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POEMS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

SONNETS AND OTHER VERSE. Fcap. 8vo. 3s. 6d.

"That these poems are above, it would not be too much to say far above, the average of the verse of the day, is evident enough."—*Spectator*.

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P O E M S

BY

SAMUEL WADDINGTONN

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'Laborum dulce lenimen.'—HOR.

LONDON
GEORGE BELL AND SONS
1896

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TO

MY SISTER

Ursula Waddington

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

NOTE

SOME of the poems in this volume have already appeared in the 'Athenæum,' 'Academy,' 'Westminster Gazette,' Mr. Miles's 'Poets and Poetry of the Century,' Mr. Gleeson White's 'Ballades and Rondeaux,' Professor Raymond's 'Genesis of Art-Form,' 'Belgravia,' 'The Magazine of Poetry' (Buffalo, U.S.A.), and other periodicals. None of them were included in either of the author's two previous volumes, 'Sonnets and Other Verse,' and 'A Century of Sonnets.'

It had been suggested that the poem 'Moirá' (page 37), might with advantage be entitled 'Fate' or 'Nemesis,' but as the Necessitarianism depicted is mainly such as affirms that a Lily may not become a Rose though both are 'things of Beauty,' and that their roots are in Eternity, it has been thought advisable to retain the present title.

At page 82 will be found a translation of the earliest sonnet that has come down to us. It was composed by Lodovico della Vernaccia about 700 years ago.

47, CONNAUGHT STREET,
HYDE PARK, W.

October, 1896.



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THE LAND OF DREAM

TO PYRRHO

WOULDST thou, Pyrrho, linger where
Lotus-blossom scents the air ;
Wouldst thou thro' weird forests wander
Where the frolic fairies dwell,
And the mazy streams meander
Round the beds of asphodel ;
Wouldst thou soar to realms above,
Worlds of rapture, orbs of love ;
Or, still fairer to thy mind,
Wouldst thou Truth's hid temple find ;—
Then, dear Pyrrho, as we deem,
Thou must seek the Land of Dream.

GIUSEPPINA

HER spirit breathes love's affluence,—
Her eyes, no heart may doubt,
Are windows in God's heaven whence
An angel looketh out.

NOBIALLO, 1896.

“THE SPRING COMES SOFTLY FROM
THE SOUTH BEGUILLED”

THE Spring comes softly from the South beguiled,

Bearing a garland for my Love to wear ;

Laughing he cometh like a little child

That joys to find a world so passing fair :

With heather-bells and kingcups everywhere,

And honeysuckle clusters,—he hath piled

The sweet thyme budding on the mountains bare,

The fragrant meadow-blossom undefiled.

And I go singing on the uplands wild,

So blithely singing in the morning air,—

The Spring comes softly from the South beguiled,

Bearing a garland for my Love to wear.

MADRIGAL

*“Le città son nemiche, amici i boschi
A' miei pensier.”* PETRARCA.

I

COME, to the woods, love, let us go,
And through the forest glide ;
There brackens grow and wild-flowers blow
And singing birds abide :
There happy are the hearts that love ;
And happy, love, are we,
While there we sing our songs in spring
Beneath the greenwood tree.

With hey, my love ! and ho, my love !

My love she is so bonnie.

II

There is a nook by Beaulieu brook,

An ivy-cinctured bower,

Where we can dwell in forest dell,

And pluck the budding flower ;

For happy are the hearts that love,

And happy, love, are we,

While still we sing our songs in spring

Beneath the greenwood tree.

With hey, my love ! and ho, my love !

My love she is so bonnie.

CALABRIA

I

A SYLVAN bower for love's embrace,
Where wild-flower blossoms grew unbidden,
It was our secret trysting-place
Behind the elms and orchard hidden :
There meadow-saffron bloomed as fair
As e'er Cosenza knew of yore ;
Strayed mignonette made sweet the air
As myrtle the Calabrian shore ;
And still the name we gave it bore
Far glimpses of that southern clime

Whence Maro fled to come no more,
Where Ennius built his rugged rhyme :—
Yet fare thee well, O leafy dell ;
Farewell, our loved Calabria !

II

O that mine eyes might view again
That vanished bower, and haply so
Might see thee as I saw thee then,
My own sweet love of long ago,
When still the stars shone bright above,
And Life, our faery-land of bliss,
Seemed made for us, and us for Love,
And Love for one eternal kiss ;
But now our lives have grown amiss,
And thou art far beyond the sea,

I know not where, I know but this,
How dear thy memory is to me :—

Then fare thee well, O leafy dell !

O fare thee well, Calabria !

AND WOULDST THOU STILL MORE
BEAUTEOUS BE”

AND wouldst thou still more beauteous be,
O maiden, steeped in lethargy?
Throw wide the windows of thy soul;
Life and the light shall make thee whole.

And wouldst thou still more joyous be,
O maiden, 'mid thy reverie?
Let not the gay world thee cajole;
Let Nature now thy heart control.

Yet if more honoured thou wouldst be,
O maiden, in thy modesty,
Recall the outcast to thy side;
And to the dark depths sink thy pride.

BEATA BEATRIX

“Ella ha perduta la sua Beatrice :
E le parole ch'uom di lei può dire
Hanno virtù di far piangere altrui.”

Vita Nuova.

AND was it thine, the light whose radiance shed
Love's halo round the gloom of Dante's brow?
Was thine the hand that touched his hand, and
thou

The spirit to his inmost spirit wed?
O gentle, O most pure, what shall be said
In praise of thee to whom Love's minstrels bow?
O heart that held his heart, for ever now
Thou with his glory shalt be garlanded.

Lo, 'mid the twilight of the waning years,
Firenze claims once more our love, our tears :
But thou, triumphant on the throne of song,—
By Mary seated in the realm above,—
O give us of that gift than death more strong,
The loving spirit that won Dante's love.

IN MEMORIAM

J. A. N.

O WINDS that wail around death's barren shore,

Be hushed no more :

O weep, ye clouds, and let your tears be shed,

For he lies dead ;

The truest, noblest, and the best,

Life's fairest guest.

Now grows the upward path more lone and dim,

Bereft of him ;

While still we linger with our grief opprest,

Where he finds rest,—

Here where the wind-blown grasses wave,

Here by his grave.

