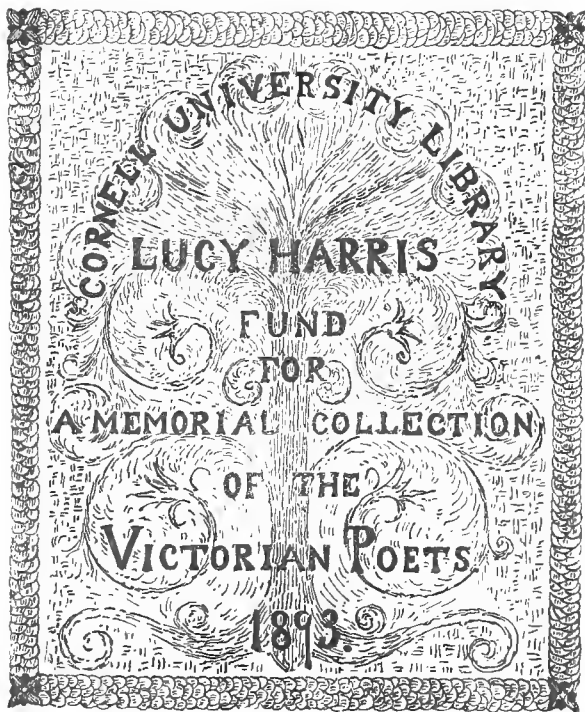


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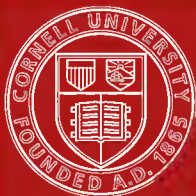
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SONNETS IN SWITZERLAND  
AND ITALY

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# Sonnets in Switzerland and Italy

BY THE

REV. H. D. RAWNSLEY

HONORARY CANON OF CARLISLE

AUTHOR OF

'SONNETS AT THE ENGLISH LAKES'

'BALLADS OF BRAVE DEEDS'

AND OTHER POEMS



LONDON

J. M. DENT AND COMPANY

ALDINE HOUSE

1899





TO JOHN RUSKIN

ON HIS

EIGHTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY

## SONNET DEDICATORY

TO JOHN RUSKIN

*With a wreath of Gentianella and other Alpine flowers  
from St. Beatenberg*

*You give me much, I little, but I know*

*That for poor deed you take the generous will,*

*And so I send from off this 'Blessèd Hill'*

*The sweetest flowers in Switzerland that grow.*

*Take them, and let them tell you what I owe,—*

*For you it was who taught mine eyes to thrill*

*At sight of 'gentian' glory, and to fill*

*My soul with wonders of the Alpine snow.*

*Still do these lowly stars of azure blue*

*Unto that star in Heaven, the great Sun, turn,*

*And in his joy their secret selves unfold;*

*And still your fond disciples turn to you,*

*Open their hearts that for your sunshine yearn,*

*And seek the smile they learned to love of old.*

## PREFATORY NOTE

‘THE blossoming time of the year being principally Spring, I perceive it to be the mind of most people to stay in towns’—so once wrote John Ruskin. He illustrated his remark by the story of a keen-sighted friend who, choosing to violate the national custom, went to the Tyrol in Spring. This friend passed through a valley near Landech with several similarly headstrong companions. ‘A strange mountain appeared in the distance, belted about the breast with a zone of blue, like our English Queen. Was it a blue cloud, a blue horizontal bar of the air that Titian breathed in youth, seen now far away, which mortal might never breathe again? Was it a mirage, a meteor? Would it stay to be approached? (ten miles of winding road yet between them and the

## *Sonnets*

foot of the mountain)—such questioning had they concerning it. My keen-sighted friend alone maintained it to be substantial ; whatever it might be, it was not air, and would not vanish. The ten miles of road were overpast, the carriage left, the mountain climbed. It stayed patiently, expanding still into richer breath and heavenlier glow—a belt of gentians.

‘Such things,’ continues Ruskin, ‘may verily be seen among the Alps in Spring, and in Spring only ; which being so, I observe most people prefer going in Autumn.’

I fear that such a miracle of colour is not likely to be repeated, and such a vision has never been vouchsafed to me ; but at least I can testify that as I crossed the Col de Jaman in early June, I saw a mile away what seemed to be the result of a heavy hailstorm whitening all the slopes, and found this storm-cloud upon the grass to melt into fragrance of innumerable narcissi.

## *Prefatory Note*

These sonnets, which have been written in many holiday rambles in May and June, are published with the hope of inducing a few readers to take their pleasure abroad at the time when the gentian flowers.

I have ventured to dedicate the volume to him who taught me, amongst other things, that Nature has nothing fairer to offer to mind or eye than blossom-tide in Switzerland.



## SONNET PREFATORY

TO JOHN RUSKIN

February 8th, 1899

*There was no snow on Coniston Old Man,  
Nor couched the Langdale Lions grizzled-gray,  
It seemed the winter had not come that way,  
And endless spring the golden age began.  
And you, for whom this earth's allotted span,  
The four-score summers of our mortal day,  
Had dawned—you heard at Brantwood voices say,  
' Strong run your founts of thought as first they ran.'*

*O joyful healer of dull labour's hours !  
O brave revealer of dark mammon's sin !  
O sure, swift feeler for our people's woe !  
We bring the laurel chaplet and the flowers,  
Such crown as angel ministers may win,  
To utter something of the debt we owe.*

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## SWITZERLAND

LAND of undying Winter, endless Spring,  
—For twice behind the scythe your valleys  
shine ;  
Land of the broad-leaved chestnut and the pine,  
Where all the flowers their gayest garlands fling  
Before the feet of Summer ; where bells ring  
An echo to the music of the kine ;  
Land doubly flowing with milk and mellow  
wine,  
—Milk of pure kindness, wine of welcoming—  
To you I come, worn out with petty care,  
Come, for the cuckoo called me ; let blue floods  
And your white-blossoming valleys close me  
round,  
And give me leave with simple faith to share  
The solace of your mountain solitudes,  
And walk with Freedom on her native ground.

# *Sonnets*

## SWITZERLAND ONCE MORE

WHEN in the May, queen-month of all the year,  
From off the heights I hear the herdsman cry,  
And up from lake or down from bluest sky,  
The trembling cow-bell music fills mine ear,  
I feel again inevitable cheer ;  
Sweet thoughts of Alpine joys that cannot die  
Come borne on wings of hospitality,  
From some brown-hooded mountain chalet near.

High up above the beechwood and the pine,  
Faint clouds that fade not, move not, greet my  
gaze,  
—The Alpine orchard's wealth of fragrant  
snow—  
Then all the long years' sorrow and the haze  
Of labour lifts, and, Switzerland, I know  
What happiness, what health of heart is thine.

# *Sonnets*

## IN A PINWOOD

AT THE GÜTSCH, LUCERNE

FRIEND of the sorrowful, not a heart is aching  
    But, charmed by this your happy cloistral shade,  
    Would find his grief before your music fade,  
And feel his sadness of your joy partaking ;  
For here, though scarce a sunbeam through is breaking,  
    The trees are glad with such sweet serenade,  
    Such humming melodies, as would persuade  
All things that are forlorn to merry-making.

Led by the woodland's sympathetic will  
    The wanderer here in darkest mood may stray,  
    Till, sudden pausing where the robin sings,  
    He feels the fragrant roof above him rings  
With message that the sun is shining still,  
    And down dim aisles his sorrow slips away.

# *Sonnets*

## THE BELL FOR EARLY MASS

FROM THE JESUIT CHURCH OF ST. JOSEPH, LUCERNE

THE Reuss ran hushed and silent beneath the morn,  
The city lay in slumber, and there fell  
Forth from St. Joseph's tower an iron knell,  
And the wall-echoes from their rest were drawn ;  
Far up the lake, far o'er the mountain lawn  
The clangour of that iron-mouthèd bell  
Went circling. Shepherds on far heights could  
tell  
That prayer would soon on trembling wings be borne ;  
  
And much they blessed that messenger of good—  
Only an iron stroke and quivering air,  
But from the bell full Sabbath peace was given,  
Lay on the waters, entered to the wood,  
Made strong weak hearts and comforted despair,  
And thrilled the earth with promises of Heaven.



# *Sonnets*

## THE FOUNTAIN IN THE WINE- MARKET, LUCERNE

THEY rest upon their swords, and lean, and peer  
    Behind their vizors at the passers-by,  
    In the dark fountain see the changing sky,  
Themselves unchanged, reflected year by year ;  
So through four centuries, with a watch austere  
    Above the waters never fouled nor dry,  
    These knights have kept unbroken fealty,  
Though blade be rusted, bruised be helm and spear.

Ah ! would to heaven, to guard each city's store  
    Of life, while still the white cross shone above,  
    With constant ward such knightly purpose  
    stood !  
    Then, from the common fount of brotherhood,  
Yea, even from forth the Dragon's mouth, should  
    pour  
Perennial streams of purity and love !

# *Sonnets*

## DREAMS AND WORK

HÔTEL DES BALANCES, LUCERNE

How sweet at eve to dream the time away  
    Above red chestnut blossom floating down,  
    Where the tall lantern lifts its cap of brown  
Against the Rigi's ridges rosy-grey !  
At noon to watch the silver shoals at play  
    In liquid emerald, dancing sunlight thrown  
    High on the eaves of this quaint burgher  
    town,  
Between the bridges where men pass and pray.

Blest is the stream that lulls us to repose  
    When dew-fall brings the silence—but more blest  
    To rouse us unto vigour at the morn,  
When, like a giant stronger for his rest  
    And fresh for any labour to be borne,  
The Reuss with joy toward the mill-wheel goes.

# *Sonnets*

## LUCERNE AGAIN

AGAIN we see the walls and ancient towers,  
The brown-capped water-fort, the Rathaus-  
hall,  
The emerald river flooding to its fall  
Between the bridges ; or, knee-deep in flowers,  
Where happy swallows slip through drifting showers  
Of snowy blossom, hear the loud bells call  
To frequent prayer, whilst wonderful o'er all  
Pilatus weaves his cloud with magic powers.

In sombre kirtles gay with steel and gold,  
The village people steer the selfsame boats  
To the same market, with the same grave air,  
Whilst near, the same dark swan-flotilla floats :  
One thing alone no changelessness can share,  
The heart that feels no longer as of old.

# *Sonnets*

## TO THE RIVER REUSS

### LUCERNE

HERE at the Wäage, as I sit and dream,  
The Reuss goes rustling on toward the weir,  
And in its voice sweet echoes I can hear,  
Of glaciers where the ice-king's treasures gleam,  
Of Alpine pasture and of Alpine stream,  
Of barren heights that brought the climber  
cheer,  
Of the green levels of the magic mere,  
Where white clouds swim and mountains double  
seem.

But most, thou garrulous river, still thy tale  
Speaks of fair villages, of happy men—  
Fluelen, Brunnen, Weggis—touched and passed,  
Of cool about the prow, of sunny sail,  
By verdurous cape and shadowy forest-glen,  
That brings the wanderer home to rest at last.

# *Sonnets*

## THE LION OF LUCERNE

NE'ER saw I, never felt such solemn breath  
    Of deep compassion breathed from carven stone,  
    Nor knew how quiet waters could atone  
For sorrow by such sending from beneath  
Of heart-appealing pity. In its sheath  
    Of flesh the spear-shaft breaks, and with a groan  
    The lion's head falls low, the rocks make moan,  
The hollow grove is resonant with death.

This is the meed of duty. They who die  
    Rather than disavow the oath they swear,  
    For them each year in silent woody places  
Trees bend in grief—their valour fills the air,  
    Clear in death's silent pool we see their faces,  
And on life's rock their immortality.

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE THREE LINDEN

### LUCERNE

UP through the marvel of the blossoming pear,  
By sorrel lanes and fields of picris gold  
We went with joy, half fearing to behold  
A scene less witching, less divinely rare  
Than wonder had imagined ; fresh and fair  
The Lindens tossed their arms that grow not  
old ;  
We gazed, and purest emerald, Reuss was rolled  
From out a lake as blue and deep as air.

Toward the towers and roofs of sunburnt brown  
Sloped bowery orchards, hill to pine-clad hill  
Broidered with tenderest beeches bade rejoice !  
Rejoice ye, River, Mountain, Lake, and Town !  
Rejoice, ye wanderers ! and a blackbird's trill  
Came clear to greet us with an English voice.

# *Sonnets*

## ENCLOSURE OF THE THREE LINDEN, LUCERNE

### A PATRIOT'S PROTEST

IMPRISONER of the Lindens, you do well  
    To guard each gable-end with lightning lance,  
    For if the levin-bolt with withering glance  
Fall, men will say not unprovoked it fell ;  
For here the lover would his story tell,  
    Here children round the tree in May could  
    dance,  
    Here hearts aflame for freedom and romance  
Felt the Confederates' passion, knew its spell.

No more our babes may hear the hum of bees,  
    Nor old men sit within the fragrant shade,  
    Or smile to see the coral glumes drop down,—  
    An iron hand has dispossessed a town,  
Prates law, and builds unrighteous barricade  
Between a nation and their Linden trees.

# *Sonnets*

## A MORNING PRAYER ON THE MARKET-BOAT

LUCERNE

THEY sat sun-tanned and marred with care and toil,  
And sorrow sat there with them in the shade ;  
A little calm the world could not invade—  
A little rest from weariness and toil—  
These were the gifts for which they plied their coil  
Of beads ; and, while the younger daughter said  
The morning office, low responses made,  
And prayed that Mary would the tempter foil.

There while they prayed, the shepherd, muttering  
low,  
Prayed with them, though his eyes were on the hill,  
And she, who bore her fruit to market, crossed  
Her breast, but thought what grapes to-day  
should cost ;  
Yet none the less their faces seemed to show  
They felt the love of Heaven was round them still.



# *Sonnets*

## AT KASTANIENBAUM

T**I**RED of my kind, and weary of the town,  
    How pleasant here to roam these orchard-bowers  
    When grey Pilatus bares at eve his towers,  
Or wreathes the clouds of morning for his crown ;  
How grateful, where the mower leaves unmown  
    Red sorrel and the fragrant meadow-flowers,  
    When all her milk-white shells the cherry  
        showers,  
And the red walnut sheds her tassels down.

O happy land of blissfulness and rest !  
    The blackbird sings, the redstarts flash and fly,  
    Through clouds of blossom emerald waters shine ;  
    A better gift than fruitfulness is thine—  
Thine is the balm to soothe an aching breast  
    With hope of Eden's old felicity !

# *Sonnets*

## THE WATCH-TOWER

AT STANZSTADT

WHERE meadows gold with mary-buds, and brown  
    With beaded burnet, shine beside the mere  
    And half forbid the passing boat to steer  
For Alpnach's waters, poplar-trees look down  
Upon the harbour of an inland town,  
    And there, its feet in waters cool and clear,  
    Rises a tower that knew not any fear  
When justice woke and tyrants were o'erthrown.

How shouldst thou fear, thou grey-embattled tower,  
    Though arrow sing and torch was hither hurled,  
    And all earth's forces leagued against thee  
    came ?  
For love of country, with o'er-mastering power,  
    With love for woman, forging bolts of flame,  
Could hold thy fortress still against the world.

# Sonnets

## SUNDAY MORNING

FROM THE STANZERHORN

ROSE-RED the Glarnisch kindled, spire on spire  
    The peaks of Oberland put off the night,  
    Pilatus gleamed, and suddenly from sight  
The whole lake vanished 'neath a mist of fire ;  
Then from the fleecy billows flooding higher  
    Upstood new islands, over bay and bight  
    The gentler mountains flashed a tenderer light,  
And every cloud became an angel choir.

The travailing earth with all its work and woes  
    Lay veiled beneath that vast translucent throng,  
    But, as up-trembling came the soft bells'  
    chime,  
A fairer Eden out of chaos rose  
    To sound of Sabbath joy and seraph song,  
    With presage of an unlaborious time.

