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T H E **D** O E M S

OF

BAYARD TAYLOR.



BOSTON:
TICKNOR AND FIELDS.
1865.

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TO MY FRIENDS.

SHALL this an emblem be of that blue sky
Wherein are set the golden stars of song?
Drops the reluctant world its doubting cry,
To give me room among the shining throng?

Ah, vain the question ! 'T is enough to know
My heart in song has blossomed and has bled :
Has learned with love of living bards to glow,
And touched the garments of the laurelled dead.

You, also, Friends, that wear the Artist's crown,
Or, wearing not, the crown to others bring,
You do not ask my measure of renown,
But wait, content to hear, as I to sing.

Your love upholds me in the silent days,
And in the tuneful nights I give to Art ;
These leaves are yours, to whom their speech betrays
The changeful fancy and the changeless heart.

B. T.


CEDARCROFT, May; 1864.







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THE POET'S JOURNAL.







PREFACE.



THE RETURN OF THE GODDESS.



NOT as in youth, with steps outspeeding
morn,
And cheeks all bright, from rapture of
the way,
But in strange mood, half cheerful, half forlorn,
She comes to me to-day.

Does she forget the trysts we used to keep,
When dead leaves rustled on autumnal ground,
Or the lone garret, whence she banished sleep
With threats of silver sound ?

Does she forget how shone the happy eyes
When they beheld her, — how the eager tongue
Plied its swift oar through wave-like harmonies,
To reach her where she sung ?

How at her sacred feet I cast me down ?

How she upraised me to her bosom fair,
And from her garland shred the first light crown
That ever pressed my hair ?

Though dust is on the leaves, her breath will bring
Their freshness back : why lingers she so long ?
The pulseless air is waiting for her wing,
Dumb with unuttered song.

If tender doubt delay her on the road,
O let her haste to find the doubt belied !
If shame for love unworthily bestowed,
That shame shall melt in pride.

If she but smile, the crystal calm shall break
In music, sweeter than it ever gave,
As when a breeze breathes o'er some sleeping lake,
And laughs in every wave.

The ripples of awakened song shall die
Kissing her feet, and woo her not in vain,
Until, as once, upon her breast I lie —
Pardoned, and loved again !

B. T.





INSCRIPTION.

TO THE MISTRESS OF CEDARCROFT.

I.

THE evening shadows lengthen on the
lawn :
Westward, our immemorial chestnuts
stand,
A mount of shade ; but o'er the cedars drawn,
Between the hedge-row trees, in many a band
Of brightening gold, the sunshine lingers on,
And soon will touch our oaks with parting hand :
And down the distant valley all is still,
And flushed with purple smiles the-beckoning hill.

II.

Come, leave the flowery terrace, leave the beds
Where Southern children wake to Northern air :
Let yon mimosas droop their tufted heads,
These myrtle-trees their nuptial beauty wear,
And while the dying day reluctant treads
From tree-top unto tree-top, with me share
The scene's idyllic peace, the evening's close,
The balm of twilight, and the land's repose.

III.

Come, for my task is done : the task that drew
My footsteps from the chambers of the Day, —
That held me back, Beloved, even from you,
That are my daylight : for the Poet's way
Turns into many a lonely avenue
Where none may follow. He must sing his lay
First to himself, then to the One most dear ;
Last, to the world. Come to my side, and hear !

IV.

The poems ripened in a heart at rest,
A life that first through you is free and strong,
Take them and warm them in your partial breast,
Before they try the common air of song !
Fame won at home is of all fame the best :
Crown me your poet, and the critic's wrong
Shall harmless strike where you in love have smiled,
Wife of my heart, and mother of my child !





THE POET'S JOURNAL.



FIRST EVENING.



THE day had come, the day of many years.

My bud of hope, thorned round with guarding fears,

And sealed with frosts of oft-renewed delay,
Burst into sudden bloom—it was the day!

“Ernest will come!” the early sunbeams cried;

“Will come!” was breathed through all the wood-lands wide;

“Will come, will come!” said cloud, and brook,
and bird;

And when the hollow roll of wheels was heard
Across the bridge, it thundered, “He is near!”

And then my heart made answer, “He is here!”

Ernest was here, and now the day had gone
Like other days, yet wild and swift and sweet,—
And yet prolonged, as if with whirling feet
One troop of duplicated Hours sped on,
And one trod out the moments lingeringly:

So distant seemed the lonely dawn from me.
But all was well. He paced the new-mown lawn,
With Edith at his side, and, while my firs
Stood bronzed with sunset, happy glances cast
On the familiar landmarks of the Past.
I heard a gentle laugh: the laugh was hers.
"Confess it," she exclaimed, "I recognize,
No less than you, the features of the place,
So often have I seen it with the eyes
Your memory gave me: yea, your very face,
With every movement of the theme, betrayed
That here the sunshine lay, and there the shade."
"A proof!" cried Ernest. "Let me be your
guide,"
She said, "and speak not: Philip shall decide."
To them I went, at beckon of her hand.
A moment she the mellow landscape scanned
In seeming doubt, but only to prolong
A witching aspect of uncertainty,
And the soft smile in Ernest's watching eye:
"Yonder," she said, "(I see I am not wrong,
By Philip's face,) you built your hermit seat
Against the rock, among the scented fern,
Where summer lizards played about your feet;
And here, beside us, is the tottering urn
You cracked in fixing firmly on its base;
And here — yes, yes! — this is the very place —
I know the wild vine and the sassafras —
Where you and Philip, lying in the grass,
Disowned the world, renounced the race of men,
And you all love, except your own for him,
Until, through that, all love came back again."
Here Edith paused; but Ernest's eyes were dim.
He kissed her, gave a loving hand to me,

And spoke : " Ah, Philip, Philip, those were days
We *dare* remember now, when only blaze
Far-off, the storm's black edges brokenly.
Who thinks, at night, that morn will ever be ?
Who knows, far out upon the central sea,
That anywhere is land ? And yet, a shore
Has set behind us, and will rise before :
A past foretells a future." " Blessed be
That Past ! " I answered, " on whose bosom lay
Peace, like a new-born child : and now, I see,
The child is man, begetting day by day
Some fresher joy, some other bliss, to make
Your life the fairer for his mother's sake."

Deeper beneath the oaks the shadows grew :
The twilight glimmer from their tops withdrew,
And purple gloomed the distant hills, and sweet
The sudden breath of evening rose, with balm
Of grassy meadows : in the upper calm
The pulses of the stars began to beat :
The fire-flies twinkled : through the lindens went
A rustle, as of happy leaves composed
To airy sleep, of drowsy petals closed,
And the dark land lay silent and content.
We, too, were silent. Ernest walked, I knew,
With me, beneath the stars of other eyes :
He heard, with me, the tongues of perished leaves :
Departed suns their trails of splendor drew
Across departed summers : whispers came
From voices, long ago resolved again
Into the primal Silence, and we twain,
Ghosts of our present selves, yet still the same,
As in a spectral mirror wandered there.
Its pain outlived, the Past was only fair.

Ten years had passed since I had touched his hand,
And felt upon my lips the brother-kiss
That shames not manhood, — years of quiet bliss
To me, fast-rooted on paternal land,
Mated, yet childless. He had journeyed far
Beyond the borders of my life, and whirled
Unresting round the vortex of the world,
The reckless child of some eccentric star,
Careless of fate, yet with a central strength
I knew would hold his life in equipoise,
And bend his wandering energies, at length,
To the smooth orbit of serener joys.
Few were the winds that wafted to my nest
A leaf from him: I learned that he was blest, —
The late fulfilment of my prophecy, —
And then I felt that he must come to me,
The old, unswerving sympathy to claim;
X And set my house in order for a guest
Long ere the message of his coming came.

In gentle terraces my garden fell
Down to the rolling lawn. On one side rose,
Flanking the layers of bloom, a bolder swell
With laurels clad, and every shrub that grows
Upon our native hills, a bosky mound,
Whence the commingling valleys might be seen
Bluer and lovelier through the gaps of green.
The rustic arbor which the summit crowned
Was woven of shining smilax, trumpet-vine,
Clematis, and the wild white eglantine,
Whose tropical luxuriance overhung
The interspaces of the posts, and made
For each sweet picture frames of bloom and shade.
It was my favorite haunt when I was young,

To read my poets, watch my sunset fade
Behind my father's hills, and, when the moon
Shed warmer silver through the nights of June,
Dream, as 't were new, the universal dream.
This arbor, too, was Ernest's hermitage :
Here he had read to me his tear-stained page
Of sorrow, here renewed the pang supreme
Which burned his youth to ashes : here would try
To lay his burden in the hands of Song,
And make the Poet bear the Lover's wrong,
But still his heart impatiently would cry :
" In vain, in vain ! You cannot teach to flow
In measured lines so measureless a woe.
First learn to slay this wild beast of despair,
Then from his harmless jaws your honey tear ! "

Hither we came. Beloved hands had graced
The table with a flask of mellow juice,
Thereto the gentle herb that poets use
When Fancy droops, and in the corner placed
A lamp, that glimmered through its misty sphere
Like moonlit marble, on a pedestal
Of knotted roots, against the leafy wall.
The air was dry, the night was calm and clear,
And in the dying clover crickets chirped.
The Past, I felt, the Past alone usurped
Our thoughts, — the hour of confidence had come,
Of sweet confession, tender interchange,
Which drew our hearts together, yet with strange
Half-dread repelled them. Seeing Ernest dumb
With memories of the spot, as if to me
Belonged the right his secrets to evoke,
And Edith's eyes on mine, consentingly,
Conscious of all I wished to know, I spoke : X

“Dear Friend, one volume of your life I read
 Beneath these vines: you placed it in my hand
 And made it mine, — but how the tale has sped
 Since then, I know not, or can understand
 From this fair ending only. Let me see
 The intervening chapters, dark and bright,
 In order, as you lived them. Give to-night
 Unto the Past, dear Ernest, and to me!”

Thus I, with doubt and loving hesitance,
 Lest I should touch a nerve he fain would hide;
 But he, with calm and reassuring glance,
 In which no troubled shadow lay, replied:

“That mingled light and darkness are no more
 In this new life, than are the sun and shade
 Of painted landscapes: distant lies the shore
 Where last we parted, Philip: how I made X

The journey, what adventures on the road,
 X What haps I met, what struggles, what success
 Of fame, or gold, or place, concerns you less,
 Dear friend, than how I lost that sorest load
 I started with, and came to dwell at last

In the House Beautiful. There but remains
 A fragment here and there, — wild, broken strains
 And scattered voices speaking from the Past.”

“Let me those broken voices hear,” I said,
 “And I shall know the rest.” “Well — be it so.
 You, who would write ‘*Resurgam*’ o’er my dead,
 The resurrection of my heart shall know.”

Then Edith rose, and up the terraces
 Went swiftly to the house; but soon we spied
 Her white dress gleam, returning through the trees,
 And, softly flushed, she came to Ernest’s side,
 A volume in her hand. But he delayed

Awhile his task, revolving leaf by leaf
 With tender interest, now that ancient grief
 No more had power to make his heart afraid ;
 For pain, that only lives in memory,
 Like battle-scars, it is no pain to show.
 " Here, Philip, are the secrets you would know,"
 He said : " Howe'er obscure the utterance be,
 The lamp you lighted in the olden time
 Will show my heart's-blood beating through the
 rhyme :

A poet's journal, writ in fire and tears
 At first, blind protestations, blinder rage,
 (For you and Edith only, many a page !)
 Then slow deliverance, with the gaps of years
 Between, and final struggles into life,
 Which the heart shrank from, as 't were death
 instead."

Then, with a loving glance towards his wife,
 Which she as fondly answered, thus he read : —

DARKNESS.

THE thread I held has slipped from out my
 hand :

In this dark labyrinth, without a clew,
 Groping for guidance, stricken blind, I stand,
 A helpless child that knows not what to do.

When all the glory of the morn was mine,
 The sudden night surprised me unawares :
 I see no pitying star above me shine,
 I hear no voice in answer to my prayers.

At every step, I stumble on the road ;
 Fain would I rest, the wild hours whirl me on ;
 What business have I in this blânk abode,
 Whence Love, and Hope, and even Faith, are
 gone ?

A child of summer, shivering in the cold, —
 A son of light, by darkness overcome, —
 A bird of air, my broken wings I fold,
 A harp of joy, my shattered strings are dumb.

And every gift that Life to me had given
 Lies at my feet, in useless fragments trod :
 There is no justice or in Earth or Heaven :
 There is no pity in the heart of God.

THE TORSO.

I.

IN clay the statue stood complete,
 As beautiful a form, and fair,
 As ever walked a Roman street
 Or breathed the blue Athenian air :
 The perfect limbs, divinely bare,
 Their old, heroic freedom kept,
 And in the features, fine and rare,
 A calm, immortal sweetness slept.

II.

O'er common men it towered, a god,
 And smote their meaner life with shame,

For while its feet the highway trod,
 Its lifted brow was crowned with flame
 And purified from touch of blame :
 Yet wholly human was the face,
 And over them who saw it came
 The knowledge of their own disgrace.

III.

It stood, regardless of the crowd,
 And simply showed what men might be :
 Its solemn beauty disavowed
 The curse of lost humanity.
 Erect and proud, and pure and free,
 It overlooked each loathsome law
 Whereunto others bend the knee,
 And only what was noble saw.

IV.

X The patience and the hope of years
 Their final hour of triumph caught ;
 The clay was tempered with my tears,
 The forces of my spirit wrought
 With hands of fire to shape my thought,
 That when, complete, the statue stood,
 To marble resurrection brought,
 The Master might pronounce it good.

V.

But in the night an enemy,
 Who could not bear the wreath should grace
 My ready forehead, stole the key
 And hurled my statue from its base ;
 And now its fragments strew the place

Where I had dreamed its shrine might be :
 The stains of common earth deface
 Its beauty and its majesty.

VI.

The torso prone before me lies ;
 The cloven brow is knit with pain :
 Mute lips, and blank, reproachful eyes
 Unto my hands appeal in vain.
 My hands shall never work again :
 My hope is dead, my strength is spent :
 This fatal wreck shall now remain
 The ruined sculptor's monument.

THE DEAD MARCH.

I.

THE April sky with sunshine filled the street,
 And lightly fell the tread of pattering feet,
 As on the last year's leaves the April rain.
 The glaring houses wore a foreign grace ;
 A foreign sweetness shone on Labor's face,
 And open lay, relaxed, the hand of Gain.

II.

My sorrow slept ; I breathed the peace of Spring.
 One fledgling hope outreached a timorous wing :
 Concealed, at least, and sacred was my pain, —
 When, suddenly, the dreadful trumpets blew,
 And every wind my gloomy secret knew,
 And all the echoes hurled it back again.

III.

Before a stranger's corpse the trumpets cried
So bitterly, it seemed all love had died :

Then hollow horns took up the fatal strain,
Till tongues of fire went flashing through the air,
The myriad clamors of a sole despair,
The cry of grief that knows its cry is vain.

IV.

The dead was fortunate, — he could not hear :
The mourners comforted, behind his bier :

Thro' happy crowds advanced the funeral train :
Mine was the sorrow, mine the deathlike pang,
And tears, that burned the eyelids as they sprang,
To hear the awful music of my pain.

ON THE HEADLAND.

I SIT ón the lonely headland,
Where the sea-gulls come and go :
The sky is gray above me,
And the sea is gray below.

There is no fisherman's pinnace
Homeward or outward bound ;
I see no living creature
In the world's deserted round.

I pine for something human,
Man, woman, young or old, —
Something to meet and welcome,
Something to clasp and hold.

I have a mouth for kisses,
 But there 's no one to give and take ;
 I have a heart in my bosom
 Beating for nobody's sake.

O warmth of love that is wasted !
 Is there none to stretch a hand ?
 No other heart that hungers
 In all the living land ?

I could fondle the fisherman's baby,
 And rock it into rest ;
 I could take the sunburnt sailor,
 Like a brother, to my breast.

I could clasp the hand of any
 Outcast of land or sea,
 If the guilty palm but answered
 The tenderness in me !

The sea might rise and drown me, —
 Cliffs fall and crush my head, —
 Were there one to love me, living,
 Or weep to see me dead !

MARAH.

THE waters of my life were sweet,
 Before that bolt of sorrow fell ;
 But now, though fainting with the heat,
 I dare not drink the bitter well.

My God ! shall Sin across the heart
Sweep like a wind that leaves no trace,
But Grief inflict a rankling smart
No after blessing can efface ?

I see the tired mechanic take
His evening rest beside his door,
And gentlier, for their father's sake,
His children tread the happy floor :

The kitchen teems with cheering smells,
With clash of cups and clink of knives,
And all the household picture tells
Of humble yet contented lives.

Then in my heart the serpents hiss :
What right have these, who scarcely know
The perfect sweetness of their bliss,
To flaunt it thus before my woe ?

Like bread, Love's portion they divide,
Like water drink his precious wine,
When the least crumb they cast aside
Were manna for these lips of mine.

I see the friend of other days
Lead home his flushed and silent bride :
His eyes are suns of tender praise,
Her eyes are stars of tender pride.

Go, hide your shameless happiness,
The demon cries, within my breast ;
Think not that I the bond can bless,
Which seeing, I am twice unblest.

The husband of a year proclaims
 His recent honor, shows the boy,
 And calls the babe a thousand names,
 And dandles it in awkward joy :

And then — I see the wife's pale cheek,
 Her eyes of pure, celestial ray —
 The curse is choked : I cannot speak,
 But, weeping, turn my head away!

THE VOICE OF THE TEMPTER.

LAST night the Tempter came to me, and
 said :

“ Why sorrow any longer for the dead ?
 The wrong is done : thy tears and groans are
 naught :

Forget the Past, — thy pain but lives in thought.
 Night after night, I hear thy cries implore
 An answer : she will answer thee no more.
 Give up thine idle prayer that Death may come
 And thou mayst somewhere find her : Death is
 dumb

To those that seek him. Live : for youth is thine.
 Let not thy rich blood, like neglected wine,
 Grow thin and stale, but rouse thyself, at last,
 And take a man's revenge upon the Past.
 What have thy virtues brought thee ? Let them go,
 And with them lose the burden of thy woe,
 Their only payment for thy service hard :
 They but exact, thou see'st, and not reward.
 Thy life is cheated, thou art cast aside

In dust, the worn-out vessel of their pride.
 Come, take thy pleasure : others do the 'same,
 And love is theirs, and fortune, name and fame !
 Let not the name of Vice thine ear affright :
 Vice is no darkness, but a different light,
 Which thou dost need, to see thy path aright ;
 Or if some pang in this experience lie,
 Through counter-pain thy present pain will die.
 Bethink thee of the lost, the barren years,
 Of harsh privations, unavailing tears,
 The steady ache of strong desires restrained,
 And what thou hast deserved, and what obtained :
 Then go, thou fool ! and, if thou canst, rejoice
 To make such base ingratitude thy choice,
 While each indulgence which thy brethren taste
 But mocks thy palate, as it runs to waste !”

So spake the Tempter, as he held outspread
 Alluring pictures round my prostrate head.
 'Twixt sleep and waking, in my helpless ear
 His honeyed voice rang musical and clear ;
 And half persuaded, shaken half with fear,
 I heard him, till the Morn began to shine,
 And found her brow less dewy-wet than mine.

EXORCISM.

O TONGUES of the Past, be still !
 Are the days not over and gone ?
 The joys have perished that were so sweet,
 But the sorrow still lives on.

I have sealed the graves of my hopes ;
I have carried the pall of love :
Let the pains and pangs be buried as deep,
And the grass be as green above !

But the ghosts of the dead arise :
They come when the board is spread :
They poison the wine of the banquet cups
With the mould their lips have shed.

The pulse of the bacchant blood
May throb in the ivy wreath,
But the berries are plucked from the nightshade
bough
That grows in the gardens of Death.

I sleep with joy at my heart,
Warm as a new-made bride ;
But a vampire comes to suck her blood,
And I wake with a corpse at my side.

O ghosts, I have given to you
The bliss of the faded years ;
'The sweat of my brow, the blood of my heart,
And manhood's terrible tears !

Take them, and be content :
I have nothing more to give :
My soul is chilled in the house of Death,
And 't is time that I should live.

Take them, and let me be :
Lie still in the churchyard mould,
Nor chase from my heart each new delight
With the phantom of the old !

SQUANDERED LIVES.

THE fisherman wades in the surges ;
The sailor sails over the sea ;
The soldier steps bravely to battle ;
The woodman lays axe to the tree.

They are each of the breed of the heroes,
The manhood attempered in strife :
Strong hands, that go lightly to labor,
True hearts, that take comfort in life.

In each is the seed to replenish
The world with the vigor it needs, —
The centre of honest affections,
The impulse to generous deeds.

But the shark drinks the blood of the fisher ;
The sailor is dropped in the sea ;
The soldier lies cold by his cannon ;
The woodman is crushed by his tree.

Each prodigal life that is wasted
In manly achievement unseen,
But lengthens the days of the coward,
And strengthens the crafty and mean.

The blood of the noblest is lavished
That the selfish a profit may find ;
But God sees the lives that are squandered,
And we to His wisdom are blind.

INDIFFERENCE.

I.

WE Fools! that meekly take the bit
And drag the burden all our lives!
Poor, blinded steeds, we all submit,
Nor know our load, scarce seeing it,
Although with stinging lash Fate goads us as she
drives.

II.

What does it help, the gold we bear,
When we are worn, and halt, and lean?
No fresher tastes the dusty air
When Fame's triumphant trumpets blare,
And we the road would leave, to lie in pastures
green.

III.

Nor profits much a virtuous name,
So short a time the crown we wear:
In fifty years 't will be the same
As if it were a crown of shame,
For none will know our lives, or, if they knew,
would care.

IV.

Life came to me: why should I take
The tasks I did not seek to do?
I did them for another's sake
In vain: and now the yoke I break,
And let the world roll on, regardless of its crew.

V.

Here, take my days, whatever Fate
 The worthless gift may choose to claim ;
 For I am weary of their weight :
 Alike to me is love or hate :
 Do with me as you please, all fortunes are the same.

A SYMBOL.

I.

HEAVY, and hot, and gray,
 Day following unto day,
 A felon gang, their blind life drag away, —

Blind, vacant, dumb, as Time,
 Lapsed from his wonted prime,
 Begot them basely in incestuous crime :

So little life there seems
 About the woods and streams, —
 Only a sleep, perplexed with nightmare-dreams.

The burden of a sigh
 Stifles the weary sky,
 Where smouldering clouds in ashen masses lie :

The forests fain would groan,
 But, silenced into stone,
 Crouch, in the dull blue vapors round them thrown.

O light, more drear than gloom !
 Than death more dead such bloom :
 Yet life — yet life — shall burst this gathering
 doom !

II.

Behold! a swift and silent fire
 Yon dull cloud pierces, in the west,
 And blackening, as with growing ire,
 He lifts his forehead from his breast.

He mutters to the ashy host
 That all around him sleeping lie, —
 Sole chieftain on the airy coast,
 To fight the battles of the sky.

He slowly lifts his weary strength,
 His shadow rises on the day,
 And distant forests feel at length
 A wind from landscapes far away.

III.

How shall the cloud unload its thunder?
 How shall its flashes fire the air?
 Hills and valleys are dumb with wonder:
 Lakes look up with a leaden stare.

Hark! the lungs of the striding giant
 Bellow an angry answer back!
 Hurling the hair from his brows defiant,
 Crushing the laggards along his track,

Now his step, like a battling Titan's,
 Scales in flame the hills of the sky;
 Struck by his breath, the forest whitens;
 Fluttering waters feel him nigh!

Stroke on stroke of his thunder-hammer —
 Sheets of flame from his anvil hurled —
 Heaven's doors are burst in the clamor:
 He alone possesses the world!

IV.

Drowned woods, shudder no more :
 Vexed lakes, smile as before :
 Hills that vanished, appear again :
 Rise for harvest, prostrate grain !

Shake thy jewels, twinkling grass :
 Blossoms, tint the winds that pass :
 Sun, behold a world restored !
 World, again thy son is lord !

Thunder-spasms the waking be
 Into Life from Apathy :
 Life, not Death, is in the gale, —
 Let the coming Doom prevail !

THUS far he read : at first with even tone,
 Still chanting in the old, familiar key, —
 That golden note, whose grand monotony
 Is musical in poets' mouths alone, —
 But broken, as he read, became the chime.
 To speak, once more, in Grief's forgotten tongue,
 And feel the hot reflex of passion flung
 Back on the heart by every pulse of rhyme
 Wherein it lives and burns, a soul might shake
 More calm than his. With many a tender break
 Of voice, a dimness of the haughty eye,
 And pause of wandering memory, he read ;
 While I, with folded arms and downcast head,
 In silence heard each blind, bewildered cry.

Thus far had Ernest read : but, closing now
The book, and lifting up a calmer brow,
“Forgive me, patient God, for this !” he said :
“And you forgive, dear friend, and dearest wife,
If I have marrèd an hour of this sweet life X
With noises from the valley of the Dead.
Long, long ago, the Hand whereat I railed
In blindness gave me courage to subdue
This wild revolt : I see wherein I failed :
My heart was false, when most I thought it true,
My sorrow selfish, when I thought it pure.
For those we lose, if still their love endure
Translation to that other land, where Love
Breathes the immortal wisdom, ask in heaven
No greater sacrifice than we had given
On earth, our love’s integrity to prove.
If we are blest to know the other blest,
Then treason lies in sorrow. Vainly said !
Alone each heart must cover up its dead ;
Alone, through bitter toil, achieve its rest :
Which I have found — but still these records keep,
Lest I, condemning others, should forget
My own rebellion. From these tares I reap,
In evil days, a fruitful harvest yet.

“But ’t is enough, to-night. Nay, Philip, here
A chapter closes. . See ! the moon is near :
Your laurels glitter : come, my darling, sing
The hymn I wrote on such a night as this !”
Then Edith, stooping first to take his kiss,
Drew from its niche of woodbine her guitar,
With chords prelusive tuned a slackened string,
And sang, clear-voiced, as some melodious star
Were dropping silver sweetness from afar :

*God, to whom we look up blindly,
Look Thou down upon us kindly :
We have sinned, but not designedly.*

*If our faith in Thee was shaken,
Pardon Thou our hearts mistaken,
Our obedience reawaken.*

*We are sinful, Thou art holy :
Thou art mighty, we are lowly :
Let us reach Thee, climbing slowly.*

*Our ingratitude confessing,
On Thy mercy still transgressing,
Thou dost punish us with blessing !*



SECOND EVENING.



T was the evening of the second day,
Which swifter, sweeter than the first
had fled :

My heart's delicious tumult passed away
And left a sober happiness instead.

For Ernest's voice was ever in mine ear,
His presence mingled as of old with mine,
But stronger, manlier, brighter, more divine
Its effluence now : within his starry sphere
Of love new-risen my nature too was drawn,
And warmed with rosy flushes of the dawn.

All day we drove about the lovely vales,
Under the hill-side farms, through summer woods,
The land of mingled homes and solitudes
That Ernest loved. We told the dear old tales
Of childhood, music new to Edith's ear,
Sang olden songs, lived old adventures o'er,
And, when the hours brought need of other cheer,
Spread on the ferny rocks a tempting store
Of country dainties. 'T was our favorite dell,
Cut by the trout-stream through a wooded ridge :
Above, the highway on a mossy bridge
Strode o'er it, and below, the water fell
Through hornblende bowlders, where the dircus
flung

His pliant rods, the berried spice-wood grew,
And tulip-trees and smooth magnolias hung
A million leaves between us and the blue.

The silver water-dust in puffs arose
And turned to dust of jewels in the sun,
And like a canon, in its close begun
Afresh, the stream's perpetual lullaby
Sang down the dell, and deepened its repose.
Here, till the western hours had left the sky,
We sat: then homeward loitered through the dusk
Of chestnut woods, along the meadow-side,
And lost in lanes that breathed ambrosial musk
Of wild-grape blossoms: and the twilight died.

Long after every star came out, we paced
The terrace, still discoursing on the themes,
The day had started, intermixed with dreams
Born of the summer night. Then, golden-faced,
Behind her daybreak of auroral gleams,
The moon arose: the bosom of the lawn
Whitened beneath her silent snow of light,
Save where the trees made isles of mystic night,
Dark blots against the rising splendor drawn,
And where the eastern wall of woodland towered,
Blue darkness, filled with undistinguished shapes:
But elsewhere, over all the landscape showered —
A silver drizzle on the distant capes
Of hills — the glory of the moon. We sought,
Drawn thither by the same unspoken thought,
The mound, where now the leaves of laurel clashed
Their dagger-points of light, around the bower,
And through the nets of leaf and elfin flower,
Cold fire, the sprinkled drops of moonshine flashed.

Erelong in Ernest's hand the volume lay,
(I did not need a second time to ask,)
And he resumed the intermitted task.

"This night, dear Philip, is the Poet's day,"
 He said : "the world is one confessional :"
 Our sacred memories as freely fall
 As leaves from o'er-ripe blossoms : we betray
 Ourselves to Nature, who the tale can win
 We shrink from uttering in the daylight's din.
 So, Friend, come back with me a little way
 Along the years, and in these records find
 The sole inscriptions they have left behind."

ATONEMENT.

IF thou hadst died at midnight,
 With a lamp beside thy bed ;
 The beauty of sleep exchanging
 For the beauty of the dead :

When the bird of heaven had called thee,
 And the time had come to go,
 And the northern lights were dancing
 On the dim December snow, —

If thou hadst died at midnight,
 I had ceased to bid thee stay,
 Hearing the feet of the Father
 Leading His child away.

I had knelt, in the awful Presence,
 And covered my guilty head,
 And received His absolution
 For my sins toward the dead.

But the cruel sun was shining
In the cold and windy sky,
And Life, with his mocking voices,
Looked in to see thee die.

God came and went unheeded ;
No tear repentant shone ;
And he took the heart from my bosom,
And left in its place a stone.

Each trivial promise broken,
Each tender word unsaid,
Must be evermore unspoken, —
Unpardoned by the dead.

Unpardoned? No : the struggle
Of years was not in vain, —
The patience that wearies passion,
And the prayers that conquer pain.

This tardy resignation
May be the blessed sign
Of pardon and atonement,
Thy spirit sends to mine.

Now first I dare remember
That day of death and woe :
Within; the dreadful silence,
Without, the sun and snow !

DECEMBER.

THE beech is bare, and bare the ash,
The thickets white below ;
The fir-tree scowls with hoar moustache,
He cannot sing for snow.

The body-guard of veteran pines,
A grim battalion, stands ;
They ground their arms, in ordered lines,
For Winter so commands.

The waves are dumb along the shore,
The river's pulse is still ;
The north-wind's bugle blows no more
Reveill e from the hill.

The rustling sift of falling snow,
The muffled crush of leaves,
These are the sounds suppressed, that show
How much the forest grieves ;

But, as the blind and vacant Day
Crawls to his ashy bed,
I hear dull echoes far away,
Like drums above the dead.

Sigh with me, Pine that never changed !
Thou wear'st the Summer's hue ;
Her other loves are all estranged,
But thou and I are true !

SYLVAN SPIRITS.

THE gray stems rise, the branches braid
A covering of deepest shade.
Beneath these old, inviolate trees
There comes no stealthy, sliding breeze,
To overhear their mysteries.

Steeped in the fragrant breath of leaves,
My heart a hermit peace receives :
The sombre forest thrusts a screen
My refuge and the world between,
And beds me in its balmy green.

No fret of life may here intrude,
To vex the sylvan solitude.
Pure spirits of the earth and air,
From hollow trunk and bosky lair
Come forth, and hear your lover's prayer !

Come, Druid soul of ancient oak,
Thou, too, hast felt the thunder-stroke ;
Come, Hamadryad of the beech,
Nymph of the burning maple, teach
My heart the solace of your speech !

Alas ! the sylvan ghosts preserve
The natures of the race they serve.
Not only Dryads, chaste and shy,
But piping Fauns, come dancing nigh,
And Satyrs of the shaggy thigh.

Across the calm, the holy hush,
 And shadowed air, there darts a flush
 Of riot, from the lawless brood,
 And rebel voices in my blood
 Salute these orgies of the wood.

Not sacred thoughts alone engage
 The saint in silent hermitage :
 The soul within him heavenward strives,
 Yet strong, as in profaner lives,
 The giant of the flesh survives.

From Nature, as from human haunts,
 That giant draws his sustenance.
 By her own elves, in woodlands wild
 She sees her robes of prayer defiled :
 She is not purer than her child.

THE LOST MAY.

WHEN May, with cowslip-braided locks,
 Walks through the land in green attire,
 And burns in meadow-grass the phlox
 His torch of purple fire :

When buds have burst the silver sheath,
 And shifting pink, and gray, and gold
 Steal o'er the woods, while fair beneath
 The bloomy vales unfold :

When, emerald-bright, the hemlock stands
 New-feathered, needled new the pine ;
 And, exiles from the orient lands,
 The turbaned tulips shine :

When wild azaleas deck the knoll,
And cinque-foil stars the fields of home,
And winds, that take the white-weed, roll
The meadows into foam :

Then from the jubilee I turn
To other Mays that I have seen,
Where more resplendent blossoms burn,
And statelier woods are green ; —

Mays, when my heart expanded first,
A honeyed blossom, fresh with dew ;
And one sweet wind of heaven dispersed
The only clouds I knew.

For she; whose softly-murmured name
The music of the month expressed,
Walked by my side, in holy shame
Of girlish love confessed.

The budding chestnuts overhead,
Their sprinkled shadows in the lane, —
Blue flowers along the brooklet's bed, —
I see them all again !

The old, old tale of girl and boy,
Repeated ever, never old :
To each, in turn the gates of joy,
The gates of heaven unfold.

And when the punctual May arrives,
With cowslip-garland on her brow,
We know what once she gave our lives,
And cannot give us now !

CHURCHYARD ROSES.

THE woodlands wore a gloomy green,
The tawny stubble clad the hill,
And August hung her smoky screen
Above the valleys, hot and still.

No life was in the fields that day ;
My steps were safe from curious eyes :
I wandered where, in churchyard clay,
The dust of love and beauty lies.

Around me thrust the nameless graves
Their fatal ridges, side by side,
So green, they seemed but grassy waves,
Yet quiet as the dead they hide.

And o'er each pillow of repose
Some innocent memento grew,
Of pansy, pink, or lowly rose,
Or hyssop, lavender, and rue.

What flower is hers, the maiden bride ?
What sacred plant protects her bed ?
I saw, the greenest mound beside,
A rose of dark and lurid red.

An eye of fierce demoniac stain,
It mocked my calm and chastened grief ;
I tore it, stung with sudden pain,
And stamped in earth each bloody leaf.

And down upon that trampled grave
In recklessness my body cast :
“ Give back the life I could not save,
Or give deliverance from the Past ! ”

But something gently touched my cheek,
Caressing while its touch reprovèd :
A rose, all white and snowy-mèek,
It grew upon the dust I loved !

A breeze the holy blossom pressed
Upon my lips : dear Saint, I cried,
Still blooms the white rose, in my breast,
Of Love that Death has sanctified !

AUTUMNAL DREAMS.

I.

WHEN the maple turns to crimson
And the sassafras to gold ;
When the gentian 's in the meadow,
And the aster on the wold ;
When the noon is lapped in vapor,
And the night is frosty-cold :

II.

When the chestnut-burs are opened,
And the acorns drop like hail,
And the drowsy air is startled
With the thumping of the flail, —
With the drumming of the partridge
And the whistle of the quail :

III.

Through the rustling woods I wander,
Through the jewels of the year,
From the yellow uplands calling,
Seeking her that still is dear :
She is near me in the autumn,
She, the beautiful, is near.

IV.

Through the smoke of burning summer,
When the weary winds are still,
I can see her in the valley,
I can hear her on the hill, —
In the splendor of the woodlands,
In the whisper of the rill.

V.

For the shores of Earth and Heaven
Meet, and mingle in the blue :
She can wander down the glory
To the places that she knew,
Where the happy lovers wandered
In the days when life was true.

VI.

So I think, when days are sweetest,
And the world is wholly fair,
She may sometime steal upon me
Through the dimness of the air,
With the cross upon her bosom
And the amaranth in her hair.

VII.

Once to meet her, ah! to meet her,
And to hold her gently fast
Till I blessed her, till she blessed me, —
That were happiness, at last :
That were bliss beyond our meetings
In the autumns of the Past !

IN WINTER.

THE valley stream is frozen,
The hills are cold and bare,
And the wild white bees of winter
Swarm in the darkened air.

I look on the naked forest :
Was it ever green in June ?
Did it burn with gold and crimson
In the dim autumnal noon ?

I look on the barren meadow :
Was it ever heaped with hay ?
Did it hide the grassy cottage
Where the skylark's children lay ?

I look on the desolate garden :
Is it true the rose was there ?
And the woodbine's musky blossoms,
And the hyacinth's purple hair ?

I look on my heart, and marvel
 If Love were ever its own, —
 If the spring of promise brightened,
 And the summer of passion shone ?

Is the stem of bliss but withered,
 And the root survives the blast ?
 Are the seeds of the Future sleeping
 Under the leaves of the Past ?

Ah, yes ! for a thousand Aprils
 The frozen germs shall grow,
 And the dews of a thousand summers,
 Wait in the womb of the snow !

YOUNG LOVE.

WE are not old, we are not cold,
 Our hearts are warm and tender yet ;
 Our arms are eager to enfold
 More bounteous love than we have met.

Still many another heart lays bare
 Its secret chamber to our eyes,
 Though dim with passion's lurid air,
 Or pure as morns of Paradise.

They give the love, whose glory lifts
 Desire beyond the realm of sense ;
 They make us rich with lavish gifts,
 The wealth of noble confidence.

We must be happy, must be proud,
So crowned with human trust and truth ;
But ah ! the love that first we vowed,
The dear religion of our youth !

Voluptuous bloom and fragrance rare
The summer to its rose may bring ;
Far sweeter to the wooing air
The hidden violet of the spring.

Still, still that lovely ghost appears,
Too fair, too pure, to bid depart ;
No riper love of later years
Can steal its beauty from the heart.

O splendid sun that shone above !
O green magnificence of Earth !
Born once into that land of love,
No life can know a second birth.

Dear, boyish heart, that trembled so
With bashful fear and fond unrest, —
More frightened than a dove, to know
Another bird within its nest !

Sharp thrills of doubt, wild hopes that came,
Fond words addressed, — each word a pang :
Then — hearts, baptized in heavenly flame,
How like the morning stars ye sang !

Love bound ye with his holiest link,
The faith in each that asks no more,
And led ye from the sacred brink
Of mysteries he held in store.

Love led ye, children, from the bowers
 Where Strength and Beauty find his crown :
 Ye were not ripe for mortal flowers ;
 God's angel brought an amaranth down.

Our eyes are dim with fruitless tears,
 Our eyes are dim, our hearts are sore :
 That lost religion of our years
 Comes never, never, nevermore !

THE CHAPEL.

LIKE one who leaves the trampled street
 For some cathedral, cool and dim,
 Where he can hear in music beat
 The heart of prayer, that beats for him ;

And sees the common light of day,
 Through painted panes, transfigured, shine,
 And casts his human woes away,
 In presence of the Woe Divine :

So I, from life's tormenting themes
 Turn where the silent chapel lies,
 Whose windows burn with vanished dreams,
 Whose altar-lights are memories.

There, watched by pitying cherubim,
 In sacred hush, I rest awhile,
 Till solemn sounds of harp and hymn
 Begin to sweep the haunted aisle :

A hymn that once but breathed complaint,
 And breathes but resignation now,
 Since God has heard the pleading saint,
 And laid His hand upon my brow.

Restored and comforted, I go
 To grapple with my tasks again ;
 Through silent worship taught to know
 The blessed peace that follows pain.

IF LOVE SHOULD COME AGAIN.

IF Love should come again, I ask my heart
 In tender tremors, not unmixed with pain,
 Couldst thou be calm, nor feel thine ancient smart,
 If Love should come again ?

Couldst thou unbar the chambers where his nest
 So long was made, and made, alas ! in vain,
 Nor with embarrassed welcome chill thy guest,
 If Love should come again ?

Would Love his ruined quarters recognize,
 Where shrouded pictures of the Past remain,
 And gently turn them with forgiving eyes,
 If Love should come again ?

Would bliss, in milder type, spring up anew,
 As silent craters with the scarlet stain
 Of flowers repeat the lava's ancient hue,
 If Love should come again ?

Would Fate, relenting, sheathe the cruel blade
 Whereby the angel of thy youth was slain,
 That thou might'st all possess him, unafraid,
 If Love should come again ?

In vain I ask : my heart makes no reply,
 But echoes evermore the sweet refrain ;
 Till, trembling lest it seem a wish, I sigh :
 If Love should come again !

“THE darkness and the twilight have an end,”
 Said Ernest, as he laid the book aside,
 And, with a tenderness he could not hide,
 Smiled, seeing in the eyes of wife and friend
 The same soft dew that made his own so dim.
 My heart was strangely moved, but not for him.
 The holy night, the stars that twinkled faint,
 Serfs of the regnant moon, the slumbering trees
 And silvery hills, recalled fair memories
 Of her I knew, his life's translated saint,
 Who seemed too sacred now, too far removed,
 To be by him lamented or beloved.
 And yet she stood, I knew, by Ernest's side
 Invisible, a glory in the heart,
 A light of peace, the inner counterpart
 Of that which round us poured its radiant tide.

We sat in silence, till a wind, astray
 From some uneasy planet, shook the vines
 And sprinkled us with snow of eglantines.

The laurels rustled as it passed away,
 And, million-tongued, the woodland whisper crept
 Of leaves that turned in sleep, from tree to tree
 All down the lawn, and once again they slept.
 Then Edith from her tender fantasy
 Awoke, yet still her pensive posture kept,
 Her white hands motionless upon her knee,
 Her eyes upon a star that sparkled through
 The mesh of leaves, and hummed a wandering air,
 (As if the music of her thought it were,)
 Low, sweet, and sad, until to words it grew
 That made it sweeter, — words that Ernest knew :

*Love, I follow, follow thee,
 Wipe thine eyes and thou shalt see :
 Sorrow makes thee blind to me.*

*I am with thee, blessing, blest ;
 Let thy doubts be laid to rest :
 Rise, and take me to thy breast !*

*In thy bliss my steps behold :
 Stretch thine arms and bliss enfold :
 'T is thy sorrow makes me cold.*

*Life is good, and life is fair,
 Love awaits thee everywhere :
 Love ! is Love's immortal prayer.*

*Live for love, and thou shalt be,
 Loving others, true to me :
 Love, I follow, follow thee !*

Thus Edith sang : the stars heard, and the night,
The happy spirits, leaning from the wall
Of Heaven, the saints, and God above them all,
Heard what she sang. She ceased : her brow was
bright

With other splendor than the moon's : she rose,
Gave each a hand, and silently we trod
The dry, white gravel and the dewy sod,
And silently we parted for repose.



THIRD EVENING.



FOR days before, the wild-dove cooed for rain.

The sky had been too bright, the world too fair.

We knew such loveliness could not remain :
 We heard its ruin by the flattering air
 Foretold, that o'er the field so sweetly blew,
 Yet came, at night, a banshee, moaning through
 The chimney's throat, and at the window wailed :
 We heard the tree-toad trill his piercing note :
 The sound seemed near us, when, on farms remote,
 The supper-horn the scattered workmen hailed :
 Above the roof the eastward-pointing vane
 Stood fixed : and still the wild-dove cooed for rain.

So, when the morning came, and found no fire
 Upon her hearth, and wrapped her shivering form
 In cloud, and rising winds in many a gyre
 Of dust foreran the footsteps of the storm,
 And woods grew dark, and flowery meadows chill,
 And gray annihilation smote the hill,
 I said to Ernest : "'T was my plan, you see :
 Two days to Nature, and the third to me.
 For you must stay, perforce : the day is doomed.
 No visitors shall yonder valley find,
 Except the spirits of the rain and wind :
 Here you must bide, my friends, with me entombed
 In this dim crypt, where shelved around us lie

The mummied authors." "Place me, when I die,"
 Laughed Ernest, "in as fair a catacomb,
 I shall not call posterity unjust,
 That leaves my bones in Shakespeare's, Goethe's
 home,
 Like king and beggar mixed in Memphian dust.
 But you are right: this day we well may give
 To you, dear Philip, and to those who stand
 Protecting Nature with a jealous hand,
 At once her subjects and her haughty lords;
 Since, in the breath of their immortal words
 Alone, she first begins to speak and live."

I know not, if that day of dreary rain
 Was not the happiest of the happy three.
 For Nature gives, but takes away again:
 Sound, odor, color — blossom, cloud, and tree
 Divide and scatter in a thousand rays
 Our individual being: but, in days
 Of gloom, the wandering senses crowding come
 To the close circle of the heart. So we,
 Cosily nestled in the library,
 Enjoyed each other and the warmth of home.
 Each window was a picture of the rain:
 Blown by the wind, tormented, wet, and gray,
 Losing itself in cloud, the landscape lay;
 Or wavered, blurred, behind the streaming pane;
 Or, with a sudden struggle, shook away
 Its load, and like a foundering ship arose
 Distinct and dark above the driving spray,
 Until a fiercer onset came, to close
 The hopeless day. The roses writhed about
 Their stakes, the tall laburnums to and fro
 Rocked in the gusts, the flowers were beaten low,

And from his pygmy house the wren looked out
With dripping bill : each living creature fled,
To seek some sheltering cover for its head :
Yet colder, drearier, wilder as it blew
We drew the closer, and the happier grew. X

She with her needle, he with pipe and book,
My guests contented sat : my cheerful dame,
Intent on household duties, went and came,
And I unto my childless bosom took
The little two-year Arthur, Ernest's child,
A darling boy, to both his parents true, —
With father's brow, and mother's eyes of blue,
And the same dimpled beauty when he smiled.
Ah me ! the father's heart within me woke :
The child that never was, I seemed to hold :
The withered tenderness that bloomed of old
In vain, revived when little Arthur spoke
Of " Papa Philip ! " and his balmy kiss
Renewed lost yearnings for a father's bliss.
And something glittered in the boy's bright hair :
I kissed him back, but turned away my head
To hide the pang I would not have thee share,
Dear wife ! from whom the dearest promise fled.
God cannot chide so sacred a despair,
But still I dream that somewhere there must be
The spirit of a child that waits for me.

And evening fell, and Arthur, rosy-limbed
And snowy-gowned, in human beauty sweet,
Came pattering up with little naked feet
To kiss the good-night cup, that overbrimmed
With love two fathers and two mothers gave.
The steady rain against the windows drave,

And round the house the noises of the night
Mixed in a lulling music: dry old wood
Burned on the hearth in leaps of ruddy light,
And on the table purple beakers stood
Of harmless wine, from grapes that ripened on
The sunniest hillsides of the smooth Garonne.
When Arthur slept, and doors were closed, and we
Sat folded in a sweeter privacy X
Than even the secret-loving moon bestows,
Spoke Ernest: "Edith, shall I read the rest?"
She, while the spirit of a happy rose
Visited her cheeks, consenting smiled, and pressed
The hand he gave. "With what I now shall read,"
He added, "Philip, you must be content.
No further runs my journal, nor, indeed,
Beyond this chapter is there further need;
Because the gift of Song was chiefly lent
To give consoling music for the joys
We lack, and not for those which we possess:
I now no longer need that gift, to bless
My heart, — *your* heart, my Edith, and your
boy's!"

Therewith he read: the fingers of the rain
In light staccatos on the window played,
Mixed with the flame's contented hum, and made
Low harmonies to suit the varied strain.

THE RETURN OF SPRING.

HAVE I passed through Death's unconscious
birth,
In a dream the midnight bare ?
I look on another and fairer Earth :
I breathe a wondrous air !

A spirit of beauty walks the hills,
A spirit of love the plain ;
The shadows are bright, and the sunshine fills
The air with a diamond rain !

Before my vision the glories swim,
To the dance of a tune unheard :
Is an angel singing where woods are dim,
Or is it an amorous bird ?

Is it a spike of azure flowers,
Deep in the meadows seen,
Or is it the peacock's neck, that towers
Out of the spangled green ?

Is a white dove glancing across the blue,
Or an opal taking wing ?
For my soul is dazzled through and through,
With the splendor of the Spring.

Is it she that shines, as never before,
The tremulous hills above, —
Or the heart within me, awake once more
To the dawning light of love ?

MORNING.

A LONG the east, where late the dark impended,
A dusky gleam is born :
The watches of the night are ended,
And heaven foretells the morn !

The hills of home, no longer hurled together,
In one wide blotch of night,
Lift up their heads through misty ether,
Distinct in rising light.

X Then, after pangs of darkness slowly dying,
O'er the delivered world
Comes Morn, with every banner flying
And every sail unfurled !

So long the night, so chill, so blank and dreary,
I thought the sun was dead ;
But yonder burn his beacons cheery
On peaks of cloudy red :

And yonder fly his scattered golden arrows,
And smite the hills with day,
While Night her vain dominion narrows
And westward wheels away.

A sweeter air revives the new creation,
The dews are tears of bliss,
And Earth, in amorous palpitation,
Receives her bridegroom's kiss.

Bathed in the morning, let my heart surrender
 The doubts that darkness gave,
 And rise to meet the advancing splendor —
 O Night ! no more thy slave.