THE CATACOMB OF ST. CALLIXTUS

BY THE VIA APPIA

BESIDE the Dead we discourse held,
And laughed nor deemed it wrong ;
He was a Monk, a godly man,—
And I a Child of Song.

Before that morn we had not met,
Yet straightway be it told,
There 'mid the Tombs it seemed to me
We had been friends of old.

For spirit unto spirit leapt,
And heart went forth to heart ;

With many a sad 'farewell' at last
We parted loth to part.

O wondrous brotherhood of Man!
Our sires—'tis surely so—
Were members of one family
A myriad years ago.

ROME, 1892.

NEMI

“Nemi, imbedded in wood, Nemi, inurned in the hill.”

CLOUGH.

I

FROM lone Castello's torrid shore,

Here, Nemi, to thy shrine,

Where Thyrsis wandering came of yore,

I come to make thee mine :

With myrtle sweet and eglantine,

O lake, beloved for evermore,

Take thou my soul, and yield me thine.

II

Spirit of Beauty! is it here,

Secluded and alone

Thou dwellest by these waters clear,
These Alban hills thy throne?
Here still, unwitnessed and unknown,
To thee we kneel, and thee revere,
And thine all-hallowing presence own.

III

What tho' mute Silence brood around,
Tho' every voice be still,
Tho' Dian's horn and steeds resound
No more along the hill,
Yet harmonies unheard fulfil
The hearts that muse on holy ground,
And rhythmic tongues with rapture thrill.

IV

Earth's flowery lap thy body is,
And loveliness thy soul,

•

O beauteous scene, whose tender kiss
Can make the wounded whole ;
Now closer to thy mystic goal
We come, and coming, crave but this,
'Do thou the weary heart console !'

V

Nay, closer now ! nay, closer yet !
Would my soul cleave to thine ;
Here by thy mantling beauty met,
Transfigured, made divine ;—
Here as of old in Palestine
Love is the true heart's amulet,
And joy of love the sacred sign.

VI

But hark, O hark, the choirs unseen !
They rise on airy wing ;

C

O Nemi, round thy borders green
Their joyous pæans ring ;
‘ Spirit of Beauty ! ’ thus they sing,
‘ Thou art, and thou hast ever been,
Of life and love the living spring.’

VII

Back to Albano, back to Rome,
We go, but still with thee,
O lake, of love-lit dreams the home,
Our thoughts, our heart shall be ;
And still, far off, we yet shall see
Beneath the Night’s star-spangled dome
Thy grove-encircled sanctuary.

MORS ET VITA

WE know not yet what life shall be,
What shore beyond earth's shore be set ;
What grief awaits us, or what glee,
We know not yet.

Still, somewhere in sweet converse met,
Old friends, we say, beyond death's sea
Shall meet and greet us, nor forget

Those days of yore, those years when we
Were loved and true,—but will death let
Our eyes the longed-for vision see ?
We know not yet.

BADEN-BADEN

“ . . . fiso, ù si mostri, attendi,
L'erba più verde, e l'aria più serena.”

PETRARCA.

SYRINGA and wild-roses,
 Beneath a sapphire sky !
Here, dearest, Life reposes,
 We'll let the Hours slip by ;
What tho' the light discloses
 Grey threads amid our hair,
Syringa and wild-roses,
 And Thou, my Love, art fair.

As in the woods of Arden
 Once dwelt the balm of peace,

And they who sought for pardon
 There found their sorrows cease ;
So in this forest-garden,
 Here with the pines alone,
Now Peace shall be our warden,
 And Strife a world unknown.

Here breathes the holy Spirit
 Of Love in bud and flower,
And they who wander near it,
 Shall they not share its dower ?

Here we too may inherit
 Of life the holier part—
Love, thine be all the merit,
 And thine the Sacred Heart.

SISTER URSULA

A SILHOUETTE

“Thou that dwellest in the gardens.”

Canticles, viii. 13.

THIS is her garden, this the place,
 Secluded and serene,
Where phlox and pansy love to grace
 The dreamland of their queen ;
A sunny solitude makes fair
The precincts of this trim parterre.

Like mystic scroll illumed and wrought
 With leaf and flowered device,
With loving care it breathes the thought
 Of holiest sacrifice :—

And still above from morn till night
Here Heaven always is in sight.

This pathway as some minster aisle,
From noxious weeds set free,
Seems holy ground, and here awhile
Ofttimes, methinks, I see
A figure past the privet glide
When comes the dusk at eventide.

No Pascal, no Spinoza treads
This walk, or stands to view
The many-coloured tulip-beds,—
The blooms of varied hue ;
No Plato rapt as in a dream
Strays hither from the Academe :

Yet haply somewhat of all three,
Some kinship of the mind,
Inspires the spirit that we see ;
And, dimly here divined,
The higher, the ideal life
Is fenced from sin, is freed from strife.

The stars gleam softly overhead,
The sky is bright and clear,—
Infinity around is spread,
Eternity is here ;
And by this leaf-encircled seat
Each morn the Past and Future meet.

The Past that from far distance brings
The Present as his gift,—

The Future that full swiftly flings
It down the stream adrift ;
While loud upon yon elder-tree
The blackbird chants his minstrelsy.

But when the Sun scales heaven's height,
With noontide fancies fraught,
Here rests within the spirit's sight
Life budding into Thought,—
The wondrous mystery of Mind,
Unsolved, unfathomed, undefined !

These jonquils shed a perfume rare,—
Whence comes it,—who can tell ?
And Thought, the blossom that we bear,
Life's fairest asphodel,

Breathes it the incense of the heart
That still shall live tho' Life depart?

* * * *

But stay, our purpose we forget,—

The portrait that we planned,—

'Tis but an old-world silhouette,

And few may understand

How in these verses they may trace

The profile of the pictured face.

So be it,—yet the gardener knows

Each symbol passing well,

The musk, the lily, and the rose,

And ever loves to dwell

Where 'bleeding-heart' and 'London-pride'

Here bloom together side by side.

NAPOLI.

(Vedi Napoli e poi mori.)

“Metropolis of a ruined Paradise.”

SHELLEY.

I

O NAPOLI, methinks thou art
A traitor with a treacherous heart ;
Or Siren, singing by the sea,
To lure men from true liberty ;
A shameless mermaid-courtesan,
To waylay, cozen, and trepan ;
And cruel thou hast cheated me,
O Napoli, O Napoli !