# *Sonnets*

## GOING TO CHURCH AT OB-BÜRGEN

### BÜRGENSTOCK

THEY leave the orchards, pass the wayside shrine,  
The path is hard, and rest is pleasant there ;  
So by the stream toward the church they fare  
Snow-white against a circling wall of pine.  
No need for bells ; the silver bells of kine  
That sound to milking, serve as call for prayer ;  
No need for sermon ; blossoms everywhere  
Bid hope for fruit, the sap is in the vine ;—

But as they enter to their chapel-porch,  
And think of that dear life to duty vowed,  
Who gave his heart that others here might pray,  
They feel Christ present : as they leave the church,  
Pilatus rears his head, and speaks aloud  
Of One who cast a dearer Life away.

*See Appendix.*

# Sonnets

## DAYSPRING ON PILATUS

THE star that hung o'er Titlis' silver head  
    Paled, and the grey Pilatus seemed to know  
    That soon the southern ridge of Alpine snow  
Would flush and fill with shadow ; saffron-red,  
As if the world burned under, there was spread  
    A rampart round the plain ; Zug caught the glow,  
    But still, Lucerne, thy waters lay below  
As pale as ice whereon the frost is shed.

Then over Sentis like a ruby came  
    The great glad god that gave another dawn,  
    And Oberland with all her peaks was bright :  
Grim Esel cast his shadow from the flame,  
    From a wide world the look of death was drawn,  
    And green once more the valleys laughed with  
    light.

# *Sonnets*

## THE RIGI

THERE is a mountain other aeons made  
For this time's use ; where once the tides were  
whirled  
Hither and thither, tender clouds are curled  
To bring the rain or yield a moment's shade ;  
And here all summer in the pine-tree glade  
Sound faery bells as from another world,  
And never here the avalanche is hurled  
To scare the flowers or make the woods afraid.

Here, to this mountain, come the worn and sad,  
And flushed with health again the pale cheek glows,  
And the weak pulse beats bravely as before ;  
Here a whole nation's life new vigour knows,  
For freedom blooms, and every village lad  
Feels his heart throb in sight of Sempach's  
shore.

# *Sonnets*

## FROM THE RIGI-KULM

### AT SUNRISE

His heart was never for a patriot made  
    Who—gazing here, when sunrise with a wand  
    Smiting the silver peaks of Oberland  
Flings on Pilatus Rigi's purple shade—  
Could watch unmoved, to think of those whose aid  
    Bequeathed their country faith in Heaven's com-  
    mand,  
    Dared face to face with fearful odds to stand,  
And struck for freedom with undaunted blade !

There shines the vale where Winkelried was born,  
    There Sempach gleams ; here fatefully shot Tell,  
    Here at Morgarten stood the Swiss at bay,  
    Here by the church of ' Kappel ' Zwingli fell ;  
    And, as the mists rise up and float away,  
The land of heroes brightens to the morn.

# *Sonnets*

## FROM THE STAFFEL-STOCK

RIGI

BENEATH me lay the Kaltbad's welcoming halls,  
    The ground was crocus-starred, the gentian's hue  
    Filled all the grass with hyacinthine blue ;  
From the far Rigi's rosy mountain-walls,  
Across the pines, came frequent cuckoo-calls,  
    And clear from yon steep-bastioned Rothenfluh  
    The silent air refreshingly let through  
The May-tide murmur of the waterfalls.

But not dark Mythen under Sentis seen,  
    Nor cloud-enwreathed Pilatus grim and grey,  
    Held me as that Protean Bürgenstock  
Which down at Vitznau like a lion lay,  
    And now half shadow, now half silver rock,  
Basked in the sun by Uri's water green.



# *Sonnets*

## THE CROCUS LEGIONS

ON THE RIGI

WHILE still the cloud hung coldly, and the May  
Glad in the vales no mountain-heights had  
crowned,

Between the dappled patches, lo ! I found  
A little army, whose white-plumed array  
Possessed the field, victorious from their fray  
With surly winter ; long beneath the ground  
In patient hiding, at a sudden bound  
These tiny soldierlings had won the day.

No banner lifted, and no bugle blew,  
Yet down their ranks a movement seemed to run ;  
The white plumes nodded, each was seen to  
hold

Within his hand three dainty spears of gold :  
Then first the cause of victory I knew,  
Their legions owned no leader but the Sun !

## *Sonnets*

### ON A SEAT BENEATH THE DOSSENWAND

ABOVE VITZNAU

REST, herdsman, rest ! for heavy is the pail ;  
    Rest, wanderer, rest ! for heavy is the heart ;  
    Rest, lover, rest ! for bitter is the smart  
Of parting from the loved one in the vale :  
For here the flowering walnut scents the gale,  
    The blackbird here sings three times o'er his part,  
    And here the jocund swallows earliest dart  
With news that Rigi's snow shall surely fail.

The rosy ramparts of the Dossenwand  
    Shut out the world ; with rainbows from the rock  
    The silver waters fall adown its breast  
With silver blossom for the Unterland,  
    And like a sleeping lion, Bürgenstock  
    Lies on the lake, the guardian lord of rest.

# *Sonnets*

## THE WISSEFLUH

### ON THE VITZNAU-STOCK

THE dark falls on us, blessed by every star,  
The sun shines round us golden all the day,  
Care climbs not hither, grief must ever stay  
Below us in the woods, where song-birds are  
Melodious ministrants ; the bells from far  
Bring from the depths the least faint sound to say  
That man, almost too happy, still must pray.  
Here, where each cloud would seem an angel's car  
To wing our thoughts to Heaven. Here we sleep  
Lulled by the tinkling herds, and waked at morn  
By some far jodel from a sister height ;  
All day we hear the mountain shepherd's horn,  
And when the merry cricket fails we keep  
With song and dance the shepherd's festal night.

# *Sonnets*

## MOUNTAIN SCHOLARS

### UP THE VITZNAU-STOCK

I HEARD the cataract bellow its command,  
The sorrowing pines send whisper through the  
glade,

When up the mountain pathway boy and maid—  
He with his satchel, she with flowers in hand—  
Came, leaving far below their scholar-band.

I asked, 'How fare you children unafraid?'  
'It is our Father's will, each morn,' they said,  
'For vale and school we leave our mountain land.'

Dear children, it is such as you who teach :  
Each day from nearer Heaven your feet can bring  
An upland blessing to the lowland school ;  
Mystery of pine-tree music, torrent-speech,  
Some words of how obedient flowers may spring  
In homes where simple innocence has rule.

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE DEGENBALM

### MORSCHACH

THE brown-leaved walnut's fragrance fills the air,  
The fields with wild forget-me-not are blue,  
The Frohnalp's beech has donned her tenderest  
hue,  
And Morschach's slope is white with blossoming pear;  
And I, uplifted on this mountain-stair,  
With Mythen's peaks and Urmi's ridge in view,  
Feel how the upland breath can strength renew,  
And Degenbalm's sure solace banish care.

Below my feet the restful village lies,  
The church-bell sounds at morn and noon and  
night,  
To bid men walk the way their fathers trod;  
While o'er my head grey peaks of glory rise,  
And other bells call cheerly from the height  
To climb through praise and wonder up to God.

# *Sonnets*

## EVENING AT MORSCHACH

BELATED herdsmen jodel from the lea,  
    The last tired cow-bell tinkles to the stall,  
    And Urmi builds himself a purple wall  
With each dark rock and every feathered tree,  
Clear-cut against Heaven's opal : flying free,  
    The bats about the dewy walnuts call,  
    While one bright star is shining over all,  
And bids the cottage eyes be bright and see.

Then, when the waters and the hills are one,  
    And depth and height are lost in liquid haze,  
    The house-lamps twinkle, and the clock clangs  
    ten,  
    Forth to the fields the chalet-jewels blaze  
To tell the long day's work at length is done,  
    And home is sweet for Morschach's weary  
    men.

# Sonnets

## ON THE AXENSTRASSE

VAST silent cliffs of saffron, purple-grey,  
    Rose up to Heaven and caught the flying cloud,  
    While underneath, the engine, shrieking loud,  
Dived into dark and thundered on its way ;  
The lake, below, an emerald mirror lay ;  
    Calm trees reflected stood, a fearless crowd—  
    Where Uri's rocks by primal forces bowed  
Told of the passion of an earlier day.

Between the restless cloud and restful flood—  
    'Twixt life unpained, and life that still must wear  
    The impress of our earth's Titanic pain—  
I, walking, felt the way for mortals good  
    Which told how hearts that passionate sorrow  
    bear  
    With peace in sight their journey may sustain.

# *Sonnets*

## AT BÜRGLEN

TO THE MEMORY OF WILLIAM TELL

HERE was he nursed upon this pleasant hill,  
Hence heard the voice of Schächen all year round  
Filling the air with free triumphant sound—  
Impassioned music for his growing will ;  
And whether with his bow he tried his skill,  
Following the chamois on the mountain-ground,  
Or shared the dalesmen's toil, his soul was bound  
To free his land from hopelessness and ill.

So when the Schächen roared with melted snow,  
And cast the pines like straws along the dale,  
He knew the Föhn, that wrecked the forest-  
ground,  
Grassed all the Alps, and prayed God's wind would  
blow,  
Yea, even with wrath, so Love at last prevail,  
And Hope and Life on Freedom's height should  
grow.



# *Sonnets*

## AT ARTH-GOLDAU

STILL must the Rossberg our reproaches bear,  
    The mark upon his forehead be unhealed,  
    And Lowertz' lessened lake and Goldau's field  
Sown thick with boulders, bid the traveller fear ;  
Again earth's avalanche he seems to hear,  
    The shuddering Rigi roars, as if it pealed  
    With thunder when Arth's waters backward  
        reeled,  
And the doom fell that cannot disappear.

But to the valley with that stroke of death  
    Came powers of life to soothe and disannul  
    The awful woe of villages forlorn ;  
    The lichen's tender hand makes beautiful  
The rocky tomb of those who slept beneath,  
    And for their dirge ten thousand pines are  
        born.

## *Sonnets*

### AT THE MONUMENT OF ST. BENEDICT ABOVE EINSIEDELN

HERE, Father Benedict, I too could stand  
    Through winter storm, through summer's quiver-  
        ing heat,  
    Clad all in white, the raven at my feet,  
With books and cup and crozier in my hand,  
And gaze upon the palace I had planned  
    For holy thought, the halls where pilgrims meet,  
    The brown-roofed school, the quadrangle com-  
        plete  
With church, byre, bakery, playground, garden-land ;  
But then, like Pastor Zwinglius, I should turn,  
    And entering to the church, I would ascend  
    Its pulpit, crying, ' Brother, leave your cell,  
    Burn no more tapers, ring no sanctus bell ;  
    Our God hath made of dark-faced dolls an end,  
And claims your heart, wherein His lamp shall burn.'

# *Sonnets*

## THE STATUE OF ZWINGLIUS

ZURICH

BENEATH the tower, where, sword upon his knee,  
Sits the great Charles who laid the corner-stone,  
Stands Zwinglius, but his soul is by the throne,  
No need of sword or Bible now has he ;  
But those hawk eyes that, seeking light to see,  
Saw God's Word opened, that deep voice, whose  
tone  
Cheered men that climb the stairs of Heaven  
alone—  
These knew not Death, or Death has set them free.  
And here beneath his doctor's ample hood,  
Stern mouth and prophet's memorable eye,  
Strong foot so irresistibly set down,  
Firm face, half-sweet for praise, for blame half-  
frown,  
These pierce the heart of every passer-by,  
And bid men stand for truth as Zwinglius stood.

# *Sonnets*

## FAREWELL TO LUCERNE

WE go ; we leave the linden-trees, the wall,  
The landward towers, the terrible bridge of  
death,  
The grey-green waters dancing underneath,  
And that brown-hooded castle which men call  
The 'Lantern' ; but our hearts are sad withal,  
For never May breathed more victorious breath,  
Nor wove of bloom a more bewitching wreath  
With power to keep the souls of men in thrall.

We glide by poplared cape and slopes a-flower,  
Pilatus casts his shadow at our feet ;  
And the reflected peaks of Oberland  
Bow down before our passage, but the power  
Of that quaint town, where old and new worlds  
meet  
And Spring is empress, holds us by the hand.

# Sonnets

## AT STANZ

I SAW the dying hero's upturned face  
    Who gathered all the spears into his breast,  
    And so made swifter onset for the rest,  
Then turned the milk-white meadow-path to trace  
Toward the homestead of his father's race ;  
    I found a grange whose broad-backed gable-crest  
    Was brown against blue heights, whose wall  
    was drest  
With blossoming pear in plenitude of grace.

And here beneath the glorious Buochserhorn,  
    That breaks from cloud to pine, from pine to mead,  
    From mead to happy house and orchard-slope—  
Here in this amphitheatre was born  
    The heart that realised a people's hope,  
    The life that dared the death of Winkelried.

# *Sonnets*

ARNOLD VON WINKELRIED

AT STANZ

How could the love of fatherland so placed  
    Not grow to be a passion?—hither free  
    Sang the loud brooks, and every budding tree  
In yon grange-orchard on to freedom raced  
When April touched the meadows, and in haste  
    The blossom reddened. Here the boy could see  
    How Spring from Winter claimed its liberty,  
How Winter still with chains the Summer chased.

And he?—his heart was filled with hope of spring :  
    Spring, and the summer of content to come,  
    With fruit of patriot good for far-off years ;  
And so at Sempach, when the tyrant ring  
    Withstood, he gathered to his breast the spears,  
And fell for God, for Liberty and Home.

# *Sonnets*

## TO ENGELBERG

ALL up the road that through the forest wound  
    We wondered how the vale and hill would lie  
    That charmed an angel message from the sky,  
And bade the black-robed monks their Abbey found.  
Then suddenly, where Aars' tumultuous bound  
    Leaps bellowing under Nieder-Wald, the sky  
    Was closed by Harrnen, the Span-Ortten high  
Sprang up, and Titlis shone with Winter crowned.

One-half the vale was shadow, one was sun,  
    The cattle lowed, the plain was all a-flower,  
    And happy dwellings dotted fell and field.  
A great bell clanged, a mighty grange did run  
    Athwart the vale, white-walled, with one great  
    tower,  
    And, Engelberg, thy wonder was revealed.

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE SIGN OF THE 'ANGEL'

ENGELBERG

WHO takes the passing traveller for a guest  
    May entertain an angel unaware,  
    And since on yonder rocky mountain stair  
Clouds broke in angel music to attest  
Here God would dwell, and here His name be blest,  
    Angels have entertained who hither fare,  
    Loosed them of sorrow, freed them of earth's  
        care,  
And soothed them with some hope of heavenly rest.

So, 'Angel,' at thy bidding I have found  
    Hint of the harmonies where angels dwell,  
    For all sweet sounds about thy portals meet :  
    The children's laugh, the goat-bells down the  
        street,  
Organ and choral chanting, and the sound  
    Of that deep, monitory, convent-bell.



# *Sonnets*

## THE MONASTERY

ENGELBERG

GREY roof, white walls, and jalousies of green,  
So Conrad's house two centuries has stood,  
Bold to withstand, as its forerunner could,  
All tides of change ; and firm to come between  
Our restless crowds of rovers and the scene  
Where is simplicity of peasantry,  
The herdsman tends his flock or fells the wood,  
And poor men live in piety serene.

Abbot ! before thy day Frocinus knew  
Good work must grow in quiet ; he who wrote  
The parchment, laboured slowly ; though the  
world  
In specious clamour at thy gates be hurled,  
With meditation man thy fort anew  
And let Distraction here find antidote !