I breathe at last, thy gloomy reign forgetting,
 Thy weary watches done,
 Thy last pale star behind me setting,
 The freedom of the sun !

QUESTIONS.

ONE thought sits brooding in my bosom,
 As broodeth in her nest the dove ;
 A strange, delicious doubt o'ercomes me, —
 But is it love ?

I see her, hear her, daily, nightly :
 My secret dreams around her move,
 Still nearer drawn in sweet attraction ; —
 Can this be love ?

Is 't love without his tender tumult ?
 Or passion purified from pain ?
 In calmer forms the old emotions
 Returned again ?

So still the stream, towards her setting,
 I whisper : Can it rise above
 Her banks, and flood the guarded island
 Where blooms her love ?

Will she, to hear a voice so timid,
 A shy and doubtful heart incline,
 Though desperate hope and endless longing
 Awake in mine ?

I breathe but peace when she is near me, —
 A peace her absence takes away :
 My heart commands her constant presence :
 Will hers obey ?

THE VISION.

I.

SHE came, long absent from my side,
 And absent from my dreams, she came,
 The earthly and the heavenly bride,
 In maiden beauty glorified :
 She looked upon me, angel-eyed :
 She called me by my name.

II.

But I, whose heart to meet her sprang
 And shook the fragile house of dreams,
 Stood, smitten with a guilty pang :
 In other groves and temples rang
 The songs that once for her I sang,
 By woods and faery streams.

III.

Her eyes had power to lift my head,
 And, timorous as a truant child,

I met the sacred light they shed,
The light of heaven around her spread :
She read my face ; no word she said :
I only saw she smiled.

IV.

“ Canst thou forgive me, Angel mine,”
I cried ; “ that Love at last beguiled
My heart to build a second shrine ?
See, still I kneel and weep at thine,
But I am human, thou divine ! ”
Still silently she smiled.

V.

“ Dost undivided worship claim,
To keep thine altar undefiled ?
Or must I bear thy tender blame,
And in thy pardon feel my shame,
Whene'er I breathe another name ?
She looked at me, and smiled.

VI.

“ Speak, speak ! ” and then my tears came fast,
My troubled heart with doubt grew wild :
“ Will 't vex the love, which still thou hast,
To know that I have peace at last ? ”
And from my dream the vision passed,
And still, in passing, smiled.

LOVE RETURNED.

I.

HE was a boy when first we met ;
His eyes were mixed of dew and fire,
And on his candid brow was set
The sweetness of a chaste desire :
But in his veins the pulses beat
Of passion, waiting for its wing,
As ardent veins of summer heat
Throb through the innocence of spring.

II.

As manhood came, his stature grew,
And fiercer burned his restless eyes,
Until I trembled, as he drew
From wedded hearts their young disguise.
Like wind-fed flame his ardor rose,
And brought, like flame, a stormy rain :
In tumult, sweeter than repose,
He tossed the souls of joy and pain.

III.

So many years of absence change !
I knew him not when he returned :
His step was slow, his brow was strange,
His quiet eye no longer burned.
When at my heart I heard his knock,
No voice within his right confessed :
I could not venture to unlock
Its chambers to an alien guest.

IV.

Then, at the threshold, spent and worn
With fruitless travel, down he lay ;
And I beheld the gleams of morn
On his reviving beauty play.
I knelt, and kissed his holy lips,
I washed his feet with pious care ;
And from my life the long eclipse
Drew off, and left his sunshine there.

V.

He burns no more with youthful fire ;
He melts no more in foolish tears ;
Serene and sweet, his eyes inspire
The steady faith of balanced years.
His folded wings no longer thrill,
But in some peaceful flight of prayer :
He nestles in my heart so still,
I scarcely feel his presence there.

VI.

O Love, that stern probation o'er,
Thy calmer blessing is secure !
Thy beauteous feet shall stray no more,
Thy peace and patience shall endure !
The lightest wind deflowers the rose,
The rainbow with the sun departs,
But thou art centred in repose,
And rooted in my heart of hearts !

LOVE JUSTIFIED.

WITHIN my heart 't is clear at last :
The haunting doubt in peace is laid,
Of faithlessness towards the Past,
Which made reviving love afraid.

For Love in abnegation lives ;
His eye no sacrifice can dim ;
He most is blessed when he gives
A greater bliss than comes to him ;

And true to him is true to all
Whose brows are worth his crown to wear.
His chosen are not those who fall,
Through loss of him, to blank despair,

But those whom he has left awhile,
That in the dark their faith be tried, —
On whom his blessing yet shall smile,
If in the dark their faith abide.

No treason in my love I see,
For treason cannot dwell with truth ;
But later blossoms crown a tree
Too deeply set to die in youth.

The blighted promise of the old
In this new love is reconciled ;
For, when my heart confessed its hold,
The lips of ancient sorrow smiled !

It brightens backward through the Past
 And gilds the gloomy path I trod,
 And forward, till it fades at last
 In light, before the feet of God,

Where stands the saint, whose radiant brow
 This solace beams, while I adore :
 Be happy : if thou lovedst not now,
 Thou never couldst have loved before !

A WOMAN.

I.

X
 SHE is a woman : therefore, I a man,
 In so much as I love her. Could I more,
 Then I were more a man. Our natures ran
 Together, brimming full, not flooding o'er
 The banks of life, and evermore will run
 In one full stream until our days are done.

II.

She is a woman, but of spirit brave
 To bear the loss of girlhood's giddy dreams ;
 The regal mistress, not the yielding slave
 Of her ideal, spurning that which seems
 For that which is, and, as her fancies fall,
 Smiling : the truth of love outweighs them all.

III.

She looks through life, and with a balance just
 Weighs men and things, beholding as they are
 The lives of others : in the common dust
 She finds the fragments of the ruined star :

Proud, with a pride all feminine and sweet,
No path can soil the whiteness of her feet.

IV.

The steady candor of her gentle eyes
Strikes dead deceit, laughs vanity away ;
She hath no room for petty jealousies,
Where Faith and Love divide their tender sway
Of either sex she owns the nobler part :
Man's honest brow and woman's faithful heart.

V.

She is a woman, who, if Love were guide,
Would climb to power, or in obscure content
Sit down : accepting fate with changeless pride, —
A reed in calm, in storm a staff unbent :
No pretty plaything, ignorant of life,
But Man's true mother, and his equal wife. ✓

THE COUNT OF GLEICHEN.

I READ that story of the Saxon knight,
Who, leaving spouse and feudal fortress, made
The Cross of Christ his guerdon in the fight,
And joined the last Crusade :

Whom, in the chase on Damietta's sands
Estrayed, the Saracens in ambush caught,
And unto Cairo, to the Soldan's hands,
A wretched captive brought :

Whom then the Soldan's child, a damsel brave,
Saw, pitied, comforted, and made him free,
And with him fled, herself a willing slave
In Love's captivity.

I read how he to bless her love was fain,
To whom his renovated life he owed,
Yet with a pang the towers beheld again
Where still his wife abode :

The wife whom first he loved : would she not scorn
The second bride he could not choose but wed,
The second mother to his children, born
In her divided bed ?

Lo ! at his castle's foot the noble dame
With tears of blessing, holy, undefiled
By human pain, received him when he came,
And kissed the Soldan's child !

My tears were on the pages as I read
The touching close : I made the story mine,
Within whose heart, long plighted to the dead,
Love built his living shrine.

I too had dared, a captive in the land,
To pay with love the love that broke my chain :
Would she, who waited, stretch the pardoning hand,
When I returned again ?

Would she, my freedom and my bliss to know,
With my disloyalty be reconciled,
And from her bower in Eden look below,
And bless the Soldan's child ?

For she is lost : but she, the later bride,
 Who came my ruined fortune to restore,
 Back from the desert wanders at my side,
 And leads me home once more.

If human love, she sighs, could move a wife
 The holiest sacrifice of love to make,
 Then the transfigured angel of thy life
 Is happier for thy sake !

BEFORE THE BRIDAL.

NOW the night is overpast,
 And the mist is cleared away :
 On my barren life at last
 Breaks the bright, reluctant day.

Day of payment for the wrong
 I was doomed so long to bear ;
 Day of promise, day of song,
 Day that makes the future fair !

Let me wake to bliss alone :
 Let me bury every fear :
 What I prayed for, is my own ;
 What was distant, now is near.

For the happy hour that waits
 No reproachful shade shall bring,
 And I hear forgiving Fates
 In the happy bells that ring.

Leave the song that now is mute,
 For the sweeter song begun :
 Leave the blossom for the fruit,
 And the rainbow for the sun !

POSSESSION.

I.

“ I T was our wedding-day
 A month ago,” dear heart, I hear you say.
 If months, or years, or ages since have passed,
 I know not : I have ceased to question Time.
 I only know that once there pealed a chime
 Of joyous bells, and then I held you fast,
 And all stood back, and none my right denied,
 And forth we walked : the world was free and wide
 Before us. Since that day
 I count my life : the Past is washed away.

II.

It was no dream, that vow :
 It was the voice that woke me from a dream, —
 A happy dream, I think ; but I am waking now,
 And drink the splendor of a sun supreme
 That turns the mist of former tears to gold.
 Within these arms I hold
 The fleeting promise, chased so long in vain :
 Ah, weary bird ! thou wilt not fly again :
 Thy wings are clipped, thou canst no more de-
 part, —
 Thy nest is builded in my heart !

III.

I was the crescent ; thou
 The silver phantom of the perfect sphere,
 Held in its bosom : in one glory now
 Our lives united shine, and many a year —
 Not the sweet moon of bridal only — we
 One lustre, ever at the full, shall be :
 One pure and rounded light, one planet whole,
 One life developed, one completed soul !
 For I in thee, and thou in me,
 Unite our cloven halves of destiny.

IV.

God knew His chosen time :
 He bade me slowly ripen to my prime,
 And from my boughs withheld the promised fruit,
 Till storm and sun gave vigor to the root.
 Secure, O Love ! secure
 Thy blessing is : I have thee day and night :
 Thou art become my blood, my life, my light :
 God's mercy thou, and therefore shalt endure !

UNDER THE MOON.

I.

FROM you and home I sleep afar,
 Under the light of a lonely star,
 Under the moon that marvels why
 Away from you and home I lie.
 Ah ! love no language can declare,
 The hovering warmth, the tender care,

The yielding, sweet, invisible air
 That clasps your bosom, and fans your cheek
 With the breath of words I cannot speak, —
 Such love I give, such warmth impart :
 The fragrance of a blossomed heart.

II.

X The moon looks in upon my bed,
 Her yearning glory rays my head,
 And round me clings, a lonely light,
 The aureole of the winter night ;
 But in my heart a gentle pain,
 A balmier splendor in my brain,
 Lead me beyond the frosty plane, —
 Lead me afar, to mellowed skies,
 Where under the moon a palace lies ;
 Where under the moon our bed is made,
 Half in splendor and half in shade.

III.

The marble flags of the corridor
 Through open windows meet the floor,
 And Moorish arches in darkness rise
 Against the gleam of the silver skies :
 Beyond, in flakes of starry light,
 A fountain prattles to the night,
 And dusky cypresses, withdrawn
 In silent conclave, stud the lawn ;
 While mystic woodlands, more remote,
 In seas of airy silver float,
 So hung in heaven, the stars that set
 Seem glossy leaves the dew has wet
 On topmost boughs, and sparkling yet.

IV.

In from the terraced garden blows
 The spicy soul of the tuberose,
 As if 't were the odor of strains that pour
 From the nightingale's throat as never before ;
 For he sings not now of wounding thorn,
 He sings as the lark in the golden morn, —
 A song of joy, a song of bliss,
 Passionate notes that clasp and kiss,
 Perfect peace and perfect pride,
 Love rewarded and satisfied,
 For I see you, darling, at my side.

V.

X I see you, darling, at my side :
 I clasp you closer, in sacred pride.
 I shut my eyes, my senses fail,
 Becalmed by Night's ambrosial gale.
 Softer than dews the planets weep,
 Descends a sweeter peace than sleep ;
 All wandering sounds and motions die
 In the silent glory of the sky ;
 But, as the moon goes down the West,
 Your heart, against my happy breast,
 Says in its beating : Love is Rest.

THE MYSTIC SUMMER.

'T IS not the dropping of the flower,
 The blush of fruit upon the tree,
 Though Summer ripens, hour by hour,
 The garden's sweet maternity :

'T is not that birds have ceased to build,
And wait their brood with tender care ;
That corn is golden in the field,
And clover balm is in the air ;—

Not these the season's splendor bring,
And crowd with life the happy year,
Nor yet, where yonder fountains sing,
The blaze of sunshine, hot and clear.

In thy full womb, O Summer ! lies
A secret hope, a joy unsung,
Held in the hush of these calm skies,
And trembling on the forest's tongue.

The lands of harvest throb anew
In shining pulses, far away ;
The Night distils a dearer dew,
And sweeter eyelids has the Day.

And not in vain the peony burns
In bursting globes, her crimson fire,
Her incense-dropping ivory urns
The lily lifts in many a spire :

And not in vain the tulips clash
In revelry the cups they hold
Of fiery wine, until they dash
With ruby streaks the splendid gold !

Send down your roots the mystic charm
That warms and flushes all your flowers,
And with the summer's touch disarm
The thralldom of the under powers,

Until, in caverns, buried deep,
Strange fragrance reach the diamond's home,
And murmurs of the garden sweep
The houses of the frightened gnome!

For, piercing through their black repose,
And shooting up beyond the sun,
I see that Tree of Life, which rose
Before the eyes of Solomon :

Its boughs, that, in the light of God,
Their bright, innumerable leaves display,—
Whose hum of life is borne abroad
By winds that shake the dead away.

And, trembling on a branch afar,
The topmost nursling of the skies,
I see my bud, the fairest star
That ever dawned for watching eyes.

Unnoticed on the boundless tree,
Its fragrant promise fills the air ;
Its little bell expands, for me,
A tent of silver, lily-fair.

All life to that one centre tends ;
All joy and beauty thence outflow ;
Her sweetest gifts the summer spends,
To teach that sweeter bud to blow.

So, compassed by the vision's gleam,
In trembling hope, from day to day,
As in some bright, bewildering dream,
The mystic summer wanes away.

X A WATCH OF THE NIGHT.

BLOW, winds of midnight, blow !
The clouds, fast-flying, chase
Across the pallid face
Of yonder moon, and go !

Sweep, as ye list, the land :
Hurl down the heavy corn,
And wrench the trees forlorn
That struggle where they stand !

Though mighty to destroy,
To me ye bring no fear ;
But in your voice I hear
An echo of my joy.

Life — life to me ye bring :
The precious soul, that takes
Its life from mine, awakes,
And soon will crown me king.

I stand with silent breath,
To hear one little cry
Ring through the roaring sky,
And worlds of Life and Death.

Wake, timid soul, and be !
Two Fathers wait thy birth :
The love of Heaven and Earth
Stands by to welcome thee !

THE FATHER.

THE fateful hour, when Death stood by
And stretched his threatening hand in vain,
Is over now, and Life's first cry
Speaks feeble triumph through its pain.

But yesterday, and thee the Earth
Inscribed not on her mighty scroll :
To-day she opes the gate of birth,
And gives the spheres another soul.

But yesterday, no fruit from me
The rising winds of Time had hurled :
To-day, a father, — can it be
A child of mine is in the world ?

I look upon the little frame,
As helpless on my arm it lies :
Thou giv'st me, child, a father's name,
God's earliest name in Paradise.

Like Him, creator too I stand :
His Power and Mystery seem more near ;
Thou giv'st me honor in the land,
And giv'st my life duration here.

But love, to-day, is more than pride ;
Love sees his star of triumph shine,
For Life nor Death can now divide
The souls that wedded breathe in thine :

Mine and thy mother's, whence arose
 The copy of my face in thee ;
 And as thine eyelids first unclose,
 My own young eyes look up to me.

Look on me, child, once more, once more,
 Even with those weak, unconscious eyes ;
 Stretch the small hands that help implore ;
 Salute me with thy wailing cries !

This is the blessing and the prayer
 A father's sacred place demands :
 Ordain me, darling, for thy care,
 And lead me with thy helpless hands !

THE MOTHER.

X
PALER, and yet a thousand times more fair
 Than in thy girlhood's freshest bloom, art
 thou :

A softer sun-flush tints thy golden hair,
 A sweeter grace adorns thy gentle brow.

Lips that shall call thee "mother!" at thy breast
 Feed the young life, wherein thy nature feels
 Its dear fulfilment : little hands are pressed
 On the white fountain Love alone unseals.

Look down, and let Life's tender daybreak throw
 A second radiance on thy ripened hour :
 Retrace thine own forgotten advent so,
 And in the bud behold thy perfect flower.

Nay, question not : whatever lies beyond
 God will dispose. Sit thus, Madonna mine,
 For thou art haloed with a love as fond
 As Jewish Mary gave the Child Divine.

I lay my own proud title at thy feet ;
 Thine the first, holiest right to love shalt be :
 Though in his heart our wedded pulses beat,
 X His sweetest life our darling draws from thee.

The father in his child beholds this truth,
 His perfect manhood has assumed its reign :
 Thou wear'st anew the roses of thy youth, —
 The mother in her child is born again. X

THE FAMILY.

DEAR Love, whatever fate
 The flying years unfold,
 There's none can dissipate
 The happiness we hold.
 Whatever cloud may rise,
 The very storms grow mild
 Where bend the blissful skies
 O'er Husband, Wife, and Child.

The errant dreams that failed,
 The promises that fled,
 The roseate hopes that paled,
 The loves that now are dead,
 The treason of the Past, —
 All, all are reconciled :
 Life's glory shines at last
 On Father, Mother, Child !

To meet the days and years,
 With hands that never part ;
 To shed no secret tears,
 To hide no lonely heart :
 To know our longing stilled,
 To feel that God has smiled :
 These are the dreams fulfilled
 In Husband, Wife, and Child, —
 In Father, Mother, Child !

THUS came the Poet's Journal to an end.
 His heart's completed music ceased to flow
 From Ernest's lips : the tale I wished to know
 Was wholly mine. "I am content, dear friend,"
 I said : "to me no voice can be obscure
 Wherein your nature speaks : the chords I hear,
 Too far and frail to strike a stranger's ear."
 With that, I bowed to Edith's forehead pure,
 And kissed her with a brother's blameless kiss :
 "To you the fortune of these days I owe,
 My other Ernest, like him most in this,
 That you can hear the cries of ancient woe
 With holy pity, free from any blame
 Of jealous love, and find your highest bliss
 To know, through you his life's fulfilment came."
 "And through him, mine," the woman's heart re-
 plied ;
 For Love's humility is Love's true pride.

"These are your sweetest poems, and your best,"
 To him I said. "I know not," answered he,
 "They are my truest. I have ceased to be
 The ambitious knight of Song, that shook his crest
 In public tilts: the sober hermit I,
 Whose evening songs but few approach to hear,—
 Who, if those few should cease to lend an ear,
 Would sing them to the forest and the sky
 Contented: singing for myself alone.
 No fear that any poet dies unknown,
 Whose songs are written in the hearts that know
 And love him, though their partial verdict show
 The tenderness that moves the critic's blame.
 Those few have power to lift his name above
 Forgetfulness, to grant that noblest fame
 Which sets its trumpet to the lips of Love!"

"Nay, then," said I, "you are already crowned.
 If your ambition in the loving pride
 Of us, your friends, is cheaply satisfied,
 We are those trumpets: do you hear them sound?"
 And Edith smilingly together wound
 Light stems of ivy to a garland fair,
 And pressed it archly on her husband's hair;
 But he, with earnest voice, though in his eyes
 A happy laughter shone, protesting, said:
 "Respect, dear friends, the Muse's sanctities,
 Nor mock, with wreaths upon a living head,
 The holy laurels of the deathless Dead.
 Crown Love, crown Truth when first her brow
 appears,
 And crown the Hero when his deeds are done:
 The Poet's leaves are gathered one by one,
 In the slow process of the doubtful years."

Who seeks too eagerly, he shall not find :
Who, seeking not, pursues with single mind
Art's lofty aim, to him will she accord,
At her appointed time, the sure reward."

The tall clock, standing sentry in the hall,
Struck midnight : on the panes no longer beat
The weary storm : the wind began to fall,
And through the breaking darkness glimmered,
sweet

With tender stars, the flying gleams of sky.
"Come, Edith, lend your voice to crown the night,
And give the new day sunny break," said I :
She listening first in self-deceiving plight
Of young maternal trouble, for a cry
From Arthur's crib, sat down in happy calm,
And sang to Ernest's heart his own thanksgiving
psalm.

*Thou who sendest sun and rain,
Thou who spendest bliss and pain,
Good with bounteous hand bestowing,
Evil for Thy will allowing, —
Though Thy ways we cannot see,
All is just that comes from Thee.*

*In the peace of hearts at rest,
In the child at mother's breast,
In the lives that now surround us,
In the deaths that sorely wound us,
Though we may not understand,
Father, we behold Thy hand !*

*Hear the happy hymn we raise ;
Take the love which is Thy praise ;
Give content in each condition ;
Bend our hearts in sweet submission,
And Thy trusting children prove
Worthy of the Father's love !*





POEMS OF THE ORIENT.

Da der West war durchgekostet,
Hat er nun den Ost entmostet.

RÜCKERT.







PROEM DEDICATORY.



AN EPISTLE FROM MOUNT TMOLUS.

TO RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.

I.



FRIEND, were you but couched on
Tmolus' side,
In the warm myrtles, in the golden
air

Of the declining day, which half lays bare,
Half drapes, the silent mountains and the wide
Embosomed vale, that wanders to the sea ;
And the far sea, with doubtful specks of sail,
And farthest isles, that slumber tranquilly
Beneath the Ionian autumn's violet veil ;—
Were you but with me, little were the need
Of this imperfect artifice of rhyme,
Where the strong Faucy peals a broken chime
And the ripe brain but sheds abortive seed.
But I am solitary, and the curse,
Or blessing, which has clung to me from birth —
The torment and the ecstasy of verse —
Comes up to me from the illustrious earth

Of ancient Tmolus ; and the very stones,
 Reverberant, din the mellow air with tones
 Which the sweet air remembers ; and they blend
 With fainter echoes, which the mountains fling
 From far oracular caverns Xso, my Friend,
 I cannot choose but sing !

II.

Unto mine eye, less plain the shepherds be,
 Tending their browsing goats amid the broom,
 Or the slow camels, travelling towards the sea,
 Laden with bales from Baghdad's gaudy loom,
 Or yon nomadic Turcomans, that go
 Down from their summer pastures — than the
 twain
 Immortals, who on Tmolus' thymy top
 Sang, emulous, the rival strain !
 Down the charmed air did light Apollo drop ;
 Great Pan ascended from the vales below.
 I see them sitting in the silent glow ;
 I hear the alternating measures flow
 From pipe and golden lyre ; — the melody
 Heard by the Gods between their nectar bowls,
 Or when, from out the chambers of the sea,
 Comes the triumphant Morning, and unrolls
 A pathway for the sun ; then, following swift,
 The dædal harmonies of awful caves
 Cleft in the hills, and forests that uplift
 Their sea-like boom, in answer to the waves,
 With many a lighter strain, that dances o'er
 The wedded reeds, till Echo strives in vain
 To follow :
 Hark ! once more,

How floats the God's exultant strain
In answer to Apollo !

*“ The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
The cicàle above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass
Are as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
Listening to my sweet pipings.”*

III.

I cannot separate the minstrels' worth ;
Each is alike transcendent and divine.
What were the Day, unless it lighted Earth ?
And what were Earth, should Day forget to
shine ?
But were you here, my Friend, we twain would
build
Two altars, on the mountain's sunward side :
There Pan should o'er my sacrifice preside,
And there Apollo your oblation gild.
He is your God, but mine is shaggy Pan ;
Yet, as their music no discordance made,
So shall our offerings side by side be laid,
And the same wind the rival incense fan.

IV.

You strain your ear to catch the harmonies
That in some finer region have their birth ;
I turn, despairing, from the quest of these,
And seek to learn the native tongue of Earth.

In "Fancy's tropic clime" your castle stands,
 A shining miracle of rarest art;
 I pitch my tent upon the naked sands,
 And the tall palm, that plumes the orient lands,
 Can with its beauty satisfy my heart.
 You, in your starry trances, breathe the air
 Of lost Elysium, pluck the snowy bells
 Of lotus and Olympian asphodels,
 And bid us their diviner odors share.
 I at the threshold of that world have lain,
 Gazed on its glory, heard the grand acclaim
 Wherewith its trumpets hail the sons of Fame,
 And striven its speech to master — but in vain.
 And now I turn, to find a late content
 In Nature, making mine her myriad shows;
 Better contented with one living rose
 Than all the Gods' ambrosia; sternly bent
 On wresting from her hand the cup, whence flow
 The flavors of her ruddiest life — the change
 Of climes and races — the unshackled range
 Of all experience; — that my songs may show
 The warm red blood that beats in hearts of men,
 And those who read them in the festering den
 Of cities, may behold the open sky,
 And hear the rhythm of the winds that blow,
 Instinct with Freedom. Blame me not, that I
 Find in the forms of Earth a deeper joy
 Than in the dreams which lured me as a boy,
 And leave the Heavens, where you are wandering
 still
 With bright Apollo, to converse with Pan;
 For, though full soon our courses separate
 ran,
 We like the Gods, can meet on Tmolus' hill.

v.

There is no jealous rivalry in Song :
I see your altar on the hill-top shine,
And mine is built in shadows of the Pine,
Yet the same worships unto each belong.
Different the Gods, yet one the sacred awe
Their presence brings us, one the reverent heart
Wherewith we honor the immortal law
Of that high inspiration, which is Art.
Take, therefore, Friend ! these Voices of the Earth,
The rhythmic records of my life's career,
Humble, perhaps, yet wanting not the worth
Of Truth, and to the heart of Nature near.
Take them, and your acceptance, in the dearth
Of the world's tardy praise, shall make them
dear.







POEMS OF THE ORIENT.



A PÆAN TO THE DAWN.

I.



THE dusky sky fades into blue,
And bluer waters bind us ;
The stars are glimmering faint and few,
The night is left behind us !

Turn not where sinks the sullen dark
Before the signs of warning,
But crowd the canvas on our bark
And sail to meet the morning.
Rejoice ! rejoice ! the hues that fill
The orient, flush and lighten ;
And over the blue Ionian hill
The Dawn begins to brighten !

II.

We leave the Night, that weighed so long
Upon the soul's endeavor,
For Morning, on these hills of Song,
Has made her home forever.

Hark to the sound of trump and lyre,
 In the olive-groves before us,
 And the rhythmic beat, the pulse of fire,
 Throb in the full-voiced chorus !
 More than Memnonian grandeur speaks
 In the triumph of the pæan,
 And all the glory of the Greeks
 Breathes o'er the old Ægean.

III.

Here shall the ancient Dawn return,
 That lit the earliest poet,
 Whose very ashes in his urn
 Would radiate glory through it, —
 The dawn of Life, when Life was Song,
 And Song the life of Nature,
 And the Singer stood amid the throng, —
 A God in every feature !
 When Love was free, and free as air
 The utterance of Passion,
 And the heart in every fold lay bare,
 Nor shamed its true expression.

IV.

Then perfect limb and perfect face
 Surpassed our best ideal ;
 Unconscious Nature's law was grace, —
 The Beautiful was real.
 For men acknowledged true desires,
 And light as garlands wore them ;
 They were begot by vigorous sires,
 And noble mothers bore them.

O, when the shapes of Art they planned
 Were living forms of passion,
 Impulse and Deed went hand in hand,
 And Life was more than Fashion !

v.

The seeds of Song they scattered first
 Flower in all later pages ;
 Their forms have woke the Artist's thirst
 Through the succeeding ages :
 But I will seek the fountain-head
 Whence flowed their inspiration,
 And lead the unshackled life they led,
 Accordant with Creation.
 The World's false life, that follows still,
 Has ceased its chain to tighten,
 And over the blue Ionian hill
 I see the sunrise brighten !

THE POET IN THE EAST.



HE Poet came to the Land of the East,
 When Spring was in the air :
 The Earth was dressed for a wedding
 feast,

So young she seemed, and fair ;
 And the Poet knew the Land of the East, —
 His soul was native there.

All things to him were the visible forms
 Of early and precious dreams, —

Familiar visions that mocked his quest
Beside the Western streams,
Or gleamed in the gold of the clouds, unrolled
In the sunset's dying beams.

He looked above in the cloudless calm,
And the Sun sat on his throne ;
The breath of gardens, deep in balm,
Was all about him blown,
And a brother to him was the princely Palm,
For he cannot live alone.

His feet went forth on the myrtled hills,
And the flowers their welcome shed ;
The meads of milk-white asphodel
They knew the Poet's tread,
And far and wide, in a scarlet tide,
The poppy's bonfire spread.

And, half in shade and half in sun,
The Rose sat in her bower,
With a passionate thrill in her crimson heart —
She had waited for the hour !
And, like a bride's, the Poet kissed
The lips of the glorious flower.

Then the Nightingale, who sat above
In the boughs of the citron-tree,
Sang : We are no rivals, brother mine,
Except in minstrelsy ;
For the rose you kissed with the kiss of love,
She is faithful still to me.

And further sang the Nightingale :
Your bower not distant lies.
 I heard the sound of a Persian lute
 From the jasmined window rise,
 And, twin-bright stars, through the lattice-bars,
 I saw the Sultana's eyes.

The Poet said :. I will here abide,
 In the Sun's unclouded door ;
 Here are the wells of all delight
 On the lost Arcadian shore :
 Here is the light on sea and land,
 And the dream deceives no more.

THE TEMPTATION OF HASSAN BEN KHALED.

I.



HASSAN BEN KHALED, singing in
 the streets

Of Cairo, sang these verses at my door :
 " Blessed is he, who God and Prophet
 greets

Each morn with prayer ; but he is blest much more
 Whose conduct is his prayer's interpreter.
 Sweeter than musk, and pleasanter than myrrh,
 Richer than rubies, shall his portion be,
 When God bids Azrael, ' Bring him unto me !'
 But woe to him whose life casts dirt upon
 The Prophet's word ! When all his days are done,

Him shall the Evil Angel trample down
 Out of the sight of God." Thus, with a frown
 Of the severest virtue, Hassan sang
 Unto the people, till the markets rang.

II.

But two days after this, he came again
 And sang, and I remarked an altered strain.
 Before my shop he stood, with forehead bent
 Like one whose sin hath made him penitent, —
 In whom the pride, that like a stately reed
 Lifted his head, is broken. "Blest, indeed,"
 (These were his words,) "is he who never fell,
 But blest much more, who from the verge of Hell
 Climbs up to Paradise: for Sin is sweet;
 Strong is Temptation; willing are the feet
 That follow Pleasure, manifold her snares,
 And pitfalls lurk beneath our very prayers:
 Yet God, the Clement, the Compassionate,
 In pity of our weakness keeps the gate
 Of Pardon open, scorning not to wait
 Till the last moment, when His mercy flings
 A splendor from the shade of Azrael's wings."
 "Wherefore, O Poet!" I to Hassan said,
 "This altered measure? Wherefore hang your
 head,
 O Hassan! whom the pride of virtue gives
 The right to face the holiest man that lives?
 Enter, I pray thee: this poor house will be
 Honored henceforth, if it may shelter thee."
 Hassan Ben Khaled lifted up his eyes
 To mine, a moment: then, in cheerful guise,
 He passed my threshold with unslipped feet.

III.

I led him from the noises of the street
To the cool inner chambers, where my slave
Poured out the pitcher's rosy-scented wave
Over his hands, and laid upon his knee
The napkin, silver-fringed : and when the pipe
Exhaled a grateful odor from the ripe
Latakian leaves, said Hassan unto me :
" Listen, O Man ! no man can truly say
That he hath wisdom. What I sang to-day
Was not less truth than what I sang before,
But to Truth's house there is a single door,
Which is Experience. He teaches best,
Who feels the hearts of all men in his breast,
And knows their strength or weakness through his
own.

The holy pride, that never was o'erthrown,
Was never tempted, and its words of blame
Reach but the dull ears of the multitude :
The admonitions, fruitful unto good,
Come from the voice of him who conquers shame."

IV.

" Give me, O Poet ! (if thy friend may be
Worthy such confidence,)" I said, " the key
Unto thy words, that I may share with thee
Thine added wisdom." Hassan's kindly eye
Before his lips unclosed, spake willingly,
And he began : " But two days since, I went
Singing what thou didst hear, with soul intent
On my own virtue, all the markets through ;
And when about the time of prayer, I drew
Near to the Gate of Victory, behold !

There came a man, whose turban fringed with gold
 And golden cimeter, bespake his wealth :
 ‘ May God prolong thy days, O Hassan ! Health
 And Fortune be thy wisdom’s aids ! ’ he cried ;
 ‘ Come to my garden by the river’s side,
 Where other poets wait thee. Be my guest,
 For even the Prophets had their times of rest,
 And Rest, that strengthens unto virtuous deeds,
 Is one with Prayer.’ Two royal-blooded steeds,
 Held by his grooms, were waiting at the gate,
 And though I shrank from such unwonted state
 The master’s words were manna to my pride,
 And, mounting straightway, forth we twain did
 ride
 Unto the garden by the river’s side.

v.

“ Never till then had I beheld such bloom.
 The west-wind sent its heralds of perfume
 To bid us welcome, midway on the road.
 Full in the sun the marble portal glowed
 Like silver, but within the garden wall
 No ray of sunshine found a place to fall,
 So thick the crowning foliage of the trees,
 Roofing the walks with twilight ; and the air
 Under their tops was greener than the seas,
 And cool as they. The forms that wandered there
 Resembled those who populate the floor
 Of Ocean, and the royal lineage own
 That gave a Princess unto Persia’s throne.
 All fruits the trees of this fair garden bore,
 Whose balmy fragrance lured the tongue to taste
 Their flavors : there bananas flung to waste
 Their golden flagons with thick honey filled ;

From splintered cups the ripe pomegranates spilled
A shower of rubies ; oranges that glow
Like globes of fire, enclosed a heart of snow
Which thawed not in their flame ; like balls of gold
The peaches seemed, that had in blood been rolled ;
Pure saffron mixed with clearest amber stained
The apricots ; bunches of amethyst
And sapphire seemed the grapes, so newly kissed
That still the mist of Beauty's breath remained ;
X And where the lotus slowly swung in air
Her snowy-bosomed chalice, rosy-veined,
The golden fruit swung softly-cradled there,
Even as a bell upon the bosom swings
Of some fair dancer, — happy-bell, that sings
For joy, its golden tinkle keeping time
To the heart's beating and the cymbal's chime !
There dates of agate and of jasper lay,
Dropped from the bounty of the pregnant palm,
And all ambrosial trees, all fruits of balm,
All flowers of precious odors, made the day
Sweet as a morn of Paradise. * My breath
Failed with the rapture, and with doubtful mind
I turned to where the garden's lord reclined,
And asked, ' Was not that gate the Gate of
Death ? '

VI.

“ The guests were near a fountain. As I came
They rose in welcome, wedding to my name
Titles of honor, linked in choicest phrase,
For Poets' ears are ever quick to Praise,
The ' Open Sesamè ! ' whose magic art
Forces the guarded entrance of the heart.

Young men were they, whose manly beauty made
 Their words the sweeter, and their speech displayed
 Knowledge of men, and of the Prophet's laws.
 Pleasant our converse was, where every pause
 Gave to the fountain leave to sing its song,
 Suggesting further speech ; until, erelong,
 There came a troop of swarthy slaves, who bore
 Ewers and pitchers all of silver ore,
 Wherein we washed our hands ; then, tables placed,
 And brought us meats of every sumptuous taste
 That makes the blood rich, — pheasants stuffed with
 spice ;
 Young lambs, whose entrails were of cloves and
 rice ;
 Ducks bursting with pistachio nuts, and fish
 That in a bed of parsley swam. Each dish,
 Cooked with such art, seemed better than the last,
 And our indulgence in the rich repast
 Brought on the darkness ere we missed the day :
 But lamps were lighted in the fountain's spray,
 Or, pendent from the boughs, their colors told
 What fruits unseen, of crimson or of gold,
 Scented the gloom. Then took the generous host
 A basket filled with roses. Every guest
 Cried, ' Give me roses ! ' and he thus addressed
 His words to all : ' He who exalts them most
 In song, he only shall the roses wear.'
 Then sang a guest : ' The rose's cheeks are fair ;
 It crowns the purple bowl, and no one knows
 If the rose colors it, or it the rose.'
 And sang another : ' Crimson is its hue,
 And on its breast the morning's crystal dew
 Is changed to rubies.' Then a third replied :
 ' It blushes in the sun's enamored sight,

As a young virgin on her wedding night,
 When from her face the bridegroom lifts the veil.
 When all had sung their songs, I, Hassan, tried.
 'The Rose,' I sang, 'is either red or pale,
 Like maidens whom the flame of passion burns,
 And Love or Jealousy controls, by turns.
 Its buds are lips preparing for a kiss;
 Its open flowers are like the blush of bliss
 On lovers' cheeks; the thorns its armor are,
 And in its centre shines a golden star,
 As on a favorite's cheek a sequin glows; —
 And thus the garden's favorite is the Rose.'

VII.

"The master from his open basket shook
 The roses on my head. The others took
 Their silver cups, and filling them with wine,
 Cried, 'Pledge our singing, Hassan, as we thine!'
 But I exclaimed, 'What is it I have heard?
 Wine is forbidden by the Prophet's word:
 Surely, O Friends! ye would not lightly break
 The laws which bring ye blessing?' Then they
 spake:

'O Poet, learn thou that the law was made
 For men, and not for poets. Turn thine eye
 Within, and read the nature there displayed;
 The gifts thou hast doth Allah's grace deny
 To common men; they lift thee o'er the rules
 The Prophet fixed for sinners and for fools.
 The vine is Nature's poet: from his bloom
 The air goes reeling, tipsy with perfume,
 And when the sun is warm within his blood
 It mounts and sparkles in a crimson flood;

Rich with dumb songs he speaks not, till they find
Interpretation in the Poet's mind.

If Wine be evil, Song is evil too ;

Then cease thy singing, lest it bring thee sin ;

But wouldst thou know the strains which Hafiz
knew,

Drink as he drank, and thus the secret win.'

They clasped my glowing hands ; they held the
bowl

Up to my lips, till, losing all control

Of the fierce thirst, which at my scruples laughed,

I drained the goblet at a single draught.

It ran through every limb like fluid fire :

' More, O my Friends ! ' I cried, the new desire

Raging within me : ' this is life indeed !

From blood like this is coined the nobler seed

Whence poets are begotten. Drink again,

And give us music of a tender strain,

Linking your inspiration unto mine,

For music hovers on the lips of Wine !'

VIII.

“ ‘ Music ! ’ they shouted, echoing my demand,

And answered with a beckon of his hand

The gracious host, whereat a maiden, fair

As the last star that leaves the morning air,

Came down the leafy paths. Her veil revealed

The beauty of her face, which, half concealed

Behind its thin blue folds, showed like the moon

Behind a cloud that will forsake it soon.

Her hair was braided darkness, but the glance

Of lightning eyes shot from her countenance,

And showed her neck, that like an ivory tower

Rose o'er the twin domes of her marble breast.
Were all the beauty of this age compressed
Into one form, she would transcend its power.
Her step was lighter than the young gazelle's,
And as she walked, her anklet's golden bells
Tinkled with pleasure, but were quickly mute
With jealousy, as from a case she drew
With snowy hands the pieces of her lute,
And took her seat before me. As it grew
To perfect shape, her lovely arms she bent
Around the neck of the sweet instrument,
Till from her soft caresses it awoke
To consciousness, and thus its rapture spoke :
'I was a tree within an Indian vale,
When first I heard the love-sick nightingale
Declare his passion : every leaf was stirred
With the melodious sorrow of the bird,
And when he ceased, the song remained with me.
Men came anon, and felled the harmless tree,
But from the memory of the songs I heard,
The spoiler saved me from the destiny
Whereby my brethren perished. O'er the sea
I came, and from its loud, tumultuous moan
I caught a soft and solemn undertone ;
And when I grew beneath the maker's hand
To what thou seest, he sang (the while he planned)
The mirthful measures of a careless heart,
And of my soul his songs became a part.
Now they have laid my head upon a breast
Whiter than marble, I am wholly blest.
The fair hands smite me, and my strings complain .
With such melodious cries, they smite again,
Until, with passion and with sorrow swayed,
My torment moves the bosom of the maid,

Who hears it speak her own. I am the voice
 Whereby the lovers languish or rejoice ;
 And they caress me, knowing that my strain
 Alone can speak the language of their pain.'

IX.

“ Here ceased the fingers of the maid to stray
 Over the strings ; the sweet song died away
 In mellow, drowsy murmurs, and the lute
 Leaned on her fairest bosom, and was mute.
 Better than wine that music was to me :
 Not the lute only felt her hands, but she
 Played on my heart-strings, till the sounds became
 Incarnate in the pulses of my frame.
 Speech left my tongue, and in my tears alone
 Found utterance. With stretched arms I implored
 Continuance, whereat her fingers poured
 A tenderer music, answering the tone
 Her parted lips released, the while her throat
 Throbbled, as a heavenly bird were fluttering there,
 And gave her voice the wonder of his note.
 ‘ His brow,’ she sang, ‘ is white beneath his hair ;
 The fertile beard is soft upon his chin,
 Shading the mouth that nestles warm within,
 As a rose nestles in its leaves ; I see
 His eyes, but cannot tell what hue they be,
 For the sharp eyelash, like a sabre, speaks
 The martial law of Passion ; in his cheeks
 The quick blood mounts, and then as quickly goes,
 Leaving a tint like marble when a rose
 Is held beside it : — bid him veil his eyes,
 Lest all my soul should unto mine arise,
 And he behold it !’ As she sang, her glance

Dwelt on my face ; her beauty, like a lance,
 Transfixed my heart. I melted into sighs,
 Slain by the arrows of her beauteous eyes.
 ‘ Why is her bosom made ’ (I cried) ‘ a snare ?
 Why does a single ringlet of her hair
 Hold my heart captive ? ’ ‘ Would you know ? ’
 she said ;

‘ It is that you are mad with love, and chains
 Were made for madmen.’ Then she raised her
 head

With answering love, that led to other strains,
 Until the lute, which shared with her the smart,
 Rocked as in storm upon her beating heart.
 Thus to its wires she made impassioned cries :
 ‘ I swear it by the brightness of his eyes ;
 I swear it by the darkness of his hair ;
 By the warm bloom his limbs and bosom wear ;
 By the fresh pearls his rosy lips enclose ;
 By the calm majesty of his repose ;
 By smiles I coveted, and frowns I feared,
 And by the shooting myrtles of his beard, —
 I swear it, that from him the morning drew
 Its freshness, and the moon her silvery hue,
 The sun his brightness, and the stars their fire,
 And musk and camphor all their odorous breath :
 And if he answer not my love’s desire,
 Day will be night to me, and Life be Death ! ’

X.

“ Scarce had she ceased, when, overcome, I fell
 Upon her bosom, where the lute no more
 That night was cradled ; song was silenced well,
 With kisses, each one sweeter than before,

Until their fiery dew so long was quaffed,
 I drank delirium in the infectious draught.
 The guests departed, but the sounds they made
 I heard not; in the fountain-haunted shade
 The lamps burned out; the moon rode far above,
 But the trees chased her from our nest of love.
 Dizzy with passion, in mine ears the blood
 Tingled and hummed in a tumultuous flood,
 Until from deep to deep I seemed to fall,
 Like him, who from El Sirat's hair-drawn wall
 Plunges to endless gulfs. In broken gleams
 Glimmered the things I saw, so mixed with dreams
 The vain confusion blinded every sense,
 And knowledge left me. Then a sleep intense
 Fell on my brain, and held me as the dead,
 Until a sudden tumult smote my head,
 And a strong glare, as when a torch is hurled
 Before a sleeper's eyes, brought back the world.

XI.

"Most wonderful! The fountain and the trees
 Had disappeared, and in the place of these
 I saw the well-known Gate of Victory.
 The sun was high; the people looked at me,
 And marvelled that a sleeper should be there
 On the hot pavement, for the second prayer
 Was called from all the minarets. I passed
 My hand across my eyes, and found at last
 What man I was. Then straightway through my
 heart
 There rang a double pang, — the bitter smart
 Of evil knowledge, and the unhealthy lust
 Of sinful pleasure; and I threw the dust

Upon my head, the burial of my pride, —
 The ashen soil, wherein I plant the tree
 Of Penitence. The people saw, and cried,
 ‘May God reward thee, Hassan! Truly, thou,
 Whom men have honored, addest to thy brow
 The crowning lustre of Humility :
 As thou abasest, God exalteth thee!’
 Which when I heard, I shed such tears of shame
 As might erase the record of my blame,
 And from that time I have not dared to curse
 The unrighteous, since the man who seemeth worse
 Than I, may purer be ; for, when I fell,
 Temptation reached a loftier pinnacle.
 Therefore, O Man ! be Charity thy aim :
 Praise cannot harm, but weigh thy words of blame.
 Distrust the Virtue that itself exalts,
 But turn to that which doth avow its faults,
 And from Repentance plucks a wholesome fruit.
 Pardon, not Wrath, is God’s best attribute.”

XII.

“The tale, O Poet ! which thy lips have told,”
 I said, “is words of rubies set in gold.
 Precious the wisdom which from evil draws
 Strength to fulfil the good, of Allah’s laws.
 But lift thy head, O Hassan ! Thine own words
 Shall best console thee, for my tongue affords
 No phrase but thanks for what thou hast bestowed ;
 And yet I fain would have thee shake the load
 Of shame from off thy shoulders, seeing still
 That by this fall thou hast increased thy will
 To do the work which makes thee truly blest.”
 Hassan Ben Khaled wept, and smote his breast :
 “Hold ! hold, O Man !” he cried : “why make
 me feel

A deeper shame! Why force me to reveal
 That Sin is as the leprous taint no art
 Can cleanse the blood from? In my secret heart
 I do believe I hold at dearer cost
 The vanished Pleasure, than the Virtue lost."

So saying, he arose and went his way;
 And Allah grant he go no more astray.

THE ARAB WARRIOR.

FROM THE ARABIC.



O, ask of men that know my name,
 And they the truth will speak,
 That I'm the terror of the strong,
 The helper of the weak.

My spear has made the dragon brood
 Succumb to galling bands,
 And tossed before the jaws of War
 The forage he demands.

I steer my horse through stormy fights,
 As a seaman steers his craft;
 My joy, to splinter on my breast
 The foeman's flying shaft.

I am the latest laid to rest,
 The earliest in the fight,
 And while the others idly feast,
 I rub my harness bright.

And while the booty they divide
 I heap the ranks of slain,
 And when they scorn my poverty,
 I scorn their greed of gain.

ARAB PRAYER.



A' illah il' Allah !” the muezzin’s call
 Comes from the minaret, slim and tall,
 That looks o’er the distant city’s wall.

“La illah il’ Allah !” the Faithful heed,
 With God and the Prophet this hour to plead :
 Whose ear is open to hear their need.

The sun is sunken ; no vapor mars
 The path of his going with dusky bars.
 The silent Desert awaits the stars.

I bend the knee and I stretch the hand,
 I strike my forehead upon the sand,
 And I pray aloud, that He understand.

Not for my father, for he is dead ;
 Not in my wandering brothers’ stead, —
 For myself alone I bow the head.

God is Great, and God is Just :
 He knoweth the hearts of the children of dust, —
 He is the Helper ; in Him I trust.

My sword is keen and my arm is strong
With the sense of unforgotten wrong,
And the hate that waits and watches long.

God, let me wait for year on year,
But let the hour at last appear,
When Vengeance makes my honor clear.

Once let me strike till he is slain ;
His blood will cleanse my sabre's stain,
And I shall stand erect again.

Till then, I wander to and fro,
Wide as the desert whirlwinds go,
And seek, by the sun and stars, my foe.

Better than Stamboul's courts of gold,
Whose harems the Georgian girls infold,
Whiter than snow, but not so cold :

Better than Baghdad's garden bowers,
Or fountains that play among Persian flowers ;
Better than all delights and powers,

The deed God's justice will abide, —
The stern atonement, long denied,
That righteous Vengeance gives to Pride.

EL KHALIL.



AM no chieftain, fit to lead
 Where spears are hurled and warriors
 bleed ;

No poet, in my chanted rhyme

To rouse the ghosts of ancient time ;
 No magian, with a subtle ken
 To rule the thoughts of other men ;
 Yet far as sounds the Arab tongue
 My name is known to old and young.

My form has lost its pliant grace,
 There is no beauty in my face,
 There is no cunning in my arm,
 The Children of the Sun to charm ;
 Yet, where I go, my people's eyes
 Are lighted with a glad surprise,
 And in each tent a couch is free,
 And by each fire a place, for me.

They watch me from the palms, and some
 Proclaim my coming ere I come.
 The children lift my hand to meet
 The homage of their kisses sweet ;
 With manly warmth the men embrace,
 The veiled maidens seek my face,
 And eyes, fresh kindled from the heart,
 Keep loving watch when I depart.

On God, the Merciful, I call,
 To shed His blessing over all :

I praise His name, for He is Great,
 And Loving, and Compassionate ;
 And for the gift of love I give —
 The breath of life whereby I live —
 He gives me back, in overflow,
 His children's love, where'er I go.

