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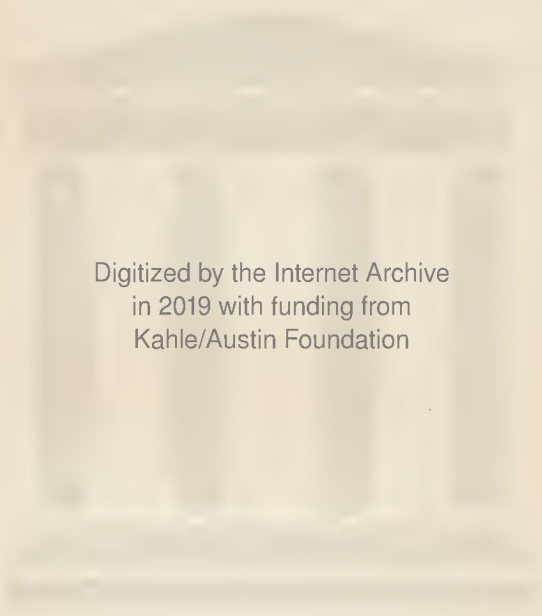


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Yours very truly
W. P. Wood

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
THOMAS HOOD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY.

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CONTENTS.

VOL. I.

	Page
MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.....	vii
The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies	13
Hero and Leander.....	53
Lycus, the Centaur.....	83
The Two Peacocks of Bedfont.....	101
The Two Swans.....	108
The Dream of Eugene Aram.....	118
The Elm Tree.....	125
The Haunted House.....	140
The Bridge of Sighs.....	151
The Song of the Shirt.....	154
The Lady's Dream.....	157
The Workhouse Clock.....	160
The Lay of the Labourer	163
The Lee-Shore.....	166
The Death-Bed.....	167
Lines on seeing my Wife and two Children sleeping in the same Chamber.....	167
To my Daughter on her Birthday.....	168
To a Child embracing his Mother.....	169
Stanzas.....	170
To a False Friend.....	171
The Poet's Portion.....	171
Song.....	172
Time, Hope, and Memory.....	173
Flowers.....	174
To ———.....	175
To ———.....	175
To ———.....	176

	Page
To ———	177
To ———. Composed at Rotterdam.	178
Serenade	179
Verses in an Album	180
Ballad.	181
Ballad.	181
Ballad.	182
Ballad.	183
The Romance of Cologne.	185
The Key; A Moorish Romance.	186
Fair Ines.	191
The Departure of Summer.	193
Ode: Autumn.	197
Autumn.	199
Autumn.	200
Song: for Music.	200
Song.	201
Hymn to the Sun.	202
To a Cold Beauty.	203
Ruth.	204
The Sea of Death.	204
I Remember, I Remember	206
The Water Lady.	207
The Exile.	208
To an Absentee.	208
Ode to the Moon	209
The Forsaken.	212
Ode to Melancholy	212
On a Native Singer.	216
Guido and Marina.	217
Answer to a Lady.	221

SONNETS.

To the Ocean.	222
Lear	222
Sonnet to a Sonnet.	223
False Poets and True.	223
To ———	224
For the 14th of February.	225
To a Sleeping Child.	225
To a Sleeping Child.	226
“The world is with me and its many cares.”	226
Written in a Volume of Shakspeare.	227
To Fancy.	227
To an Enthusiast.	228
“It is not death, that sometime in a sigh.”	229
“By ev’ry sweet tradition of true hearts.”	229

	Page
On receiving a Gift.	230
Silence.	230
“The curse of Adam, the old curse of all.”	231
“Love, dearest Lady, such as I would speak.”	231
Miss Kilmansegg and her Precious Leg.	232
A Tale of a Trumpet.	303
The Irish Schoolmaster.	326
The Forge.	335
The Last Man.	348
The Season.	355
Love.	356
Faithless Sally Brown.	357
Faithless Nelly Gray.	359
Bianca's Dream.	361
The Demon-Ship.	370
Spring.	375
The Flower.	376
The Sea-Spell.	377
A Sailor's Apology for Bow-Legs.	381
The Bachelor's Dream.	384
The Wee Man.	386
Etching Moralized.	388
Death's Ramble.	396
The Progress of Art.	398
A Fairy Tale.	401
The Turtles.	405
The Desert-Born.	410
Love Lane.	421
Domestic Poems.	423
Hymeneal Retrospections.	423
“The sun was slumbering in the west.”	424
A Parental Ode to my Son, aged three years and five months.	425
A Serenade.	427
A Plain Direction.	428
A Table of Errata.	432
A Row at the Oxford Arms.	435
Equestrian Courtship.	442
An Open Question.	443

MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

BY RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES.

THOMAS HOOD, humorist and poet, was born at London in 1798. He was the son of Mr. Hood, bookseller, of the firm of Vernor and Hood, a man of intelligence, and the author of two novels. "Next to being a citizen of the world," writes Thomas Hood in his *Literary Reminiscences*, "it must be the best thing to be born a citizen of the world's greatest city." The best incident of his boyhood was his instruction by a schoolmaster who appreciated his talents, and, as he says, "made him feel it impossible not to take an interest in learning while he seemed so interested in teaching." Under the care of this "decayed dominie," whom he has so affectionately recorded, he earned a few guineas—his first literary fee—by revising for the press a new edition of *Paul and Virginia*.

Admitted soon after into the counting-house of a friend of his family, he "turned his stool into a Pegasus on three legs, every foot, of course, being a dactyl or a spondee;" but the uncongenial profession affected his health, which was never strong, and he was transferred to the care of a relation at Dundee. He has graphically described his unconditional rejection by this inhospitable personage, and the circumstances under which he found himself in a strange town without an acquaintance, with the most sympathetic nature, anxious for in-

telleetual and moral culture, but without guidance, instruction, or control. This self-dependence, however, suited the originality of his character: he became a large and indiscriminate reader, and before long contributed humorous and poetical articles to the provincial newspapers and magazines. As a proof of the seriousness with which he regarded the literary vocation, it may be mentioned that he used to write out his poems in printed characters, believing that that process best enabled him to understand his own peculiarities and faults, and probably unconscious that Coleridge had recommended some such method of criticism when he said he thought "print settles it."

His modest judgment of his own abilities, however, deterred him from literature as a profession, and on his return to London he applied himself assiduously to the art of engraving, in which he acquired a skill that in after years became a most valuable assistant to his literary labors, and enabled him to illustrate his various humours and fancies by a profusion of quaint devices, which not only repeated to the eye the impressions of the text, but, by suggesting amusing analogies and contrasts, added considerably to the sense and effect of the work.

