



Poetical Works

Coleridge, Poe Rossetti

Illustrated by
Mrs. J. M. W. Turner
and
Mrs. J. M. W. Turner
London
1850



Class DR 4478

Book A1

Copyright N^o 1817

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT





Poetical Works
of Coleridge, Poe
and Rossetti

*Containing only those
poems which time
has proven
immortal*



Poetical Works

of

Coleridge, Poe and Rossetti

Containing only those
poems which time
has proven
immortal



NEW YORK : THE CLOVER PRESS, INC.

Nineteen-Hundred-and-Ten

PR 4478
A1
1910



*Copyright 1910, by
Gertrude Flower*

54

To My Beloved Parents



Preface



Coleridge, Poe, Rossetti

—these three of the *immortals* are linked to all true lovers of the beautiful, the mystical and the rhythmical: as expressed in the divine language of verse.

Sufficient time has separated us from the advent of *Christabel*, *Annabel Lee*, and *The Blessed Damozel*, to obliterate all that is personal and earthly from the mass of companion verse. For in a life-time the fancies of youth and the maturer thoughts of later years—when inscribed—may be large in volume, but to no man is it given that all his acts shall be great, ennobling or enduring.

In communing with these rare musicians, it would seem as though they had played upon the same instrument; for a reader of one soon becomes absorbed in a second, and inevitably an ardent worshipper at the shrines of all three.

So it is that the following pages contain all that grips the heart, and haunts the memory of the worshipper of to-day,—as distinct from that one of yester-year,—(who could not dis-associate the song from the singer), and lifts us from the “throng to peace remote in sunny silences.”



CONTENTS



	PAGE
PREFACE	1

PART I.

INTRODUCTION TO SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.....	5
KUBLA KHAN	7
CRISTABEL.....	10
SONGS OF THE PIXIES.....	36
HYMN (<i>Before Sunrise, in the vale of Chamouni</i>).....	41
LEWTH.....	45
ODE TO SARA	48
THE ROSE	52
THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.....	53 ✓

SELECTIONS :

Reflections	78
The Pains of Sleep	80
Religious Musings	80
Lines Written in Early Youth	81
The Kiss	82
Lines on a Friend	82
Youth and Age	83
To C. Lloyd	84

PART II.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION TO EDGAR ALLAN POE	85
TO HELEN	87
A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM	88
LENORE	89
THE CITY IN THE SEA	91
ANNABEL LEE	93
ISRAFEL	95
THE HAUNTED PALACE	97
EVENING STAR	99
EULALIE	100
THE SLEEPER	101
TO ———	103
THE VALLEY OF UNREST	104
THE CONQUEROR WORM	105
DREAM-LAND	107
SELECTIONS FROM AL AARAAF	109
SPIRITS OF THE DEAD	112
THE BELLS	113
BRIDAL BALLAD	117
FOR ANNIE	118
TO ONE IN PARADISE	122
ULALUME	123
TO SCIENCE (<i>A Prologue to Al Aaraaf</i>)	126

	PAGE
ELDORADO	127
THE RAVEN	128
SELECTION FROM TAMERLANE	134

PART III.

INTRODUCTION TO DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI	135
SUDDEN LIGHT	137
THE BLESSED DAMOZEL	138
TRUE WOMAN (<i>The House of Life</i>)	143
JOHN OF TOURS	144
PARTED PRESENCE	145
YOUTH'S ANTIPHONY (<i>The House of Life</i>)	147
THE STAFF AND SCRIP	148
THE BALLAD OF DEAD LADIES (<i>Translation from Francois Villon</i>)	155
THE SONG OF THE BOWER	156
EVEN SO	158
THE WHITE SHIP	159
THE KING'S TRAGEDY	170
THE ONE HOPE (<i>The House of Life</i>)	202
NUPTIAL SLEEP (<i>The House of Life</i>)	203





PART I.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE was born at the Vicarage of Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, on the 21st of October, 1772. His father was the Rev. John Coleridge, Vicar of the Parish, and Master of its Grammar School. His mother was the Vicar's second wife, and Samuel Taylor was the ninth son by the second wife. Coleridge's parents died within a short time of one another when he was nine years old. Our knowledge of Coleridge's childhood is derived entirely from his letters to Poole in 1797. He describes himself as a precocious and imaginative child, never mixing with other boys. As a scholar, Coleridge's talents proved as great as his genius, and in spite of his persistent waywardness he always took the best honors the school afforded.

"At twenty-five he had already defined for himself his peculiar line of intellectual activity," Walter Pater writes. Madam de Staël observed of him: 'that he had an odd, attractive gift of monologue;' and another says, 'His voice rose like a stream of rich, distilled perfume.'

"In 1795, Coleridge married Sarah Fricker, and settled at Clevedon. With these responsibilities and interests, the earnest endeavors of his pen scarcely relieved their financial troubles beyond eking out a mere subsistence. The following year he published the first volume of his earlier poems, and in 1797 appeared a second edition. This year produced the works by which he will be longest and always remembered. It was in November, 1797, that Coleridge and Wordsworth planned a joint composition, but the attempt failed, and Coleridge took the matter into his own hands. The magnificent result was *'The Ancient Mariner.'* It was not completed then, but 'grew and grew' (says Wordsworth) until March of the following year.

"Of *Christabel*, which Coleridge says was begun in Stowey, in 1797, there is no contemporary record; though it was published in 1816, with its attendant, *Kubla Khan* and *The Pains of Sleep*; and while the pamphlet met with large sale, and went into a

second edition almost at once, its reception by the critics was disappointing. *Kubla Khan* had been the costly, but delightful result of Coleridge's retirement to Porlock in 1798. In 1800 '*Lyrical Ballads and a Few Other Poems*' was published, but without success.

"Prose writings on philosophy, politics and religion filled the last migration of the poet's life. "And so glided away the lengthening twilight of his days,—yet not without active, intellectual life at the centre"—writes W. M. Rossetti—"and after four years of confinement to a sick-room the end came on the 25th of July, 1834."

Mr. Swinburn has expressed his enthusiasm, in the following truth about Coleridge—"As a poet, his place is indisputable, it is high among the highest at all time. That may be said of this one which can hardly be said of any but the greatest among men,—that, come what may to the world in the course of time, it will never see his place filled. The highest lyrical work is either passionate or imaginative. Of passion Coleridge's has nothing; but, for height and perfection of imaginative quality, he is the greatest of lyric poets. This was his special power, and this is his special praise."

"No one who is at all qualified to entertain or express an opinion on the subject can be insensible to the exquisite beauties of such a composition as *Youth and Age*." And, "Any one who doubts the significance of *Christabel* can plead that it is but a fragment; but any such doubt is unfair," argues William Rossetti.

Walter Pater cleverly concludes: "From his childhood he hungered for eternity." "There, after all, is the incontestable claim of Coleridge,—the perfect flower of any elementary type of life must always be precious to humanity, and Coleridge is a true flower of the *ennuyé*, of the type of *René*, — and may still be ranked among the interpreters of one of the constituent elements of our life."



The above fragments have been gathered from: James D. Campbell's *Biographical Introduction*, W. M. Rossetti's *Biographical Sketch*, and Walter Pater's *Essay on Style*.

Kubla Khan

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm house between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effect of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in 'Purchas's Pilgrimage:' 'Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto: and thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall.' The author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to the room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast, but alas! without the after restoration of the latter:

Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair,
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes—
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo! he stays,
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror.

Yet from the still surviving recollections in his mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him. Ἀύριον ἄριον ἄνω : but the to-morrow is yet to come.

As a contrast to this vision, I have annexed a fragment of a very different character, describing with equal fidelity the dream of pain and disease.—1816.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.

So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And there were forests ancient as the hills,
Emfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!

And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

Christabel

The first part of the following poem was written in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, at *Stowey*, in the county of *Somerset*. The second part, after my return from *Germany*, in the year one thousand eight hundred, at *Keswick*, *Cumberland*. Since the latter date, my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness no less than with the loveliness, of a vision; I trust that I shall yet be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come.

It is probable, that if the poem had been finished at either of the former periods, or if even the first and second part had been finished in the year 1800, the impression of its originality would have been much greater than I dare at present expect. But for this, I have only my own inference to allege. The dates are mentioned for the exclusive purpose of precluding charges of plagiarism or servile imitation from myself. For there is among us a set of critics, who seem to hold that every possible thought and image is traditional; who have no notion that there are such things as fountains in the world, small as well as great; and who would, therefore, charitably derive every rill they behold flowing, for a perforation made in some other man's tank. I am confident, however, that as far as the present poem is concerned, the celebrated poets whose writings I might be suspected of having imitated, either in particular passages, or in the tone and the spirit of the whole, would be among the first to vindicate me from the charge, and who, in any striking coincidence, would permit me to address them in this doggerel version of two monkish Latin hexameters:

'Tis mine and it is likewise yours,
But an if this will not do,
Let it be mine, good friend! for I
Am the poorer of the two.

I have only to add, that the metre of the *Christabel* is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle; namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless, this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion.

Part the First.

'Tis the middle of the night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock!
Tu—whit!—Tu—whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff, which
From her kennel beneath the rock
Maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin grey cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is grey:
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak,
But moss and rarest mistletoe:
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel!
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is, she cannot tell.—
On the other side it seemed to be
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone:
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
Her blue-veined feet unsandaled were;
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see—
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly!

Mary, mother, save me now!
(Said Christabel), And who art thou?

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet:—
Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness:
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear,
Said Christabel, How camest thou here?
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet:—

My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine:
Five warriors seized me yester-morn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.

They spurred amain, their steeds were white;
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be;
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive.
Some muttered words his comrades spoke;
He placed me underneath this oak,
He swore they would return with haste;
Whither they went I cannot tell—
I thought I heard, some minutes past,
Sounds as of a castle bell,
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,
And comforted fair Geraldine:
O well bright dame! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline;
And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth and friends withal
To guide and guard you safe and free
Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose: and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious STARS the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel;
All our household are at rest,
The hall as silent as the cell,
Sir Leoline is weak in health
And may not well awakened be,
But we will move as if in stealth:
And I beseech your courtesy
This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well;
A little door she opened straight,
All in the middle of the gate;
The gate that was ironed within and without,
Where an army in battle array had marched out;
The lady sank, belike through pain,
And Christabel with might and main
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate:
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court: right glad they were.
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the lady by her side,
Praise we the Virgin all divine
Who has rescued thee from thy distress!

Alas, alas! said Geraldine,
I cannot speak for weariness.
So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court: right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make!
And what can ail the mastiff bitch?
Never till now she uttered yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch:
For what can ail the mastiff bitch?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will!
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
And nothing else saw she thereby
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
O softly tread, said Christabel,
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And jealous of the listening air
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room,
As still as death, with stifled breath!
And now have reached her chamber door;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters there.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!
It is a wine of virtuous powers;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn?
Christabel answered—Woe is me!
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell,
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding day.
O mother dear! that thou were here!
I would, said Geraldine, she were.

But soon with altered voice, said she—
'Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!
I have power to bid thee flee.'
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
Why stares she with unsettled eye?
Can she the bodiless dead espy?
And why with hollow voice cries she,
'Off, woman, off! this hour is mine—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me.'

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
Alas! said she, this ghastly ride—
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, ' 'tis over now!'

Again the wild-flower wine she drank!
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée.
And thus the lofty lady spake—
All they who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befell,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.

Quoth Christabel, so let it be!
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro,
That vain it were her lids to close;
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
And slowly rolled her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast:
Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold! her bosom and half her side—
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs:
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;
Then suddenly, as one defied,
Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the Maiden's side!—
And in her arms the maid she took,
 Ah, wel-a-day!
And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say:
In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!

Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow;
 But vainly thou warrest,
For this is alone in
Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
Thou heardest a low moaning,
 And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair:
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in
 charity,
 To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST.

It was a lovely sight to see
The lady Christabel, when she
Was praying at the old oak tree
 Amid the jagged shadows
 Of mossy leafless boughs,
 Kneeling in the moonlight,
 To make her gentle vows;
Her slender palms together prest,
Heaving sometimes on her breast;
Her face resigned to bliss or bale—
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is—
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,
The lady who knelt at the old oak tree?
And lo! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild,
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine! one hour was thine
Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,
The night-birds all that hour were still.
But now they are jubilant anew,
From cliff and tower, tu—whoo! tu—whoo!
Tu—whoo! tu—whoo! from wood and fell!
And see! the lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out her trance;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess,
Beauteous in a wilderness,
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance 'tis but the blood so free,
Comes back and tingles in her feet.
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
What if her guardian spirit 'twere,
What if she knew her mother near?
But this she knows, in joys and woes,
That saints will aid if men will call:
For the blue sky bends over all!

PART THE SECOND.

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,
Knells us back to a world of death.
These words Sir Leoline first said,
When he rose and found his lady dead:
These words Sir Leoline will say,
Many a morn to his dying day.
And hence the custom and law began,
That still at dawn the sacristan
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,
Five and forty beads must tell
Between each stroke—a warning knell,
Which not a soul can choose but hear
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell!
And let the drowsy sacristan
Still count as slowly as he can!
There is no lack of such, I ween
As well fill up the space between.
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
With ropes of rock and bells of air
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
Who all give back, one after t'other,
The death-note to their living brother:
And oft too, by the knell offended,
Just as their one! two! three! is ended,
The devil mocks the doleful tale
With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still! through mist and cloud
That merry peal comes ringing loud;
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
And rises lightly from the bed;
Puts on her silken vestments white,
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,
And nothing doubting of her spell
Awakens the lady Christabel.

'Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?
I trust that you have rested well.'
And Christabel awoke and spied
The same who lay down by her side—
O rather say, the same whom she
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!
Nay, fairer yet! and yet more fair!

For she belike hath drunken deep
Of all the blessedness of sleep!
And while she spake, her looks, her air
Such gentle thankfulness declare,
That (so it seemed) her girded vests
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.
'Sure I have sinned!' said Christabel,
'Now Heaven be praised if all be well!'
And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
Did she the lofty lady greet
With such perplexity of mind
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown,
She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.
The lovely maid and the lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And pacing on through page and groom
Enter the Baron's presence room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The lady Geraldine espies,
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might beseem so bright a dame!

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine?

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline.
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted—ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.
Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
Stood gazing on the damsel's face;
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the Baron forgot his age,
His noble heart swelled high with rage;
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,
He would proclaim it far and wide
With trump and solemn heraldry,
That they, who thus had wronged the dame,
Were base as spotted infamy!
'And if they dare deny the same,
My herald shall appoint a week,
And let the recreant traitors seek
My tourney court—that there and then
I may dislodge their reptile souls
From the bodies of and forms of men!
He spake: his eye in lightning rolls!
For the lady was ruthlessly seized; and he kenned
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend!
And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look
Which when she viewed, a vision fell
Upon the soul of Christabel,
The vision of fear, the touch and pain!
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again
(Ah, woe is me! Was it for thee,
Thou gentle maid! such sights to see?)
Again she saw that bosom old,
Again she felt that bosom cold,
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound:
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
And in its stead that vision blest,
Which comforted her after-rest,
While in the lady's arms she lay,
Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes,
Spread smiles like light!

With new surprise,
'What ails then my beloved child?'
The Baron said—His daughter mild
Made answer, 'All will yet be well!'
I ween she had no power to tell
Aught else: so mighty was the spell.
Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,
Had deemed her sure a thing divine,
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
As if she feared she had offended
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!
And with such lowly tones she prayed,
She might be sent without delay
Home to her father's mansion.