Deep sunk in sin the man must be
 That has no friendly word for me.
 I pass through tribes whose trade is death,
 And not a sabre quits the sheath ;
 For, strong and cruel as they prove,
 The sons of men are weak to Love.
 The humblest gifts to them I bring ;
 Yet in their hearts I rule, a king.

ODE TO INDOLENCE.

I.



IND me a bower, in silent dells embayed,
 And trebly guarded from each wind
 that blows,
 Where the blue noon o'erroofs the tran-
 quil shade,
 And poppies breathe an odor of repose ;
 Where never noises from the distant world
 Disturb the happy calm of soul and sense,
 But in thy haven every sail is furled,
 Divinest Indolence !
 There shall I summon all melodious measures,
 And *feel* the hymns to thee, I *sing* to other Pleasures.

II.

Within thy realm the vexing tempests die
That strip the leaves from Life's aspiring tree,
And fairer blossoms open in thy sky,
To richer fruits maturing peacefully.
What is the clangor of Ambition's car
To thine eternal silence? To thy rest,
What are the stormy joys that shake the breast,
And Passion's cloud, that leaves the thunder-scar?
On brows that burn with Toil's relentless fever
Thy pitying hand is laid, and they have peace for-
ever.

III.

Far from thee drift the shattered hulks of life;
But the wrecked spirit slumbers at thy feet,
And, harbored now from every wave of strife,
Feels the strong pulses of Existence beat.
There hears the heart its native language, free
From the world's clamor; with enlightened eyes
There doth the soul its features recognize,
And read its destiny!
The dark enigmas which perplexed the sense
Fade in the wisdom, born of Indolence.

IV.

Yea, let men struggle, toil, exult, and win
The pygmy triumphs which they fret to wear;
But I will fly the curse of primal sin,
And in thy lap the peace of Eden share.
Serenes than a star on Twilight's breast,
A sea-flower, deep below the tropic waves,
Or sparry foliage of the dædal caves,
My life shall blossom in thine arms of rest.
My breath grows calm; my weary eyelids close;
And the pursuing Fates have left me to repose.

SONG.



DAUGHTER of Egypt, veil thine eyes !
 I cannot bear their fire ;
 Nor will I touch with sacrifice
 Those altars of Desire.

For they are flames that shun the day,
 And their unholy light
 Is fed from natures gone astray
 In passion and in night.

The stars of Beauty and of Sin,
 They burn amid the dark,
 Like beacons that to ruin win
 The fascinated bark.

Then veil their glow, lest I forswear
 The hopes thou canst not crown,
 And in the black waves of thy hair
 My struggling manhood drown !

AMRAN'S WOOING.

I.



YOU ask, O Frank ! how Love is born
 Within these glowing climes of Morn,
 Where envious veils conceal the charms
 That tempt a Western lover's arms,
 And how, without a voice or sound,
 From heart to heart the path is found,

Since on the eye alone is flung
The burden of the silent tongue.
You hearken with a doubtful smile
Whene'er the wandering bards beguile
Our evening indolence with strains
Whose words gush molten through our veins, —
The songs of Love, but half confessed,
Where Passion sobs on Sorrow's breast,
And mighty longings, tender fears,
Steep the strong heart in fire and tears.
The source of each accordant strain
Lies deeper than the Poet's brain.
First from the people's heart must spring
The passions which he learns to sing ;
They are the wind, the harp is he,
To voice their fitful melody, —
The language of their varying fate,
Their pride, grief, love, ambition, hate, —
The talisman which holds inwrought
The touchstone of the listener's thought ;
That penetrates each vain disguise,
And brings his secret to his eyes.
For, like a solitary bird
That hides among the boughs unheard
Until some mate, whose carol breaks,
Its own betraying song awakes,
So, to its echo in those lays,
The ardent heart itself betrays.
Crowned with a prophet's honor, stands
The Poet, on Arabian sands ;
A chief, whose subjects love his thrall, —
The sympathizing heart of all.

II.

Vaunt not your Western maids to me,
Whose charms to every gaze are free :
My love is selfish, and would share
Scarce with the sun, or general air,
The sight of beauty which has shone
Once for mine eyes, and mine alone.
Love likes concealment ; he can dress
With fancied grace the loveliness
That shrinks behind its virgin veil,
As hides the moon her forehead pale
Behind a cloud, yet leaves the air
Softer than if her orb were there.
And as the splendor of a star,
When sole in heaven, seems brighter far,
So shines the eye, Love's star and sun,
The brighter, that it shines alone.
The light from out its darkness sent
Is Passion's life and element ;
And when the heart is warm and young,
Let but that single ray be flung
Upon its surface, and the deep
Heaves from its unsuspecting sleep,
As heaves the ocean when its floor
Breaks over the volcano's core.
Who thinks if cheek or lip be fair ?
Is not all beauty centred where
The soul looks out, the feelings move,
And Love his answer gives to love ?
Look on the sun, and you will find
For other sights your eyes are blind.
Look — if the colder blood you share
Can give your heart the strength to dare —

In eyes of dark and tender fire :
What more can blinded love desire ?

III.

I was a stripling, quick and bold,
And rich in pride as poor in gold,
When God's good will my journey bent
One day to Shekh Abdallah's tent.
My only treasure was a steed
Of Araby's most precious breed ;
And whether 't was in boastful whim
To show his mettled speed of limb,
Or that presumption, which, in sooth,
Becomes the careless brow of youth, —
Which takes the world as birds the air,
And moves in freedom everywhere, —
It matters not. But 'midst the tents
I rode in easy confidence,
Till to Abdallah's door I pressed
And made myself the old man's guest.
My "Peace be with you!" was returned
With the grave courtesy he learned
From age and long authority,
And in God's name he welcomed me.
The pipe replenished, with its stem
Of jasmine wood and amber gem,
Was at my lips, and while I drew
The rosy-sweet, soft vapor through
In ringlets of dissolving blue,
Waiting his speech with reverence meet,
A woman's garments brushed my feet,
And first through boyish senses ran
The pulse of love which made me man.

The handmaid of her father's cheer,
With timid grace she glided near,
And, lightly dropping on her knee,
Held out a silver zerf to me,
Within whose cup the fragrance sent
From Yemen's sunburnt berries blent
With odors of the Persian rose.
That picture still in memory glows
With the same heat as then, — the gush
Of fever, with its fiery flush . . .
Startling my blood; and I can see —
As she this moment knelt to me —
The shrouded graces of her form;
The half-seen arm, so round and warm;
The little hand, whose tender veins
Branched through the henna's orange stains;
The head, in act of offering bent;
And through the parted veil, which lent
A charm for what it hid, the eye,
Gazelle-like, large, and dark, and shy,
That with a soft, sweet tremble shone
Beneath the fervor of my own,
Yet could not, would not, turn away
The fascination of its ray,
But half in pleasure, half in fright,
Grew unto mine, and builded bright
From heart to heart a bridge of light.

IV.

From the fond trouble of my look
The zerf within her fingers shook,
As with a start, like one who breaks
Some happy trance of thought, and wakes

Unto forgotten toil, she rose
And passed. I saw the curtains close
Behind her steps : the light was gone,
But in the dark my heart dreamed on.
Some random words — thanks ill expressed —
I to the stately Shekh addressed,
With the intelligence which he,
My host, could not demand of me ;
How, wandering in the desert chase,
I spied from far his camping-place,
And Arab honor bade me halt
To break his bread and share his salt.
Thereto, fit reverence for his name,
The praise our speech is quick to frame,
Which, empty though it seem, was dear
To the old warrior's willing ear,
And led his thoughts, by many a track,
To deeds of ancient prowess back,
Until my love could safely hide
Beneath the covert of his pride.
And when his "Go with God!" was said,
Upon El-Azrek's back I sped
Into the desert, wide and far,
Beneath the silver evening-star,
And, fierce with passion, without heed
Urged o'er the sands my snorting steed,
As if those afrites, feared of man, —
Who watch the lonely caravan,
And, if a loiterer lags behind,
Erase its tracks with sudden wind,
Then fill the air with cheating cries,
And make false pictures to his eyes
Till the bewildered sufferer dies, —
Had breathed on me their demon breath,
And spurred me to the hunt of Death.

v.

Yet madness such as this was worth
All the cool wisdom of the earth,
And sweeter glowed its wild unrest
Than the old calm of brain and breast.
The image of that maiden beamed
Through all I saw, or thought, or dreamed,
Till she became, like Light or Air,
A part of life. And she shall share,
I vowed, my passion and my fate,
Or both shall fail me, soon or late,
In the vain effort to possess ;
X For Life lives only in success.
I could not, in her father's sight,
Purchase the hand which was his right ;
And well I knew how quick denied
The prayer would be to empty pride ;
But Heaven and Earth shall sooner move
Than bar the energy of Love.
The sinews of my life became
Obedient to that single aim,
And desperate deed and patient thought
Together in its service wrought.
X Keen as a falcon, when his eye
In search of quarry reads the sky,
I stole unseen, at eventide,
Behind the well, upon whose side
The girls their jars of water leaned.
By one long, sandy hillock screened,
I watched the forms that went and came,
With eyes that sparkled with the flame
Up from my heart in flashes sent,
As one by one they came and went

Amid the sunset radiance cast
On the red sands : they came and passed,
And she, — thank God ! — she came at last !

VI.

Then, while her fair companion bound
The cord her pitcher's throat around,
And steadied with a careful hand
Its slow descent, upon the sand
At the Shekh's daughter's feet, I sped
A slender arrow, shaft and head
With breathing jasmine-flowers entwined,
And roses such as on the wind
Of evening with rich odors fan
The white kiosks of Ispahan.
A moment, fired with love and hope,
I stayed upon the yellow slope
El-Azrek's hoofs, to see her raise
Her startled eyes in sweet amaze, —
To see her make the unconscious sign
Which recognized the gift as mine,
And place, before she turned to part,
The flowery barb against her heart.

VII.

Again the Shekh's divan I pressed :
The jasmine pipe was brought the guest,
And Mariam, lovelier than before,
Knelt with the steamy cup once more.
O bliss ! within those eyes to see
A soul of love look out on me, —
A fount of passion, which is *truth*
In the wild dialect of Youth, —

Whose rich abundance is outpoured
 Like worship at a shrine adored,
 And on its rising deluge bears
 The heart to raptures or despairs.
 While from the cup the zerk contained
 The foamy amber juice I drained,
 A rose-bud in the zerk expressed
 The sweet confession of her breast.
 One glance of glad intelligence,
 And silently she glided thence.
 "O Shekh!" I cried, as she withdrew,
 (Short is the speech where hearts are true,)
 "Thou hast a daughter; let me be
 X A shield to her, a sword to thee!"
 Abdallah turned his steady eye
 Full on my face, and made reply:
 "It cannot be. The treasure sent
 By God must not be idly spent.
 Strong men there are, in service tried,
 Who seek the maiden for a bride;
 And shall I slight their worth and truth
 To feed the passing flame of youth?"

VIII.

"No passing flame!" my answer ran;
 "But love which is the life of man,
 Warmed with his blood, fed by his breath,
 And, when it fails him, leaves but Death.
 O Shekh, I hoped not thy consent;
 But having tasted in thy tent
 An Arab welcome, shared thy bread,
 I come to warn thee I shall wed
 Thy daughter, though her suitors be

As leaves upon the tamarind-tree.
Guard her as thou mayst guard, I swear
No other bed than mine shall wear
Her virgin honors, and thy race
Through me shall keep its ancient place.
Thou'rt warned, and duty bids no more ;
For, when I next approach thy door,
Her child shall intercessor be
To build up peace 'twixt thee and me."
A little flushed my boyish brow ;
But calmly then I spake, as now.
The Shekh, with dignity that flung
Rebuke on my impetuous tongue,
Replied : " The young man's hopes are fair ;
The young man's blood would all things dare.
But age is wisdom, and can bring
Confusion on the soaring wing
Of reckless youth. Thy words are just,
But needless ; for I still can trust
A father's jealousy to shield
From robber grasp the gem concealed
Within his tent, till he may yield
To fitting hands the precious store.
Go, then, in peace ; but come no more."

IX.

My only sequin served to bribe
A cunning mother of the tribe
To Mariam's mind my plan to bring.
A feather of the wild dove's wing,
A lock of raven gloss and stain
Sheared from El-Azrek's flowing mane,
And that pale flower whose fragrant cup

Is closed until the moon comes up, —
But then a tenderer beauty holds
Than any flower the sun unfolds, —
Declared my purpose. Her reply
Let loose the winds of ecstasy :
Two roses and the moonlight flower
Told the acceptance, and the hour, —
Two daily suns to waste their glow,
And then, at moonrise, bliss — or woe.

x.

El-Azrek now, on whom alone
The burden of our fate was thrown,
Claimed from my hands a double meed
Of careful training for the deed.
I gave him of my choicest store, —
No guest was ever honored more.
With flesh of kid, with whitest bread
And dates of Egypt was he fed ;
The camel's heavy udders gave
Their frothy juice his thirst to lave :
A charger, groomed with better care,
The Sultan never rode to prayer.
My burning hope, my torturing fear,
I breathed in his sagacious ear ;
Caressed him as a brother might,
Implored his utmost speed in flight,
Hung on his neck with many a vow,
And kissed the white star on his brow.
His large and lustrous eyeball sent
A look which made me confident,
As if in me some doubt he spied,
And met it with a human pride.

X "Enough: I trust thee. 'Tis the hour,
 And I have need of all thy power.
 Without a wing, God gives thee wings,
 And Fortune to thy forelock clings."

XI.

X The yellow moon was rising large
 Above the Desert's dusky marge,
 And save the jackal's whining moan,
 Or distant camel's gurgling groan,
 And the lamenting monotone
 Of winds that breathe their vain desire
 And on the lonely sands expire,
 A silent charm, a breathless spell,
 Waited with me beside the well.
 She is not there, — not yet, — but soon
 A white robe glimmers in the moon.
 Her little footsteps make no sound
 On the soft sand; and with a bound,
 Where terror, doubt, and love unite
 To blind her heart to all but flight,
 Trembling, and panting, and oppressed,
 She threw herself upon my breast.
 By Allah! like a bath of flame
 The seething blood tumultuous came
 From life's hot centre as I drew
 Her mouth to mine: our spirits grew
 Together in one long, long kiss, —
 One swooning, speechless pulse of bliss,
 That, throbbing from the heart's core, met
 In the united lips. O, yet
 The eternal sweetness of that draught
 Renews the thirst with which I quaffed

X Love's virgin vintage : starry fire
Leapt from the twilights of desire,
And in the golden dawn of dreams
The space grew warm with radiant beams,
Which from that kiss streamed o'er a sea
Of rapture, in whose bosom we
Sank down, and sank eternally. X

XII.

Now nerve thy limbs, El-Azrek ! Fling
Thy head aloft, and like a wing
Spread on the wind thy cloudy mane !
The hunt is up : their stallions strain
The urgent shoulders close behind,
And the wide nostril drinks the wind.
But thou art, too, of Nedjid's breed,
My brother ! and the falcon's speed
Slant down the storm's advancing line
Would laggard be if matched with thine.
Still leaping forward, whistling through
The moonlight-laden air, we flew ;
And from the distance, threateningly,
Came the pursuer's eager cry.
Still forward, forward, stretched our flight
Through the long hours of middle night ;
One after one the followers lagged,
And even my faithful Azrek flagged
Beneath his double burden, till
The streaks of dawn began to fill
The East, and, freshening in the race,
Their goaded horses gained apace.
I drew my dagger, cut the girth,
Tumbled my saddle to the earth,

And clasped with desperate energies
My stallion's side with iron knees ;
While Mariam, clinging to my breast,
The closer for that peril pressed.
They come ! they come ! Their shouts we hear,
Now faint and far, now fierce and near.
O brave El-Azrek ! on the track
Let not one fainting sinew slack,
Or know thine agony of flight
Endured in vain ! The purple light
Of breaking morn has come at last.
O joy ! the thirty leagues are past ;
And, gleaming in the sunrise, see,
The white tents of the Aneyzee !
The warriors of the waste, the foes
Of Shekh Abdallah's tribe, are those
Whose shelter and support I claim,
Which they bestow in Allah's name ;
While, wheeling back, the baffled few
No longer venture to pursue.

XIII.

And now, O Frank ! if you would see
How soft the eyes that looked on me
Through Mariam's silky lashes, scan
Those of my little Solyman.
And should you marvel if the child
His stately grandsire reconciled
To that bold theft, when years had brought
The golden portion which he sought,
And what upon this theme befell,
The Shekh himself can better tell.

A PLEDGE TO HAFIZ.



BRIM the bowls with Shiraz wine !
 Roses round your temples twine ;
 Brim the bowls with Shiraz wine, —
 Hafiz pledge we, Bard divine !

With the summer warmth that glows
 In the wine and on the rose,
 Blushing, fervid, ruby-bright,
 We shall pledge his name aright.

Hafiz, in whose measures move
 Youth and Beauty, Song and Love, —
 In his veins the nimble flood
 Was of wine, and not of blood.
 All the songs he sang or thought
 In his brain were never wrought,
 But like rose-leaves fell apart
 From that bursting rose, his heart.

Youth is morning's transient ray ;
 Love consumes itself away ;
 Time destroys what Beauty gives ;
 But in Song the Poet lives.
 While we pledge him — thus — and thus —
 He is present here in us ;
 'T is his voice that cries, not mine :
 Brim the bowls with Shiraz wine !

THE GARDEN OF IREM.



HAVE you seen the Garden of Irem?
 No mortal knoweth the road thereto.
 Find me a path in the mists that gather
 When the sunbeams scatter the morn-
 ing dew,

And I will lead you thither.

Give me a key to the halls of the sun
 When he goes behind the purple sea,
 Or a wand to open the vaults that run
 Down to the afrite-guarded treasures,
 And I will open its doors to thee.

Who hath tasted its countless pleasures?

Who hath breathed, in its winds of spice,

Raptures deeper than Paradise?

Who hath trodden its ivory floors,

Where the fount drops pearl from a golden shell,

And heard the hinges of diamond doors

Swing to the music of Israfil?

Its roses blossom, its palms arise,

By the phantom stream that flows so fair

Under the Desert's burning skies.

Can you reach that flood, can you drink its tide,

Can you swim its waves to the farther side,

Your feet may enter there.

II.

I have seen the Garden of Irem.

I found it, but I sought it not:

X Without a path, without a guide,
I found the enchanted spot :
Without a key its golden gate stood wide.
I was young, and strong, and bold, and free
As the milk-white foal of the Nedjidee,
And the blood in my veins was like sap of the vine,
That stirs, and mounts, and will not stop
Till the breathing blossoms that bring the wine
Have drained its balm to the last sweet drop.
Lance and barb were all I knew,
Till deep in the Desert the spot I found,
Where the marvellous gates of Irem threw
Their splendors over an unknown ground.
Mine were the pearl and ivory floors,
Mine the music of diamond doors,
Turning each on a newer glory :
Mine were the roses whose bloom outran
The spring-time beauty of Gulistan,
And the fabulous flowers of Persian story.
Mine were the palms of silver stems,
And blazing emerald for diadems ;
The fretted arch and the gossamer wreath,
So light and frail you feared to breathe ;
Yet o'er them rested the pendent spars
Of domes bespangled with silver stars,
And crusted gems of rare adorning :
And ever higher, like a shaft of fire,
The lessening links of the golden spire
Flamed in the myriad-colored morning !

Like one who lies on the marble lip
Of the blessed bath in a tranquil rest,
And stirs not even a finger's tip
Lest the beatific dream should slip,

So did I lie in Irem's breast.
 Sweeter than Life and stronger than Death
 Was every draught of that blissful breath ;
 Warmer than Summer came its glow
 To the youthful heart in a mighty flood,
 And sent its bold and generous blood
 To water the world in its onward flow.
 There, where the Garden of Irem lies,
 Are the roots of the Tree of Paradise,
 And happy are they who sit below,
 When into this world of Strife and Death
 The blossoms are shaken by Allah's breath.

THE BIRTH OF THE HORSE.

FROM THE ARABIC.



HE South-wind blows from Paradise, —
 A wind of fire and force ;
 And yet his proudest merit is
 That he begat the Horse.

When Allah's breath created first
 The noble Arab steed, —
 The conqueror of all his race
 In courage and in speed, —

To the South-wind He spake : From thee
 A creature shall have birth,
 To be the bearer of my arms
 And my renown on Earth.

The pride of all the Faithful, he—
 The terror of their foes :
 Rider and Horse shall comrades be
 In battle and repose.

Then to the perfect Horse He spake :
 Fortune to thee I bring ;
 Fortune, as long as rolls the Earth,
 Shall to thy forelock cling.

Without a pinion winged thou art,
 And fleetest with thy load ;
 Bridled art thou without a rein,
 And spurred without a goad.

Men shall bestride thee who have made
 Their fame, their service, mine ;
 And, when they pray upon their way,
 Their prayers shall count as thine.

The worship which thy master speaks
 Thou sharest silently ;
 By mutual fate he rises up,
 Or falls to Earth with thee.

THE WISDOM OF ALL.

AN ARAB LEGEND.



HE Prophet once, sitting in calm debate,
 Said : " I am Wisdom's fortress ; but
 the gate
 Thereof is Ali." Wherefore, some who
 heard,

With unbelieving jealousy were stirred ;
And, that they might on him confusion bring,
Ten of the boldest joined to prove the thing.
“ Let us in turn to Ali go,” they said,
“ And ask if Wisdom should be sought instead
Of earthly riches ; then, if he reply
To each of us, in thought, accordantly,
And yet to none, in speech or phrase, the same,
His shall the honor be, and ours the shame.”

Now, when the first his bold demand did make,
These were the words which Ali straightway
spake : —

“ Wisdom is the inheritance of those
Whom Allah favors ; riches, of his foes.”

Unto the second he said : “ Thyself must be
Guard to thy wealth ; but Wisdom guardeth thee.”

Unto the third : “ By Wisdom wealth is won ;
But riches purchased wisdom yet for none.”

Unto the fourth : “ Thy goods the thief may take ;
But into Wisdom’s house he cannot break.”

Unto the fifth : “ Thy goods decrease the more
Thou giv’st ; but use enlarges Wisdom’s store.”

Unto the sixth : “ Wealth tempts to evil ways ;
But the desire of Wisdom is God’s praise.”

Unto the seventh : “ Divide thy wealth, each part
Becomes a pittance. Give with open heart

Thy wisdom; and each separate gift shall be
All that thou hast, yet not impoverish thee."

Unto the eighth: "Wealth cannot keep itself;
But Wisdom is the steward even of pelf."

Unto the ninth: "The camels slowly bring
Thy goods; but Wisdom has the swallow's wing."

And lastly, when the tenth did question make,
These were the ready words which Ali spake: —
"Wealth is a darkness which the soul should fear;
But Wisdom is the lamp that makes it clear."

Crimson with shame the questioners withdrew,
And they declared: "The Prophet's words were
true;
The mouth of Ali is the golden door
Of Wisdom."

When his friends to Ali bore
These words, he smiled and said: "And should
they ask
The same until my dying day, the task
Were easy; for the stream from Wisdom's well,
Which God supplies, is inexhaustible."

AN ORIENTAL IDYL.



SILVER javelin which the hills
Have hurled upon the plain below,
The fleetest of the Pharpar's rills,
Beneath me shoots in flashing flow.

I hear the never-ending laugh
Of jostling waves that come and go,
And suck the bubbling pipe, and quaff
The sherbet cooled in mountain snow.

The flecks of sunshine gleam like stars
Beneath the canopy of shade ;
And in the distant, dim bazaars
I scarcely hear the hum of trade.

No evil fear, no dream forlorn,
Darkens my heaven of perfect blue ;
My blood is tempered to the morn, —
My very heart is steeped in dew.

What Evil is I cannot tell ;
But half I guess what Joy may be ;
And, as a pearl within its shell,
The happy spirit sleeps in me.

I feel no more the pulse's strife, —
The tides of Passion's ruddy sea, —
But live the sweet, unconscious life
That breathes from yonder jasmine tree.

Upon the glittering pageantries
Of gay Damascus' streets I look
As idly as a babe that sees
The painted pictures of a book.


Forgotten now are name and race ;
The Past is blotted from my brain ;
For Memory sleeps, and will not trace
The weary pages o'er again.

I only know the morning shines,
 And sweet the dewy morning air ;
 But does it play with tendrilled vines ?
 Or does it lightly lift my hair ?

Deep-sunken in the charmed repose,
 This ignorance is bliss extreme :
 And whether I be Man, or Rose,
 O, pluck me not from out my dream !

THE ANGEL OF PATIENCE.

“Patience is the key of Content.” — MAHOMET.

 O cheer, to help us, children of the dust,
 More than one angel has Our Father
 given ;
 But one alone is faithful to her trust, —
 The best, the brightest exile out of Heaven.

Her ways are not the ways of pleasantness ;
 Her paths are not the lightsome paths of joy ;
 She walks with wrongs that cannot find redress,
 And dwells in mansions Time and Death de-
 stroy.

She waits until her stern precursor, Care,
 Has lodged on foreheads, open as the morn,
 To plough his deep, besieging trenches there, —
 The signs of struggles which the heart has borne.

But when the first cloud darkens in our sky,
And face to face with Life we stand alone,
Silent and swift, behold ! she draweth nigh,
And mutely makes our sufferings her own.

Unto rebellious souls, that, mad with Fate,
To question God's eternal justice dare,
She points above with looks that whisper, "Wait,—
What seems confusion here is wisdom there."

To the vain challenges of doubt we send,
No answering comfort doth she minister :
Her face looks ever forward to the end,
And we, who see it not, are led by her.

She doth not chide, nor in reproachful guise
The griefs we cherish rudely thrust apart ;
But in the light of her immortal eyes
Revives the manly courage of the heart.

Daughter of God ! who walkest with us here,
Who mak'st our every tribulation thine,
Such light hast thou in Earth's dim atmosphere,
How must thy seat in Heaven exalted shine !

How fair thy presence by those living streams
Where Sin and Sorrow from their troubling cease !
Where on thy brow the crown of amaranth gleams,
And in thy hand the golden key of Peace !

BEDOUIN SONG.



FROM the Desert I come to thee
 On a stallion shod with fire;
 And the winds are left behind
 In the speed of my desire.

Under thy window I stand,
 And the midnight hears my cry :
 I love thee, I love but thee,
 With a love that shall not die
 Till the sun grows cold,
 And the stars are old,
 And the leaves of the Judgment
 Book unfold !

Look from thy window and see
 My passion and my pain ;
 I lie on the sands below,
 And I faint in thy disdain.
 Let the night-winds touch thy brow
 With the heat of my burning sigh,
 And melt thee to hear the vow
 Of a love that shall not die
 Till the sun grows cold,
 And the stars are old,
 And the leaves of the Judgment
 Book unfold !

My steps are nightly driven,
 By the fever in my breast,
 To hear from thy lattice breathed
 The word that shall give me rest.

Open the door of thy heart,
 And open thy chamber door,
 And my kisses shall teach thy lips
 The love that shall fade no more
 Till the sun grows cold,
 And the stars are old,
 And the leaves of the Judgment
 Book unfold!

DESERT HYMN TO THE SUN.

I.



UNDER the arches of the morning sky,
 Save in one heart, there beats no life
 of Man ;
 The yellow sand-hills bleak and track-
 less lie,

And far behind them sleeps the caravan.
 A silence, as before Creation, broods
 Sublimely o'er the desert solitudes.

II.

A silence as if God in Heaven were still,
 And meditating some new wonder! Earth
 And Air the solemn portent own, and thrill
 With awful prescience of the coming birth.
 And Night withdraws, and on their silver cars
 Wheel to remotest space the trembling Stars.

III.

See! an increasing brightness, broad and fleet,
 Breaks on the morning in a rosy flood,

As if He smiled to see His work complete,
And rested from it, and pronounced it good.
The sands lie still, and every wind is furled :
The Sun comes up, and looks upon the world.

IV.

Is there no burst of music to proclaim
The pomp and majesty of this new lord ? —
A golden trumpet in each beam of flame,
Startling the universe with grand accord ?
Must Earth be dumb beneath the splendors thrown
From his full orb to glorify her own ?

V.

No : with an answering splendor, more than sound
Instinct with gratulation, she adores.
With purple flame the porphyry hills are crowned,
And burn with gold the Desert's boundless
floors ;
And the lone Man compels his haughty knee,
And, prostrate at thy footstool, worships thee.

VI.

Before the dreadful glory of thy face
He veils his sight ; he fears the fiery rod
Which thou dost wield amid the brightening space,
As if the sceptre of a visible god.
If not the shadow of God's lustre, thou
Art the one jewel flaming on His brow.

VII.

Wrap me within the mantle of thy beams,
And feed my pulses with thy keenest fire !

Here, where thy full meridian deluge streams
Across the Desert, let my blood aspire
To ripen in the vigor of thy blaze,
And catch a warmth to shine through darker days!

VIII.

I am alone before thee: Lord of Light!
Begetter of the life of things that live!
Beget in me thy calm, self-balanced might;
To me thine own immortal ardor give.
Yea, though, like her who gave to Jove her charms,
My being wither in thy fiery arms.

IX.

Whence came thy splendors? Heaven is filled
with thee;
The sky's blue walls are dazzling with thy train;
Thou sitt'st alone in the Immensity,
And in thy lap the World grows young again.
Bathed in such brightness, drunken with the Day,
He deems the Dark forever passed away.

X.

But thou dost sheathe thy trenchant sword, and lean
With tempered grandeur towards the western
gate;
Shedding thy glory with a brow serene,
And leaving heaven all golden with thy state:
Not as a king discrowned and overthrown,
But one who keeps, and shall reclaim his own.

NILOTIC DRINKING-SONG.

I.



YOU may water your bays, brother-poets,
 with lays
 That brighten the cup from the
 stream you doat on,
 By the Schuylkill's side, or Cochituate's tide,
 Or the crystal lymph of the mountain Croton :
 (We may pledge from these
 In our summer ease,
 Nor even Anacreon's shade revile us —)
 But I, from the flood
 Of his own brown blood,
 Will drink to the glory of ancient Nilus !

II.

Cloud never gave birth, nor cradle the Earth,
 To river so grand and fair as this is :
 Not the waves that roll us the gold of Pactolus,
 Nor cool Cephissus, nor classic Ilissus.
 The lily may dip
 Her ivory lip
 To kiss the ripples of clear Eurotas ;
 But the Nile brings balm
 From the myrrh and palm,
 And the ripe, voluptuous lips of the lotus.

III.

The waves that ride on his mighty tide
 Were poured from the urns of unvisited moun-
 tains ;

And their sweets of the South mingle cool in the
 mouth
 With the freshness and sparkle of Northern foun-
 tains.

Again and again
 The goblet we drain, —
 Diviner a stream never Nereid swam on :
 For Isis and Orus
 Have quaffed before us,
 And Ganymede dipped it for Jupiter Ammon.

IV.

Its blessing he pours o'er his thirsty shores,
 And floods the regions of Sleep and Silence,
 When he makes oases in desert places,
 And the plain is a sea, the hills are islands.
 And had I the brave
 Anacreon's stave,
 And lips like the honeyed lips of Hylas,
 I'd dip from his brink
 My bacchanal drink,
 And sing for the glory of ancient Nilus !

CAMADEVA.



HE sun, the moon, the mystic planets
 seven,
 Shone with a purer and serener flame,
 And there was joy on Earth and joy in
 Heaven
 When Camadeva came.

The blossoms burst, like jewels of the air,
 Putting the colors of the morn to shame;
 Breathing their odorous secrets everywhere
 When Camadeva came.

The birds, upon the tufted tamarind spray,
 Sat side by side and cooed in amorous blame;
 The lion sheathed his claws and left his prey
 When Camadeva came.

The sea slept, pillowed on the happy shore;
 The mountain-peaks were bathed in rosy flame;
 The clouds went down the sky, — to mount no more
 When Camadeva came.

The hearts of all men brightened like the morn;
 The poet's harp then first deserved its fame,
 For rapture sweeter than he sang was born
 When Camadeva came.

All breathing life a newer spirit quaffed,
 A second life, a bliss beyond a name,
 And Death, half-conquered, dropped his idle shaft
 When Camadeva came.

NUBIA.



LAND of Dreams and Sleep, — a pop-
 pied land!
 With skies of endless calm above her
 head,

The drowsy warmth of summer noonday shed

Upon her hills, and silence stern and grand
 Throughout her Desert's temple-burying sand.
 Before her threshold, in their ancient place,
 With closed lips, and fixed, majestic face,
 Noteless of Time, her dumb colossi stand.
 O, pass them not with light, irreverent tread ;
 Respect the dream that builds her fallen throne,
 And soothes her to oblivion of her woes.
 Hush ! for she does but sleep ; she is not dead :
 Action and Toil have made the world their own,
 But she hath built an altar to Repose.

KILIMANDJARO.

I.



AIL to thee, monarch of African moun-
 tains,

Remote, inaccessible, silent, and lone, —
 Who, from the heart of the tropical fer-
 vors,

Liftest to heaven thine alien snows,
 Feeding forever the fountains that make thee
 Father of Nile and Creator of Egypt !

II.

The years of the world are engraved on thy fore-
 head ;
 Time's morning blushed red on thy first-fallen
 snows ;
 Yet, lost in the wilderness, nameless, unnoted,
 Of Man un beholden, thou wert not till now.

Knowledge alone is the being of Nature,
Giving a soul to her manifold features,
Lighting through paths of the primitive darkness
The footsteps of Truth and the vision of Song.
Knowledge has born thee anew to Creation,
And long-baffled Time at thy baptism rejoices.
Take, then, a name, and be filled with existence,
Yea, be exultant in sovereign glory,
While from the hand of the wandering poet
Drops the first garland of song at thy feet.

III.

Floating alone, on the flood of thy making,
Through Africa's mystery, silence, and fire,
Lo! in my palm, like the Eastern enchanter,
I dip from the waters a magical mirror,
And thou art revealed to my purified vision.
I see thee, supreme in the midst of thy co-mates,
Standing alone 'twixt the Earth and the Heavens,
Heir of the Sunset and Herald of Morn.
Zone above zone, to thy shoulders of granite,
The climates of Earth are displayed, as an index,
Giving the scope of the Book of Creation.
There, in the gorges that widen, descending
From cloud and from cold into summer eternal,
Gather the threads of the ice-gendered fountains, —
Gather to riotous torrents of crystal,
And, giving each shelvy recess where they dally
The blooms of the North and its evergreen turfage,
Leap to the land of the lion and lotus!
There, in the wondering airs of the Tropics
Shivers the Aspen, still dreaming of cold:
There stretches the Oak, from the loftiest ledges,

His arms to the far-away lands of his brothers,
And the Pine-tree looks down on his rival, the
Palm.

IV.

Bathed in the tenderest purple of distance,
Tinted and shadowed by pencils of air,
Thy battlements hang o'er the slopes and the forests,
Seats of the Gods in the limitless ether,
Looming sublimely aloft and afar.
Above them, like folds of imperial ermine,
Sparkle the snow-fields that furrow thy forehead, —
Desolate realms, inaccessible, silent,
Chasms and caverns where Day is a stranger,
Earners where storeth his treasures the Thunder,
The Lightning his falchion, his arrows the Hail!

V.


Sovereign Mountain, thy brothers give welcome:
They, the baptized and the crownèd of ages,
Watch-towers of Continents, altars of Earth,
Welcome thee now to their mighty assembly.
Mont Blanc, in the roar of his mad avalanches,
Hails thy accession; superb Orizaba,
Belted with beech and ensandalled with palm;
Chimborazo, the lord of the regions of noonday, —
Mingle their sounds in magnificent chorus
With greeting august from the Pillars of Heaven,
Who, in the urns of the Indian Ganges
Filter the snows of their sacred dominions,
Unmarked with a footprint, unseen but of God.

VI.

Lo! unto each is the seal of his lordship,
 Nor questioned the right that his majesty giveth :
 Each in his awful supremacy forces
 Worship and reverence, wonder and joy.
 Absolute all, yet in dignity varied,
 None has a claim to the honors of story,
 Or the superior splendors of song,
 Greater than thou, in thy mystery mantled, —
 Thou, the sole monarch of African mountains,
 Father of Nile and Creator of Egypt!

THE BIRTH OF THE PROPHET.

I.

HRICE three moons had waxed in heaven,
 thrice three moons had waned away,
 Since Abdullah, faint and thirsty, on
 the Desert's bosom lay
 In the fiery lap of Summer, the meridian of the
 day; —

II.

Since from out the sand upgushing, lo! a sudden
 fountain leapt;
 Sweet as musk and clear as amber, to his parch-
 ing lips it crept.
 When he drank it straightway vanished, but his
 blood its virtue kept.

III.

Ere the morn. his forehead's lustre, signet of the
Prophet's line,
To the beauty of Amina had transferred its flame
divine ;
Of the germ within her sleeping, such the conse-
crated sign.

IV.

And with every moon that faded waxed the splen-
dor more and more,
Till Amina's beauty lightened through the matron
veil she wore,
And the tent was filled with glory, and of Heaven
it seemed the door.

V.

When her quickened womb its burden had ma-
tured, and Life began
Struggling in its living prison, through the wide
Creation ran
Premonitions of the coming of a God-appointed
man.

VI.

For the oracles of Nature recognize a Prophet's
birth, —
Blossom of the tardy ages, crowning type of hu-
man worth, —
And by miracles and wonders he is welcomed to
the Earth.

VII.

Then the stars in heaven grew brighter, stooping
downward from their zones ;
Wheeling round the towers of Mecca, sang the
moon in silver tones,
And the Kaaba's grisly idols trembled on their
granite thrones.

VIII.

Mighty arcs of rainbow splendor, pillared shafts
of purple fire,
Split the sky and spanned the darkness, and with
many a golden spire,
Beacon-like, from all the mountains streamed the
lambent meteors higher.

IX.

But when first the breath of being to the sacred
infant came,
Paled the pomp of airy lustre, and the stars grew
dim with shame,
For the glory of his countenance outshone their
feebler flame.

X.

Over Nedjid's sands it lightened, unto Oman's
coral deep,
Startling all the gorgeous regions of the Orient
from sleep,
Till, a sun on night new-risen, it illumed the
Indian steep.

XI.

They who dwelt in Mecca's borders saw the distant realms appear
All around the vast horizon, shining marvellous
and clear,
From the gardens of Damascus unto those of
Bendemeer.

XII.

From the colonnades of Tadmor to the hills of
Hadramaut,
Ancient Araby was lighted, and her sands the
splendor caught,
Till the magic sweep of vision overtook the track
of Thought.

XIII.

Such on Earth the wondrous glory, but beyond
the sevenfold skies
God His mansions filled with gladness, and the
seraphs saw arise
Palaces of pearl and ruby from the founts of Par-
adise.

XIV.

As the surge of heavenly anthems shook the sol-
emn midnight air,
From the shrines of false religions came a wailing
of despair,
And the fires on Pagan altars were extinguished
everywhere.

XV.

'Mid the sounds of salutation, 'mid the splendor
 and the balm,
 Knelt the sacred child, proclaiming, with a brow
 of heavenly calm :
 " God is God ; there is none other ; I his chosen
 Prophet am ! "

TO THE NILE.



MYSTERIOUS Flood, — that through the
 silent sands

Hast wandered, century on century,
 Watering the length of green Egyptian
 lands,

Which were not, but for thee, —

Art thou the keeper of that eldest lore,
 Written ere yet thy hieroglyphs began,
 When dawned upon thy fresh, untrampled shore
 The earliest life of Man ?

Thou guardest temple and vast pyramid,
 Where the gray Past records its ancient speech ;
 But in thine unrevealing breast lies hid
 What they refuse to teach.

All other streams with human joys and fears
 Run blended, o'er the plains of History :
 Thou tak'st no note of Man ; a thousand years
 Are as a day to thee.

What were to thee the Osirian festivals ?
Or Memnon's music on the Theban plain ?
The carnage, when Cambyses made thy halls
Ruddy with royal slain ?

Even then thou wast a God, and shrines were built
For worship of thine own majestic flood ;
For thee the incense burned, — for thee was spilt
The sacrificial blood.

And past the bannered pylons that arose
Above thy palms, the pageantry and state,
Thy current flowed, calmly as now it flows,
Unchangeable as Fate.

Thou givest blessing as a God might give,
Whose being is his bounty : from the slime
Shaken from off thy skirts the nations live,
Through all the years of Time.

In thy solémnity, thine awful calm,
Thy grand indifference of Destiny,
My soul forgets its pain, and drinks the balm
Which thou dost proffer me.

Thy godship is unquestioned still : I bring
No doubtful worship to thy shrine supreme ;
But thus my homage as a chaplet fling,
To float upon thy stream !

HASSAN TO HIS MARE.



COME, my beauty! come, my desert
darling!

On my shoulder lay thy glossy head!
Fear not, though the barley-sack be
empty,

Here's the half of Hassan's scanty bread.

Thou shalt have thy share of dates, my beauty!
And thou know'st my water-skin is free:
Drink and welcome, for the wells are distant,
And my strength and safety lie in thee.

Bend thy forehead now, to take my kisses!
Lift in love thy dark and splendid eye:
Thou art glad when Hassan mounts the saddle, —
Thou art proud he owns thee: so am I.

Let the Sultan bring his boasted horses,
Prancing with their diamond-studded reins;
They, my darling, shall not match thy fleetness
When they course with thee the desert-plains!

Let the Sultan bring his famous horses,
Let him bring his golden swords to me, —
Bring his slaves, his eunuchs, and his harem;
He would offer them in vain for thee.

We have seen Damascus, O my beauty!
And the splendor of the Pashas there:
What's their pomp and riches? Why, I would not
Take them for a handful of thy hair!

Khaled sings the praises of his mistress,
 And, because I've none, he pities me :
 What care I if he should have a thousand,
 Fairer than the morning ? *I* have thee.

He will find his passion growing cooler,
 Should her glance on other suitors fall ;
 Thou wilt ne'er, my mistress and my darling,
 Fail to answer at thy master's call.

By and by some snow-white Nedjid stallion
 Shall to thee his spring-time ardor bring ;
 And a foal, the fairest of the Desert,
 To thy milky dugs shall crouch and cling.

Then, when Khaled shows to me his children,
 I shall laugh, and bid him look at thine ;
 Thou wilt neigh, and lovingly caress me,
 With thy glossy neck laid close to mine.

CHARMIAN.

I.



DAUGHTER of the Sun !
 Who gave the keys of passion unto thee ?
 Who taught the powerful sorcery
 Wherein my soul, too willing to be won,
 Still feebly struggles to be free,
 But more than half undone ?
 Within the mirror of thine eyes,
 Full of the sleep of warm Egyptian skies, —

The sleep of lightning, bound in airy spell,
 And deadlier, because invisible, —
 I see the reflex of a feeling
 Which was not, till I looked on thee :
 A power, involved in mystery,
 That shrinks, affrighted, from its own revealing.

II.

Thou sitt'st in stately indolence,
 Too calm to feel a breath of passion start
 The listless fibres of thy sense,
 The fiery slumber of thy heart.
 Thine eyes are wells of darkness, by the veil
 Of languid lids half-sealed : the pale
 And bloodless olive of thy face,
 And the full, silent lips that wear
 A ripe serenity of grace,
 Are dark beneath the shadow of thy hair.
 Not from the brow of templed Athor beams
 Such tropic warmth along the path of dreams ;
 Not from the lips of hornèd Isis flows
 Such sweetness of repose !
 For thou art Passion's self, a goddess too,
 And aught but worship never knew ;
 And thus thy glances, calm and sure,
 Look for accustomed homage, and betray
 No effort to assert thy sway :
 Thou deem'st my fealty secure.

III.

O Sorceress ! those looks unseal
 The undisturbèd mysteries that press
 Too deep in nature for the heart to feel

Their terror and their loveliness.
Thine eyes are torches that illumine
On secret shrines their unforeboded fires,
And fill the vaults of silence and of gloom
With the unresting life of new desires.
I follow where their arrowy ray
Pierces the veil I would not tear away,
And with a dread, delicious awe behold
Another gate of life unfold,
Like the rapt neophyte who sees
Some march of grand Osirian mysteries.
The startled chambers I explore,
And every entrance open lies,
Forced by the magic thrill that runs before
Thy slowly-lifted eyes.
I tremble to the centre of my being
Thus to confess the spirit's poise o'erthrown,
And all its guiding virtues blown
Like leaves before the whirlwind's fury fleeing.

IV.

But see ! one memory rises in my soul,
And, beaming steadily and clear,
Scatters the lurid thunder-clouds that roll
Through Passion's sultry atmosphere.
An alchemy more potent borrow
For thy dark eyes, enticing Sorceress !
For on the casket of a sacred Sorrow
Their shafts fall powerless.
Nay, frown not, Athor, from thy mystic shrine :
Strong Goddess of Desire, I will not be
One of the myriad slaves thou callest thine,
To cast my manhood's crown of royalty
Before thy dangerous beauty : I am free !

SMYRNA.



HE "Ornament of Asia" and the "Crown
Of fair Ionia." Yea; but Asia stands
No more an empress, and Ionia's hands
Have lost their sceptre. Thou, majestic
town,

Art as a diamond on a faded robe :
The freshness of thy beauty scatters yet
The radiance of that sun of Empire set,
Whose disk sublime illumed the ancient globe.
Thou sitt'st between the mountains and the sea ;
The sea and mountains flatter thine array,
And fill thy courts with Grandeur, not Decay ;
And Power, not Death, proclaims thy cypress tree.
Through thee, the sovereign symbols Nature lent
Her rise, make Asia's fall magnificent.

TO A PERSIAN BOY,

IN THE BAZAAR AT SMYRNA.



HE gorgeous blossoms of that magic tree
Beneath whose shade I sat a thousand
nights,
Breathed from their opening petals all
delights

Embalmed in spice of Orient Poesy,
When first, young Persian, I beheld thine eyes,

And felt the wonder of thy beauty grow
 Within my brain, as some fair planet's glow
 Deepens, and fills the summer evening skies.
 From under thy dark lashes shone on me
 The rich, voluptuous soul of Eastern land,
 Impassioned, tender, calm, serenely sad, —
 Such as immortal Hafiz felt when he
 Sang by the fountain-streams of Rocnabad,
 Or in the bowers of blissful Samarcand.

THE GOBLET.

I.



WHEN Life his lusty course began,
 And first I felt myself a man,
 And Passion's unforeboded glow —
 The thirst to feel, the will to know —

Gave courage, vigor, fervor, truth,
 The glory of the heart of Youth,
 And each awaking pulse was fleet
 A livelier march of joy to beat,
 Presaging in its budding hour
 The ripening of the human flower,
 There came, on some divine intent,
 One whom the Lord of Life had sent,
 And from his lips of wisdom fell
 This fair and wondrous oracle : —

II.

Life's arching temple holds for thee
 Solution quick, and radiant key

To many an early mystery ;
And thou art eager to pursue,
Through many a dimly-lighted clew,
The hopes that turn thy blood to fire,
The phantoms of thy young desire :
Yet not to reckless haste is poured
The nectar of the generous lord,
Nor mirth nor giddy riot jar
The penetralia, high and far ;
But steady hope, and passion pure,
And manly truth, the crown secure.

III.

Within that temple's secret heart,
In mystic silence shrined apart,
There is a goblet, on whose brim
All raptures of Creation swim.
No light that ever beamed in wine
Can match the glory of its shine,
Or lure with such a mighty art
The tidal flow of every heart.
But in its warm, bewildering blaze,
An ever-shifting magic plays,
And few who round the altar throng
Shall find the sweets for which they long.
Who, unto brutish life akin,
Comes to the goblet dark with sin,
And with a coarse hand grasps, for him
The splendor of the gold grows dim,
The gems are dirt, the liquor's flame
A maddening beverage of shame,
And into caverns shut from day
The hot inebriate reels away.

IV.

For each shall give the draught he drains
Its nectar pure, or poison stains ;
From out his heart the flavor flows
That gives him fury, or repose :
And some shall drink a tasteless wave,
And some increase the thirst they lave ;
And others loathe as soon as taste,
And others pour the tide to waste ;
And some evoke from out its deeps
A torturing fiend that never sleeps, —
For vain all arts to exorcise
From the seared heart its haunting eyes.

V.

But he who burns with pure desire,
With chastened love and sacred fire,
With soul and being all aglow
Life's holiest mystery to know,
Shall see the goblet flash and gleam
As in the glory of a dream ;
And from its starry lip shall drink
A bliss to lift him on the brink
Of mighty rapture, joy intense,
That far outlives its subsidence.
The draught shall strike Life's narrow goal,
And make an outlet for his soul,
That down the ages, broad and far,
Shall brighten like a rising star.
In other forms his pulse shall beat,
His spirit walk in other feet,
And every generous hope and aim

That spurred him on to honest fame,
 To other hearts give warmth and grace,
 And keep on earth his honored place,
 Become immortal in his race.

THE ARAB TO THE PALM.



Next to thee, O fair gazelle,
 O Beddowee girl, beloved so well ;

Next to the fearless Nedjidee,
 Whose fleetness shall bear me again to thee ;

Next to ye both I love the Palm,
 With his leaves of beauty, his fruit of balm ;

Next to ye both I love the Tree
 Whose fluttering shadow wraps us three
 With love, and silence, and mystery !

Our tribe is many, our poets vie
 With any under the Arab sky ;
 Yet none can sing of the Palm but I.