In 1821, Mr. John Scott, the editor of the *London Magazine*, was killed in a duel, and that periodical passed into the hands of some friends of Mr. Hood, who proposed to him to take a part in its publication. His installation into this congenial post at once introduced him to the best literary society of the time; and in becoming the associate of such men as Charles Lamb, Cary, De Quincy, Allan Cunningham, Proctor, Talfourd, Hartley Coleridge, the peasant-poet Clare, and other contributors to that remarkable miscellany, he gradually developed his own intellectual powers, and enjoyed that happy intercourse with superior minds for which his cordial and genial character was so well adapted,

and which he has described in his best manner, in several chapters of *Hood's Own*. *Odes and Addresses*, his first work, were written about this time, in conjunction with his brother-in-law, Mr. J. H. Reynolds, the friends of Keats; and it is agreeable to find Sir Walter Scott acknowledging the gift of the work with no formal expressions of gratification, but "wishing the unknown author good health, good fortune, and whatever other good things can best support and encourage his lively vein of inoffensive and humorous satires." *Whims and Oddities*, *National Tales*, *Tylney Hall*, a novel, and *The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies*, followed. In these works the humorous faculty not only predominated, but expressed itself with a freshness, originality, and power, which the poetical element could not claim. There was much true poetry in the verse, and much sound sense and keen observation in the prose of these works; but the poetical feeling and lyrical facility of the one, and the more solid qualities of the other, seemed best employed when they were subservient to his rapid wit, and to the ingenious coruscations of his fancy. This impression was confirmed by the series of the *Comic Annual*, a kind of publication at that time popular, which Mr. Hood undertook and continued, almost unassisted, for several years. Under that somewhat frivolous title he treated all the leading events of the day in a fine spirit of caricature, entirely free from grossness and vulgarity, without a trait of personal malice, and with an under-current of true sympathy and honest purpose that will preserve these papers, like the sketches of Hogarth, long after the events and manners they illustrate have passed from the minds of men. But just as the agreeable jester rose into the earnest satirist, one of the most striking peculiarities of his style became a more manifest defect. The attention of the reader was distracted, and his good taste annoyed,

by the incessant play upon words, of which Hood had written in his own vindication :—

“ However critics may take offence,
A double meaning has a double sense.”

Now it is true that the critic must be unconscious of some of the subtlest charms and nicest delicacies of language, who would exclude from humorous writing all those impressions and surprises which depend on the use of the diverse sense of words. The history, indeed, of many a word lies hid in its equivocal uses ; and it in no way derogates from the dignity of the highest poetry to gain strength and variety from the ingenious application of the same sounds to different senses, any more than from the contrivances of rhythm or the accompaniment of imitative sounds. But when this habit becomes the characteristic of any wit, it is impossible to prevent it from degenerating into occasional buffoonery, and from supplying a cheap and ready resource, whenever the true vein of humour becomes thin or rare. Artists have been known to have used the left hand in the hope of checking the fatal facility which practice had conferred on the right ; and if Mr. Hood had been able to place under some restraint the curious and complex machinery of words and syllables which his fancy was incessantly producing, his style would have been a great gainer, and much real earnestness of object, which now lies confused by the brilliant kaleidoscope of language, would have remained definite and clear. He was probably not unconscious of this danger ; for, as he gained experience as a writer, his diction became more simple, and his ludicrous illustrations less frequent. In another annual, called the *Gem*, appeared the poem on the story of “ Eugene Aram,” which first manifested the full extent of that poetical vigour which seemed to advance just in proportion as his physical

health declined. He started a magazine in his own name, for which he secured the assistance of many literary men of reputation and authority, but which was mainly sustained by his own intellectual activity. From a sick-bed, from which he never rose, he conducted this work with surprising energy, and there composed those poems, too few in number, but immortal in the English language, such as the "Song of the Shirt," the "Bridge of Sighs," and the "Song of the Labourer," which seized the deep human interests of the time, and transported them from the ground of social philosophy into the loftier domain of the imagination. They are no clamorous expressions of anger at the discrepancies and contrasts of humanity, but plain, solemn pictures of conditions of life, which neither the politician nor the moralist can deny to exist, and which they are imperatively called upon to remedy. Woman, in her wasted life, in her hurried death, here stands appealing to the society that degrades her, with a combination of eloquence and poetry, of forms of art at once instantaneous and permanent, and with a metrical energy and variety of which perhaps our language alone is capable.

Prolonged illness brought on straitened circumstances; and application was made to Sir Robert Peel to place Mr. Hood's name on the pension list, with which the British state so moderately rewards the national services of literary men. This was done without delay, and the pension was continued to his wife and family after his death, which occurred on the 3d of May 1845. Nine years after, a monument, raised by public subscription, in the cemetery of Kensall Green, was inaugurated with a concourse of spectators that showed how well the memory of the poet stood the test of time. Artizans came from a great distance to view and honor the image of the popular writer whose best efforts had been dedicated to the cause and the sufferings

of the workers of the world; and literary men of all opinions gathered around the grave of one of their brethren, whose writings were at once the delight of every boy and the instruction of every man who read them.

Happy the humorist whose works and life are an illustration of the great moral truth that the sense of humour is the just balance of all the faculties of man, the best security against the pride of knowledge and the conceits of the imagination, the strongest inducement to submit with a wise and pious patience to the vicissitudes of human existence. This was the lesson that Thomas Hood left behind him, and which the people of this country will not easily forget.

THE PLEA
OF
THE MIDSUMMER FAIRIES.

TO
CHARLES LAMB.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I THANK my literary fortune that I am not reduced, like many better wits, to barter dedications, for the hope or promise of patronage, with some nominally great man; but that where true affection points, and honest respect, I am free to gratify my head and heart by a sincere inscription. An intimacy and dearness, worthy of a much earlier date than our acquaintance can refer to, direct me at once to your name: and with this acknowledgment of your ever kind feeling towards me, I desire to record a respect and admiration for you as a writer, which no one acquainted with our literature, save Elia himself, will think disproportionate or misplaced. If I had not these better reasons to govern me, I should be guided to the same selection by your intense yet critical relish for the works of our great Dramatist, and for that favourite play in particular which has furnished the subject of my verses.

It is my design, in the following Poem, to celebrate by an allegory, that immortality which Shakspeare has conferred on the Fairy mythology by his *Midsummer Night's Dream*. But for him, those pretty children of our childhood would leave barely their names to our maturer years; they belong, as the mites upon the plum, to the bloom of fancy, a thing generally too frail and beautiful to withstand the rude handling of Time: but the Poet has made this most perishable part of the mind's creation equal to the most enduring; he has so intertwined the Elfin's with human sympathies, and linked them by so many delightful associations with the productions of nature, that they are as real to the mind's eye, as their green magical circles to the outer sense.

It would have been a pity for such a race to go extinct, even though they were but as the butterflies that hover about the leaves and blossoms of the visible world.

I am,

My dear friend,

Yours most truly,

T. Hood

1827.

THE
PLEA OF THE MIDSUMMER FAIRIES.

I.

'Twas in that mellow season of the year
When the hot Sun sings the yellow leaves
Till they be gold,—and with a broader sphere
The Moon looks down on Ceres and her sheaves ;
When more abundantly the spider weaves,
And the cold wind breathes from a chillier clime ;
That forth I fared, on one of those still eves,
Touch'd with the dewy sadness of the time,
To think how the bright months had spent their
prime.

II.