II

By Virgil's tomb—thrice-happy fate !
A week, or more, I lived elate ;

It stands, the house where we did stay,
(Palazzo named Torlonia,)
Where the Chiaja hath its end,
And Margellina takes a bend,—
By Maro's bones 'twas grand to be,
By Maro's tomb, O Napoli !

III

Each morn the Mantuan might have heard
Our song, forsooth, as word by word,
'Virumque cano' and the rest,
I sang with true poetic zest :
Where Petrarch, where Boccaccio,
Had worshipped at Posilipo,
I dwelt, and there 'twas good to be—
Was it not good, O Napoli !

IV

Wise Falcioni was mine host,

And kinder soul can no man boast ;
He roundly laughed, then shook his head ;
Then laughed again, and, pointing, said,
' There, there is Virgil's tomb, but there
The bones of Virgil never were !'
It was a sham,—mere roguery
To bring thee trade, O Napoli !

V

'Tis said, ' See Naples, and then die !'
See Naples, and there learn to lie—
Perchance, were wiser, and more true
To Nature that here winks at you :
O wily, wanton, Siren fair !
To sing thy praise we will not dare ;
We will not sigh nor die for thee,
O Napoli, O Napoli !

THE INFINITE

I

FAR off, and very far !
 Beyond the crystal sea ;
Beyond the worlds that are
 Unknown, or known to be ;
Beyond the pearly star ;
 The clustering nebulae ;
 Beyond dark gulphs we see
Where rolls no glittering car—
 At last, at last, we come to thee,
 The finite to Infinity !

II

Ere yet, and evermore !
 Before the day's delight ;
Before the dawn, before
 Apollo in his might
Sped forth by sea and shore ;
 And after many a night,
 When all the Hours take flight,
Forth issuing from death's door—
 Behold, behold, in death's despite
 Eternal looms the Infinite !

THE BAT

VESPERTILIO MURINUS

I

SLEEK, faery creature,
Strange freak of Nature
That through the Twilight comes and goes,
Could we the mystery
Of thy life's history
Resolve, and learn what no man knows,
From what dim forces,
What hidden sources,
Thy wingèd soul sprang into being,

Then might we clearly
Divine more nearly
The World that lies beyond our seeing.

II

Quaint, mimic angel !
Thy new evangel
Disclose, and share it now with me,
While through the gloaming
Thus lightly roaming,
Thou flittest round this old oak tree ;
Tell me what Ages,
What Cosmic stages,
Evolved thy Spirit in the Past ;
The far stars glisten,—
Speak, for I listen ;
Teach me the Wisdom that thou hast.

III

Nay, spectral flitter,
Where glowworms glitter,
Thou art more silent than the Sphinx ;
Thro' eras ended
Thou hast descended
Down from the sphere of 'missing links,'—
Like pterodactyl
Thy race runs back till
The distance foils our dazèd sight,
To prehistoric,
Rude, allegoric,
Brute offspring of the Infinite.

IV

The Past hath vanished,
From memory banished,

What of the Future canst thou tell?

In words aesthetic,

Sage and prophetic,

Our doubting and our fears dispel ;

When life is over

Shall Darkness cover

Thy twilight wanderings with the Night,—

Or from Death's portal

Wilt thou immortal

Speed forth into the realm of light?

V

Mute, mystic rover !

Could we discover

Thy wisdom though thou answer'st not,

There is no human,

Or man or woman,

But hath the knowledge thou hast got ;

We know we know not !

The gods bestow not

On thee a wider, clearer view ;—

Thou art surrounded,

On all sides bounded,

By thine own ignorance,—adieu !

MOIRA

WHO most is Fortune's fool? The man
That eager strives yet never can
Increase his stature half a span?
Or he, the Mussulman, that sleeps,—
Saith, "God in heaven this watch keeps;
Our pilot, Allah, Lord and King,
Safe to the port our bark shall bring;
'Tis Providence that shapes our ends,
And who shall slay while Fate befriends!"

Behold, each man before his birth,
Of great or haply little worth,

Hath all his gifts,—a giant he,
Or doomed a mere dwarf-soul to be !
Nay, be he great or good or bad,
He shall not to his talents add,
Or mould a brain replete with wit
If Nature hath not furnished it.
See yonder babe, 'tis but the last
Fresh output of the Ages past ;
And 'tis no fable that each man
Existed ere Man's race began.
'Tis writ on Moira's oriflamme,
“ Before Jehovah was I am ! ”
'Tis writ on Nature's banner too,
“ Eternity hath fashioned you ! ”
And Moira, Moira, what is she
But Nature and the laws that be,

Immutable Necessity!

Go, travel thou thro' space afar
To Sirius, or that furthest star
Thy Fancy, not thy feet, may reach ;
There from its ancient, time-worn beach
Look back, behold, if Mortal can,
This earth, this planet-home of Man :
Thou seest,—no, thou canst not see
So small a speck there lost to thee
'Mid space that mocks Infinity.
This mighty world, it is so small
Thou canst not see this earth at all
From Sirius, or that distant star
Where splendid rolls Orion's car.

And yet these orbs that nightly shine,
These myriad worlds that gleam afar,
Have helped to shape this Will of thine,
This automatic toy that plays
Weird music for ten-thousand days ;
Thou canst not wish, or will, or act,
Or lift thy finger, or contract
A limb or muscle, but in thee,
Part of the cosmic unity,
The link'd cogwheels at work we see
Of all that is, or e'er hath been,
Of all the worlds seen or unseen,
The forces of the Universe.

But 'mid the waves of Time immerse
Thy thoughts awhile. Thro' days remote

From age to age let Fancy float,
Wayfaring in a faery boat
Down forest rivers to that sea
That hath no shore, Eternity.
—Ten million years ago to-day,
Awhile we'll anchor in this bay ;
Beneath these trees whose branches meet
And yield us shelter from the heat.
The world by some divine decree
Remains unaltered,—as you see,
These trees are green as those we knew,
And as of yore the skies are blue !
Beneath the sun is nothing new
In substance, tho' in shape perchance
Some change accrues from circumstance,—
Some lapse of form, some permutation,

Or new life from fresh combination.
Yet long ere round its parent sun
This earth, our planet, had begun
As foal around its dam to run,—
Long ere this orb began to be,
Vast aeons of Eternity
A myriad earths and orbs had seen,
A myriad worlds that once had been
The homes of mortals, beasts, and birds ;
Of shepherds with their flocks and herds ;
Of priests and pedlars—haply, too,
Trim statesmen, men of many words
To hide their meaning from our view.
Immortal souls these mortals had,
And creeds, perchance, almost as mad
As those men cherish to this hour

To feed their pride, and give them power
On outstretched wing to upward fly
And reach their castles in the sky.