The marble minarets that begem
 Cairo's citadel-diadem
 Are not so light as his slender stem.

He lifts his leaves in the sunbeam's glance
 As the Almehs lift their arms in dance, —

A slumberous motion, a passionate sign,
That works in the cells of the blood like wine.

Full of passion and sorrow is he,
Dreaming where the beloved may be.

And when the warm south-winds arise,
He breathes his longing in fervid sighs, —

Quickening odors, kisses of balm,
That drop in the lap of his chosen palm.

The sun may flame and the sands may stir,
But the breath of his passion reaches her.

O Tree of Love, by that love of thine,
Teach me how I shall soften mine !

Give me the secret of the sun,
Whereby the wooed is ever won !

If I were a King, O stately Tree,
A likeness, glorious as might be,
In the court of my palace I 'd build for thee !

With a shaft of silver, burnished bright,
And leaves of beryl and malachite ;

With spikes of golden bloom ablaze,
And fruits of topaz and chrysoptase :

And there the poets, in thy praise,
Should night and morning frame new lays, —

New measures sung to tunes divine ;
But none, O Palm, should equal mine !

AURUM POTABILE.

I.



BROTHER Bards of every region, —
 Brother Bards, (your name is Legion!)
 Were you with me while the twilight
 Darkens up my pine-tree skylight, —
 Were you gathered, representing
 Every land beneath the sun,
 O, what songs would be indited,
 Ere the earliest star is lighted,
 To the praise of vino d'oro,
 On the Hills of Lebanon!

II.

Yes ; while all alone I quaff its
 Lucid gold, and brightly laugh its
 Topaz waves and amber bubbles,
 Still the thought my pleasure troubles,
 That I quaff it all alone.
 O for Hafiz, — glorious Persian!
 Keats, with buoyant, gay diversion
 Mocking Schiller's grave immersion ;
 O for wreathed Anacreon!
 Yet enough to have the living, —
 They, the few, the rapture-giving!
 (Blessèd more than in receiving,)
 Fate, that frowns when laurels wreath them,
 Once the solace might bequeath them,
 Once to taste of vino d'oro,
 On the Hills of Lebanon!

III.

Lebanon, thou mount of story,
 Well we know thy sturdy glory,
 Since the days of Solomon ;
 Well we know the Five old Cedars,
 Scarred by ages, — silent pleaders,
 Preaching, in their gray sedateness,
 Of thy forest's fallen greatness,
 Of the vessels of the Tyrian,
 And the palaces Assyrian,
 And the temple on Moriah
 To the High and Holy One !
 Know the wealth of thy appointment, —
 Myrrh and aloes, gum and ointment ;
 But we knew not, till we clomb thee,
 Of the nectar dropping from thee, —
 Of the pure, pellucid Ophir
 In the cups of vino d'oro,
 On the Hills of Lebanon !

IV.

We have drunk, and we have eaten, X
 Where Egyptian sheaves are beaten ;
 Tasted Judah's milk and honey
 On his mountains, bare and sunny ;
 Drained ambrosial bowls, that ask us
 Never more to leave Damascus ;
 And have sung a vintage pæan
 To the grapes of isles Ægean,
 And the flasks of Orvieto,
 Ripened in the Roman sun : :
 But the liquor here surpasses

All that beams in earthly glasses.
 'T is of this that Paracelsus
 (His elixir vitæ) tells us,
 That to happier shores can float us
 Than Lethean stems of lotus,
 And the vigor of the morning
 Straight restores when day is done.
 Then, before the sunset waneth,
 While the rosy tide, that staineth
 Earth, and sky, and sea, remaineth,
 We will take the fortune proffered, —
 Ne'er again to be reoffered, —
 We will drink of vino d'oro,
 On the Hills of Lebanon!
 Vino d'oro! vino d'oro! —
 Golden blood of Lebanon!

ON THE SEA.



HE splendor of the sinking moon
 Deserts the silent bay;
 The mountain-isles loom large and faint,
 Folded in shadows gray,
 And the lights of land are setting stars
 That soon will pass away.

O boatman, cease thy mellow song!
 O minstrel, drop thy lyre!
 Let us hear the voice of the midnight sea,
 Let us speak as the waves inspire,
 While the plashy dip of the languid oar
 Is a furrow of silver fire.

Day cannot make thee half so fair,
 Nor the stars of eve so dear :
 The arms that clasp and the breast that keeps,
 They tell me thou art near,
 And the perfect beauty of thy face
 In thy murmured words I hear.

The lights of land have dropped below
 The vast and glimmering sea ;
 The world we leave is a tale that is told, —
 A fable, that cannot be.
 There is no life in the spherly dark
 But the love in thee and me !

TYRE.

I.



HE wild and windy morning is lit with
 lurid fire ;
 The thundering surf of ocean beats on
 the rocks of Tyre, —
 Beats on the fallen columns and round the head-
 land roars,
 And hurls its foamy volume along the hollow-
 shores,
 And calls with hungry clamor, that speaks its long
 desire :
 “Where are the ships of Tarshish, the mighty
 ships of Tyre ?”

II.

Within her cunning harbor, choked with invading
sand.
No galleys bring their freightage, the spoils of
every land,
And like a prostrate forest, when autumn gales
have blown,
Her colonnades of granite lie shattered and o'er-
thrown ;
And from the reef the pharos no longer flings its
fire,
To beacon home from Tarshish the lordly ships
of Tyre.

III.

Where is thy rod of empire, once mighty on the
waves, —
Thou that thyself exalted, till Kings became thy
slaves ?
Thou that didst speak to nations, and saw thy
will obeyed, —
Whose favor made them joyful, whose anger sore
afraid, —
Who laid'st thy deep foundations, and thought
them strong and sure,
And boasted midst the waters, Shall I not aye
endure ?

IV.

Where is the wealth of ages that heaped thy
princely mart ?
The pomp of purple trappings ; the gems of
Syrian art ;

The silken goats of Kedar ; Sabæa's spicy store ;
The tributes of the islands thy squadrons home-
ward bore,
When in thy gates triumphant they entered from
the sea
With sound of horn and sackbut, of harp and
psaltery ?

v.

Howl, howl, ye ships of Tarshish ! the glory is
laid waste :
There is no habitation ; the mansions are defaced.
No mariners of Sidon unfurl your mighty sails ;
No workmen fell the fir-trees that grow in Shenir's
vales,
And Bashan's oaks that boasted a thousand years
of sun,
Or hew the masts of cedar on frosty Lebanon.

vi.

Rise, thou forgotten harlot ! take up thy harp and
sing :
Call the rebellious islands to own their ancient
king :
Bare to the spray thy bosom, and with thy hair
unbound,
Sit on the piles of ruin, thou throneless and dis-
crowned !
There mix thy voice of wailing with the thunders
of the sea,
And sing thy songs of sorrow, that thou remem-
bered be !

VII.

Though silent and forgotten, yet Nature still
 laments
 The pomp and power departed, the lost magnifi-
 cence :
 The hills were proud to see thee, and they are
 sadder now ;
 The sea was proud to bear thee, and wears a
 troubled brow,
 And evermore the surges chant forth their vain
 desire :
 “ Where are the ships of Tarshish, the mighty
 ships of Tyre ? ”

AN ANSWER.



YOU call me cold : you wonder why
 The marble of a mien like mine
 Gives fiery sparks of Poesy,
 Or softens at Love's touch divine.

Go, look on Nature, you will find
 It is the rock that feels the sun :
 But you are blind, — and to the blind
 The touch of ice and fire is one.

GULISTAN.

AN ARABIC METRE.



HERE is Gulistan, the Land of Roses ?
 Not on hills where Northern winters
 Break their spears in icy splinters,
 And in shrouded snow the world reposes ;
 But amid the glow and splendor
 Which the Orient summers lend her,
 Blue the heaven above her beauty closes :
 There is Gulistan, the Land of Roses.

Northward stand the Persian mountains ;
 Southward spring the silver fountains
 Which to Hafiz taught his sweetest measures,
 Clearly ringing to the singing
 Which the nightingales delight in,
 When the Spring, from Oman winging
 Unto Shiraz, showers her fragrant treasures
 On the land, till valleys brighten,
 Mountains lighten with returning
 Fires of scarlet poppy burning,
 And the stream meanders
 Through its roseate oleanders,
 And Love's golden gate, unfolden,
 Opens on a universe of pleasures.

There the sunshine blazes over
 Meadows gemmed with ruby clover ;
 There the rose's heart uncloses,
 Prodigal with hoarded stores of sweetness,

And the lily's cup so still is
 Where the river's waters quiver,
 That no wandering air can spill his
 Honeyed balm, or blight his beauty's fleetness.
 Skies are fairest, days are rarest, —
 Thou, O Earth! a glory wearest
 From the ecstasy thou bearest,
 Once to feel the Summer's full completeness.

Twilight glances, moonlit dances,
 Song by starlight, there entrances
 Youthful hearts with fervid fancies,
 And the blushing rose of Love uncloses :
 Love that, lapped in summer joyance,
 Far from every rude annoyance,
 Calmly on the answering love reposes ;
 And in song, in music only
 Speaks the longing, vague and lonely,
 Which to pain is there the nearest,
 Yet of joys the sweetest, dearest,
 As a cloud when skies are clearest
 On its folds intenser light discloses :
 This is Gulistan, the Land of Roses.

JERUSALEM.



AIR shines the moon, Jerusalem,
 Upon the hills that wore
 Thy glory once, their diadem
 Ere Judah's reign was o'er :

The stars on hallowed Olivet
And over Zion burn,
But when shall rise thy splendor set ?
Thy majesty return ?

The peaceful shades that wrap thee now
Thy desolation hide ;
The moonlit beauty of thy brow
Restores thine ancient pride ;
Yet there, where Rome thy Temple rent,
The dews of midnight wet
The marble dome of Omar's tent,
And Aksa's minaret.

Thy strength, Jerusalem, is o'er,
And broken are thy walls ;
The harp of Israel sounds no more
In thy deserted halls :
But where thy Kings and Prophets trod,
Triumphant over Death
Behold the living Soul of God, —
The Christ of Nazareth !

The halo of his presence fills
Thy courts, thy ways of men ;
His footsteps on thy holy hills
Are beautiful as then ;
The prayer, whose bloody sweat betrayed
His human agony,
Still haunts the awful olive shade
Of old Gethsemane.

Woe unto thee, Jerusalem !
Slayer of Prophets, thou,

That in thy fury stonest them
God sent, and sends thee now : —
Where thou, O Christ ! with anguish spent,
Forgave thy foes, and died,
Thy garments yet are daily rent, —
Thy soul is crucified !

They darken with the Christian name
The light that from thee beamed,
And by the hatred they proclaim
Thy spirit is blasphemed ;
Unto thine ear the prayers they send
Were fit for Belial's reign,
And Moslem cimeters defend
The temple they profane.

Who shall rebuild Jerusalem ? —
Her scattered children bring
From Earth's far ends, and gather them
Beneath her sheltering wing ?
For Judah's sceptre broken lies,
And from his kingly stem
No new Messiah shall arise
For lost Jerusalem !

But let the wild ass on her hills
Its foal unfrighted lead,
And by the source of Kedron's rills
The desert adder breed :
For where the love of Christ has made
Its mansion in the heart,
He builds in pomp that will not fade
Her heavenly counterpart.

THE VOYAGE OF A DREAM.



HERE is a cloud below the mountain
 peak,
 Moored in the pauses of the uncertain
 air.

Its fleecy folds piled idly, self-involved,
 Fashion the semblance of a floating throne,
 Torn, in the clash of airy anarchy,
 From the halls of Thunder; haply, once surcharged
 With elemental fire and threatening death, —
 Fit seat for the destroying Gods! — but now
 Of ivory all compact, and touched with gold
 And opal radiance on its sunny hem,
 As if a peaceful Angel steered it down
 From empyreal heights, with folded wing
 Slow sinking through the yielding deeps. A throne
 It seems, where disembodied Thought may sit;
 Unquestioned take the sceptre of the world,
 And, exercising power anticipant,
 Go forth to try his lordship.

I accept

The moment's offer, mount the seat sublime,
 And on the winds whose wings I feel no more,
 Because I move before them, boldly try
 The blue abyss whose measure no man knows.
 Straight down the mountain sinks; the mountain
 pines
 Send a last drowning murmur faintly up
 The ingulfing air, then stand in moveless calm,

Like coral forests rooted on the floors
Of Ocean. Plummeted with all her sins,
The Earth, down-sliding through the limpid sea,
Bears far below the noises of her broils, —
The greeds, the struggles, the devouring cares,
The endless agitations, — leaving free
To the enfranchised spirit the still fields
Of amplest ether. Speed, my wingèd throne!
Wherever Thought may pilot, stretch thy flight,
Higher than eagle dares, above the peaks
Of Himalayan snow, o'er seas and sands,
Through tropic green, or where the eternal ice
Stiffens around the forehead of the Pole!
The World is mine; the secrets of her heart
Lie at my feet; she cannot shut them out:
And as she spins on her appointed round
From daylight into dark, from dark to dawn
The mysteries of ages, problems which
A hundred centuries have left unsolved,
Give one by one their answers. Yonder burst
From the hot heart of Africa the springs
Of waters that have rocked Egyptian gods,
When the great stream that leaped in thunder down
From Primnis and Syene's barrier, bore
The chaplets and the consecrated oil
To his own godship poured: — Beyond those hills,
Whose tops against the Indian Caucasus
Uplift their snowy helms, behold the vast
Wind-driven platforms, whence the earliest Men
Went with the streams to greener pasture-fields,
And bore — their only heritage — God's name,
The altars of his worship, and the truths
Whose rude foundations underlie the piles
Of states and sovereignties, upholding firm

The masonry of Time : and whatsoe'er
 Of summer beauty in the virgin isles,
 Of lifeless grandeur in the emerald crags
 Of undissolving ice, was never yet
 By bold Adventure wrested from the keep
 Of savage Nature, gives its secret up,
 Helpless beneath the master-gaze of Thought,
 As that of God.

Sweep downward, streams of air !
 And thou, my cloudy chariot, drop thy shade
 To roll, like dust, behind thy silent wheels,
 And draw round Earth the triumph of our march !
 See where, from zone to zone, the shadow moves, —
 A spot upon the Desert's golden glare, —
 A deeper blue on the far-stretching plains
 Of Ocean's foamy azure, — pausing now
 To cloak with purple gloom the shoulders bare
 Of mighty mountains, or ingulfed and lost
 Deep in their folded chasms, or sailing slow
 On wide savannas, the elysian home
 Of flowery life, or quenching splendors vain
 That dance upon the gilded domes of men,
 And blind their eyes to the great light of Heaven.
 As in this rarer ether I surmount
 Life's numberless obstructions, and my gaze
 Takes in the whole expanded round of Earth,
 So, lifted o'er the narrow walks of Time,
 The weary years have dwindled to a point,
 And all their lessons compassed in the sphere
 Of one sole thought, as in the dew-drop lies
 The large orb of the morning sun. The years, —
 The ages, that from their accretion grow, —
 The cyclic eras, — shrink, and all the Past

Lies round and clear beneath me, swallowing up
In one grand circumspect the separate lives,
The individual links whereby our hearts
Walk slowly back the difficult paths of Time,
Or climb some lesser eminence, to gain
A forward look that dimly penetrates
The nearest Future. Past and Future now
Unite their worlds in equal counterpoise,
And, effortless as dreams, the wisdom comes
That reads the hidden issues of all life,
The purpose of Creation.

Mount no more,
Thou flying cloud, but rather turn to dew
And weep thyself upon the clover meads,
And mix thy being with their honeyed bloom,
Than float alone within the highest vault
Of blue-cold ether, to dissolve alone
Into the thin, unfriendly air. Come down!
Come down! and let me quit this perilous height,
This icy royalty of thought, to glide
Nearer the homes of men, the embowered nests
Of unaspiring, lowliest content,
And joy, that from the beams of many hearts
Gathers its radiant focus, like a star
In the warm mists of Earth: nor yet enough
To glide above, but drop me in the fields
Or in the vales at evening, when from work
Accomplished, rest the glowing limbs of Toil,
And men have time to love, — and I will kiss
The rugged cheek of Earth, with thankful tears
For every throb of every human heart
That welcomes me to share the general law,
And bear the mutual burden. Man alone

Creates Elysium for the soul of man.
 The ample Future, and the godlike reach
 Of new existence, are the prophecies
 Of humblest Love, and in the souls that love
 And are beloved the shining ether swims,
 Whereon exalted, we o'erlook the world,
 And Life, and Death, and everything but Heaven.

L'ENVOI.



UNTO the Desert and the desert steed
 Farewell! The journey is completed
 now :

Struck are the tents of Ishmael's wan-
 dering breed,

And I unwind the turban from my brow.

The sun has ceased to shine ; the palms that bent,
 Inebriate with light, have disappeared ;
 And naught is left me of the Orient
 But the tanned bosom and the unshorn beard.

Yet from that life my blood a glow retains,
 As the red sunshine in the ruby glows ;
 These songs are echoes of its fiercer strains, —
 Dreams, that recall its passion and repose.

I found, among those Children of the Sun,
 The cipher of my nature, — the release
 Of baffled powers, which else had never won
 That free fulfilment, whose reward is peace.

For not to any race or any clime
Is the completed sphere of life revealed ;
He who would make his own that round sublime,
Must pitch his tent on many a distant field.

Upon his home a dawning lustre beams,
But through the world he walks to open day,
Gathering from every land the prismatic gleams,
Which, when united, form the perfect ray.

Go, therefore, Songs! — which in the East were
born
And drew your nurture — from your sire's
control :
Haply to wander through the West forlorn,
Or find a shelter in some Orient soul.

And if the temper of our colder sky
Less warmth of passion and of speech demands,
They are the blossoms of my life, — and I
Have ripened in the suns of many lands.





PASSING THE SIRENS.

END



PASSING THE SIRENS.

—◆—
ULYSSES.

THE headlands pale, the long, far-pointing
cliffs
Of Circe's isle, are fading on the sea.
Our oars are idle, for the rising wind,
Strong Auster, fills the sail : the galley's beak
From every billow tears the garland foam,
And trails the scattered sea-blooms in her wake.
We should be near the islands : look, my men,
You, Perimedeś, look, whose hawk-eyes peer,
Deep-set, beneath their many-wrinkled lids,
Tell me if yon be shores which rather float
On the unburdened seas, the isles of heat,
Delusive vapor-lands that come and go,
Than rise from under, lifting solid fronts
To meet the turmoil of the changing tides.

A steady helm, my pilot ! yonder lies
The broader channel : look not on the shores
That glimmering change from purple into green,
But mark the burning highway of the sun,
Now to his bath descending, — follow that,

Straight through, and out on waters unexplored,
Ay, though we reach the Thunder's awful house,
The caverned hell of storms, than once touch keel
In these smooth harbors. Turn away your eyes,
My sailors, from the fair, fast-rising isles,
That drug the winds with many a musky flower
To sleep, that smooth the waters as with oil,
And open bowery laps of sunny coves,
To tempt your tempest-battered frames. And me,
Who never gave ye toils I did not share,
Or tasted pleasures I denied ye, — who
In Chian ports the flaccid wine-skin filled,
And in the arms of soft Ionian girls
Ye after storms long anchorage allowed, —
Me bind ye fast, here, at the mainmast's foot,
And stop my ears with wool, lest I should lose
The settled will that drives my purpose on,
And falter with slack sails, the shame of all,
Of ye, my men, and all who honored me,
Heroes and demigods, in Troy. For I,
Wiser than ye in scheming, stronger proved
In much endurance, have the keener sense
Of all delights and all indulgences,
The more temptation to forbidden lusts:
Let me not hear the singing from the isles,
Or see the Sirens, naked in the shade,
Spread their alluring couches!

Ye, who toiled
With me, whom now from Circe's sty I saved,
Whose fate and mine is one, hear these my words:
Brail up the slackened mainsail to the yard:
Strong Auster fails: in order sit ye down,
Each on his bench, within the hollow ship,

And smite the billows of the hoary sea!
Let the white blades of fir keep even time,
Rattling together, — nor the helmsman fall
A hair's breadth from his course. It comes at last!
Whate'er you hear, the tasks I set perform
In order! Press the stoppers of my ears:
Nay, stop your own, — your faces grow too keen, —
Your eyes are full of wild and hungry light.
Now, by Poseidon! my right arm is free,
Look shoreward, and I slay you! Orpheus, there,
Tightens the loose chords of his lyre: he leans
Against the spray-wet altar on the prow,
Gazing straight forward, as his soul were dropt
Into the ocean of the golden sky.
Ay, sing, and overtake it with your song,
And if the Sirens not more rugged be
Than pines of Thessaly, that left the hills
To hear your music, they will quit their isles,
Shorn of their spells, your captives, following us
In dumb subjection through the barren seas.

THE SIRENS.

They are rough with the salt of the sea,
They are brown with the brand of the sun;
They are weary, weary of the sea;
They are weary of the sun.
Tug at the heavy oar;
Heave at the stubborn sail, —
Tossed in the mid-sea gale,
Wrecked on the fatal shore!

Here in our isles is rest,
Here there is rest alone:

Sweet is rest, ah, sweet is rest,
 White the arms and warm the breast, —
 Naught beyond but the unknown West,
 Naught but the waves unknown !

From their foreheads wipe the brine,
 Round their brows the poppies twine :
 Lay them on couches of balmy thyme,
 Deep in the shade of the bee-loved lime !
 Let them sleep : the restless deep
 Here no more compels to keep
 The weary watches that baffle sleep :
 Toil is here a thing unknown,
 Peril is a stranger here ;
 Sweetest rest, and rest alone,
 Waits the weary mariner.

ORPHEUS.

You sit serene upon your golden seats,
 In the bright climate of eternal calm.
 No pain can touch you, and the tumult raised
 By foolish men dies in this lower air :
 But Song — when from the Poet's perfect lips
 Divinest song is shed — finds entrance there,
 And bears his message even to your board.
 Great Zeus lifts up his awful brow : his beard
 Drops from its knotted coils, and sweeps his knees ;
 The thunder's edge grows keener in his grasp,
 And the grave pleasure seated in his eyes
 Brightens Olympian ether. Pallas hears ;
 Her brow's chill adamant is less severe :
 And large-eyed Herè lifts the violet lids,
 Shading the languid fountains of her eyes,

To look the joy her indolence makes dumb.
You hear me, Gods! you hear and comfort me.
I see thee, whom in Delos I adored,
And unto whom, beyond the Thracian strait,
I built an altar on the windy isle
Beside the Tauric seas. Thy splendid hair,
Spread by the swiftness of thy chariot-wheels,
Rays with celestial gold thy forehead's arch,
And thine immortal lips, too sweet for man,
Too eloquent for woman, half unclosed,
Unuttered consolation in their smile, —
Unspoken promises, whence hope is born
Of something happier, somewhere in the spheres.

THE SIRENS.

You have toiled enough, mariners!
Labor no more:
Lower the canvas,
Leave the oar:
Over our island
Storms cannot come:
Winds are in slumber:
Thunder is dumb.
Only the nightingale
Sings in her nest:
Balmy our couches,
Come to your rest!
Roses shall garland you,
Arms shall encircle you,
Lips shall be pressed!
Wine in the goblets
Shines ruby and gold, —
Strength to the weary,
Warmth to the cold,

Blood to the wasted,
 Youth to the old !
 Ah, and the rapture
 Thousand-fold dearer,
 Ne'er to be told :
 Learn ye the secret, —
 Taste ye the sweetness, —
 Beauty's possession
 Belongs to the bold !

ORPHEUS.

Not Minos, iron judge, alone shall speak
 Our final sentence ; but the balance hangs,
 Even while we live, in sight of all the Gods.
 Our fates are weighed, and less unequal seem
 To calm Olympian eyes, than ours, obscured
 By films inseparate from this cloudy earth.
 As one who, sitting on the high-prowed ship,
 Sees not the rosy splendor of the sail
 At morning, when, a planet of the sea,
 It shines afar to dwellers on the land ;
 So we the later radiance of our lives,
 Now shining, see not. We have toiled, 't is true :
 Stared Danger's lion boldly in the face
 Until he turned : borne wounds and racking pains ;
 The frosts of Colchian winters, and the fire
 That darts from Cancer on the Libyan shore :
 Brief joy, brief rest, stern labor, suffering,
 Are ours, — yet have we kept, as heroes should,
 The steady cheerfulness of temperate hearts,
 Courage, and mutual trust. We shall not leave
 The vapid dust of idlers in our urns :
 Behind our lives shall burn the shining tracks

Of splendid deeds, and men long after us
Shall build the steadfast mansion of our fame.
What here we lose, shall be our portion there
Among the Happy Fields, — divine repose
Eternally prolonged, and blameless joy.
We in that larger freedom of the blest
Heroic shades, shall find our chosen seats.
This restless life beneath the hollow sky,
And looking o'er the edges of the world
Far from the anchored shores, the tongues of air,
The doubtful voices heard in sounding caves
Where gods abide, dim whispers, teaching us,
God-like, the secrets of the elements,
Have smoothed our entrance to the ample realms
Where Youth returns, and Joy, so timorous now,
Drops, like a weary dove, to fly no more.

THE SIRENS.

Listen, ye mariners ! hark to our promises !
Prouder than pleasure the gifts we confer :
Though unto passion the Siren gives passion,
He who seeks power receives it from her !

Labor no longer, confronting the turbulent
Elements, ever opposing your will :
Secrets we know, knowing all things, immortal, —
Equal with gods your desires to fulfil.

Secrets that chain in his caverns the Thunder,
Fetter the winds when they eagerest are :
Loosen the stream from its urns in the mountain,
Ay, and the vaults of the earthquake unbar !

Come, and the delicate spell shall be spoken,
 Subtly to seize, and securely to bind, —
 Wisdom and eloquence, honeyed persuasion,
 Giving ye mastery over your kind.

Men shall adore ye, and even Immortals
 Stoop from their thrones in Olympian flame :
 All that have conquered and triumphed before ye
 Dust shall become at the feet of your fame !

ULYSSES.

It cleaves the muffled sense ; it penetrates
 The guarded porches of the brain, no lance
 Hurl'd from a giant's arm more sure : it hums
 And stings within me, as the brown bee hums
 Shut in the folded heart of some rich flower,
 Drinking its drop of honey, — so it creeps
 Within the purple blossom of my heart,
 That music : and the very thrills of fear
 To hide the secret honey of my lust,
 Aid the seduction and betray the spoil.
 You see me tremble : will it never cease ?
 It follows, follows, clearer as we pass
 The channel's throat, the final isles abeam,
 And sweeter, keener, more alluring still,
 From looking on the unfriendly seas. My men,
 Sing me your loudest songs, — the yo-heave-O !
 Of Aulis, or the coarse carousal-glees
 Of Tenedos and Troy ! What ? are ye dumb,
 With eyes that burn like half-extinguished brands,
 Fanned with desires new-blown, and mutinous
 With thought of coming peril ? Nay, then, shout !
 Yell with the rage of disappointed lust,

The spite of thwarted opportunity,
The frenzy which an unrelenting Fate
Smiles at, and so increases! Curse your chief,
Even me, Ulysses, — lash yourselves to wrath,
Like Satyrs when the Bacchic madness takes
Autumnal hills, so ye but overcome
That still-pursuing music! Bravely done!
My heart is tougher for that brawny roar,
Which, in the old time heard, could always turn
The battle's doubtful scale.

A fresher wind

Foreruns the presence of the rearward night;
Salt scud flies over us, and pale sea-fire
Flashes around the rudder. Set me free:
I am your captain, — you are still my men:
My sailors, whose obedience makes me strong,
My comrades, whom I love. See! yonder sinks
The glimmering beach astern: the songs are still;
The lovely Treachery withdraws at last
Its baffled spells. Now, whatsoever waits
For us, of new adventure, hostile winds,
Deceitful reefs, leagues of unharbored shore,
Or combats with strange tribes, gigantic forms
Cyclopean, or of bestial shape abhorred,
The worst is passed: and ye have proved to-day
Strong to resist, where mere resistance counts
Above all courage to confront the shocks
Whereon true manly steel but rings unharmed;
But this assails us from the softer side,
Melting the hero's marrow. Wherefore, now,
Broach we that skin of amber Cretan wine,
First pouring, as is meet, libations large
To Pallas, and Poseidon, and to Zeus.
Ho, Orpheus! Are you dreaming on the prow?

Or have the Sirens through your trancèd ears
 Rapt forth your soul ? You cannot hear them now :
 Come down : our hearts need festal music. Sing
 As when we skirted Delos, and the white
 Uplifted temple shone like morning snow,
 'Twixt the blue hemispheres of sky and sea !

ORPHEUS.

I looked on him whose marble mansion gleams
 High over Delos, — did the Sirens sing ?
 Who hears their music, sitting in the light
 Of his immortal features, breathing balm
 Shook from the rich confusion of his curls ?
 He gave me entrance to the happy meads
 Beyond the rainbow's span : I breathed, with him,
 The perfect ether of Olympian skies :
 I heard the piercing sweetness of his lyre
 Strike harmony through all the shuddering heart
 Of Chaos, while from blissful stars that slid,
 Sparkling, around him, in their crystal grooves,
 Sweet noises came, responsive. I beheld
 His music shape the world's eternal law.
 Immortal Justice there was justified :
 Fate span an equal thread : more vile became
 Rebellion to the gods, obedience light,
 Complaint unworthy. They the soonest reach
 The shining fields where shades of heroes walk,
 Who, spurning passion, rise with even souls
 O'er this, your madness, as an eagle hangs
 Above the thunder, in the sunshine poised.
 Your voices call me from my lofty dream,
 Yet think not that my spirit stoops to share
 Your noisy gladness ! Rather let me breathe

This pulse of music throbbing at my heart,
Until the speaking wires shall give me back
Some fragments of the voices of the Gods.

THE SAILORS.

No doubt you know the language of the Gods,
You, Orpheus, with your eyes that look afar,
Your ears, dumb to the thunder when you sing ;
But you, our Captain, know the hearts of men.
Here, pour this cup of amber wine to Zeus,
This, to Poseidon, — this, to Pallas, — this
Drink, shipmates, to Ulysses, from your hearts !
Sing, Orpheus, if you like : we do not want
Your Samothracian songs that cheat our ears
Like wind among the pines, — but lusty staves,
“ *Down with the Dardans !* ” or “ *The Girl of Cos,* ”
Songs that our captain loves : we sing with him.
Who knows us, suffers with us, feels for us,
Stands at the post of peril at our head,
Strong to subdue our hot, rebellious blood,
Free to forgive the easy vice, because
He feels it tugging at his heart the same, —
Him will we follow, though ten thousand isles
Of Sirens tempted, to the utmost verge
Where Earth falls sheer away, and under where
The great sun rolls, and the stars hide at dawn.
Drink with us, Captain ! strike hands once again !
We swear anew the obedient oath we took
When first you shipped us, wild, wayfaring knaves,
Among the scattered isles. The watch is set ;
The night is fortunate ; the wind is fair ;
Our hearts are happy, — let our compact hold !





ROMANCES AND LYRICS.





TO

GEORGE H. BOKER.

TO you the homage of this book I bring,
The earliest and the latest flowers I yield,
And though their hues betray a barren field,
I know you will not slight the offering.
You were the mate of my poetic spring ;
To you its buds of little worth concealed
More than the summer years have since revealed,
Or doubtful autumn from the stem shall fling.
But here they are, the buds, the blossoms blown ;
If rich or scant, the wreath is at your feet ;
And though it were the freshest ever grown,
To you its incense could not be more sweet,
Since with it goes a love to match your own,
A heart, dear Friend, that never falsely beat.

EBB



PORPHYROGENITUS.

I.

BORN in the purple! born in the purple!
Heir to the sceptre and crown!
Lord over millions and millions of vas-
sals, —
Monarch of mighty renown!
Where, do you ask, are my banner-proud castles?
Where my imperial town?

II.

Where are the ranks of my far-flashing lances, —
Trumpets, courageous of sound, —
Galloping squadrons and rocking armadas,
Guarding my kingdom around?
Where are the pillars that blazon my borders,
Threatening the alien ground?

III.

Vainly you ask, if you wear not the purple,
Sceptre and diadem own;
Ruling, yourself, over prosperous regions,
Seated supreme on your throne.

Subjects have nothing to give but allegiance :
 Monarchs meet monarchs alone.

IV.

But, if a king, you shall stand on my ramparts,
 Look on the lands that I sway,
 Number the domes of magnificent cities,
 Shining in valleys away, —
 Number the mountains whose foreheads are golden,
 Lakes that are azure with day.

V.

Whence I inherited such a dominion ?
 What was my forefathers' line ?
 Homer and Sophocles, Pindar and Sappho,
 First were anointed divine :
 Theirs were the realms that a god might have
 governed,
 Ah, and how little is mine !

VI.

Hafiz in Orient shared with Petrarca
 Thrones of the East and the West ;
 Shakespeare succeeded to limitless empire,
 Greatest of monarchs, and best :
 Few of his children inherited kingdoms,
 Provinces only, the rest.

VII.

Keats has his vineyards, and Shelley his islands ;
 Coleridge in Xanadu reigns ;

Wordsworth is eyried aloft on the mountains,
Goethe has mountains and plains ;
Yet, though the world has been parcelled among
them,
A world to be parcelled remains.

VIII.

Blessing enough to be born in the purple,
Though but a monarch in name, —
Though in the desert my palace is builded,
Far from the highways of Fame :
Up with my standards ! salute me with trumpets !
Crown me with regal acclaim !

METEMPSYCHOSIS OF THE PINE.



AS when the haze of some wan moonlight
makes
Familiar fields a land of mystery,
Where, chill and strange, a ghostly
presence wakes
In flower, and bush, and tree, —

Another life the life of Day o'erwhelms ;
The Past from present consciousness takes hue,
And we remember vast and cloudy realms
Our feet have wandered through :

So, oft, some moonlight of the mind makes dumb
The stir of outer thought : wide open seems

The gate wherethrough strange sympathies have
 come,
 The secret of our dreams ;

The source of fine impressions, shooting deep
 Below the failing plummet of the sense ;
 Which strike beyond all Time, and backward sweep
 Through all intelligence.

We touch the lower life of beast and clod,
 And the long process of the ages see
 From blind old Chaos, ere the breath of God
 Moved it to harmony.

All outward wisdom yields to that within,
 Whereof nor creed nor canon holds the key ;
 We only feel that we have ever been,
 And evermore shall be.

And thus I know, by memories unfurled
 In rarer moods, and many a nameless sign,
 That once in Time, and somewhere in the world,
 I was a towering Pine,

Rooted upon a cape that overhung
 The entrance to a mountain gorge ; whereon
 The wintry shadow of a peak was flung,
 Long after rise of sun.

Behind, the silent snows ; and wide below,
 The rounded hills made level, lessening down
 To where a river washed with sluggish flow
 A many-templed town.

There did I clutch the granite with firm feet,
There shake my boughs above the roaring gulf,
When mountain whirlwinds through the passes beat,
And howled the mountain wolf.

There did I louder sing than all the floods
Whirled in white foam adown the precipice,
And the sharp sleet that stung the naked woods
Answer with sullen hiss :

But when the peaceful clouds rose white and high
On blandest airs that April skies could bring,
Through all my fibres thrilled the tender sigh,
The sweet unrest of Spring.

She, with warm fingers laced in mine, did melt
In fragrant balsam my reluctant blood ;
And with a smart of keen delight I felt
The sap in every bud,

And tingled through my rough old bark, and fast
Pushed out the younger green, that smoothed
my tones,
When last year's needles to the wind I cast,
And shed my scaly cones.

I held the eagle till the mountain mist
Rolled from the azure paths he came to soar,
And like a hunter, on my gnarled wrist
The dappled falcon bore.

Poised o'er the blue abyss, the morning lark
Sang, wheeling near in rapturous carouse ;

And hart and hind, soft-pacing through the dark,
Slept underneath my boughs.

Down on the pasture-slopes the herdsman lay,
And for the flock his birchen trumpet blew ;
There ruddy children tumbled in their play,
And lovers came to woo.

And once an army, crowned with triumph, came
Out of the hollow bosom of the gorge,
With mighty banners in the wind aflame,
Borne on a glittering surge

Of tossing spears, a flood that homeward rolled,
While cymbals timed their steps of victory,
And horn and clarion from their throats of gold
Sang with a savage glee.

I felt the mountain walls below me shake,
Vibrant with sound, and through my branches
poured
The glorious gust : my song thereto did make
Magnificent accord.

Some blind harmonic instinct pierced the rind
Of that slow life which made me straight and
high,
And I became a harp for every wind,
A voice for every sky ;

When fierce autumnal gales began to blow,
Roaring all day in concert, hoarse and deep ;
And then made silent with my weight of snow —
A spectre on the steep ;

Filled with a whispering gush, like that which
flows

Through organ-stops, when sank the sun's red
disk

Beyond the city, and in blackness rose
Temple and obelisk ;

Or breathing soft, as one who sighs in prayer,
Mysterious sounds of portent and of might,
What time I felt the wandering waves of air
Pulsating through the night.

And thus for centuries my rhythmic chant
Rolled down the gorge, or surged about the
hill :

Gentle, or stern, or sad, or jubilant,
At every season's will.

No longer Memory whispers whence arose
The doom that tore me from my place of pride :
Whether the storms that load the peak with snows,
And start the mountain-slide,

Let fall a fiery bolt to smite my top,
Upwrenched my roots, and o'er the precipice
Hurled me, a dangling wreck, ere long to drop
Into the wild abyss ;

Or whether hands of men, with scornful strength
And force from Nature's rugged armory lent,
Sawed through my heart and rolled my tumbling
length
Sheer down the steep descent.

All sense departed, with the boughs I wore ;
 And though I moved with mighty gales at strife,
 A mast upon the seas, I sang no more,
 And music was my life.

Yet still that life awakens, brings again
 Its airy anthems, resonant and long,
 Till Earth and Sky, transfigured, fill my brain
 With rhythmic sweeps of song.

Thence am I made a poet : thence are sprung
 Those shadowy motions of the soul, that reach
 Beyond all grasp of Art, — for which the tongue
 Is ignorant of speech.

And if some wild, full-gathered harmony
 Roll its unbroken music through my line,
 There livés and murmurs, faintly though it be,
 The Spirit of the Pine.

THE VINEYARD-SAINT.



HE, pacing down the vineyard walks,
 Put back the branches, one by one,
 Stripped the dry foliage from the stalks,
 And gave their bunches to the sun.

On fairer hillsides, looking south,
 The vines were brown with cankerous rust,
 The earth was hot with summer drouth,
 And all the grapes were dim with dust.

Yet here some blessed influence rained
From kinder skies, the season through ;
On every bunch the bloom remained,
And every leaf was washed in dew.

I saw her blue eyes, clear and calm ;
I saw the aureole of her hair ;
I heard her chant some unknown psalm,
In triumph half, and half in prayer.

“ Hail, maiden of the vines ! ” I cried :
“ Hail, Oread of the purple hill !
For vineyard fauns too fair a bride,
For me thy cup of welcome fill !

“ Unlatch the wicket ; let me in,
And, sharing, make thy toil more dear :
No riper vintage holds the bin
Than that our feet shall trample here.

“ Beneath thy beauty’s light I glow,
As in the sun those grapes of thine :
Touch thou my heart with love, and lo !
The foaming must is turned to wine ! ”

She, pausing, stayed her careful task,
And, lifting eyes of steady ray,
Blew, as a wind the mountain’s mask
Of mist, my cloudy words away.

No troubled flush o’erran her cheek ;
But when her quiet lips did stir,
My heart knelt down to hear her speak,
And mine the blush I sought in her.

“O, not for me,” she said, “the vow
So lightly breathed, to break ere long ;
The vintage-garland on the brow ;
The revels of the dancing throng !

“To maiden love I shut my heart,
Yet none the less a stainless bride ;
I work alone, I dwell apart,
Because my work is sanctified.

“A virgin hand must tend the vine,
By virgin feet the vat be trod,
Whose consecrated gush of wine
Becomes the blessed blood of God !

“No sinful purple here shall stain,
Nor juice profane these grapes afford ;
But reverent lips their sweetness drain
Around the Table of the Lord.

“The cup I fill, of chaster gold,
Upon the lighted altar stands ;
There, when the gates of heaven unfold,
The priest exalts it in his hands.

“The censer yields adoring breath,
The awful anthem sinks and dies,
While God, who suffered life and death,
Renews His ancient sacrifice.

“O sacred garden of the vine !
And blessed she, ordained to press
God’s chosen vintage, for the wine
Of pardon and of holiness !”

HYLAS.



TORM-WEARIED Argo slept upon
the water.

No cloud was seen ; on blue and craggy
Ida

The hot noon lay, and on the plain's enamel ;
Cool, in his bed, alone, the swift Scamander.

“ Why should I haste ? ” said young and rosy
Hylas :

“ The seas were rough, and long the way from
Colchis.

Beneath the snow-white awning slumbers Jason,
Pillowed upon his tame Thessalian panther ;
The shields are piled, the listless oars suspended
On the black thwarts, and all the hairy bondsmen
Doze on the benches. They may wait for water,
Till I have bathed in mountain-born Scamander.”

So said, unfilleting his purple chlamys,
And putting down his urn, he stood a moment,
Breathing the faint, warm odor of the blossoms
That spangled thick the lovely Dardan meadows.
Then, stooping lightly, loosened he his buskins,
And felt with shrinking feet the crispy verdure,
Naked, save one light robe that from his shoulder
Hung to his knee, the youthful flush revealing
Of warm, white limbs, half-nerved with coming
manhood,

Yet fair and smooth with tenderness of beauty.
Now to the river's sandy marge advancing,

He dropped the robe, and raised his head exulting
 In the clear sunshine, that with beam embracing
 Held him against Apollo's glowing bosom.
 For sacred to Latona's son is Beauty,
 Sacred is Youth, the joy of youthful feeling.
 A joy indeed, a living joy, was Hylas,
 Whence Jove-begotten Héraclês, the mighty,
 To men though terrible, to him was gentle,
 Smoothing his rugged nature into laughter
 When the boy stole his club, or from his shoulders
 Dragged the huge paws of the Nemæan lion.

The thick, brown locks, tossed backward from his
 forehead,
 Fell soft about his temples ; manhood's blossom
 Not yet had sprouted on his chin, but freshly
 Curved the fair cheek, and full the red lips' part-
 ing,
 Like a loose bow, that just has launched its arrow.
 His large blue eyes, with joy dilate and beamy,
 Were clear as the unshadowed Grecian heaven ;
 Dewy and sleek his dimpled shoulders rounded
 To the white arms and whiter breast between them.
 Downward, the supple lines had less of softness :
 His back was like a god's ; his loins were moulded
 As if some pulse of power began to waken ;
 The springy fulness of his thighs, outswerving,
 Sloped to his knee, and, lightly dropping down-
 ward,
 Drew the curved lines that breathe, in rest, of
 motion.

He saw his glorious limbs reversely mirrored
 In the still wave, and stretched his foot to press it

On the smooth sole that answered at the surface :
 Alas ! the shape dissolved in glimmering fragments.
 Then, timidly at first, he dipped, and catching
 Quick breath, with tingling shudder, as the waters
 Swirled round his thighs, and deeper, slowly
 deeper,

Till on his breast the River's cheek was pillowed,
 And deeper still, till every shoreward ripple
 Talked in his ear, and like a cygnet's bosom
 His white, round shoulder shed the dripping crystal.
 There, as he floated, with a rapturous motion,
 The lucid coolness folding close around him,
 The lily-cradling ripples murmured, "Hylas !"
 He shook from off his ears the hyacinthine
 Curls, that had lain unwet upon the water,
 And still the ripples murmured, "Hylas ! Hylas !"
 He thought : "The voices are but ear-born music.
 Pan dwells not here, and Echo still is calling
 From some high cliff that tops a Thracian valley :
 So long mine ears, on tumbling Hellespontus,
 Have heard the sea waves hammer Argo's fore-
 head,

That I misdeem the fluting of this current
 For some lost nymph —" Again the murmur,
 Hylas !"

And with the sound 'a cold, smooth arm around
 him

Slid like a wave, and down the clear, green dark-
 ness

Glimmered on either side a shining bosom, —
 Glimmered, uprising slow ; and ever closer
 Wound the cold arms, till, climbing to his shoul-
 ders,

Their cheeks lay nestled, while the purple tangles

Their loose hair made, in silken mesh enwound
him.

Their eyes of clear, pale emerald then uplifting,
They kissed his neck with lips of humid coral,
And once again there came a murmur, "Hylas!
O, come with us! O, follow where we wander
Deep down beneath the green, translucent ceiling, —

Where on the sandy bed of old Scamander
With cool white buds we braid our purple tresses,
Lulled by the bubbling waves around us stealing!
Thou fair Greek boy, O, come with us! O, follow
Where thou no more shalt hear Propontis riot,
But by our arms be lapped in endless quiet,
Within the glimmering caves of Ocean hollow!
We have no love; alone, of all the Immortals,
We have no love. O, love us, we who press thee
With faithful arms, though cold, — whose lips caress thee, —

Who hold thy beauty prisoned! Love us, Hylas!"

The boy grew chill to feel their twining pressure
Lock round his limbs, and bear him, vainly striving,
Down from the noonday brightness. "Leave me,
Naiads!

Leave me!" he cried; "the day to me is dearer
Than all your caves deep-sphered in Ocean's quiet.
I am but mortal, seek but mortal pleasure:
I would not change this flexile, warm existence,
Though swept by storms, and shocked by Jove's
dread thunder,

To be a king beneath the dark-green waters."
Still moaned the humid lips, between their kisses,
"We have no love. O, love us, we who love
thee!"

And came in answer, thus, the words of Hylas :
 " My love is mortal. For the Argive maidens
 I keep the kisses which your lips would ravish.
 Unlock your cold white arms, — take from my
 shoulder

The tangled swell of your bewildering tresses.
 Let me return : the wind comes down from Ida,
 And soon the galley, stirring from her slumber,
 Will fret to ride where Pelion's twilight shadow
 Falls o'er the towers of Jason's sea-girt city.
 I am not yours, — I cannot braid the lilies
 In your wet hair, nor on your argent bosoms
 Close my drowsed eyes to hear your rippling voices.
 Hateful to me your sweet, cold, crystal being, —
 Your world of watery quiet. Help, Apollo!
 For I am thine : thy fire, thy beam, thy music,
 Dance in my heart and flood my sense with rap-
 ture :

The joy, the warmth and passion now awaken,
 Promised by thee, but erewhile calmly sleeping.
 O, leave me, Naiads ! loose your chill embraces,
 Or I shall die, for mortal maidens pining."
 But still with unrelenting arms they bound him,
 And still, accordant, flowed their watery voices :
 " We have thee now, — we hold thy beauty pris-
 oned ;

O, come with us beneath the emerald waters !
 We have no love ; we love thee, rosy Hylas.
 O, love us, who shall nevermore release thee :
 Love us, whose milky arms will be thy cradle
 Far down on the untroubled sands of ocean,
 Where now we bear thee, clasped in our embraces."
 And slowly, slowly sank the amorous Naiads ;
 The boy's blue eyes, upturned, looked through the
 water,

Pleading for help ; but Heaven's immortal Archer
 Was swathed in cloud. The ripples hid his fore-
 head,
 And last, the thick, bright curls a moment floated,
 So warm and silky that the stream upbore them,
 Closing reluctant, as he sank forever.

The sunset died behind the crags of Imbros.
 Argo was tugging at her chain ; for freshly
 Blew the swift breeze, and leaped the restless billows.
 The voice of Jason roused the dozing sailors,
 And up the mast was heaved the snowy canvas.
 But mighty Héraclès, the Jove-begotten,
 Unmindful stood, beside the cool Scamander,
 Leaning upon his club. A purple chlamys
 Tossed o'er an urn was all that lay before him :
 And when he called, expectant, " Hylas ! Hylas !"
 The empty echoes made him answer, — " Hylas !"

KUBLEH :

A STORY OF THE ASSYRIAN DESERT.



THE black-eyed children of the Desert
 drove
 Their flocks together at the set of sun.
 The tents were pitched ; the weary
 camels bent
 Their suppliant necks, and knelt upon the sand ;
 The hunters quartered by the kindled fires
 The wild boars of the Tigris they had slain,
 And all the stir and sound of evening ran

Throughout the Shammar camp. The dewy air
 Bore its full burden of confused delight
 Across the flowery plain ; and while, afar,
 The snows of Koordish Mountains in the ray
 Flashed roseate amber, Nimroud's ancient mound
 Rose broad and black against the burning West.
 The shadows deepened, and the stars came out,
 Sparkling in violent ether ; one by one
 Glimmered the ruddy camp-fires on the plain,
 And shapes of steed and horseman moved among
 The dusky tents, with shout and jostling cry,
 And neigh and restless prancing. Children ran
 To hold the thongs, while every rider drove
 His quivering spear in the earth, and by his door
 Tethered the horse he loved. In midst of all
 Stood Shammeriyah, whom they dared not touch,—
 The foal of wondrous Kubleh, to the Shekh
 A dearer wealth than all his Georgian girls.