'Nay! Nay, by my soul!' said Leoline.
'Ho! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine!
Go thou, with music sweet and loud,
And take two steeds with trappings proud,
And take the youth whom thou lov'st best,
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
And clothe you both in solemn vest,
And over the mountains haste along,
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
Detain you on the valley road.

And when he hath crossed the Irthing flood,
My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,
And reaches soon that castle good
Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are fleet,
You must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,
More loud than your horses' echoing feet!
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—
Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
He bids thee come without delay,
With all thy numerous array,
And take thy lovely daughter home:
And he will meet thee on the way
With all his numerous array
White with their panting palfreys' foam,
And, by my honor! I will say,
That I repent me of the day,
When I spake words of fierce disdain
To Ronald de Vaux of Tryermaine!—
—For since that evil hour hath flown,
Many a summer's sun have shone;
Yet ne'er found I a friend again
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine.'

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing;
And Bracy replied with faltering voice,
His gracious hail on all bestowing:—
Thy words, thy sire of Christabel,
Are sweeter than my harp can tell,
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,
This day my journey should not be;
So strange a dream hath come to me:
That I vowed with music loud
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
Warned by a vision in my rest!
For in my sleep I saw that dove,
That gentle bird whom thou dost love,
And call'st by thy own daughter's name—
Sir Leoline! I saw the same
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
Which when I saw and when I heard,
I wondered what might ail the bird:
For nothing near it could I see,
Save the grass and the green herbs underneath
the old tree.

And in my dream, methought, I went
To search out what might there be found:
And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
I went and peered, and could descry
No cause for her distressful cry;
But yet for her dear lady's sake
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
When lo! I saw a bright green snake
Coiled round its wings and neck.
Green as the herbs on which it couched,
Close by the dove its head it crouched;
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers!
I awoke; it was the midnight hour,
The clock was echoing in the tower;
But though my slumber was gone by,
This dream it would not pass away—
It seems to live upon my eye!
And thence I vowed this self-same day,
With music strong and saintly song
To wander through the forest bare
Less aught unholy loiter there.

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,
Half-listening heard him with a smile;
Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
His eyes made up of wonder and love;
And said in courtly accents fine,
Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
With arms more strong than harp or song,
Thy sire and I will crush the snake!

He kissed her forehead as he spake,
And Geraldine in maiden wise,
Casting down her large bright eyes,
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine
She turned her from Sir Leoline;
Softly gathering up her train,
That o'er her right arm fell again;
And folded her arms across her chest,
And couched her head upon her breast,
And looked askance at Christabel—
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!
A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread
At Christabel she looked askance!—
One moment and the sight was fled!
But Christabel in dizzy trance,
Stumbling on the unsteady ground—
Shuddered aloud with a hissing sound;
And Geraldine again turned round,
And like a thing, that sought relief,
Full of wonder and full of grief,
She rolled her large bright eyes divine
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,
She nothing sees—no sight but one!
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not now, in fearful wise
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
That all her features were resigned
To this sole image in her mind:
And passively did imitate
That look of dull and treacherous hate,
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
Still picturing that look askance,
With forced unconscious sympathy
Full before her father's view—
As far as such a look could be,
In eyes so innocent and blue!
And when the trance was o'er, the maid
Paused awhile and inly prayed,
Then falling at her father's feet,
'By my mother's soul do I entreat,
That thou this woman send away!'
She said; and more she could not say,
For what she knew she could not tell,
O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline? Thy only child
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild;
The same, for whom thy lady died!
O by the pangs of her dead mother
Think thou no evil of thy child!

For her, and thee, and for no other,
She prayed the moment ere she died:
Prayed that the babe for whom she died,
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!
That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
Sir Leoline!

And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,
Her child and thine?

Within the Baron's heart and brain
If thoughts, like these, had any share,
They only swelled his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,
Dishonored thus in his old age;
Dishonored by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To th' insulted daughter of his friend,
By more than woman's jealousy,
Brought thus to a disgraceful end—
He rolled his eyes with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere—
Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
I bade thee hence! The bard obeyed;
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldine!

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE SECOND.

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks
That always finds and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last
Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so unlike each other;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.

Songs of the Pixies

The Pixies, in the superstition of Devonshire, are a race of beings invisibly small, and harmless or friendly to man. At a small distance from a village in that county, half-way up a wood-covered hill, is an excavation, called the Pixies' parlor. The roots of old trees form its ceiling, and on its sides are innumerable ciphers, among which the author discovered his own cipher and those of his brothers, cut by the hand of their childhood. At the foot of the hill flows the river Otter.

To this place the author conducted a party of young ladies, during the summer months of the year 1793; one of whom, of stature elegantly small, and of complexion colorless yet clear, was proclaimed the Fairy Queen: on which occasion, and at which time, the following irregular ode was written.

I.

Whom the untaught Shepherds call
PIXIES in their madrigal,
Fancy's children, here we dwell:
Welcome, ladies! to our cell.
Here the wren of softest note
Builds its nest and warbles well;
Here the blackbird strains his throat:
Welcome, ladies! to our cell.

II.

When fades the moon all shadowy-pale,
And scuds the cloud before the gale,
Ere Morn with living gems bedight
Streaks the east with purple light,
We sip the furze-flower's fragrant dews,
Clad in robes of rainbow hues;
Richer than the deepened bloom
That glows on summer's scented plume;
Or sport amid the rosy gleam
Soothed by the distant-tinkling team,
While lusty labor scouting sorrow
Bids the Dame a glad good-morrow,
Who jogs th' accustomed road along,
And paces cheery to her cheering song.

III.

But not our filmy pinion
We scorch amid the blaze of day,
When Noontide's fiery-tressed minion
Flashes the fervid ray.
Aye from the sultry heat
We to the cave retreat,
O'ercanopied by huge roots intertwined
With wildest texture, blackened o'er with age:
Round them their mantle green the ivies bind,
Beneath whose foliage pale
Fanned by the unfrequent gale
We shield us from the Tyrant's mid-day rage.

IV.

Thither, while the murm'ring throng
Of wild-bees hum their drowsy song,
By Indolence and Fancy brought,
A youthful Bard, 'unknown to Fame,'
Woos the Queen of solemn thought,
And heaves the gentle mis'ry of a sigh
Gazing with tearful eye,
As round our sandy grot appear
Many a rudely sculptured name
To pensive Mem'ry dear!
Weaving gay dreams of sunny-tinctured hue
We glance before his view:
O'er his hushed soul our soothing witch'ries shed,
And twine our fairy garlands round his head.

V.

When Evening's dusky car
Crowned with her dewy star
Steals o'er the fading sky in shadowy flight;
On leaves of aspen trees
We tremble to the breeze,
Veiled from the grosser ken of mortal sight.
Or, haply, at the visionary hour,
Along our wild sequestered walk,
We listen to th' enamoured rustic's talk;
Heave with the heavings of the maiden's breast,
Where young-eyed Loves have built their turtle
nest;
Or guide of soul-subduing power
Th' electric flash, that from the melting eye
Darts the fond question and the soft reply.

VI.

Or thro' the mystic ringlets of the vale
We flash our fairy feet in gamesome prank;
Or, silent-sandalled, pay our defter court
Circling the spirit of the western gale,
Where, wearied with his flower-caressing sport,
Supine he slumbers on a violet bank;
Then with quaint music hymn the parting gleam,
By lonely Otter's sleep-persuading stream;
Or where his wave with loud unquiet song
Dashed o'er the rocky channel froths along;
Or where, his silver waters smoothed to rest,
The tall tree's shadow sleeps upon his breast.

VII.

Hence! thou lingerer, Light!
Eve saddens into Night.
Mother of wildly-working dreams! we view
The sombre hours, that round thee stand
With down-cast eyes (a duteous band!)
Their dark robes dripping with the heavy dew.
Sorceress of the ebon throne!
Thy power the Pixies own,
When round thy raven brow
Heaven's lucent roses glow,
And clouds, in wat'ry colors drest,
Float in light drapery 'o'er thy sable vest;
What time the pale moon sheds a softer day,
Mellowing the woods beneath its pensive beam:
For 'mid the quiv'ring light 'tis ours to play,
Aye dancing to the cadence of the stream.

VIII.

Welcome, Ladies! to the cell,
Where the blameless Pixies dwell,
But thou, Sweet Nymph! proclaimed our Fairy
Queen,
With what obeisance meet
Thy presence shall we greet?
For lo! attendant on thy steps are seen
Graceful Ease in artless stole,
And white-robed Purity of soul,
With Honor's softer mien:
Mirth of the loosely-flowing hair,
And meek-eyed Pity eloquently fair,
Whose tearful cheeks are lovely to the view,
As snow-drop wet with dew.

IX.

Unboastful Maid! tho' now the Lily pale
Transparent grace thy beauties meek;
Yet ere again along th' impurpling vale,
The purpling vale and elfin-haunted grove,
Young Zephyr his fresh flowers profusely throws,
We'll tinge with livelier hues thy cheek;
And, haply from the nectar-breathing Rose
Extract a Blush for Love!

Hymn

BEFORE SUN-RISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning-star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my
Thought,
Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing — there
As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart, awake;
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the Vale!
O struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when they sink:
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
Forever shattered and the same forever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came),
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye Ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the Gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain-storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
Ye signs and wonders of the element!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast —
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,
To rise before me — Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense, from the Earth!
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great Hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

Lewti

At midnight by the stream I roved,
To forget the form I loved.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

The moon was high, the moonlight gleam
And the shadow of a star
Heaved upon Tamaha's stream;
But the rock shone brighter far,
The rock half-sheltered from my view
By pendent boughs of tressy yew—

So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
Gleaming through her sable hair.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue,
Onward to the moon it passed;
Still brighter and more bright it grew,
With floating colors not a few,
Till it reached the moon at last:
Then the cloud was wholly bright,
With a rich and amber light!
And so with many a hope I seek,
And with such joy I find my Lewti;
And even so my pale wan cheek
Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty!
Nay! treacherous image! leave my mind,
If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,
 Away it goes; away so soon!
Alas! it has no power to stay:
Its hues are dim, its hues are gray—
 Away it passes from the moon!
How mournfully it seems to fly,
Ever fading more and more,
To joyless regions of the sky—
And now 'tis whiter than before!
As white as my poor cheek will be,
When, Lewti! on my couch I lie,
A dying man for love of thee.
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—
And yet, thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapor in the sky,
Thin, and white, and very high:
I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud:
Perhaps the breezes that can fly,
Now below and now above,
Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud
Of Lady fair—that died for love.
For maids, as well as youths, have perished
From fruitless love too fondly cherished.
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—
For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush! my heedless feet from under
Slip the crumbling banks forever:
Like echoes to a distant thunder,
They plunge into the gentle river.
The river-swans have heard my tread,
And startle from their reedy bed.

O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure
Your movements to some heavenly tune!
O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies,
When silent night has closed her eyes;
It is a breezy jasmine-bower,
The nightingale sings o'er her head:
Voice of the night! had I the power
That leafy labyrinth to thread,
And creep, like thee, with sound-less tread,
I then might view her bosom white,
Heaving lovely to my sight,
As these two swans together heave
On the gently swelling wave.

Oh! that she saw me in a dream,
And dreamt that I had died for care;
All pale and wasted I would seem,
Yet fair withal, as spirits are!
I'd die indeed, if I might see
Her bosom heave, and heave for me!
Soothe, gentle image! soothe my mind!
To-morrow Lewti may be kind.

Ode to Sara

Nor travels my meand'ring eye
The starry wilderness on high;
Nor now with curious sight
I mark the glow-worm as I pass,
Move with "green radiance" thro' the grass,
An emerald of light

O ever-present to my view!
My wafted spirit is with you,
And soothes your boding fears;
I see you all oppressed with gloom
Sit lonely in that cheerless room—
Ah me! you are in tears!

Belovèd Woman! did you fly
Chilled Friendship's dark disliking eye,
Or Mirth's untimely din?
With cruel weight these trifles press
A temper sore with tenderness,
Where aches the void within.

But why with sable wand unblessed
Should Fancy rouse within my breast
Dim visaged shapes of Dread?
Untenanting its beauteous clay,
My Sara's soul has winged its way,
And hovers round my head!

I felt it prompt the tender dream,
When, slowly sank the day's last gleam,
 You roused each gentler sense;
As sighing o'er the blossom's bloom
Meek Evening wakes its soft perfume
 With viewless influence.

And hark, my Love! the sea-breeze moans
Thro' yon reft house! O'er rolling stones,
 In ambitious sweep
The onward-surgin' tides supply
The silence of the cloudless sky
 With mimic thunders deep.

Dark-redd'ning from the channel'd Isle
(Where stands one solitary pile
 Unslated by the blast)
The watchfire, like a sullen star,
Twinkles to many a dozing Tar,
 Rude-cradled on the mast.

Ev'n there—beneath that light-house tower—
In the tumultuous evil hour
 Ere Peace with Sara came,
Time was, I should have thought it sweet
To count the echoings of my feet,
 And watch the troubled flame.

And there in black soul-jaundiced fit
A sad gloom-pampered Man to sit,
 And listen to the roar,
When mountain surges, bellowing deep,
With an uncouth monster leap
 Plunged foaming on the shore.

Then by the lightning's blaze to mark,
Some toiling tempest-shattered bark:
 Her vain distress-guns hear:
And when a second sheet of light
Flashed o'er the blackness of the night—
 To see *no* vessel there!

But Fancy now more gayly sings;
Or if awhile she droop her wings,
 As skylarks 'mid the corn,
On summer fields she grounds her breast:
Th' oblivious poppy o'er her nest,
 Nods, till returning morn.

O mark those smiling tears, that swell
The opened rose! From heaven they fell,
 And with the sunbeam blend;
Blest visitations from above:
Such are the tender woes of Love
 Fost'ring the heart they bend!

When stormy Midnight howling round
Beats on our roof with clatt'ring sound,
 To me your arms you'll stretch:
Great God! you'll say—To us so kind,
O shelter from this loud bleak wind
 The houseless, friendless wretch!

The tears that tremble down your cheek,
Shall bathe my kisses chaste and meek
 In Pity's dew divine;
And from your heart the sighs that steal
Shall make your rising bosom feel
 The answ'ring swell of mine!

How oft, my Love! with shapings sweet
I paint the moment we shall meet!
 With eager speed I dart—
I seize you in the vacant air,
And fancy, with a husband's care,
 I press you to my heart!

'Tis said, in Summer's evening hour
Flashes the golden-coloured flower
 A fair electric flame:
And so shall flash my love-charged eye
When all the heart's big ecstasy
 Shoots rapid through the flame!

The Rose

As late each flower that sweetest blows
I plucked, the garden's pride!
Within the petals of a rose
A sleeping Love I spied.

Around his brows a beamy wreath
Of many a lucent hue;
All purple glowed his cheek, beneath,
Inebriate with dew.

I softly seized the unguarded power,
Nor scared his balmy rest;
And placed him, caged within the flower,
On spotless Sara's breast.

But when unweeting of the guile
Awoke the pris'ner sweet,
He struggled to escape awhile
And stamped his fairy feet.

Ah! soon the soul-entrancing sight
Subdued the impatient boy!
He gazed! he thrilled with deep delight!
Then clapped his wings for joy.

'And oh!' he cried—'Of magic kind
What charms this throne endear!
Some other Love let Venus find—
I'll fix *my* empire here.'

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Part the First.