*See Appendix.*

# *Sonnets*

## ABBOT'S DAY, MAY 15

ENGELBERG

ANSELM, this morn, the morn of middle May,  
Break never fairer ; never from the height  
Did angels blither sing at morning light,  
Than when the matin-bell bade souls to pray  
On this thy namesake's high memorial day,  
When Conrad's convent-church, that all the night  
Lay hushed with expectation, woke, with might  
Of pipe and string, its Hallelujah lay.

But, Abbot, not the incense-bearing priest,  
Nor chant of choir and music in accord,  
So seemed to celebrate thy golden rule,  
As these old men unbidden to the feast,  
Who, trained from youth in this thy convent  
school,  
Knelt in the church and blessed the convent's  
Lord.

# *Sonnets*

## GOLD-BODEN

ENGELBERG

HERE, in this meadow of the cloth of gold,  
Great sovereigns meet, the white-robed Winter-  
King  
And the green-kirtled, glad, triumphant Spring,  
A celebration of their peace to hold.  
Not, as for mortal kings in days of old,  
The shout of hosts and cannons booming bring  
Applause ; the cataracts roar them welcoming,  
The avalanche thunder in their ears is rolled.

With silver clouds for banners, lo! the skies  
In blue pavilioned splendour overhead  
Shine, and beneath are jewelled tapestries  
Such as no earthly kings did ever tread,  
For all sweet flowers have hither flung their dyes,  
A royal carpet for their feet to spread.

# *Sonnets*

## THE FÖHN-WIND

ENGELBERG

THE dust-whorls rise and smoke along the road  
That maps with milk-white lines the distant  
vale ;

Foreworn we are, we scarce know what we ail,  
For lo ! the withering Föhn-wind flies abroad ;  
The mountain packman who so lightly trod  
Puts down his pack, uneasy slips his bale,  
The mighty eagle's spirit seems to fail,  
From weary heights the avalanche casts his load.

With a chill sense of prisonment and fear  
The heavy clouds drop down the hills, and near,  
Now bitter cold, now fiery is the blast ;  
Leaves curl, flowers close, the roof-stones crash  
and fall,  
Discomfortable loss is over all ;  
Comes sunshine and sweet rain ! the Föhn is past.

# *Sonnets*

## BENEATH TITLIS

ENGELBERG

As one who hears with awe and bated breath  
    How on the seventh day, when God would rest,  
    He made a throne of yonder mountain crest,  
So passed I silent through the meads beneath.  
The stern cliffs stood crowned still with Winter's  
    wreath,  
    But all the vale by Summer was possest,  
    The air with sound of waterfalls was blest,  
The ground with bloom,—here never could come  
    Death.

And gazing up at Spanort's double horn,  
    I felt, though angel voices here should cease,  
    And Love's religion leave its ancient seat,  
    Man still might know God's will was joy and peace  
    As long as, close beneath the Almighty's feet,  
Such tender flowers in gentleness were born.

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE TRUB-SEE

INSTEAD of bluest waters from blue sky,  
Grass crocus-pied, with soldanella sown,  
Was dismal swamp, snow-scorched and winter-  
brown

And overlaid with leaden canopy—  
Such clouds as hang where souls in torment lie ;  
While, scared by avalanche-thunder roaring down,  
The swifts for silence far away had flown,  
And the wild fox paused once, then hurried by.

Then o'er that seething cauldron of the cloud  
High Titlis shone ; the hand that guards the pass  
Stood forth like silver, and we clomb up higher :  
Thence gazing, the disconsolate morass  
Became a sea of glory, and a crowd  
Of angels moving on soft waves of fire.

# *Sonnets*

## HERRN RÜTLI

### ENGELBERG

WHEN that old Abbot hither drove his kine,  
And set on Rütli's hill his byre and bield,  
He knew what hand it was that gave him field,  
Herb for the cattle, plenteous dew for wine ;  
And so beside his pen he set this shrine,  
And taught his shepherds Christ was Lord and  
shield,  
That not in vain the convent prayers appealed  
For fruits on earth, and wealth in things divine.

The shrine is buried, the monk behind the bars  
Who held the lily, moulders and decays,  
But all who pass this consecrated mound  
Will find that from the unforgetful ground  
Each Spring come forth earth's multi-coloured stars,  
And on the farm Heaven's benediction stays.

# *Sonnets*

## ST. FLORIAN

IN THE MONASTERY CHURCH AT ENGELBERG

THERE was no priest behind this golden gate,  
    No angel floating in the painted dome  
    To give him comfort and to guide him home,  
When Florian went a martyr to his fate.  
He saw no temples thronged and consecrate  
    With music and the mysteries of Rome ;  
    He dreamed no countless multitudes would come  
To gaze upon his bones in jewelled state.

Nay, take those amethysts from out his eyes,  
    Unstop his careless ears of any gem,  
    Nor fill his mouth with pearls. A poor man's  
    part  
He played, who wears his crown in Paradise,  
    Who strove to touch his Saviour's simple hem,  
    Whom Christ wears now, a jewel at His heart.



# *Sonnets*

## BLESSING THE PASTURES

ON THE BLACHENALP, ENGELBERG

HE had no need of bell to call to prayer,  
His meek-eyed congregation with him went,  
Jangling their bells all up the steep ascent,  
As Father Joseph climbed the mountain stair.  
The tapers burned, rich incense filled the air,  
Rude cowherds, conscious of his good intent,  
Prayed with the priest in adoration bent,  
Who gave the pastures to the Almighty's care.

More earnest Paternosters ne'er were said,  
And when they issued from the lowly shrine  
I saw the names of all the wandering kine  
Before the Lord upon the altar spread.  
Father in heaven ! all things that live are Thine,  
Come from Thine hand, and by Thy hand are fed.

# *Sonnets*

## OVER THE ST. GOTHARD

WE left the fields where Tell the archer bent  
    The bow whose twanging yet has never died,  
    And high along the Reuss's rushing tide,  
Behind the steamy dragon, up we went.  
Chasms were bridged, the very rocks were rent  
    To let us pass. Aloud the monster cried,  
    And coiling on itself in earth would glide  
By marvellous gyres to gain a higher vent.

Then through the mist of hail and blinding snow  
    We roared into the tunnel sulphurous, long,  
    And the head reeled—we almost felt the pain  
    Of that fierce snorting dragon's forward strain ;  
Forth leapt the light ; blue heaven was ours, and  
    song,  
And old Italia lay in sun below.

# *Sonnets*

## AT FAIDO, ON THE ST. GOTHARD

You died, but, dalesmen, you did well to die !  
    Than this rock amphitheatre, what scene  
    For your brave act could fitter e'er have been !  
Above us to the sun the eagles cry,  
And Chibiasco, falling from the sky  
    Death-white, betwixt the pines for ever green,  
    Gathers new strength behind its watery screen,  
And passes on full-souled for liberty.

Brave-hearted men the tyrant's hand might slay !  
    And, that you suffered centuries of wrong,  
    Grim chestnuts down the valley still attest ;  
    But a clear voice triumphant, and more strong  
Than fierce Ticino, speaks for you to-day,  
    God's stream of sympathy for souls oppressed.

*See Appendix.*

# *Sonnets*

## LOCARNO IN RAIN

RAIN on the heights, Italia grim and grey,  
    And grey the valleys ; Bellinzona's plain  
    And all its vines grey-cloaked in mist and rain,  
And Lago Maggiore's northern bay  
Through mist and cloud stretched ghost-like ; so the  
    day  
    Died on Locarno's hills in dreary pain ;  
    Down dreary streets groaned by the dark-  
    drenched wain,  
And scarce their words the convent-bells could say  
For muffled melancholy. By the lake  
    The frogs croaked loud ; all else was lifeless, dull ;  
    And drearily the boatman pushed ashore ;  
    And I had come to thee, Italia, full  
Of dreams of sunshine for the hearts that ache,  
    And Heaven above me blue for evermore !

# *Sonnets*

## AT SANTA TRINITA

### ABOVE LOCARNO

WHEN sunny Taman trembles for its snow,  
    And Maggia hot above his milk-white strand  
    Swims in the haze, leave thou the lower land  
While hour by hour the young vine-shadows grow,  
And the shy lizard lifts his head to know  
    Who comes : climb up to where the lime-trees  
    stand  
    By Santa Trinità, and let the hand  
Of the cool zephyr gently touch thy brow.

Then say if wandering faith did ever find  
    A lovelier place for thought, and cool and calm,  
    A spot more sure to make an old man pray ;  
    For Maggia, singing still his ancient psalm,  
Goes glad to lose his individual mind  
    And gain the depth and breadth of yonder bay.

## *Sonnets*

### SOLITUDO CONTINUATA DULCESCIT

AN INSCRIPTION AT THE GATE OF THE CONVENT  
OF THE MADONNA DEL SASSO, LOCARNO

RIGHT, friar, right ! but not such solitude  
As mars the thing you live by, your own soul,  
Which needs must think and act, or it dies whole,  
Root upward, as your vines die, when the wood  
Feels in the rock no more its natural good.  
For me—I had rather have for being's goal  
The lizard's life beside its cranny's hole,  
That grows so like the stone he scans for food.

No ; if this rotting out in sloth and rust  
Be all God meant when He created man,  
Be the sure charm that fits the soul for heaven—  
To me let city-noise and crowds be given,  
And cast me from your order, under ban  
To think and act until my heart be dust.

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE BALCONY OF THE CHURCH OF THE MADONNA DEL SASSO

LOCARNO

HERE from the brown friars' balcony I gaze,  
The long lake laid like silver at my feet,  
The yellow tower with harbour-pool complete ;  
White Maggia and Ticino's dusty ways  
Lost in the purple plain and shimmering haze ;  
From the near gorge, with sound for labour sweet,  
The fall of waters, while the crickets beat  
Their chirring drums, and red geraniums blaze.

And I am sad ; the faith that for the poor  
Planted these walls has dwindled ; on their knees  
Three ancient men implore the Virgin's aid ;  
Two in the garden tend the brown-backed bees,  
Who ply, methinks, to-day a healthier trade  
Seeing they drive all idlers from the door.

## *Sonnets*

### THE ISLANDS OF LAGO MAGGIORE

WHEN those old Greeks, fordone with toil of seas,  
And sorrow of the land, and endless wrong,  
Hoped against hope for quiet rest among  
Some golden isle of the Hesperides,  
They had not seen this tranquil flood, nor these  
Calm-girt and azure-circled isles of song  
And sun and flower, where all things tender  
throng,  
And earth and air invite perpetual ease—

Or, sure, some singer would have smote his lyre,  
And told men tired with wandering, of a lake  
In whose calm ripple stars do larger grow,  
And clouds gain glory, where like emeralds glow  
Green islands at the noon, where mornings break  
Up from the depths in golden fleece of fire.



# *Sonnets*

## ISOLA-BELLA

INTRICATE marbles, ceilings lined with gold,  
Grottoes for nymphs to hide in, with pretence  
Of far sea murmur ; man's omnipotence  
Over the fiercer brute, in colours scrolled  
On tapestries ; great terraces that hold  
Groves on their shoulders ; here magnificence  
Breathes from the earth, and over all is sense  
Of some enchanter's magic manifold.

And we who, coasting by the gardens, feel  
Fragrance of tropic flowers toward us fanned  
From orange-fruited walls above the tide,  
Almost forgive the men who on their seal  
Engraved 'Humility,' but stamped their pride  
Upon this marvellous isle in fairyland.

*See Appendix.*

# *Sonnets*

## ISOLA-BELLA

HE reared a monument, who built this isle,  
    To show how patriot hearts forbade to roam  
    Amongst the olives and the vines of home,  
Or the dark Austrian pines, must needs beguile  
The weariness of longing ; pile on pile  
    Grew with his terraces of borrowed loam,  
    Trees called the nesting nightingale to come,  
Bare rock with flower and fruitage needs must smile.

Ah ! Borromeo, though the happy dove  
    Found rest within your cedars, though your  
    flowers,  
Your hills, your grotts were consecrate to love,  
    Though all that wealth could give or art could  
    raise  
Above the wondering waters blessed your towers—  
    Freedom you wanted still, freedom and length  
    of days !

# *Sonnets*

## AT BAVENO

### HÔTEL BELLE-VUE

I KNOW a palace builded by a lake  
    That trembles sapphire to the garden wall ;  
    There, till late morn and earliest evening fall,  
The nightingale sings clear to hearts that ache.  
There the magnolia blooms, the palm-trees shake  
    From ivory sheathes their golden flowers, and all  
    Azaleas come for May-tide festival,  
And in cool shade their swift surprises make.

There broods above the place a calm divine,  
    The breath of guardian spirits haunts the air ;  
    There, when the night on Motterone sleeps,  
    And Pescatori's lamps no longer flare,  
I hear the sound that tells from some far shrine  
    How Prayer her watch unintermittent keeps.

# *Sonnets*

## THE FIRE-FLY

BAVENO

WHEN Madre's Island like a shadow lies  
High up upon the 'Iron Rock'—so clear,  
Across the still grey water-flood, comes near  
The phantom of the mountain—then mine eyes  
Are gladdened by a tiny speck that flies  
Forth from the myrtle : now it doth appear  
A boat's prow lantern, now a starry sphere  
Fallen, but how swiftly, from the dusky skies.

I gaze perplexed ; the pulses of its light  
Beat, and with noiseless beauty move and move,  
Then fade, or like a starry jewel burn  
Upon the Nereid sitting at her urn,  
Anon through sparkling dusk it takes its flight,  
A creature made for wonder and for love.

# *Sonnets*

## ORANGE-FLOWERS AT BAVENO

AH ! fair Baveno, well do I recall  
How, when Pallanza burned and writhed with  
heat,  
Cool shadows fell right downward to thy feet ;  
And I, who dreamed beside thy water-wall,  
Felt the magnolia's incense prodigal  
Poured from white cups upon the garden-seat,  
The vine flowers' scent impalpable and sweet,  
And honeysuckle, sweetest of them all.

But most in that enchanting dewy hour  
I blessed the odours from that pearl of grey  
That breaks into the semblance of a star,  
For then the day came near, that was so far,  
When one beside me bare white orange-flower,  
And all the world seemed made for marriage day.

## *Sonnets*

### DAYLIGHT ON LAGO MAGGIORE

NOT as on Derwentwater, when the dawn  
Comes dancing o'er Helvellyn, comes the light  
To Lago Maggiore : here the night  
With jealous, lingering footsteps is withdrawn,  
And up the hills, and down the mountain-lawn,  
The blue-eyed morn with silver sandals bright  
Moves toward the sleeping waters. First to  
sight  
The still grey mirror glimmers into fawn ;

Next, while the church-bell moans across the mere  
From some far convent, lilac steals from Heaven,  
And when the swallow stirs, a roseate cloud  
Casts down its purple ; blackbirds sing out loud,  
Green light and gold from dewy slopes are given,  
Then the blue deepens, and the day is here.

# Sonnets

## AT THE CHURCH DOOR, BAVENO

### THE SOLDIER'S OATH

FIRST came the German with his soldier's oath  
    To Caesar Emperor, and he vowed  
    To Julia, Dian, and Tarpeia proud,  
Here above old Verbanus—nothing loth  
To change for soft Italia's sunny sloth  
    His northern labour ; the invader's cloud  
    Brake o'er the hills—to other gods were bowed  
The stubborn necks of Hun and Visigoth.

Last came Heaven's Imperator, whom God sent  
    To be the word to all whoe'er should till  
    The vines on Motterone's bowery slope ;  
And now, while fragrant clouds the old church fill,  
    And the priest mumbles in his golden cope,  
The pure in heart may claim Christ's sacrament.