So that, wherever I address'd my way,
I seem'd to track the melancholy feet
Of him that is the Father of Decay,
And spoils at once the sour weed and the sweet ;—
Wherefore regretfully I made retreat
To some unwasted regions of my brain,
Charm'd with the light of summer and the heat,
And bade that bounteous season bloom again,
And sprout fresh flowers in mine own domain.

III.

It was a shady and sequester'd scene,
Like those famed gardens of Boccaccio,
Planted with his own laurels ever green,

And roses that for endless summer blow ;
 And there were fountain springs to overflow
 Their marble basins,—and cool green arcades
 Of tall o'erarching sycamores, to throw
 Athwart the dappled path their dancing shades,—
 With timid coney's cropping the green blades.

IV.

And there were crystal pools, peopled with fish,
 Argent and gold ; and some of Tyrian skin,
 Some crimson-barr'd ;—and ever at a wish
 They rose obsequious till the wave grew thin
 As glass upon their backs, and then dived in,
 Quenching their ardent scales in watery gloom ;
 Whilst others with fresh hues row'd forth to win
 My changeable regard,—for so we doom
 Things born of thought to vanish or to bloom.

V.

And there were many birds of many dyes,
 From tree to tree still faring to and fro,
 And stately peacocks with their splendid eyes,
 And gorgeous pheasants with their golden glow,
 Like Iris just bedabbled in her bow,
 Besides some vocalists, without a name,
 That oft on fairy errands come and go,
 With accents magical ;—and all were tame,
 And peckéd at my hand where'er I came.

VI.

And for my sylvan company, in lieu
 Of Pampinea with her lively peers,
 Sate Queen Titania with her pretty crew,
 All in their liveries quaint, with elfin gears,
 For she was gracious to my childish years,
 And made me free of her enchanted round ;
 Wherefore this dreamy scene she still endears,
 And plants her court upon a verdant mound,
 Fenced with umbrageous woods and groves pro-
 found.

VII.

“ Ah me,” she cries, “ was ever moonlight seen
 So clear and tender for our midnight trips?
 Go some one forth, and with a trump convene
 My lieges all!”—Away the goblin skips
 A pace or two apart, and deftly strips
 The ruddy skin from a sweet rose’s cheek,
 Then blows the shuddering leaf between his lips,
 Making it utter forth a shrill small shriek,
 Like a fray’d bird in the gray owlet’s beak.

VIII.

And lo! upon my fix’d delighted ken
 Appear’d the loyal Fays.—Some by degrees
 Crept from the primrose buds that open’d then,
 And some from bell-shaped blossoms like the bees,
 Some from the dewy meads, and rushy leas,
 Flew up like chafers when the rustics pass;
 Some from the rivers, others from tall trees
 Dropp’d, like shed blossoms, silent to the grass,
 Spirits and elfins small, of every class.

IX.

Peri and Pixy, and quaint Puck the Antie,
 Brought Robin Goodfellow, that merry swain;
 And stealthy Mab, queen of old realms romantic,
 Came too, from distance, in her tiny wain,
 Fresh dripping from a cloud—some bloomy rain,
 Then circling the bright Moon, had wash’d her
 car,
 And still bedew’d it with a various stain:
 Lastly came Ariel, shooting from a star,
 Who bears all fairy embassies afar.

X.

But Oberon, that night elsewhere exiled,
 Was absent, whether some distemper’d spleen
 Kept him and his fair mate unreconciled,

Or warfare with the Gnome (whose race had been
Sometime obnoxious,) kept him from his queen,
And made her now peruse the starry skies
Prophetical with such an absent mien ;
Howbeit, the tears stole often to her eyes,
And oft the Moon was incensed with her sighs—

XI.

Which made the elves sport drearily, and soon
Their hushing dances languish'd to a stand,
Like midnight leaves when, as the Zephyrs swoon,
All on their drooping stems they sink unfann'd, —
So into silence droop'd the fairy band,
To see their empress dear so pale and still,
Crowding her softly round on either hand,
As pale as frosty snow-drops, and as chill,
To whom the sceptred dame reveals her ill.

XII.

“ Alas,” quoth she, “ ye know our fairy lives
Are leased upon the fickle faith of men ;
Not measured out against fate’s mortal knives,
Like human gossamers, we perish when
We fade, and are forgot in worldly ken, —
Though poesy has thus prolong’d our date,
Thanks be to the sweet Bard’s auspicious pen
That rescued us so long! — howbeit of late
I feel some dark misgivings of our fate.

XIII.

“ And this dull day my melancholy sleep
Hath been so throng’d with images of woe,
That even now I cannot choose but weep
To think this was some sad prophetic show
Of future horror to befall us so, —
Of mortal wreck and uttermost distress, —
Yea, our poor empire’s fall and overthrow, —
For this was my long vision’s dreadful stress,
And when I waked my trouble was not less.

XIV.

“ Whenever to the clouds I tried to seek,
Such leaden weight dragg'd these Icarian wings,
My faithless wand was wavering and weak,
And slimy toads had trespass'd in our rings—
The birds refused to sing for me—all things
Disown'd their old allegiance to our spells;
The rude bees prick'd me with their rebel stings;
And, when I pass'd, the valley-lily's bells
Rang out, methought, most melancholy knells.

XV.

“ And ever on the faint and flagging air
A doleful spirit with a dreary note
Cried in my fearful ear, ‘ Prepare! prepare!’
Which soon I knew came from a raven's throat,
Perch'd on a cypress bough not far remote,—
A cursed bird, too crafty to be shot,
That alway cometh with his soot-black coat
To make hearts dreary :—for he is a blot
Upon the book of life, as well ye wot!—

XVI.

“ Wherefore some while I bribed him to be mute,
With bitter acorns stuffing his foul maw,
Which barely I appeased, when some fresh bruit
Startled me all aheap!—and soon I saw
The horridest shape that ever raised my awe,—
A monstrous giant, very huge and tall,
Such as in elder times, devoid of law,
With wicked might grieved the primeval ball,
And this was sure the deadliest of them all!

XVII.

“ Gaunt was he as a wolf of Languedoc,
With bloody jaws, and frost upon his crown;
So from his barren poll one hoary lock
Over his wrinkled front fell far adown,

Wellnigh to where his frosty brows did frown
 Like jagged icicles at cottage eaves ;
 And for his coronal he wore some brown
 And bristled ears gather'd from Cercs' sheaves,
 Entwined with certain sere and russet leaves.

XVIII.

“ And lo ! upon a mast rear'd far aloft,
 He bore a very bright and crescent blade,
 The which he waved so dreadfully, and oft,
 In meditative spite, that, sore dismay'd,
 I crept into an acorn-cup for shade ;
 Meanwhile the horrid effigy went by :
 I trow his look was dreadful, for it made
 The trembling birds betake them to the sky,
 For every leaf was lifted by his sigh.

XIX.

“ And ever as he sigh'd, his foggy breath
 Blurr'd out the landscape like a flight of smoke :
 Thence knew I this was either dreary Death
 Or Time, who leads all creatures to his stroke.
 Ah wretched me !”—Here, even as she spoke,
 The melancholy Shape came gliding in,
 And lean'd his back against an antique oak,
 Folding his wings, that were so fine and thin,
 They scarce were seen against the Dryad's skin.