An Ancient
Mariner
meeteth three
Gallants
bidden to a
wedding-feast,
and detaineth
one.

It is an Ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three,
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?"

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wedding-
Guest is spell-
bound by the
eye of the old
sea-faring
man, and con-
strained to
hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye —
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone;
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

“The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward with
a good wind
and fair wea-
ther, till it
reached the
line.

The Sun came up upon the left
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—”
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-
Guest heareth
the bridal
music; but the
Mariner con-
tinueth his
tale.

The Bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship
driven by a
storm toward
the south pole.

“And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o’ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken —
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross:
Through the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

The land of
ice, and of
fearful sounds
where no liv-
ing thing was
to be seen.

Till a great
sea-bird, called
the Albatross,
came through
the snow-fog,
and was re-
ceived with
great joy and
hospitality.

And lo! the
Albatross
proves a bird
of good omen,
and followeth
the ship as it
returned north-
ward through
fog and float-
ing ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariner's hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white Moon-shine.

The Ancient
Mariner
inhospitably
killeth the
pious bird of
good omen.

“God save thee, Ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
Why look'st thou so?”—“With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

Part the Second.

The Sun now rose upon the right
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

His shipmates
cry out
against the
Ancient
Mariner,
for killing the
bird of good
luck.

And I had done an hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah, wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

But when the fog cleared
off, they justify the same,
and thus make themselves ac-
complices in the crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze con-
duces; the ship enters the
Pacific Ocean,
and sails northward,
even till it reaches the
Line.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free:
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The ship hath
been suddenly
becalmed.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,—
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the
Albatross
begins to be
avenged.

Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white.

And some in dreams assurèd were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so:
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

Part the Third.

There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward I beheld
A something in the sky.

A Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Pselus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the Ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

The Ancient Mariner beheld a sign in the element afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist:
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer
approach, it
seemeth him
to be a ship;
and at a dear
ransom he
freeth his
speech from
the bonds of
thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, 'A sail! a sail!'

A flash of joy;

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

And horror fol-
lows. For can
it be a ship
that comes on-
ward without
wind or tide?

'See! see!' (I cried) 'she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!'

The western wave was all aflame,
The day was well-nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

It ~~strength~~ him
but the skele-
ton of a ship.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered,
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud,
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres!

And its ribs
are seen as bars
on the face of
the setting
Sun.

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that Woman's mate?

The Spectre-
Woman and
her Death-
mate, and no
other on board
the skeleton-
ship.

Like vessel,
like crew!

Her lips were red, her looks were free.
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was white as leprosy,
The Night-Mare, Life-in-Death, was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Death and
Life-in-Death
have diced for
the ship's
crew, and she
(the latter)
winneth the
Ancient
Mariner.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've, I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

No twilight
within the
courts of the
Sun.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre bark.

At the rising
of the Moon,

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after
another,

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

His shipmates
drop down
dead,

Four times fifty living men
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan).
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life in
Death begins
her work on
the Ancient
Mariner

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

Part the Fourth.

The Wedding-
Guest feareth
that a Spirit is
talking to him.

"I fear thee, Ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

But the Ancient Mariner
assureth him
of his bodily
life, and proceedeth to re-
late his
horrible
penance.

“I fear thee, and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown.”—
“Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth
the creatures
of the calm.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie;
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to Heaven, and tried to pray
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse
liveth for him
in the eye of
the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they;
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and every where the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

An orphan's curse would drag to Hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside —

Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt always
A still and awful red.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware!
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The self same moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

Part the Fifth.

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamed that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

Their beauty
and their
happiness.

He blesseth
them in his
heart.

The spell be-
gins to break.

By grace of
the holy
Mother, the
Ancient
Mariner is re-
freshed with
rain.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light — almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessèd ghost.

He heareth
sounds and
seeth strange
sights and
commotions in
the sky and
the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of
the ship's crew
are inspired,
and the ship
moves on!

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do:
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools —
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The Body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me."

"I fear thee, Ancient Mariner!"

"Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!

'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned — they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths
And from their bodies passed.

But not by the
souls of the
men, nor by
dæmons of
the earth or
middle air, but
by a blessed
troop of ang-
elic spirits,
sent down by
the invocation
of the guard-
ian saint.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome
Spirit from the
south-pole
carries on the
ship as far as
the Line, in
obedience to
the angelic
troop, but 'till
requireth ven-
geance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The Spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound;
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

The Polar
Spirit's fellow-
demons, the
invisable inhab-
itants of the
element, take
part in his
wrong; and
two of them
relate one
to the other,
that penance
long and heavy
for the Ancient
Mariner hath
been accorded
to the Polar
Spirit, who re-
turneth south-
ward.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By Him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low,
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

Part the Sixth.

First Voice.

'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing —
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?'

Second Voice.

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast —

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

The Mariner
hath been cast
into a trance;
for the angelic
power causeth
the vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

First Voice.

'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

Second Voice.

'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

The super-
natural motion
is retarded;
the Mariner
awakes, and
his penance be-
gins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high:
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is
finally expi-
ated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen —

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And, having once turned round, walks on
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring —
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze —
On me alone it blew.

O dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

And the An-
cient Mariner
beholdeth his
native country.

We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray —
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbor-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay
And the shadow of the moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colors came.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck —
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

The angelic
spirits leave
the dead
bodies,

And appear in
their own
forms of light.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart —
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot, and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third — I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

Part the Seventh.

The Hermit of
the Wood,

This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve —
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

Approacheth
the ship
with wonder.

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said —
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks looked warped! and see those sails
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

' Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared '—' Push on, push on! '
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship sud-
denly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The Ancient
Mariner
is saved in the
Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat span round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The Ancient
Mariner
earnestly en-
treateth the
Hermit to
shrieve him;
and the pen-
ance of life
falls on him.

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say —
What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever and
anon through
his future life
an agony con-
straineth him
to travel from
land to land,

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns;
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the Bride
And bride-maids singing are;
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

And to teach,
by his own
example, love
and reverence
to all things
that God made
and loveth.

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.



Selection

(Reflections)

Low was our pretty Cot! our tallest rose
Peeped at the chamber-window. We could hear
At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
The sea's faint murmur. In the open air
Our myrtles blossomed; and across the porch
Thick jasmins twined: the little landscape round
Was green and woody and refreshed the eye.
It was a spot, which you might aptly call
The Valley of Seclusion! Once I saw
(Hallowing his Sabbath-day by quietness)
A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,
Bristowa's citizen: methought, it calmed
His thirst of idle gold, and made him muse
With wiser feelings: for he paused, and looked
With a pleased sadness, and gazed all around,
Then eyed our cottage, and gazed round again,
And sighed, and said, *it was a blessed place.*

And we *were* blesséd. Oft with patient ear
Long-listening to the viewless sky-lark's note
(Viewless, or haply for a moment seen
Gleaming on sunny wings) in whispered tones
I've said to my beloved, 'Such, sweet girl!
The inobtrusive song of Happiness,
Unearthly minstrelsy! then only heard
When the soul seeks to hear; when all is hushed
And the heart listens!'

But the time, when first
From that low dell, steep up the stony mount
I climbed with perilous toil and reached the top,
O what a goodly scene! *Here* the bleak mount,
The bare bleak mountain speckled thin with sheep;
Gray clouds, that shadowing spot the sunny fields;
And river, now with bushy rocks o'erbrowed,
Now winding bright and full, with naked banks;
And seats, and lawns, the abbey, and the wood,
And cots, and hamlets, and faint city-spire:
The Channel *there*, the islands and white sails,
Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills, and shoreless ocean—
It seemed like Omnipresence! God, methought,
Had built him there a Temple: the whole world
Seemed imaged in its vast circumference.
No wish profaned my overwhelmed heart.
Blest hour! it was luxury,—to be!

Selection

(The Pains of Sleep)

Ere on my bed my limbs I lay,
It hath not been my use to pray
With moving lips or bended knees;
But silently, by slow degrees,
My spirit I to Love compose,
In humble trust mine eye-lids close,
With reverential resignation,
No wish conceived, no thought exprest,
Only a sense of supplication;
A sense o'er all my soul imprest
That I am weak, yet not unblest,
Since in me, round me, everywhere
Eternal strength and wisdom are.

To be beloved is all I need,
And whom I love, I love indeed.



Selection

(Religious Musings)

Believe thou, O my soul,
Life is a vision shadowy of truth;
And vice, and anguish, and the wormy grave,
Shapes of a dream! The veiling clouds retire,
And lo! the Throne of the redeeming God
Forth flashing unimaginable day
Wraps in one blaze earth, heaven, and deepest hell.

Selection

(Lines Written in Early Youth)

Now sheds the sinking sun a deeper gleam,
Aid, lovely sorceress! aid thy poet's dream!
With fairy wand O bid the maid arise,
Chaste joyance dancing in her bright blue eyes;
As erst when from the Muses' calm abode
I came, with learning's meed not unbestowed:
When, as she twined a laurel round my brow,
And met my kiss, and half returned my vow,
O'er all my frame shot rapid my thrilled heart,
And every nerve confessed the electric dart.

O dear deceit! I see the maiden rise,
Chaste joyance dancing in her bright blue eyes,
When first the lark high-soaring swells his throat
Mocks the tired eye, and scatters the loud note,
I trace her footsteps on the accustomed lawn,
I mark her glancing 'mid the gleams of dawn.
When the bent flower beneath the night-dew weeps,
And on the lake the silver lustre sleeps,
Amid the paly radiance soft and sad
She meets my lonely path in moon-beams clad.
With her along the streamlet's brink I rove;
With her I list the warblings of the grove;
And seems in each low wind her voice to float
Lone-whispering pity in each soothing note!

Selection

(The Kiss)

Yon viewless wand'rer of the vale,
The spirit of the western gale,
At morning's break, at evening's close
Inhales the sweetness of the rose.
And hovers o'er th' uninjured bloom
Sighing back the soft perfume.
Vigor to the zephyr's wing
Her nectar-breathing kisses fling;
And he the glitter of the dew
Scatters on the rose's hue.
Bashful, lo! she bends her head
And darts a blush of deeper red!



Selection

(Lines on a Friend)

Is this piled earth our Being's passless mound?
Tell me, cold grave! is Death with poppies crown'd?
Tired Sentinel! 'mid fitful starts I nod,
And fain would sleep, though pillowed on a clod!

Selection

(Youth and Age)

O Youth! for years so many and so sweet,
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be that Thou art gone!
The Vesper-bell hath not yet tolled:—
And thou wert aye a Masker bold!
What strange Disguise hast now put on,
To MAKE BELIEVE, that thou art gone?
I see these Locks in silvery slips,
This drooping Gait, this altered Size:
But Springtide blossoms on thy Lips,
And Tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but Thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are House-mates still.

Selection

(To C. Lloyd)

O meek retiring spirit! we will climb,
Cheering and cheered, this lovely hill sublime;
And from the stirring world uplifted high
(Whose noises faintly wafted on the wind,
To quiet musings shall attune the mind,
And oft the melancholy *theme* supply),
There, while the prospect thro' the gazing eye
Pours all its healthful greenness on the soul,
We'll smile at wealth, and learn to smile at fame,
Our hopes, our knowledge, and our joys the same,
As neigh'ring fountains image each the whole.



PART II.

Edgar Allan Poe

THE following is largely taken from the work of Mr. Chas. F. Richardson of Dartmouth College, whose Biography of Edgar Allan Poe in the Arnheim Edition is most excellent.

"Edgar Allan Poe was born in Boston, on the 19th of January, 1809. He was the son of strolling players, an adopted orphan, a wayward but brilliant student, a literary hack, in his short career of forty years—often years of bitter poverty he "hitched his wagon to a star" as truly as did the favored Emerson in his sheltered nook. His life was as chaste as his writings; he was the center of a little home in which he was the idol of his young wife and her mother; his intense ambition did not in itself color his view of the world, though the tone of increasing regret for things past re-echoes through much of his verse.

"Edgar Allan Poe died on Sunday, the seventh of October, 1849, and was buried the next day in the burial ground of Westminster Church, Baltimore.

"The personal appearance of the poet was striking and individual according to all testimony. A lady who well remembers him, writes—"His quiet elegance, courtly manners, musical voice, and refined accent, his glorious head and wonderful eyes made an impression which time does not efface."

"Bishop Fitzgerald who saw Mr. Poe in 1849 said: "There was a fascination about him that everybody felt. Meeting him in the midst of thousands a stranger would stop to get a second look and to ask "Who is he?" As regards his voice Thomas Higginson says: "that Poe read *Ligeia* before a Boston audience in a voice, whose singular music he never had heard equaled."

"What new thing can be said of Poe's verse? True poetry is as self-explanatory as a bird-song or a gem. Scarcely less familiar than *The Raven* are the figures of *Lenore* or *Annabel Lee*, sweeping mystically from the hitherto to the hereafter.

There is an indefinable mystery in *The City in the Sea*, *The Sleeper*, *The Valley of Unrest*, and *The Haunted Palace*, and we know that all of these have won a decided place in the temple of fame.

"Mr. Lang has well spoken of "that rare quality, the strange, the hitherto unheard, yet delightful note which again and again is heard in the verse of Edgar Allan Poe—not his ideas but the beauty of his haunting lines confers on him the laurel." His poems, known by English readers in their own dialect, transferred into the similar German, not wholly lost even when transmuted into French prose, occupy a place that is unique. And it may be added as Chas. W. Kent has said: "His music has in it the haunting sense of something lost. The melody with its plaintiveness, the variations with their lingering and recurring themes, suggest far more than they express. Here more is meant than meets the ear, and listeners of varying talents and aptitudes will perceive in these melodies different meanings.

"Poe stands supreme, even in the only morally pure national literature the world has ever seen, in the absolute chastity of his every word. The ideal vision of pure beauty, now incarnate and now but a mist figure, pallid or rosy, ever floated before the poet's eyes. It hypnotized him like a crystal ball. To it he addressed the shorter lyric, '*To Helen*,' most perfect of all his poems. *Annabel Lee* was not only the song of a single loss, but a passionate world-cry of the immortal to the immortal. Past *One in Paradise* flows the eternal streams. If Poe's assertive belief in the immortality of the soul of beauty sometimes veered toward the mood of despair, we must not forget that to every man, at times, death seems death indeed, and the door of the tomb appears open to receive those who pass into the dreamless sleep with never a hint of release or renewal."



To Helen

Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicaean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy naiad airs, have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

A Dream Within a Dream

Take this kiss upon the brow!
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow:
You are not wrong, who deem
That my days have been a dream;
Yet if hope has flown away
In a night, or in a day,
In a vision, or in none,
Is it therefore the less *gone*?
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar
Of a surf-tormented shore,
And I hold within my hand
Grains of the golden sand—
How few! yet how they creep
Through my fingers to the deep,
While I weep,—while I weep!
O God! can I not grasp
Them with a tighter clasp?
O God! can I not save
One from the pitiless wave?
Is *all* that we see or seem
But a dream within a dream?

Lenore

Ah, broken is the golden bowl!—the spirit flown
forever!—

Let the bell toll!—a saintly soul floats on the Stygian
river;

And, Guy de Vere, hast *thou* no tear?—weep now,
or nevermore!

See, on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love,
Lenore!

Come, let the burial rite be read—the funeral song
be sung!—

An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so
young,—

A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so
young.

“Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her
for her pride,

And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her—
that she died!

How *shall* the ritual, then, be read?—the requiem how
be sung

By you—by yours, the evil eye,—by yours, the
slandrous tongue

That did to death the innocence that died, and died
so young?”