'Mid tropic forests vast and dim
Thou shalt not find the Seraphim,
But mailèd serpents mayst thou see
Coiled near the shady mango-tree :
There by the marge of some lone swamp
Where orchids bloom and all the pomp
Of painted plumage gleams around,
The Cherubim are never found ;
But born of Nature's changeless laws,
With hungry, ravenous, cruel jaws,
The alligator waits his prey,—
And while the merry children play

A budding life is snatched away.

Do gods then give the crocodile
Angelic food? Nay, list awhile ;
All mortals Nature doth impel,
But Moira rules the gods as well !
The gods are Justice, Power, and Love,
Yet over these, see, throned above,
Reigns Moira, stern Necessity
Abiding in all things that be,
Eternal and immutable !

Man strives to guide, and doeth well,
His bark upon the stream of life,
But, ah ! the floods despite his strife
Bear him he knows not whence or whither ;

Where the dim Future leads him, thither
He goes, and Moira points the way ;
To what, who knoweth, or can say !
All things for ever onward wend,
From no Beginning to no End.

THE LOST CIPHER

THE Night her occult manuscript
Unrolls along the sky,
And with her mystic words equipt
The racing winds rush by ;
They bear her message,—what is it ?
Go, ask the winds what she hath writ.

The radiant Morn once more returns,
Once more the golden Dawn
Illumes the scroll each eye discerns
On meadow-land and lawn ;
Each flower a word dropt from above,—
What is the message,—is it Love ?

Yet shalt thou see ere sets the day

And all its splendours pass,

The hawk descending on its prey,

The adder in the grass ;

Far off the thunder muttereth,—

What is the message,—is it Death ?

O Spirit of the Universe,

That hath been and shall be,

Here still thy riddle we rehearse

Yet cannot find the key ;

Lost is the cipher that we need

Who fain thy manuscript would read.

“IF THOU WERT TRUE AS THOU
ART FAIR”

IF thou wert true as thou art fair,
Love should for thee thy burden bear ;
No service would his heart disdain,
Or deem it idle, or in vain :

But fare thee well ! Too fair art thou ;
So fare thee well for ever now.

If thou wert mine, and mine alone,
Then shouldst thou reign upon love's throne ;
But other hands may thine caress,
And other lips those lips may press,

So fare thee well ! Unfair art thou,—
Go, fare thee well for ever now.

If thou, a goddess, wert divine,

Should all men worship at thy shrine?

Nay, prithee, think!—is there not one

Who from thine altar would pass on,

With, "Fare thee well! Mere fairy thou,—

Nay, fare thee well for ever now"?

Yet tell me, thou, my own, my queen,

Art true as thou hast ever been,—

And I thy servant still shall be;

Nor, doubting, sing this song to thee

Of "Fare thee well,"—but "Fair art thou,"

And "With me fare for ever now."

“O BLITHE THE DAY, O BLITHE
THE NIGHT”

I

O BLITHE the day, O blithe the night,
And down the dale the fairies flit,
For earth is young, and skies are bright,
And life is full of fair delight
While Love is still the lord of it!

II

O hail the dawn, the happy morn,
And happy hours the fates permit,
Now every home spring-flowers adorn,
And never a heart is found forlorn
While Love is still the lord of it!

III

Then, shepherd, sing! O shepherd, bring

Thy pastoral pipe, as is most fit ;

Fair maids, around your roses fling ;—

For life is still a holy thing,

And Love is still the lord of it.

LINES WRITTEN BY RYDAL WATER

WORSHIP was a holy Maid,
Faith a Refuge in the shade ;
Gossips tell me both are gone—
Tell me, Love, dost *thou* live on ?

Then for wedded Heart and Head
Thou shalt make the marriage-bed ;
Wisdom as his Bride shall take
Pity for the hearts that ache !

Lo, the children she shall bear,
Shall Love's garland ever wear ;
Holy children shall they be,
Honor, Joy, and Charity.

THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE

*“And long before the day
Was old, the joy which waked like heaven’s glance
The sleepers in the oblivious valley, died;
And some grew weary of the ghastly dance,
. . . Then, ‘What is life?’ I cried.”*

SHELLEY.

I

WHO saith that Joy hath passed away,
Life’s glory hath departed?
Not they who own Love’s holy sway,
The true, the steadfast-hearted;
Then, Soul, take wing!
Arise and sing,
And crown Life with thy roundelay.

II

Where lightly trips amid the hills
The brown-limbed village maiden,

Life still for her with Pleasure thrills,—
And still with Music laden,
Far down the steep
Glad waters leap
To greet the golden daffodils.

III

The meadows bathed in matin dew
Are clothed with gay apparel ;
While high in Heaven, hid from view,
The lark trills out his carol ;
Then upward soar,
O Heart, once more
Thy praises and thy song renew.

IV

In Arcady, when flushed the dawn,
Blithe shepherds to Apollo

Their pæans sang from grassy lawn,
Green bank, and sheltered hollow,—
That with the Spring
He back might bring
Their Loves more gentle than the fawn.

V

Was it not his what time the light
Erst brooded o'er Earth's bosom,—
And his the gift when Love's new might
Crowned Life with bud and blossom?
Thrice-gracious boon,
Though heaven's high noon
With dazzling splendour daze our sight.

VI

In gardens of the purple Sea,
'Neath Ocean's rocky bower,

'Mid groves where trailing seaweeds be,
More fair than any flower,
Life sprang to birth,
Then o'er the earth
Thro' vale and upland fain would flee.

VII

And lo, in every mossy dell
Life's children now are dwelling ;
Brief tenants they, yet who shall tell,
All mystery dispelling,
What hope, what aim,
What upward flame,
Stirs every heart with ceaseless spell.

VIII

The Swallow wheeling thro' the air,
Borne on the wings of rapture,—

The Bat that haunts some ruin bare,
Winged fairy fearing capture,—
These have delight,
And day or night
Each heart its wreath of joy must wear.