*See Appendix.*

# Sonnets

## ON MONTE MOTTERONE

THY feet are set in waters sapphire clear,  
    Thy knees are cool with chestnut and the vine,  
    The star-narcissus girds thee, bells of kine  
Sound on thy brow, the lark enchants thine ear,  
Northward the ice-kings frown, thou hast no fear—  
    Though east and west perpetual winter shine,  
    For southward to the furthest Apennine  
Thine eyes can gaze on harvest all the year.

To thee was given a trust, and not in vain,  
    Thou great inspirer ; he who when he died  
    Slept with his horse and armour by his side,  
    Here on this utmost peak, has left the key  
To thy heart's secret ; yonder peaceful plain  
    Knows well the crown of strife is Liberty.

*See Appendix.*



# *Sonnets*

## SUNRISE FROM MONTE MOTTERONE

PALE Lago Maggiore lay below,  
    And stretched a death-white arm toward the day;  
    Lombardia's plain was veiled, and Toche grey  
Swept down dark vales to livid Orphano;  
Far to the west, with her nine peaks of snow,  
    Stood Monte Rosa, ghostlike—you would say  
    No sun could ever rise to chase away  
Such lifeless shadow with triumphant glow.

But sudden, eastward, under bars of gold,  
    Gleamed the first glorious promise of the morn,  
    And Monte Rosa trembled into flame :  
Then all the valleys purpled, fold on fold,  
    The long lake lightened, over miles of corn  
    The Sun, the Bringer of life's gladness, came !

# *Sonnets*

## THE PHEASANT-EYE NARCISSUS

UP MONTE MOTTERONE

ABOVE the vines the cherry-trees are growing,  
The chestnuts o'er the cherries make cool shade,  
And I up-wandering found a little maid  
Whose hair was brown, whose eyes like jet were  
glowing.

She looked me through, as of my heart's wish knowing,  
Then in her gentlest Latin tone she said :  
'These are the flowers wherefrom our wreaths  
we braid

When to the church in May-time we are going.'

I looked, and lo ! ten thousand thousand stars,  
With eyes like pheasant's, glittered in the grass,  
And where the crickets made their gayest cheer  
She plucked and sang and plucked, and I, alas !  
Knew not the words, but still these liquid bars  
Of song in soft narcissus-time I hear.

# Sonnets

## THE MONTE SACRO

### AT VARALLO

I ASK no hundred days exempt from pain,  
For I have seen here Christ upon His rood—  
I, who 'neath stars of Bethlehem have stood,  
Drunk Nazareth's well, by Galilee's blue plain  
Of sparkling waters wandered, and was fain  
To weep at Olivet, in solemn mood  
Have climbed, Varallo, through thy holy wood,  
And seen hate's loss and love's eternal gain.

What Caimi planned and grave Gaudenzio drew  
Shall moulder in each iron-grated cell,  
And Borromeo's skull shall grin no more ;  
But long as Mastelone's waters roar,  
The faith that built compassion's citadel  
Shall on these heights her eagle's wings renew.

*See Appendix.*

# *Sonnets*

## THE MUSIC OF THE DAWN

HÔTEL SPLENDIDE, LUGANO

FROM this flower-girdled palace by the shore  
Of old Ceresio, like a casket set,  
How many eyes, when dark and dawning met,  
Have almost wished the noon would come no more,  
The morning woke so wondrously,—before,  
Caprino stood, dark purple, dewy wet,  
While far Legnone's snowy coronet  
Flashed glory southward to San Salvador.

Then all things that had breath a moment stirred ;  
The roses trembled, every mountain lawn  
Moved into shadow-dance, as if it heard  
The music of the making of the dawn ;  
And, to the song of birds, the sleeping lake  
Seemed with a sudden sense of joyousness to  
wake.

# Sonnets

## EVENING FROM SAN SALVATORE

WHEN all the hills between us and the west  
Seem unsubstantial from the breath of Him  
Who framed them, and where Specchio's waters  
brim,  
The grey plain shows the jewel on her breast,  
Then do I climb San Salvatore's crest,  
And bow my knee within its chapel dim,  
And hear from far-off bells the sound up-swim  
Of thanks to God who gives His people rest:—

Rest for the beasts that toil, the men who till ;  
Rest for the farms, safe-sheltered in their groves ;  
Rest for the upland huts, the lakeside town ;  
But one dark thing unresting moves and moves  
O'er Campione and Caprino's hill,  
The growing shadow of Saint Saviour's crown.

## *Sonnets*

### THE NIGHTINGALE OF LUGANO

COME from a north that knows no nightingale,  
How could my heart not thrill to hear the song  
That tells so many centuries of wrong  
With such an old-world sweetness? To its tale  
San Salvatore in the moonlight pale  
Hushed all his leafy whispers, and the throng  
Of feet that passed in heedlessness along  
Paused, and the fisher luffed his homeward sail.

For from the fragrant myrtle by the lake,  
And from the stars, and from the pearly tide,  
There came the voice of Philomel, to say  
That souls must sorrow and that hearts must ache,  
Till Hate has vanished and till Death has died,  
And Love find Love, and Night become the  
Day.

# *Sonnets*

## IN THE CHURCH OF S. MARIA DEGLI ANGIOLI

LUGANO

IN Mary's Church of Angels by the shore—  
    Wherein Luini, labouring for his bread,  
    Painted the Bread of Heaven, a Saviour dead,  
And gained not gold, but fame for evermore—  
Is Christ the Child, and She whom men adore :  
    He rides no horse, bestrides a lamb instead,  
    Facing the boy Saint John with curly head,  
And heart ripe-full of frolic to the core.

But I might see how still the Saviour-Child  
    Looked for communion to His Mother's eyes,  
    And questioning held the lambkin by its ear,  
While She, as if She felt how sacrifice  
    And some dark day of doom was drawing near,  
With sweet assent most pitifully smiled.

# *Sonnets*

## LIGHT AT EVENTIDE

LUGANO

WHEN to far shepherds on Caprino's height  
    The day has died from off Legnone's snow,  
    And very solemnly the afterglow  
Enpurples Salvatore, sudden light  
Springs up beyond Porlezza ; burnished bright,  
    Cloud-mountains in the clear green ether grow,  
    And with new glories leaping from below  
Lugano's water quite forbids the night.

So when our daylight darkens on the slope  
    Of these dim hills up which our feet have trod,  
    May rain and mist of tears have built in Heaven  
Hills flushed with Love, and heights aflame with  
    God,  
    Wherefrom to eyes that watch shall still be  
    given  
Some sign of joy, some monument of hope.



# *Sonnets*

## LANZO D'INTELVI

WE left the torrent in its sinuous cave,  
    Osteno's tower clanged out Farewell ! Farewell !  
    Upward we went by cuckoo-haunted dell  
And cricket-hearted meadow. Cheerly brave  
The horses jangled onward, wave on wave  
    Green billowy slopes to far Porlezza fell,  
    Till on our left we heard deep Lanzo's bell,  
And knew what hope of home its music gave.

Then down an English lane, through English air,  
    We, but just now in Italy, passed on,  
    A blackbird carolled with a voice of May,  
    When sudden at our feet a sapphire shone,  
And with its villages reflected fair,  
    Blue deeps—a heaven on earth—Lugano lay !

# *Sonnets*

## A STORM

ON MONTE GENEROSO

THROUGH fragrant beechen groves we speed our  
way ;  
Below, the villages from steep to steep  
Crowd round their churches close, like flocks of  
sheep  
Huddled about their shepherds in dismay ;  
The Lombard plain's great level—blue and grey,  
Through which the coiling rivers gleam and  
sweep  
Like a sun-smitten, sail-flecked, shadowy deep—  
Rolls into distance, with a vast inlay  
Of towns and towers unnumbered ; furthest seen,  
A snowy bar of never-melting cloud,  
Borne high on purple wings, the mountains  
stand,  
And sudden from the peaks of Oberland  
To Piedmont's nearest spur of misty green  
Fierce lightnings flash, the thunder peals aloud.

# *Sonnets*

## THE LOST HALF-HOUR

LUGANO, MIDNIGHT, MAY 31, 1894

LAST night the clocks that clanged from every tower  
Struck twelve, then, leaping forward, lightly  
went,

And Europe's middle nations by consent  
Gave to the hand of Death a full half-hour.

If mortals had such arbitrary power,

What hours of wrong, what moments idly spent  
Should we consign to endless banishment,  
Or give to dull oblivion for his dower !

We would not wait for midnight's drowse of sleep,  
Nor make-believe with cog and weight and wheel  
And senseless dial to cast the time away ;  
But wide-awake, and in the face of day  
Our shears should cut, albeit the wound was deep,  
And trust Love's full forgetfulness to heal.

*See Appendix.*

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE CHAPEL OF THE ANNUNCIATION

SACRO MONTE, VARESE

HARD by the Gate of Joy is nobly set  
    A chapel to the Lady of the Rose ;  
    Who, crossing from the fountain, thither goes,  
May see a simple bedchamber complete  
With such adorning as for maids is meet :  
    Beside the bed, all ranged in order close,  
    Are set the shoes, the basket for her hose  
Stands near, unruffled lies the coverlet.

And all the air is quiet, but I might see  
    One heart beat fast in wonder what would prove  
    The angel's salutation in her ears :  
'Hail, Mary ! for the Lord is come to thee.'  
    Speechless she stands, while o'er her floats the dove,  
    And dovelike in her innocence she hears.

# *Sonnets*

## EVENING AT SACRO MONTE

VARESE

How falls the evening on Varese's plain  
When over Monte Rosa day declines!—  
A cool air whispers in among the vines;  
The swifts cry loud, and from her grove again  
The nightingale retells her love and pain;  
White lies the lake, stand purple-dark the pines;  
Unseen before to sudden brightness shines  
Now town, now tower, like lilies after rain.

Then populous cities tremble into haze,  
The silver roads gleam out and fade afar,  
The lucent mists go wandering out of sight,  
Till, though Bisbino show his silver star,  
Our sacred mountain's shadow as we gaze  
Grows, and Val Gagna darkens into night.

## *Sonnets*

### ON THE ROOF OF THE DUOMO, MILAN, AT ANTHEM TIME

HERE on this marble mountain, as I stand  
    Among its multitudes as white as snow  
    Of forms fresh-winged for Heaven, who fain  
        would go

But linger, waiting God's august command,  
I hear the cupola, Omodei planned,  
    And Croce's tower, throb loud, while far below  
    Organ and chant would have us mortals know  
How heart of stone can join the angel band.

Then with triumphal benison, the choir  
    Of saints, who bore the cross and wear the crown,  
    Breaks into Alleluias with accord ;  
    And sounding forth beyond the purple town,  
From Lambro's tide to Monte Viso's spire,  
    A people's praise floats upward to the Lord.

# *Sonnets*

## IN MILAN CATHEDRAL

FORTH from the sun-lit city's dazzling square,  
    The cloistral mart, the teeming colonnade,  
    I passed through gates of silence into shade,  
Blind for the sudden contrast, and was 'ware  
Of shadowy congregations bowed in prayer ;  
    And while through awesome dusk an organ made  
    Its moan, one murmured, and a phantom swayed  
And tossed dark arms above the altar-stair.

High over all, in His death agony—  
    The sole weird gleam in that cathedral gloom—  
    Hung Christ in utter friendlessness of woe ;  
    I felt fresh hours of darkness and of doom,  
I heard a great exceeding bitter cry—  
    'Friend ! brother ! why dost thou forsake Me  
    so ?'

# *Sonnets*

## IN THE REFECTORY, MILAN

As one sits in front of Leonardo's great picture of the Last Supper, one may see inscribed upon the walls the motto,  
'COMEDITE AMICI HIS CONTENTI SIMUS.'

AY, we may feed, and therewith be content,  
    Seeing for those who gaze on yonder square  
    The painter Leonardo gives the fare ;  
For though he failed him of his full intent,  
And the false oil with truest colour blent  
    Has left the Christ a phantom on the air  
    Of the blue twilight, still the face is there,  
We know the Man Divine, Da Vinci meant.

They scarce can speak ; they mutter, 'Is it I ?'  
    Save Judas, he can boldly ask the Lord,  
    For he has heard what Peter whispered John.  
James draws his breath for horror, says no word,  
    But one majestic Face looks sadly on,  
Less sorrowful for death than treachery.



# Sonnets

## AT COMO CATHEDRAL

### PLINY'S STATUE

HERE sits in marble, with his scroll in hand,  
The student-lover of the Larian lake,  
Whom Trajan trusted for his wisdom's sake ;  
Who, going governor to the Asian land,  
Waited his Lord's imperial command,  
What steps to stay that heresy he should take,  
Which, in the name of Christ, had dared forsake  
The temple courts, and all Jove's altars banned.

He saw Vesuvius' ashes blur the sky  
And bury Herculaneum ; dreamed not Rome  
Would sink in fiercer fires ; nor ever knew  
That 'harmless superstition, doomed to die  
A natural death,' would to his honouring come,  
With sweet forgiveness for the hand that slew.

*See Appendix.*

# *Sonnets*

## MORNING AT SOGLIO

FRESH from the silence of Lombardia's plain,  
    How pleasant, Soglio, on thy lawns to hear  
    The sound of falling waters, far and near !  
The roar of Mera, careless of all rain,  
Knowing 'Bondasca' gives her snowy gain ;  
    The flute of ouzel, and that chime most dear  
    To him who loves the simple mountaineer—  
The mellow cow-bells, with their soothing strain.

But sweeter far it is to wake at morn  
    And hear above the murmur of the stream  
    The children's voices, and the pattering feet  
    Of friends, that for another glad day meet—  
The goats—who come obedient to the horn,  
    Drink at the fount, and vanish like a dream.

# *Sonnets*

## THE WITNESS OF THE FLOWERS

AT PIAN LUTHERO, SOGLIO

No wonder, in the valley far below,  
That Luther's meadow every June is white  
With fair St. Bruno's stars ; that on this height,  
Round Luther's Plain, the scarlet lilies blow :  
For here men stood who, brave to overthrow  
That creed which hung between them and the  
Light,  
Man's mediatorial darkness, claimed the right  
Of lonely souls, their Father's love to know.

Wherefore each Spring the white flowers' starry host  
Gleams in yon valley meadow, to proclaim  
That there of old, upon a Christmas morn,  
To Bethlehem's star, a people's vow was sworn,  
And, symbol of God's glorious Pentecost,  
Here lilies break to scarlet tongues of flame.

# *Sonnets*

## OVER THE SPLUGEN

### THE NAVY'S CROSS

I, WANDERING up by steep St. Jacomo,  
Where, swift for Barbarossa's ancient halls  
The Liro leaps, and fills the valley walls  
With thunder, thought how hither long ago  
Macdonald pushed his cannon through the snow,  
Battling with winter ; heard his bugle-calls,  
Saw regiments swept to death by avalanche falls,  
Men mad for fear, who quailed not at the foe.

Fame of thy deed, Macdonald, shall not cease  
While men praise war ; but lo ! this iron cross  
Tells how some simple labourer toiling died :  
You hewed a mountain path in warrior pride—  
His venture was a nobler thing—his loss  
Dear life, in service of the way of Peace.

*See Appendix.*

# *Sonnets*

## MY FRIEND AND I

### THE SPLÜGEN PASS

THERE in the barren pass I saw him stand,  
His yellow hair, his eyes that seemed to shine  
Like those forget-me-nots of blue divine  
That gem the mountain slopes. ‘My Fatherland!’  
He cried, ‘with breath of Home my brows are  
fanned!’  
And down, through cowbell chimes and odorous  
pine,  
Toward the cradle of the nursling Rhine  
We went with hearts together, hand in hand.

There leapt the rushing torrent blanched by snow,  
That keeps a nation strong and sings it free;  
And as I gazed, the gates of Time flung wide,  
The self-same river with primæval tide  
Made mine own England out of darkness grow,  
And swept a path for the encircling sea.