Peccavimus! but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath
song
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no
wrong!
The sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with Hope
that flew beside,
Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have
been thy bride!—
For her, the fair and *debonair*, that now so lowly lies,
The life upon her yellow hair but not within her
eyes,—
The life still there, upon her hair,—the death upon
her eyes!

"Avaunt! To-night my heart is light! no dirge will
I upraise,
But waft the angel on her flight with a pæan of old
days!
Let *no* bell toll!—lest her sweet soul, amid its
hallowed mirth,
Should catch the note, as it doth float up from the
damnéd Earth!
To friends above, from fiends below, the indignant
ghost is riven,—
From Hell unto a high estate far up within the
Heaven,—
From grief and groan to a golden throne, beside the
King of Heaven."

The City in the Sea

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and
the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not!)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently,
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers—
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers—
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathèd friezes interwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves,
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye,—
Not the gayly-jewelled dead
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas!
Along that wilderness of glass;
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea;
No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene.

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide;
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven.
The waves have now a redder glow,
The hours are breathing faint and low;
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

Annabel Lee

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of ANNABEL LEE;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than
love,—
I and my ANNABEL LEE;
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea:
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me,—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night
Chilling and killing my ANNABEL LEE.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,—
Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me
dreams
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful ANNABEL LEE;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

Israfel

And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—*Koran*.

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell,
 "Whose heart-strings are a lute."
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns, attend the spell
 Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
 In her highest noon,
The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,—
 While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven)
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir
 And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
 By which he sits and sings,—
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,
Where deep thoughts are a duty—
Where Love's a grown-up God—
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore thou art not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest!
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervor of thy lute:
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sour;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,—
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

The Haunted Palace

In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago),
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingèd odor went away

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows, saw
Spirits moving musically,
To a lute's well-tunèd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn! — for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)
And round about his home, the glory
That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

And travellers, now, within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms, that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh — but smile no more.

Evening Star

'Twas noontide of summer,
And mid-time of night;
And stars, in their orbits,
Shone pale, through the light
Of the brighter, cold moon,
'Mid Planets her slaves,
Herself in the Heavens,
Her beam on the waves.
I gazed awhile
On her cold smile,
Too cold — too cold for me;
There passed, as a shroud,
A fleecy cloud,
And I turned away to thee,
Proud Evening Star,
In thy glory afar,
And dearer thy beam shall be;
For joy to my heart
Is the proud part
Thou bearest in Heaven at night,
And more I admire
Thy distant fire
Than that colder, lowly light.

Eulalie

I dwelt alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing
bride, —
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling
bride.

Ah, less — less bright
The stars of the night
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!
And never a flake
That the vapor can make
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded curl,
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most humble
and careless curl.

Now Doubt — now Pain
Come never again,
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh;
And all day long
Shines, bright and strong,
Astartè within the sky,
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye,—
While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

The Sleeper

At midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain-top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin moulders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All Beauty sleeps! — And Lo! where lies
(Her casement open to the skies)
Irene, with her Destinies!
Oh, lady bright! can it be right, —
This window open to the night? —
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop, —
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully — so fearfully —
Above the closed and fringed lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall!

Oh, lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor! strange thy dress!
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps. Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the pale sheeted ghosts go by.

My love, she sleeps! Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
(Soft may the worms about her creep!)
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold, —
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And wingéd panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls
Of her grand family funerals:
Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone, —
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within.

To ———

I saw thee on thy bridal day,
 When a burning blush came o'er thee,
Though happiness around thee lay,
 The world all love before thee;

And in thine eye a kindling light
 (Whatever it might be)
Was all on Earth my aching sight
 Of loveliness could see.

That blush, perhaps, was maiden shame:
 As such it well may pass,
Though its glow hath raised a fiercer flame
 In the breast of him, alas!

Who saw thee on that bridal day,
 When that deep blush *would* come o'er thee
Though happiness around thee lay,
 The world all love before thee.

The Valley of Unrest

Once it smiled a silent dell
Where the people did not dwell;
They had gone unto the wars,
Trusting to the mild-eyed stars,
Nightly, from their azure towers,
To keep watch above the flowers,
In the midst of which all day
The red sunlight lazily lay.
Now each visitor shall confess
The sad valley's restlessness.
Nothing there is motionless,
Nothing save the airs that brood
Over the magic solitude.
Ah, by no wind are stirred those trees
That palpitate like the chill seas
Around the misty Hebrides!
Ah, by no wind those clouds are driven
That rustle through the unquiet Heaven
Uneasily, from morn till even,
Over the violets there that lie
In myriad types of the human eye, —
Over the lilies there that wave
And weep above a nameless grave!
They wave: — from out their fragrant tops
Eternal dews come down in drops.
They weep: — from off their delicate stems
Perennial tears descend in gems.

The Conqueror Worm

Lo! 't is a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years!
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theatre, to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly, —
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their Condor wings
Invisible Woe!

That motley drama — oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot;
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see, amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude!
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And the Angels sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbrued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
And, over each quivering form,
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.

Dream-Land

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named Night,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have reached these lands but newly
From an ultimate dim Thule:
From a wild weird clime that lieth, sublime,
Out of Space — out of Time.

Bottomless vales and boundless floods,
And chasms and caves and Titan woods,
With forms that no man can discover
For the dews that drip all over;
Mountains toppling evermore
Into seas without a shore;
Seas that restlessly aspire,
Surging, unto skies of fire;
Lakes that endlessly outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead, —
Their still waters, still and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily.

By the lakes that thus outspread
Their lone waters, lone and dead, —
Their sad waters, sad and chilly
With the snows of the lolling lily;
By the mountains — near the river
Murmuring lowly, murmuring ever;
By the gray woods, by the swamp
Where the toad and newt encamp;

By the dismal tarns and pools
Where dwell the Ghouls;
By each spot the most unholy,
In each nook most melancholy, —
There the traveller meets aghast
Sheeted Memories of the Past:
Shrouded forms that start and sigh
As they pass the wanderer by,
White-robed forms of friends long given,
In agony, to the Earth — and Heaven.

For the heart whose woes are legion
'Tis a peaceful, soothing region;
For the spirit that walks in shadow
'Tis — oh, 'tis an Eldorado!
But the traveller, travelling through it,
May not — dare not openly view it;
Never its mysteries are exposed
To the weak human eye unclosed;
So wills its King, who hath forbid
The uplifting of the fringed lid;
And thus the sad Soul that here passes
Beholds it but through darkened glasses.

By a route obscure and lonely,
Haunted by ill angels only,
Where an Eidolon, named Night,
On a black throne reigns upright,
I have wandered home but newly
From this ultimate dim Thule.

Selections from Al Aaraaf

“ Neath blue-bell or streamer,
Or tufted wild spray
That keeps, from the dreamer,
The moonbeam away,
Bright beings! that ponder,
With half closing eyes,
On the stars which your wonder
Hath drawn from the skies,
Till they glance through the shade, and
Come down to your brow
Like — eyes of the maiden
Who calls on you now,—
Arise from your dreaming
In violet bowers
To duty beseeching
These star-litten hours!
And shake from your tresses,
Encumbered with dew,
The breath of those kisses
That cumber them too—
(Oh, how, without you, Love!
Could angels be blest?—)
Those kisses of true love
That lulled ye to rest!
Up! shake from your wing
Each hindering thing!
The dew of the night,
It would weigh down your flight;
And true love caresses,
Oh, leave them apart.
They are light on the tresses,
But lead on the heart.

"Ligeia! Ligeia!
My beautiful one!
Whose harshest idea
Will to melody run,
Oh, is it thy will
On the breezes to toss?
Or, capriciously still,
Like the lone Albatross,
Incumbent on night
(As she on the air)
To keep watch with delight
On the harmony there?"

"Legeia! wherever
Thy image may be,
No magic shall sever
Thy music from thee.
Thou hast bound many eyes
In a dreamy sleep,
But the strains still arise
Which thy vigilance keep:
The sound of the rain,
Which leaps down to the flower,
And dances again
In the rhythm of the shower;
The murmur that springs
From the growing of grass,
Are the music of things,
But are modelled, alas!
Away, then, my dearest,
Oh, hie thee away
To springs that lie clearest
Beneath the moon-ray,—

To lone lake that smiles,
 In its dream of deep rest,
At the many star-isles
 That enjewel its breast!
Where wild flowers, creeping,
 Have mingled their shade,
On its margin is sleeping
 Full many a maid;
Some have left the cool glade, and
 Have slept with the bee;
Arouse them, my maiden,
 On moorland and lea!
Go! breathe on their slumber,
 All softly in ear,
The musical number
 They slumbered to hear:
For what can awaken
 An angel so soon,
Whose sleep hath been taken
 Beneath the cold moon,
As the spell which no slumber
 Of witchery may test, —
The rhythmical number
 Which lulled him to rest?

What guilty spirit, in what shrubbery dim,
Heard not the stirring summons of that hymn?
But two; they fell; for Heaven no grace imparts
To those who hear not for their beating hearts
A maiden angel and her seraph-lover.
Oh, where (and ye may seek the wide skies over)
Was Love, the blind, near sober Duty known?
Unguided Love hath fallen 'mid "tears of perfect
 moan."

Spirits of the Dead

Thy soul shall find itself alone
'Mid dark thoughts of the gray tombstone;
Not one, of all the crowd, to pry
Into thine hour of secrecy.

Be silent in that solitude,
Which is not loneliness — for then
The spirits of the dead, who stood
In life before thee, are again
In death around thee, and their will
Shall overshadow thee; be still.

The night, though clear, shall frown,
And the stars shall look not down
From their high thrones in the Heaven
With light like hope to mortals given,
But their red orbs, without beam,
To thy weariness shall seem
As a burning and a fever
Which would cling to thee forever.
Now are thoughts thou shalt not banish,
Now are visions ne'er to vanish;
From thy spirit shall they pass
No more, like dewdrops from the grass.

The breeze, the breath of God, is still,
And the mist upon the hill
Shadowy, shadowy, yet unbroken,
Is a symbol and a token.
How it hangs upon the trees,
A mystery of mysteries!

The Bells

I

Hear the sledges with the bells,
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars, that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells,

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune.
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she glloats
On the moon!

Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
 How it swells!
 How it dwells
On the Future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
 Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells —
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III

Hear the loud alarum bells,
 Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
 Too much horrified to speak,
 They can only shriek, shriek,
 Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,
 Leaping higher, higher, higher,
 With a desperate desire,
 And a resolute endeavor
 Now—now to sit, or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
 Of Despair!

How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
 Yet the ear, it fully knows,
 By the twanging
 And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
 In the jangling
 And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells, —
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells,
 Of the bells,
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells —
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV

 Hear the tolling of the bells,
 Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody
 compels!
 In the silence of the night
 How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
 For every sound that floats
 From the rust within their throats
 Is a groan.
 And the people — ah, the people,
 They that dwell up in the steeple,
 All alone,

And who, tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone —
They are neither man nor woman,
They are neither brute nor human,
They are Ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan from the bells;
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells,
And he dances, and he yells:
Keeping time, time time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells,
Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells —
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells:
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

Bridal Ballad

The ring is on my hand,
And the wreath is on my brow;
Satins and jewels grand
Are all at my command,
And I am happy now.

And my lord he loves me well;
But, when first he breathed his vow,
I felt my bosom swell,
For the words rang as a knell,
And the voice seemed his who fell
In the battle down the dell,
And who is happy now.

But he spoke to reassure me,
And he kissed my pallid brow,
While a revery came o'er me,
And to the church-yard bore me,
And I sighed to him before me,
Thinking him dead D'Elormie,
"Oh, I am happy now!"

And thus the words were spoken,
And this the plighted vow;
And though my faith be broken,
And though my heart be broken,
Behold the golden token
That proves me happy now!

Would God I could awaken!
For I dream I know not how,
And my soul is sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be taken,
Lest the dead who is forsaken
May not be happy now.

For Annie

Thank Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last,
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

Sadly, I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length:
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

And I rest so composedly
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead,
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing
At heart:— ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing!
The sickness, the nausea,
The pitiless pain,
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain,
With the fever called "Living"
That burned in my brain.

And oh! of all tortures,
That torture the worst
Has abated — the terrible
Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst:
I have drunk of a water
That quenches all thirst:

Of a water that flows,
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground,
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground.

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy,
And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
In a different bed:
And, to sleep, you must slumber
In just such a bed.

My tantalized spirit
Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
Regretting, its roses:
Its old agitations
Of myrtles and roses;

For now, while so quietly
Lying, it fancies
A holier odor
About it, of pansies:
A rosemary odor,
Commingled with pansies,
With rue and the beautiful
Puritan pansies.

And so it lies happily,
Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
And the beauty of Annie,
Drowned in a bath
Of the tresses of Annie.

She tenderly kissed me,
She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
To sleep on her breast,
Deeply to sleep
From the heaven of her breast.

When the light was extinguished,
She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
To keep me from harm,
To the queen of the angels
To shield me from harm.

And I lie so composedly
Now, in my bed,
(Knowing her love)
That you fancy me dead;
And I rest so contentedly
Now, in my bed,
(With her love at my breast)
That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
Thinking me dead.

But my heart it is brighter
Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
For it sparkles with Annie:
It glows with the light
Of the love of my Annie,
With the thought of the light
Of the eyes of my Annie.

To One in Paradise

Thou wast that all to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!" but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
"No more—no more—no more—"
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy dark eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

Ulalume

The skies they were ashen and sober ;
The leaves they were crispèd and sere,
The leaves they were withering and sere ;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year ;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir :
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul —
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll,
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole,
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,
Our memories were treacherous and sere,
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year,
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!) ;
We noted not the dim lake of Auber
(Though once we had journeyed down here),
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn,
As the star-dials hinted of morn,
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous lustre was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn,
Astarte's bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.
And I said — "She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs,
She revels in a region of sighs:

She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion
To point us the path to the skies,
To the Lethean peace of the skies:
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes:
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said — "Sadly this star I mistrust,
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
Oh, hasten! — oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly! — let us fly! — for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her
Wings until they trailed in the dust;
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust,
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied — “This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its Sibyllic splendor is beaming
With Hope and in Beauty to-night:
See, it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright:
We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night.”

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom,
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb,
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said — “What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?”
She replied — “Ulalume — Ulalume —
'Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!”

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crispèd and sere,
As the leaves that were withering and sere.
And I cried — "It was surely October
On *this* very night of last year
That I journeyed — I journeyed down here,
That I brought a dread burden down here:
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber,
This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

■
To Science

A PROLOGUE TO "AL AARAAF"

Science! true daughter of Old Time thou art,
Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.
Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,
Vulture, whose wings are dull realities?
How should he love thee? or how deem thee wise,
Who wouldst not leave him in his wandering
To seek for treasure in the jeweled skies,
Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing?
Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car,
And driven the Hamadryad from the wood
To seek a shelter in some happier star?
Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,
The Elfin from the green grass, and from me
The summer dream beneath the tamarind-tree?

Eldorado

Gayly bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old,—
This knight so bold,
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow:
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

The Raven

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak
and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten
lore, —
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came
a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber
door.
“’Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber
door:

Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon
the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow; — vainly I had sought
to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost
Lenore,
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name
Lenore:

Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple
curtain
Thrilled me — filled me with fantastic terrors never felt
before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood
repeating

“ ’Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber
door,
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber
door :

This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no
longer,
“ Sir,” said I, “ or Madam, truly your forgiveness I im-
plore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came
rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber
door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you” — here I opened
wide the door :—

Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there
wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to
dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no
token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word,
“ Lenore !”
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word,
“ Lenore !”

Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me
burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than
before.

“Surely,” said I, “surely that is something at my window
lattice;

Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery
explore;

Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore:
’Tis the wind and nothing more.”

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt
and flutter,

In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of
yore.

Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped
or stayed he;

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my cham-
ber door,

Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber
door:

Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it
wore, —

“Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,” I said,
“art sure no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the
Nightly shore:

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night’s Plutonian
shore?”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse
so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning — little relevancy bore ;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber
door,
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his cham-
ber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke
only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did
outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered, not a feather then he
fluttered,
Till I scarcely more than muttered,— "Other friends
have flown before,—
On the morrow he will leave me, as my hopes have flown
before."
Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and
store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful
disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one
burden bore :
Till the dirges of his hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never — nevermore.' "

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and
bust and door;

Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of
yore,

What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous
bird of yore

Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable ex-
pressing

To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my
bosom's core;

This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease
reclining

On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated
o'er,

But whose velvet violet lining with the lamplight gloat-
ing o'er

She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an
unseen censer

Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted
floor.

"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee — by these
angels He hath sent thee

Respite — respite and nepenthe from thy memories of
Lenore!

Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost
Lenore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil! prophet still, if bird
or devil!

Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee
here ashore,

Desolate, yet all undaunted, on this desert land en-
chanted —

On this home by Horror haunted — tell me truly, I
implore:

Is there — is there balm in Gilead? — tell me — tell me,
I implore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil — prophet still, if bird
or devil!

By that Heaven that bends above us, by that God we
both adore,—

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant
Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name
Lenore:

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name
Lenore!”

Quoth the Raven, “Nevermore.”

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I
shrieked upstarting:

“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Pluton-
ian shore!

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI was born on the 12th of May, 1828, at No. 38 Charlotte Street, Portland Place, London. In blood he was three-fourths Italian, and only one-fourth English,—being on the father's side wholly Italian (Abruzzese), and on the mother's side half Italian (Truscan), and half English. The means of the family were always strictly moderate, and in 1843 Dante Gabriel left King's College School, where he had learned Latin, French, and a beginning of Greek; he then entered upon the study of the art of painting, to which he had from earliest childhood exhibited a very marked bent. After a while he was admitted to the school of the Royal Academy. In 1848 Rossetti co-operated with two of his fellow-students in painting—John Everett Millais and William Holman Hunt,—and with the sculptor Thomas Woolner, in forming the so-called Præraphæelite Brotherhood. In the spring of 1860 Rossetti married Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal. Their married life was of short duration as she died in the month of February, 1862.

"In 1850 the members of the Præraphæelite Brotherhood, with the co-operation of some friends, bought out a short lived magazine named '*The Germ*' (afterwards '*Art and Poetry*'). Here appeared the first prose published by Rossetti, including '*The Blessed Damozel*'.

Rossetti had contemplated bringing out in or about 1862, a volume of original poems; but in the grief and dismay which overwhelmed him in losing his wife, he determined to sacrifice to her memory this long-cherished project, and he buried in her coffin the manuscript which would have furnished forth this volume. With the lapse of years he came to see that as a final settlement of the matter this was neither obligatory nor desirable; so in 1869 the manuscripts were disinterred, and in 1870 his volume, named '*Poems*', was issued. For some considerable time this work was hailed with general and lofty praise, checkered only by moderate stricture or demur; but in 1871 Mr. Robert

Buchanan published under a pseudonym, in the *'Contemporary Review'*, a very hostile article named *'The Fleshly School of Poetry'*, attacking the poems on literary, and more especially, on moral grounds. The assault produced on Rossetti an effect altogether disproportionate to its intrinsic importance. Unfortunately there was in him already only too much of the morbid material on which this venom of detraction was to work.

"For some years the state of his eyesight had given very grave cause for apprehension, he himself fancying from time to time that the evil might end in absolute blindness. From this or other causes, insomnia had ensued, coped with by too free a use of chloral, which may have begun near the end of 1869. In the summer of 1872 he had a dangerous crisis of illness; and from that time forward, but more especially from the middle of 1874, he became secluded in his habits of life, and often depressed, fanciful, and gloomy. Not indeed that there were no intervals of serenity, even of brightness; for in fact he was often genial and pleasant, and a most agreeable companion, with as much *'bonhomie'* as acuteness for whiling an evening away.

To speak of Rossetti's poems, which perhaps appeal to a special and limited assembly, it is not astonishing to note that *'The Blessed Damsel'*,—with its visionary theme of imagery—was written at the age of eighteen; because the poem was the work of a painter, who detailed as minutely as did Dante and his contemporaries, the music of his verse.

"The second of his original volumes, *'Ballads and Sonnets'*, was published in the autumn of 1881. About the same time he retired to the Vale of St. John, near Keswick, Cumberland, for change of air and scene; but he returned to town shattered in health and mental tone. He died on Easter Sunday, April 9, 1882, and lies buried in the churchyard of Birchington."



The above short sketch, which is found in the American edition of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's works, is taken from an article published in London in 1886 by William M. Rossetti, and it is in this article that reference is made to the strong influence, the writings of Coleridge and Poe, had on the mind of Rossetti.

Sudden Light

I have been here before,
 But when or how I cannot tell:
I know the grass beyond the door,
 The sweet keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.
You have been mine before,—
 How long ago I may not know:
But just when at that swallow's soar
 Your neck turned so,
Some veil did fall,— I knew it all of yore.

Has this been thus before?
 And shall not thus time's eddying flight
Still with our lives our love restore
 In death's despite,
And day and night yield one delight once more?

The Blessed Damozel

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me — her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;—
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

∴ But in those tracts, with her, it was
The peace of utter light
And silence. For no breeze may stir
Along the steady flight
Of seraphim; no echo there,
Beyond all depth or height.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

(∴ This stanza is not in the later editions).

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now. The curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven? — on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

“We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

“We two will lie i’ the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

“And I myself will teach to him —
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.”

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say’st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

“We two,” she said, “will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies:—
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

“Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth, white like flame,
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-ropes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

“He shall fear, haply, and be dumb.
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak;
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak,

“Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

“There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love,—only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
Together, I and he.”

She gazed, and listened, and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild;
“All this is when he comes.” She ceased:
The light thrilled towards her, fill’d
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smil’d.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres;
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

■
The House of Life

LVIII. — TRUE WOMAN.

II.—Her Love.

She loves him; for her infinite soul is Love,
And he her lodestar. Passion in her is
A glass facing his fire, where the bright bliss
Is mirrored, and the heat returned. Yet mové
That glass, a stranger's amorous flame to prove,
And it shall turn, by instant contraries,
Ice to the moon; while her pure fire to his
For whom it burns, clings close i' the heart's alcove.

Lo! they are one. With wifely breast to breast
And circling arms, she welcomes all command
Of love, — her soul to answering ardours fann'd:
Yet as morn springs or twilight sinks to rest,
Ah! who shall say she deems not loveliest
The hour of sisterly sweet hand-in-hand?

John of Tours

(Old French.)

John of Tours is back with peace,
But he comes home ill at ease.

“Good-morrow, mother.” “Good-morrow, son;
Your wife has borne you a little one.”

“Go now, mother, go before,
Make me a bed upon the floor;

“Very low your foot must fall,
That my wife hear not at all.”

As it neared the midnight toll,
John of Tours gave up his soul.

“Tell me now, my mother my dear,
What’s the crying that I hear?”

“Daughter, it’s the children wake
Crying with their teeth that ache.”

“Tell me though, my mother my dear,
What’s the knocking that I hear?”

“Daughter, it’s the carpenter
Mending planks upon the stair.”

“Tell me too, my mother my dear,
What’s the singing that I hear?”

“Daughter, it’s the priests in rows
Going round about our house.”

“Tell me then, my mother my dear,
What’s the dress that I should wear?”

“Daughter, any reds or blues,
But the black is most in use.”

"Nay, but say, my mother my dear,
Why do you fall weeping here?"

"Oh! the truth must be said, —
It's that John of Tours is dead."

"Mother, let the sexton know
That the grave must be for two;

"Aye, and still have room to spare,
For you must shut the baby there."



Parted Presence

Love, I speak to your heart,
Your heart that is always here.
Oh draw me deep to its sphere,
Though you and I are apart;
And yield, by the spirit's art,
Each distant gift that is dear.
O love, my love, you are here!

Your eyes are afar to-day,
Yet, love, look now in mine eyes.
Two hearts sent forth may despise
All dead things by the way.
All between is decay,
Dead hours and this hour that dies,
O love, look deep in mine eyes!

Your hands to-day are not here,
Yet lay them, love, in my hands.
The hourglass sheds its sands
All day for the dead hours' bier;
But now, as two hearts draw near,
This hour like a flower expands.
O love, your hands in my hands!

Your voice is not on the air,
Yet, love, I can hear your voice:
It bids my heart to rejoice
As knowing your heart is there, —
A music sweet to declare
The truth of your steadfast choice.
O love, how sweet is your voice!

To-day your lips are afar,
Yet draw my lips to them, love.
Around, beneath, and above,
Is frost to bind and to bar;
But where I am and you are,
Desire and the fire thereof.
O kiss me, kiss me, my love!

Your heart is never away,
But ever with mine, for ever,
For ever without endeavor,
To-morrow, love, as to-day;
Two blent hearts never astray,
Two souls no power may sever,
Together, O my love, for ever!

The House of Life

XIV. YOUTH'S ANTIPHONY

"I love you, sweet: how can you ever learn
How much I love you?" "You I love even so,
And so I learn it." "Sweet, you cannot know
How fair you are." "If fair enough to earn
Your love, so much is all my love's concern."
"My love grows hourly, sweet." "Mine too doth grow,
Yet love seemed full so many hours ago!"

Thus lovers speak, till kisses claim their turn.
Ah! happy they to whom such words as these
In youth have served for speech the whole day long,
Hour after hour, remote from the world's throng,
Work, contest, fame, all life's confederate pleas,—
What while Love breathed in sighs and silences
Through two blent souls one rapturous undersong.

The Staff and Scrip

“Who rules these lands?” the Pilgrim said.
“Stranger, Queen Blanchelys.”
“And who has thus harried them?” he said.
“It was Duke Luke did this:
God’s ban be his!”

The Pilgrim said: “Where is your house?
I’ll rest there, with your will.”
“You’ve but to climb these blackened boughs
And you’ll see it over the hill,
For it burns still.”

“Which road, to seek your Queen?” said he.
“Nay, nay, but with some wound
You’ll fly back hither, it may be,
And by your blood i’ the ground
My place be found.”

“Friend, stay in peace. God keep your head,
And mine, where I will go;
For He is here and there,” he said.
He passed the hill-side, slow,
And stood below.

The Queen sat idle by her loom:
She heard the arras stir,
And looked up sadly: through the room
The ‘sweetness sickened her
Of musk and myrrh.

Her women, standing two and two,
In silence combed the fleece.
The Pilgrim said, "Peace be with you,
Lady;" and bent his knees.
She answered, "Peace."

Her eyes were like the wave within;
Like water-reeds the poise
Of her soft body, dainty thin;
And like the water's noise
Her plaintive voice.

For him, the stream had never well'd
In desert tracts malign
So sweet; nor had he ever felt
So faint in the sunshine
Of Palestine.

Right so; he knew that he saw weep
Each night through every dream
The Queen's own face, confused in sleep
With visages supreme
Not known to him.

"Lady," he said, "your lands lie burnt
And waste; to meet your foe
All fear: this I have seen and learnt.
Say that it shall be so,
And I will go."

She gazed at him. "Your cause is just,
For I have heard the same."
He said: "God's strength shall be my trust.
Fall it to good or grame,
'Tis in His name."

“Sir, you are thanked. My cause is dead
Why should you toil to break
A grave, and fall therein?” she said.
He did not pause but spake:
“For my vow’s sake.”

“Can such vows be, Sir — to God’s ear,
Not to God’s will?” “My vow
Remains: God heard me there as here,”
He said with reverent brow,
“Both then and now.”

They gazed together, he and she,
The minute while he spoke;
And when he ceased, she suddenly
Looked round upon her folk
As though she woke.

“Fight, Sir,” she said: “my prayers in pain
Shall be your fellowship.”
He whispered one among her train, —
“To-morrow bid her keep
This staff and scrip.”

She sent him a sharp sword, whose belt
About his body there
As sweet as her own arms he felt.
He kissed its blade, all bare,
Instead of her.

She sent him a green banner wrought
With one white lily stem,
To bind his lance with when he fought.
He writ upon the same
And kissed her name.

She sent him a white shield, whereon
She bade that he should trace
His will. He blent fair hues that shone,
And in a golden space
He kissed her face.

Born of the day that died, that eve
Now dying sank to rest;
As he, in likewise taking leave,
Once with a heaving breast
Looked to the west.

And there the sunset skies unseal'd,
Like lands he never knew,
Beyond to-morrow's battle-field
Lay open out of view
To ride into.

Next day till dark the women pray'd:
Nor any might know there
How the fight went: the Queen has bade
That there do come to her
No messenger.

The Queen is pale, her maidens ail;
And to the organ-tones
They sing but faintly, who sang well
The matin-orisons,
The lauds and nones.

Lo, Father, is thine ear inclin'd,
And hath thine angel pass'd?
For these thy watchers now are blind
With vigil, and at last
Dizzy with fast.

Weak now to them the voice o' the priest
As any trance affords;
And when each anthem failed and ceas'd,
It seemed that the last chords
Still sang the words.

"Oh what is the light that shines so red?
'Tis long since the sun set;"
Quoth the youngest to the eldest maid:
" 'Twas dim but now, and yet
The light is great."

Quoth the other: "'Tis our sight is dazed
That we see flame i' the air."
But the Queen held her brows and gazed,
And said, "It is the glare
Of torches there."

"Oh what are the sounds that rise and spread?
All day it was so still;"
Quoth the youngest to the eldest maid:
"Unto the furthest hill
The air they fill."

Quoth the other: "'Tis our sense is blurr'd
With all the chants gone by."
But the Queen held her breath and heard
And said, "It is the cry
Of Victory."

The first of all the rout was sound,
The next were dust and flame,
And then the horses shook the ground:
And in the thick of them
A still band came.

“Oh what do ye bring out of the fight,
Thus hid beneath these boughs?”
“Thy conquering guest returns to-night,
And yet shall not carouse,
Queen, in thy house.”

“Uncover ye his face,” she said.
“O changed in little space!”
She cried, “O pale that was so red!
O God, O God of grace!
Cover his face.”

His sword was broken in his hand
Where he had kissed the blade,
“O soft steel that could not withstand!
O my hard heart unstayed,
That prayed and prayed!”

His bloodied banner crossed his mouth
Where he had kissed her name.
“O east, and west, and north, and south,
Fair flew my web, for shame,
To guide Death’s aim!”

The tints were shredded from his shield
Where he had kissed her face.
“Oh, of all gifts that I could yield,
Death only keeps its place,
My gift and grace!”

Then stepped a damsel to her side,
And spoke, and needs must weep:
“For his sake, lady, if he died,
He prayed of thee to keep
This staff and scrip.”

That night they hung above her bed,
Till morning wet with tears.
Year after year above her head
Her bed his token wears,
Five years, ten years.