XX.

Then what a fear seized all the little rout !
 Look how a flock of panic'd sheep will stare—
 And huddle close—and start—and wheel about,
 Watching the roaming mongrel here and there,—
 So did that sudden Apparition scare
 All close abeap those small affrighted things ;
 Nor sought they now the safety of the air,
 As if some leaden spell withheld their wings ;
 But who can fly that ancientest of Kings ?

XXI.

Whom now the Queen, with a forestalling tear
 And previous sigh, beginneth to entreat,
 Bidding him spare, for love, her lieges dear:
 "Alas!" quoth she, "is there no nodding wheat
 Ripe for thy crooked weapon, and more meet,—
 Or wither'd leaves to ravish from the tree,—
 Or crumbling battlements for thy defeat?
 Think but what vaunting monuments there be
 Buildd in spite and mockery of thee.

XXII.

"O fret away the fabric walls of Fame,
 And grind down marble Cæsars with the dust:
 Make tombs inscriptionless—raze each high name,
 And waste old armours of renown with rust:
 Do all of this, and thy revenge is just:
 Make such decays the trophies of thy prime,
 And check Ambition's overweening lust,
 That dares exterminating war with Time,—
 But we are guiltless of that lofty crime.

XXIII.

"Frail feeble sprites!—the children of a dream!
 Leased on the sufferance of fickle men,
 Like motes dependent on the sunny beam,
 Living but in the sun's indulgent ken,
 And when that light withdraws, withdrawing
 then;—
 So do we flutter in the glance of youth
 And fervid fancy,—and so perish when
 The eye of faith grows aged;—in sad truth,
 Feeling thy sway, O Time! though not thy tooth.

XXIV.

"Where be those old divinities forlorn,
 That dwelt in trees, or haunted in a stream?
 Alas! their memories are dimm'd and torn.

Like the remainder tatters of a dream :
 So will it fare with our poor thrones, I deem ;—
 For us the same dark trench Oblivion delves,
 That holds the wastes of every human scheme.
 O spare us then,—and these our pretty elves,
 We soon, alas ! shall perish of ourselves !”

XXV.

Now as she ended, with a sigh, to name
 Those old Olympians, scatter'd by the whirl
 Of fortune's giddy wheel and brought to shame,
 Methought a scornful and malignant curl
 Show'd on the lips of that malicious churl,
 To think what noble havocs he had made ;
 So that I fear'd he all at once would hurl
 The harmless fairies into endless shade,—
 Howbeit he stopp'd awhile to whet his blade.

XXVI.

Pity it was to hear the elfins' wail
 Rise up in concert from their mingled dread ;
 Pity it was to see them, all so pale,
 Gaze on the grass as for a dying bed ;—
 But Puck was seated on a spider's thread,
 That hung between two branches of a briar,
 And 'gan to swing and gambol heels o'er head,
 Like any Southwark tumbler on a wire,
 For him no present grief could long inspire.

XXVII.

Meanwhile the Queen with many piteous drops,
 Falling like tiny sparks full fast and free,
 Bedews a pathway from her throne ;—and stops
 Before the foot of her arch enemy,
 And with her little arms enfolds his knee,
 That shows more gristly from that fair embrace ;
 But she will ne'er depart. “ Alas !” quoth she,
 “ My painful fingers I will here enlace
 Till I have gained your pity for our race.

XXVIII.

“ What have we ever done to earn this grudge,
 And hate—(if not too humble for thy hating?)—
 Look o’er our labors and our lives, and judge
 If there be any ills of our creating;
 For we are very kindly creatures, dating
 With nature’s charities still sweet and bland:—
 O think this murder worthy of debating!”—
 Herewith she makes a signal with her hand,
 To beckon some one from the Fairy band.

XXIX.

Anon I saw one of those elfin things,
 Clad all in white like any ehorister,
 Come fluttering forth on his melodious wings,
 That made soft music at each little stir,
 But something louder than a bee’s demur
 Before he lights upon a bunch of broom,
 And thus ’gan he with Saturn to confer,—
 And O his voice was sweet, touch’d with the gloom
 Of that sad theme that argued of his doom!

XXX.

Quoth he, “ We make all melodies our eare,
 That no false discords may offend the Sun,
 Music’s great master—tuning everywhere
 All pastoral sounds and melodies, each one
 Duly to place and season, so that none
 May harshly interfere. We rouse at morn
 The shrill sweet lark; and when the day is done,
 Hush silent pauses for the bird forlorn,
 That singeth with her breast against a thorn.

XXXI.

“ We gather in loud ehoirs the twittering race,
 That make a ehorus with their single note;
 And tend on new-fledged birds in every place,
 That duly they may get their tunes by rote;

And oft, like echoes, answering remote,
 We hide in thickets from the feather'd throng,
 And strain in rivalship each throbbing throat,
 Singing in shrill responses all day long,
 Whilst the glad truant listens to our song.

XXXII.

“Wherefore, great King of Years, as thou dost love
 The raining music from a morning cloud,
 When vanish'd larks are carolling above,
 To wake Apollo with their pipings loud;—
 If ever thou hast heard in leafy shroud
 The sweet and plaintive Sappho of the dell,
 Show thy sweet mercy on this little crowd,
 And we will muffle up the sheepfold bell
 Whene'er thou listenest to Philomel.”

XXXIII.

Then Saturn thus: “Sweet is the merry lark,
 That carols in man's ear so clear and strong;
 And youth must love to listen in the dark
 That tuneful elegy of Tereus' wrong;
 But I have heard that ancient strain too long,
 For sweet is sweet but when a little strange,
 And I grow weary for some newer song;
 For wherefore had I wings, unless to range
 Through all things mutable from change to change?”

XXXIV.

“But wouldst thou hear the melodies of Time,
 Listen when sleep and drowsy darkness roll
 Over hush'd cities, and the midnight chime
 Sounds from their hundred clocks, and deep bells
 toll
 Like a last knell over the dead world's soul,
 Saying, Time shall be final of all things,
 Whose late, last voice must elegize the whole,—
 O then I clap aloft my brave broad wings,
 And make the wide air tremble while it rings!”

XXXV.

Then next a fair Eve-Fay made meek address,
 Saying, "We be the handmaids of the Spring,
 In sign whereof, May, the quaint broideress,
 Hath wrought her samplers on our gauzy wing.
 We tend upon buds' birth and blossoming,
 And count the leafy tributes that they owe—
 As, so much to the earth, so much to fling
 In showers to the brook—so much to go
 In whirlwinds to the clouds that made them grow.

XXXVI.

"The pastoral cowslips are our little pets,
 And daisy stars, whose firmament is green;
 Pansies, and those veil'd nuns, meek violets,
 Sighing to that warm world from which they screen;
 And golden daffodils, pluck'd for May's Queen;
 And lonely harebells, quaking on the heath;
 And Hyacinth, long since a fair youth seen,
 Whose tuneful voice, turn'd fragrance in his breath,
 Kiss'd by sad Zephyr, guilty of his death.