But when their meal was o'er, — when the red fires
 Blazed brighter, and the dogs no longer bayed, —
 When Shammar hunters with the boys sat down
 To cleanse their bloody knives, came Alimàr,
 The poet of the tribe, whose songs of love
 Are sweeter than Bassora's nightingales, —
 Whose songs of war can fire the Arab blood
 Like war itself: who knows not Alimàr ?
 Then asked the men, " O Poet, sing of Kubleh !"
 And boys laid down the burnished knives and said,
 " Tell us of Kubleh, whom we never saw, —
 Of wondrous Kubleh !" Closer drew the group,
 With eager eyes, about the flickering fire,
 While Alimàr, beneath the Assyrian stars,
 Sang to the listening Arabs :

“ God is great !

O Arabs ! never since Mohammed rode
 The sands of Beder, and by Mecca's gate
 That wingèd steed bestrode, whose mane of fire
 Blazed up the zenith, when, by Allah called,
 He bore the Prophet to the walls of Heaven,
 Was like to Kubleh, Sofuk's wondrous mare :
 Not all the milk-white barbs, whose hoofs dashed
 flame,

In Bagdad's stables, from the marble floor, —
 Who, swathed in purple housings, pranced in state
 The gay bazaars, by great Al-Raschid backed :
 Not the wild charger of Mongolian breed
 That went o'er half the world with Tamerlane :
 Nor yet those flying coursers, long ago
 From Ormuz brought by swarthy Indian grooms
 To Persia's kings, — the foals of sacred mares,
 Sired by the fiery stallions of the sea !

“ Who ever told, in all the Desert Land,
 The many deeds of Kubleh ? Who can tell
 Whence came she ? whence her like shall come
 again ?

O Arabs ! sweet as tales of Scheherazade
 Heard in the camp, when javelin shafts are tried
 On the hot eve of battle, are the words
 That tell the marvels of her history.

“ Far in the Southern sands, the hunters say,
 Did Sofuk find her, by a lonely palm.
 The well had dried ; her fierce, impatient eye
 Glared red and sunken, and her slight young limbs
 Were lean with thirst. He checked his camel's pace,
 And, while it knelt, untied the water-skin,

And when the wild mare drank, she followed him.
Thence none but Sofuk might the saddle gird
Upon her back, or clasp the brazen gear
About her shining head, that brooked no curb
From even him ; for she, alike, was royal.

“ Her form was lighter, in its shifting grace,
Than some impassioned almeĥ’s, when the dance
Unbinds her scarf, and golden anklets gleam,
Through floating drapery, on the buoyant air.
Her light, free head was ever held aloft ;
Between her slender and transparent ears
The silken forelock tossed ; her nostril’s arch,
Thin-blown, in proud and pliant beauty spread
Snuffing the desert winds. Her glossy neck
Curved to the shoulder like an eagle’s wing,
And all her matchless lines of flank and limb
Seemed fashioned from the flying shapes of air.
When sounds of warlike preparation rang
From tent to tent, her keen and restless eye
Shone blood-red as a ruby, and her neigh
Rang wild and sharp above the clash of spears.

“ The tribes of Tigris and the Desert knew her :
Sofuk before the Shammar bands she bore
To meet the dread Jebours, who waited not
To bid her welcome ; and the savage Koord,
Chased from his bold irruption on the plain,
Has seen her hoof-prints in his mountain snow.
Lithe as the dark-eyed Syrian gazelle,
O’er ledge, and chasm, and barren steep amid
The Sinjar hills, she ran the wild ass down.
Through many a battle’s thickest brunt she
stormed,

Reeking with sweat and dust, and fetlock deep
 In curdling gore. When hot and lurid haze
 Stifled the crimson sun, she swept before
 The whirling sand-spout, till her gusty mane
 Flared in its vortex, while the camels lay
 Groaning and helpless on the fiery waste.

“The tribes of Taurus and the Caspian knew her :
 The Georgian chiefs have heard her trumpet neigh
 Before the walls of Tiflis ; pines that grow
 On ancient Caucasus have harbored her,
 Sleeping by Sofuk in their spicy gloom.
 The surf of Trebizond has bathed her flanks,
 When from the shore she saw the white-sailed bark
 That brought him home from Stamboul. Never yet,
 O Arabs ! never yet was like to Kubleh !

“And Sofuk loved her. She was more to him
 Than all his snowy-bosomed odalisques.
 For many years she stood beside his tent,
 The glory of the tribe.

“At last she died, —
 Died, while the fire was yet in all her limbs, —
 Died for the life of Sofuk, whom she loved.
 The base Jebours, — on whom be Allah’s curse ! —
 Came on his path, when far from any camp,
 And would have slain him, but that Kubleh sprang
 Against the javelin points, and bore them down,
 And gained the open Desert. Wounded sore,
 She urged her light limbs into maddening speed,
 And made the wind a laggard. On and on
 The red sand slid beneath her, and behind
 Whirled in a swift and cloudy turbulence,

As when some star of Eblis, downward hurled
By Allah's bolt, sweeps with its burning hair
The waste of darkness. On and on the bleak,
Bare ridges rose before her, came, and passed,
And every flying leap with fresher blood
Her nostril stained, till Sofuk's brow and breast
Were flecked with crimson foam. He would have
turned

To save his treasure, though himself were lost,
But Kubleh fiercely snapped the brazen rein.
At last, when through her spent and quivering
frame

The sharp throes ran, our clustering tents arose,
And with a neigh, whose shrill excess of joy
O'ercame its agony, she stopped and fell.
The Shammar men came round her as she lay,
And Sofuk raised her head, and held it close
Against his breast. Her dull and glazing eye
Met his, and with a shuddering gasp she died.
Then like a child his bursting grief made way.
In passionate tears, and with him all the tribe
Wept for the faithful mare.

“They dug her grave
Amid El-Hather's marbles, where she lies
Buried with ancient kings ; and since that time
Was never seen, and will not be again,
O Arabs ! though the world be doomed to live
As many moons as count the desert sands,
The like of glorious Kubleh. God is great !”

LOVE AND SOLITUDE.

I.



EARTH knew no deeper life since Earth
 began,
 And scarce the Heaven above :
 In the profoundest measure given to
 Man,

We love, we love !

O, in that sound, completion lies

For all imperfect destinies.

It is a pulse of joy, that rings

The marriage-peal of Nature, brings

The lonely heart, the humblest and the least,

To share her royal feast ;

No more an outcast on her sod,

Or at her board a stinted guest,

But now in purple raiment dressed,

And heir to all delight, that she receives of God !

II.

A balmy breath is breathed upon the land,

And through the spirit's inmost cells

It floats and swells,

Till at the touch of its persuading hand

The jealous bolts give way, and every door

Stands wide forevermore.

Not only there, dear love, not only there

Where Love's warm chambers front the morning
 air,

Thy soul may walk, and in the secret bower

Where burns the holiest fire that Heaven lets fall,
And with Ambition, in his blazoned hall,
Hope, in her airy tower !
The heart has other guests than these,
More secret halls, more solemn mysteries.
Dark crypts, beheld of none,
Throne darker powers, that flee the sun,
Chained far below, and heard at intervals
When all is still, and through the trembling walls
Some guilty whisper calls ;
Or, when the storms have blown,
And the house rocks upon its basement stone,
They wring their chains with clamor that appalls
The pale-cheeked lord. To thee
Those awful crypts and corridors are free.
Thou through the darkened hush mayst glide,
White and serene, with unaffrighted breath,
Past the blind Sins, that slumber leaden-eyed
In caves that lead to Death.
Nor I the less, where purer powers control
The perfect temple of thy soul,
And saintly harmonies to me
Breathe from its gates unceasingly,
Its bowery courts and chambers that infold
The chastened gleam of pearl and gold,
Free to the sun and blessed air :
No deeper gloom than starry twilight there !

III.

What is the world of men to us ? We love,
And Love hath his own world. Love hath
Repose in storms and peace in wrath,
Far from the shocks of Time a quiet path,

Another Earth below, another Heaven above.
 Men from their weakness and their sin create
 The iron bonds of State,
 Soldered with wrongs of olden date, —
 The heartless frame, the chance-directed law
 Which grows to them a grand, avenging Fate,
 And fills their darkness with its awe.
 States have no soul. The World's tired brain
 O'er many riddles broods with pain,
 Not hopeless all, but hoping much in vain.
 Those who have never loved may stay,
 And in his files fight out the day ;
 But aliens we, who breathe a separate air
 In regions far away !
 Thou art my law, I thine : the links we wear,
 If not of Freedom, dearer still,
 And binding both in one harmonious will.
 Why should we track the labyrinth of ill
 Before us, — mingle with the fret
 Of jangling natures, till our souls forget
 Their crystal orbits of accordant sound ?
 Why should we walk the common ground,
 Where gloom is born of gloom, and pain
 From pain unfoldeth ever,
 When to the blue air's limitless domain,
 Made ours by right of love, we rise without en-
 deavor ?

IV.

Some voice of wind or sea
 May reach the imbruted slave, and in his ear
 Drop Freedom's mighty secret ; so to me
 Through blindness and through passion came the
 clear

Calm voice of Love, thenceforth to be
The revelation of diviner truth
Than ever touched our sinless youth, —
A power to bid us face Eternity!
But the same whisper that reveals the glory
Of Freedom's brow, makes also known
The bitterness of bondage. We
Will leave this splendid misery,
This hollow joy, whose laugh but hides a groan,
And teach our lives to write a perfect story.

V.

O, somewhere, in the living realms that lie
Between the icy zones of desolation,
Covered by some remote, unconscious sky,
Where God's serene creation
Yet never glassed itself in human eye,
Must be a glorious Valley, hidden
In the safe bosom of the hills that part
The river-veins of some old Continent's heart,
To love like ours a shelter unforbidden!
Some Valley must there be,
Whereto wide wastes of desert sand have kept
The gateway secret, mountain walls
Across the explorer's pathway stepped,
Or mighty woods surrounded like a sea.
Love's voice, unto the chosen ones he calls,
Alike the compass to his freedom is,
And to that Vale, the loadstar of our bliss,
Our hearts shall guide us. Even now
I see the close defiles unfold
Upon a sloping mead that lies below
A mountain black with pines,

O'er which the barren ridges heave their lines,
And high beyond, the snowy ranges old !
Fed by the plenteous mountain rain,
Southward, a blue lake sparkles, whence outflows
A rivulet's silver vein,
Awhile meandering in fair repose,
Then caught by riven cliffs that guard our home,
And flung upon the outer world in foam !
The sky above that still retreat,
Through all the year serene and sweet,
Drops dew that finds the daisy's heart,
And keeps the violet's tender lids apart :
All winds that whistle drearily
Around the naked granite, die
With many a long, melodious sigh
Among the pines ; and if a tempest seek
The summits cold and bleak,
He does but shift the snow from shining peak to
peak.

VI.

Or should this Valley seem
Too deeply buried from the golden sun,
Still may a home be won
Whose breast lies open to his every beam.
Some Island, on the purple plain
Of Polynesian main,
Where never yet the adventurer's prore
Lay rocking near its coral shore :
A tropic mystery, which the enamored Deep
Folds, as a beauty in a charmed sleep.
There lofty palms, of some imperial line,
That never bled their nimble wine,
Crowd all the hills, and out the headlands go

To watch on distant reefs the lazy brine
 Folding its fringe of snow.
 There, when the sun stands high
 Upon the burning summit of the sky,
 All shadows wither : Light alone
 Is in the world : and, pregnant grown
 With teeming life, the trembling island-earth
 And panting sea forebode sweet pains of birth
 Which never come, — their love brings never forth
 The Human Soul they lack alone !

VII.

We to that Island soul and voice will be,
 When (rapturous hour !) the baffling quest is over,
 The boat is wrecked, the ship is blown to sea,
 And underneath the palm-tree's cover
 We bless our God that He hath left us free.
 Then, wandering through the inland dells
 Where sun and dew have built their gorgeous bowers,
 The golden, blue, and crimson flowers
 Will drain in joy their spicy wells,
 The lily toll her alabaster bells,
 And some fine influence, unknown and sweet,
 Precede our happy feet
 Around the Isle, till all the life that dwells
 In leaf and stem shall feel it, and awake,
 And even the pearly-bosomed shells,
 Wet with the foamy kiss of lingering swells,
 Shall rosier beauty at our coming take,
 For Love's dear sake !
 There when, like Aphrodite, Morn
 From the ecstatic waves is born,
 The chieftain Palm, that tops each mountain-crest,
 Shall feel her glory gild his scaly greaves,

And lift his glittering leaves
 Like arms outspread, to take her to his breast.
 Then shall we watch her slowly bend, and fold
 The Island in her arms of gold,
 Breathing away the heavy balms which crept
 All night around the bowers, and lifting up
 Each flower's enamelled cup,
 To drink the sweetness gathered while it slept.
 Yet on our souls a joy more tender
 Shall gently sink, when sunset makes the sky
 One burning sheet of opalescent splendor,
 And on the deep dissolving rainbows lie.
 No whisper shall disturb
 That alchemy superb,
 Whereto our beings every sense surrender.
 O, long and sweet, while sitting side by side,
 Looking across the western sea,
 That dream of Death, that morn of Heaven, shall be ;
 And when the shadows hide
 Each dying flush, upon the quiet tide, —
 Quiet as is our love, —
 We first shall see the stars come out above,
 And after them, the slanting beams that run,
 Based on the sea, far up the shining track
 Of the emblazoned Zodiac,
 A pyramid of light, above the buried sun !

VIII.

There shall our lives to such accordance grow
 As love alone can know ;
 Can never know but there :
 Each within each involved, like Light and Air,
 In endless marriage. Earth will fill
 Her bounteous lap with all we ask of Earth,

Nor ever drought or dearth
 Shrink the rich pulps of vale; and hill.
 Content at last the missing tone to hear
 Through all her summer-chords,
 Which makes their full-strung harmony complete
 In her delighted ear,
 She to our hearts that concord shall repeat.
 Led by the strain, it may be ours to enter
 The secret chamber where she works alone
 With Color, Form, and Tone,
 In human mood, or, sterner grown,
 Takes hold on powers that shake her fiery centre.
 Year after year the Island shall become
 A fairer and serener home,
 And happy children fill our place,
 The future parents of a nobler race,
 To whom the banished Love shall come,
 And fold his weary wings, and find his earthly
 home!

MON-DA-MIN;

OR, THE ROMANCE OF MAIZE.

I.



LONG ere the shores of green America
 Were touched by men of Norse and
 Saxon blood,
 What time the Continent in silence lay,
 A solemn realm of forest and of flood,
 Where Nature wantoned wild in zones immense,
 Unconscious of her own magnificence;

II.

Then to the savage race, who knew no world
Beyond the hunter's lodge, the council-fire,
The clouds of grosser sense were sometimes furled,
And spirits came to answer their desire, —
The spirits of the race, grotesque and shy ;
Exaggerated powers of earth and sky.

III.

For Gods resemble whom they govern : they,
The fathers of the soil, may not outgrow
The children's vision. In that earlier day,
They stooped the race familiarly to know ;
From Heaven's blue prairies they descended then,
And took the shapes and shared the lives of men.

IV.

A chief there was, who in the frequent stress
Of want, yet in contentment, lived his days ;
His lodge was built within the wilderness
Of Huron, clasping those transparent bays,
Those deeps of unimagined crystal, where
The bark canoe seems hung in middle air.

V.

There, from the lake and from the uncertain chase
With patient heart his sustenance he drew ;
And he was glad to see, in that wild place,
The sons and daughters that around him grew,
Although more scant they made his scanty store,
And in the winter moons his need was sore.

VI.

X The eldest was a boy, a silent lad,
Who wore a look of wisdom from his birth ;
Such beauty, both of form and face, he had,
As until then was never known on earth :
And so he was (his soul so bright and far !)
Osséo named, — Son of the Evening Star.

VII.

This boy by nature was companionless :
His soul drew nurture only when it sucked
The savage dugs of Fable ; he could guess
The knowledge other minds but slowly plucked
From out the heart of things ; to him, as well
As to his Gods, all things were possible.

VIII.

The heroes of that shapeless faith of his
Took life from him : when gusts of powdery snow
Whirled round the lodge, he saw Paup-puckewiss
Floundering amid the drifts, and he would go
Climbing the hills, while sunset faded wan,
To seek the feathers of the Rosy Swan.

IX.

He knew the lord of serpent and of beast,
The crafty Incarnation of the North ;
He knew, when airs grew warm and buds increased,
The sky was pierced, the Summer issued forth,
And when a cloud concealed some mountain's crest,
The Bird of Thunder brooded on his nest.

X.

Through Huron's mists he saw the enchanted boat
Of old Mishosha to his island go,
And oft he watched, if on the waves might float,
As once, the Fiery Plume of Wassamo ;
And when the moonrise flooded coast and bay,
He climbed the headland, stretching far away ;

XI.

For there — so ran the legend — nightly came
The small Puck-wudjees, ignorant of harm :
The friends of Man, in many a sportive game
The nimble elves consoled them for the charm
Which kept them exiled from their homes afar, —
The silver lodges of a twilight star.

XII.

So grew Osséo, as a lonely pine,
That knows the secret of the wandering breeze,
And ever sings its canticles divine,
Uncomprehended by the other trees :
And now the time drew nigh, when he began
The solemn fast whose issue proves the man.

XIII.

His father built a lodge the wood within,
Where he the appointed space should duly bide,
Till such propitious time as he had been
By faith prepared, by fasting purified,
And in mysterious dreams allowed to see
What God the guardian of his life would be.

XIV.

The anxious crisis of the Spring was past,
 And warmth was master o'er the lingering cold.
 The alder's catkins dropped; the maple cast
 His crimson bloom, the willow's downy gold
 Blew wide, and softer than a squirrel's ear
 The white-oak's foxy leaves began appear.

XV.

There was a motion in the soil. A sound
 Lighter than falling seeds, shook out of flowers,
 Exhaled where dead leaves, sodden on the ground,
 Repressed the eager grass; and there for hours
 Osséo lay, and vainly strove to bring
 Into his mind the miracle of Spring.

XVI.

The wood-birds knew it, and their voices rang
 Around his lodge; with many a dart and whir
 Of saucy joy, the shrewish catbird sang
 Full-throated, and he heard the kingfisher,
 Who from his God escaped with ruffled crest,
 And the white medal hanging on his breast.

XVII.

The aquilegia sprinkled on the rocks
 A scarlet rain; the yellow violet
 Sat in the chariot of its leaves; the phlox
 Held spikes of purple flame in meadows wet,
 And all the streams with vernal-scented reed
 Were fringed, and streaky bells of miskodeed.

XVIII.

The boy went musing : What are these, that burst
 The sod and grow, without the aid of man ?
 What father brought them food ? what mother
 nursed
 Them in her earthy lodge, till Spring began ?
 They cannot speak ; they move but with the air ;
 Yet souls of evil or of good they bear.

XIX.

How are they made, that some with wholesome juice
 Delight the tongue, and some are charged with
 death ?
 If spirits them inhabit, they can loose
 Their shape sometimes, and talk with human
 breath :
 Would that in dreams one such would come to me,
 And thence my teacher and my guardian be !

XX.

So, when more languid with his fast, the boy
 Kept to his lodge, he pondered much thereon,
 And other memories gave his mind employ ;
 Memories of winters when the moose were gone, —
 When tales of Manabozo failed to melt
 The hunger-pang his pining brothers felt.

XXI.

He thought : The Mighty Spirit knows all things,
 Is master over all. Could He not choose
 Design his children food to ease the stings
 Of hunger, when the lake and wood refuse ?
 If He will bless me with the knowledge, I
 Will for my brothers fast until I die.

XXII.

Four days were sped since he had tasted meat ;
Too faint he was to wander any more,
When from the open sky, that, blue and sweet,
Looked in upon him through the lodge's door,
With quiet gladness he beheld a fair
Celestial Shape descending through the air.

XXIII.

He fell serenely, as a wingèd seed
Detached in summer from the maple bough ;
His glittering clothes unruffled by the speed,
The tufted plumes unshaken on his brow :
Bright, wonderful, he came without a sound,
And like a burst of sunshine struck the ground.

XXIV.

So light he stood, so tall and straight of limb,
So fair the heavenly freshness of his face,
With beating heart Osséo looked at him,
For now a God had visited the place.
More brave a God his dreams had never seen :
The stranger's garments were a shining green,

XXV.

Sheathing his limbs in many a stately fold,
That, parting on his breast, allowed the eye
To note beneath, his vest of scaly gold,
Whereon the drops of slaughter, scarcely dry,
Disclosed their blushing stain : his shoulders fair
Gave to the wind long tufts of silky hair.

XXVI.

The plummy crest, that high and beautiful
Above his head its branching tassels hung,
Shook down a golden dust, while, fixing full
His eyes upon the boy, he loosed his tongue.
Deep in his soul Osséo did rejoice
To hear the reedy music of his voice :

XXVII.

“By the Great Spirit I am hither sent,
He knows the wishes whereupon you feed, —
The soul, that, on your brothers’ good intent,
Would sink ambition to relieve their need :
This thing is grateful to the Master’s eye,
Nor will His wisdom what you seek deny.

XXVIII.

“But blessings are not free ; they do not fall
In listless hands ; by toil the soul must prove
Its steadfast purpose master over all,
Before their wings in pomp of coming move :
Here, wrestling with me, must you overcome,
In me, the secret, — else, my lips are dumb.”

XXIX.

No match for his, Osséo’s limbs appeared,
Weak with the fast ; and yet in soul he grew
Composed and resolute, by accents cheered,
That spake in light what he but darkly knew.
He rose, unto the issue nerved ; he sent
Into his arms the hope of the event.

XXX.

The shining stranger wrestled long and hard,
When, disengaging weary limbs, he said :
“ It is enough ; with no unkind regard
The Master’s eye your toil hath visited.
He bids me cease ; to-day let strife remain ;
But on the morrow I will come again.”

XXXI.

And on the morrow came he as before,
Dropping serenely down the deep-blue air :
More weak and languid was the boy, yet more
Courageous he, that crowning test to bear.
His soul so wrought in every fainting limb,
It seemed the cruel fast had strengthened him.

XXXII.

Again they grappled, and their sinews wrung
In desperate emulation ; and again
Came words of comfort from the stranger’s tongue
When they had ceased. He scaled the heavenly
plain,
His tall, bright stature lessening as he rose,
Till lost amid the infinite repose.

XXXIII.

On the third day descending as before,
His raiment’s gleam surprised the silent sky ;
And weaker still the poor boy felt, yet more
Courageous he, and resolute to die,
So he might first the promised good embrace,
And leave a blessing unto all his race.

XXXIV.

This time with intertwining limbs they strove ;
 The God's green mantle shook in every fold,
 And o'er Osséo's heated forehead drove
 His silky hair, his tassel's dusty gold,
 Till, spent and breathless, he at last forbore,
 And sat to rest beside the lodge's door.

XXXV.

"My friend," he said, "the issue now is plain ;
 Who wrestles in his soul must victor be ;
 Who bids his life in payment shall attain
 The end he seeks, — and you will vanquish me.
 Then, these commands fulfilling, you shall win
 What the Great Spirit gives in Mon-da-Min.

XXXVI.

"When I am dead, strip off this green array,
 And pluck the tassels from my shrivelled hair ;
 Then bury me where summer rains shall play
 Above my breast, and sunshine linger there.
 Remove the matted sod ; for I would have
 The earth lie lightly, softly on my grave.

XXXVII.

"And tend the place, lest any noxious weed
 Through the sweet soil should strike its bitter root ;
 Nor let the blossoms of the forest breed,
 Nor the wild grass in green luxuriance shoot ;
 But when the earth is dry and blistered, fold
 Thereon the fresh and dainty-smelling mould.

XXXVIII.

“The clamoring crow, the blackbird swarms that
 make
 The meadow trees their hive, must come not near;
 Scare thence all hurtful things; nor quite forsake
 Your careful watch until the woods appear
 With crimson blotches deeply dashed and crossed,—
 Sign of the fatal pestilence of Frost.

XXXIX.

“This done, the secret, into knowledge grown,
 Is yours forevermore.” With that, he took
 The yielding air. Osséo, left alone,
 Followed his flight with hope-enraptured look.
 The pains of hunger fled; a happy flame
 Danced in his heart until the trial came.

XL.

It happened so, as Mon-da-Min foretold:
 Osséo's soul, at every wreathing twist
 Of palpitating muscle, grew more bold,
 And from the limbs of his antagonist
 Celestial vigor to his own he drew,
 Till with one mighty heave he overthrew.

XLI.

Then from the body, beautiful and cold,
 He stripped the shining clothes; but on his breast
 He left the vest, engrained with blushing gold,
 And covered him in decent burial-rest.
 At sunset to his father's lodge he passed,
 And soothed with meat the anguish of his fast.

XLII.

Naught did he speak of all that he had done
 But day by day in secrecy he sought
 An opening in the forest, where the sun
 Warmed the new grave: so tenderly he wrought,
 So lightly heaped the mould, so carefully
 Kept all the place from choking herbage free,

XLIII.

That in a little while a folded plume
 Pushed timidly the covering soil aside,
 And, fed by fattening rains, took broader room,
 Until it grew a stalk, and rustled wide
 Its leafy garments, lifting in the air
 Its tasselled top, and knots of silky hair.

XLIV.

Osséo marvelled to behold his friend
 In this fair plant; the secret of the Spring
 Was his at length; and till the Summer's end
 He guarded him from every harmful thing.
 He scared the cloud of blackbirds, wheeling low;
 His arrow pierced the reconnoitring crow.

XLV.

Now came the brilliant mornings, kindling all
 The woody hills with pinnacles of fire;
 The gum's ensanguined leaves began to fall,
 The buckeye blazed in prodigal attire,
 And frosty vapors left the lake at night
 To string the prairie grass with spangles white.

XLVI.

One day, from long and unsuccessful chase
The chief returned. Osséo through the wood
In silence led him to the guarded place,
Where now the plant in golden ripeness stood.
“Behold, my father!” he exclaimed, “our friend,
Whom the Great Spirit unto me did send,

XLVII.

“Then, when I fasted, and my prayer He knew,
That He would save my brothers from their want;
For this, His messenger I overthrew,
And from his grave was born this glorious plant.
'T is Mon-da-Min : his sheathing husks enclose
Food for my brothers in the time of snows.

XLVIII.

“I leave you now, my father ! Here befits
Me longer not to dwell. My pathway lies
To where the West-wind on the mountain sits,
And the Red Swan beyond the sunset flies :
There may superior wisdom be in store.”
And so he went, and he returned no more.

XLIX.

But Mon-da-Min remained, and still remains ;
His children cover all the boundless land,
And the warm sun and frequent mellow rains
Shape the tall stalks and make the leaves expand.
A mighty army they have grown : he drills
Their green battalions on the summer hills.

L.

And when the silky hair hangs crisp and dead,
 Then leave their rustling ranks the tasselled peers,
 In broad encampment pitch their tents instead,
 And garner up the ripe autumnal ears :
 The annual storehouse of a nation's need,
 From whose abundance all the world may feed.

THE SOLDIER AND THE PARD.



SECOND deluge ! Well, — no matter :
 here,

At least, is better shelter than the lean,
 Sharp-elbowed oaks, — a dismal com-
 pany !

That stood around us in the mountain road
 When that cursed axle broke : a roof of thatch,
 A fire of withered boughs, and best of all,
 This ruddy wine of Languedoc, that warms
 One through and through, from heart to finger-
 ends.

No better quarters for a stormy night
 A soldier, like myself, could ask ; and since
 The rough Cevennes refuse to let us forth,
 Why, fellow-travellers, if so you will,
 I'll tell the story cut so rudely short
 When both fore-wheels broke from the diligence,
 Stocked in the rut, and pitched us all together :
 I said, we fought beside the Pyramids ;
 And somehow, from the glow of this good wine,
 And from the gloomy rain, that shuts one in

With his own self, — a sorry mate sometimes! —
The scene comes back like life. As then, I feel
The sun, and breathe the hot Egyptian air,
Hear Kleber, see the sabre of Dessaix
Flash at the column's front, and in the midst
Napoleon, upon his Barbary horse,
Calm, swarthy-browed, and wiser than the Sphinx
Whose granite lips guard Egypt's mystery.
Ha! what a rout! our cannon bellowed round
The Pyramids: the Mamelukes closed in,
And hand to hand like devils did we fight,
Rolled towards Sakkara in the smoke and sand.

For days we followed up the Nile. We pitched
Our tents in Memphis, pitched them on the site
Of Antinoë, and beside the cliffs
Of Aboufayda. Then we came anon
On Kenneh, ere the sorely-frightened Bey
Had time to pack his harem: nay, we took
His camels, not his wives: and so, from day
To day, past wrecks of temples half submerged
In sandy inundation, till we saw
Old noseless Memnon sitting on the plain,
Both hands upon his knees, and in the east
Karnak's propylon and its pillared court.
The sphinxes wondered — such as had a face —
To see us stumbling down their avenues;
But we kept silent. One may whistle round
Your Roman temples here at Nismes, or dance
Upon the Pont du Gard; — but, take my word,
Egyptian ruins are a serious thing:
You would not dare let fly a joke beside
The maimed colossi, though your very feet
Might catch between some mummied Pharaoh's
 ribs.

Dessaix was bent on chasing Mamelukes,
 And so we rummaged tomb and catacomb,
 Clambered the hills and watched the Desert's rim
 For sight of horse. One day my company
 (I was but ensign then) found far within
 The sands, a two-days' journey from the Nile,
 A round oasis, like a jewel set.

It was a grove of date-trees, clustering close
 About a tiny spring, whose overflow
 Trickled beyond their shade a little space,
 And the insatiate Desert licked it up.
 The fiery ride, the glare of afternoon
 Had burned our faces, so we stopped to feel
 The coolness and the shadow, like a bath
 Of pure ambrosial lymph, receive our limbs
 And sweeten every sense. Drowsed by the soft,
 Delicious greenness and repose, I crept
 Into a balmy nest of yielding shrubs,
 And floated off to slumber on a cloud
 Of rapturous sensation.

When I woke,
 So deep had been the oblivion of that sleep,
 That Adam, when he woke in Paradise,
 Was not more blank of knowledge; he had felt
 As heedlessly, the silence and the shade;
 As ignorantly had raised his eyes and seen —
 As, for a moment, I — what then I saw
 With terror, freezing limb and voice like death,
 When the slow sense, supplying one lost link,
 Ran with electric fleetness through the chain
 And showed me what I was, — no miracle,
 But lost and left alone amid the waste,
 Fronting a deadly Pard, that kept great eyes

Fixed steadily on mine. I could not move :
 My heart beat slow and hard : I sat and gazed,
 Without a wink, upon those jasper orbs,
 Noting the while, with horrible detail,
 Whereto my fascinated sight was bound,
 Their tawny brilliance, and the spotted fell
 That wrinkled round them, smoothly sloping back
 And curving to the short and tufted ears.
 I felt — and with a sort of fearful joy —
 The beauty of the creature : 't was a pard,
 Not such as one of those they show you caged
 In Paris, — lean and scurvy beasts enough !
 No : but a desert pard, superb and proud,
 That would have died behind the cruel bars.

I think the creature had not looked on man,
 For, as my brain grew cooler, I could see
 Small sign of fierceness in her eyes, but chief,
 Surprise and wonder. More and more entranced,
 Her savage beauty warmed away the chill
 Of deathlike terror at my heart : I stared
 With kindling admiration, and there came
 A gradual softness o'er the flinty light
 Within her eyes ; a shadow crept around
 Their yellow disks, and something like a dawn
 Of recognition of superior will,
 Of brute affection, sympathy enslaved
 By higher nature, then informed her face.
 Thrilling in every nerve, I stretched my hand, —
 She silent, moveless, — touched her velvet head,
 And with a warm, sweet shiver in my blood,
 Stroked down the ruffled hairs. She did not start ;
 But, in a moment's lapse, drew up one paw
 And moved a step, — another, — till her breath

X Came hot upon my face. She stopped : she rolled
 A deep-voiced note of pleasure and of love,
 And gathering up her spotted length, lay down,
 Her head upon my lap, and forward thrust
 One heavy-moulded paw across my knees,
 The glittering talons sheathing tenderly.
 Thus we, in that oasis all alone,
 Sat when the sun went down : the Pard and I,
 Caressing and caressed : and more of love
 And more of confidence between us came,
 I grateful for my safety, she alive
 With the dumb pleasure of companionship,
 Which touched with instincts of humanity
 Her brutish nature. When I slept, at last,
 X My arm was on her neck.

The morrow brought

No rupture of the bond between us twain.
 The creature loved me ; she would bounding come,
 Cat-like, to rub her great, smooth, yellow head
 Against my knee, or with rough tongue would
 lick
 The hand that stroked the velvet of her hide.
 How beautiful she was ! how lithe and free
 The undulating motions of her frame !
 How shone, like isles of tawny gold, her spots,
 Mapped on the creamy white ! And when she
 walked,
 No princess, with the crown about her brows,
 Looked so superbly royal. Ah, my friends,
 Smile as you may, but I would give this life
 With its fantastic pleasures — ay, even that
 One leads in Paris — to be back again
 In the red Desert with my splendid Pard.

That grove of date-trees was our home, our world,
A star of verdure in a sky of sand.

Without the feathery fringes of its shade
The naked Desert ran, its burning round
Sharp as a sword : the naked sky above,
Awful in its immensity, not shone
There only, where the sun supremely flamed,
But all its deep-blue walls were penetrant
With dazzling light. God reigned in Heaven and
Earth,

An Everlasting Presence, and his care
Fed us, alike his children. From the trees
That shook down pulpy dates, and from the spring,
The quiet author of that happy grove,
My wants were sated ; and when midnight came,
Then would the Pard steal softly from my side,
Take the unmeasured sand with flying leaps
And vanish in the dusk, returning soon
With a gazelle's light carcass in her jaws.
So passed the days, and each the other taught
Our simple language. She would come at call
Of the pet name I gave her, bound and sport
When so I bade, and she could read my face
Through all its changing moods, with better skill
Than many a Christian comrade. Pard and beast,
Though you may say she was, she had a soul.

But Sin will find the way to Paradise.
Erelong the sense of isolation fed
My mind with restless fancies. I began
To miss the life of camp, the march, the fight,
The soldier's emulation : youthful blood
Ran in my veins : the silence lost its charm,
And when the morning sunrise lighted up
The threshold of the Desert, I would gaze

With looks of bitter longing o'er the sand.

X At last, I filled my soldier's sash with dates,
 Drank deeply of the spring, and while the Pard
 Roamed in the starlight for her forage, took
 A westward course. The grove already lay
 A dusky speck — no more — when through the
 night

Came the forsaken creature's eager cry.

Into a sandy pit I crept, and heard

Her bounding on my track until she rolled
 Down from the brink upon me. Then with cries
 Of joy and of distress, the touching proof
 Of the poor beast's affection, did she strive
 To lift me — Pardon, friends! these foolish eyes
 Must have their will: and had you seen her then,
 In her mad gambols, as we homeward went,
 Your hearts had softened too.

But I, possessed

By some vile devil of mistrust, became
 More jealous and impatient. In my heart
 I cursed the grove, and with suspicions wronged
 The noble Pard. She keeps me here, I thought,
 Deceived with false caresses, as a cat
 Toys with the trembling mouse she straight de-
 vours.

Will she so gently fawn about my feet,
 When the gazelles are gone? Will she crunch
 dates,

And drink the spring, whose only drink is blood?

Am I to ruin flattered, and by whom? —

Not even a man, a wily beast of prey.

Thus did the Devil whisper in mine ear,

Till those black thoughts were rooted in my heart
 And made me cruel. So it chanced one day,

That as I watched a flock of birds, that wheeled,
 And dipped, and circled in the air, the Pard,
 Moved by a freak of fond solicitude
 To win my notice, closed her careful fangs
 About my knee. Scarce knowing what I did,
 In the blind impulse of suspicious fear,
 I plunged, full home, my dagger in her neck.
 God! could I but recall that blow! She loosed
 Her hold, as softly as a lover quits
 His mistress' lips, and with a single groan,
 Full of reproach and sorrow, sank and died.
 What had I done! Sure never on this earth
 Did sharper grief so base a deed requite.
 Its murderous fury gone, my heart was racked
 With pangs of wild contrition, spent itself
 In cries and tears, the while I called on God
 To curse me for my sin. There lay the Pard,
 Her splendid eyes all film, her blazoned fell
 Smirched with her blood; and I, her murderer,
 Less than a beast, had thus repaid her love.

Ah, friends! with all this guilty memory
 My heart is sore: and little now remains
 To tell you, but that afterwards — how long,
 I could not know — our soldiers picked me up,
 Wandering about the Desert, wild with grief
 And sobbing like a child. My nerves have grown
 To steel, in many battles; I can step
 Without a shudder through the heaps of slain;
 But never, never, till the day I die,
 Prevent a woman's weakness when I think
 Upon my desert Pard: and if a man
 Deny this truth she taught me, to his face
 I say he lies: a beast may have a soul.

ARIEL IN THE CLOVEN PINE.



NOW the frosty stars are gone :
 I have watched them, one by one,
 Fading on the shores of Dawn.
 Round and full the glorious sun
 Walks with level step the spray,
 Through his vestibule of Day,
 While the wolves that late did howl
 Slink to dens and coverts foul,
 Guarded by the demon owl,
 Who, last night, with mocking croon,
 Wheeled athwart the chilly moon,
 And with eyes that blankly glared
 On my direful torment stared.

The lark is flickering in the light ;
 Still the nightingale doth sing ;—
 All the isle, alive with Spring,
 Lies, a jewel of delight,
 On the blue sea's heaving breast :
 Not a breath from out the West,
 But some balmy smell doth bring
 From the sprouting myrtle buds,
 Or from meadowy vales that lie
 Like a green inverted sky,
 Which the yellow cowslip stars,
 And the bloomy almond woods,
 Cloud-like, cross with roseate bars.
 All is life that I can spy,
 To the farthest sea and sky,

And my own the only pain
Within this ring of Tyrrhene main.

In the gnarled and cloven Pine
Where that hell-born hag did chain me,
All this orb of cloudless shine,
All this youth in Nature's veins
Tingling with the season's wine,
With a sharper torment pain me.
Pansies in soft April rains
Fill their stalks with honeyed sap
Drawn from Earth's prolific lap;
But the sluggish blood she brings
To the tough Pine's hundred rings,
Closer locks their cruel hold,
Closer draws the scaly bark
Round the crevice, damp and cold,
Where my useless wings I fold, —
Sealing me in iron dark.

By this coarse and alien state
Is my dainty essence wronged;
Finer senses that belonged
To my freedom, chafe at Fate,
Till the happier elves I hate,
Who in moonlight dances turn
Underneath the palmy fern,
Or in light and twinkling bands
Follow on with linkèd hands
To the Ocean's yellow sands.

Primrose-eyes each morning ope
In their cool, deep beds of grass;
Violets make the airs that pass
Telltale of their fragrant slope.

I can see them where they spring
Never brushed by fairy wing.
All those corners I can spy
In the island's solitude,
Where the dew is never dry,
Nor the miser bees intrude.
Cups of rarest hue are there,
Full of perfumed wine undrained, —
Mushroom banquets, ne'er profaned,
Canopied by maiden-hair.
X Pearls I see upon the sands,
Never touched by other hands,
And the rainbow bubbles shine
On the ridged and frothy brine,
Tenantless of voyager
Till they burst in vacant air.
O, the songs that sung might be,
And the mazy dances woven,
Had that witch ne'er crossed the sea
And the Pine been never cloven !

Many years my direst pain
Has made the wave-rocked isle complain.
Winds, that, from the Cyclades
Came, to blow in wanton riot
Round its shore's enchanted quiet,
Bore my wailings on the seas ;
Sorrowing birds in Autumn went
Through the world with my lament.
Still the bitter fate is mine,
All delight unshared to see,
Smarting in the cloven Pine,
While I wait the tardy axe
Which, perchance, shall set me free
From the damned Witch Sycorax.

THE SONG OF THE CAMP.



IVE us a song!" the soldiers cried,
 The outer trenches guarding,
 When the heated guns of the camps allied
 Grew weary of bombarding.

The dark Redan, in silent scoff,
 Lay, grim and threatening, under;
 And the tawny mound of the Malakoff
 No longer belched its thunder.

There was a pause. A guardsman said:
 "We storm the forts to-morrow;
 Sing while we may, another day
 Will bring enough of sorrow."

They lay along the battery's side,
 Below the smoking cannon:
 Brave hearts, from Severn and from Clyde,
 And from the banks of Shannon.

They sang of love, and not of fame;
 Forgot was Britain's glory:
 Each heart recalled a different name,
 But all sang "Annie Lawrie."

Voice after voice caught up the song,
 Until its tender passion
 Rose like an anthem, rich and strong, —
 Their battle-eve confession.

Dear girl, her name he dared not speak,
 But, as the song grew louder,
 Something upon the soldier's cheek
 Washed off the stains of powder.

Beyond the darkening ocean burned
 The bloody sunset's embers,
 While the Crimean valleys learned
 How English love remembers.

And once again a fire of hell
 Rained on the Russian quarters,
 With scream of shot, and burst of shell,
 And bellowing of the mortars!

And Irish Nora's eyes are dim
 For a singer, dumb and gory;
 And English Mary mourns for him
 Who sang of "Annie Lawrie."

Sleep, soldiers! still in honored rest
 Your truth and valor wearing:
 The bravest are the tenderest, —
 The loving are the daring. X

ICARUS.

I.



O TRIUMPHE! Lo, thy certain art,
 My crafty sire, releases us at length!
 False Minos now may knit his baffled
 brows,

And in the labyrinth by thee devised
 His brutish horns in angry search may toss
 The Minotaur, — but thou and I are free!
 See where it lies, one dark spot on the breast
 Of plains far-shining in the long-lost day,
 Thy glory and our prison! Either hand
 Crete, with her hoary mountains, olive-clad
 In twinkling silver, 'twixt the vineyard rows,
 Divides the glimmering seas. On Ida's top
 The sun, discovering first an earthly throne,
 Sits down in splendor: lucent vapors rise
 From folded glens among the awaking hills,
 Expand their hovering films, and touch, and spread
 In airy planes beneath us, hearths of air
 Whereon the Morning burns her hundred fires.

II.

Take thou thy way between the cloud and wave,
 O Dædalus, my father, steering forth
 To friendly Samos, or the Carian shore!
 But me the spaces of the upper heaven
 Attract, the height, the freedom, and the joy.
 For now, from that dark treachery escaped,
 And tasting power which was the lust of youth,
 Whene'er the white blades of the sea-gull's wings
 Flashed round the headland, or the barbèd files
 Of cranes returning clanged across the sky,
 No half-way flight, no errand incomplete
 I purpose. Not, as once in dreams, with pain
 I mount, with fear and huge exertion hold
 Myself a moment, ere the sickening fall
 Breaks in the shock of waking. Launched, at last,
 Uplift on powerful wings, I veer and float

Past sunlit isles of cloud, that dot with light
 The boundless archipelago of sky.
 I fan the airy silence till it starts
 In rustling whispers, swallowed up as soon ;
 I warm the chilly ether with my breath ;
 I with the beating of my heart make glad
 The desert blue. Have I not raised myself
 Unto this height, and shall I cease to soar ?
 The curious eagles wheel about my path :
 With sharp and questioning eyes they stare at me,
 With harsh, impatient screams they menace me,
 Who, with these vans of cunning workmanship
 Broad-spread, adventure on their high domain, —
 Now mine, as well. Henceforth, ye clamorous
 birds,

I claim the azure empire of the air !
 Henceforth I breast the current of the morn,
 Between her crimson shores : a star, henceforth,
 Upon the crawling dwellers of the earth
 My forehead shines. The steam of sacred blood,
 The smoke of burning flesh on altars laid,
 Fumes of the temple-wine, and sprinkled myrrh,
 Shall reach my palate ere they reach the Gods.

III.

Nay, am not I a God ? What other wing,
 If not a God's, could in the rounded sky
 Hang thus in solitary poise ? What need,
 Ye proud Immortals, that my balanced plumes
 Should grow, like yonder eagle's, from the nest ?
 It may be, ere my crafty father's line
 Sprang from Erectheus, some artificer,
 Who found you roaming wingless on the hills,

Naked, asserting godship in the dearth
 Of loftier claimants, fashioned you the same.
 Thence did you seize Olympus; thence your pride
 Compelled the race of men, your slaves, to tear
 The temple from the mountain's marble womb,
 To carve you shapes more beautiful than they,
 To sate your idle nostrils with the reek
 Of gums and spices, heaped on jewelled gold.

IV.

Lo, where Hyperion, through the glowing air
 Approaching, drives! Fresh from his banquet-
 meats,
 Flushed with Olympian nectar, angrily
 He guides his fourfold span of furious steeds,
 Convoyed by that bold Hour whose ardent torch
 Burns up the dew, toward the narrow beach,
 This long, projecting spit of cloudy gold
 Whereon I wait to greet him when he comes.
 Think not I fear thine anger: this day, thou,
 Lord of the silver bow, shalt bring a guest
 To sit in presence of the equal Gods
 In your high hall: wheel but thy chariot near,
 That I may mount beside thee!

—— What is this?

I hear the crackling hiss of singèd plumes!
 The stench of burning feathers stifles me!
 My loins are stung with drops of molten wax! —
 Ai! ai! my ruined vans! — I fall! I die!

Ere the blue noon o'erspanned the bluer strait
 Which parts Icaria from Samos, fell,
 Amid the silent wonder of the air,

Fell with a shock that startled the still wave,
 A shrivelled wreck of crisp, entangled plumes,
 A head whence eagles' beaks had plucked the eyes,
 And clots of wax, black limbs by eagles torn
 In falling: and a circling eagle screamed
 Around that floating horror of the sea
 Derision, and above Hyperion shone.

THE BATH.



FF, fetters of the falser life, —
 Weeds, that conceal the statue's form!
 This silent world with truth is rife,
 This wooing air is warm.

Now fall the thin disguises, planned
 For men too weak to walk unblamed:
 Naked beside the sea I stand, —
 Naked, and not ashamed.

Where yonder dancing billows dip,
 Far-off, to ocean's misty verge,
 Ploughs Morning, like a full-sailed ship,
 The Orient's cloudy surge.

With spray of scarlet fire before
 The ruffled gold that round her dies,
 She sails above the sleeping shore,
 Across the waking skies.

The dewy beach beneath her glows ;
A pencilled beam, the lighthouse burns :
Full-breathed, the fragrant sea-wind blows, —
Life to the world returns !

I stand, a spirit newly-born,
White-limbed and pure, and strong, and fair ;
The first-begotten son of Morn,
The nursling of the air !

There, in a heap, the masks of Earth,
The cares, the sins, the griefs, are thrown :
Complete, as through diviner birth,
I walk the sands alone.

With downy hands the winds caress,
With frothy lips the amorous sea,
As welcoming the nakedness
Of vanished gods, in me.

Along the ridged and sloping sand,
Where headlands clasp the crescent cove,
A shining spirit of the land,
A snowy shape, I move :

Or, plunged in hollow-rolling brine,
In emerald cradles rocked and swung,
The sceptre of the sea is mine,
And mine his endless song.

For Earth with primal dew is wet,
Her long-lost child to rebaptize ;
Her fresh, immortal Edens yet
Their Adam recognize.

Her ancient freedom is his fee ;
 Her ancient beauty is his dower :
 She bares her ample breasts, that he
 May suck the milk of power.

Press on, ye hounds of life, that lurk
 So close, to seize your harried prey ;
 Ye fiends of Custom, Gold, and Work, —
 I hear your distant bay !

And, like the Arab, when he bears
 To the insulted camel's path
 His garment, which the camel tears,
 And straight forgets his wrath ;

So, yonder badges of your sway,
 Life's paltry husks, to you I give :
 Fall on, and in your blindness say :
 We hold the fugitive !

But leave to me this brief escape
 To simple manhood, pure and free, —
 A child of God, in God's own shape,
 Between the land and sea !

THE FOUNTAIN OF TREVI.



THE Coliseum lifts at night
 Its broken cells more proudly far
 Than in the noonday's naked light,
 For every rent enshrines a star :

On Cæsar's hill the royal Lar
Presides within his mansion old :
Decay and Death no longer mar
The moon's atoning mist of gold.

Still lingering near the shrines renewed,
We sadly, fondly, look our last ;
Each trace concealed of spoilage rude
From old or late iconoclast,
Till, Trajan's whispering forum passed,
We hear the waters, showering bright,
Of Trevi's ancient fountain, cast
Their woven music on the night.

The Genius of the Tiber nods
Benign, above his tilted urn :
Kneel down and drink ! the beckoning gods
This last libation will not spurn.
Drink, and the old enchantment learn
That hovers yet o'er Trevi's foam, —
The promise of a sure return,
Fresh footsteps in the dust of Rome !

Kneel down and drink ! the golden days
Here lived and dreamed, shall dawn again :
Albano's hill, through purple haze,
Again shall crown the Latin plain.
Whatever stains of Time remain,
Left by the years that intervene,
Lo ! Trevi's fount shall toss its rain
To wash the pilgrim's forehead clean.

Drink, and depart ! for Life is just :
She gives to Faith a master-key

To ope the gate of dreams august,
 And take from joys in memory
 The certainty of joys to be :
 And Trevi's basins shall be bare
 Ere we again shall fail to see
 Their silver in the Roman air.

MY MISSION.



VERY spirit has its mission, say the
 transcendental crew :
 " This is mine," they cry ; " Eureka ! this
 the purpose I pursue ;
 For, behold, a god hath called me, and his service
 I shall do !