That night the passion of her grief
Shook them as there they hung.
Each year the wind that shed the leaf
Shook them and in its tongue
A message flung.

And once she woke with a clear mind
That letters writ to calm
Her soul lay in the scrip; to find
Only a torpid balm
And dust of palm.

They shook far off with palace sport
When joust and dance were rife;
And the hunt shook them from the court;
For hers, in peace or strife,
Was a Queen's life.

A Queen's death now; as now they shake
To gusts in chapel dim, —
Hung where she sleeps, not seen to wake
(Carved lovely white and slim),
With them by him.

Stand up to-day, still armed, with her,
Good knight, before His brow
Who then as now was here and there,
Who had in mind thy vow
Then even as now.

The lists are set in Heaven to-day,
The bright pavilions shine;
Fair hangs thy shield, and none gainsay;
The trumpets sound in sign
That she is thine.

Not tithed with days' and years' decease
He pays thy wage He owed,
But with imperishable peace
Here in his own abode,
Thy jealous God.



Translation from Francois Villon

(THE BALLAD OF DEAD LADIES)

Tell me now in what hidden way is
Lady Flora the lovely Roman?
Where's Hipparchia, and where is Thais,
Neither of them the fairer woman?
Where is Echo, beheld of no man,
Only heard on river and mere, —
She whose beauty was more than human?
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Where's Heloise, the learned nun,
For whose sake Abeillard, I ween,
Lost manhood and put priesthood on?
(From Love he won such dule and teen!)

And where, I pray you, is the Queen
Who willed that Buridan should steer
Sewed in a sack's mouth down the Seine? . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

White Queen Blanche, like a queen of lilies,
With a voice like any mermaid, —
Bertha Broadfoot, Beatrice, Alice,
And Ermengarde the lady of Maine, —
And that good Joan whom Englishmen
At Rouen doomed and burned her there, —
Mother of God, where are they then?
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Nay, never ask this week, fair lord,
Where they are gone, nor yet this year,
Except with this for an overword, —
But where are the snows of yester-year.



The Song of the Bower

Say, is it day, is it dusk in thy bower,
Thou whom I long for, who longest for me?
Oh! be it light, be it night, 'tis Love's hour,
Love's that is fettered as Love's that is free.
Free Love has leaped to that innermost chamber,
Oh! the last time, and the hundred before:
Fettered Love, motionless, can but remember,
Yet something that sighs from him passes the door.
Nay, but my heart when it flies to thy bower,
What does it find there that knows it again?

There it must droop like a shower-beaten flower,
Red at the rent core and dark with the rain.
Ah! yet what shelter is still shed above it, —
What waters still image its leaves torn apart?
Thy soul is the shade that clings round it to love it,
And tears are its mirror deep down in thy heart.

What were my prize, could I enter thy bower,
This day, to-morrow, at eve or at morn?
Large lovely arms and a neck like a tower,
Bosom then heaving that now lies forlorn.
Kindled with love-breath, (the sun's kiss is colder!)
Thy sweetness all near me, so distant to-day;
My hand round thy neck and thy hand on my shoulder,
My mouth to thy mouth as the world melts away.

What is it keeps me afar from thy bower, —
My spirit, my body, so fain to be there?
Waters engulfing or fires that devour? —
Earth heaped against me or death in the air?
Nay, but in day-dreams, for terror, for pity,
The trees wave their heads with an omen to tell;
Nay, but in night-dreams, throughout the dark city,
The hours, clashed together, lose count in the bell.

Shall I not one day remember thy bower,
One day when all days are one day to me? —
Thinking, "I stirred not, and yet had the power!" —
Yearning, "Ah God, if again it might be!"
Peace, peace! such a small lamp illumes, on this high-
way,
So dimly so few steps in front of my feet, —
Yet shows me that her way is parted from my way. . .
Out of sight, beyond light, at what goal may we
meet?

Even So

So it is, my dear.
All such things touch secret strings
For heavy hearts to hear.
So it is, my dear.

Very like indeed:
Sea and sky, afar, on high,
Sand and strewn seaweed,—
Very like indeed.

But the sea stands spread
As one wall with the flat skies,
Where the lean black craft like flies
Seem well-nigh stagnated,
Soon to drop off dead.

Seemed it so to us
When I was thine and thou wast mine,
And all these things were thus,
But all our world in us?

Could we be so now?
Not if all beneath heaven's pall
Lay dead but I and thou,
Could we be so now!

The White Ship

HENRY I. OF ENGLAND.—25TH NOVEMBER, 1120

By none but me can the tale be told,
The butcher of Rouen, poor Berold.
(Lands are swayed by a King on a throne.)

'T was a royal train put forth to sea,
Yet the tale can be told by none but me.
(The sea hath no King but God alone.)

King Henry held it as life's whole gain
That after his death his son should reign.

'T was so in my youth I heard men say,
And my old age calls it back to-day.

King Henry of England's realm was he,
And Henry Duke of Normandy.

The times had changed when on either coast
"Clerkly Harry" was all his boast.

Of ruthless strokes full many an one
He had struck to crown himself and his son;
And his elder brother's eyes were gone.

And when to the chase his court would crowd,
The poor flung ploughshares on his road,
And shrieked: "Our cry is from King to God!"

But all the chiefs of the English land
Had knelt and kissed the Prince's hand.

And next with his son he sailed to France
To claim the Norman allegiance:

And every Baron in Normandy
Had taken the oath of fealty.

'T was sworn and sealed, and the day had come
When the King and the Prince might journey home:

For Christmas cheer is to home hearts dear,
And Christmas now was drawing near.

Stout Fitz-Stephen came to the King, —
A pilot famous in seafaring;

And he held to the King, in all men's sight,
A mark of gold for his tribute's right.

"Liege Lord! my father guided the ship
From whose boat your father's foot did slip
When he caught the English soil in his grip,

"And cried: 'By this clasp I claim command
O'er every rood of English land!"

"He was borne to the realm you rule o'er now
In that ship with the archer carved at her prow:

"And thither I'll bear, an' it be my due,
Your father's son and his grandson too.

"The famed White Ship is mine in the bay;
From Harfleur's harbor she sails to-day,

"With masts fair-pennoned as Norman spears
And with fifty well-tried mariners."

Quoth the King: "My ships are chosen each one,
But I'll not say nay to Stephen's son.

“My son and daughter and fellowship
Shall cross the water in the White Ship.”

The King set sail with the eve's south wind,
And soon he left that coast behind.

The Prince and all his, a princely show,
Remained in the good White Ship to go.

With noble knights and with ladies fair,
With courtiers and sailors gathered there,
Three hundred living souls we were:

And I Berold was the meanest hind
In all that train to the Prince assign'd.

The Prince was a lawless shameless youth;
From his father's loins he sprang without ruth:

Eighteen years till then he had seen,
And the devil's dues in him were eighteen.

And now he cried: “Bring wine from below;
Let the sailors revel ere yet they row:

“Our speed shall o'ertake my father's flight
Though we sail from the harbor at midnight.”

The rowers made good cheer without check;
The lords and ladies obeyed his beck;
The night was light, and they danced on the deck.

But at midnight's stroke they cleared the bay,
And the White Ship furrowed the water-way.

The sails were set, and the oars kept tune
To the double flight of the ship and the moon:

Swifter and swifter the White Ship sped
Till she flew as the spirit flies from the dead:

As white as a lily glimmered she
Like a ship's fair ghost upon the sea.

And the Prince cried, "Friends, 't is the hour to sing!
Is a songbird's course so swift on the wing?"

And under the winter stars' still throng,
From brown throats, white throats, merry and strong,
The knights and the ladies raised a song.

A song, — nay, a shriek that rent the sky,
That leaped o'er the deep! — the grievous cry
Of three hundred living that now must die.

An instant shriek that sprang to the shock
As the ship's keel felt the sunken rock.

'T is said that afar — a shrill strange sigh —
The King's ships heard it and knew not why.

Pale Fitz-Stephen stood by the helm
'Mid all those folk that the waves must whelm.

A great King's heir for the waves to whelm,
And the helpless pilot pale at the helm!

The ship was eager and sucked athirst,
By the stealthy stab of the sharp reef pierc'd;

And like the moil round a sinking cup,
The waters against her crowded up.

A moment the pilot's senses spin, —
The next he snatched the Prince 'mid the din,
Cut the boat loose, and the youth leaped in.

A few friends leaped with him, standing near.
"Row! the sea's smooth and the night is clear!"

"What! none to be saved but these and I?"
"Row, row as you'd live! All here must die!"

Out of the churn of the choking ship,
Which the gulf grapples and the waves strip,
They struck with the strained oars' flash and dip.

'T was then o'er the splitting bulwarks' brim
The Prince's sister screamed to him.

He gazed aloft, still rowing apace,
And through the whirled surf he knew her face.

To the toppling decks clave one and all
As a fly cleaves to a chamber-wall.

I Berold was clinging anear;
I prayed for myself and quaked with fear,
But I saw his eyes as he looked at her.

He knew her face and he heard her cry,
And he said, "Put back! she must not die!"

And back with the current's force they reel
Like a leaf that's drawn to a water-wheel.

'Neath the ship's travail they scarce might float,
But he rose and stood in the rocking boat.

Low the poor ship leaned on the tide:
O'er the naked keel as she best might slide,
The sister toiled to the brother's side.

He reached an oar to her from below,
And stiffened his arms to clutch her so.

But now from the ship some spied the boat,
And "Saved!" was the cry from many a throat.

And down to the boat they leaped and fell:
It turned as a bucket turns in a well,
And nothing was there but the surge and swell.

The Prince that was and the King to come,
There in an instant gone to his doom,

Despite of all England's bended knee
And maugre the Norman fealty!

He was a Prince of lust and pride;
He showed no grace till the hour he died.

When he should be King, he oft would vow,
He'd yoke the peasant to his own plough.
O'er him the ships score their furrows now.

God only knows where his soul did wake,
But I saw him die for his sister's sake.

By none but me can the tale be told,
The butcher of Rouen, poor Berold.
(*Lands are swayed by a King on a throne.*)

'T was a royal train put forth to sea,
Yet the tale can be told by none but me.
(*The sea hath no King but God alone.*)

And now the end came o'er the waters' womb
Like the last great day that's yet to come.

With prayers in vain and curses in vain,
The White Ship sundered on the mid-main:

And what were men and what was a ship
Were toys and splinters in the sea's grip.

I Berold was down in the sea;
And passing strange though the thing may be,
Of dreams then known I remember me.

Blithe is the shout on Harfleur's strand
When morning lights the sails to land:

And blithe is Honfleur's echoing gloam
When mothers call the children home:

And high to the bells of Rouen beat
When the Body of Christ goes down the street.

These things and the like were heard and shown
In a moment's trance 'neath the sea alone;

And when I rose, 't was the sea did seem,
And not these things, to be all a dream.

The ship was gone and the crowd was gone,
And the deep shuddered and the moon shone,

And in a strait grasp my arms did span
The mainyard rent from the mast where it ran;
And on it with me was another man.

Where lands were none 'neath the dim sea-sky,
We told our names, that man and I.

“O I am Godefroy de l’Aigle hight,
And son I am to a belted knight.”

“And I am Berold the butcher’s son
Who slays the beasts in Rouen town.”

Then cried we upon God’s name, as we
Did drift on the bitter winter sea,

But lo! a third man rose o’er the wave,
And we said, “Thank God! us three may He save!”

He clutched to the yard with panting stare,
And we looked and knew Fitz-Stephen there.

He clung, and “What of the Prince?” quoth he.
“Lost, lost!” we cried. He cried, “Woe on me!”
And loosed his hold and sank through the sea.

And soul with soul again in that space
We two were together face to face:

And each knew each, as the moments sped,
Less for one living than for one dead;

And every still star overhead
Seemed an eye that knew we were but dead.

And the hours passed; till the noble’s son
Sighed, “God be thy help! my strength’s foredone!”

“O farewell, friend, for I can no more!”
“Christ take thee!” I moaned; and his life was o’er.

Three hundred souls were all lost but one,
And I drifted over the sea alone.

At last the morning rose on the sea
Like an angel's wing that beat tow'rds me.

Sore numbed I was in my sheepskin coat;
Half dead I hung, and might nothing note,
Till I woke sun-warmed in a fisher-boat.

The sun was high o'er the eastern brim
As I praised God and gave thanks to Him.

That day I told my tale to a priest,
Who charged me, till the shrift were releas'd,
That I should keep it in mine own breast.

And with the priest I thence did fare
To King Henry's court at Winchester.

We spoke with the King's high chamberlain,
And he wept and mourned again and again,
As if his own son had been slain:

And round us ever there crowded fast
Great men with faces all aghast:

And who so bold that might tell the thing
Which now they knew to their lord the King?
Much woe I learnt in their communing.

The King had watched with a heart sore stirred
For two whole days, and this was the third:

And still to all his court would he say,
"What keeps my son so long away?"

And they said: "The ports lie far and wide
That skirt the swell of the English tide:

"And England's cliffs are not more white
Than her women are, and scarce so light
Her skies as their eyes are blue and bright;

"And in some port that he reached from France
The Prince has lingered for his pleasure."

But once the King asked: "What distant cry
Was that we heard 'twixt the sea and sky?"

And one said: "With suchlike shouts, pardie!
Do the fishers fling their nets at sea."

And one: "Who knows not the shrieking quest
When the sea-mew misses its young from the nest?"

'T was thus till now they had soothed his dread,
Albeit they knew not what they said:

But who should speak to-day of the thing
That all knew there except the King?

Then pondering much they found a way,
And met round the King's high seat that day:

And the King sat with a heart sore stirred,
And seldom he spoke and seldom heard.

'T was then through the hall the King was 'ware
Of a little boy with golden hair,

As bright as the golden poppy is
That the beach breeds for the surf to kiss:

Yet pale his cheek as the thorn in Spring,
And his garb black like the raven's wing.

Nothing heard but his foot through the hall,
For now the lords were silent all.

And the king wondered, and said, "Alack!
Who sends me a fair boy dressed in black?"

"Why, sweet heart, do you pace through the hall
As though my court were a funeral?"

Then lowly knelt the child at the dais,
And looked up weeping in the King's face.

"O wherefore black, O King, ye may say,
For white is the hue of death to-day.

"Your son and all his fellowship
Lie low in the sea with the White Ship."

King Henry fell as a man struck dead;
And speechless still he stared from his bed
When to him next day my rede I read.

There's many an hour must needs beguile
A King's high heart that he should smile, —

Full many a lordly hour, full fain
Of his realm's rule and pride of his reign: —

But this King never smiled again.

By none but me can the tale be told,
The butcher of Rouen, poor Berold.
(*Lands are swayed by a King on a throne.*)

'T was a royal train put forth to sea,
Yet the tale can be told by none but me.
(*The sea hath no King but God alone.*)

The King's Tragedy

JAMES I. OF SCOTS. — 20TH FEBRUARY, 1437.

A few stanzas from King James's lovely poem, known as "The King's Quhair," are quoted in the course of this ballad. The writer must express regret for the necessity which has compelled him to shorten the ten-syllabled lines to eight syllables, in order that they might harmonize with the ballad metre.

I Catherine am a Douglas born,
A name to all Scots dear;
And Kate Barlass . . . they've called me now
Through many a waning year.

This old arm's withered now. 'T was once
Most deft 'mong maidens all
To rein the steed, to wing the shaft,
To smite the palm-play ball.

In hall adown the close-linked dance
It has shone most white and fair;
It has been the rest for a true lord's head,
And many a sweet babe's nursing-bed,
And the bar to a King's chambère.