IX

Then who shall grieve, or who shall say
Life's glory hath departed?
Nay, sigh no more Death's well-a-way,
But be ye still blithe-hearted ;—
Each grassy lawn
At golden dawn
With love shall greet your roundelay.

THE CITY OF GOD

COME hither, nor wander,—but whither

Shall they go who would find the abode?

Many ages men journey together

Still seeking the City of God.

Come hither, nor wander, O Spirit

Of Man, in the maze of thy mind ;

What solace, what joy, or what merit,

Shouldst thou in such wandering find ?

Come hither, but whither?—nay, truly

Many prophets have told us the way,

Yet the cities we found were but newly-
Built dwellings of stucco and clay.

“Come hither, O Spirit, come hither!”
Shrieked teachers of blasphemous din;
“Come hither, ye sinners!”—and thither
Went Folly, and Sorrow, and Sin.

“Come hither,” cried Calvin, “Hell waits you
Predestined to torture and pain
Everlasting; God made you, He hates you:—
Good deeds shall ye do but in vain!”

“Come hither,” Rome thundered, “come hither,
To the marvels of Orient birth,
To prodigies, miracles,”—thither
Fled a maniac-tenanted earth.

And ever they hasten, and ever,
 With the eager impetuous roar
Of a torrent-fed mountain-girt river,
 They rush to their shrines and adore.

But the Desert still widens around them ;
 And the Mirage that led them is gone ;
And their numberless teachers confound them
 With dogmas of brass and of stone ;

Till they cry, " Is it vain, our endeavour
 To find out the sacred abode ?

Is it vain ?—then in vain, yet for ever,
 We will seek for the City of God ! "

" Full wisely and well was it spoken,—
 ' Who seeketh he truly shall find ; '

And the hope in our hearts is the token
Of the peace in God's city enshrined."

* * * * *

O Vista of infinite Beauty!

Lo, our feet with new rapture are shod ;
See, there is the Pathway of Duty,
And it leads to the City of God.

TO VICTORY!

(A MARCHING SONG FOR THE NEW YEAR.)

"I set the trumpet to my lips and blow."—SWINBURNE.

I

COME ye, come soldiers brave and true,

Fall in, and step together!

Your flags unfurl—the bugles call—

Come strong-souled warriors one and all;

The foemen linger round the wall,

Yet still our song shall be,—

To victory! O victory!

We march,—we march together!

II

The far hills glisten with the dawn ;

Fall in, and step together !

The clouds dispart, they pass away ;

O'er hearts long watching for the day

Now Knowledge sheds a clearer ray,

And still our song shall be,—

To victory ! O victory !

We march,—we march together !

III

Ye priests and prophets famed of yore,

Fall in, and step together !

The hour of Discord now hath fled ;

Soon faiths unfaithful shall lie dead ;

The Light is dawning overhead,

And still our song shall be,—

To victory! O victory!

We march,—we march together!

IV

To meadows rosy with the morn,—

Fall in, and step together!

To happier homes with eager heart

We march,—we take the Toiler's part;

The Commonweal shall be our chart,

And still our song shall be,—

To victory! O victory!

We march,—we march together!

V

Ye statesmen, ye of factious strife,

Fall in, and step together!

Relieve the accidents of fate;

Toil for no Party, but the State;

For selfish aims your zeal abate ;
Then still our song shall be,—
To victory! O victory!
We march,—we march together!

VI

Where children pine and children weep,
Fall in, and step together!
Arise, O stalwart souls, and bring
Peace to the spirits sorrowing ;
Then shall your children's children sing,
And this their song shall be,—
To victory! O victory!
We march,—we march together!

VII

O mourners, now the night is past,
Fall in, and step together!
Let every man his Duty do ;

To all and to himself be True ;
Soon shall ye reap what is your due,
And still your song shall be,—
To victory ! O victory !
We march,—we march together !

VIII

The New World crieth to the Old,
Fall in, and step together !
Ere bloody Anarchs raging come,
Ere mad Despair invade your home,
Let Christ reconquer Christendom ;
Then still your song shall be,—
To victory ! O victory !
We march,—we march together !

IX

O Love reborn, O Life renewed,
Fall in, and step together !

With sprays of Mercy ever twined,
Let Justice in life's garland bind
Peace and goodwill to all mankind!

And still our song shall be,—

To victory! O victory!

We march,—we march together!

X

Then come, ye soldiers brave and true,

Fall in, and step together!

Your flags unfurl—the bugles call—

Come, warriors, come—for one and all

Now Right with Might we will install,

And still our song shall be,—

To victory! O victory!

We march,—we march together!

THE CHURCH AT FERNEY

‘DEO EREXIT VOLTAIRE’

‘DEO Voltaire!’—Thus yesterday we read
The bold inscription o’er the doorway writ ;
No pert device of philosophic wit,
It through the ages speaks from overhead,
A messenger of love with wisdom wed,—
Of grief for human grieving as is fit :
Truly, methinks, no smile lurked under it ;
Ah, now we smile no more, Voltaire is dead !

No cynic savant to the God Unknown

Here reared this temple by his palace-gate ;

No prelate, faithful to one faith alone,

Built this, God's witness of his high estate ;

But Love, Love whispered to his friends, the Poor,—

“ I too would honour Him whom ye adore.”

GENEVA, 1895.

THE MAWDDACH

I

SUN-KISSED sands,
Where the sea-gull lands
And alien birds from the Forest meet ;
Where, as bright
As the Rainbow's light,
Kingfishers flash thro' the noontide heat,—
Sylvan shore !
As in years of yore
We seek the calm of thy still retreat.

II

Where but here
Should the Hours appear

Thus blithely clad with the robe of Song ;
Where more fair
In the sunlit air,
And pure as winds that the pine-woods throng,
Dawns the sight
Of our love's delight,
With all the joys that to Life belong ?

III

Rich as gold
That the mines unfold
In those lone heights that around thee rise,
Nature, true
To the Hearts that woo,
Here yields her bliss to enchanted eyes,—
Whispering, " Mine
Is this land, and thine,
And ne'er shalt thou its rare grace despise."

IV

Naiads sleep
On thy glassy deep,
And Night reveals what the Day hath hid,—
Circling arms,
And a feast that charms
With dreams of Love thy green banks amid ;
Yet, fair Scene,
That our joy hast been,
Farewell to thee, and thy woods we bid.