XXXVII.

"The widow'd primrose weeping to the moon,
 And saffron crocus in whose chalice bright
 A cool libation hoarded for the noon
 Is kept—and she that purifies the light,
 The virgin lily, faithful to her white,
 Whereon Eve wept in Eden for her shame;
 And the most dainty rose, Aurora's spright,
 Our every godchild, by whatever name—
 Spare us our lives, for we did nurse the same!"

XXXVIII.

Then that old Mower stamp'd his heel, and struck
 His hurtful scythe against the harmless ground,
 Saying, "Ye foolish imps, when am I stuck
 With gaudy buds, or like a wooer crown'd

With flow'ry chaplets, save when they are found
 Wither'd?—Whenever have I pluck'd a rose,
 Except to scatter its vain leaves around?
 For so all gloss of beauty I oppose,
 And bring decay on every flow'r that blows.

XXXIX.

“Or when am I so wroth as when I view
 The wanton pride of Summer;—how she decks
 The birth-day world with blossoms ever new,
 As if Time had not lived, and heap'd great wrecks
 Of years on years?—O then I bravely vex
 And catch the gay Months in their gaudy plight,
 And slay them with the wreaths about their necks,
 Like foolish heifers in the holy rite,
 And raise great trophies to my ancient might!”

XL.

Then saith another, “We are kindly things,
 And like her offspring nestle with the dove,—
 Witness these hearts embroider'd on our wings,
 To show our constant patronage of love:—
 We sit at even, in sweet bow'rs above
 Lovers, and shake rich odours on the air,
 To mingle with their sighs; and still remove
 The startling owl, and bid the bat forbear
 Their privacy, and haunt some other where.

XLI.

“And we are near the mother when she sits
 Beside her infant in its wicker bed;
 And we are in the fairy scene that flits
 Across its tender brain: sweet dreams we shed,
 And whilst the tender little soul is fled
 Away, to sport with our young elves, the while
 We touch the dimpled cheek with roses red,
 And tickle the soft lips until they smile,
 So that their careful parents they beguile.

XLII.

“ O then, if ever thou hast breathed a vow
 At Love’s dear portal, or at pale moon-rise
 Crush’d the dear eurl on a regardful brow
 That did not frown thee from thy honey prize—
 If ever thy sweet son sat on thy thighs,
 And wooed thee from thy careful thoughts within
 To watch the harmless beauty of his eyes,
 Or glad thy fingers on his smooth soft skin,
 For Love’s dear sake, let us thy pity win ! ”

XLIII.

Then Saturn fiercely thus: “ What joy have I
 In tender babes, that have devour’d mine own,
 Whenever to the light I heard them cry,
 Till foolish Rhea cheated me with stone ?
 Whereon, till now, is my great hunger shown,
 In monstrous dints of my enormous tooth ;
 And,—but the peopled world is too full grown
 For hunger’s edge,—I would consume all youth
 At one great meal, without delay or ruth !

XLIV.

“ For I am wellnigh crazed and wild to hear
 How boastful fathers taunt me with their breed,
 Saying, ‘ We shall not die nor disappear,
 But in these other selves, ourselves succeed,
 Ev’n as ripe flowers pass into their seed
 Only to be renew’d from prime to prime,’
 All of which boastings I am forced to read,
 Besides a thousand challenges to Time
 Which bragging lovers have compiled in rhyme.

XLV.

“ Wherefore, when they are sweetly met o’ nights,
 There will I steal, and with my hurried hand
 Startle them suddenly from their delights
 Before their next encounter hath been plann’d,

Ravishing hours in little minutes spann'd ;
 But when they say farewell, and grieve apart,
 Then like a leaden statue I will stand,
 Meanwhile their many tears incrust my dart,
 And with a ragged edge cut heart from heart."

XLVI.

Then next a merry Woodsman, clad in green,
 Stept vanward from his mates, that idly stood
 Each at his proper ease, as they had been
 Nursed in the liberty of old Shérwood,
 And wore the livery of Robin Hood,
 Who wont in forest shades to dine and sup,—
 So came this chief right frankly, and made good
 His haunch against his axe, and thus spoke up,
 Doffing his cap, which was an acorn's cup :—

XLVII.

" We be small foresters and gay, who tend
 On trees and all their furniture of green,
 Training the young boughs airily to bend,
 And show blue snatches of the sky between ;—
 Or knit more close intricacies, to screen
 Birds' crafty dwellings as may hide them best,
 But most the timid blackbird's—she, that seen,
 Will bear black poisonous berries to her nest,
 Lest man should cage the darlings of her breast.

XLVIII.

" We bend each tree in proper attitude,
 And founting willows train in silvery falls ;
 We frame all shady roofs and arches rude,
 And verdant aisles leading to Dryads' halls,
 Or deep recesses where the Echo calls ;—
 We shape all plummy trees against the sky,
 And carve tall elms' Corinthian capitals,—
 When sometimes, as our tiny hatchets ply,
 Men say, the tapping woodpecker is nigh.

XLIX.

“ Sometimes we scoop the squirrel’s hollow cell,
 And sometimes carve quaint letters on trees’ rind,
 That haply some lone musing wight may spell
 Dainty Aminta,—Gentle Rosalind,—
 Or chastest Laura,—sweetly call’d to mind
 In sylvan solitudes, ere he lies down ;—
 And sometimes we enrich gray stems, with twined
 And vagrant ivy,—or rich moss, whose brown
 Burns into gold as the warm sun goes down.

L.

“ And, lastly, for mirth’s sake and Christmas cheer,
 We bear the seedling berries, for increase,
 To graft the Druid oaks, from year to year,
 Careful that misletoe may never cease ;—
 Wherefore, if thou dost prize the shady peae
 Of sombre forests, or to see light break
 Through sylvan eloisters, and in spring release
 Thy spirit amongst leaves from careful ake,
 Spare us our lives for the Green Dryad’s sake.”

LI.

Then Saturn, with a frown : “ Go forth, and fell
 Oak for your coffins, and thenceforth lay by
 Your axes for the rust, and bid farewell
 To all sweet birds, and the blue peeps of sky
 Through tangled branches, for ye shall not spy
 The next green generation of the tree ;
 But hence with the dead leaves whene’er they
 fly,—
 Which in the bleak air I would rather see,
 Than flights of the most tuneful birds that be.

LII.

‘ For I dislike all prime, and verdant pets,
 ivy except, that on the aged wall
 Preys with its worm-like roots, and daily frets

The crumbled tower it seems to league withal,
 King-like, worn down by its own coronal :—
 Neither in forest haunts love I to won,
 Before the golden plumage 'gins to fall,
 And leaves the brown bleak limbs with few leaves
 on,
 Or bare—like Nature in her skeleton.

LIII.

“For then sit I amongst the crooked boughs,
 Wooing dull Memory with kindred sighs ;
 And there in rustling nuptials we espouse,
 Smit by the sadness in each other's eyes ;—
 But Hope must have green bowers and blue skies,
 And must be courted with the gauds of spring ;
 Whilst Youth leans god-like on her lap, and cries,
 What shall we always do, but love and sing ?—
 And Time is reckon'd a discarded thing.”