Aye, lasses, draw round Kate Barlass,
And hark with bated breath
How good King James, King Robert's son,
Was foully done to death.

. . . Tradition says that Catherine Douglas, in honor of her heroic act when she barred the door with her arm against the murderers of James the First of Scots, received popularly the name of "Barlass." This name remains to her descendants, the Barlas family, in Scotland, who bear for their crest a broken arm. She married Alexander Lovell of Bolunnie.

Through all the days of his gallant youth
The princely James was pent,
By his friends at first and then by his foes,
In long imprisonment.

For the elder Prince, the kingdom's heir,
By treason's murderous brood
Was slain: and the father quaked for the child
With the royal mortal blood.

I' the Bass Rock fort, by his father's care,
Was his childhood's life assured;
And Henry the subtle Bolingbroke,
Proud England's King, 'neath the southron yoke
His youth for long years immured.

Yet in all things meet for a kingly man
Himself did he approve;
And the nightingale through his prison-wall
Taught him both lore and love.

For once, when the bird's song drew him close
To the opened window-pane,
In her bower beneath a lady stood,
A light of life to his sorrowful mood,
Like a lily amid the rain.

And for her sake, to the sweet bird's note,
He framed a sweeter Song,
More sweet than ever a poet's heart
Gave yet to the English tongue.

She was a lady of royal blood;
And when, past sorrow and teen,
He stood where still through his crownless years
His Scottish realm had been,
At Scone were the happy lovers crowned,
A heart-wed King and Queen.

But the bird may fall from the bough of youth,
And song be turned to moan,
And Love's storm-cloud be the shadow of Hate,
When the tempest-waves of a troubled State
Are beating against a throne.

Yet well they loved; and the god of Love,
Whom well the King had sung,
Might find on the earth no truer hearts
His lowliest swains among.

From the days when first she rode abroad
With Scottish maids in her train,
I Catherine Douglas won the trust
Of my mistress sweet Queen Jane.

And oft she sighed, "To be born a King!"
And oft along the way
When she saw the homely lovers pass
She has said, "Alack the day!"

Years waned,—the loving and toiling years:
Till England's wrong renewed
Drove James, by outrage cast on his crown,
To the open field of feud.

'T was when the King and his host were met
At the leaguer of Roxbro' hold,
The Queen o' the sudden sought his camp
With a tale of dread to be told.

And she showed him a secret letter writ
That spoke of treasonous strife,
And how a band of his noblest lords
Were sworn to take his life.

"And it may be here or it may be there,
In the camp or the court," she said:
"But for my sake come to your people's arms
And guard your royal head."

Quoth he, "'T is the fifteenth day of the siege,
And the castle's nigh to yield."
"O face your foes on your throne," she cried,
"And show the power you wield;
And under your Scottish people's love
You shall sit as under your shield."

At the fair Queen's side I stood that day
When he bade them raise the siege,
And back to his Court he sped to know
How the lords would meet their Liege.

But when he summoned his Parliament,
The louring brows hung round,
Like clouds that circle the mountain-head
Ere the first low thunders sound.

For he had tamed the nobles' lust
And curbed their power and pride,
And reached out an arm to right the poor
Through Scotland far and wide;
And many a lordly wrong-doer
By the headsman's axe had died.

'T was then upspoke Sir Robert Græme,
The bold o'ermastering man:—
"O King, in the name of your Three Estates
I set you under their ban!

"For, as your lords made oath to you
Of service and fealty,
Even in like wise you pledged your oath
Their faithful sire to be:—

"Yet all we here that are nobly sprung
Have mourned dear kith and kin
Since first for the Scottish Baron's curse
Did your bloody rule begin."

With that he laid his hands on his King:—
"Is this not so, my lords?"
But of all who had sworn to league with him
Not one spake back to his words.

Quoth the King:—"Thou speak'st but for one
Estate,
Nor doth it avow thy gage.
Let my liege lords hale this traitor hence!"
The Græme fired dark with rage:—
"Who works for lesser men than himself,
He earns but a witless wage!"

But soon from the dungeon where he lay
He won by privy plots,
And forth he fled with a price on his head
To the country of the Wild Scots.

And word there came from Sir Robert Græme
To the King at Edinbro':—
"No Liege of mine thou art; but I see
From this day forth alone in thee
God's creature, my mortal foe.

"Through thee are my wife and children lost,
My heritage and lands;
And when my God shall show me a way,
Thyself my mortal foe will I slay
With these my proper hands."

Against the coming of Christmastide
That year the King bade call
I' the Black Friar's Charterhouse of Perth
A solemn festival.

And we of his household rode with him
In a close-ranked company;
But not till the sun had sunk from his throne
Did we reach the Scottish Sea.

That eve was clenched for a boding storm,
'Neath a toilsome moon half seen;
The cloud stooped low and the surf rose high;
And where there was a line of the sky,
Wild wings loomed dark between.

And on a rock of the black beach-side,
By the veiled moon dimly lit,
There was something seemed to heave with life
As the King drew nigh to it.

And was it only the tossing furze
Or brake of the waste sea-wold?
Or was it an eagle bent to the blast?
When near we came, we knew it at last
For a woman tattered and old.

But it seemed as though by a fire within
Her writhen limbs were wrung;
And as soon as the King was close to her,
She stood up gaunt and strong.

'T was then the moon sailed clear of the rack
On high in her hollow dome;
And still as aloft with hoary crest
Each clamorous wave rang home,
Like fire in snow the moonlight blazed
Amid the champing foam.

And the woman held his eyes with her eyes:—
“O King, thou art come at last;
But thy wraith has haunted the Scottish Sea
To my sight for four years past.

“Four years it is since first I met,
'Twixt the Duchray and the Dhu,
A shape whose feet clung close in a shroud,
And that shape for thine I knew.

“A year again, and on Inchkeith Isle
I saw thee pass in the breeze,
With the cerecloth risen above thy feet
And wound about thy knees.

“And yet a year, in the Links of Forth,
As a wanderer without rest,
Thou can’st with both thine arms i’ the shroud
That clung high up thy breast.

“And in this hour I find thee here,
And well mine eyes may note
That the winding-sheet hath passed thy breast
And risen around thy throat.

“And when I meet thee again, O King,
That of death hast such sore drouth, —
Except thou turn again on this shore, —
The winding-sheet shall have moved once more
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

“O King, whom poor men bless for their King,
Of thy fate be not so fain;
But these my words for God’s message take,
And turn thy steed, O King, for her sake
Who rides beside thy rein!”

While the woman spoke, the King’s horse reared
As if it would breast the sea,
And the Queen turned pale as she heard on the gale
The voice die dolorously.

When the woman ceased, the steed was still,
But the King gazed on her yet,
And in silence save for the wail of the sea
His eyes and her eyes met.

At last he said:—“God’s ways are His own;
Man is but shadow and dust.
Last night I prayed by His altar-stone;
To-night I wend to the Feast of His Son;
And in Him I set my trust.

“I have held my people in sacred charge,
And have not feared the sting
Of proud men’s hate,—to His will resign’d
Who has but one same death for a hind
And one same death for a King.

“And if God in His wisdom have brought close
The day when I must die,
That day by water or fire or air
My feet shall fall in the destined snare
Wherever my road may lie.

“What man can say but the Fiend hath set
Thy sorcery on my path,
My heart with the fear of death to fill,
And turn me against God’s very will
To sink in His burning wrath?”

The woman stood as the train rode past,
And moved nor limb nor eye;
And when we were shipped, we saw her there
Still standing against the sky.

As the ship made way, the moon once more
Sank slow in her rising pall;
And I thought of the shrouded wraith of the King,
And I said, "The Heavens know all."

And now, ye lasses, must ye hear
How my name is Kate Barlass:—
But a little thing, when all the tale
Is told of the weary mass
Of crime and woe which in Scotland's realm
God's will let come to pass.

'T was in the Charterhouse of Perth
That the King and all his Court
Were met, the Christmas Feast being done,
For solace and disport.

'T was a wind-wild eve in February,
And against the casement-pane
The branches smote like summoning hands
And muttered the driving rain.

And when the wind swooped over the lift
And made the whole heaven frown,
It seemed a grip was laid on the walls
To tug the housetop down.

And the Queen was there, more stately fair
Than a lily in garden set;
And the King was loth to stir from her side;
For as on the day when she was his bride,
Even so he loved her yet.

And the Earl of Athole, the King's false friend,
Sat with him at the board;
And Robert Stuart the chamberlain
Who had sold his sovereign Lord.

Yet the traitor Christopher Chaumber there
Would fain have told him all,
And vainly four times that night he strove
To reach the King through the hall.

But the wine is bright at the goblet's brim
Though the poison lurk beneath;
And the apples still are red on the tree
Within whose shade may the adder be
That shall turn thy life to death.

There was a knight of the King's fast friends
Whom he called the King of Love;
And to such bright cheer and courtesy
That name might best behave.

And the King and Queen both loved him well
For his gentle knightliness;
And with him the King, as that eve wore on,
Was playing at the chess.

And the King said, (for he thought to jest
And soothe the Queen thereby;) —
"In a book 't is writ that this same year
A King shall in Scotland die.

“And I have pondered the matter o’er,
And this have I found, Sir Hugh,—
There are but two Kings on Scottish ground,
And those Kings are I and you.

“And I have a wife and a new-born heir,
And you are yourself alone;
So stand you stark at my side with me
To guard our double throne.

“For here sit I and my wife and child,
As well your heart shall approve,
In full surrender and soothfastness,
Beneath your Kingdom of Love.”

And the Knight laughed, and the Queen too smiled;
But I knew her heavy thought,
And I strove to find in the good King’s jest
What cheer might thence be wrought.

And I said, “My Liege, for the Queen’s dear love
Now sing the song that of old
You made, when a captive Prince you lay,
And the nightingale sang sweet on the spray,
In Windsor’s castle-hold.”

Then he smiled the smile I knew so well
When he thought to please the Queen;
The smile which under all bitter frowns
Of hate that rose between,
For ever dwelt at the poet’s heart
Like the bird of love unseen.

And he kissed her hand and took his harp,
And the music sweetly rang;
And when the song burst forth, it seemed
'T was the nightingale that sang.

*"Worship, ye lovers, on this May:
Of bliss your kalends are begun:
Sing with us, Away, Winter, away!
Come, Summer, the sweet season and sun!
Awake for shame, — your heaven is won, —
And amorously your heads lift all:
Thank Love, that you to his grace doth call!"*

But when he bent to the Queen, and sang
The speech whose praise was hers,
It seemed his voice was the voice of the Spring
And the voice of the bygone years.

*"The fairest and the freshest flower
That ever I saw before that hour,
The which o' the sudden made to start
The blood of my body to my heart.*

* * * * *

*Ah sweet, are ye a worldly creature
Or heavenly thing in form of nature?"*

And the song was long, and richly stored
With wonder and beauteous things;
And the harp was tuned to every change
Of minstrel ministerings;
But when he spoke of the Queen at the last,
Its strings were his own heart-strings.

*“Unworthy but only of her grace,
Upon Love’s rock that’s easy and sure,
In guerdon of all my lovè’s space
She took me her humble creature.
Thus fell my blissful aventure
In youth of love that from day to day
Flowereth aye new, and further I say.*

*“To reckon all the circumstance
As it happed when lessen gan my sore,
Of my rancor and woful chance,
It were too long, — I have done therefor.
And of this flower I say no more
But unto my help her heart hath tended
And even from death her man defended.”*

*“Aye, even from death,” to myself I said;
For I thought of the day when she
Had borne him the news, at Roxbro’ siege,
Of the fell confederacy.*

*But Death even then took aim as he sang
With an arrow deadly bright;
And the grinning skull lurked grimly aloof,
And the wings were spread far over the roof
More dark than the winter night.*

*Yet truly along the amorous song
Of Love’s high pomp and state,
There were words of Fortune’s trackless doom
And the dreadful face of Fate.*

And oft have I heard again in dreams
The voice of dire appeal
In which the King then sang of the pit
That is under Fortune's wheel.

*"And under the wheel beheld I there
An ugly Pit as deep as hell,
That to behold I quaked for fear:
And this I heard, that who therein fell
Came no more up, tidings to tell:
Whereat, astound of the fearful sight,
I wist not what to do for fright."*

And oft has my thought called up again
These words of the changeful song:—
*"Wist thou thy pain and thy travail
To come, well might'st thou weep and wail!"*
And our wail, O God! is long.

But the song's end was all of his love;
And well his heart was grac'd
With her smiling lips and her tear-bright eyes
As his arm went round her waist.

And on the swell of her long fair throat
Close clung the necklet-chain
As he bent her pearl-tir'd head aside,
And in the warmth of his love and pride
He kissed her lips full fain.

And her true face was rosy red,
The very red of the rose
That, couched on the happy garden-bed
In the summer sunlight glows.

And all the wondrous things of love
That sang so sweet through the song
Were in the look that met in their eyes,
And the look was deep and long.

'T was then a knock came at the outer gate,
And the usher sought the King.
"The woman you met by the Scottish Sea,
My Liege, would tell you a thing;
And she says that her present need for speech
Will bear no gainsaying."

And the King said: "The hour is late;
To-morrow will serve, I ween."
Then he charged the usher strictly, and said:
"No word of this to the Queen."

But the usher came again to the King.
"Shall I call her back?" quoth he:
"For as she went on her way she cried,
'Woe! Woe! then the thing must be!'"

And the King paused, but he did not speak.
Then he called for the Voidee-cup:
And as we heard the twelfth hour strike,
There by true lips and false lips alike
Was the draught of trust drained up.

So with reverence meet to King and Queen,
To bed went all from the board;
And the last to leave of the courtly train
Was Robert Stuart the chamberlain
Who had sold his sovereign lord.

And all the locks of the chamber-door
Had the traitor riven and brast;
And that Fate might win sure way from afar,
He had drawn out every bolt and bar
That made the entrance fast.

And now at midnight he stole his way
To the moat of the outer wall,
And laid strong hurdles closely across
Where the traitor's tread should fall.

But we that were the Queen's bower-maids
Alone were left behind;
And with heed we drew the curtains close
Against the winter wind.

And now that all was still through the hall,
More clearly we heard the rain
That clamored ever against the glass
And the boughs that beat on the pane.

But the fire was bright in the ingle-nook,
And through empty space around
The shadows cast on the arras'd wall
'Mid the pictured kings stood sudden and tall
Like spectres sprung from the ground.

And the bed was dight in a deep alcove;
And as he stood by the fire
The King was still in talk with the Queen
While he doffed his goodly attire.

And the song had brought the image back
Of many a bygone year;
And many a loving word they said
With hand in hand and head laid to head;
And none of us went anear.

But Love was weeping outside the house,
A child in the piteous rain;
And as he watched the arrow of Death,
He wailed for his own shafts close in the sheath
That never should fly again.

And now beneath the window arose
A wild voice suddenly:
And the King reared straight, but the Queen fell
back
As for bitter dule to dree;
And all of us knew the woman's voice
Who spoke by the Scottish Sea.

"O King," she cried, "in an evil hour
They drove me from thy gate;
And yet my voice must rise to thine ears;
But alas! it comes too late!

“Last night at mid-watch, by Aberdour,
When the moon was dead in the skies,
O King, in a death-light of thine own
I saw thy shape arise.

“And in full season, as erst I said,
The doom had gained its growth;
And the shroud had risen above thy neck
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

“And no moon woke, but the pale dawn broke,
And still thy soul stood there;
And I thought its silence cried to my soul
As the first rays crowned its hair.