DOLGELLY, 1893.

LA FONTAINE D'AMOUR

I

FAR off in a glen of the mountain,
Engirdled by forests of pine,
Was, they whispered, the legended fountain,
Love's mystical fountain and shrine ;
There the Angels descended at even
To list to the Nightingale's song,
And they left there the guerdon of Heaven,
The gift of a love that is strong.

II

Then I said, " I will go and behold it,
This sacred sweet fountain of love !
Tho' I know not the dark groves that fold it,

The leafy green haunts of the dove ;
Tho' I know not the mazy recesses,
And glades where the Dryads recline,—
Where the forest bends down and caresses,
I will kneel at this leaf-hidden shrine."

III

So I rose, and passed forth from the city,
Through the granite-built gate of the town ;
Nor heeded the dread of banditti,
Nor the surly priest's darkening frown ;
But on, and still on, never resting
By roadside, or river, or dell,
I sped like an arrow, attesting
The might of Love's magical spell.

IV

Away, and away, in the gladness
And glamour of youth and delight,

I fled past the pilgrims in sadness
 Returning to rest for the Night ;
But diverging the road soon divided,
 And left me in doubt on the way ;
And an echoing torrent derided
 My spirit that brooked not delay.

V

There the Swallows above the blue water
 Were darting, and down on the lea
While tending her young lambs the daughter
 Of a yeoman stood gazing at me ;
And I thought, " Surely, born on this mountain
 Yon gentle, fair Maiden will know
The path that leads up to the Fountain
 Of Love, and the way I should go."

VI

Then I asked her, but blushing and sighing,

And cooing more soft than the dove,
She modestly whispered, replying
That her heart was the Fountain of Love ;
Yet I doubted, and doubting departed
From that simple, sweet, innocent maid ;
Thro' the forest I rushed eager-hearted,
Nor conquered, nor wholly dismayed.

VII

Was it days, was it weeks that I wandered,—
Or, in sooth, many months, many years,
'Mid those mazy recesses meandered,
Oft mingling my rapture with tears
But never the Fountain, ah, never
That pure lucid spring could I see ;
And with sorrow I thought that for ever
That fount might be hidden from me.

VIII

When lo, in the Twilight at even,—

Alone, far away from the world,—
Where the Angels descended from Heaven
As the shadows of Night were unfurled,
Lo, there stood the Fountain before me,
And fainting my heart was undone,
But the spirit of gladness upbore me,
And the sense of a victory won.

IX

Yet where were the lovers? No maiden
With her wooer was there to be seen,—
No Phoebus, no Phryne love-laden,
No Cypris of old that had been ;
But there by the brink of the fountain,
The Fountain of Love undefiled,
Alone there with God on the mountain
A Mother lay clasping her Child.

“LOVE COMES NO MORE, OR
RARELY COMES”

LOVE comes no more, or rarely comes
Again to his deserted homes ;
To hearts that once have loved, and yet
Must now remember to forget.

So thought I as but yesterday
I passed out with Louise to play
Upon the lawn at battledore ;
Yet “love is love for evermore !”

Our game soon ended, 'neath the limes
We sat and talked of olden times :—

"Two years ago! 'Tis long," she said,
"Since last we met: we thought you dead!"

A sadness as of discontent
Was in her loving speech, that lent
Enchantment to the linden-trees ;
I spoke her name, I said—" Louise,
"When last we met, too young, 'tis true,
Was my heart's love for love of you ;
Will you forgive if I avow
You loved me then, I love you now?"

She turned, a smile was on her face ;
She turned but for a moment's space ;
Yet ere her hand in mine she'd lay,
Her downward glances seemed to say,

80 "LOVE COMES NO MORE, OR RARELY COMES"

"At battledore too long we've play'd,

Now you, now I—yet I'm afraid:

Will you be true if I too vow

I loved you then, I—love you now?"

THE SONG OF THE SIRENS

TO ONE DEPARTING

WHITHER, O whither, ere yet the stars wane,
Love, art thou going? Nay, with us remain :—
Come back, beloved! Love, come back again!

See, unto thee we stretch hands ever fain;
List, for to thee we sing chanting one strain,—
Come back, beloved! Love, come back again!

Fondly we plead to thee, pleading in vain,
Lord of our limbs and lips, pleasure and pain,
Come back, beloved! Love, come back again!

Where on this sandy beach long we have lain,
Ere the night hideth us, hiding disdain,
Come back, beloved! Love, come back again!

THE FOES AT HOME

BY LODOVICO DELLA VERNACCIA.—A.D. 1200

IF ye, O Citizens, the honoured theme

Of our high purpose will now hold in view,

Your comment on the text, is it not true,

Will surely be that we as children seem !

Yet, if awhile ye do not idle deem

Our strifes intestine to revolve anew,

Methinks your heads ye'll bow with reverence due,

Nor lightly all our thorny griefs esteem.

What though now chastened be each foreign foe—
His onset routed and his blood outpoured—
Not therefore must the sword be laid aside,
But 'gainst our foes at home must deal the blow,
And in their traitorous blood once more be dyed :
For only great and terrible is the sword !

THE ROAD TO MACUGNAGA

VAL ANZASCA

'To matins come! To matins come!'

Thus tolled the bell—but lo, on high
Triumphant blazed the cloudless sky ;
More ample than St. Peter's dome,
It was our heaven, and God's home ;—
And bound at last for Truth to search
We might not linger in the Church.

Vogogna gave us on that day
An omelet for *déjeuner* ;—
On such 'viaticum' well-fed
The pilgrim, with life garlanded,
Goes forth upon the upward way ;

Nor shall he faint, nor rest, till he
Hath reached the Kingdom that they see
Whose eyes are gifted to behold
And gaze upon Infinity.

Across the bridge where Tosa rolled
His sunlit tide of burnished gold
We passed, and soon had left behind
Pié de Muléra,—to our mind
A hot Gehenna of the plain,
The torrid home of scorching pain,
Such as some Christian-folk declare
Their fellow-men anon shall share.

But now our hearts were lifted up ;
Already from the golden cup

Of Nature's sacramental wine
Our souls had drunk. A light divine
Gleamed bright above the horizon line ;
And Love was with us, and Delight,
When Monte Rosa came in sight.