LIV.

Here in my dream it made me fret to see
 How Puck, the antic, all this dreary while
 Had blithely jested with calamity,
 With mistimed mirth mocking the doleful style
 Of his sad comrades, till it raised my bile
 To see him so reflect their grief aside,
 Turning their solemn looks to half a smile—
 Like a straight stick shown crooked in the tide ;—
 But soon a novel advocate I spied.

LV.

Quoth he—“ We teach all natures to fulfil
 Their fore-appointed crafts, and instincts meet,—
 The bee's sweet alchemy,—the spider's skill,—
 The pismire's care to garner up his wheat,—
 And rustie masonry to swallows fleet,—
 The lapwing's cunning to preserve her nest,—
 But most, that lesser pelican, the sweet
 And shrilly ruddock, with its bleeding breast,
 Its tender pity of poor babes distressed.

LVI.

“ Sometimes we cast our shapes, and in sleek skins
 Delve with the timid mole, that aptly delves
 From our example ; so the spider spins,
 And eke the silk-worm, pattern'd by ourselves :
 Sometimes we travail on the summer shelves
 Of early bees, and busy toils commence,
 Watch'd of wise men, that know not we are elves,
 But gaze and marvel at our stretch of sense,
 And praise our human-like intelligence.

LVII.

“ Wherefore, by thy delight in that old tale,
 And plaintive dirges the late robins sing,
 What time the leaves are scatter'd by the gale,
 Mindful of that old forest burying ;—
 As thou dost love to watch each tiny thing,
 For whom our craft most curiously contrives,
 If thou hast caught a bee upon the wing,
 To take his honey-bag,—spare us our lives,
 And we will pay the ransom in full hives.”

LVIII.

“ Now by my glass,” quoth Time, “ ye do offend
 In teaching the brown bees that careful lore,
 And frugal ants, whose millions would have end,
 But they lay up for need a timely store,
 And travail with the seasons evermore ;
 Whereas Great Mammoth long hath pass'd away,
 And none but I can tell what hide he wore ;
 Whilst purblind men, the creatures of a day,
 In riddling wonder his great bones survey.”

LIX.

Then came an elf, right beauteous to behold,
 Whose coat was like a brooklet that the sun
 Hath all embroider'd with its crooked gold,
 It was so quaintly wrought and overrun

With spangled traeries,—most meet for one
 That was a warden of the pearly streams;—
 And as he stept out of the shadows dun,
 His jewels sparkled in the pale moon's gleams,
 And shot into the air their pointed beams.

LX.

Quoth he,—“ We bear the gold and silver keys
 Of bubbling springs and fountains, that below
 Course thro' the veiny earth,—which when they
 freeze
 Into hard erysolites, we bid to flow,
 Creeping like subtle snakes, when, as they go,
 We guide their windings to melodious falls,
 At whose soft murmurings, so sweet and low,
 Poets have tuned their smoothest madrigals,
 To sing to ladies in their banquet halls.

LXI.

“ And when the hot sun with his steadfast heat
 Parches the river god,—whose dusty urn
 Drips miserly, till soon his crystal feet
 Against his pebbly floor wax faint and burn,
 And languid fish, unpoised, grow sick and yearn,—
 Then scoop we hollows in some sandy nook,
 And little channels dig, wherein we turn
 The thread-worn rivulet, that all forsook
 The Naiad-lily, pining for her brook.

LXII.

“ Wherefore, by thy delight in cool green meads,
 With living sapphires daintily inlaid,—
 In all soft songs of waters and their reeds,—
 And all reflections in a streamlet made,
 Haply of thy own love, that, disarray'd,
 Kills the fair lily with a livelier white,—
 By silver trouts upspringing from green shade,
 And winking stars reduplicate at night,
 Spare us, poor ministers to such delight.”

LXIII.

Howbeit his pleading and his gentle looks
 Moved not the spiteful Shade: Quoth he, "Your
 taste

Shoots wide of mine, for I despise the brooks
 And slavish rivulets that run to waste
 In noontide sweats, or, like poor vassals, haste
 To swell the vast dominion of the sea,
 In whose great presence I am held disgraced,
 And neighbour'd with a king that rivals me
 In ancient might and hoary majesty.

LXIV.

"Whereas I ruled in Chaos, and still keep
 The awful secrets of that ancient dearth,
 Before the briny fountains of the deep
 Brimm'd up the hollow cavities of earth;—
 I saw each trickling Sea-God at his birth,
 Each pearly Naiad with her oozy locks,
 And infant Titans of enormous girth,
 Whose huge young feet yet stumbled on the rocks,
 Stunning the early world with frequent shocks.

LXV.

"Where now is Titan, with his cumbrous brood,
 That scared the world?—By this sharp scythe they
 fell,

And half the sky was curdled with their blood:
 So have all primal giants sigh'd farewell.
 No Wardens now by sedgy fountains dwell,
 Nor pearly Naiads. All their days are done
 That strove with Time, untimely, to excel;
 Wherefore I razed their progenies, and none
 But my great shadow intercepts the sun!"

LXVI.

Then saith the timid Fay—"Oh, mighty Time!
 Well hast thou wrought the cruel Titans' fall.

For they were stain'd with many a bloody crime :
Great giants work great wrongs,—but we are
small,

For love goes lowly ;—but Oppression's tall,
And with surpassing strides goes foremost still
Where love indeed can hardly reach at all ;
Like a poor dwarf o'erburthen'd with good will,
That labours to efface the tracks of ill.—

LXVII.

“ Man even strives with Man, but we eschew
The guilty feud, and all fierce strifes abhor ;
Nay, we are gentle as sweet heaven's dew,
Beside the red and horrid drops of war,
Weeping the cruel hates men battle for,
Which worldly bosoms nourish in our spite :
For in the gentle breast we ne'er withdraw,
But only when all love hath taken flight,
And youth's warm gracious heart is harden'd quite

LXVIII.

“ So are our gentle natures intertwined
With sweet humanities, and closely knit
In kindly sympathy with human kind.
Witness how we befriend, with elfin wit,
All hopeless maids and lovers,—nor omit
Magical succours unto hearts forlorn :—
We charm man's life, and do not perish it ;—
So judge us by the helps we show'd this morn,
To one who held his wretched days in scorn.

LXIX.

“ Twas nigh sweet Amwell ;—for the Queen had
task'd
Our skill to-day amidst the silver Lea,
Whereon the noontide sun had not yet bask'd ;
Wherefore some patient man we thought to see,
Planted in moss-grown rushes to the knee, •

Beside the cloudy margin cold and dim ;—
 Howbeit no patient fisherman was he
 That cast his sudden shadow from the brim,
 Making us leave our toils to gaze on him.

LXX.

“ His face was ashy pale, and leaden care
 Had sunk the levell'd arches of his brow,
 Once bridges for his joyous thoughts to fare
 Over those melancholy springs and slow,
 That from his piteous eyes began to flow,
 And fell anon into the chilly stream ;
 Which, as his mimick'd image show'd below,
 Wrinkled his face with many a needless seam,
 Making grief sadder in its own esteem.