# *Sonnets*

## KURHAUS, BRÜNIG

HIGH on the bowery pass the hostel stood,  
    All day the warblers filled the balmy air  
    With life's intoxication, driving care  
And pain and passionless being from the wood ;  
All night the cricket and his merry brood  
    Chirped of content, and down the mountain-stair,  
    Across the vale, with silver-flashing hair  
The torrent sisters sang of summer flood.

Around the house were quiet leafy places,  
    Where pathways led from glade to beechen glade  
    With irresistible windings, and sweet lure  
    From Alp to Alp—so tranquil, so secure,  
You almost thought to see the shy fawn faces,  
    And felt that Pan's old empire was remade.

# *Sonnets*

## THE FALLS OF THE REICHENBACH

THROUGH houses blackened by the fire's fierce tongue  
We crossed the Aar, we clomb the mountain-  
stair,  
And sudden o'er a chalet-roof were 'ware  
Of a huge cloud of whitest smoke that sprung  
Forth from a cleft, and bellowed loud, and clung  
And belched as Hell had opened wide on air,  
While voices of the doomed in wild despair  
O'er Hasli's vale in lamentation hung.

There came a child ; no fear was in her face,  
And following up the Reichenbach, we found  
The Rosenloui's gift of melting snow ;  
A thousand angel-figures seemed to throw  
Hands over head and leap with jubilant sound  
In flowing skirts of unimagined grace.

## *Sonnets*

### FROM MEIRINGEN TO ROSENLAUI

WE left that vale of waters where the air  
    Is never silent ; Reichenbach outspoke  
    With voice of thunder from his cloud of smoke,  
Wherein he hides his restlessness and care.  
Wet with his breath, we climbed the stony stair,  
    Till Rosenlauri's wonder on us broke,  
    And Wellhorn with her pines and glacier-cloak  
Cast round her shoulders rose : peace, peace was  
    there.

It seemed as if the torrent at our side  
    By such tranquillity 'was dispossessed  
    Of its own natural haste, forgot the falls  
    And foam of Rosenlauri's water-walls,  
And dreaming that its calm would still abide,  
    Bade weary hearts a little while have rest.



# *Sonnets*

## BETWEEN ROSENLAUI AND THE SCHWARZWALD

THE huts were closed, no cowbells chiming clear  
Told that swift June had overtaken May,  
The Reichenbach in sorrow by our way  
Made moan with waters colourless and drear,  
And those dark pines that murmured sadly near  
Stood without song of bird, and seemed to say  
Grim Wellhorn's pitiless heights of silver-grey  
Had filled their hearts from youth with sense of fear.

Then at my feet in multitudes I saw  
Blue gentian and the mealy primrose shine,  
And heard far-off a happy goat-herd boy  
Call to his fellow through the groves of pine ;  
Methought, such souls no wilderness can awe,  
Youth's quintessential life is fearless joy.

# *Sonnets*

## AT INTERLAKEN

FROM loud Italia and her echoing streets,  
Her ash-grey rivers and her songless plain,  
How good to hear the blackbird's jocund strain,  
And rest upon your walnut-shadowed seats  
Where Bodeli's emerald river brims and fleets  
Southward,—to watch the mower pile his wain  
Here in your mighty mead, and feel again  
The 'Mountain Maiden' temper noontide heats.

Bodeli! the monks who built their house of prayer,  
Or round their cloister-meadow set sweet shade,  
If e'er they felt their hearts in vain had striven  
To break earth-fetters so much beauty made,  
Lifted their eyes, and Jungfrau shining fair  
Caught up their souls unerringly to Heaven.

# *Sonnets*

## THE JUNGFRAU

FROM THE HOHEWEG, INTERLAKEN

IN that old cloistral mead of grass and flower  
    Beneath the mossy walnuts' gathering shade,  
    We watched the snow-white mighty Mountain-  
    Maid

Go through her changes, felt her glorious dower  
Of calm and purity, and knew the power  
    Wherewith she comes all mortal hearts to aid,  
    When sure of life hereafter, unafraid,  
She waits in patience her appointed hour.

The sunlight faded from her virgin crown,  
    And there she sat majestic, spectral, pale,  
    Till all her long day's unremembered grace  
    Reborn with roseate splendours flushed her face,  
    And o'er the undying Lady of the vale  
The deathless stars with welcoming look down.

# *Sonnets*

## AT BREITLAUENEN

### SCHYNYGE PLATTE

WHO 'neath Breitlauenen's larches seeks his rest,  
    What time from Niederhorn's empurpled walls  
    The first night-shadow over Brienz falls,  
When all the flame that ever fired the west  
Burns through soft haze on Thun's resplendent  
    breast—

    Will hear such silver chime of cattle-calls  
    As needs must charm the ear it quite enthralls,  
And make him feel the mountain life is best.—

For in the plain, 'twixt either sister lake,  
    Brown dwellings swarm like busy clustering bees  
    That know no rest ; there commerce cries her  
    wares,  
    There labourers patch the earth with purple  
    squares,  
    Down there are hates, resentments, jealousies ;  
Here at Breitlauenen, hearts can never ache.

# *Sonnets*

## ON THE GEISSHORN

### SCHYNYGE PLATTE

IF one should ask where mortal man may stand  
Who feels for this life's littleness forlorn,  
To know cloud mysteries, learn how Heaven is  
born,  
How earth was built, and with what prodigal hand  
She yields her jewels when Junetide gives command—  
Here would I set him on this grassy horn,  
When unimaginably bright the morn  
Shines on the silent peaks of Oberland.

Then the deep gorge is glad with torrent tone  
That bids the great world rest not but rejoice,  
Then in the 'Vale of Waters' to the dawn  
The Staubbach waves her flag of rainbow lawn,  
And hard by, seated on his mighty throne,  
The young glad day sends forth a glorious voice.

## *Sonnets*

### THE CHAMOIS OF LAUTERBRUNNEN

THEY penned it for a peepshow in the vale,  
A creature of the clouds and of the air,  
Bold as the wind the barren heights to dare,  
With heart as restless as the flying gale.  
How could its life not droop, its spirits fail ?  
He saw the sun on Jungfrau shining fair—  
Those silver cliffs, the craggy precipice-stair  
That led to pastures only he could scale.

All day white Lüttschne through his prison gate  
Sang loud of liberty ; he felt the smoke  
Of Staubbach free as angels, and one day  
He caught the far-off whistle of his mate  
Sound from the Mönch's dark shoulders, and  
men say  
'A chamois died !'—'twas Freedom's heart that  
broke.

# Sonnets

## THE GUIDE'S FAREWELL

TO ULRICH LAUENER AT LAUTERBRUNNEN

LAST veteran of a lion-hearted band,  
    Withered of form, in spirit unsubdued,  
    The conqueror of the mountain solitude,  
He stood alone ; his snow-seared eyes still scanned  
The well-loved heights : I held his horny hand,  
    That hand so sure in all vicissitude,—  
    And this was he who first of men had stood  
On many a virgin peak of Oberland ;

And this was he who well had fenced with death,  
    Who well had kept all charges to him given.  
    Now he was old, his bones were racked with  
    pain ;  
    ‘Farewell,’ I cried, ‘ brave heart, we meet again !’  
And Ulrich answered grave, beneath his breath,  
    ‘Master, no more on earth ! perchance in Heaven.’

*See Appendix.*

## *Sonnets*

### THE WIRTSCHAFT ON THE OLD FOOTPATH TO MÜRREN

WHERE Staubbach gathers strength within the wood  
    To pour itself in music to the vale,  
    The rest-house stands, whose welcome cannot fail  
For all who deem that shade and song are good.  
Here, when the midday sun with silver flood  
    Pours over Jungfrau, and the Monk is pale,  
    Oft have I listened to the traveller's tale,  
And known the joy of wandering brotherhood.

For all who hither climb or here descend  
    Bring with them scent of pines and sight of  
    flowers,  
    And the continual sound of falling streams,  
    The glowing mountains minister to dreams  
    Of cloudless sun, perpetual summer hours,  
And not a man but feels his fellow friend.



## *Sonnets*

### ON THE KURHAUS TERRACE, MÜRREN

FROM Eiger round to snowy Gspaltenhorn

No cloud can dare to fleck the tranquil sky,  
The redcap warbles, and the wild choughs cry,  
While sound of waterfalls from distance borne  
Through lilac-scented air this sunny morn  
Brings to us sense of cool and melody :  
What heart can fail to put the future by,  
What soul but feels the present less forlorn ?

And if the avalanche thunder from the height,  
It thunders harmlessly ; on yonder hill,  
With its grey bastions and its golden towers,  
The echoes die, they cannot even fright  
The chamois feeding safe among the flowers,  
And all the world seems here secure from ill.

## *Sonnets*

ON THE SCHILTHORN, JUNE 21, 1896

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH BY LIGHTNING  
OF MRS. ARBUTHNOT

STILL on the Schilthorn stands the funeral-stone,  
    Though six-and-thirty years have flown to-day  
    Since Heaven's fire-chariot bore the bride away  
And left her lover on the mount alone ;  
Few pass without a deep-drawn sigh, and none  
    Speak as they pass ; in secret many pray ;  
    And when about the place fierce lightnings play,  
Grief sounds within the thunder's solemn tone.

There is small need of monumental cross,  
    As long as hearts are human and tears fall  
    For life cut short, beloved from lover torn ;  
    The whole drear scene from 'neath this snowy  
        horn  
To Jungfrau's height is eloquent of loss—  
    The mountain is the Bride's memorial.

# *Sonnets*

## IN THE BLUMENTHAL, MURREN

BRING the tired hearts whom Nature's power can aid,  
    By this world's use benumbed or crushed by ills,  
    Here to the crescent circle of these hills,  
Where sit the kings of winter snow-arrayed.  
Hence shall ye watch clouds born, see thunder made,  
    Catch the 'Monk's' music with his thousand  
        rills,  
    And feel what fear the 'Trembling Valley' fills  
When Jungfrau roars her ceaseless cannonade.

And if at all the terror of the place,  
    The unapproachable weight of wonder, make  
    The soul shrink back, and sense of beauty fail,  
Let soldanella's thousands, and the race  
    Of sulphur wind-flowers and the crocus pale  
    Bid fearless love and reverent joy awake.

# *Sonnets*

## ALPINE ANEMONES

IN THE BLUMENTHAL AT MÜRREN

CRUSHED by the overpowering bastion wall  
Of Jungfrau's height, appalled and soul-oppressed,  
We turned for breathing to a wider west,  
And climbed the narrow path to Blumenthal ;  
Sadly the herdsman patched his broken stall,  
So long the snow his pasture had possessed ;  
The winter cold had burnt the mountain-breast,  
And driven the flowers, we thought, beyond recall.

Then sudden by a stream's impetuous race,  
Like sunshine breaking upward through the ground,  
A host of frail anemones were seen,  
Part white, part yellow, dancing on the green :  
We felt our souls unto their measure bound  
To find light hearts in such a lonely place.

# *Sonnets*

## SPRING CROCUSES

IN THE BLUMENTHAL, MÜRREN

WE are the sun's first couriers, and we know  
    What grass shall clothe the mountain and the  
        moor,  
    What flowers shall bless the children of the poor,  
And set the humblest cottage rooms aglow ;  
Here, long before the herdsmen open throw  
    Their chalet windows and the frost-browned  
        door,  
    We people with white multitudes the floor,  
And push our tender spear-heads through the snow.

And mortals, straying to our upland home,  
    Where no bees murmur yet and no birds sing,  
    Have marvelled at our boldness, and have said,  
    ‘ How are these gentle creatures unafraid ? ’—  
They have not learned that from God's hand we come  
    To speed with joy His message of the spring.

# *Sonnets*

## THE SCHWARZE MÖNCH

FROM MÜRREN

THE skirts of other mightier mountains sink  
    To sunny woods and pastures gay with flowers,  
    But to thy making there came sterner powers—  
Fear and despair, that tremble on the brink,  
And awe, that from thy presence still would shrink.  
    Thou hurlest Winter from thy snowy towers,  
    No cloud in Spring with freshness on thee lowers,  
And of the Summer rain thou dost not drink.

The million years have striven to lend thee grace,  
    Unnumbered suns have given thee gold for grey,  
    Through dawn, through dark the torrents wrap  
    thee round  
    With floating veils of soft, incessant sound ;  
Utterly naked, still thou dost out-face  
    Full glare of noon, and blush of setting day.

# *Sonnets*

## THE WENGEN THRUSH

HE never quite forgets that liquid lay  
    Who hears the warbler in the Stanstadt reeds,  
    Yet if when squirrels drop their whispering seeds  
And spruce-tufts cast their yellow hoods away  
Through Wengen woods the traveller chance to  
    stray,  
    Thenceforth all other song he little heeds—  
    He feels himself borne back to English meads  
And dreams of bluebell woods and wreaths of May.

For here with indefatigable voice  
    The speckled bird makes merry in the bush,  
    And carols forth so lustily and strong  
You might believe each thing that would rejoice—  
    Tree, flower, sun, air—had bade the happy thrush  
    To be its minister of soul and song.

## *Sonnets*

### THE RAINBOW FIELDS OF WENGEN

SUMMER and winter time should never cease,  
    So seem those snowy heights, these fields to say;  
    Let rainbows trick the air with bright array,  
And through the storm-shower let the sun speak  
    peace,  
We have no need of messengers like these,  
    No signs of bow and cloud to pass away,  
    Born of the sun and rain to longer stay,  
Earth flings her rainbow's banner on the leas.

For here when cranesbill purples all the grass,  
    June wears such colours as men see in Heaven,  
    And casts her mantle o'er the meadow slope  
So flower-embroidered, not a soul can pass  
    But feels God's covenant of love regiven,  
    And hears the undying harvest-song of hope.



# *Sonnets*

## ‘LINKST HAND,’ ON SULEGG

WHEN out of deeps abysmal Sulegg came,  
Did old Oceanus with dark-browed despair  
Sit yonder in his lone colossal chair  
To watch his ’minished kingdom as the frame  
Of earth grew visible, and did he blame  
Peak after peak uprising bald and bare,  
And laugh to see the great tides rend and tear  
The valleys with a might no hand could tame ?

Or rather, climbing to his high-built seat,  
Did some earth-giant view with cruel eyes  
The mountains lift, and life and war begin ?  
Or did the God of earth and sea and skies  
Through clouds of new-born incense at His feet  
Hear prayers of men and praise of seraphin ?

# Sonnets

## AT THE METTLEN ALP

### WENGERN

THERE, Death and Terror hold an endless reign,  
Far up, from cruel cliffs of silver-grey  
Grim glaciers break and cast their lives away  
With groaning and unutterable pain ;  
Here, Life and Peace abide ; with silver strain  
Of bells the cattle through the pine-groves stray,  
A soft wind sets the flowering firs asway  
And fills the air with pollen's golden rain.

Life ! Death !—how narrow is the gulf between !  
Yet none may dare to cross the dread crevasse—  
Here, summer-meads beneficently green,  
There, winter-heights that know no joy of grass,  
While thundering out of sight to the ravine  
All day the Jungfrau's avalanches pass.

# *Sonnets*

## THE YOUNG HERDSMAN'S DEATH

WENGERN

UPON his fir-bough mattress dying lay  
    The youngest herdsman of the Wengern folk,  
    And very tenderly the grey-beards spoke  
Of home and friends in valleys far away.  
He clasped his hands together, seemed to pray,  
    Then slept, but sudden from his dream awoke  
    Crying, 'The young bull from the pasture broke,  
But I must bring him back ere close of day.'

And he went forth in spirit to the wild,  
    His eyes are closed, his body lies stark still,  
    And round his bed gaze wistfully the kine.  
Father of all, Thou wilt receive this child  
    Who, to the last, earth's duty would fulfil,  
    For work is prayer, the labourer's wage is Thine.