Lo, on its throne, aloft, on high,
Encircled by the sapphire sky,
A holy spirit seemed to sit ;—
What was this Spirit, what was it ?
And what the Voices in the air
That sang their hymn of praise and prayer ?

O Thou, our Master in the Past,
What is the Message that thou hast
For us the pilgrims of To-day

Bound for the heavenly, upward way?

O spirit on thy stainless throne,

What is thy teaching? Shall we say

Thou and the Universe are one,

And we Thy children, Thine alone—

We are a Part, Thou art the Whole;

The world Thy body, Thou the soul?

Yea, shall our worship ever be

The praise of the Infinity?

But here is Ponte Grande,—here

The higher Vision draweth near,

As earth's low levels disappear.

'Mid these fair heights long let us stay,

And drink of Beauty while we may;

Here quench thy thirst with purest wine;

Here rest 'mid Nature's holiest shrine,
And thou at eventide shalt say,
'I too,'—and shall not this suffice?—
'I too have been in Paradise.'

Keep thou thy soul still and serene,
As hid in some lone woodland scene
A sheltered lake may long have been ;
And, heaven reflected on thy breast,
The stars shall on thy bosom rest ;
Thou shalt find peace, and Beauty then
Shall drift within thy spirit's ken.

Alone upon the Pampas plain
The Gaucho rides with loosened rein ;

He hears afar the jaguar roar ;
He sees the ' crested screamer ' soar
High o'er his head till lost to view
It enters heaven's empyreal blue,—
An Angel singing on its way
A sweet and paradisal lay
Unlike the shrill discordant sound
It uttered resting on the ground.
Thus shall all spirits as they soar
Sings hymns to Beauty evermore,
Till they thro' heaven's gate at last
Into the realm of Peace have passed ;
And holy, holy shall they be
Who reach that highest sanctuary.

Yet while of Beauty, as we think,

The soul of Man should ever drink,
What is the Godhead,—can it be,
Truth is the truest Deity?

Then turn, O comrade, turn and pray
Awhile to Truth for his bright ray
Of Light to lead thee on thy way ;
Truth be the star that shines above
Thy home of Beauty and of Love,
Then shall its influence benign
Make thee and thy pure soul divine ;
Tho' its far orb thou may'st not reach
Its sacred light thy heart shall teach,—
None may the Very Truth secure,
But Truthfulness is ever sure!

Lo, in full glory now unrolled

There stands the sovran peak—behold,
Snow-white and solemn, vast and grand,
Great hierarch of this 'holy land,'
Now Monte Rosa high in air
Gleams, and its gospel would declare.
O long as on its supreme crest
Unmoved the changeless snow shall rest,
Long as their wealth the years unfold,
To every pilgrim young or old,—
To every wandering soul whose sigh⁺
Here feasts with wonder and delight,—
To every heart it shall be told
By mystic symbols manifold,
Love, Truth, and Beauty, are the Three
That now must form thy Trinity!
To these the Voices in the air

Now chant their hymns of praise and prayer ;
To these the avalanches cry
When downward sweeping from on high ;
To these the deep-blue gentian-flower
Unfolds the mystery of its dower ;
To these the bending pine-trees sigh
When swift the stormy winds rush by :—
Love, Truth and Beauty ! Still to these
Are sung the sweetest melodies,
While all the spheres unite to bring
Oblation, and glad pæans sing ;
To these, now Monte Rosa bears
True witness, and their worship shares ;
To these who will may upward soar
And dwell with God for evermore.

KRÜGER

AKIN to Cromwell, yet averse to strife !
O patriarch of a people doomed to fight
For home and liberty, whose sole delight
Is still in peace to lead a pastoral life
With lithe-limbed children and a loving wife,—
Shalt thou not guard and guide thy race aright !
Shalt thou not in thy wisdom and true might
Snatch from the brigand's hand the up-lifted knife !

Akin to Cromwell ! Hark, methinks I hear
The roar of armed battalions drawing near ;

Awake, arise! The hour is past for sleep!

Arise, and arm thy sons, and have no fear!

Arise, Van Tromp! Once more the Dutch shall
sweep

The foemen from the veldt as from the deep.

LONDON,

January 3, 1896.

STANZAS COMPOSED AT VOIRON

FROM far Saint Laurent, from the heights
That cluster round the Grande Chartreuse,
Here back returned once more we sit
'Neath Voiron's moonlit avenues.

How calm the night, how still the trees,—
These linden-trees that scent the air,
And with their verdure love to grace
The fairest town of all Isère.

'Mid such a scene, on such an eve,
How should man's spirit fail to win

Some impulse from the world without,
Some utterance from the voice within !

No passing sound the stillness breaks ;
There comes no murmur on the breeze ;
No thunder that the mariner hears
When dreaming of the storm-lashed seas ;

No vesper song of bird or maid,
No lay of minstrel chanted near,
Makes glad the night with carol gay
Or jubilant strain we love to hear.

Yet list, a whisper from afar,
Faint echo from life's stormy sea,—
A message from the Spirit-land
On angel's wing floats down to me.

And still in crystals of clear rhyme,
Like snow-flakes moulded into song,
It builds itself a lyric dome
Of melody the Muses throng :—

I

O sunny lands,
O golden sands,
When Youth its halo round us spread !
We will not weep,
Nor sad watch keep,
Tho' dark the Night hangs overhead.

II

'Mid sea-washed shells,
And flower-sweet bells,

H

We played thro' merry childhood's hour ;
Then Dryad fair
With golden hair
Enticed us to Love's leafy bower.

III

Ah me, those years
Of smiles and tears !
We would not bid them yet adieu ;
Love is the best !
Death take the rest,
So it but leave me, love, with you.

“FAIRER THAN THE FIELDS OF
ENNA”

TO R. C. HERON MAXWELL

FAIRER than the fields of Enna

Sung by many a bard of yore,

Is this village of Varenna

Cypress-crowned on Como's shore.

Not Lucerne, and not Lugano,

Tho' they both be passing fair,

Nor, believe me, Desenzano

With Varenna can compare.

Beauty on the wings of rapture

Wafts us to the realm above;

While Varenna with sweet capture

Wins and keeps our heart and love.

LAGO DI COMO, 1896.

OMNIA SOMNIA

“Go, silly worm, drudge, trudge, and travel,
Despising pain, so thou may'st gain
Some honour, or some golden gravel,—”

SYLVESTER.