LXXI.

“ And lo ! upon the air we saw him stretch
 His passionate arms ; and, in a wayward strain,
 He 'gan to elegize that fellow wretch
 That with mute gestures answer'd him again,
 Saying, ‘ Poor slave, how long wilt thou remain
 Life's sad weak captive in a prison strong,
 Hoping with tears to rust away thy chain
 In bitter servitude to worldly wrong ?—
 Thou wear'st that mortal livery too long !’

LXXII.

“ This, with more spleenful speeches and some
 tears,
 When he had spent upon the imaged wave,
 Speedily I convened my elfin peers
 Under the lily-cups, that we might save
 This woful mortal from a wilful grave
 By shrewd diversions of his mind's regret,
 Seeing he was mere melancholy's slave,
 That sank wherever a dark cloud he met,
 And straight was tangled in her secret net.

LXXIII. .

“ Therefore, as still he watch’d the water’s flow,
Daintily we transform’d, and with bright fins
Came glancing through the gloom ; some from be-
low

Rose like dim fancies when a dream begins,
Snatching the light upon their purple skins
Then under the broad leaves made slow retire :
One like a golden galley bravely wins
Its radiant course,—another glows like fire,—
Making that wayward man our pranks admire.

LXXIV.

“ And so he banish’d thought, and quite forgot
All contemplation of that wretched face ;
And so we wiled him from that lonely spot
Along the river’s brink ; till, by heaven’s grace,
He met a gentle haunter of the place,
Full of sweet wisdom gather’d from the brooks,
Who there discuss’d his melancholy case
With wholesome texts learn’d from kind nature’s
books,
Meanwhile he newly trimm’d his lines and hooks.”

LXXV.

Herewith the Fairy ceased. Quoth Ariel now—
“ Let me remember how I saved a man,
Whose fatal noose was fasten’d on a bough,
Intended to abridge his sad life’s span ;
For haply I was by when he began
His stern soliloquy in life’s dispraise,
And overheard his melancholy plau,
How he had made a vow to end his days,
And therefore follow’d him in all his ways,

LXXVI.

“ Through brake and tangled copse, for much he
loathed

All populous haunts, and roam'd in forests rude,
 To hide himself from man. But I had clothed
 My delicate limbs with plumes, and still pursued,
 Where only foxes and wild cats intrude,
 Till we were come beside an ancient tree
 Late blasted by a storm. Here he renew'd
 His loud complaints,—choosing that spot to be
 The scene of his last horrid tragedy.

LXXVII.

“It was a wild and melancholy glen,
 Made gloomy by tall firs and cypress dark,
 Whose roots, like any bones of buried men,
 Push'd through the rotten sod for fear's remark;
 A hundred horrid stems, jagged and stark,
 Wrestled with crooked arms in hideous fray,
 Besides sleek ashes with their dappled bark,
 Like crafty serpents climbing for a prey,
 With many blasted oaks moss-grown and gray.

LXXVIII.

“But here upon his final desperate clause
 Suddenly I pronounced so sweet a strain,
 Like a pang'd nightingale it made him pause,
 Till half the frenzy of his grief was slain,
 The sad remainder oozing from his brain
 In timely ecstasies of healing tears,
 Which through his ardent eyes began to drain;—
 Meanwhile the deadly Fates unclosed their
 shears:—
 So pity me and all my fated peers!”

LXXIX.

Thus Ariel ended, and was some time hush'd:
 When with the hoary shape a fresh tongue pleads,
 And red as rose the gentle Fairy blush'd
 To read the record of her own good deeds:—
 “It chanced,” quoth she, “in seeking through the
 meads

For honeyed cowslips, sweetest in the morn,
 Whilst yet the buds were hung with dewy beads,
 And Echo answer'd to the huntsman's horn,
 We found a babe left in the swarths forlorn.

LXXX.

“ A little, sorrowful, deserted thing,
 Begot of love, and yet no love begetting ;
 Guiltless of shame, and yet for shame to wring ;
 And too soon banish'd from a mother's petting,
 To churlish nurture and the wide world's fretting,
 For alien pity and unnatural care ;—
 Alas ! to see how the cold dew kept wetting
 His childish coats, and dabbled all his hair,
 Like gossamers across his forehead fair.

LXXXI.

“ His pretty pouting mouth, witless of speech,
 Lay half-way open like a rose-lipp'd shell ;
 And his young cheek was softer than a peach,
 Whereon his tears, for roundness, could not
 dwell,
 But quickly roll'd themselves to pearls, and fell,
 Some on the grass, and some against his hand,
 Or haply wander'd to the dimpled well,
 Which love beside his mouth had sweetly plann'd,
 Yet not for tears, but mirth and smilings bland.

LXXXII.

“ Pity it was to see those frequent tears
 Falling regardless from his friendless eyes ;
 There was such beauty in those twin blue spheres,
 As any mother's heart might leap to prize ;
 Blue were they, like the zenith of the skies
 Soften'd betwixt two clouds, both clear and
 mild ;—
 Just touch'd with thought, and yet not over wise,
 They show'd the gentle spirit of a child,
 Not yet by care or any craft defiled.

LXXXIII.

“ Pity it was to see the ardent sun
 Scorching his helpless limbs—it shone so warm ;
 For kindly shade or shelter he had none,
 Nor mother’s gentle breast, come fair or storm.
 Meanwhile I bade my pitying mates transform
 Like grasshoppers, and then, with shrilly cries,
 All round the infant noisily we swarm,
 Haply some passing rustic to advise—
 Whilst providential Heaven our care espies,

LXXXIV.

“ And sends full soon a tender-hearted hind,
 Who, wond’ring at our loud unusual note,
 Strays curiously aside, and so doth find
 The orphan child laid in the grass remote,
 And laps the foundling in his russet coat,
 Who thence was nurtured in his kindly cot:—
 But how he prosper’d let proud London quote,
 How wise, how rich, and how renown’d he got,
 And chief of all her citizens, I wot.

LXXXV.

“ Witness his goodly vessels on the Thames,
 Whose holds were fraught with costly merchan-
 dise,—
 Jewels from Ind, and pearls for courtly dames,
 And gorgeous silks that Samarcand supplies :
 Witness that Royal Bourse he bade arise,
 The mart of merchants from the East and West ;
 Whose slender summit, pointing to the skies,
 Still bears, in token of his grateful breast,
 The tender grasshopper, his chosen crest—

LXXXVI.

“ The tender grasshopper, his chosen crest,
 That all the summer, with a tuneful wing,
 Makes merry chirpings in its grassy nest,

Inspirited with dew to leap and sing :—
 So let us also live, eternal King !
 Partakers of the green and pleasant earth :—
 Pity it is to slay the meanest thing,
 That, like a mote, shines in the smile of mirth :—
 Enough there is of joy's decrease and dearth !

LXXXVII.