" Brother, seek thy calling likewise, thou wert des-
 tined for the same ;
 Sloth is sin, and toil is worship, and the soul
 demands an aim :
 Who neglects the ordination, he shall not escape
 the blame."

O my ears are dinned and wearied with the clatter
 of the school :
 Life to them is geometric, and they act by line and
 rule —
 If there be no other wisdom, better far to be a
 fool !

Better far the honest nature, in its narrow path
content,
Taking, with a child's acceptance, whatsoever may
be sent,
Than the introverted vision, seeing Self pre-emi-
nent.

For the spirit's proper freedom by itself may be
destroyed,
Wasting, like the young Narcissus, o'er its image
in the void :
Even virtue is not virtue, when too consciously
enjoyed.

I am sick of canting prophets, self-elected kings
that reign
Over herds of silly subjects, of their new allegiance
vain :
Preaching labor, preaching duty, preaching love
with lips profane.

With the holiest things they tamper, and the noblest
they degrade, —
Making Life an institution, making Destiny a
trade ;
But the honest vice is better than the saintship
they parade.

Native goodness is unconscious, asks not to be
recognized ;
But its baser affectation is a thing to be de-
spised.
Only when the man is loyal to himself shall he be
prized.

Take the current of your nature, make it stagnant
if you will :

Dam it up to drudge forever, at the service of your
mill :

Mine the rapture and the freedom of the torrent
on the hill !

Straighten out your wavy borders : make a tow-
path at the side :

Be the dull canal your channel, where the heavy
barges glide, —

Lo, the muddy bed is tranquil, not a rapid breaks
the tide !

I shall wander 'o'er the meadows where the fairest
blossoms call :

Though the ledges seize and fling me headlong
from the rocky wall,

I shall leave a rainbow hanging o'er the ruins of
my fall !

I shall lead a glad existence, as I broaden down
the vales,

Brimming past the regal cities, whitened with the
seaward sails, —

Feel the mighty pulse of ocean ere I mingle with
its gales !

Vex me not with weary questions : seek no moral
to deduce :

With the Present I am busy, with the Future hold
a truce :

If I live the life He gave me, God will turn it to
His use.

PROPOSAL.



HE violet loves a sunny bank,
 The cowslip loves the lea ;
 The scarlet creeper loves the elm,
 But I love — thee.

The sunshine kisses mount and vale,
 The stars, they kiss the sea ;
 The west winds kiss the clover bloom,
 But I kiss — thee !

The oriole weds his mottled mate ;
 The lily's bride o' the bee ;
 Heaven's marriage-ring is round the earth —
 Shall I wed thee ?

RENUNCIATION.

I.



WORDS are but headstones o'er the grave
 of thought.

When some gigantic passion grasps
 the heart

Until its powers, to utmost tension brought,
 Tug at the roots of life, no speech may start
 The spell of silence. Deepest moods are dumb,
 Nor song, nor picture, nor the spells of sound
 Fathom their dark profound,
 The secret of their language overcome.

But farthest, subtlest, most elusive still
 Are those dim shapes that haunt the Poet's brain,
 Beyond all wish, or any grasp of will,
 That come unsought, — and, sought, retreat
 again :
 The independent fantasies that fall
 As meteors fall in clear November nights,
 Sometimes a showery burst of wayward lights,
 Or singly trailing gold celestial,
 Or in auroral blushes fused afar,
 Drowning the steady torch of every star !

II.

There was a time when, like a child, I dreamed
 The gold lay hidden where the meteor fell :
 When some divine interpretation seemed
 Unto the speech of Poets possible :
 When Nature's face a mask of brightness wore,
 Beyond the brightness of the moon or sun :
 The hills I knew, their skyey temples bore ;
 I heard the streams to other music run.
 I saw a fairer morn within the morn,
 And would have painted it for duller eyes ;
 I heard the harmonies of twilight skies,
 The rippling idyls of the harvest corn.
 The gray old mountains many a rainbow spanned,
 And trumpets clamored on the ocean-sand :
 The summer valleys sang a minor strain,
 Dying away in far, aerial blue,
 Until, divinely saddened through and through,
 I tried their song to echo, but in vain !
 Why speak of that for which there is no speech ?
 Why sing of light to those who cannot see ?

All that the Poet's noblest song may reach
Is the regret for what unsung must be.

III.

I gave to Nature more than she gave back :
The dreams that, vanished once, return no more ;
Passion that left her colder than before,
And the warm soul her stubborn features lack.
It was an echo of my heart I heard
Sing in the sky, and chant along the sea :
My life the affluence of her own conferred,
And gave her seeming sympathy with me.
O stars ! whose light was dimmed with tears of
mine !
O sun, that smiled with more than May-day joy !
Ye do not sit upon your thrones divine
To feed the tender fancies of a boy.
Ye see the stern eyes weep, the strong heart break,
The courage conquered by a fate unkind,
In your own brightness blind,
Unmoved, unchanged for any creature's sake.
The voices which encouraged me, are dumb ;
The Soul I recognized in Earth is fled ;
I wait for answers which have ceased to come :
I press the pulse of Nature : she is dead.
The early reverence I gave her fails,
To know her apathy for human ills ;
I only see the bleak, unpitying hills,
The drear, indifferent vales,
The dark, dumb woods, the harsh, insulting sea,
The stolid sky in cold serenity, —
Cold as the ceilings are of palace-halls,
Above their painted walls,

To some hot life, that beats in passion there,
 Barred in alone, with eyes all wet and blind,
 Which in the splendid frescos only find
 The staring mockery of their own despair!

IV.

Earth is our palace, and her zoned array
 Of forms and colors its adornments are :
 She gives the soul its garments of display ;
 She draws the wheels of its triumphal car.
 But does the victor kiss the threshold-stone,
 Or clasp the heartless pillar at his door ?
 And does the bush whereon his bays have grown,
 Shine with a glossier emerald than before ?
 No — no ! His sun is risen in kindred eyes ;
 His morn, the brighter flush of friendly cheeks :
 The music of his day of triumph speaks
 In human voices, and the sullen skies,
 When, palm to palm, beloved pulses kiss,
 Beam with the splendid sunshine of his bliss !
 He gives to Earth the joy that flows from him :
 The vanquished gives her his defeat and shame :
 Her chimes, to different fates, at once proclaim
 The bridal pæan and the burial hymn !

V.

O, not to know, the sunny mist that gilds
 The mountain tops, my breath had thither blown !
 O, not to feel that loftiest Beauty builds
 In Man her temple, and in Man alone !
 Henceforward I renounce the vain pursuit
 To find without the secret hid within, —
 To chase a phantom thin,
 Masked in our own divinest attribute,

While rosy life, the beating Heart of God,
 The dayspring of the glory of the earth,
 Supplies the Poet's dearth,
 If o'er its fountains move his wizard rod.
 The spirit of the mountains, sought in vain,
 Sits on the forehead of the mountaineer ;
 The forest's voice is heard in every strain
 Of hunters' bugles, and the restless main
 Sings in the sailor-songs it loves to hear.
 The slender girl, beside the tropic palm,
 Stands, the completed beauty of the wild ;
 The sweet-brier blooms not with so sweet a balm
 Beside the cottage, as the cotter's child.
 The whirls of windy fire, on desert sands,
 But faintly Man's infuriate wrath express ;
 The desolation of the Arctic lands
 Is warm beside his icy selfishness.
 Love, passion, rapture, terror, grief, repose,
 Through him alone the face of Nature knows :
 There is no aspect of the changing zones
 But springs from something deeper in the heart :
 Then, let me touch its chords with tender art,
 And cease to chant in wind-harp monotones !

THE QUAKER WIDOW.

I.



SHEE finds me in the garden, Hannah, —
 come in ! 'T is kind of thee
 To wait until the Friends were gone,
 who came to comfort me.

The still and quiet company a peace may give,
indeed,
But blessed is the single heart that comes to us at
need.

II.

Come, sit thee down! Here is the bench where
Benjamin would sit
On First-day afternoons in spring, and watch the
swallows flit :
He loved to smell the sprouting box, and hear the
pleasant bees
Go humming round the lilacs and through the
apple-trees.

III.

I think he loved the spring : not that he cared for
flowers : most men
Think such things foolishness, — but we were first
acquainted then,
One spring : the next he spoke his mind ; the
third I was his wife,
And in the spring (it happened so) our children
entered life.

IV.

He was but seventy-five : I did not think to lay
him yet
In Kennett graveyard, where at Monthly Meeting
first we met.
The Father's mercy shows in this : 'tis better I
should be
Picked out to bear the heavy cross — alone in age
— than he.

V.

We 've lived together fifty years : it seems but one
long day,
One quiet Sabbath of the heart, till he was called
away ;
And as we bring from Meeting-time a sweet con-
tentment home,
So, Hannah, I have store of peace for all the days
to come.

VI.

I mind (for I can tell thee now) how hard it was
to know
If I had heard the spirit right, that told me I
should go ;
For father had a deep concern upon his mind that
day,
But mother spoke for Benjamin, — she knew what
best to say.

VII.

Then she was still : they sat awhile : at last she
spoke again,
“ The Lord incline thee to the right ! ” and “ Thou
shalt have him, Jane ! ”
My father said. I cried. Indeed, 't was not the
least of shocks,
For Benjamin was Hicksite, and father Orthodox.

VIII.

I thought of this ten years ago, when daughter
Ruth we lost :
Her husband 's of the world, and yet I could not
see her crossed.

She wears, thee knows, the gayest gowns, she
 hears a hireling priest —
 Ah, dear! the cross was ours: her life's a happy
 one, at least.

IX.

Perhaps she'll wear a plainer dress when she's as
 old as I, —
 Would thee believe it, Hannah? once *I* felt
 temptation nigh!
 My wedding-gown was ashen silk, too simple for
 my taste:
 I wanted lace around the neck, and a ribbon at
 the waist.

X.

How strange it seemed to sit with him upon the
 women's side!
 I did not dare to lift my eyes: I felt more fear
 than pride,
 Till, "in the presence of the Lord," he said, and
 then there came
 A holy strength upon my heart, and I could say
 the same.

XI.

I used to blush when he came near, but then I
 showed no sign;
 With all the meeting looking on, I held his hand
 in mine.
 It seemed my bashfulness was gone, now I was
 his for life:
 Thee knows the feeling, Hannah, — thee, too, hast
 been a wife.

XII.

As home we rode, I saw no fields look half so
green as ours ;
The woods were coming into leaf, the meadows
full of flowers ;
The neighbors met us in the lane, and every face
was kind, —
'T is strange how lively everything comes back
upon my mind.

XIII.

I see, as plain as thee sits there, the wedding-
dinner spread :
At our own table we were guests, with father at
the head,
And Dinah Passmore helped us both, — 't was she
stood up with me,
And Abner Jones with Benjamin, — and now
they're gone, all three !

XIV.

It is not right to wish for death ; the Lord dis-
poses best.
His Spirit comes to quiet hearts, and fits them
for His rest ;
And that He halved our little flock was merciful,
I see :
For Benjamin has two in heaven, and two are left
with me.

XV.

Eusebius never cared to farm, — 't was not his
call, in truth,
And I must rent the dear old place, and go to
daughter Ruth. .

Thee 'll say her ways are not like mine, — young
 people now-a-days
 Have fallen sadly off, I think, from all the good
 old ways.

XVI.

But Ruth is still a Friend at heart ; she keeps the
 simple tongue,
 The cheerful, kindly nature we loved when she
 was young ;
 And it was brought upon my mind, remembering
 her, of late,
 That we on dress and outward things perhaps lay
 too much weight.

XVII.

I once heard Jesse Kersey say, a spirit clothed
 with grace,
 And pure, almost, as angels are, may have a
 homely face.
 And dress may be of less account : the Lord will
 look within :
 The soul it is that testifies of righteousness or sin.

XVIII.

Thee must n't be too hard on Ruth : she's anx-
 ious I should go,
 And she will do her duty as a daughter should,
 I know.
 'T is hard to change so late in life, but we must
 be resigned :
 The Lord looks down contentedly upon a willing
 mind.

ANASTASIA.

TOO pure thy lips for passion's kiss ;
 Too fair thy cheek love's rose to be :
 The brightest dream of Beauty's bliss
 Is dark beside the dream of thee.

Thine eyes were lit from other skies ;
 Thy limbs are made of purer clay ;
 And wandering airs of Paradise
 Before thee breathe the mists away.

Go, Angel ! on thy path serene,
 The lily-garland in thy hair :
 I shall not crown thee as my queen,
 Or vex thee with my hopeless prayer.
 Love follows those whose dancing feet
 Like rose-leaves warm the summer sod :
 Thy brow foretells the winding-sheet ;
 The coffin waits thee, and the clod.

THE PALM AND THE PINE.

WHEN Peter led the First Crusade,
 A Norseman wooed an Arab maid.

He loved her lithe and palmy grace,
 And the dark beauty of her face :

She loved his cheeks, so ruddy fair,
 His sunny eyes and yellow hair.

He called : she left her father's tent ;
She followed wheresoe'er he went.

She left the palms of Palestine
To sit beneath the Norland pine.

She sang the musky Orient strains
Where Winter swept the snowy plains.

Their natures met like Night and Morn
What time the morning-star is born.

The child that from their meeting grew
Hung, like that star, between the two.

The glossy night his mother shed
From her long hair was on his head :

But in its shade they saw arise
The morning of his father's eyes.

Beneath the Orient's tawny stain
Wandered the Norseman's crimson vein :

Beneath the Northern force was seen
The Arab sense, alert and keen.

His were the Viking's sinewy hands,
The arching foot of Eastern lands.

And in his soul conflicting strove
Northern indifference, Southern love ;

The chastity of temperate blood,
Impetuous passion's fiery flood ;

The settled faith that nothing shakes,
The jealousy a breath awakes ;

The planning Reason's sober gaze,
And fancy's metcoric blaze.

And stronger, as he grew to man,
The contradicting natures ran, —

As mingled streams from Etna flow,
One born of fire, and one of snow.

And one impelled, and one withheld,
And one obeyed, and one rebelled.

One gave him force, the other fire ;
This self-control, and that desire.

One filled his heart with fierce unrest ;
With peace serene the other blessed.

He knew the depth and knew the height,
The bounds of darkness and of light ;

And who these far extremes has seen
Must needs know all that lies between.

So, with untaught, instinctive art,
He read the myriad-natured heart.

He met the men of many a land ;
They gave their souls into his hand ;

And none of them was long unknown :
The hardest lesson was his own.

But how he lived, and where, and when,
It matters not to other men ;

For, as a fountain disappears,
To gush again in later years,

So hidden blood may find the day,
When centuries have rolled away ;

And fresher lives betray at last
The lineage of a far-off Past.

That nature, mixed of sun and snow,
Repeats its ancient ebb and flow :

The children of the Palm and Pine
Renew their blended lives — in mine.

OVER-POSSESSION.



WITH beating heart and crowded brain,
I wait the touch of song in vain.
The coy, capricious Muse retires
Before the flame herself inspires,
And for a calmer, colder hour
Reserves her passion and her power.

The sweetness of the autumn skies,
The light that on the landscape lies,
Where yonder sloping wood-side nods
The sunshine of the golden-rods,
The noise of children at their play,

The crickets chirping out the day,
 The music breathing from the Past,
 The Future's pictures, vague and vast;
 The beauty men but rarely seek,
 The secret truths they never speak;
 The double life, — the outward show, —
 The hell and heaven that hide below;
 The hopeless whirl of woe and wrong;
 Eternal Wisdom's under-song, —
 All these, by turns, possess my mind,
 Yet none of these mine art can bind:
 For she, my goddess, will be wooed
 Alone in calm and solitude.

So, cheerfully, the weight I bear
 Of hot emotions which outwear
 The crowded brain, and dim the eye
 Of single-sighted Poesy.
 She, when the throngs around her hum,
 Stands in the centre, blind and dumb;
 But to the One unveils her charms,
 And clasps him in immortal arms.

ON LEAVING CALIFORNIA.



FAIR young land, the youngest, fairest
 far

Of which our world can boast, —
 Whose guardian planet, Evening's silver
 star,

Illumes thy golden coast, —

How art thou conquered, tamed in all the pride
Of savage beauty still !
How brought, O panther of the splendid hide,
To know thy master's will !

No more thou sittest on thy tawny hills
In indolent repose ;
Or pour'st the crystal of a thousand rills
Down from thy house of snows.

But where the wild-oats wrapped thy knees in gold,
The ploughman drives his share,
And where, through cañons deep, thy streams are
rolled,
The miner's arm is bare.

Yet in thy lap, thus rudely rent and torn,
A nobler seed shall be :
Mother of mighty men, thou shalt not mourn
Thy lost virginity !

Thy human children shall restore the grace
Gone with thy fallen pines :
The wild, barbaric beauty of thy face
Shall round to classic lines.

And Order, Justice, Social Law shall curb
Thy untamed energies ;
And Art, and Science, with their dreams superb,
Replace thine ancient ease.

The marble, sleeping in thy mountains now,
Shall live in sculptures rare ;
Thy native oak shall crown the sage's brow, —
Thy bay, the poet's hair.

Thy tawny hills shall bleed their purple wine,
 Thy valleys yield their oil ;
 And Music, with her eloquence divine,
 Persuade thy sons to toil.

Till Hesper, as he trims his silver beam,
 No happier land shall see,
 And Earth shall find her old Arcadian dream
 Restored again in thee !

EUPHORION.

“ I will not longer
 Earth-bound linger :
 Loosen your hold on
 Hand and on ringlet,
 Girdle and garment ;
 Leave them : they 're mine ! ”

“ Bethink thee, bethink thee
 To whom thou belongest !
 Say, wouldst thou wound us,
 Rudely destroying
 Threefold the beauty, —
 Mine, his, and thine ? ”

Faust, — Second Part.



AY, fold your arms, beloved Friends,
 Above the hearts that vainly beat !
 Or catch the rainbow where it bends,
 And find your darling at its feet ;

Or fix the fountain's varying shape,
 The sunset-cloud's elusive dye,
 The speech of winds that round the cape
 Make music to the sea and sky :

So may you summon from the air
The loveliness that vanished hence,
And Twilight give his beauteous hair,
And Morning give his countenance,

And Life about his being clasp
Her rosy girdle once again : —
But no ! let go your stubborn grasp
On some wild hope, and take your pain !

For, through the crystal of your tears,
His love and beauty fairer shine ;
The shadows of advancing years
Draw back, and leave him all divine.

And Death, that took him, cannot claim
The smallest vesture of his birth, —
The little life, a dancing flame
That hovered o'er the hills of earth, —

The finer soul, that unto ours
A subtle perfume seemed to be,
Like incense blown from April flowers
Beside the scarred and stormy tree, —

The wondering eyes, that ever saw
Some fleeting mystery in the air,
And felt the stars of evening draw
His heart to silence, childhood's prayer !

Our suns were all too fierce for him ;
Our rude winds pierced him through and through :
But Heaven has valleys cool and dim,
And bosage sweet with starry dew.

There knowledge breathes in balmy air,
 Not wrung, as here, with panting breast :
 The wisdom born of toil you share ;
 But he, the wisdom born of rest.

For every picture here that slept,
 A living canvas is unrolled ;
 The silent harp he might have swept
 Leans to his touch its strings of gold.

Believe, dear Friends, they murmur still
 Some sweet accord to those you play,
 That happier winds of Eden thrill
 With echoes of the earthly lay ;

That he, for every triumph won,
 Whereto your poet-souls aspire,
 Sees opening, in that perfect sun,
 Another blossom's bud of fire !

Each song, of Love and Sorrow born,
 Another flower to crown your boy, —
 Each shadow here his ray of morn,
 Till Grief shall clasp the hand of Joy !

WIND AND SEA.

I.



HE sea is a jovial comrade,
 He laughs wherever he goes ;
 His merriment shines in the dimpling lines
 That wrinkle his hale repose ;

He lays himself down at the feet of the Sun,
 And shakes all over with glee,
 And the broad-backed billows fall faint on the shore,
 In the mirth of the mighty Sea!

II.

But the Wind is sad and restless,
 And cursed with an inward pain ;
 You may hark as you will, by valley or hill,
 But you hear him still complain.
 He wails on the barren mountains,
 And shrieks on the wintry sea ;
 He sobs in the cedar, and moans in the pine,
 And shudders all over the aspen tree.

III.

Welcome are both their voices,
 And I know not which is best, —
 The laughter that slips from the Ocean's lips,
 Or the comfortless Wind's unrest.
 There 's a pang in all rejoicing,
 A joy in the heart of pain,
 And the Wind that saddens, the Sea that gladdens,
 Are singing the selfsame strain!

MY DEAD.



GIVE back the soul of Youth once more!
 The years are fleeting fast away,
 And this brown hair will soon be gray,
 These cheeks be pale and furrowed o'er.

Ah, no! the child is long since dead,
Whose light feet spurred the laggard years,
Who breathed in future atmospheres,
Ere Youth's eternal Present fled.

Dead lies the boy, whose timid eye
Shunned every face that spake not love;
Whose simple vision looked above,
And saw a glory in the sky.

And now the youth has sighed his last;
I see him cold upon his bier,
But in these eyes there is no tear:
He joins his brethren of the Past.

'T was time he died: the gates of Art
Had shut him from the temple's shrine,
And now I climb her mount divine,
But with the sinews, not the heart.

How many more, O Life! shall I
In future offer up to thee?
And shall they perish utterly,
Upon whose graves I clomb so high?

Say, shall I not at last attain
Some height, from whence the Past is clear,
In whose immortal atmosphere
I shall behold my Dead again?

THE LOST CROWN.



YOU ask me why I sometimes drop
 The threads of talk I weave with you,
 And midway in expression stop
 As if a sudden trumpet blew.

It is because a trumpet blows
 From steeps your feet will never climb :
 It calls my soul from present woes
 To rule some buried realm of Time.

Wide open swing the guarded gates,
 That shut from you the vales of dawn ;
 And there my car of triumph waits,
 By white, immortal horses drawn.

A throne of gold the wheels uphold,
 Each spoke a ray of jewelled fire :
 The crimson banners float unrolled,
 Or falter when the winds expire.

Lo ! where the valley's bed expands,
 Through cloudy censer-smoke, upcurled —
 The avenue to distant lands —
 The single landscape of a world !

I mount the throne ; I seize the rein ;
 Between the shouting throngs I go,
 The millions crowding hill and plain,
 And now a thousand trumpets blow !

The armies of the world are there,
The pomp, the beauty, and the power,
Far-shining through the dazzled air,
To crown the triumph of the hour.

Enthroned aloft, I seem to float
On wide, victorious wings upborne,
Past the rich vale's expanding throat,
To where the palace burns with morn.

My limbs dilate, my breast expands,
A starry fire is in mine eye ;
I ride above the subject lands,
A god beneath the hollow sky.

Peal out, ye clarions ! shout, ye throngs,
Beneath your banners' reeling folds !
This pageantry to me belongs, —
My hand its proper sceptre holds.

Surge on, in still augmenting lines,
Till the great plain be overrun,
And my procession far outshines
The bended pathway of the sun !

But when my triumph overtops
This language, which from vassals grew,
The crown from off my forehead drops,
And I again am serf with you.

STUDIES FOR PICTURES.

I.

AT HOME.



HE rain is sobbing on the wold ;
The house is dark, the hearth is cold ;
And stretching drear and ashy gray
Beyond the cedars, lies the bay.

The winds are moaning, as they pass
Through tangled knots of autumn grass, —
A weary, dreary sound of woe,
As if all joy were dead below.

I sit alone, I wait in vain
Some voice to lull this nameless pain ;
But from my neighbor's cottage near
Come sounds of happy household cheer.

My neighbor at his window stands,
His youngest baby in his hands ;
The others seek his tender kiss,
And one sweet woman crowns his bliss.

I look upon the rainy wild :
I have no wife, I have no child :
There is no fire upon my hearth,
And none to love me on the earth.

II.

THE NEIGHBOR.

How cool and wet the lowlands lie
Beneath the cloaked and hooded sky !
How softly beats the welcome rain
Against the plashy window-pane !

There is no sail upon the bay :
We cannot go abroad to-day,
But, darlings, come and take my hand,
And hear a tale of Fairy-land.

The baby's little head shall rest
In quiet on his father's breast,
And mother, if he chance to stir,
Shall sing him songs once sung to her.

Ah, little ones, ye do not fret,
Because the garden grass is wet ;
Ye love the rains, whene'er they come,
That all day keep your father home.

No fish to-day the net shall yield ;
The happy oxen graze afield ;
The thirsty corn will drink its fill,
And louder sing the woodland rill.

Then, darlings, nestle round the hearth ;
Ye are the sunshine of the earth :
Your tender eyes so fondly shine,
They bring a welcome rain to mine.

III.

UNDER THE STARS.

How the hot revel's fever dies,
Beneath the stillness of the skies !
How suddenly the whirl and glare
Shoot far away, and this cold air
Its icy beverage brings, to chase
The burning wine-flush from my face !
The window's gleam still faintly falls,
And music sounds at intervals,
Jarring the pulses of the night
With whispers of profane delight ;
But on the midnight's awful strand,
Like some wrecked swimmer flung to land,
I lie, and hear those breakers roar :
And smile — they cannot harm me more !

Keep, keep your lamps ; they do not mar
The silver of a single star.
The painted roses you display
Drop from your cheeks, and fade away ;
The snowy warmth you bid me see
Is hollowness and mockery ;
The words that make your sin so fair
Grow silent in this vestal air ;
The loosened madness of your hair,
That wrapped me in its snaky coils,
No more shall mesh me in your toils ;
Your very kisses on my brow
Burn like the lips of devils now.
O sacred night ! O virgin calm !

Teach me the immemorial psalm
 Of your eternal watch sublime
 Above the grovelling lusts of Time !
 Within, the orgie shouts and reels ;
 Without, the planets' golden wheels
 Spin, circling through the utmost space ;
 Within, each flushed and reckless face
 Is masked to cheat a haunting care ;
 Without the silence and the prayer.
 Within, the beast of flesh controls ;
 Without, the God that speaks in souls !

IV.

IN THE MORNING.

THE lamps were thick ; the air was hot ;
 The heavy curtains hushed the room ;
 The sultry midnight seemed to blot
 All life but ours in vacant gloom.

You spoke : my blood in every vein
 Throbbled, as by sudden fever stirred,
 And some strange whirling in my brain
 Subdued my judgment, as I heard.

Ah, yes ! when men are dead asleep,
 When all the tongues of Day are still,
 The heart must sometimes fail to keep
 Its natural poise 'twixt good and ill.

You knew too well its blind desires,
 Its savage instincts, scarce confessed ;
 I could not see you touch the wires,
 But felt your lightning in my breast.

For you, Life's web displayed its flaws,
The wrong which Time transforms to right :
The iron mesh of social laws
Was but a cobweb in your sight.

You showed that tempting freedom, where
The passions bear their perfect fruit,
The cheats of conscience cannot scare,
And Self is monarch absolute.

And something in me seemed to rise,
And trample old obedience down :
The serf sprang up, with furious eyes,
And clutched at the imperial crown.

That fierce rebellion overbore
The arbiter that watched within,
Till Sin so changed an aspect wore,
It was no longer that of Sin.

You gloried in the fevered flush
That spread, defiant, o'er my face,
Nor thought how soon this morning's blush
Would chronicle the night's disgrace.

I wash my eyes ; I bathe my brow ;
I see the sun on hill and plain :
The old allegiance claims me now,
The old content returns again.

Ah, seek to stop the sober glow
And healthy airs that come with day,
For when the cocks at dawning crow
Your evil spirits flee away.

SUNKEN TREASURES.



WHEN the uneasy waves of life subside,
And the soothed ocean sleeps in glassy
rest,

I see, submerged beyond or storm or
tide,

The treasures gathered in its greedy breast.

There still they shine, through the translucent Past,
Far down on that forever quiet floor ;
No fierce upheaval of the deep shall cast
Them back, — no wave shall wash them to the
shore.

I see them gleaming, beautiful as when
Erewhile they floated, convoys of my fate ;
The barks of lovely women, noble men,
Full-sailed with hope, and stored with Love's
own freight.

The sunken ventures of my heart as well,
Look up to me, as perfect as at dawn ;
My golden palace heaves beneath the swell
To meet my touch, and is again withdrawn.

There sleep the early triumphs, cheaply won,
That led Ambition to his utmost verge,
And still his visions, like a drowning sun,
Send up receding splendors through the surge.

There wait the recognitions, the quick ties,
 Whence the heart knows its kin, wherever cast;
 And there the partings, when the wistful eyes
 Caress each other as they look their last.

There lie the summer eves, delicious eves,
 The soft green valleys drenched with light divine,
 The lispings murmurs of the chestnut leaves,
 The hand that lay, the eyes that looked in mine.

There lives the hour of fear and rapture yet,
 The perilled climax of the passionate years;
 There still the rains of wan December wet
 A naked mound, — I cannot see for tears!

There are they all: they do not fade or waste,
 Lapped in the arms of the embalming brine;
 More fair than when their beings mine embraced, —
 Of nobler aspect, beauty more divine.

I see them all, but stretch my hands in vain;
 No deep-sea plummet reaches where they rest;
 No cunning diver shall descend the main,
 And bring a single jewel from its breast.

A FANTASY.



MAIDEN of the Forest,
 Why play so loud and long?
 Now let thy horn be silent,
 Thy voice take up the song!

I cannot choose but listen,
I cannot choose but follow,
Where'er thy blue eyes glisten
Across the woodlands hollow.

My heart is filled with brightness
As the heavens are filled with morn,
To hear the sounds enchanted
Leap from thy silver horn.

Let the echoes rest a moment,
And let thy lips declare
If thou be of earth or ocean,
Or the flying shapes of air.

Let my mouth be free to kiss thee,
Let my hands be free to hold,
For I cannot choose but love thee,
And love is ever bold.

Still she played, and playing, fled
Before me as I sought her,
And the horn rang out this answer
Across the shaded water :

I play the strains enchanted
You cannot choose but hear,
For your life is in the music,
And your heart sits at your ear.

I shall never cease my playing
For your love's impassioned prayer ;
I shall never feel your kisses
Falling on my golden hair.

For my touch would chill your pulses,
 And my kiss make dim your eye,
 And the horn will first be silent
 In the hour that you shall die.

THE VOYAGERS.



No longer spread the sail!
 No longer strain the oar!
 For never yet has blown the gale
 Will bring us nearer shore.

The swaying keel slides on,
 The helm obeys the hand;
 Fast we have sailed from dawn to dawn,
 Yet never reach the land.

Each morn we see its peaks,
 Made beautiful with snow;
 Each eve its vales and winding creeks,
 That sleep in mist below.

At noon we mark the gleam
 Of temples tall and fair;
 At midnight watch its bonfires stream
 In the auroral air.

And still the keel is swift,
 And still the wind is free,
 And still as far its mountains lift
 Beyond the enchanted sea.

Yet vain is all return,
 Though false the goal before ;
 The gale is ever dead astern,
 The current sets to shore.

O shipmates, leave the ropes, —
 And what though no one steers,
 We sail no faster for our hopes,
 No slower for our fears.

Howe'er the bark is blown,
 Lie down and sleep awhile :
 What profits toil, when chance alone
 Can bring us to the isle ?

MEMORY.



GIVE me the tongue of the silver sea,
 Or the flute of the twilight wind,
 For a tenderer music my heart would
 find,

To sing of the sadness and sweetness of Memory !

Joy is a goblet that soon is drained ;
 It cracks in our heedless hands ;
 But the cup of Remembrance forever stands,
 Filled with libations the wormwood of tears has
 stained.

We lift it against the dying sun ;
 We drink till the eyes run o'er ;
 We drink till the heart will contain no more,
 And surfeited turns from the Lethe it has not won.

THE MARINERS.



THEY were born by the shore, by the
 shore,
 When the surf was loud and the sea-
 gull cried ;
 They were rocked to the rhythm of its roar,
 They were cradled in the arms of the tide.

Sporting on the fenceless sand,
 Looking o'er the limitless blue,
 Half on the water and half on the land,
 Ruddily and lustily to manhood they grew.

How should they follow where the plough
 Furrows at the heels of the lazy steers ?
 How should they stand with a sickly brow,
 Pent behind a counter, wasting golden years ?

They turned to the Earth, but she frowns on her
 child ;
 They turned to the Sea, and he smiled as of old ;
 Sweeter was the peril of the breakers white and
 wild,
 Sweeter than the land with its bondage and gold !

Now they walk on the rolling deck,
 And they hang to the rocking shrouds,
 When the lee-shore looms with a vision of wreck,
 And the scud is flung to the stooping clouds.

Shifting the changeless horizon ring,
Which the lands and islands in turn look o'er,
They traverse the zones with a veering wing,
From shore to sea, and from sea to shore.

They know the South and the North ;
They know the East and the West ;
Shuttles of fortune, flung back and forth
In the web of motion, the woof of rest.

They do not act with a studied grace,
They do not speak in delicate phrase,
But the candor of heaven is on their face,
And the freedom of ocean in all their ways.

They cannot fathom the subtle cheats,
The lying arts which the landmen learn :
Each looks in the eyes of the man he meets,
And whoso trusts him, he trusts in turn.

Say that they curse, if you will,
That the tavern and harlot possess their gains :
On the surface floats what they do of ill, —
At the bottom the manhood remains.

When they slide from the gangway-plank below,
Deep as the plummeted shroud may drag,
They hold it comfort enough, to know
The corpse is wrapped in their country's flag.

But whether they die on the sea or shore,
And lie under water, or sand, or sod,
Christ give them the rest that he keeps in store,
And anchor their souls in the harbors of God !

HYMN TO AIR.

I.



HE mightiest thou, among the Powers
 of Earth,
 The viewless Agent of the unseen God,
 What immemorial era saw thy birth?
 What pathless fields of new Creation trod
 Thy noiseless feet? Where was thy dwelling-place
 In the blind realm of Chaos, ere the word
 Of Sovereign Order by the stars was heard,
 Or the young planet knew her Maker's face?
 No wrecks are hid in thine unfathomed sea;
 Thy crystal tablets no inscription bear;
 The awful Infinite is shrined in thee,
 Immeasurable Air!

II.

Thou art the Soul wherein the Earth renews
 The nobler life, that heals her primal scars;
 Thine is the mantle of all-glorious hues,
 Which makes her beautiful among the stars;
 Thine is the essence that informs her frame
 With manifold existence, thine the wing
 From gulfs of outer darkness sheltering,
 And from the Sun's uplifted sword of flame.
 She sleeps in thy protection, lives in thee;
 Thou mak'st the foreheads of her mountains
 smile;
 His heart to thine, the all-surrounding Sea
 Spreads thy blue drapery o'er his cradled isle,

Thou art the breath of Nature, and the tongue
 Unto her dumb material being granted,
 And by thy voice her sorrowing psalms are
 chanted —
 Her hymns of triumph sung !

III.

Thine azure fountains nourish all that lives ;
 Forever drained, yet ever brimming o'er,
 Their billows in eternal freshness pour,
 And from her choicest treasury Nature gives
 A glad repayment of the debt she owes,
 Replenishing thy sources :— balmy dews,
 That on thy breast their summer tears diffuse ;
 Strength from the pine, and sweetness from the rose ;
 The spice of gorgeous Ind, the scents that fill
 Ambrosial forests in the isles of palm ;
 Leagues of perennial bloom on every hill ;
 Lily and lotus in the water's calm ;
 And where the torrent leaps to take thy wing,
 But dashes out its life in diamond spray,
 Or multitudinous waves of ocean fling
 Their briny strength along thy rapid way —
 Escapes some virtue which from thee they hold :
 And even the grosser exhalations, fed
 From Earth's decay, Time's crowded charnel-
 bed,
 Fused in thy vast alembic, turn to gold.

IV.

What is the scenery of Earth to thine ?
 Here all is fixed in everlasting shapes,
 But where the realms of gorgeous Cloudland shine,
 There stretch afar thy sun-illumined capes,

Embaying reaches of the amber seas
 Of sunset, on whose tranquil bosom lie
 The happy islands of the upper sky,
 The halcyon shores of thine Atlantides.
 Anon the airy headlands change, and drift
 Into sublimer forms, that slowly heave
 Their toppling masses up the front of eve,
 Crag heaped on crag, with many a fiery rift,
 And hoary summits, throned beyond the reach
 Of Alp or Caucasus : again they change,
 And down the vast, interminable range
 Of towers and palaces, transcending each
 The workmanship of Fable-Land, we see
 The crystal hyaline of Heaven's own floor, —
 The radiance of the far Eternity
 Reflected on thy shore !

v.

Thine are the treasures of Hail and Snow ;
 Thy hand lets fall the Thunder's bolt of fire ;
 And when from out thy seething caldrons blow
 The vapors of the whirlwind, spire on spire
 In terrible convolution wreathed and blent,
 The unimagined strength that lay concealed
 Within thy quiet bosom is revealed
 To the racked Earth and trembling firmament.
 And thou dost hold, awaiting God's decree,
 The keys of all destruction : — in that hour
 When the Almighty Wrath shall loose thy power,
 Before thy breath shall disappear the sea,
 To ashes turn the mountain's mighty frame,
 And as the seven-fold fervors wider roll,
 Thou, self-consuming, shrivel as a scroll,
 And wrap the world in one wide pall of flame !

SONG.



OW the days are brief and drear :

Naked lies the new-born Year

In his cradle of the snow,

And the winds unbridled blow,

And the skies hang dark and low, —

For the Summers come and go.

Leave the clashing cymbals mute !

Pipe no more the happy flute !

Sing no more that dancing rhyme

Of the rose's harvest-time ; —

Sing a requiem, sad and low :

For the Summers come and go.

Where is Youth ? He strayed away

Through the meadow-flowers of May.

Where is Love ? The leaves that fell

From his trysting-bower, can tell.

Wisdom stays, sedate and slow,

And the Summers come and go.

Yet a few more years to run,

Wheeling round in gloom and sun ;

Other raptures, other woes, —

Toil alternate with Repose :

Then to sleep where daisies grow,

While the Summers come and go.

THE MYSTERY.



THOU art not dead ; thou art not gone
to dust ;
No line of all thy loveliness shall fall
To formless ruin, smote by Time, and
thrust

Into the solemn gulf that covers all.

Thou canst not wholly perish, though the sod
Sink with its violets closer to thy breast ;
Though by the feet of generations trod,
The headstone crumbles from thy place of rest.

The marvel of thy beauty cannot die ;
The sweetness of thy presence shall not fade ;
Earth gave not all the glory of thine eye, —
Death may not keep what Death has never made.

It was not thine, that forehead strange and cold,
Nor those dumb lips, they hid beneath the snow ;
Thy heart would throb beneath that passive fold,
Thy hands for me that stony clasp forego.

But thou hadst gone, — gone from the dreary land,
Gone from the storms let loose on every hill,
Lured by the sweet persuasion of a hand
Which leads thee somewhere in the distance still.

Where'er thou art, I know thou wearest yet
The same bewildering beauty, sanctified
By calmer joy, and touched with soft regret
For him who seeks, but cannot reach thy side.

I keep for thee the living love of old,
 And seek thy place in Nature, as a child
 Whose hand is parted from his playmate's hold,
 Wanders and cries along a lonesome wild.

When, in the watches of my heart, I hear
 The messages of purer life, and know
 The footsteps of thy spirit lingering near,
 The darkness hides the way that I should go.

Canst thou not bid the empty realms restore
 That form, the symbol of thy heavenly part?
 Or on the fields of barren silence pour
 That voice, the perfect music of thy heart?

O once, once bending to these widowed lips,
 Take back the tender warmth of life from me,
 Or let thy kisses cloud with swift eclipse
 The light of mine, and give me death with thee!

A PICTURE.



SOMETIMES, in sleeping dreams of night,
 Or waking dreams of day,
 The selfsame picture seeks my sight
 And will not fade away.

I see a valley, cold and still,
 Beneath a leaden sky:
 The woods are leafless on the hill,
 The fields deserted lie.

The gray November eve benumbs
The damp and cheerless air ;
A wailing from the forest comes,
As of the world's despair.

But on the verge of night and storm,
Far down the valley's line,
I see the lustre, red and warm,
Of cottage windows shine.

And men are housed, and in their place
In snug and happy rest,
Save one, who walks with weary pace
The highway's frozen breast.

His limbs, that tremble with the cold
Shrink from the coming storm ;
But underneath his mantle's fold
His heart beats quick and warm.

He hears the laugh of those who sit
In Home's contented air ;
He sees the busy shadows flit
Across the window's glare.

His heart is full of love unspent,
His eyes are wet and dim ;
For in those circles of content
There is no room for him.

He clasps his hands and looks above ;
He makes the bitter cry :
" All, all are happy in their love, —
All are beloved but I ! "

Across no threshold streams the light,
 Expectant, o'er his track ;
 No door is opened on the night,
 To bid him welcome back.

There is no other man abroad
 In all the wintry vale,
 And lower upon his lonely road
 The darkness and the gale.

I see him through the doleful shades
 Press onward, sad and slow,
 Till from my dream the picture fades,
 And from my heart the woe.

IN THE MEADOWS.



LIE in the summer meadows,
 In the meadows all alone,
 With the infinite sky above me,
 And the sun on his midday throne.

The smell of the flowering grasses
 Is sweeter than any rose,
 And a million happy insects
 Sing in the warm repose.

The mother lark that is brooding
 Feels the sun on her wings,
 And the deeps of the noonday glitter
 With swarms of fairy things.

From the billowy green beneath me
 To the fathomless blue above,
 The creatures of God are happy
 In the warmth of their summer love.

The infinite bliss of Nature
 I feel in every vein ;
 The light and the life of Summer
 Blossom in heart and brain.

But darker than any shadow
 By thunder-clouds unfurled,
 The awful truth arises,
 That Death is in the world !

And the sky may beam as ever,
 And never a cloud be curled ;
 And the airs be living odors,
 But Death is in the world !

Out of the deeps of sunshine
 The invisible bolt is hurled :
 There 's life in the summer meadows,
 But Death is in the world !

THE WINTER SOLSTICE.



DARKEST day of all the year !
 O day of Winter and of Death !
 Thy reign is in the North, yet here
 The Southern Ocean feels thy breath.

Yon ruddy sun, that from the wave
Climbs up his path in summer glow,
Will light, ere long, a frozen grave,
Too cold to melt its pall of snow.

And I must find the sunshine pale,
The tropic breezes chill and drear,
For when the gray autumnal gale
Came to despoil the dying year,
Passed with the slow retreating sun,
As day by day some beams depart,
The beauty and the life of one,
Whose love made summer in my heart.

Day after day, the latest flower,
Her faded being waned away,
More pale and dim with every hour, —
And ceased upon the darkest day !
The warmth and glow that with her died
No light of coming suns shall bring ;
The heart its wintry gloom may hide,
But cannot feel a second Spring.

O darkest day of all the year !
In vain thou com'st with balmy skies,
For, blotting out their azure sphere,
The phantoms of my Fate arise :
A blighted life, whose shattered plan
No after fortune can restore ;
The perfect lot, designed for Man,
That should be mine, but is no more.

She was the sun, that rose above
The landscape of the life I dreamed,

And through the portals of her love
 The promise of my Future beamed.
 Though buried long, those dreams arise
 To mock me wheresoe'er I roam, —
 The happy light of household eyes,
 The blessing and the peace of Home.

And I behold the changing fire,
 Of alien heavens increase and pale
 On many a sunbeam-gilded spire
 And many a moonlight-silvered sail :
 The pomp and glory of the lands,
 The range of Earth, is given to me ;
 But every touch of loving hands
 Recalls my blighted destiny.

SATURDAY NIGHT AT SEA.



COME, messmates, fill the cheerful bowl !

To-night let no one fail,
 No matter how the billows roll,
 Or roars the ocean gale.

There's toil and danger in our lives,
 But let us jovial be,
 And drink to sweethearts and to wives,
 On Saturday night at sea !

The chill nor'wester hurls the spray
 Our icy bulwarks o'er,
 As swift we cleave our stormy way,
 A thousand miles from shore ;

And while the good ship onward drives,
 Let none forget that he
 Must drink to sweethearts and to wives,
 On Saturday night at sea !

The joys that landsmen little reck
 We best can understand,
 Who live a year upon the deck,
 A month upon the land.
 And rough as are our sailor lives,
 Full tender hearts have we
 To drink to sweethearts and to wives,
 On Saturday night at sea !

Our frames are worn and little worth,
 And hard our rugged hands ;
 We struggle for our hold on Earth
 With the storms of many lands :
 But the only love that lights our lives
 Shall still remembered be ;
 We drink to sweethearts and to wives,
 On Saturday night at sea !

SONG.



THEY call thee false as thou art fair,
 They call thee fair and free, —
 A creature pliant as the air
 And changeful as the sea :
 But I, who gaze with other eyes, —
 Who stand and watch afar, —
 Behold thee pure as yonder skies
 And steadfast as a star !

THE PHANTOM.

Thine is a rarer nature, born
 To rule the common crowd,
 And thou dost lightly laugh to scorn
 The hearts before thee bowed.
 Thou dreamest of a different love
 Than comes to such as these ;
 That soars as high as heaven above
 Their shallow sympathies.

A star that shines with flickering spark,
 Thou dost not wane away,
 But shed'st adown the purple dark
 The fulness of thy ray :
 A rose, whose odors freely part
 At every zephyr's will,
 Thou keep'st within thy folded heart
 Its virgin sweetness still !

THE PHANTOM.



GAIN I sit within the mansion,
 In the old, familiar seat ;
 And shade and sunshine chase each other
 O'er the carpet at my feet.

But the sweet-brier's arms have wrestled upwards
 In the summers that are past,
 And the willow trails its branches lower
 Than when I saw them last.

They strive to shut the sunshine wholly
From out the haunted room ;
To fill the house, that once was joyful,
With silence and with gloom.

And many kind, remembered faces
Within the doorway come, —
Voices, that wake the sweeter music
Of one that now is dumb.

They sing, in tones as glad as ever,
The songs she loved to hear ;
They braid the rose in summer garlands,
Whose flowers to her were dear.

And still, her footsteps in the passage,
Her blushes at the door,
Her timid words of maiden welcome,
Come back to me once more.

And, all forgetful of my sorrow,
Unmindful of my pain,
I think she has but newly left me,
And soon will come again.

She stays without, perchance, a moment,
To dress her dark-brown hair ;
I hear the rustle of her garments, —
Her light step on the stair !

O, fluttering heart ! control thy tumult,
Lest eyes profane should see
My cheeks betray the rush of rapture
Her coming brings to me !

She tarries long : but lo ! a whisper
 Beyond the open door,
 And, gliding through the quiet sunshine,
 A shadow on the floor !

Ah ! 't is the whispering pine that calls me,
 The vine, whose shadow strays ;
 And my patient heart must still await her,
 Nor chide her long delays.

But my heart grows sick with weary waiting,
 As many a time before :
 Her foot is ever at the threshold,
 Yet never passes o'er.

THE CONSOLATION OF SONG.



FALSE, fleeting Youth, ah ! whither fled
 Thy golden promise ?
 Thy joy is past, thy love is dead,
 And every arrowy hope we sped
 Falls distant from us.

Ah, where the wondrous alchemy
 Thy steps that haunted ?
 The happy airs of Arcady
 That fanned thy brow, the fancy free,
 The faith undaunted ?

The glories caught from Nature die,
 And men deceive me ;

Star after star goes down the sky,
 And darker, sadder hours are nigh,
 If Song should leave me.

For Song can still the living light
 Of Memory borrow,
 With faded dawns to flush the night,
 And hide with gleams of old delight
 The present sorrow.

Let Faith and Love and Hope depart,
 Since Fate so wills it :
 Some foliage yet may shade the heart,
 And blossom in the beams of Art,
 Whose presence fills it.

On thee, dear Song ! the loss I cast,
 Beyond redressing :
 Let gone be gone, and past be past,
 But, Angel ! I will hold thee fast,
 And force thy blessing !

SOLDIER'S SONG.

FROM "FAUST."



CASTLES with lofty
 Ramparts and towers, —
 Maidens disdainful
 In Beauty's array, —
 All shall be ours !
 Bold is the venture,
 Splendid the pay !

Lads, let the trumpets
 For us be suing,
 Calling to pleasure,
 Calling to ruin!
 Stormy our life is;
 Such is its boon:
 Maidens and castles
 Capitulate soon.
 Bold is the venture,
 Splendid the pay!
 And the soldiers go marching,
 Marching away.

THE SHEPHERD'S LAMENT.

FROM GOETHE.



Uyonder on the mountain
 A thousand times I stand,
 Leant on my crook, and gazing
 Down on the valley-land.

I follow the flock to the pasture;
 My little dog watches them still:
 I have come below, but I know not
 How I descended the hill.

The beautiful meadow is covered
 With blossoms of every hue;
 I pluck them, alas! without knowing
 Whom I shall give them to.

I seek, in the rain and the tempest,
 A refuge under the tree :
 Yonder the doors are fastened,
 And all is a dream to me.

Right over the roof of the dwelling
 I see a rainbow stand ;
 But she has departed forever,
 And gone far out in the land.

Far out in the land, and farther, —
 Perhaps to an alien shore :
 Go forward, ye sheep ! go forward, —
 The heart of the shepherd is sore.

THE GARDEN OF ROSES.

FROM UHLAND.