# *Sonnets*

## A MEMORY AT THE MÄNNLICHEN

MARGARET

WHY should I mourn or nurse a bitter smart  
    Because no more she doth companion me ?  
    Through the dark pines her sunny face I see,  
Her laughter from the wild rock seems to start ;  
Here at the Männlichen her childish heart  
    Made winter spring, she sought the flowers with  
        glee,  
    Crocus and gentian and anemone,  
Of the live air her spirit's joy was part—

Yea, still is part ; although her feet are gone  
    To fairer heights where only angels are,  
    Her presence haunts the mountain path to-day ;  
Her gladness on this upland lingers on,  
    And not a gentian cup nor crocus star  
    But shines more bright, because she passed this  
        way.

# *Sonnets*

## THE JUNGFRAU UNVEILED

FROM WENGERN ALP

LOUD torrent voices bellowed through the mist,  
The Trumlenthal was filled with awe and  
    sound,  
We almost felt the avalanche shake the ground,  
As downward through the cloud the ice-balls hissed ;  
Then, like a lover, lo ! the strong sun kissed  
    His virgin-bride, the veil that clung around  
    Was tenderly disparted, snowy-crowned  
Her glorious head to azure heights uprist.

Even as I gazed the marvel seemed to grow,  
For on her breast a flowing scarf was seen,  
    Fold upon fold translucently revealed,  
    Part silver-frosted and part emerald-green,—  
I knew not which was fairer, crown of snow,  
    Or that deep-wrinkled, wondrous glacier-field.

# *Sonnets*

## THE ALPINE ROSE

LITTLE SCHEIDEGG

THINE is the rare, incomparable might  
    To warm a nation's heart, and year by year  
    For valley dweller and for mountaineer  
To bring new sense of summer and delight.  
June sees thee first upon the barren height  
    With iron-rusted leaves, buds bronzed and sere,  
    Then plump the petals, for the bells ring near,  
And sudden all thy plumes are flushed and bright.

Brave rhododendron ! Bacchus never gave  
    Such joy behind his thyrsus as is thine  
    When thy small thyrsus-buds to beauty break ;  
    When, filled with mountain glory as with wine,  
    The village youths thy first fair cluster take  
And dance down-hill behind the rose-crowned stave.

# *Sonnets*

## THE WARBLER'S SONG

### GRINDELWALD

COME not in August when the slopes are green  
And Eiger's robe of ermine turns to grey,—  
Come rather when the orchards gleam with  
May,

And later when the gold laburnum's screen  
Lets through the lilac's fragrance. Then is seen  
In poor men's gardens, either side the way,  
Lilies of scarlet for a king's array,  
And picris lights the fields with golden sheen.

But not for fragrant flowers nor fear of scythe  
In June I seek the pleasant alder-groves,  
Where the dark Lütſchſine pours herself along :  
It is because the little warbler loves  
To tell in June how hearts should all be blithe  
And fill the valley with exuberant song.

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE UPPER GLACIER, GRINDELWALD

I FELT upon my brow the bitter breath  
    Of irresistible woe for far and wide,  
    When o'er me hung the grey-green glacier-tide  
That seemed to threaten all the plain beneath ;  
But as with awe the ice-cold wings of death  
    Fanned the soft air, I suddenly espied,  
    Full in the torrent track, with fearless pride,  
The seedling sprang, and bloomed the cystus-wreath.

Then I bethought me how these brave things knew  
    How all the weight of desolation hung  
    There, on the dark cliff's shoulders, once had  
    been  
    But tender mist that made the valleys green,  
Dawn's lightest exhalation, and the dew  
    That feeds the flowers and keeps the pastures  
    young.



# *Sonnets*

## A RETURN TO ST. BEATENBERG

ONCE more the crags of Niederhorn we greet,  
    And face to face the snowy giants rise ;  
    Once more the lake a hundred thousand dyes  
Of peacock-green is stretched beneath our feet.  
There sits the young wood-carver in his seat ;  
    Fresh from the block, and with the same surprise,  
    The chamois gazes ; here the goatboy hies,  
And there the milkman that we used to meet.

Thrice happy hill ! the same far cuckoo calls,  
    The same shrill cricket chirps his noontide cheer,  
    The same light gleams on yonder water's breast—  
The only change beneath your sheltering walls  
    Are these tired hearts that hither come for rest,  
    To find the balm of constant friendship here.

# *Sonnets*

HÔTEL DE LA POSTE, 1890

ST. BEATENBERG

HIGH perched among the chalets on the steep,  
And fenced from all the northern winds that  
blow,

It seemed high heaven's tranquillity to know,  
To feel the calm of emerald waters deep,  
And breathe the dark fir-forests' fragrant sleep ;  
In front, those three great giant kings of snow  
Sat throned, until for robes of roseate glow  
Night gave them starry diadems to keep.

At morn the goat-bells woke the house with cheer,  
At noon the crickets chirped with merry mind,  
While old men rested in the bowery shade ;  
There was no hostel all the upland near  
That seemed so well for weary mortals made,  
So happy, simple-hearted, homely, kind.

# *Sonnets*

## THE VISION OF KINGS

ST. BEATENBERG

THE daylight fell, and vast o'ershadowings  
Filled with their purple dark the valleys under,  
When swift as thought Heaven's veil was rent  
asunder,

And gave us vision of the mountain kings ;  
Their thrones—carved ivory, unsubstantial things,  
Such as men only dream of—seemed a wonder  
Of palpitating fire, and grey with thunder  
A huge cloud bore them up on plummy wings.

Then forth on Eiger's topmost peak out-stepped  
The full orb'd moon, and swift away she drew  
Death-pale—her envy could not brook the sight,  
For while beneath her feet earth's darkness crept,  
These mountain kings in power and glory grew  
To stay the sun, and to delay the night.

## *Sonnets*

### AFTERGLOW ON THE ABENDBERG

THE day had been a day of clouds that lower—  
Such days as Cumbrian shepherds only know—  
No sun, no moon, when sudden from below  
O'er the still lake the sunset smote with power,  
And the grey wrinkled cliff gave back the dower  
Of such transcendent magic afterglow  
As made one long with shallop-oars to row,  
And share the radiance of its rosy shower.

So have I seen upon an aged face  
Storm-wrinkled, gazing from its height of peace  
O'er the calm deeps of Death that lie before,  
At sunset-time, a sudden wondrous grace  
That made me yearn to reach the further shore,  
And share their joy whose light can never cease.

# *Sonnets*

## A GLIMPSE OF THE JUNGFRAU

ST. BEATENBERG

As one in sorrow, mourning for his bride,  
Sees through his cloud of winter-grief arise  
The well-loved form with summer in her eyes,  
And dreams again he views her in her pride  
Of snowy-pure apparel at his side,  
And feels, in sooth, too happy for surprise,  
Till the form fades, the dream of beauty dies,  
And he mourns on with soul unsatisfied,—

So, after days of darkness, did it seem,  
Suddenly splendid out of middle Heaven  
The Maiden Mount that is the bride of dawn  
Showed snowy pure, as swift to be withdrawn—  
I well-nigh wished the clouds had never given  
The glory of that dissoluble dream.

# *Sonnets*

## IN BUTTERFLY-LAND

ST. BEATENBERG

It seemed as if all butterflies that flew,  
    By some attractive fragrance in the air  
    Too subtle for man's finding, settled there ;  
The scarlet-ounced Apollo came to view  
His mate more beauteous in her bridal hue ;  
    Thither fritillaries floated large and fair  
    Like burnished bronze, and wings shone every-  
    where,  
That made the grass to blossom violet-blue.

And thither golden-green the beetles came,  
    With fragile things of emerald gauze and light,  
    That rested till some sudden ecstasy  
    Caught them and cast them sunward ;—ah !  
    thought I,  
These all are lovers, followers of one flame,  
    Their day how brief, how glad, they fear no night !

# *Sonnets*

## IN CRICKET-LAND

FROM ST. BEATENBERG TO INTERLAKEN

ON that beguiling forest-road that leads  
The upland shepherd to the mid-lake town,  
Rapt by the double view, I sat me down  
Where Oberland's three glorious mountain-heads  
Shone snowy white among the firs ; thence meads  
Sloped to a sapphire flood with cliffs grey-brown  
Beside the hermit's cavern, and grass unmown  
Was flecked with daisies, hawkweed, sorrel-seeds.

And there was wondrous chirping in the grass,  
And every living emerald that had wings,  
And every idle creature that had breath  
Seemed there in gay processional to pass,  
Saying, ' In Heaven above, on earth beneath,  
The gladdest place is where the cricket sings.'

## Sonnets

### THE GENTIANELLA (*GENTIANA VERNA*)

ST. BEATENBERG

UPON that 'Hill of him God blessed' all dew  
    Leapt into varied blossom, all the light  
    Took living form and colour infinite ;  
But 'mid the multitude of flowers that grew  
I noted one of most ethereal hue,  
    Of starry form and dazzling to the sight,  
    So full of blue as just to need the white,  
And white enough to make one feel the blue.

It was a flower the chalet children call  
    'Heaven's-bloom' ; no scent of fragrant breath it  
    had,  
    But to its starry petals there was given  
The quintessential radiance sucked from all  
    Blue skies and lakes that ever made earth glad—  
    It seemed, in truth, a messenger from Heaven !



# *Sonnets*

## AFTER A STORM AT KANZELI

ST. BEATENBERG

BENEATH high Kanzeli's towers of silver-grey  
    We saw the sudden rainbow like a wreath  
    Of softest filmy blossom, flung beneath,  
And colour flashed from every diamond spray.  
We cried—' Has earth more heavenly-born display  
    To call the wanderer upward? can the breath  
    Of storm a show more prodigal bequeath  
To ease this wild, impracticable way?'

For ne'er on lawns of gladder green and gold  
    Gleamed the bronze huts above us on the height,  
    Nor lovelier through dim veils of sapphire mist  
    Rose rampart walls of gleaming amethyst,  
    Nor sweetlier leapt the valleys back to light,  
Nor swiftlier were the gates of Heaven unrolled.

## *Sonnets*

### A SERMON IN THE CHURCH AT ST. BEATENBERG

THEY sat with withered cheeks on withered hands,  
O'er wrinkled brows the dark lace-veiling fell,  
With reverent gaze they heard the preacher tell  
In simple words God's love and God's commands.

Wearied with toil upon their stubborn lands,  
They learned that where the blessed ones shall  
dwell  
Are living waters from a springing well,  
Where alway Christ the Water-giver stands.

To willing ears the parable went home,  
Willing as his to whom was promise given,  
'This day shalt thou find rest in Paradise,'  
And I could see that tears were in their eyes  
To think a day of rest should ever come  
When they should drink the painless streams of  
Heaven.

# *Sonnets*

## AT KANZELI

ABOVE ST. BEATENBERG

LORD, what a pulpit is this seat of Thine !

Here canst Thou speak a word to every nation,

Bidding them bring a soul of adoration,

And cast their hearts in worship at Thy shrine.

But if they come not, snowy mountains shine,

Blue lake and sky and wondrous vegetation,

These give Thee glory, and for congregation

Thou hast Thy silent multitude of pine.

These hear and these obey Thee ; mortal men

Hearing obey not ; ceaselessly the fountains

Sing to Thee psalms, the forest claps its hands,

The cattle roving in their tinkling bands

Chime to the chorus, and from far-off mountains

The falling avalanche thunders an Amen.

# *Sonnets*

## THE BIRENFLUH

ST. BEATENBERG

I NEVER pass this towery, bastioned hill,  
    That looks upon the hollow gorge, where flow  
    The sounding streams of Gemmenalphorn's snow  
To bless the vale and turn the water-mill,  
Without a thought how patient and how still  
    Stand the dark firs in their embattled row  
    Of ceaseless watch—how stubbornly they grow,  
What soldier bearing, what enduring will!

The drums of Heaven for battle roll afar,  
    The storm-winds blow their trumpets, and the  
    stream  
    Leaps its fierce horses foaming from the steep ;  
But these dark sentinels—they only seem  
    With closer front a sterner guard to keep,  
Sworn to obey one Lord in peace and war.

# *Sonnets*

## AT AMISBUHL

ST. BEATENBERG

OFt in the dreary flats of common care,  
    Fordoned by heat of work and cloud of pain,  
    The hills I climbed, I climb in thought again,  
And feel wide sun and breathe calm crystal air.  
Below me lies some lake of azure fair  
    Dappled by cloud, or grey with drift of rain,  
    Snows shine above a mountain-girdled plain,  
And white falls flash with rainbows in their hair.

Then while the castled town asleep is laid,  
    On Rabenfluh I breathe the pine-tree balm,  
    Or when the mid-mere valley in the heat  
    Is throbbing, rest on Heimweh's woody seat,  
Or here while Abendberg is gathering shade  
    Feel Amisbuhl's incomparable calm.

# *Sonnets*

## COWBELLS ON THE RISCHEREN ALP

AMISBUHL, BEATENBERG

HIGH o'er the plain where Aar's green waters make  
A girdle of perpetual hyaline,  
When bees are murmuring at the cups of wine  
The plane-flowers bring them, oft my rest I take,  
Lulled by that sound which cures all ears that ache,  
Sound of the bells with which the feeding kine  
Charm the soft air to assonance divine,  
And far and near their blessed joyaunce shake.

Lo! as I listen, words of peace and strife,  
Of joy, of calm, of labour, and of prayer  
Run to harmonious concord ; I can tell  
Here chinks the forge, the bugle echoes there,  
Here sounds the band, glad peals for man and wife  
Ring, and for praise the deep cathedral bell.

## *Sonnets*

### DOWN THE LAKE TO THUN

WE heard the holy hermit's sounding rill,  
    Passed Spietz's castle-cluster, snowy-white  
    Against the purple Niesen, caught the light,—  
Gleam after rain—on craggy Sygriswyl,  
We scented Gonten's laurels, gazed our fill  
    At towery Oberhofen, full in sight  
    Of Blümlis' snowy splendour saw the night  
Of storm round Stockhorn, felt the thunder's thrill.

But not till Aar between its brakes and bowers  
    Bare us with rapturous haste toward the town,  
    And terraced roofs and church and castle-hold  
    From heights of quiet graciousness looked down,  
We knew old Thun's hereditary power  
    To charm us with the life of centuries old.

## *Sonnets*

### AT THE CHURCH GATE, OBERHOFEN

BENEATH their open canopy of brown

The bells had ceased to call to morning prayer,  
And climbing up the Oberhofen stair,

There in the churchyard court I sat me down.

The preacher passing eyed me with a frown,

‘Why linger, friend?—the faithful enter there.’

I answered, ‘Here the blackbird’s hymn is rare,  
These chestnut flowers might weave an angel’s  
crown!’

For all the bees that ever hummed above

Had made within that leafy choir of shade

An organ murmuring out an anthem’s tone ;

The pastor preached, the people sang and prayed,

I felt with bees that prayer and work were one,  
With flower and bird that praise is life and love.



# Sonnets

## IN THE BAUMGARTEN

### AT THUN

GREEN sapphire rolls the Aar beneath our feet,  
    And pine-clad Grüsisberg, where ravens call,  
    Rises behind, a sheltering mountain-wall ;  
Tall poplars gird us ; from the garden-seat  
We hear all birds that ever made air sweet  
    Sing through the day ; all flowers are ours, and all  
    Delicious orchard-scents upon us fall,  
And butterflies float in on our retreat  
With noiseless beauty ; lizards bask and run,  
    A fountain flashes silver ; o'er our rest  
The red-roofed Castle of the Counts of Thun  
    Looks down to give protection to the guest,  
And, through the pear-trees snow-white in the sun,  
    A church-bell chimes to bid each hour be blest.