AND thou, Sylvester, didst thou find,

Awaking in the Night,

The Dreamland of the human mind

Laid bare unto thy sight?

And didst thou see a ‘mighty smoke’

From ‘burning matter’ mount,

Was it the Pride of foolish folk

Death deems of small account?

Renown a wreath that fades, and Fame

A road to Melancholy;

The Mirage of a deathless name
Mere dreams and idle folly?

So be it! Yet the vision comes
Of effort not in vain,
Of honest labour, happy homes ;—
Nor shall the Muse complain,

Tho' what we seek may ne'er be ours,
If 'mid the toil and strife,
And in the blossoming of our powers
We find the crown of life.

SONNET BY RAPHAEL

“Un pensier dolce erimembrare e godo
Di quello assalto—”

How sweet the Memory when again I think
Of that embrace,—how sweet the Joy! Yet sad
The grievous loss that I at parting had
As sank my Star beneath the dark Sea's brink.

Now breaking silence Truth I will not blink,
But will confess how Love, a traitor chief,
Then played me false to my own speechless grief;
Tho' him I thank, nor from his praise would
shrink.

The sixth Hour was it, and the Sun had set,—
And in its place another Orb arose;

A time for deeds methought, and not for speech ;
Yet vanquished by the Fires that in me met,
Voiceless I still remained unto the close ;
Nor could with burning words my Love beseech.

MAN

CHILD of the Infinite,

Born of Eternity,—

Man, the last neophyte,

Robed in modernity!

What is his history,—

What can we show of it?

Little we know of it,

Hid in much mystery :—

Child of the Infinite,

Born of Eternity!

THE PEDLAR'S 'APOLOGIA'

A cader v`a chi troppo alto sale.

IT. PROV.

MEN travel-worn tread night and morn
One highway to one goal ;
They toil to earn, nor wisdom learn,
While on the ages roll.

In years of yore ere Youth passed o'er
I wearied of dull life,
I bade farewell to 'Faery-Dell,'
And took the World to wife.

Now up and down, thro' thorp and town,
From door to door I roam,—

A pedlar sage that loves the page
Of Nature's wondrous tome!

He grasps too much who all would clutch!

But I have been content
To cull, each day, in my own way
The bloom of each event.

And when the shy folk come and buy
What most they need or prize,
To each I fling—no worthless thing—
Apt word or adage wise.

I bend not low to 'empty show,'
Like those of high estate;
No rule I own, I reign alone,
Sole sovran of my fate!

Who fain Content would circumvent
With glory or with gold,
Should watch awhile where wild-flowers smile,
And woods their wealth unfold.

The Daffodils by laughing rills
Dance as the breeze goes by ;
And Song and Glee meet on the lea ;
The lark trills in the sky.

Peace dwelleth there ; and with the air
The joys of Life come borne ;
While Nature's calm and Nature's balm
Can soothe the heart forlorn.

Now with my pack I'm travelling back
Unto the 'Great Unknown ;'

Yet on the road light seems my load,
And all the world my own.

And when no more from shore to shore
I wander down life's way,
Grave on my tomb—no word of gloom—
“This dog has had his day!”

THE PARADISE OF SONG

ONCE more unto the gates I come ;

Once more I stand and wait ;

I hear again the distant hum

Of hymns to Beauty consecrate.

The Twilight shadows gather round ;

The golden sun goes down ;

Once more the wooded heights resound

With lilt and lay that Love would crown.

Before the gates again I wait,

And rhythmic Voices hear ;

Not theirs the Message that too late

Come they who Beauty still revere.

But 'Welcome, welcome!' Yet they cry,

These Voices from above ;—

'Welcome!' the echoing cliffs reply,

'Welcome, the songs of Life and Love!'



EPIGRAMS AND VERSICLES

THE FOUNDATIONS OF BELIEF

BY A MODERN STATESMAN

TAKE "Philosophic Doubt," and give

To it a new "authority";

Upon this basis build your creed—

'Twill win a large majority!

But if the Church and Chapel spurn

Your "doubts" with strange barbarity,

With Doubt have done, let every one

Then worship "popularity."

DII

“Hecatæus, the historian of Miletus, who lived 500 B.C., expresses the opinion that for some 900 years the Gods had no longer taken women for their wives.”—BÜCHNER.

AH, fickle lovers, foolish Gods !

Inconstant as the wind !

Your power hath faded from the earth,

Your memory from mankind.

Unwise, unwise,—ah, well-away !

And could ye not foresee

How soon without those loving wives

Extinct your race must be ?

The ploughman hastens to his home ;
The thrush a mate hath found ;
But ye have vanished from our view,
Nor with your deeds astound.

THE HUMAN MIND

TO PYRRHO

IN vain, in vain you strive each day
Truth's hidden wealth to find ;
You know not how, in what strange way
Exists the Human Mind.

A perfume issues from the rose,
A light from yonder fire,—
But ah, the mystery who knows
Of Thought, or Soul's desire.

MAN'S IMMORTALITY

NAY, tell me, which part shall endure,

O Man, of all thy mystery !

Thy Pride, methinks, stands fixed and sure ;

Thou shalt not *wholly* die.

GIOTTO'S TOWER

FOR Giotto's Tower,

Well, half-an-hour

Might suffice ;

So walk around,

And step the ground

Twice or thrice !

'Twas Florence raised it ;

And Ruskin praised it—

What, not nice !

Nay, if you doubt it,

Say naught about it,

Is my advice.

A POEM FOR PENELOPE

Ætat. 9

THE LIGHT FROM THE MILKY WAY

I

TWELVE million miles in each minute of time
Travels the Light from the Milky Way!
It travels by night, and it travels by day:
It never grows weary, or halts on the way;
But straight to the Earth with an ardour sublime,
Twelve million miles in each minute of time,
Travels the Light from the Milky Way!

II

For a thousand years—that's a very long time—
Travels the Light from the Milky Way!

But it reaches at length with a quivering ray
The home where this Poet is writing his lay ;
Yet ere it touches the hem of his rhyme,
For a thousand years, 'tis a very long time,
Travels the Light from the Milky Way !

ETERNITY

OF old spake the priest, spake the parson and
preacher,—

‘After death, O my friends, after death is Eternity.’

‘Not so,’ cries my spirit, ‘not so, O wise teacher!’

It was, and it is, and it ever shall be,—

Now, now is Eternity! Is it for thee?’



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