Of the beautiful Garden of Roses
 I will sing, with your gracious leave :
 There the dames walked forth at morning,
 And the heroes fought at eve.

“ My Lord is King of the country,
 But I am the Garden’s Queen ;
 His crown with the red gold sparkles,
 And mine with the rose’s sheen.

“ So hear me, ye youthful gallants,
 My favorite guardsmen three ;
 The garden is free to the maidens,
 To the knights it must not be.

“ They would trample my beautiful roses,
And bring me trouble enow,” —
Said the Queen, as she walked in the morning,
With the garland on her brow.

Then went the three young gallants
And guarded the gate about ;
And peacefully blossomed the roses
And sent their odors out.

Now came three fair young maidens,
Virgins that knew not sin :
“ Ye guardsmen, ye gallant three guardsmen,
Open, and let us in ! ”

And when they had gathered the roses,
They spake, with looks forlorn :
“ What makes our hands so bloody ?
Is it the prick of the thorn ? ”

And still the three young gallants
Guarded the gate about,
And peacefully blossomed the roses,
And sent their odors out.

Now came upon prancing stallions
Three lawless knights, and cried :
“ Ye guardsmen, ye surly three guardsmen,
Open the portal wide ! ”

“ The portal is shut and bolted :
Our naked swords will teach
That the price of the roses is costly ;
Ye must pay a wound for each ! ”

Then fought the knights and the gallants,
 But the knights had the victory,
 And the roses were torn and trampled,
 And died with the guardsmen three.

And when the evening darkened,
 The Queen came by with her train :
 " Now that my roses are trampled
 And my faithful guardsmen slain,

" I will lay them on leaves of roses,
 And bury them solemnly :
 And where was the Garden of Roses,
 The Garden of Lilies shall be.

" But who will watch my lilies,
 When their blossoms open white ?
 By day the sun shall be sentry,
 And the moon and the stars by night ! "

THE THREE SONGS.

FROM UHLAND.



ING Siegfried sat in his lofty hall :

" Ye harpers ! who sings the best song
 of all ? "

Then a youth stepped forth with a scorn-
 ful lip,

The harp in his hand, and the sword at his hip.

“ Three songs I know ; but this first song
Thou, O King ! hast forgotten long :
Thou hast stabbed my brother with murderous
 hand, —
Hast stabbed my brother with murderous hand !

“ The second song I learned aright
In the midst of a dark and stormy night :
Thou must fight with me for life or death, —
Must fight with me for life or death ! ”

On the banquet-table he laid his harp,
And they both drew out their swords so sharp ;
And they fought in the sight of the harpers all,
Till the King sank dead in the lofty hall.

“ And now for the third, the proudest, best !
I shall sing it, sing it, and never rest :
King Siegfried lies in his red, red blood, —
Siegfried lies in his red, red blood ! ”





CALIFORNIAN BALLADS AND
POEMS.

5





MANUELA.

FROM the doorway, Manuela, in the sunny April morn,
Southward looks, along the valley, over
leagues of gleaming corn ;
Where the mountain's misty rampart like the wall
of Eden towers,
And the isles of oak are sleeping on a painted sea
of flowers.

All the air is full of music, for the winter rains are
o'er,
And the noisy magpies chatter from the budding
sycamore ;
Blithely frisk unnumbered squirrels, over all the
grassy slope ;
Where the airy summits brighten, nimbly leaps
the antelope.

Gentle eyes of Manuela! tell me wherefore do ye rest
On the oak's enchanted islands and the flowery
ocean's breast ?
Tell me wherefore, down the valley, ye have
traced the highway's mark
Far beyond the belts of timber, to the mountain-
shadows dark ?

Ah, the fragrant bay may blossom and the sprouting
verdure shine
With the tears of amber dropping from the tassels
of the pine,
And the morning's breath of balsam lightly brush
her sunny cheek, —
Little recketh Manuela of the tales of Spring they
speak.

When the Summer's burning solstice on the mountain-harvests
glowed,
She had watched a gallant horseman riding down
the valley road ;
Many times she saw him turning, looking back
with parting thrills,
Till amid her tears she lost him, in the shadow of
the hills.

Ere the cloudless moons were over, he had passed
the Desert's sand,
Crossed the rushing Colorado and the wild Apachè
Land,
And his laden mules were driven, when the time
of rains began,
With the traders of Chihuahua, to the Fair of San
Juan.

Therefore watches Manuela, — therefore lightly
doth she start,
When the sound of distant footsteps seems the
beating of her heart ;
Not a wind the green oak rustles or the redwood
branches stirs,
But she hears the silver jingle of his ringing bit
and spurs.

Often, out the hazy distance, come the horsemen,
 day by day,
But they come not as Bernardo, — she can see it,
 far away ;
Well she knows the airy gallop of his mettled
 alazàn,
Light as any antelope upon the Hills of Gavilàn.

She would know him 'mid a thousand, by his free
 and gallant air ;
By the featly-knit sarápè, such as wealthy traders
 wear ;
By his broidered calzoneros and his saddle, gayly
 spread,
With its cantle rimmed with silver, and its horn
 a lion's head.

None like him the light riáta on the maddened
 bull can throw ;
None amid the mountain-cañons track like him
 the stealthy doe ;
And at all the Mission festals, few indeed the
 revellers are
Who can dance with him the jota, tóuch with him
 the gay guitar.

He has said to Manuela, and the echoes linger
 still
In the cloisters of her bosom, with a secret, tender
 thrill,
When the bay again has blossomed, and the
 valley stands in corn,
Shall the bells of Santa Clara usher in the wedding
 morn.

He has pictured the procession, all in holiday attire,
 And the laugh of bridal gladness, when they see
 the distant spire ;
 Then their love shall kindle newly, and the world
 be doubly fair
 In the cool, delicious crystal of the summer morn-
 ing air.

Tender eyes of Manuela ! what has dimmed your
 lustrous beam ?
 'T is a tear that falls to glitter on the casket of her
 dream.
 Ah, the eye of Love must brighten, if its watches
 would be true,
 For the star is falsely mirrored in the rose's drop
 of dew !

But her eager eyes rekindle, and her breathless
 bosom thrills,
 As she sees a horseman moving in the shadow of
 the hills :
 Now in love and fond thanksgiving they may loose
 their pearly tides, —
 'T is the alazan that gallops, 't is Bernardo's self
 that rides !

THE FIGHT OF PASO DEL MAR.



USTY and raw was the morning,
 A fog hung over the seas,
 And its gray skirts, rolling inland,
 Were torn by the mountain trees ;

No sound was heard but the dashing
Of waves on the sandy bar,
When Pablo of San Diego
Rode down to the Paso del Mar.

The pescador, out in his shallop,
Gathering his harvest so wide,
Sees the dim bulk of the headland
Loom over the waste of the tide ;
He sees, like a white thread, the pathway
Wind round on the terrible wall,
Where the faint, moving speck of the rider
Seems hovering close to its fall.

Stout Pablo of San Diego
Rode down from the hills behind ;
With the bells on his gray mule tinkling
He sang through the fog and wind.
Under his thick, misted eyebrows
Twinkled his eye like a star,
And fiercer he sang as the sea-winds
Drove cold on the Paso del Mar.

Now Bernal, the herdsman of Chino,
Had travelled the shore since dawn,
Leaving the ranches behind him —
Good reason had he to be gone !
The blood was still red on his dagger,
The fury was hot in his brain,
And the chill, driving scud of the breakers
Beat thick on his forehead in vain.

With his poncho wrapped gloomily round him,
He mounted the dizzying road,

And the chasms and steep of the headland
 Were slippery and wet, as he trod :
 Wild swept the wind of the ocean,
 Rolling the fog from afar,
 When near him a mule-bell came tinkling,
 Midway on the Paso del Mar.

“ Back ! ” shouted Bernal, full fiercely,
 And “ Back ! ” shouted Pablo, in wrath,
 As his mule halted, startled and shrinking,
 On the perilous line of the path.
 The roar of devouring surges
 Came up from the breakers’ hoarse war ;
 And “ Back, or you perish ! ” cried Bernal,
 “ I turn not on Paso del Mar ! ”

The gray mule stood firm as the headland :
 He clutched at the jingling rein,
 When Pablo rose up in his saddle
 And smote till he dropped it again.
 A wild oath of passion swore Bernal,
 And brandished his dagger, still red,
 While fiercely stout Pablo leaned forward,
 And fought o’er his trusty mule’s head.

They fought till the black wall below them
 Shone red through the misty blast ;
 Stout Pablo then struck, leaning farther,
 The broad breast of Bernal at last.
 And, frenzied with pain, the swart herdsman
 Closed on him with terrible strength,
 And jerked him, despite of his struggles,
 Down from the saddle at length.

They grappled with desperate madness,
On the slippery edge of the wall ;
They swayed on the brink, and together
Reeled out to the rush of the fall.
A cry of the wildest death-anguish
Rang faint through the mist afar,
And the riderless mule went homeward
From the fight of the Paso del Mar.

THE PINE FOREST OF MONTEREY.



WHAT point of Time, unchronicled, and
dim

As yon gray mist that canopies your
heads,

Took from the greedy wave and gave the sun
Your dwelling-place, ye gaunt and hoary Pines ?
When, from the barren bosoms of the hills,
With scanty nurture, did ye slowly climb,
Of these remote and latest-fashioned shores
The first-born forest ? Titans gnarled and rough,
Such as from out subsiding Chaos grew
To clothe the cold loins of the savage earth,
What fresh commixture of the elements,
What earliest thrill of life, the stubborn soil
Slow-mastering, engendered ye to give
The hills a mantle and the wind a voice ?
Along the shore ye lift your rugged arms,
Blackened with many fires, and with hoarse
chant, —

Unlike the fibrous lute your co-mates touch

In elder regions, — fill the awful stops
 Between the crashing cataracts of the surf.
 Have ye no tongue, in all your sea of sound,
 To syllable the secret, — no still voice
 To give your airy myths a shadowy form,
 And make us of lost centuries of lore
 'The rich inheritors ?

The sea-winds pluck

Your mossy beards, and gathering as they sweep,
 Vex your high heads, and with your sinewy arms
 Grapple and toil in vain. A deeper roar,
 Sullen and cold, and rousing into spells
 Of stormy volume, is your sole reply.
 Anchored in firm-set rock, ye ride the blast,
 And from the promontory's utmost verge
 Make signal o'er the waters. So ye stood,
 When, like a star, behind the lonely sea,
 Far shone the white speck of Grijalva's sail ;
 And when, through driving fog, the breaker's sound
 Frighted Otondo's men, your spicy breath
 Played as in welcome round their rusty helms,
 And backward from its staff shook out the folds
 Of Spain's emblazoned banner.

Ancient Pines,

Ye bear no record of the years of man.
 Spring is your sole historian, — Spring, that paints
 These savage shores with hues of Paradise ;
 That decks your branches with a fresher green,
 And through your lonely, far cañadas pours
 Her floods of bloom, rivers of opal dye
 That wander down to lakes and widening seas
 Of blossom and of fragrance, — laughing Spring,

That with her wanton blood refills your veins,
And weds ye to your juicy youth again
With a new ring, the while your rifted bark
Drops odorous tears. Your knotty fibres yield
To the light touch of her unfailing pen,
As freely as the lupin's violet cup.
Ye keep, close-locked, the memories of her stay,
As in their shells the avelonès keep
Morn's rosy flush and moonlight's pearly glow.
The wild northwest, that from Alaska sweeps,
To drown Point Lobos with the icy scud
And white sea-foam, may rend your boughs and
leave

Their blasted antlers tossing in the gale ;
Your steadfast hearts are mailed against the shock,
And on their annual tablets naught inscribe
Of such rude visitation. Ye are still
The simple children of a guiltless soil,
And in your natures show the sturdy grain
That passion cannot jar, nor force relax,
Nor aught but sweet and kindly airs compel
To gentler mood. No disappointed heart
Has sighed its bitterness beneath your shade ;
No angry spirit ever came to make
Your silence its confessional ; no voice,
Grown harsh in Crime's great market-place, the
world,

Tainted with blasphemy your evening hush
And aromatic air. The deer alone, —
The ambushed hunter that brings down the deer, —
The fisher wandering on the misty shore
To watch sea-lions wallow in the flood, —
The shout, the sound of hoofs that chase and fly,
When swift vaqueros, dashing through the herds,
Ride down the angry bull, — perchance, the song

Some Indian heired of long-forgotten sires, —
Disturb your solemn chorus.

Stately Pines,

But few more years around the promontory
Your chant will meet the thunders of the sea.
No more, a barrier to the encroaching sand,
Against the surf ye 'll stretch defiant arm,
Though with its onset and besieging shock
Your firm knees tremble. Never more the wind
Shall pipe shrill music through your mossy beards,
Nor sunset's yellow blaze athwart your heads
Crown all the hills with gold. Your race is past :
The mystic cycle, whose unnoted birth
Coeval was with yours, has run its sands,
And other footsteps from these changing shores
Frighten its haunting Spirit. Men will come
To vex your quiet with the din of toil ;
The smoky volumes of the forge will stain
This pure, sweet air ; loud keels will ride the sea,
Dashing its glittering sapphire into foam ;
Through all her green cañadas Spring will seek
Her lavish blooms in vain, and clasping ye,
O mournful Pines, within her glowing arms,
Will weep soft rains to find ye fallen low.
Fall, therefore, yielding to the fiat ! Fall,
Ere the maturing soil, whose first dull life
Fed your belated germs, be rent and seamed !
Fall, like the chiefs ye sheltered, stern, unbent,
Your gray beards hiding memorable scars !
The winds will mourn ye, and the barren hills
Whose breast ye clothed ; and when the pauses come
Between the crashing cataracts of the surf,
A funeral silence, terrible, profound,
Will make sad answer to the listening sea.

EL CANELO.

I.



NOW saddle EL CANELO! — the freshen-
 ing wind of morn,
 Down in the flowery vega, is stirring
 through the corn;
 The thin smoke of the ranches grows red with
 coming day,
 And the steed is fiercely stamping, in haste to be
 away.

II.

My glossy-limbed Canelo, thy neck is curved in
 pride,
 Thy slender ears pricked forward, thy nostril
 straining wide;
 And as thy quick neigh greets me, and I catch
 thee by the mane,
 I'm off with the winds of morning, — the chieftain
 of the plain!

III.

I feel the swift air whirring, and see along our
 track,
 From the flinty-paved sierra, the sparks go stream-
 ing back;
 And I clutch my rifle closer, as we sweep the dark
 defile,
 Where the red guerillas ambush for many a lonely
 mile.

IV.

They reach not El Canelo ; with the swiftness of
 a dream
 We 've passed the bleak Nevada, and San Fernan-
 do's stream ;
 But where, on sweeping gallop, my bullet backward
 sped
 The keen-eyed mountain vultures will wheel above
 the dead.

V.

On ! on, my brave Canelo ! we 've dashed the sand
 and snow
 From peaks upholding heaven, from deserts far
 below, —
 We 've thundered through the forest, while the
 crackling branches rang,
 And trooping elks, affrighted, from lair and covert
 sprang.

VI.

We 've swum the swollen torrent, — we 've dis-
 tanced in the race
 The baying wolves of Pinos, that panted with the
 chase ;
 And still thy mane streams backward, at every
 thrilling bound,
 And still thy measured hoof-stroke beats with its
 morning sound !

VII.

The seaward winds are wailing through Santa
 Barbara's pines,
 And like a sheathless sabre, the far Pacific shines ;

Hold to thy speed, my arrow ! at nightfall thou
 shalt lave
 Thy hot and smoking haunches beneath his silver
 wave !

VIII.

My head upon thy shoulder, along the sloping sand
 We'll sleep as trusty brothers, from out the moun-
 tain land ;
 The pines will sound in answer to the surges on
 the shore,
 And in our dreams, Canelo, we'll make the jour-
 ney o'er.

THE SUMMER CAMP.



HERE slacken rein ; here let the dusty
 mules
 Unsaddled graze ! The shadows of the
 oaks

Are on our brows, and through their knotted boles
 We see the blue round of the boundless plain
 Vanish in glimmering heat : these aged oaks,
 The island speck that beckoned us afar
 Over the burning level, — as we came,
 Spreading to shore and cape, and bays that ran
 To leafy headlands, balanced on the haze,
 Faint and receding as a cloud in air.

The mules may roam unsaddled : we will lie
 Beneath the mighty trees, whose shade, like dew
 Poured from the urns of Twilight, dries the sweat

Of sunburnt brows, and on the heavy lid
And heated eyeball sheds a balm, than sleep
Far sweeter. We have done with travel, — we
Are weary now, who never dreamed of Rest,
For until now did never Rest unbar
Her palace-doors, nor until now our ears
The silence drink, beyond all melodies
Of all imagined sound, that wraps her realm.
Here, where the desolating centuries •
Have left no mark ; where noises never came
From the far world of battle and of toil ;
Where God looks down and sends no thunderbolt
To smite a human wrong, for all is good,
She finds a refuge. We will dwell with her.

No more of travel, where the flaming sword
Of the great sun divides the heavens ; no more
Of climbing over jutting steeps that swim
In driving sea-mist, where the stunted tree
Slants inland, mimicking the stress of winds
When wind is none ; of plain and steaming marsh
Where the dry bulrush crackles in the heat ;
Of camps by starlight in the columned vault
Of sycamores, and the red, dancing fires
That build a leafy arch, efface and build,
And sink at last, to let the stars peep through ;
Of cañons grown with pine and folded deep
In golden mountain-sides ; of airy sweeps
Of mighty landscape, lying all alone
Like some deserted world. They tempt no more.
It is enough that such things were : too blest,
O comrades mine, to lie in Summer's arms,
Lodged in her Camp of Rest, we will not dream
That they may vex us more.

The sun goes down :

The dun mules wander idly : motionless
Beneath the stars, the heavy foliage lifts
Its rich, round masses, silent as a cloud
That sleeps at midday on a mountain peak.
All through the long, delicious night no stir
Is in the leaves ; spangled with broken gleams,
Before the pining Moon, — that fain would drop
Into the lap of this deep quiet, — swerve
Eastward the shadows : Day comes on again.
Where is the life we led ? Whither hath fled
The turbulent stream that brought us hither ? How,
So full of sound, so lately dancing down
The mountains, turbid, fretted into foam, —
How has it slipped, with scarce a gurgling coil,
Into this calm transparence, noise or wind
Hath ruffled never ? Ages past, perchance,
Such wild turmoil was ours, or did some Dream
Malign, that last night nestled in the oak,
Whisper our ears, when not a star could see ?
Give o'er the fruitless doubt : we will not waste
One thought of rest, nor spill one radiant drop
From the full goblet of this summer balm.

Day after day the mellow sun slides o'er,
Night after night the mellow moon. The clouds
Are laid, enchanted : soft and bare, the heavens
Fold to their breast the dozing Earth, that lies
In languor of deep bliss. At times, a breath,
Remnant of gales far off, forgotten now,
Rustles the never-fading leaves, then drops
Affrighted into silence. Near a slough
Of dark, still water, in the early morn
The shy coyotas prowl, or trooping elk

From the close covert of the bulrush-fields
Their dewy antlers toss : nor other sight,
Save when the falcon, poised on wheeling wings,
His bright eye on the burrowing coney, cuts
His arrowy plunge. Along the distant trail,
Dim with the heat, sometimes the miners go,
Bearded and rough, the swart Sonorians drive
Their laden asses, or vaqueros whirl
The lasso's coil and carol many a song,
Native to Spanish hills. As when we lie
On the soft brink of Sleep, not pillowed quite
To blest forgetfulness, some dim array
Of masking forms in long procession comes,
A sweet disturbance to the popped sense,
That will not cease, but gently holds it back
From slumber's haven, so their figures pass,
With such disturbance cloud the blessed calm,
And hold our beings, ready to slip forth
O'er unmolested seas, still rocking near
The coasts of Action.

Other dreams are ours,
Of shocks that were, or seemed ; whereof our souls
Feel the subsiding lapse, as feels the sand
Of tropic island-shores the dying pulse
Of storms that racked the Northern sea. My Soul,
I do believe that thou hast toiled and striven,
And hoped and suffered wrong. I do believe
Great aims were thine, deep loves and fiery hates,
And though I may have lain a thousand years
Beneath these Oaks, the baffled trust of Youth,
Thy first keen sorrow, brings a gentle pang
To temper joy. Nor will the joy I drank
To wild intoxication, quit my heart :

It was no dream that still has power to droop
The soft-suffusing lid, and lift desire
Beyond this rapt repose. No dream, dear love !
For thou art with me in our Camp of Peace.

O Friend, whose history is writ in deeds
That make your life a marvel, come no gleams
Of past adventure, echoes of old storms,
And Battle's tingling hum of flying shot,
To touch your easy blood and tempt you o'er
The round of yon blue plain ? Or have they lost,
Heroic days, the virtue which the heart
That did their hest rejoicing, proved so high ?
Back through the long, long cycles of our rest
Your memory travels : through this hush you hear
The Gila's dashing, feel the yawning jaws
Of black volcanic gorges close you in
On waste and awful tracts of wilderness,
Which other than the eagle's cry, or bleat
Of mountain-goat, hear not : the scorching sand
Eddies around the tracks your fainting mules
Leave in the desert : thorn and cactus pierce
Your bleeding limbs, and stiff with raging thirst
Your tongue forgets its office. Leave untried
That cruel trail, and leave the wintry hills
And leave the tossing sea ! The Summer here
Builds us a tent of everlasting calm.

How shall we wholly sink our lives in thee,
'Thrice-blessèd Deep ? O many-natured Soul,
Chameleon-like, that, steeped in every phase
Of wide existence, tak'st the hue of each,
Here with the silent Oaks and azure Air
Incorporate grow ! Here loosen one by one

Thy vexing memories, burdens of the Past,
 Till all unrest be laid, and strong Desire
 Sleeps on his nerveless arm. Content to find
 In liberal Peace thy being's high result
 And crown of aspiration, gather all
 The dreams of sense, the reachings of the mind
 For ampler issues and dominion vain,
 To fold them on her bosom, happier there
 Than in exultant action : as a child
 Forgets his meadow butterflies and flowers,
 Upon his mother's breast.

It may not be.

Not in this Camp, in these enchanted Trees,
 But in ourselves, must lodge the calm we seek,
 Ere we can fix it here. We cannot take
 From outward nature power to snap the curse
 Which clothed our birth ; and though 't were easier
 This hour to die than yield the blessed cup
 Wherefrom our hearts divinest comfort draw,
 It clothes us yet, and yet shall drive us forth
 To breast the world. Then come : we will not bide
 To tempt a ruin to this paradise,
 Fulfilling Destiny. A mighty wind
 Would gather on the plain, a cloud arise
 To blot the sky, with thunder in its heart,
 And the black column of the whirlwind spin
 Out of the cloud, straight downward to this grove,
 Take by their heads the shuddering trees, and
 wrench

With fearful clamor, limb from limb, till Rest
 Should flee forever. Rather set at once
 Our faces toward the noisy world again,
 And gird our loins for action. Let us go !

THE BISON TRACK.

I.



STRIKE the tent ! the sun has risen ; not
a vapor streaks the dawn,
And the frosted prairie brightens to the
westward, far and wan :

Prime afresh the trusty rifle, — sharpen well the
hunting spear —
For the frozen sod is trembling, and a noise of
hoofs I hear !

II.

Fiercely stamp the tethered horses, as they snuff
the morning's fire ;
Their impatient heads are tossing, and they neigh
with keen desire.
Strike the tent ! the saddles wait us, — let the bri-
dle-reins be slack,
For the prairie's distant thunder has betrayed the
bison's track.

III.

See ! a dusky line approaches : hark, the onward-
surging roar,
Like the din of wintry breakers on a sounding wall
of shore !

Dust and sand behind them whirling, snort the
foremost of the van,
And their stubborn horns are clashing through the
crowded caravan.

IV.

Now the storm is down upon us : let the maddened
horses go !
We shall ride the living whirlwind, though a hun-
dred leagues it blow !
Though the cloudy manes should thicken, and the
red eyes' angry glare
Lighten round us as we gallop through the sand
and rushing air !

V.

Myriad hoofs will scar the prairie, in our wild,
resistless race,
And a sound, like mighty waters, thunder down the
desert space :
Yet the rein may not be tightened, nor the rider's
eye look back —
Death to him whose speed should slacken, on the
maddened bison's track !

VI.

Now the trampling herds are threaded, and the
chase is close and warm
For the giant bull that gallops in the edges of the
storm :
Swiftly hurl the whizzing lasso, — swing your rifles
as we run :
See ! the dust is red behind him, — shout, my com-
rades, he is won !

VII.

Look not on him as he staggers, — 't is the last
shot he will need!
More shall fall, among his fellows, ere we run the
mad stampede, —
Ere we stem the brinded breakers, while the wolves,
a hungry pack,
Howl around each grim-eyed carcass, on the bloody
Bison Track!







EARLIER POEMS.







THE HARP : AN ODE.

I.

WHEN bleak winds through the Northern
pines were sweeping,
Some hero-skald, reclining on the
sand,

Attuned it first, the chords harmonious keeping
With murmuring forest and with moaning
strand :

And when, at night, the horns of mead foamed over,
And torches flared around the wassail board,
It breathed no song of maid, nor sigh of lover,
It rang aloud the triumphs of the sword !
It mocked the thunders of the ice-ribbed ocean,
With clenched hands beating back the dragon's
prow ;

It gave Berserker arms their battle motion,
And swelled the red veins on the Viking's brow !

II.

No myrtle, plucked in dalliance, ever sheathed it,
To melt the savage ardor of its flow ;
The only gauds wherewith its lord enwreathed it,
The lusty fir and Druid mistletoe. . . .

Thus bound, it kept the old, accustomed cadence,
 Whether it pealed through slumberous ilex
 bowers
 In stormy wooing of Byzantine maidens,
 Or shook Trinacria's languid lap of flowers ;
 Whether Genseric's conquering march it chanted,
 Till cloudy Atlas rang with Gothic staves,
 Or where gray Calpè's pillared feet are planted,
 Died grandly out upon the unknown waves !

III.

Not unto Scania's bards alone belonging,
 The craft that loosed its tongues of changing
 sound,
 For Ossian played, and ghosts of heroes, thronging,
 Leaned on their spears above the misty mound.
 The Cambrian eagle, round his eyrie winging,
 Heard the wild chant through mountain-passes
 rolled,
 When bearded throats chimed in with mighty
 singing,
 And monarchs listened, in their torques of gold :
 Its dreary wail, blent with the sea-mews' clangor,
 Surged round the lonely keep of Penmaen-Mawr ;
 It pealed aloud, in battle's glorious anger,
 Behind the banner of the Blazing Star !

IV.

The strings are silent ; who shall dare to wake them,
 Though later deeds demand their living powers ?
 Silent in other lands, what hand shall make them
 Leap as of old, to shape the songs of ours ?
 Here, while the sapless bulk of Europe moulders,
 Springs the rich blood to hero-veins unsealed, —

Source of that Will, that on its fearless shoulders
 Would bear the world's fate lightly as a shield :
 Here moves a larger life, to grander measures
 Beneath our sky and through our forests rung ;
 Why sleeps the harp, forgetful of its treasures, —
 Buried in songs that never yet were sung ?

V.

Great, solemn songs, that with majestic sounding
 Should swell the Nation's heart from sea to sea ;
 Informed with power, with earnest hope abounding
 And prophecies of triumph yet to be !
 Songs, by the wild wind for a thousand ages
 Hummed o'er our central prairies, vast and lone ;
 Glassed by the Northern lakes in crystal pages,
 And carved by hills on pinnacles of stone ;
 Songs chanted now, where undiscovered fountains
 Make in the wilderness their babbling home,
 And through the deep-hewn cañons of the mountains
 Plunge the cold rivers in perpetual foam !

VI.

Sung but by these : our forests have no voices ;
 Rapt with no loftier strain our rivers roll ;
 Far in the sky, no song-crowned peak rejoices
 In words that give the silent air a soul.
 Wake, mighty Harp ! and thrill the shores that
 hearken
 For the first peal of thine immortal rhyme :
 Call from the shadows that begin to darken
 The beaming forms of our heroic time :
 Sing us of deeds, that on thy strings outsoaring
 The ancient soul they glorified so long,
 Shall win the world to hear thy grand restoring,
 And own thy latest thy sublimest song !

SERAPION.



OME hither, Child ! thou silent, shy
 Young creature of the glorious eye !
 Though never yet by ruder air
 Than father's kiss or mother's prayer

Were stirred the tendrils of thy hair,
 The sadness of a soul that stands
 Withdrawn from Childhood's frolic bands,
 A stranger in the land, I trace
 Upon thy brow's cherubic grace
 The tender pleading of thy face,
 Where other stars than Joy and Hope
 Have cast thy being's horoscope.

For thee, the threshold of the world
 Is yet with morning dews impearled ;
 The nameless radiance of Birth
 Imbathes thy atmosphere of Earth,
 And, like a finer sunshine, swims
 Round every motion of thy limbs :
 The sweet, sad wonder and surprise
 Of waking glimmers in thine eyes,
 And wiser instinct, purer sense,
 And gleams of rare intelligence
 Betray the converse held by thee
 With the angelic family.

Come hither, Boy ! For while I press
 Thy lips' confiding tenderness,
 Less broad and dark the spaces be
 Which Life has set 'twixt thee and me.

Thy soul's white feet shall soon depart
On paths I walked with eager heart ;
God give thee, in His kindly grace,
A brighter road, a loftier place !
I see thy generous nature flow
In boundless trust to friend and foe,
And leap, despite of shocks and harms,
To clasp the world in loving arms.
I see that glorious circle shrink
Back to thy feet, at Manhood's brink,
Narrowed to one, one image fair,
And all its splendor gathered there.
The shackles of experience then
Sit lightly as on meaner men :
In flinty paths thy feet may bleed,
Thorns pierce thy flesh, thou shalt not heed,
Till when, all panting from the task,
Thine arms outspread their right shall ask,
Thine arms outspread that right shall fly,
The star shall burst, the splendor die !
Go, with thy happier brothers play,
As heedless and as wild as they ;
Seek not so soon thy separate way,
Thou lamb in Childhood's field astray !

Whence camest thou ? what angel bore
Thee past so many a fairer shore
Of guarding love, and guidance mild,
To drop thee on this barren wild ?
Thy soul is lonely as a star,
When all its fellows muffled are, —
A single star, whose light appears
To glimmer through subduing tears.
The father who begat thee sees

In thee no deeper mysteries
Than load his heavy ledger's page,
And swell for him thy heritage.
A hard, cold man, of punctual face,
Renowned in Credit's holy-place,
Whose very wrinkles seem arrayed
In cunning hieroglyphs of trade, —
Whose gravest thought but just unlocks
The problems of uncertain stocks, —
Whose farthest flights of hope extend
From dividend to dividend.
Thy mother, — but a mother's name
Too sacred is, too sweet for blame.
No doubt she loves thee, — loves the shy,
Strange beauty of thy glorious eye ;
Loves the soft mouth, whose drooping line
Is silent music ; loves to twine
Thy silky hair in ringlets trim ;
To watch thy lightsome play of limb ;
But, God forgive me ! I, who find
The soul within that beauty shrined,
I love thee more, I know thy worth
Better, than she who gave thee birth.

Are they thy keepers ? They would thrust
The priceless jewel in the dust ;
Would tarnish in their careless hold
The vessel of celestial gold.
Who gave them thee ? What fortune lent
Their hands the delicate instrument,
Which finer hands might teach to hymn
The harmonies of Seraphim,
Which they shall make discordant soon,
The sweet bells jangled, out of tune ?

Mine eyes are dim : I cannot see
 The purposes of Destiny,
 But than my love Heaven could not shine
 More lovingly, if thou wert mine !
 Rest then securely on my heart :
 Give me thy trust : *my* child thou art,
 And I shall lead thee through the years
 To Hopes and Passions, Loves and Fears,
 Till, following up Life's endless plan,
 A strong and self-dependent Man,
 I see thee stand and strive with men :
 Thy Father now, thy Brother then.



MOAN, ye wild winds ! around the pane,
 And fall, thou drear December rain !
 Fill with your gusts the sullen day,
 Tear the last clinging leaves away !

Reckless as yonder naked tree,
 No blast of yours can trouble me.

Give me your chill and stern embrace,
 And pour your baptism on my face ;
 Sound in mine ears the airy moan
 That sweeps in desolate monotone,
 Where on the unsheltered hill-top beat
 The marches of your homeless feet.

Moan on, ye winds ! and pour, thou rain !
 Your stormy sobs and tears are vain,

If shed for her whose fading eyes
 Will open soon on Paradise :
 The eye of Heaven shall blinded be,
 Or ere ye cease, if shed for me.

TAURUS.

I.



THE Scorpion's stars crawl down behind
 the sun,
 And when he drops below the verge
 of day,
 The glittering fangs, their fervid courses run,
 Cling to his skirts and follow him away.
 Then, ere the heels of flying Capricorn
 Have touched the western mountain's darkening
 rim,
 I mark, stern Taurus, through the twilight gray
 The glinting of thy horn,
 And sullen front, uprising large and dim,
 Bent to the starry hunter's sword, at bay.

II.

Thy hoofs, unwilling, climb the sphery vault ;
 Thy red eye trembles with an angry glare,
 When the hounds follow, and in fierce assault
 Bay through the fringes of the lion's hair.
 The stars that once were mortal in their love,
 And by their love are made immortal now,

Cluster like golden bees upon thy mane,
 When thou, possessed with Jove,
 Bore sweet Europa's garlands on thy brow,
 And stole her from the green Sicilian plain.

III.

Type of the stubborn force that will not bend
 To loftier art, — soul of defiant breath
 That blindly stands and battles to the end,
 Nerving resistance with the throes of death, —
 Majestic Taurus! when thy wrathful eye
 Flamed brightest, and thy hoofs a moment stayed
 Their march at Night's meridian, I was born :
 But in the western sky,
 Like sweet Europa, Love's fair star delayed,
 To hang her garland on thy silver horn.

IV.

Thou giv'st that temper of enduring mould,
 That slights the wayward bent of Destiny, —
 Such as sent forth the shaggy Jarls of old
 To launch their dragons on the unknown sea :
 Such as kept strong the sinews of the sword,
 The proud, hot blood of battle, — welcome made
 The headsman's axe, the rack, the martyr-fire,
 The ignominious cord,
 When but to yield, had pomps and honors laid
 On heads that moulder in ignoble mire.

V.

Night is the summer when the soul grows ripe
 With Life's full harvest : of her myriad suns,

Thou dost not gild the quiet herdsman's pipe,
 Nor royal state, that royal action shuns.
 But in the noontide of thy ruddy stars
 Thrive strength, and daring, and the blood
 whence springs
 The Heraclidean seed of heroes ; then
 Were sundered Gaza's bars ;
 Then, 'mid the smitten Hydra's loosened rings,
 His slayer rested, in the Lernean fen.

VI.

Thine is the subtle element that turns
 To fearless act the impulse of the hour, —
 The secret fire, whose flash electric burns
 To every source of passion and of power.
 Therefore I hail thee, on thy glittering track :
 Therefore I watch thee, when the night grows dark,
 Slow-rising, front Orion's sword along
 The starry zodiac,
 And from thy mystic beam demand a spark
 To warm my soul with more heroic song.

THE ODALISQUE.



N marble shells the fountain splashes ;
 Its falling spray is turned to stars,
 When some light wind its pinion dashes
 Against thy gilded lattice-bars.
 Around the shafts, in breathing cluster,
 The roses of Damascus run,
 And through the summer's moons of lustre
 The tulip's goblet drinks the sun.

The day, through shadowy arches fainting,
Reveals the garden's burst of bloom,
With lights of shifting iris painting
The jasper pavement of thy room :
Enroofed with palm and laurel bowers,
Thou seest, beyond, the cool kiosk,
And far away the pencilled towers
That shoot from many a stately mosque.

Thou hast no world beyond the chamber
Whose inlaid marbles mock the flowers,
Where burns thy lord's chibouk of amber,
To charm the languid evening hours ;
Where sounds the lute's impassioned yearning
Through all enchanted tales of old,
And spicy cressets, dimly burning,
Swing on their chains of Persian gold.

No more, in half-remembered vision,
Thy distant childhood comes to view ;
That star-like world of shapes Elysian
Has faded from thy morning's blue :
The eastern winds that cross the Taurus
Have now no voice of home beyond,
Where light waves foam in endless chorus
Against the walls of Trebizond.

For thee the Past may never reckon
Its hoard of saddening memories o'er,
Nor shapes from out the Future beckon
To joys that only live in store.
Thy life is in the gorgeous Present,
An Orient summer, warm and bright ;
No gleam of beauty evanescent,
But one long time of deep delight.

SORROWFUL MUSIC:



GIVE me music, or I die ;
 Music, wherein Sorrow's cry
 Is a sweet, aerial sigh, —
 Where Despair is harmony.

Give me music, such as winds
 To the ambushed grief, and finds
 Clews of soft-enticing sound,
 Notes that soothe and cannot wound,
 Leading with a tender care
 Outward into brighter air :
 Music which, with welcome pain,
 Melted from the master's brain,
 When his sorrow, freed from smart,
 Laid its head upon his heart,
 And the measure, broken, slow, —
 Shed with tears in mingled flow, —
 All its mighty secret spake
 And it slept : it will not wake.

Give me music, sad and strong,
 Drawn from deeper founts than Song ;
 More impassioned, full, and free
 Than the Poet's numbers be :
 Music which can master thee,
 Stern enchantress, Memory !
 Piercing through the gloomy stress
 Of thy gathered bitterness,
 As the summer lightnings play
 Through a cloud's edge far away.

Give me music, I am dumb ;
 Choked with tears that never come.
 Give me music ; sigh or word
 Such a sorrow never stirred, —
 Sorrow that with blinding pain
 Lies like fire on heart and brain.
 Earth and Heaven bring no relief ;
 I am dumb ; this weight of grief
 Locks my lips ; I cannot cry :
 Give me music, or I die.

AUTUMNAL VESPERS.



HE clarion Wind, that blew so loud at
 morn,

Whirling a thousand leaves from
 every bough

Of the purple woods, has not a whisper now ;
 Hushed on the uplands is the huntsman's horn,
 And huskers whistling round the tented corn :

The snug warm cricket lets his clock run down,
 Scared by the chill, sad hour that makes forlorn
 The Autumn's gold and brown.

The light is dying out on field and wold ;

The life is dying in the leaves and grass.

The World's last breath no longer dims the
 glass

Of waning sunset, yellow, pale, and cold.

His genial pulse, which Summer made so bold,
 Has ceased. Haste, Night, and spread thy
 decent pall !

The silent, stiffening Frost makes havoc : fold
 The darkness over all !

The light is dying out o'er all the land,
 And in my heart the light is dying. She,
 My life's best life, is fading silently
 From Earth, from me, and from the dreams we
 planned,

Since first Love led us with his beaming hand
 From hope to hope, yet kept his crown in store.
 The light is dying out o'er all the land :
 To me it comes no more.

The blossom of my heart, she shrinks away,
 Stricken with deadly blight : more wan and
 weak

Her love replies in blanching lip and cheek,
 And gentler in her dear eyes, day by day.
 God, in Thy mercy, bid the arm delay,
 Which thro' her being smites to dust my own !
 Thou gav'st the seed thy sun and showers ; why slay
 The blossoms yet unblown ?

In vain, — in vain ! God will not bid the Spring
 Replace with sudden green the Autumn's gold ;
 And as the night-mists, gathering damp and
 cold,

Strike up the vales where watercourses sing,
 Death's mist shall strike along her veins, and cling
 Thenceforth forever round her glorious frame :
 For all her radiant presence, May shall bring
 A memory and a name.

What know the woods, that soon shall be so stark ?
What know the barren fields, the songless air,
Locked in benumbing cold, of blooms more fair
In mornings ushered by the April lark ?
Weak solace this, which Grief will never hark ;
Blind as a bud in stiff December's mail,
To lift her look beyond the frozen dark
No memory can avail.

I never knew the autumnal eves could wear,
With all their pomp, so drear a hue of Death ;
I never knew their still and solemn breath
Could rob the breaking heart of strength to bear,
Feeding the blank submission of despair.
Yet, peace, sad soul ! reproach and pity shine
Suffused through starry tears : bend thou in prayer,
Rebuked by Love divine.

Our life is scarce the twinkle of a star
In God's eternal day. Obscure and dim
With mortal clouds, it yet may beam for Him,
And darkened here, shine fair to spheres afar.
I will be patient, lest my sorrow bar
His grace and blessing, and I fall supine :
In my own hands my want and weakness are, —
My strength, O God ! in Thine.

ODE TO SHELLEY.

I.



WHY art thou dead ? Upon the hills once
 more
 The golden mist of waning Autumn
 lies ;
 The slow-pulsed billows wash along the shore,
 And phantom isles are floating in the skies.
 They wait for thee : a spirit in the sand
 Hushes, expectant for thy coming tread ;
 The light wind pants to lift thy trembling hair ;
 Inward, the silent land
 Lies with its mournful woods ; — why art thou
 dead,
 When Earth demands that thou shalt call her fair ?

II.

Why art thou dead ? I too demand thy song,
 To speak the language yet denied to mine,
 Twin-doomed with thee, to feel the scorn of Wrong,
 To worship Beauty as a thing divine !
 Thou art afar : wilt thou not soon return
 To tell me that which thou hast never told ?
 To clasp my throbbing hand, and, by the shore
 Or dewy mountain-fern,
 Pour out thy heart as to a friend of old,
 Touched with a twilight sadness ? Nevermore.

III.

I could have told thee all the sylvan joy
Of trackless woods ; the meadows far apart,
Within whose fragrant grass, a lonely boy,
I thought of God ; the trumpet at my heart,
When on bleak mountains roared the midnight
storm,
And I was bathed in lightning, broad and grand :
O, more than all, with soft and reverent breath
And forehead flushing warm,
I would have led thee through the summer land
Of early Love, and past my dreams of Death !

IV.

In thee, Immortal Brother ! had I found
That Voice of Earth, that fails my feebler lines :
The awful speech of Rome's sepulchral ground ;
The dusky hymn of Vallombrosa's pines !
From thee the noise of Ocean would have taken
A grand defiance round the moveless shores,
And vocal grown the Mountain's silent head :
Canst thou not yet awaken
Beneath the funeral cypress ? Earth implores
Thy presence for her son ; — why art thou dead ?

V.

I do but rave : for it is better thus.
Were once thy starry nature given to mine,
In the one life which would encircle us
My voice would melt, my soul be lost in thine.
Better to bear the far sublimer pain
Of Thought that has not ripened into speech,

To hear in silence Truth and Beauty sing
 Divinely to the brain ;
 For thus the Poet at the last shall reach
 His own soul's voice, nor crave a brother's string.

• SICILIAN WINE.



I'VE drunk Sicilia's crimson wine !
 The blazing vintage pressed
 From grapes on Etna's breast,
 What time the mellowing autumn sun
 did shine :

I've drunk the wine !
 I feel its blood divine
 Poured on the sluggish tide of mine,
 Till, kindling slow,
 Its fountains glow
 With the light that swims
 On their trembling brims,
 And a molten sunrise floods my limbs !

What do I here ?
 I've drunk the wine,
 And lo ! the bright blue heaven is clear
 Above the ocean's bluer sphere,
 Seen through the long arcades of pine,
 Inwoven and arched with vine !
 The glades are green below ;
 The temple shines afar ;
 Above, old Etna's snow
 Sparkles with many an icy star :

I see the mountain and its marble wall,
Where gleaming waters fall
And voices call,
Singing and calling
Like chorals falling
Through pearly doors of some Olympian hall,
Where Love holds bacchanal.

Sicilian wine ! Sicilian wine !
Summer, and Music, and Song divine
Are thine, — all thine !
A sweet wind over the roses plays ;
The wild bee hums at my languid ear ;
The mute-winged moth serenely strays
On the downy atmosphere,
Like hovering Sleep, that overweighs
My lids with his shadow, yet comes not near.
Who 'll share with me this languor ?
With me the juice of Etna sip ?
Who press the goblet's lip,
Refusing mine the while with love's enchanting
 anger ?
Would I were young Adonis now !
With what an ardor bold
Within my arms I'd fold
Fair Aphrodite of Idalian mould,
And let the locks that hide her gleaming brow
Fall o'er my shoulder as she lay
With the fair swell of her immortal breast
Upon my bosom pressed,
Giving Olympian thrills to its enamored clay !

Bacchus and Pan have fled :
No heavy Satyr crushes with his tread

The verdure of the meadow ground,
But in their stead
The Nymphs are leading a bewildering round,
Vivid and light, as o'er some flowering rise
A dance of butterflies,
Their tossing hair with slender lilies crowned,
And greener ivy than o'erran
The brows of Bacchus and the reed of Pan!

I faint, I die :
The flames expire,
That made my blood a fluid fire :
Steeped in delicious weariness I lie.
O, lay me in some pearlèd shell,
Soft-balanced on the rippling sea,
Where sweet, cheek-kissing airs may wave
Their fresh wings over me ;
Let me be wafted with the swell
Of Nereid voices ; let no billow rave
To break the cool green crystal of the sea.
For I will wander free
Past the blue islands and the fading shores,
To Calpè and the far Azores,
And still beyond, and wide away,
Beneath the dazzling wings of tropic day,
Where, on unruffled seas,
Sleep the green isles of the Hesperides.

The Triton's trumpet calls :
I hear, I wake, I rise :
The sound peals up the skies,
And mellowed Echo falls
In answer back from Heaven's cerulean walls.
Give me the lyre that Orpheus played upon,

Or bright Hyperion, —
 Nay, rather come, thou of the mighty bow,
 Come thou below,
 Leaving thy steeds unharnessed go!
 Sing as thou wilt, my voice shall dare to follow,
 And I will sun me in thine awful glow,
 Divine Apollo!
 Then thou thy lute shalt twine
 With Bacchic tendrils of the glorious vine
 That gave Sicilian wine:
 And henceforth when the breezes run
 Over its clusters, ripening in the sun,
 The leaves shall still be playing,
 Unto thy lute its melody repaying,
 And I, that quaff, shall evermore be free
 To mount thy car and ride the heavens with thee!

SUMMER'S BACCHANAL.



ILL the cup from some secretest fountain,
 Under granite ledges, deep and low,
 Where the crystal vintage of the mountain,
 Runs in foam from dazzling fields of snow.

Some lost stream, that in a woodland hollow
 Coils, to sleep its weariness away,
 Shut from prying stars, that fain would follow,
 In the emerald glooms of hemlock spray.

Fill, dear friend, a goblet cool and sparkling
As the sunlight of October morns, —
Not for us the crimson wave, that darkling
Stains the lips of olden drinking-horns !

We will quaff, beneath the noontide glowing,
Draughts of nectar, sweet as faery dew ;
Couched on ferny banks, where light airs blowing,
Shake the leaves between us and the blue.

We will pledge in breathless, long libation,
All we have been, or have sworn to be, —
Fame, and Joy, and Love's dear adoration, —
Summer's lusty bacchanals are we !

Round the white roots of the fragrant lily,
And the mossy hazels, purple-stained,
Once the music of these waters chilly
Gave return for all the sweetness drained.

How that rare, delicious, woodland flavor
Mocked my palate in the fever hours,
When I pined for springs of coolest savor,
As the burning Earth for thunder-showers !

In the wave, which through my maddened dreaming
Flowed to cheat me, fill the cups again !
Drink, dear friend, to life which is not seeming, —
Fresh as this to manhood's heart and brain !

Fill, fill high ! and while our goblets, ringing,
Shine with vintage of the mountain-snow,
Youth shall bid his Fountain, blithely springing,
Brim our souls to endless overflow !

STORM-LINES.



WHEN the rains of November are dark on the hills, and the pine-trees incessantly roar

To the sound of the wind-beaten crags, and the floods that in foam through their black channels pour :

When the breaker-lined coast stretches dimly afar through the desolate waste of the gale,
And the clang of the sea-gull at nightfall is heard from the deep, like a mariner's wail :

When the gray sky drops low, and the forest is bare, and the laborer is housed from the storm,
And the world is a blank, save the light of his home through the gust shining redly and warm :—

Go thou forth, if the brim of thy heart with its tropical fulness of life overflow, —
If the sun of thy bliss in the zenith is hung, nor a shadow reminds thee of woe !

Leave the home of thy love ; leave thy labors of fame ; in the rain and the darkness go forth,
When the cold winds unpausingly wail as they drive from the cheerless expanse of the North.

Thou shalt turn from the cup that was mantling before ; thou shalt hear the eternal despair
Of the hearts that endured and were broken at last, from the hills and the sea and the air !

Thou shalt hear how the Earth, the maternal, laments for the children she nurtured with tears,—
How the forest but deepens its wail and the breakers their roar, with the march of the years !

Then the gleam of thy hearth-fire shall dwindle away, and the lips of thy loved ones be still ;
And thy soul shall lament in the moan of the storm, sounding wide on the shelterless hill.

All the woes of existence shall stand at thy heart, and the sad eyes of myriads implore,
In the darkness and storm of their being, the ray, streaming out through thy radiant door.

Look again : how that star of thy Paradise dims, through the warm tears, unwittingly shed ;—
Thou art man, and a sorrow so bitterly wrung never fell on the dust of the Dead !

Let the rain of the midnight beat cold on thy cheek, and the proud pulses chill in thy frame,
Till the love of thy bosom is grateful and sad, and thou turn'st from the mockery of Fame !