## *Sonnets*

### THE TOMBSTONE OF HEINRICH VON STRATTLINGEN, THE BARD

IN THE BÄCHIHÖLZI, THUN

HERE lies the knightly bard ; his head is bare,  
His feet are on the lion, and his shield  
Shows the barbed arrow ; gauntleted and steeled,  
His hands are closed and lifted as in prayer :  
So during life was reverence his care,  
So to the beast in man he would not yield,  
But Orpheus-like he tamed him, so a-field  
Honour he won with his song-arrows rare.

Still, in the old-world singer's sure retreat,  
Where lake, and lawn, and snowy height combined  
Rouse dullest hearts to passion, thought is sweet,  
We feel the breathings of a master mind.  
Death drove the Poet from his garden-seat,  
But left the soul of all his song behind.

*See Appendix.*

## Sonnets

### ON THE INSCRIPTION OVER THE DOORWAY OF THE OLD SCHLOSS AT THE BAUMGARTEN, THUN

‘ INVENI PORTUM, SPES ET FORTUNA VALETE ’

‘ HARBOUR at last ! hope, fortune, fare ye well ! ’

For I am tired of wandering, and the star  
By which I steered in quest of hope afar  
Has set, the waves at morn with ceaseless swell  
Sank not, but rose to storm as night-time fell,  
And beating landwards, where the quicksands  
are,  
I for the pilot call across the bar,  
And steer towards the haven-citadel.

Yet neither song of bird in Maytide bower,  
Nor blossoming orchard, nor rich lilac scent,  
Nor gold laburnum dropping at the door,  
Can soothe my soul with such prevailing power  
As finding here what poorest of the poor  
May feel—the joy of heaven and earth—Content.

## *Sonnets*

### AT THE MINNESINGER'S SEAT ABOVE CHARTREUSE

THUN

WE may not watch thee sitting in the shade  
    In front of Blümlis and its purple shore,  
    Far-seeing fancy cannot quite restore  
The knightly form that here his ballads made;  
Yet, Minnesinger ! mightily to aid  
    Come the sweet presences that came of yore,  
    The merry cricket chirping at his door,  
The gossamer rainbows flashed from blade to blade.

One sweeter presence in this beechen grove  
    You left, we hear it in the cuckoo's call,  
    We see her bending o'er the blackbird's nest,  
    The flowers come with her still for festival,  
    She is a form more beauteous than the rest,  
Where all is beauty, and her name is Love !

# *Sonnets*

## IN THUN CHURCHYARD

### AT SERVICE-TIME

FRIENDS ! I a dead man laid upon this hill :  
    If I could hear the great bell's hollow sound  
    Call to the town that Sabbath had come round,  
Then feet move near, then silence deep, until  
The anthem floated o'er me and the thrill  
    Of that sweet blackbird touched me in my  
    swound,  
    I should leap forth with joyance from the ground  
And join the congregation with good will.

For in this grave there is no voice of praise,  
    No hint of melody, no hope of song ;  
    The heart is dust, lips dry, and ears are dull ;  
While yonder hills to which your eyes ye raise—  
    Yon brimming river blue and beautiful,  
From height to depth man's hymn of praise prolong.

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE CASTLE, THUN

I—SITTING here above the quiet town,  
Whose only voice was gently murmuring Aar,  
While near, the sweet narcissus with its star  
Shone through the shade, and tulip-banners flown  
Marshalled the flowers—heard sudden trumpets blown,  
Saw men from forth the turrets gaze afar,  
Felt once again the dreadfulnes of war,  
And heard the stern portcullis rattle down.

But at a voice the vision seemed to cease,  
A child laughed out, a mother at her door  
Talked to her babe, then left it in the sun  
To tend her flowers,—the time had sure begun  
When God should give earth's castles to the poor,  
To plant their walls with happiness and peace.

## *Sonnets*

### ON FINDING A SWIFT IN THE CASTLE PRISON AT THUN

You of the soft grey throat and ebon wing,  
    Was it the soul of sympathy and grace  
    For these poor mortals in their piteous case,  
That thus aside your freedom you dared fling,  
Your joy of flight beyond imagining—  
    Gave up the fierce excitement of your race,  
    And lonely in this lamentable place,  
Here to dumb walls a speechless prisoner cling ?

Or have you come into this hall of doom  
    With message of a wider Heaven above,  
    From Him who only breaks the prison bars,  
    On solid earth or in the trembling stars,  
For all whose feet are set in narrow room,  
    Who gives us freedom when He grants us Love ?

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE RABENFLUH

THUN

God sent them sun, and since they loved the light  
    Straight up for Heaven obediently they grew ;  
    God sent them storm, and, tried in every thew,  
Yea, even with pain, they waxed by day and night.  
And there they stood broad-based upon the height,  
    A silent, uncommunicative crew,  
    Till the clouds gathered and the lightning flew,  
Then all sang loud together in their might.

And wandering through that solemn-hearted wood,  
    As in some vast cathedral, on the hill,  
    I heard soft organ music, angel speech,  
Saying, ‘ Thrice blest is human brotherhood,  
    Where each unjealous seeks the sun, and each  
    Strong for the storm can commune or be still.’



# *Sonnets*

## AT THE SCHWABIS

THUN

BEYOND the walls that Berchtold's chivalry  
    Built up against Burgundian hate and pride,  
    Rolls the blue Aar in swift impetuous tide  
To meet all foes with exultation free ;  
And whosoe'er its careless strength may see  
    Takes heart, and ceases to be satisfied  
    With his world's narrow limit, goes outside  
His city walls against all foes that be.

Sure of its course, the river, rolled along,  
    Slides down, and shakes its thousand plumes of  
    snow,  
    And curved to sapphire, thunders at the fall :  
    So the brave heart beyond the city wall,  
    If but life's continuity it know—  
Its whence, its whither—falls, but still is strong.

## *Sonnets*

### THE GOLDEN STAR OF THUN

BRAVE little town ! the rushing stream that makes  
    Its murmur round thine island-homes, from far  
    Brings echo of the elements of war,  
Crashing of avalanche, roar of ice that breaks  
Beneath the arrows of the sun, who shakes  
    Whole mountains into nothing ; but thy star  
    That shines on castle-steep and rolling Aar,  
From red-hot streams of blood its glory takes.

And still in memory of the days when Thun  
    Broke the Burgundian host and made it reel,  
Upon thy plains we hear the echoing gun,  
    We watch the squadrons march, the horses wheel,  
And see each week thy lads together run  
    To hurl the horn-winged bolt from bows of steel.

*See Appendix.*

# *Sonnets*

## THE STOCKHORN

DEO CREATORI

THIS is the purple throne whereon the day  
    First takes her seat and latest leaves her crown,  
    And when she lays her rosy mantle down,  
Here first with starry sceptre night holds sway.  
Snow-clad, or in the ermine of the May,  
    Its splendour haunts the valley and the town,  
    Whether beneath the thunder-clouds it frown,  
Or in the summer sun shines silver-gray.

But on this day of glory and of love,  
    When smiles the plain beneath the mountain-  
    walls,  
    And laughs blue lake and blossoming river-  
    shore,  
One sitteth on the throne all kings above,  
    Who raised the Stockhorn, and for ever calls  
    The heart of man to honour and adore.

## *Sonnets*

### THE JUDGMENT PICTURE AT ADELBODEN

IN that high vale where winter stays too long  
Kept by the hills' encircling rampart wall,  
Mist-hidden ever moaned the waterfall ;  
No cowbell chimed, I heard no sweet bird's song :  
From mountains wreathed with storm, a ghastly  
throng †  
Into a boiling caldron seemed to fall,  
And clouds, like souls in pain that could not call,  
Writhed in and out the darkened pines among.

I could not wonder by the church's door,  
Beneath the great age-blasted sycamore,  
Man should have set the terrible Day of Doom,—  
For how can hearts in utter sunlessness  
Believe a fuller light will heal and bless,  
And Love shall shine beyond the Judgment gloom ?

# *Sonnets*

## THE VILLAGE DANCE AT ADELBODEN

### A SAD FACE

It was the ending of the Sabbath Day—  
    God's gift to man of restfulness and cheer—  
    And glad from all the village chalets near  
Met men and maids. All hearts but one were gay :  
The players played, the dancers danced away,  
    To-morrow to the Alp for half a year  
    The lovers go, the loved ones linger here,  
And many a swain some last fond word will say.

There in the village inn's low-ceilèd room  
    The feet incessant beat the earthen floor ;  
    Some sang an unpremeditated strain,  
But one sad face sat silent in the gloom—  
    She could not meet to-night her love again,  
    He would not seek at morn the upland moor.

# *Sonnets*

## THE BEAR HOTEL

KANDERSTEG

AT foot of that gigantic mountain stair,  
    Straight to thy threshold all the paths incline,  
    And thou with song of waters, scent of pine,  
Canst ease poor wandering mortals of their care.  
With kind arms right across the path, and air  
    Of courteous greeting, generous design,  
    What homely hospitalities are thine,  
What chance to welcome angels unaware !

Type of the wise and good, to whom is given  
    The glory of a sure-appointed place,  
    For help to others o'er the desolate hills,  
Who greet us with unutterable grace,  
    Comfort the weary, and confirm the wills  
Of those whose souls still hesitate for Heaven.

# *Sonnets*

## IN GASTERN-THAL

### KANDERSTEG

STUNNED by the fierce, reverberating sound  
Of Kander roaring through his rocky walls  
With thunder of ten thousand waterfalls,  
I passed to wondrous quietude, and found  
Where Rest had girt his mountains all around ;  
There the streams speak not, and the sun that  
calls  
The noiseless shadows from their saffron halls,  
All day shines silent on the meadowy ground.

And in the midst, by some earth-giant hurled,  
A 'stone of help' for Thought, the preacher stands,  
He cries aloud to bid men come apart,  
And they who listen lose the troubled heart—  
They never quite come back into the world,  
Or if they come, Peace holds them by the hands.

## *Sonnets*

### ON THE GEMMI ROAD ABOVE GASTERN-THAL

THE song was heard, the singer he was hid,  
As there I listened to the organ-tone,  
Where the ten thousand waters joined in one  
With joyful chorus down to Gastern slid ;  
O how their Hallelujahs shamed and chid  
My songless heart ! when that great glory shone,  
Like to His face that none may look upon,  
The sunlit snow of Altel's pyramid.

But as I listened to that mellow flood,  
I felt my soul with ecstasy new born,  
And heard a voice from Heaven, which seemed  
to say,  
For praise arose the mighty Doldenhorn,  
For praise the vale was hollowed on the day  
God gazed upon the work and called it good.



# Sonnets

## WAYFARERS ON THE GEMMI

### IN THE ALP-SPITAL-MATTE

I MET a traveller in a desert place :

I said, ' I speak because I am a man ;

These circling cliffs are dumb since time began,

They stand for ever speechless face to face—

Yea, even the torrent hushes in this place ;

Noiseless as air yon startled chamois ran,

These flowers about our feet live out their span,

Then die into the ground, a silent race.'

And so we stood and communed for a while,

He from the Rhone, and I from Kander come ;

We shall not meet until that other land,

But I remember how he grasped my hand,

How sad eyes flashed, and wan lips seemed to smile

To hear again the accents of his home.

# *Sonnets*

## BLANC-SEE AND DAUBENSEE

GEMMI

THERE is a pool whose waters would beguile  
Men to dive down, yea, even till they die,  
In liquid depths of lapis lazuli,  
With coral wonders and with rainbow wile ;  
Not far from thence a lake that cannot smile,  
A hungry lake with livid lips doth lie,  
With face death-pale beneath the sunniest sky,  
And glance as cruel as a crocodile.

Death ! Death ! or coming swift, or coming slow,  
Come not with sweet, delicious guise of cheer,  
With rainbow hope of mere escape from ill ;  
Rather with barrenness and wreathèd snow,  
That tells the summit of the pass is near,  
And the great vision soon shall life fulfil.

# *Sonnets*

## AT THE SIGN OF THE WILDSTRUBEL

### ON THE GEMMI

THEY had the hearts of eagles, they who dared  
On this tremendous precipice to build.  
What muttering thunder meant, what lightning  
willed,  
They knew ; the winds with them their secrets shared,  
Their souls were more than mortal, and they cared  
For more than mortal vision ; here they filled  
Their hearts with peace, where all man's noise  
is stilled,  
Their eyes with revelations God-declared.

And here they dwelt, good angels of the steep,  
Between the evening and the morning light  
That flushes all the Pennine peaks with rose ;  
Large-hearted givers of rest and food and sleep,  
With words of comfortable cheer for those  
Who through dumb solitudes have climbed the  
height.

# *Sonnets*

## THE DAUBENHORN CLIFFS

### OVER THE GEMMI

How the bones grew to frame our dædal earth,  
    When in the womb of Ocean and old Time  
    These hills were fashioned, how a furious prime  
Of tidal deluge carved this headland firth—  
This is thy message,—not the conjurer's mirth  
    That mocks the merry shepherds as they climb  
    Up the steep zigzags, with false echo's chime :  
Thine is the mystery of the mountain's birth.

And we who dare descend the Daubenhorn  
    Like goats, by perilous path and jutting edge,  
    Round bastion-walls that fail beneath our feet,  
    May scare the eagle from his mountain ledge ;  
    We cannot move from her imperial seat  
The awful secret of Creation's morn.

# *Sonnets*

## GOING TO ZERMATT

WE leave the dusty vines, the poplared plain,  
And, prisoners to the imperious god of steam,  
Pant up the vale that changes as in dream,  
Climb slow the iron stairway, in our pain  
Groan through the gorges, shriek and plunge amain  
Through rock, o'er river; now well-nigh we seem  
To hang in air, and feel the milk-white stream  
Breathe in our face, as onward still we strain.

St. Nikolas' silver-turbaned spire is passed,  
Above our heads strange snowy summits peep,  
And glaciers frown from off their mountain  
walls;  
Still upward irresistibly we creep,  
Till, with a sudden glory that appals,  
The Matterhorn leaps high—Zermatt at last !

# *Sonnets*

## THE MATTERHORN

WHEN through the huts, by sun and frost embrowned,  
—Those square toy-boxes for some giant's play—  
Where Zermatt shepherds lie, I took my way,  
And still the Triftbach followed me with sound,  
Suddenly face to face from out the ground  
Sprang into middle heaven, grim and gray,  
The Matterhorn's huge spire, which seemed to  
say,  
I am the Alps' avenger, and I wound.

But the huge falchion shone so gaily bright,  
And from its hilt streamed forth so soft a cloud  
To fling its rosy banner far beneath,  
I heard no sound of women wailing loud  
Because on hearth and home had fallen the night,  
Nor that fierce mountain's trumpet-note of  
death.

# *Sonnets*

## THE CHAPEL OF OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

AT THE SCHWARZ-SEE, ZERMATT

By the dark lake beside sad Hörnli laid  
    There stands a little solitary shrine,  
    Raised by rude hands of men who tend the kine,  
In simple love laboriously made ;  
And there the herdsman may implore the aid  
    Of Her whose presence pure as snow can shine,  
    Infrequent priests may offer rites divine,  
And pilgrim prayers and litanies be said.

Thereover Cervin casts a shadow prone,  
    And thither, overshadowed by great loss,  
    The heart that in its silence pain must bear  
May come, and feel uplifted by the cross,  
    Know in the wilderness a Saviour near,  
And in the desert dare to be alone.

## *Sonnets*

### HÔTEL DU PARC ET DES BELLES FLEURS

LAC DE CHAN, MONTANA

WE left the vale where Rhone's grey waters flow,  
    Past sun-baked mounds and ruined castle halls,  
    Hot cliffs scored deep with waterless waterfalls,  
And striped with burning harvest far below,  
Up through the dusty vineyards, toiling slow,  
    Up through the forest where no songbird calls,  
    Up till the Weisshorn over mountain walls  
Gleamed, and Valaisian Alps shone all aglow ;

And there we found fair meadows dewy cool,  
    A rolling park where stately fir-trees stand,  
    Music in storm, and fragrance in the heat ;  
Where lilies lit the lawn and starred the pool,  
    And every flower that blooms in Switzerland  
    Seemed to fling jewels at the wanderer's feet.