“Since then have I journeyed fast and fain
In very despite of Fate,
Lest Hope might still be found in God's will:
But they drove me from thy gate.

“For every man on God's ground, O King,
His death grows up from his birth
In a shadow-plant perpetually;
And thine towers high, a black yew-tree,
O'er the Charterhouse of Perth!”

That room was built far out from the house;
And none but we in the room
Might hear the voice that rose beneath,
Nor the tread of the coming doom.

For now there came a torchlight-glare,
And a clang of arms there came;
And not a soul in that space but thought
Of the foe Sir Robert Græme.

Yea, from the country of the Wild Scots,
O'er mountain, valley, and glen,
He had brought with him in murderous league
Three hundred armèd men.

The King knew all in an instant's flash,
And like a King did he stand;
But there was no armor in all the room,
Nor weapon lay to his hand.

And all we women flew to the door
And thought to have made it fast;
But the bolts were gone and the bars were gone
And the locks were riven and brast.

And he caught the pale, pale Queen in his arms
As the iron footsteps fell,—
Then loosed her, standing alone, and said,
“Our bliss was our farewell!”

And 'twixt his lips he murmured a prayer,
And he crossed his brow and breast;
And proudly in royal hardihood
Even so with folded arms he stood,—
The price of the bloody quest.

Then on me leaped the Queen like a deer: —
 “O Catherine, help!” she cried.
And low at his feet we clasped his knees
 Together side by side.
“Oh! even a King, for his people’s sake,
 From treasonous death must hide!”

“For *her* sake most!” I cried, and I marked
 The pang that my words could wring.
And the iron tongs from the chimney-nook
 I snatched and held to the King: —
“Wrench up the plank! and the vault beneath
 Shall yield safe harboring.”

With brows low-bent, from my eager hand
 The heavy heft did he take;
And the plank at his feet he wrenched and tore;
And as he frowned through the open floor,
 Again I said, “For her sake!”

The he cried to the Queen, “God’s will be done!”
For her hands were clasped in prayer.
And down he sprang to the inner crypt;
And straight we closed the plank he had ripp’d
 And toiled to smoothe it fair.

(Alas! in that vault a gap once was
 Wherethro’ the King might have fled:
But three days since close-walled had it been
By his will; for the ball would roll therein
 When without at the palm he play’d.)

Then the Queen cried, "Catherine, keep the door,
And I to this will suffice!"
At her word I rose all dazed to my feet,
And my heart was fire and ice.

And louder ever the voices grew,
And the tramp of men in mail;
Until to my brain it seemed to be
As though I tossed on a ship at sea
In the teeth of a crashing gale.

Then back I flew to the rest; and hard
We strove with sinews knit
To force the table against the door;
But we might not compass it.

Then my wild gaze sped far down the hall
To the place of the hearthstone-sill;
And the Queen bent ever above the floor,
For the plank was rising still.

And now the rush was heard on the stair,
And "God, what help?" was our cry.
And was I frenzied or was I bold?
I looked at each empty stanchion-hold,
And no bar but my arm had I!

Like iron felt my arm, as through
The staple I made it pass: —
Alack! it was flesh and bone — no more!
'T was Catherine Douglas sprang to the door,
But I fell back Kate Barlass.

With that they all thronged into the hall,
Half dim to my failing ken;
And the space that was but a void before
Was a crowd of wrathful men.

Behind the door I had fall'n and lay,
Yet my sense was wildly aware,
And for all the pain of my shattered arm
I never fainted there.

Even as I fell, my eyes were cast
Where the King leaped down to the pit;
And lo! the plank was smooth in its place,
And the Queen stood far from it.

And under the litters and through the bed
And within the presses all
The traitors sought for the King, and pierced
The arras around the wall.

And through the chamber they ramped and stormed
Like lions loose in the lair,
And scarce could trust to their very eyes, —
For behold! no King was there.

Then one of them seized the Queen, and cried, —
“Now tell us, where is thy lord?”
And he held the sharp point over her heart:
She drooped not her eyes nor did she start,
But she answered never a word.

Then the sword half pierced the true, true breast:
But it was the Græme's own son
Cried, "This is a woman, — we seek a man!"
And away from her girdle zone
He struck the point of the murderous steel;
And that foul deed was not done.

And forth flowed all the throng like a sea,
And 't was empty space once more;
And my eyes sought out the wounded Queen
As I lay behind the door.

And I said: "Dear Lady, leave me here,
For I cannot help you now;
But fly while you may, and none shall reck
Of my place here lying low."

And she said, "My Catherine, God help thee!"
Then she looked to the distant floor,
And clasping her hands, "O God help *him*,"
She sobbed, "for we can no more!"

But God He knows what help may mean,
If it mean to live or to die;
And what sore sorrow and mighty moan
On earth it may cost ere yet a throne
Be filled in His house on high.

And now the ladies fled with the Queen;
And through the open door
The night-wind wailed round the empty room
And the rushes shook on the floor.

And the bed drooped low in the dark recess
Whence the arras was rent away;
And the firelight still shone over the space
Where our hidden secret lay.

And the rain had ceased, and the moonbeams lit
The window high in the wall, —
Bright beams that on the plank that I knew
Through the painted pane did fall
And gleamed with the splendor of Scotland's crown
And shield armorial.

But then a great wind swept up the skies,
And the climbing moon fell back;
And the royal blazon fled from the floor,
And nought remained on its track;
And high in the darkened window-pane
The shield and the crown were black.

And what I say next I partly saw
And partly I heard in sooth,
And partly since from the murderers' lips
The torture wrung the truth.

For now again came the armèd tread,
And fast through the hall it fell;
But the throng was less; and ere I saw,
By the voice without I could tell
That Robert Stuart had come with them
Who knew that chamber well.

And over the space the Græme strode dark
With his mantle round him flung;
And in his eye was a flaming light
But not a word on his tongue.

And Stuart held a torch to the floor,
And he found the thing he sought;
And they slashed the plank away with their swords;
And O God! I fainted not!

And the traitor held his torch in the gap,
All smoking and smouldering;
And through the vapor and fire, beneath
In the dark crypt's narrow ring,
With a shout that pealed to the room's high roof
They saw their naked King.

Half naked he stood, but stood as one
Who yet could do and dare:
With the crown, the King was stript away, —
The Knight was reft of his battle-array, —
But still the Man was there.

From the rout then stepped a villain forth, —
Sir John Hall was his name;
With a knife unsheathed he leapt to the vault
Beneath the torchlight-flame.

Of his person and stature was the King
A man right manly strong,
And mightily by the shoulder-blades
His foe to his feet he flung.

Then the traitor's brother, Sir Thomas Hall,
Sprang down to work his worst;
And the King caught the second man by the neck
And flung him above the first.

And he smote and trampled them under him;
And a long month thence they bare
All black their throats with the grip of his hands.
When the hangman's hand came there.

And sore he strove to have had their knives,
But the sharp blades gashed his hands.
Oh James! so armed, thou hadst battled there
Till help had come of thy bands;
And oh! once more thou hadst held our throne
And ruled thy Scottish lands!

But while the King o'er his foes still raged
With a heart that nought could tame,
Another man sprang down to the crypt;
And with his sword in his hand hard gripp'd,
There stood Sir Robert Graeme.

(Now shame on the recreant traitor's heart
Who durst not face his King
Till the body unarmed was wearied out
With two-fold combating!

Ah! well might the people sing and say,
As oft ye have heard aright:—
"O Robert Graeme, O Robert Graeme,
Who slew our King, God give thee shame!"
For he slew him not as a knight.)

And the naked King turned round at bay,
But his strength had passed the goal,
And he could but gasp: — "Mine hour is come;
But oh! to succor thine own soul's doom,
Let a priest now shrive my soul!"

And the traitor looked on the King's spent strength,
And said: — "Have I kept my word? —
Yea, King, the mortal pledge that I gave?
No black friar's shrift thy soul shall have,
But the shrift of this red sword!"

With that he smote his King through the breast;
And all they three in that pen
Fell on him and stabbed and stabbed him there
Like merciless murderous men.

Yet seemed it now that Sir Robert Græme,
Ere the King's last breath was o'er,
Turned sick at heart with the deadly sight
And would have done no more.

But a cry came from the troop above: —
"If him thou do not slay,
The price of his life that thou dost spare
Thy forfeit life shall pay!"

O God! what more did I hear or see,
Or how should I tell the rest?
But there at length our King lay slain
With sixteen wounds in his breast.

O God! and now did a bell boom forth,
And the murderers turned and fled; —
Too late, too late, O God, did it sound! —
And I heard the true men mustering round,
And the cries and the coming tread.

But ere they came, to the black death-gap
Somewise did I creep and steal;
And lo! or ever I swooned away,
Through the dusk I saw where the white face lay
In the Pit of Fortune's Wheel.

And now, ye Scottish maids who have heard
Dread things of the days grown old, —
Even at the last, of true Queen Jane
May somewhat yet be told,
And how she dealt for her dear lord's sake
Dire vengeance manifold.

'T was in the Charterhouse of Perth,
In the fair-lit Death-chapelle,
That the slain King's corpse on bier was laid
With chaunt and requiem-knell.

And all with royal wealth of balm
Was the body purified;
And none could trace on the brow and lips
The death that he had died.

In his robes of state he lay asleep
With orb and sceptre in hand;
And by the crown he wore on his throne
Was his kingly forehead spann'd.

And, girls, 't was a sweet sad thing to see
How the curling golden hair,
As in the day of the poet's youth,
From the King's crown clustered there.

And if all had come to pass in the brain
That throbbed beneath those curls,
Then Scots had said in the days to come
That this their soil was a different home
And a different Scotland, girls!

And the Queen sat by him night and day,
And oft she knelt in prayer,
All wan and pale in the widow's veil
That shrouded her shining hair.

And I had got good help of my hurt:
And only to me some sign
She made; and save the priests that were there
No face would she see but mine.

And the month of March wore on apace;
And now fresh couriers fared
Still from the country of the Wild Scots
With news of the traitors snared.

And still as I told her day by day,
Her pallor changed to sight,
And the frost grew to a furnace-flame
That burnt her visage white.

And evermore as I brought her word,
She bent to her dead King James,
And in the cold ear with fire-drawn breath
She spoke the traitors' names.

But when the name of Sir Robert Græme
Was the one she had to give,
I ran to hold her up from the floor;
For the froth was on her lips, and sore
I feared that she could not live.

And the month of March wore nigh to its end,
And still was the death-pall spread;
For she would not bury her slaughtered lord
Till his slayers all were dead.

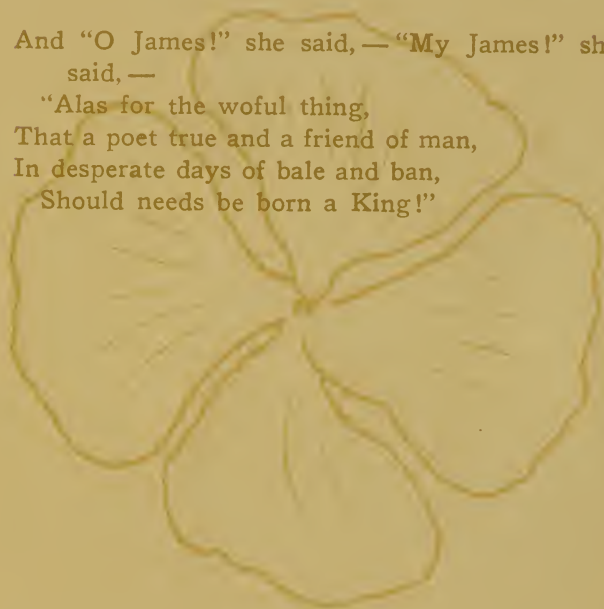
And now of their dooms dread tidings came,
And of torments fierce and dire;
And nought she spake, — she had ceased to speak, —
But her eyes were a soul on fire.

But when I told her the bitter end
Of the stern and just award,
She leaned o'er the bier, and thrice three times
She kissed the lips of her lord.

And then she said, — "My King, they are dead!"
And she knelt on the chapel-floor,
And whispered low with a strange proud smile, —
"James, James, they suffered more!"

Last she stood up to her queenly height,
But she shook like an autumn leaf,
As though the fire wherein she burned
Then left her body, and all were turned
To winter of life-long grief.

And "O James!" she said, — "My James!" she
said, —
"Alas for the woful thing,
That a poet true and a friend of man,
In desperate days of bale and ban,
Should needs be born a King!"



The House of Life

CII. — THE ONE HOPE

When vain desire at last and vain regret
Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,
What shall assuage the unforgotten pain
And teach the unforgetful to forget?
Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long unmet, —
Or may the soul at once in a green plain
Stoop through the spray of some sweet life-fountain
And cull the dew-drenched flowering amulet?

Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air
Between the scripted petals softly blown
Peers breathless for the gift of grace unknown, —
Ah! let none other alien spell soe'er
But only the one Hope's one name be there, —
Not less nor more, but even that word alone.

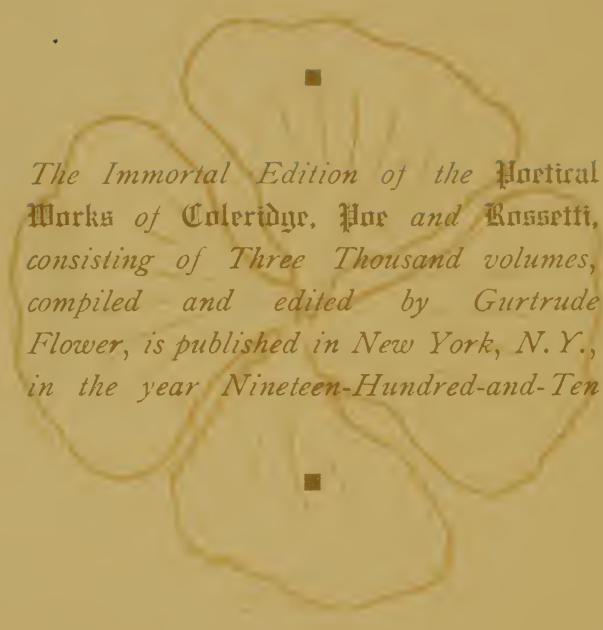
The House of Life

VII.—NUPTIAL SLEEP. .

At length their long kiss severed, with sweet smart:
And as the last, slow, sudden drops are shed
From sparkling eaves when all the storm has fled,
So singly flagged the pulses of each heart.
Their bosoms sundered, with the opening start
Of married flowers to either side outspread
From the knit stem; yet still their mouths, burnt red,
Fawned on each other where they lay apart.

Sleep sank them lower than the tide of dreams,
And their dreams watched them sink, and slid away.
Slowly their souls swam up again, through gleams
Of watered light and dull drowned waifs of day;
Till from some wonder of new woods and streams
He woke, and wondered more: for there she lay.

. . . The sonnet entitled Nuptial Sleep, is omitted from most editions, has been replaced in its proper position in the House of Life. This sonnet was chosen for admiration by Tennyson, being deeply impressed by the passion and imaginative power of the sonnet.



*The Immortal Edition of the Poetical
Works of Coleridge, Poe and Rossetti,
consisting of Three Thousand volumes,
compiled and edited by Gurtrude
Flower, is published in New York, N. Y.,
in the year Nineteen-Hundred-and-Ten*



877 4 1910

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: March 2009

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

One copy del. to Cat. Div.

CGF 4 1910

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 457 921 5