Take with humble acceptance the gifts of thy life ; let thy joy touch the fountain of tears ;
For the soul of the Earth, in endurance and pain, gathers promise of happier years !

THE TWO VISIONS.



THROUGH days of toil, through nightly
 fears,
 A vision blessed my heart for years ;
 And so secure its features grew,
 My heart believed the blessing true.

I saw her there, a household dove,
 In consummated peace of love,
 And sweeter joy and saintlier grace
 Breathed o'er the beauty of her face :

The joy and grace of love at rest,
 The fireside music of the breast,
 When vain desires and restless schemes
 Sleep, pillowed on our early dreams.

Nor her alone : beside her stood,
 In gentler types, our love renewed ;
 Our separate beings one, in Birth, —
 The darling miracles of Earth.


The mother's smile, the children's kiss,
 And home's serene, abounding bliss ;
 The fruitage of a life that bore
 But idle summer blooms before :

Such was the vision, far and sweet,
 That, still beyond Time's lagging feet,
 Lay glimmering in my heart for years,
 Dim with the mist of happy tears.

That vision died, in drops of woe,
 In blotting drops, dissolving slow :
 Now, toiling day and sorrowing night,
 Another vision fills my sight.

A cold mound in the winter snow ;
 A colder heart at rest below ;
 A life in utter loneliness hurled,
 And darkness over all the world.

THE LIFE OF EARTH.

HE breeze is blowing fresh and strong,
 The rocking shallop chafes its chain,
 And the billows are breaking in swells
 of song,

The rhythmical joy of the restless main.
 A spirited stallion paws the sand ;
 A hound is watching with eager eye ;
 The tramp of armies is felt in the land,
 And banners are dancing beneath the sky !

Let horns be heard in the gray ravine,
 And stormy songs from off the sea !
 There's blood in my heart, where tears have been,
 And the blood of youth is warm and free.
 Leave, weary Soul, the lifeless lore
 That kept these limbs in a slothful rust :
 Lie down to rest on the quiet shore, —
 The Dust has need of the life of dust !

Thou art weak and pallid, O form of flesh,
Where the rubicund dawn once left its hue,
But the Earth shall bare her bosom afresh,
And give thee the milk of manhood anew.
Thy locks shall toss on the mountain air,
Thy limbs shall cool in the sparkling brine ;
She will brace thy nerves with her forest-fare,
And warm thy veins with generous wine !

Thy loins shall grow to a pard-like power
On the windy slopes of the riven hills ;
Thou shalt bare thy breast to the arrowy shower,
And catch in thine arms the icy rills !
Thy vigorous blood shall exult the same,
Though fevered cares in the spirit start,
As a pine, when the mountain is swathed in flame,
Keeps green and fresh in his spicy heart.

Thou shalt go where the battle-clarions blare,
As heroes went, ere the brain was lord ;
Thine eye with the soldier's lust shall glare,
Thy heart shall smite in the clanging sword.
The cannon will bellow thy mad desire,
And the shock of combat thine arm employ,
Till the thews are steel, and the veins are fire,
And death at last is a terrible joy !

Then tighten the girth and loosen the rein !
Unleash the baying, impatient hound,
And deep in the surging and seething main
Let every quivering oar be drowned.
We are free ! we have quelled the tyrant Soul :
We shall fill the world with our rebel mirth,
While the laughing vineyards crown the bowl
That brims for us with the Life of Earth !

STORM SONG.



THE clouds are scudding across the moon,
 A misty light is on the sea ;
 The wind in the shrouds has a wintry
 tune,
 And the foam is flying free.

Brothers, a night of terror and gloom
 Speaks in the cloud and gathering roar ;
 Thank God, He has given us broad sea-room,
 A thousand miles from shore.

Down with the hatches on those who sleep !
 The wild and whistling deck have we ;
 Good watch, my brothers, to-night we 'll keep,
 While the tempest is on the sea !

Though the rigging shriek in his terrible grip,
 And the naked spars be snapped away,
 Lashed to the helm, we 'll drive our ship
 In the teeth of the whelming spray !

Hark ! how the surges o'erleap the deck !
 Hark ! how the pitiless tempest raves !
 Ah, daylight will look upon many a wreck
 Drifting over the desert waves.

Yet, courage, brothers ! we trust the wave,
 With God above us, our guiding chart :
 So, whether to harbor or ocean-grave,
 Be it still with a cheery heart !

SONG.



PLUCKED for thee the wilding rose
 And wore it on my breast,
 And there, till daylight's dusky close,
 Its silken cheek was pressed ;

Its desert breath was sweeter far
 Than palace-rose could be,
 Sweeter than all Earth's blossoms are,
 But that thou gav'st to me.

I kissed its leaves, in fond despite
 Of lips that failed my own,
 And Love recalled that sacred night
 His blushing flower was blown.
 I vowed, no rose should rival mine,
 Though withered now, and pale,
 Till those are plucked, whose white buds twine
 Above thy bridal veil.

THE WAVES.

I.



CHILDREN are we
 Of the restless sea,
 Swelling in anger or sparkling in glee ;
 We follow our race,
 In shifting chase,

Over the boundless ocean-space !
 Who hath beheld where the race begun ?
 Who shall behold it run ?
 Who shall behold it run ?

II.

When the smooth airs keep
 Their noontide sleep,
 We dimple the cheek of the dreaming deep ;
 When the rough winds come,
 From their cloudy home,
 At the tap of the hurricane's thunder-drum,
 Deep are the furrows of wrath we plough,
 Ridging his darkened brow !
 Ridging his darkened brow !

III.

Over us born,
 The unclouded Morn
 Trumpets her joy with the Triton's horn,
 And sun and star
 By the thousand are
 Orbed in our glittering, near and far :
 And the splendor of Heaven, the pomp of Day,
 Shine in our laughing spray !
 Shine in our laughing spray !

IV.

We murmur our spell
 Over sand and shell ;
 We girdle the reef with a combing swell ;
 And bound in the vice
 Of the Arctic ice,

We build us a palace of grand device, —
 Walls of crystal and splintered spires,
 Flashing with diamond fires!
 Flashing with diamond fires!

v.

In the endless round
 Of our motion and sound,
 The fairest dwelling of Beauty is found,
 And with voice of strange
 And solemn change,
 The elements speak in our world-wide range,
 Harping the terror, the might, the mirth,
 Sorrows and hopes of Earth!
 Sorrows and hopes of Earth!

SONG.



FROM the bosom of ocean I seek thee,
 Thou lamp of my spirit afar,
 As the seaman, adrift in the darkness,
 Looks up for the beam of his star;
 And when on the moon-lighted water
 The spirits of solitude sleep,
 My soul, in the light of thy beauty,
 Lies hushed as the waves of the deep.

As the shafts of the sunrise are broken
 Far over the glittering sea,

Thou hast dawned on the waves of my dreaming,
 And each thought has a sparkle of thee.
 And though, with the white sail distended,
 I speed from the vanishing shore,
 Thou wilt give to the silence of ocean
 The spell of thy beauty the more.

WORDSWORTH.



SAW thee not, what time mine eyes
 beheld

Far-off Helvellyn skirt the misty sea,
 When wild Manx waters foamed and
 tumbled free

Around my keel : I saw thee not, when swelled
 Beyond Northumbrian moors the soft-blue line
 Of mountain chains that look on Windermere ;
 Yet was it joy to know thy paths so near,
 Thy voice on all those hills, O Bard divine !
 But I shall see thee where thou sittest now,
 Musing, uplift o'er deeps of diamond air,
 And I shall feel the splendor of thy brow
 Thrown on the scanty wreath that binds my hair,
 As, looking down benignly on my place,
 Thou read'st the reverence in my lifted face.

SONNET.

TO G. H. B.



YOU comfort me as one that, knowing
Fate,
Would paint her visage kinder than you
deem ;

You say, my only bliss that is no dream
She clouds, but makes not wholly desolate.
Ah, Friend! your heart speaks words of little
weight

To veil that sadder knowledge, learned in song,
And 'gainst your solace Grief has made me strong :
The Gods are jealous of our low estate ;
They give not Fame to Love, nor Love to Fame ;
Power cannot taste the joy the humbler share,
Nor holy Beauty breathe in Luxury's air,
And all in darkness Genius feeds his flame.
We build and build, poor fools! and all the while
Some Demon works unseen, and saps the pile.

THE TOMB OF CHARLEMAGNE.



I STOOD in that cathedral old, the work
of kingly power,

That from the clustered roofs of Aix
lifts up its mouldering tower,

And, like a legend strange and rude, speaks of an
earlier day, —

Of saint and knight, the tourney's pomp, and the
Minnesinger's lay!

Above me rose the pillared dome, with many a
 statue grim,
 And through the chancel-oriel came a splendor
 soft and dim,
 Till dusky shrine and painting old glowed in the
 lustre wan :
 Below me was a marble slab, — the Tomb of Char-
 lemagne.

A burst of organ-music rang so grandly, sadly
 slow,
 It seemed a requiem thundered o'er the dead who
 slept below ;
 And with the sound came thronging round the
 stern men of that time,
 When best was he who bravest fought, and coward-
 ice was crime.

I thought upon the day when hé, whose dust I
 stood upon,
 Ruled with a monarch's boundless right the king-
 doms he had won, —
 When rose the broad Alps in his realm, and roared
 the Baltic's wave ;
 And now — the lowest serf might stand, unheeded,
 on his grave.

And ruthless hands despoiled his dust, attired in
 regal pride,
 The crown upon his crumbled brows, and *Joyeuse*
 by his side, —
 Whose rusted blade, at Ronçeval, flamed in the
 hero's hand
 In answer to the silver horn of the Paladin, Ro-
 land.

I stood on that neglected stone, thrilled with the
glorious sound,
While bowed at many a holier shrine the worship-
pers around, —
And through the cloud of incense-smoke burned
many a taper dim,
And priestly stoles went sweeping by — I could
but think of him !

I saw the boy with yellow locks, crowned at St.
Deny's shrine ;
The emperor in his purple cloak, the lord of all
the Rhine ;
The conqueror of a thousand foes, in battle stern
and hard ;
The widowed mourner at thy tomb, O fairest Hil-
degarde !

Long pealed the music of the choir through chan-
cel-arch and nave,
As, lost in those old memories, I stood upon his
grave ;
And when the morning anthem ceased, and solemn
mass began,
I left that minster gray and old, — the Tomb of
Charlemagne !

THE WAYSIDE DREAM.



HE deep and lordly Danube
 Goes winding far below ;
 I see the white-walled hamlets
 Amid his vineyards glow,
 And southward, through the ether, shine
 The Styrian hills of snow.

O'er many a league of landscape
 Sleeps the warm haze of noon ;
 The wooing winds come freighted
 With messages of June,
 And down among the corn and flowers
 I hear the water's tune.

The meadow-lark is singing,
 As if it still were morn ;
 Within the dark pine-forest
 The hunter winds his horn,
 And the cuckoo's shy, complaining note
 Mocks the maidens in the corn.

I watch the cloud-armada
 Go sailing up the sky,
 Lulled by the murmuring mountain grass
 Upon whose bed I lie,
 And the faint sound of noontday chimes
 That in the distance die.

A warm and drowsy sweetness
Is stealing o'er my brain ;
I see no more the Danube
Sweep through his royal plain ;
I hear no more the peasant girls
Singing amid the grain.

Soft, silvery wings, a moment
Have swept across my brow :
Again I hear the water,
But its voice is sweeter now,
And the mocking-bird and oriole
Are singing on the bough !

The elm and linden branches
Droop close and dark o'erhead,
And the foaming forest brooklet
Leaps down its rocky bed :
Be still, my heart ! the seas are passed, —
The paths of home I tread !

The showers of creamy blossoms
Are on the linden spray,
And down the clover meadow
They heap the scented hay,
And glad winds toss the forest leaves,
All the bright summer day.

Old playmates ! bid me welcome
Amid your brother-band ;
Give me the old affection, —
The glowing grasp of hand !
I seek no more the realms of old, —
Here is my Fatherland !

Come hither, gentle maiden,
Who weep'st in tender joy !
The rapture of thy presence
Repay's the world's annoy,
And calms the wild and ardent heart
Which warms the wandering boy.

In many a mountain fastness,
By many a river's foam,
And through the gorgeous cities,
'T was loneliness to roam ;
For the sweetest music in my heart
Was the olden songs of home.

Ah, glen and grove are vanished,
And friends have faded now !
The balmy Styrian breezes
Are blowing on my brow,
And sounds again the cuckoo's call
From the forest's inmost bough.

Fled is that happy vision, —
The gates of slumber fold ;
I rise and journey onward
Through valleys green and old,
Where the far, white Alps announce the morn,
And keep the sunset's gold.

STEYERMARK.



IN Steyermark, — green Steyermark,
 The fields are bright and the forests
 dark, —
 Bright with the maids that bind the
 sheaves,

Dark with the arches of whispering leaves!
 Voices and streams and sweet bells chime
 Over the land, in the harvest-time,
 And the blithest songs of the finch and lark
 Are heard in the orchards of Steyermark.

In Steyermark, — old Steyermark,
 The mountain summits are white and stark;
 The rough winds furrow their trackless snow,
 But the mirrors of crystal are smooth below;
 The stormy Danube clasps the wave
 That downward sweeps with the Drave and Save,
 And the Euxine is whitened with many a bark,
 Freighted with ores of Steyermark!

In Steyermark, — rough Steyermark,
 The anvils ring from dawn till dark;
 The molten streams of the furnace glare,
 Blurring with crimson the midnight air;
 The lusty voices of forgemen chord,
 Chanting the ballad of Siegfried's Sword,
 While the hammers swung by their arms so stark
 Strike to the music of Steyermark!

In Steyermark, — dear Steyermark,
 Each heart is light as the morning lark :
 There men are framed in the manly mould
 Of their stalwart sires, of the times of old,
 And the sunny blue of the Styrian sky
 Grows soft in the timid maiden's eye,
 When love descends with the twilight dark,
 In the beechen groves of Steyermark.

TO A BAVARIAN GIRL.



THOU, Bavaria's brown-eyed daughter,
 Art a shape of joy,
 Standing by the Isar's water
 With thy brother-boy ;
 In thy dream, with idle fingers
 Threading through his curls,
 On thy cheek the sun's kiss lingers,
 Rosiest of girls !

Woods of glossy oak are ringing
 With the echoes bland,
 While thy generous voice is singing
 Songs of Fatherland, —
 Songs, that by the Danube's river
 Sound on hills of vine,
 And where waves in green light quiver,
 Down the rushing Rhine.

Life, with all its hues and changes,
 To thy heart doth lie

Like those dreamy Alpine ranges
 In the southern sky ;
 Where in haze the clefts are hidden,
 Which the foot should fear,
 And the crags that fall unbidden
 Startle not the ear.

Where the village maidens gather
 At the fountain's brim,
 Or in sunny harvest-weather,
 With the reapers trim ;
 Where the autumn fires are burning
 On the vintage-hills ;
 Where the mossy wheels are turning
 In the ancient mills ;

Where from ruined robber-towers
 Hangs the ivy's hair,
 And the crimson foxbell flowers
 On the crumbling stair : —
 Everywhere, without thy presence,
 Would the sunshine fail,
 Fairest of the maiden peasants !
 Flower of Isar's vale !

MUNICH, 1845.

IN ITALY.



DEAR Lillian, all I wished is won !
 I sit beneath Italia's sun,
 Where olive-orchards gleam and quiver
 Along the banks of Arno's river.

Through laurel leaves, the dim green light
Falls on my forehead as I write,
And the sweet chimes of vesper, ringing,
Blend with the contadina's singing.

Rich is the soil with Fancy's gold ;
The stirring memories of old
Rise thronging in my haunted vision,
And wake my spirit's young ambition.

But as the radiant sunsets close
Above Val d'Arno's bowers of rose,
My soul forgets the olden glory,
And deems our love a dearer story.

Thy words, in Memory's ear, outchime
The music of the Tuscan rhyme ;
Thou standest here — the gentle-hearted —
Amid the shades of bards departed.

I see before thee fade away
Their garlands of immortal bay,
And turn from Petrarch's passion-glances
To my own dearer heart-romances.

Sad is the opal glow that fires
The midnight of the cypress spires,
And cold the scented wind that closes
The heart of bright Etruscan roses.

A single thought of thee effaced
The fair Italian dream I chased ;
For the true clime of song and sun
Lies in the heart which mine hath won !

A BACCHIC ODE.



WINE, — bring wine!
 Let the crystal beaker flame and shine,
 Brimming o'er with the draught di-
 vine!

The crimson glow
 Of the lifted cup on my forehead throw,
 Like the sunset's flush on a field of snow.

I burn to lave
 My thirsty lip in the ruddy wave;
 Freedom bringeth the wine so brave!

The world is cold:
 Sorrow and pain have gloomy hold,
 Chilling the bosom warm and bold.

Doubts and fears
 Veil the shine of my morning years, —
 My life's lone rainbow springs from tears.

But Eden-gleams
 Visit my soul in immortal dreams,
 When the wave of the goblet burns and beams.

Not from the Rhine,
 Not from fields of Burgundian vine,
 Bring me the bright Olympian wine!

Not with a ray
 Born where the winds of Shiraz play,
 Or the fiery blood of the ripe Tokay.

Not where the glee
Of Falernian vintage echoes free,
Or the Chian gardens gem the sea.

But wine, — bring wine,
Royally flushed with its growth divine,
In the crystal depth of my soul to shine!

Whose glow was caught
From the warmth which Fancy's summer brought
To the vintage-fields in the Land of Thought.

Rich and free
To my thirsting soul will the goblet be,
Poured by the Hebe, Poesy.

A FUNERAL THOUGHT.

I.



WHEN the stern Genius, to whose hollow
tramp
Echo the startled chambers of the soul,
Waves his inverted torch o'er that pale
camp

Where the archangel's final trumpets roll,
I would not meet him in the chamber dim,
Hushed, and pervaded with a nameless fear,
When the breath flutters and the senses swim,
And the dread hour is near.

II.

Though Love's dear arms might clasp me fondly
then

As if to keep the Summoner at bay,
And woman's woe and the calm grief of men
Hallow at last the chill, unbreathing clay —
These are Earth's fetters, and the soul would
shrink,

Thus bound, from Darkness and the dread Un-
known,
Stretching its arms from Death's eternal brink,
Which it must dare alone.

III.

But in the awful silence of the sky,
Upon some mountain summit, yet untrod,
Through the blue ether would I climb, to die
Afar from mortals and alone with God!
To the pure keeping of the stainless air
Would I resign my faint and fluttering breath,
And with the rapture of an answered prayer
Receive the kiss of Death.

IV.

Then to the elements my frame would turn ;
No worms should riot on my coffined clay,
But the cold limbs, from that sepulchral urn,
In the slow storms of ages waste away.
Loud winds and thunder's diapason high
Should be my requiem through the coming time,
And the white summit, fading in the sky,
My monument sublime.

AN HOUR.



'VE left the keen, cold winds to blow
 Around the summits bare ;
 My sunny pathway to the sea
 Leads downward, green and fair,
 Where leaves and blossoms toss and glow
 Amid the southern air.

The fern its fragrant plumage droops
 O'er mosses crisp and gray,
 Where on the shaded crags I sit,
 Beside the cataract's spray,
 And watch the far-off, shining sails
 Go down the gleaming bay.

I've left the wintry winds of life
 On barren hearts to blow, —
 The anguish and the gnawing care,
 The torture and the woe !
 I sail the sunny sea of dreams
 Where'er its winds may blow.

Away ! away ! I hear the horn
 Among the hills of Spain :
 The old, chivalric glory fires
 Her warrior hearts again :
 Ho ! how their banners light the morn
 Along Granada's plain !

I hear the hymns of holy faith
The red Crusaders sang,
And the silver horn of Ronçeval,
That o'er the tecbir rang,
When prince and kaiser through the fray
To the dying paladin sprang.

A beam of burning light I hold,
My good Damaseus brand,
And the jet-black charger that I ride
Was foaled in the Arab land,
And a hundred horsemen, mailed in steel,
Follow at my command!

Through royal cities goes our march;
The minster-bells are rung;
The trumpets give a lordly peal,
The battle-flags are swung,
And lips of lovely ladies praise
The chieftain, brave and young.

And now, in soft Provençal bowers,
A minstrel-knight am I:
A gentle bosom on my own
Throbs back its ecstasy;
A cheek, as fair as the almond flowers,
Thrills to my lip's reply.

I tread the fanes of wondrous Rome,
Crowned with immortal bay,
And myriads crowd the Capitol
To hear my lofty lay,
While, sounding o'er the Tiber's foam,
Their shoutings peal away.

O, triumph such as this were worth
 The Poet's doom of pain,
 Whose hours are brazen on the earth,
 But golden in the brain :
 I close the starry Gate of Dreams,
 And walk the dust again.

THE NORSEMAN'S RIDE.



THE frosty fires of Northern starlight
 Gleamed on the glittering snow,
 And through the forest's frozen branches
 The shrieking winds did blow ;
 A floor of blue, translucent marble
 Kept ocean's pulses still,
 When, in the depth of dreary midnight,
 Opened the burial hill.

Then while a low and creeping shudder
 Thrilled upward through the ground,
 The Norseman came, as armed for battle,
 In silence from his mound :
 He, who was mourned in solemn sorrow
 By many a swordsman bold,
 And harps that wailed along the ocean,
 Struck by the Skalds of old.

Sudden, a swift and silver shadow
 Rushed up from out the gloom, —
 A horse that stamped with hoof impatient,
 Yet noiseless, on the tomb.

“Ha, Surtur! let me hear thy tramping,
Thou noblest Northern steed,
Whose neigh along the stormy headlands
Bade the bold Viking heed!”

He mounted: like a north-light streaking
The sky with flaming bars,
They, on the winds so wildly shrieking,
Shot up before the stars.

“Is this thy mane, my fearless Surtur,
That streams against my breast?
Is this thy neck, that curve of moonlight,
Which Helva's hand caressed?”

“No misty breathing strains thy nostril,
Thine eye shines blue and cold,
Yet, mounting up our airy pathway,
I see thy hoofs of gold!
Not lighter o'er the springing rainbow
Walhalla's gods repair,
Than we, in sweeping journey over
The bending bridge of air.

“Far, far around, star-gleams are sparkling
Amid the twilight space;
And Earth, that lay so cold and darkling,
Has veiled her dusky face.
Are those the Nornes that beckon onward
To seats at Odin's board,
Where nightly by the hands of heroes
The foaming mead is poured?”

“'Tis Skuld! her star-eye speaks the glory
That waits the warrior's soul,

When on its hinge of music opens
 The gateway of the Pole, —
 When Odin's warder leads the hero
 To banquets never done,
 And Freya's eyes outshine in summer
 The ever-risen sun.

“On! on! the Northern lights are streaming
 In brightness like the morn,
 And pealing far amid the vastness,
 I hear the Gjallarhorn:
 The heart of starry space is throbbing
 With songs of minstrels old,
 And now, on high Walhalla's portal,
 Gleam Surtur's hoofs of gold!”

THE VOICE OF THE FIRE.



THEY sat by the hearth-stone, broad and
 bright,
 Whose burning brands threw a cheerful
 light
 On the frosty calm of the winter's night.

Her tresses soft to his lips were pressed,
 Her head was laid on his happy breast,
 And a tender silence their love expressed:

And ever a gentle murmur came
 From the clear, bright heart of the wavering flame,
 Like the first sweet call of the dearest name.

He kissed on the warm, white brow,
And told her in fonder words, the vow
He had whispered under the moonlit bough ;

And o'er them a steady radiance came
From the shining heart of the mounting flame,
Like the love that burneth for ever the same.

The maiden smiled through her soft brown eyes,
As he led her forward to sunnier skies,
Whose cloudless light on the Future lies ;

And a moment paused the laughing flame,
And it listened awhile, and then there came
A cheery burst from its sparkling frame.

In the home he pictured, the home so blest,
Their souls should sit in a calmer rest,
Like woodland birds in their shaded nest.

There slept, foreshadowed, the bliss to be,
When a tenderer life that home should see,
In the wingless cherub that climbed his knee.

And the flame went on with its flickering song,
And beckoned and laughed to the lovers long,
Who sat in its radiance, red and strong.

And ever its burden seemed to be
The mingled voices of household glee,
Like the gush of winds in a mountain tree.

Then broke and fell a glimmering brand
To the cold, dead ashes it fed and fanned,
And its last gleam waved like a warning hand.

They did not speak, for there came a fear,
 As a spirit of evil were wandering near,
 A menace of danger to something dear.

And, hovering over its smouldering bed,
 A feebler pinion the flame outspread,
 And a paler light through the chamber shed.

He clasped the maid in a fonder thrall :
 " We shall love each other, whatever befall,
 And the Merciful Father is over all."

A REQUIEM IN THE NORTH.



PEED swifter, Night!— wild Northern
 Night,
 Whose feet the Arctic islands know,
 When stiffening breakers, sharp and
 white,

Gird the complaining shores of snow !
 Send all thy winds to sweep the wold,
 And howl in mountain passes far,
 And hang thy banners, red and cold,
 Against the shield of every star !

For what have I to do with morn,
 Or summer's glory in the vales, —
 With the blithe ring of forest-horn,
 Or beckoning gleam of snowy sails ?
 Art *thou* not gone, in whose blue eye
 The fleeting summer dawned to me ?
 Gone, like the echo of a sigh
 Beside the loud, resounding sea !

O, brief that time of song and flowers,
Which blessed, through thee, the Northern Land!
I pine amid its leafless bowers,
And on the bleak and lonely strand.
The forest wails the starry bloom
Which yet shall light its dusky floor,
But down my spirit's paths of gloom
Thy love shall blossom nevermore.

And nevermore shall battling pines
Their solemn triumph sound for me;
Nor morning gild the mountain lines,
Nor sunset flush the hoary sea;
But Night and Winter fill the sky,
And load with frost the shivering air,
Till every gust that hurries by
Repeats the voice of my despair.

The leaden twilight, cold and long,
Is slowly settling o'er the wave;
No wandering blast awakes a song
In naked boughs, above thy grave.
The frozen air is still and dark;
The numb earth lies in icy rest;
And all is dead save this one spark
Of burning grief, within my breast.

Life's darkened orb shall wheel no more
To Love's rejoicing summer back:
My spirit walks a wintry shore,
With not a star to cheer its track.
Speed swifter, Night! thy gloom and frost
Are free to spoil and ravage here;
This last wild requiem for the lost
I pour in thy unheeding ear!

THE CONTINENTS.



HAD a vision in that solemn hour,
 Last of the year sublime,
 Whose wave sweeps downward, with
 its dying power
 Rippling the shores of Time.
 On the bleak margin of that hoary sea
 My spirit stood alone,
 Watching the gleams of phantom History,
 Which through the darkness shone.

Then, when the bell of midnight ghostly hands
 Tolled for the dead year's doom,
 I saw the spirits of Earth's ancient lands
 Stand up amid the gloom!
 The crownèd deities, whose reign began
 In the forgotten Past,
 When first the fresh world gave to sovereign Man
 Her empires green and vast.

First queenly ASIA, from the fallen thrones
 Of twice three thousand years,
 Came with the woe a grieving goddess owns,
 Who longs for mortal tears.
 The dust of ruin to her mantle clung
 And dimmed her crown of gold,
 While the majestic sorrows of her tongue
 From Tyre to Indus rolled :

“ Mourn with me, sisters, in my realm of woe,
Whose only glory streams
From its lost childhood, like the arctic glow
Which sunless Winter dreams !
In the red desert moulders Babylon,
And the wild serpent’s hiss
Echoes in Petra’s palaces of stone,
And waste Persepolis.

“ Gone are the deities that ruled enshrined
In Elephanta’s caves,
And Brahma’s wailings fill the fragrant wind
That ripples Ganges’ waves :
The ancient gods amid their temples fall,
And shapes of some near doom,
Trembling and waving on the Future’s wall,
More fearful make my gloom ! ”

Then, from her seat, amid the palms embowered
That shade the lion-land,
Swart AFRICA in dusky aspect towered,
The fetters on her hand !
Backward she saw, from out her drear eclipse,
The mighty Theban years,
And the deep anguish of her mournful lips
Interpreted her tears.

“ Woe for my children, whom your gyves have bound
Through centuries of toil ;
The bitter wailings of whose bondage sound
From many an alien soil !
Leave me but free, though the eternal sand
Be all my kingdom now, —
Though the rude splendors of barbaric land
But mock my crownless brow ! ”

There was a sound, like sudden trumpets blown,
 A ringing, as of arms,
 When EUROPE rose, a stately amazon,
 Stern in her mailed charms.
 She brooded long beneath the weary bars
 That chafed her soul of flame,
 And like a seer, who reads the awful stars,
 Her words prophetic came :

“ I hear new sounds along the ancient shore,
 Whose dull old monotone
 Of tides, that broke on many a system hoar,
 Moaned through the ages lone :
 I see a gleaming, like the crimson morn
 Beneath a stormy sky,
 And warning throes, which long my breast has borne,
 Proclaim the struggle nigh.”

O radiant-browed, the latest born of Time !
 How waned thy sisters old,
 Before the splendors of thine eye sublime,
 And mien erect and bold !
 Free, as the winds of thine own forests are,
 Thy brow beamed lofty cheer,
 And Day's bright oriflamme, the Morning Star,
 Flashed on thy lifted spear.

“ I bear no weight ” — rang thine exulting tones —
 “ Of memories weird and vast ;
 No crushing heritage of iron thrones,
 Bequeathed by some dead Past ;
 But hopes, that give my children power to climb
 Above the old-world fears —
 Whose prophecies forerun the latest time,
 And lead the crowning years !

“ Like spectral lamps, that burn before a tomb,
 The ancient lights expire ;
 I hold a torch, that floods the fading gloom
 With everlasting fire :
 Crowned with my constellated stars, I stand
 Beside the foaming sea,
 And from the Future, with a victor's hand,
 Claim empire for the Free ! ”

January, 1848.

THE MOUNTAINS.



DEEP, exulting freedom of the hills !
 O summits vast, that to the climbing
 view
 In naked glory stand against the blue !
 O cold and buoyant air, whose crystal fills
 Heaven's amethystine bowl ! O speeding streams,
 That foam and thunder from the cliffs below !
 O slippery brinks and solitudes of snow,
 And granite bleakness, where the vulture screams !
 O stormy pines, that wrestle with the breath
 Of every tempest, sharp and icy horns ;
 And hoary glaciers, sparkling in the morns,
 And broad, dim wonders of the world beneath !
 I summon ye, and 'mid the glare which fills
 The noisy mart, my spirit walks the hills.

L'ENVOI.



'VE passed the grim and threatening
warders

That guard the vestibule of Song,
And traced the print of bolder footsteps

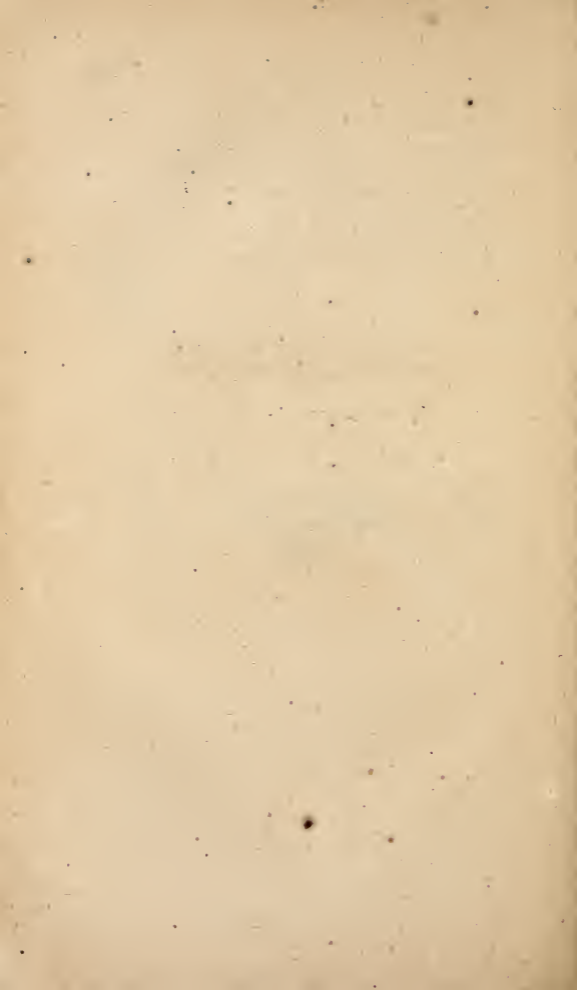
The lengthened corridors along ;
Where every thought I strove to blazon
Beside the bannered lays of old,
Was dim below some bright escutcheon,
Or shaded by some grander fold.

I saw, in veiled and shadowy glimpses,
The solemn halls expand afar,
And through the twilight, half despairing,
Looked trembling up to find a star ;
Till, in the rush of wings, awakened
My soul to utterance free and strong,
And with impassioned exultation,
I revelled in the rage of Song !

Then, though the world beside, unheeding,
Heard other voices than my own,
Thou, thou didst mark the broken music,
And cheer its proud, aspiring tone :
Thou cam'st in many a lovely vision
To lead my ardent spirit on,
Thine eye my morning-star of promise,
The sweet anticipant of dawn.

And if I look to holier altars,
Thou still art near me, as of old,
And thou wilt give the living laurel,
When the shrined Presence I behold.
Take, then, these echoes of thy being,
My lips have weakly striven to frame ;
For when I speak what thou inspirest,
I know my songs are nearest fame.







SINCE 1861.

END





THROUGH BALTIMORE.

I.

T WAS Friday morn : the train drew near
The city and the shore.
Far through the sunshine, soft and clear,
We saw the dear old flag appear,
And in our hearts arose a cheer
For Baltimore.

II.

Across the broad Patapsco's wave,
Old Fort McHenry bore
The starry banner of the brave,
As when our fathers went to save,
Or in the trenches find a grave
At Baltimore.

III.

Before us, pillared in the sky,
We saw the statue soar
Of Washington, serene and high : —
Could traitors view that form, nor fly ?
Could patriots see, nor gladly die
For Baltimore ?

IV.

“O, city of our country’s song!
 By that swift aid we bore
 When sorely pressed, receive the throng
 Who go to shield our flag from wrong,
 And give us welcome, warm and strong,
 In Baltimore!”

V.

We had no arms; as friends we came,
 As brothers evermore,
 To rally round one sacred name, —
 The charter of our power and fame:
 We never dreamt of guilt and shame
 In Baltimore.

VI.

The coward mob upon us fell:
 McHenry’s flag they tore:
 Surprised, borne backward by the swell,
 Beat down with mad, inhuman yell,
 Before us yawned a traitorous hell
 In Baltimore!

VII.

The streets our soldier-fathers trod
 Blushed with their children’s gore;
 We saw the craven rulers nod,
 And dip in blood the civic rod —
 Shall such things be, O righteous God,
 In Baltimore?

VIII.

No, never! By that outrage black,
 A solemn oath we swore,
 To bring the Keystone's thousands back,
 Strike down the dastards who attack,
 And leave a red and fiery track
 Through Baltimore!

IX.

Bow down, in haste, thy guilty head!
 God's wrath is swift and sore:
 The sky with gathering bolts is red, —
 Cleanse from thy skirts the slaughter shed,
 Or make thyself an ashen bed,
 O Baltimore!

TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.



THAT late, in half-despair, I said:
 "The Nation's ancient life is dead;
 Her arm is weak, her blood is cold;
 She hugs the peace that gives her gold, —
 The shameful peace, that sees expire
 Each beacon-light of patriot fire,
 And makes her court a traitors' den," —
 Forgive me this, my countrymen!

O, in your long forbearance grand,
 Slow to suspect the treason planned,

Enduring wrong, yet hoping good
For sake of olden brotherhood,
How grander, how sublimer far
At the roused Eagle's call ye are,
Leaping from slumber to the fight
For Freedom and for Chartered Right !

Throughout the land there goes a cry ;
A sudden splendor fills the sky :
From every hill the banners burst,
Like buds by April breezes nurst ;
In every hamlet, home, and mart,
The fire-beat of a single heart
Keeps time to strains whose pulses mix
Our blood with that of Seventy-Six !

The shot whereby the old flag fell
From Sumter's battered citadel
Struck down the lines of party creed
And made ye One in soul and deed, —
One mighty People, stern and strong
To crush the consummated wrong ;
Indignant with the wrath whose rod
Smites as the awful sword of God !

The cup is full ! They thought ye blind :
The props of state they undermined ;
Abused your trust, your strength defied,
And stained the Nation's name of pride.
Now lift to Heaven your loyal brows,
Swear once again your fathers' vows,
And cut through traitor hearts a track
To nobler fame and freedom back !

Draw forth your million blades as one ;
Complete the battle then begun !
God fights with ye, and overhead
Floats the dear banner of your dead.
They, and the glories of the Past,
The Future, dawning dim and vast,
And all the holiest hopes of Man,
Are beaming triumph in your van !

Slow to resolve, be swift to do !
Teach ye the False how fight the True !
How bucklered Perfidy shall feel
In her black heart the Patriot's steel ;
How sure the bolt that Justice wings ;
How weak the arm a traitor brings ;
How mighty they, who steadfast stand
For Freedom's Flag and Freedom's Land !

April 30, 1861.

SCOTT AND THE VETERAN.

I.



AN old and crippled veteran to the War
Department came ;
He sought the Chief who led him on
many a field of fame, —
The Chief who shouted “ Forward ! ” where'er his
banner rose,
And bore its stars in triumph behind the flying foes.

II.

“Have you forgotten, General,” the battered soldier cried,
 “The days of Eighteen Hundred Twelve, when I
 was at your side?
 Have you forgotten Johnson, that fought at Lundy’s Lane?
 ’Tis true, I’m old and pensioned, but I want to
 fight again.”

III.

“Have I forgotten?” said the Chief; “my brave
 old soldier, No!
 And here’s the hand I gave you then, and let it
 tell you so:
 But you have done your share, my friend; you’re
 crippled, old, and gray,
 And we have need of younger arms and fresher
 blood to-day.”

IV.

“But, General,” cried the veteran, a flush upon
 his brow,
 “The very men who fought with us, they say, are
 traitors now;
 They’ve torn the flag of Lundy’s Lane, — our old
 red, white, and blue;
 And while a drop of blood is left, I’ll show that
 drop is true.”

V.

“I’m not so weak but I can strike, and I’ve a good
 old gun
 To get the range of traitors’ hearts, and pick them,
 one by one.”

Your Minié rifles, and such arms, it a'n't worth
while to try :
I could n't get the hang o' them, but I'll keep my
powder dry !”

VI.

“ God bless you, comrade !” said the Chief ;
“ God bless your loyal heart !
But younger men are in the field, and claim to
have their part :
They'll plant our sacred banner in each rebellious
town,
And woe, henceforth, to any hand that dares to
pull it down !”

VII.

“ But, General,” — still persisting, the weeping
veteran cried,
“ I'm young enough to follow, so long as *you* 're
my guide ;
And some, you know, must bite the dust, and
that, at least, can I, —
So, give the young ones place to fight, but me a
place to die !

VIII.

“ If they should fire on Pickens, let the Colonel in
command
Put me upon the rampart, with the flagstaff in my
hand :
No odds how hot the cannon-smoke, or how the
shells may fly ;
I'll hold the Stars and Stripes aloft, and hold
them till I die !

IX.

“I’m ready, General, so you let a post to me be
 given,
 Where Washington can see me, as he looks from
 highest heaven,
 And say to Putnam at his side, or, may be,
 General Wayne;
 ‘There stands old Billy Johnson, that fought at
 Lundy’s Lane!’

X.

“And when the fight is hottest, before the traitors
 fly,
 When shell and ball are screeching and bursting
 in the sky,
 If any shot should hit me, and lay me on my face,
 My soul would go to Washington’s, and not to
 Arnold’s place!”

May, 1861.

MARCH.



WITH rushing winds and gloomy skies
 The dark and stubborn Winter dies.
 Far-off, unseen, Spring faintly cries,
 Bidding her earliest child arise:

March!

By streams still held in icy snare,
 On southern hillsides, melting bare,
 O’er fields that motley colors wear,
 That summons fills the changeful air:

March!

What though conflicting seasons make
 Thy days their field, they woo or shake
 The sleeping lids of Life awake,
 And hope is stronger for thy sake,

March !

Then from thy mountains, ribbed with snow,
 Once more thy rousing bugle blow,
 And East and West, and to and fro,
 Announce thy coming to the foe,

March !

Say to the picket, chilled and numb ;
 Say to the camp's impatient hum ;
 Say to the trumpet and the drum :
 "Lift up your hearts, I come ! I come !"

March !

Cry to the waiting hosts that stray
 On sandy seashores, far away,
 By marshy isle and gleaming bay,
 Where Southern March is Northern May :

March !

Announce thyself with welcome noise,
 Where Glory's victor-eagles poise
 Above the proud, heroic boys
 Of Iowa and Illinois :

March !

Then down the long Potomac's line
 Shout like a storm on hills of pine,
 Till ramrods ring and bayonets shine :
 "Advance ! The Chieftain's call is mine, —

MARCH !"

March 1, 1862.

A THOUSAND YEARS.

[NOVGOROD, RUSSIA, SEPT. 20, 1862.]



THOUSAND years! Through storm
and fire,
With varying fate, the work has grown,
Till Alexander crowns the spire,
Where Rurik laid the corner-stone.

The chieftain's sword, that could not rust,
But bright in constant battle grew,
Raised to the world a throne august, —
A nation grander than he knew.

Nor he, alone; but those who have,
Through faith or deed, an equal part:
The subtle brain of Yaroslav,
Vladimir's arm and Nikon's heart:

The later hands, that built so well
The work sublime which these began,
And up from base to pinnacle
Wrought out the Empire's mighty plan.

All these, to-day, are crowned anew,
And rule in splendor where they trod,
While Russia's children throng to view
Her holy cradle, Novgorod.

From Volga's banks ; from Dwina's side ;
From pine-clad Ural, dark and long ;
Or where the foaming Terek's tide
Leaps down from Kasbek, bright with song :

From Altaï's chain of mountain-cones ;
Mongolian deserts, far and free ;
And lands that bind, through changing zones,
The Eastern and the Western sea !

To every race she gives a home,
And creeds and laws enjoy her shade,
Till, far beyond the dreams of Rome,
Her Cæsar's mandate is obeyed.

She blends the virtues they impart,
And holds, within her life combined,
The patient faith of Asia's heart, —
The force of Europe's restless mind.

She bids the nomad's wanderings cease ;
She binds the wild marauder fast ;
Her ploughshares turn to homes of peace
The battle-fields of ages past.

And, nobler yet, she dares to know
Her future's task, nor knows in vain ;
But strikes at once the generous blow
That makes her millions men again !

So, firmer-based, her power expands,
Nor yet has seen its crowning hour, —
Still teaching to the struggling lands
That Peace the offspring is of Power.

Build, then, the storied bronze, to tell
 The steps whêreby this height she trod, —
 The thousand years that chronicle
 The toil of Man, the help of God!

And may the thousand years to come, —
 The future ages, wise and free, —
 Still see her flag, and hear her drum
 Across the world, from sea to sea! —

Still find, a symbol stern and grand,
 Her ancient eagle's wings unshorn :
 One head to watch the Western land,
 And one to guard the land of morn !

A DAY IN MARCH.



LOOK forth, Beloved, from thy mansion
 high,
 By soft airs fanned,
 And see the summer from her bluest sky
 Surprise the land!

See how the bare hills bask in purple bliss
 Along the south :
 On the brown death of winter falls a kiss
 From summer's mouth!

From pines that weave, among the ravished trees,
 Their phantom bowers,
 A murmur comes, as sought the ghosts of bees
 The ghosts of flowers.

Though yet no blood may swell the willow rind,
No grass-blade start,
A dream of blossoms fills the yearning wind,
Of love, my heart.

Look forth, Beloved, through the tender air,
And let thine eyes
The violets be, it finds not anywhere,
And scentless dies.

Look, and thy trembling locks of plenteous gold
The day shall see,
And search no more where first, on yonder wold,
The cowslips be.

Look, and the wandering summer not forlorn
Shall turn aside,
Content to leave her million flowers unborn,
Her songs untried.

Drowsy with life and not with sleep or death
I dream of thee:
Breathe forth thy being in one answering breath,
And come to me!

Come forth, Beloved! Love's exultant sign
Is in the sky:
And let me lay my panting heart to thine
And die!

THE TEST.



FAREWELL awhile, my bonnie darling !
 One long, close kiss, and I depart :
 I hear the angry trumpet snarling,
 The drum-beat tingles at my heart."

Behind him, softest flutes were breathing,
 Across the vale their sweet recall ;
 Before him burst the battle, seething
 In flame beneath its thunder-pall.

All sights and sounds to stay invited ;
 The meadows tossed their foam of flowers ;
 The lingering Day beheld, delighted,
 The dances of his amorous Hours.

He paused : again the fond temptation
 Assailed his heart, so firm before,
 And tender dreams, of Love's creation,
 Persuaded from the peaceful shore.

"But no !" he sternly cried ; "I follow
 The trumpet, not the shepherd's reed :
 Let idlers pipe in pastoral hollow, —
 Be mine the sword, and mine the deed !

"Farewell to Love !" he murmured, sighing :
 "Perchance I lose what most is dear ;
 But better there, struck down and dying,
 Than be a man and wanton here !"

He went where battle's voice was loudest ;
He pressed where danger nearest came ;
His hand advanced, among the proudest,
Their banner through the lines of flame.

And there, when wearied Carnage faltered,
He, foremost of the fallen, lay,
While Night looked down with brow unaltered,
And breathed the battle's dust away.

There lying, sore from wounds untended,
A vision crossed the starry gleam :
The girl he loved beside him bended,
And kissed him in his fever-dream.

“ O love ! ” she cried, “ you fled, to find me ;
I left with you the daisied vale ;
I turned from flutes that wailed behind me,
To hear your trumpet's distant hail.

“ Your tender vows, your peaceful kisses,
They scarce outlived the moment's breath ;
But now we clasp immortal blisses
Of passion proved on brinks of Death !

“ No fate henceforward shall estrange her
Who finds a heart more brave than fond ;
For Love, forsook this side of danger,
Waits for the man who goes beyond ! ”

THE NEVA.



WALK, as in a dream,
Beside the sweeping stream,
Wrapped in the summer midnight's
amber haze :

Serene the temples stand,
And sleep, on either hand,
The palace-fronts along the granite quays.

Where golden domes, remote,
Above the sea-mist float,
The river-arms, dividing, hurry forth ;
And Peter's fortress-spire,
A slender lance of fire,
Still sparkles back the splendor of the North.

The pillared angel soars
Above the silent shores ;
Dark from his rock the horseman hangs in air ;
And down the watery line
The exiled Sphinxes pine
For Karnak's morning in the mellow glare.

I hear, amid the hush,
The restless current's rush,
The Neva murmuring through his crystal zone :
A voice portentous, deep,
To charm a monarch's sleep
With dreams of power resistless as his own.

Strong from the stormy Lake,
 Pure from the springs that break
 In Valdaï vales the forest's mossy floor,
 Greener than beryl-stone
 From fir-woods vast and lone,
 In one full stream the braided currents pour.

“Build up your granite piles
 Around my trembling isles,”
 I hear the River's scornful Genius say :
 “Raise for eternal time
 Your palaces sublime,
 And flash your golden turrets in the day !

“But in my waters cold
 A mystery I hold, —
 Of empires and of dynasties the fate :
 I bend my haughty will,
 Unchanged, unconquered still,
 And smile to note your triumph : mine can wait.

“Your fetters I allow,
 As a strong man may bow
 His sportive neck to meet a child's command,
 And curb the conscious power
 That in one awful hour [stand.
 Could whelm your halls and temples where they

“When infant Rurik first
 His Norseland mother nursed,
 My willing flood the future chieftain bore :
 To Alexander's fame
 I lent my ancient name,
 What time my waves ran red with Pagan gore.

“ Then Peter came. I laughed
To feel his little craft
Borne on my bosom round the marshy isles :
His daring dream to aid,
My chafing floods I laid,
And saw my shores transfixed with arrowy piles.

“ I wait the far-off day
When other dreams shall sway
The House of Empire builded by my side, —
Dreams that already soar
From yonder palace-door,
And cast their wavering colors on my tide, —

“ Dreams where white temples rise
Below the purple skies,
By waters blue, which winter never frets, —
Where trees of dusky green
From terraced gardens lean,
And shoot on high the reedy minarets.

“ Shadows of mountain-peaks
Vex my unshadowed creeks ;
Dark woods o'erhang my silvery birchen bowers ;
And islands, bald and high,
Break my clear round of sky,
And ghostly odors blow from distant flowers.

“ Then, ere the cold winds chase
These visions from my face,
I see the starry phantom of a crown,
Beside whose blazing gold
This cheating pomp is cold,
A moment hover, as the veil drops down.

“ Build on ! That day shall see
My streams forever free.

Swift as the wind, and silent as the snow,
The frost shall split each wall :
Your domes shall crack and fall :
My bolts of ice shall strike your barriers low ! ”

On palace, temple, spire,
The morn's descending fire
In thousand sparkles o'er the city fell :
Life's rising murmur drowned
The Neva where he wound
Between his isles : he keeps his secret well.









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