# Sonnets

## GOING TO NETTLESHIP'S GRAVE

FROM ARGENTIÈRE TO CHAMOUNIX, BY NIGHT

I NEED no surer, sympathetic guide,  
    Than this loud stream with waters icy cold,  
    Down with perpetual thunder darkly rolled,  
Beneath a starless heaven at my side—  
For somewhere in this valley, he who died,  
    Caught by the sudden snow-blast's withering  
    hold,  
    Lies beyond storm in quiet churchyard mould,  
Beneath the heights he climbed, dear friend, well tried.

Flow on, pale Arve, with lamentation flow !  
Joined with thy gray-haired sister of the snow,  
    Make double moan and fill the air with sorrow :  
    I have no heart nor care to lift mine eyes  
    To find the sunlit glacier's glad surprise,  
Or face the mountain splendours of to-morrow.

# *Sonnets*

TO R. L. NETTLESHIP

IN CHAMOUNIX CHURCHYARD

IF you should be awakened from your sleep,  
Here in this snow-crowned, mountain-girdled  
vale,  
Such sounds should greet your ear as could not  
fail  
To lull you back into a slumber deep :  
The chime of waters falling from the steep,  
The bells that clang towards the milking-pail,  
Murmur of bees and song of nightingale,  
Where through the copse those sister rivers sweep.  
But if one voice should mingle with the sound—  
A voice you knew in college days of old—  
Crying, 'Come back, fulfil your earthly span !'  
I know your words would leap from underground,  
And say, 'God hath His helpers manifold,  
Their hands shall finish what my heart began.'

*See Appendix.*

# *Sonnets*

## VIOLAS ON THE COL DE BALME

WHEN under Jaman's peak I sudden found  
    The slopes with white narcissus overspread,  
    No lovelier carpet for the Spring, I said,  
Was ever laid on any mountain ground.  
I did not know what charm the cowbell's sound  
    On Col de Balme for her imperial tread  
    Could work, to wake the rock-rose in its bed,  
Or stir the violet from its winter's wound.

For here when May is hand in hand with June,  
    And the shy soldanella shrinks away,  
    The fragrant earth shines purple, mixed with  
    gold ;  
    The oldest heart would quicken and be gay,  
The saddest voice would sing again in tune,  
    Such garniture of glory to behold !

# *Sonnets*

## MOONLIGHT AT PENSION REITZEL

LEYSIN

BESIDE the sloping road that curves and shines,  
A silver serpent on from field to field,  
There stands a chalet, where all woes are healed  
That need the sunlight, and when day declines  
And the rose gleam of eve incarnadines  
The peak of Chamossaire, there is unsealed  
A dewy balm Arabia could not yield,  
Breathed from the fragrant multitude of pines.

Sweet house of health for weary mortals planned,  
What witchery haunts thee, when the purple vale  
Is filled with shadow by Rionda thrown,  
And we behold in some enchanted land  
Of magic gleam, the Dent du Midi pale—  
A phantom presence o'er the moonlit Rhone.

# *Sonnets*

## A FEAR FOR LEYSIN

### THE BUILDING OF THE CASINO

CLOSE round its silver spire the village cowers,  
Each brown house spreads its wings as if it  
heard

The cry in heaven from some gigantic bird,  
Told of in old Arabian midnight hours ;  
Yet all was sun, from Dent du Midi's towers  
To those high pines no other voices stirred  
Than the grey cricket chirring, as he chirred  
Last year, among his groves of innocent flowers.

But as I gazed, up rose the purple dome  
Of some huge pleasure-palace idly planned,  
To dull the sense of time with dice and gold ;  
I felt the fear for every cottage home,  
When indolence should poisonous wealth command,  
And Leysin lose the simple life of old.

# *Sonnets*

## UP LA RIONDA

LEYSIN

UP through the pines with rosy fruitage set,  
    Through air made fragrant with the dust of gold  
    I climbed, that world of wonder to behold :  
Southward, in bluest air that knew no fret,  
The Dent du Midi's snow-plumed coronet  
    Shone peaceful, valleys purpled fold on fold,  
    Whilst north, the Rhone by town and tower  
        was rolled  
Till lake and stream in one great glory met.

Eyes ne'er had seen such beauteous mountain state,  
    Vale after vale by fancy was explored,  
    Height after height to rapturous gaze was given,  
But my sad heart was at the river gate,  
    Where Rhone with all her valley's splendour  
        poured  
    To lose her sorrow in a tranquil Heaven.

# *Sonnets*

## TWILIGHT AT LA PRAFONDAZ

LEYSIN

COME not at morn, when beautiful and bare,  
    Rose-pink with all her meadows, all her vines,  
    The Dent du Midi's marvellous splendour shines,  
Nor when on La Rionda's rocky stair  
The noon with flowers and butterflies is fair,—  
    Come rather when the lingering day declines,  
    And the grey mist is breathed from out the pines,  
And one star lights the dewy-purple air.

Then say if earth from any mountain steep  
    Can soothe with gentler calm the troubled breast,  
    Or bring to aching hearts a surer boon,  
When vale and hill and river seem asleep,  
    And to far shores of blissfulness and rest  
    The long lake gleams beneath a rising moon.

# *Sonnets*

## HOME THOUGHTS AT SUNSET

FROM PRAFONDAZ, LEYSIN

FROM Dent du Midi fades her roseate hue,  
Leman's rare witchery can no more prolong  
The mirrored daylight ; pale Rhone moves among  
Dim fields and mountain walls of solid blue ;  
The last sweet bird is silent, but for you  
The thrush shall fill another hour with song ;  
The sun with you is shining, here a throng  
Of angel presences, the stars, peep through.

The lingering glory of the sunset bars  
O'er Jura's range has passed upon its way,  
But brightens over England : which were best,  
Eyes held on Earth by still unended day,  
Or hearts caught up to commune with the stars—  
A longer waking, or an earlier rest ?



# Sonnets

## ALPINE ANEMONE-SEED

LEYSIN

IN latest June, when giant gentians bold  
    Unhood themselves and break to sudden flower,  
    Manning the galleries of each sturdy tower  
With saffron-starry shields and spikes of gold,  
I wandering found a wonder to behold,  
    A tufted thing that wove a silken bower  
    For fairies, frightened by a summer shower,  
Or tender sprites that feared the dewy cold.

Anon it seemed a humming-bird's soft nest,  
    Anon a living sea-flower, such as grow  
    In tropic waters when the waves are still ;  
I knew not, in its silken seed-coat drest,  
    The May's most lovely daughter of the hill,  
    The wind-flower with its petals white as snow.

## *Sonnets*

### THE MORNING PLAY AT VILLARS

HERE in this amphitheatre of wood,  
    Upon the sloping stage of flowery land,  
    Where the dark firs like hushed spectators  
        stand,  
Each morn, with night-time's starry interlude,  
A drama is enacted.—First a flood  
    Of roselight fills the west, then gaunt and grand  
    The Muveran reaches out a shadowy hand,  
The Dent du Midi feels her brotherhood  
Of snowy peaks enkindled : then she shines,  
    Takes her gold crown and drops her veil of gray,  
    And while the villages from forth the mist  
Sparkle to life, Val D'Illier through her vines  
    Draws sunlight mixed with purple amethyst,  
As loud with music Dawn begins the play.

## *Sonnets*

### ON CHAMOSSAIRE

MIST wrapped the Jura, like an ocean bay  
The gray lake waters rippled into light;  
Northward the sun smote Leysin's towering  
height,  
And south Mont Blanc in snowy splendour lay;  
Beyond a sea of mountain blue and gray.  
The Weisshorn rose, the Bernese peaks were  
bright,  
And drawing purple glory, golden light,  
From every vale, the long Rhone held its way.

Soul, thou must climb the hills, drink upper air,  
Stand near to Heaven, or thou canst never know  
What towering presences around thee wait,  
More than the labourer in the plain below,  
Whose eyes have never seen what mountain state  
The Dawn reveals on grassy Chamossaire.

## *Sonnets*

### IN THE DUNGEON AT CHILLON

I PASSED through Chillon's heavy prison door—  
For those who entered there all hope was vain ;  
The air was pale with centuries of pain,  
The light lay ghastly green on vault and floor.  
Methought men wan, and, save for patience, poor,  
At every pitiless pillar clanked a chain,  
Paced their one step, and then repaced again,  
And so to softness even hard earth wore.

What hand, I cried, can give these liberty ?  
Guides led me to a dark, unvaulted room,  
Showed me in living rock a bed aslope,  
And o'er, a rafter and a swaying rope :  
Here did they sleep the night before their doom,  
And they slept well, for Death would set them free.

# *Sonnets*

## AT WEISSENSTEIN

### SOLEURE

HERE, at the high-built, hospitable grange,  
    Grey with long years, and, as the old are, kind,  
    There is such health in every passing wind,  
We feel new powers of life, invigorate, strange ;  
Our eyes look out with more than mortal range  
    Over blue miles of fruitfulness, and find  
    Eden fresh-breathed from the Almighty mind,  
With that old serpent going through his change.

Then as from coiling Aar our gaze is caught  
    To those far hills of pure unearthly glory  
    That lean upon the lilac, cloud-built wall,  
We seem to hear again the old-world story  
    Of Paradise, the Serpent, and the Fall,  
And Heaven's new Eden lovelier than all thought.

## *Sonnets*

### SWITZERLAND, FAREWELL !

FAREWELL the Schreckhorn's silver spires ! Farewell  
The Blumlis' domes and pinnacles of snow !  
By vine-clad Spietz and Gonten's lawns we go,  
We leave behind Thun's ancient citadel,  
Sun-bright against its pines ; but still the spell  
Of emerald Aar will follow with its flow,  
And still to backward gaze, with flush aglow  
The Oberland its evening tale will tell.

Others may climb the peaks high-crowned with  
flowers,  
—Blue gentian, sulphur-pale anemone,  
For other eyes the alpine-rose may shine,  
Others may hear the music of the kine,  
The thunder of the glacier's breaking sea,—  
Remembrance ineffaceable is ours.

# *Sonnets*

## HOME FROM LOMBARDY

BETTER grey lakes, grey mountain, and grey skies,  
    With song of water-brooks and sound of rain,  
    Than that immeasurable Lombard plain—  
For all its vines and corn and mulberries—  
Sunburnt to silence : with what sweet surprise  
    The mellow ouzel greets us once again !  
    Clear and familiar from the springing grain,  
With what a sense of home the corncrake cries !

But not the cry of crake, nor throstle's tune,  
    Nor daisied fields, nor plumy laurel-bowers  
    That gleam snow-white at evening's long-lit  
    close,  
So made me sure of Cumberland and June,  
    As Crosthwaite lanes full-breathed of elder-flowers,  
    And hedges broidered over with wild rose.





## APPENDIX

PAGE 16.—The inscription at Ob-Bürgen Church reads as follows:—

‘To the pious and learned Town Councillor and Bailiff of the Chapel, Joseph Francis Fluher of Wyden von Obbergen, who, on the 9th of September 1798, at the first attack of the French, saved this church, on his knees, from being burned; but who, at the second attack, was shot, with his repeated intercessions unheard, and was buried above the Inn.’

PAGE 37.—Frocinus the second Abbot was a remarkable scholar, and specimens of his laborious handiwork by way of transcript and mss. still are preserved in the library of the Monastery.

PAGE 47.—The people of Val Leventina revolted in 1755 against the tyranny of the cowherds of Uri, to whom they had been subject since the fifteenth century. The rebellion was terminated at this spot by the execution of the ringleaders, whose heads were fastened to the trunks of the chestnut-trees near, in the presence of three thousand men of the valley.

PAGE 53.—The Borromean crest has for motto the word ‘Humilitas.’

PAGE 59.—At the porch of the old Church of Baveno a Roman altar has been built into the wall with a dedication to Diana, Julia, and Tarpeia: the same wall has been painted over

## Sonnets

in Byzantine times with a large fresco of Christ, now hardly distinguishable.

PAGE 60.—The top of Monte Motterone is the scene of the meeting of Mazzini and leaders of Italian Unity, in George Meredith's novel *Vittoria*. In digging the foundation of the hotel on the ridge of the mountain, an axe, a spear, a horse-shoe and a key were found in what must have been some chieftain's grave.

PAGE 63.—Bernardino Caimi on his return from the Holy Land in 1491 founded the Sacro Monte at Varallo. St. Carlo Borromeo seems to have refounded it in 1678: his skull is pointed at within an iron grating near the Holy Sepulchre. Gaudenzio Ferrari, the famous Val-Sesian painter, born about 1484, appears to have painted with fresco many of the chapels on the Sacro Monte between the years 1524 and 1528.

PAGE 71.—At midnight of May 31, 1894, by international consent, Italy, Switzerland, and Austria put all their clocks forward thirty minutes, and took a Mid-Europe standard time.

PAGE 77.—Pliny in his famous rescript to Trajan describes the new Christianity, which is the subject of his letter, as 'a harmless superstition doomed to die.'

PAGE 80.—On the 4th December 1804, General Macdonald made a desperate passage of the Splügen to cover the flank of the Italian army: whole regiments were swept away by the avalanche, but he accomplished his endeavour. Travellers over the Splügen will note the little iron monumental crosses that record the death of workmen who perished in the making of the road.

PAGE 91.—In May of 1893, at Lauterbrunnen, I met Ulrich Lauener, a last survivor of his contemporaries, the famous band

## Appendix

of Oberland guides. Himself the first to stand on the summit of the Weisshorn, Dent-Blanche, Rothhorn, and Grand Cornier, he was guide to Professor Tyndall and other of the most daring climbers in the middle of this century. Now an old man of 72, erect, but stiff and much troubled with rheumatism, his dim eyes lit up as he talked of the ascents he had made. Even as late as last summer he had ascended the Jungfrau. 'I was ever a careful man, far-sighted,' he said, 'and in all my climbing, thank God, never met with accident.' 'Farewell, Ulrich,' said my friend, who had one time employed him as guide, 'we shall meet again.'—'On earth no more, sir,' answered Ulrich solemnly, 'perchance in Heaven.'

PAGE 126.—In a wood near Thun, called the Bächihölzi, within sight of the Chartreuse, which it is believed that the poet built in the thirteenth century, lies, beneath the shadow of an oak, the tombstone of Heinrich von Strattlingen, the bard. The knight is clad in mail; he is bareheaded; his hands are raised in prayer; his feet are on a lion, and an arrow is engraved upon his shield.

PAGE 134.—The Golden Star of Thun was won as follows:—In the battle of Morat, 1476, the post of honour against the Burgundian nobles and Charles the Bold was held by the townsmen of Thun. In consequence of their valour on that occasion Berne offered the town ten years' exemption from taxes, or the privilege of changing their black star into gold on their banner and civic armorial bearings. They chose the latter.

PAGE 150.—Richard Lewis Nettleship, Fellow of Balliol, perished in a snowstorm on Mont Blanc, August 25, 1892 (B. Jowett's *College Sermons*, p. 264).

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*VALETE AND OTHER POEMS,*

MACLEHOSE.

*BALLADS, LYRICS, AND BUCOLICS,*

MACMILLAN.

*IDYLLS AND LYRICS OF THE NILE,*

DAVID NUTT.

*SONNETS AT THE ENGLISH LAKES,*

LONGMANS.

*SONNETS ROUND THE COAST,*

SONNENSCHNEIN.

*BALLADS OF BRAVE DEEDS,*

DENT AND CO.