“ Enough of pleasure, and delight, and beauty,
 Perish'd and gone, and hasting to decay ;—
 Enough to sadden even thee, whose duty
 Or spite it is to havoc and to slay :
 Too many a lovely race razed quite away,
 Hath left large gaps in life and human loving :—
 Here then begin thy cruel war to stay,
 And spare fresh sighs, and tears, and groans,
 reproving
 Thy desolating hand for our removing.”

LXXXVIII.

Now here I heard a shrill and sudden cry,
 And looking up, I saw the antic Puck
 Grappling with Time, who clutch'd him like a fly,
 Victim of his own sport,—the jester's luck !
 He, whilst his fellows grieved, poor wight, had
 stuck
 His freakish gauds upon the Ancient's brow,
 And now his ear, and now his beard, would pluck ;
 Whereas the angry churl had snatch'd him now,
 Crying, “ Thou impish mischief, who art thou ? ”

LXXXIX.

“ Alas ! ” quoth Puck, “ a little random elf,
 Born in the sport of nature, like a weed,
 For simple sweet enjoyment of myself,
 But for no other purpose, worth, or need ;
 And yet withal of a most happy breed ;
 And there is Robin Goodfellow besides,
 My partner dear in many a prankish deed

'To make dame Laughter hold her jolly sides,
Like merry mummers twain on holy tides.

XC.

"'Tis we that bob the angler's idle cork,
Till e'en the patient man breathes half a curse;
We steal the morsel from the gossip's fork,
And curdling looks with secret straws disperse,
Or stop the sneezing chanter at mid verse:
And when an infant's beauty prospers ill,
We change, some mothers say, the child at nurse.
But any graver purpose to fulfil,
We have not wit enough, and scarce the will.

XCI.

"We never let the canker melancholy
To gather on our faces like a rust,
But gloss our features with some change of folly,
Taking life's fabled miseries on trust,
But only sorrowing when sorrow must:
We ruminatè no sage's solemn cud,
But own ourselves a pinch of lively dust
To frisk upon a wind,—whereas the flood
Of tears would turn us into heavy mud.

XCII.

"Beshrew those sad interpreters of nature,
Who gloze her lively universal law,
As if she had not form'd our cheerful feature
To be so tickled with the slightest straw!
So let them vex their mumping mouths, and draw
The corners downward, like a wat'ry moon,
And deal in gusty sighs and rainy flaw—
We will not woo foul weather all too soon,
Or nurse November on the lap of June.

XCIII.

"For ours are winging sprites, like any bird,
That shun all stagnant settlements of grief;

And even in our rest our hearts are stirr'd,
 Like insects settled on a daneing leaf:—
 This is our small philosophy in brief,
 Which thus to teæh hath set me all agape:
 But dost thou relish it? O hoary chief!
 Unclasp thy erooked fingers from my nape,
 And I will show thee many a pleasant scrape.”

XCIV.

Then Saturn thus:—shaking his erooked blade
 O'erhead, which made aloft a lightning flash
 In all the fairies' eyes, dismally fray'd!
 His ensuing voice came like the thunder crash—
 Meanwhile the bolt shatters some pine or ash—
 “Thou feeble, wanton, foolish, fickle thing!
 Whom nought can frighten, sadden, or abash,—
 To hope my solemn eountenancee to wring
 To idiot smiles!—but I will prune thy wing!

XCV.

“Lo! this most awful handle of my scythe
 Stood once a May-pole, with a flowery erown,
 Which rustics daneed around, and maidens blithe,
 To wanton pipings;—but I pluck'd it down,
 And robed the May Queen in a ehureyard
 gown,
 Turning her buds to rosemary and rue;
 And all their merry minstrelsy did drown,
 And laid each lusty leaper in the dew;—
 So thou shalt fare—and every jovial crew!”

XCVI.

Here he lets go the struggling imp, to elutch
 His mortal engine with each grisly hand,
 Which frights the elfin progeny so much,
 They huddle in a heap, and trembling stand
 All round Titania, like the queen bee's band,
 With sighs and tears and very shrieks of woe!—
 Meanwhile, some moving argument I plann'd

To make the stern Shade merciful,—when lo!
He drops his fatal scythe without a blow!

XCVII.

For, just at need, a timely Apparition
Steps in between, to bear the awful brunt;
Making him change his horrible position,
To marvel at this comer, brave and blunt,
That dares Time's irresistible affront,
Whose strokes have scarr'd even the gods of old;—
Whereas this seem'd a mortal, at mere hunt
For coney, lighted by the moonshine cold,
Or stalker of stray deer, stealthy and bold.

XCVIII.

Who, turning to the small assembled fays,
Doffs to the lily queen his courteous cap,
And holds her beauty for a while in gaze,
With bright eyes kindling at this pleasant hap;
And thence upon the fair moon's silver map,
As if in question of this magic chance,
Laid like a dream upon the green earth's lap;
And then upon old Saturn turns askance,
Exclaiming, with a glad and kindly glance:—

XCIX.

“ Oh, these be Fancy's revellers by night!
Stealthy companions of the downy moth—
Diana's motes, that flit in her pale light,
Shunners of sunbeams in diurnal sloth;—
These be the feasters on night's silver cloth,—
The gnat with shrilly trump is their convener,
Forth from their flowery chambers, nothing loth,
With lulling tunes to charm the air serener,
Or dance upon the grass to make it greener.

C.

“ These be the pretty genii of the flow'rs,
Daintily fed with honey and pure dew—

Midsummer's phantoms in her dreaming hours,
 King Oberon, and all his merry crew,
 The darling puppets of romanee's view ;
 Fairies, and sprites, and goblin elves we call them
 Famous for patronage of lovers true :—
 No harm they act, neither shall harm befall them,
 So do not thus with crabbed frowns appall them."

CI.

O what a cry was Saturn's then !—it made
 The fairies quake. "What care I for their pranks,
 However they may lovers choose to aid,
 Or dance their roundelays on flow'ry banks ?—
 Long must they danee before they earn my
 thanks,—
 So step aside, to some far safer spot,
 Whilst with my hungry scythe I mow their ranks,
 And leave them in the sun, like weeds, to rot,
 And with the next day's sun to be forgot."

CII.

Anon, he raised afresh his weapon keen ;
 But still the gracious Shade disarm'd his aim,
 Stepping with brave alacrity between,
 And made his sere arm powerless and tame.
 His be perpetual glory, for the shame
 Of hoary Saturn in that grand defeat !—
 But I must tell, how here Titania eame
 With all her kneeling lieges, to entreat
 His kindly succour, in sad tones, but sweet.

CIII.

Saying, "Thou seest a wretched queen before thee
 The fading power of a failiug land,
 Who for her kingdom kneeleth to implore thee,
 Now menaced by this tyrant's spoiling hand ;
 No one but thee ean hopefully withstand
 That crooked blade, he longeth so to lift.
 I pray thee blind him with his own vile sand,

Which only times all ruins by its drift,
Or prune his eagle wings that are so swift.

CIV.

“ Or take him by that sole and grizzled tuft,
That hangs upon his bald and barren crown;
And we will sing to see him so rebuff'd,
And lend our little nights to pull him down,
And make brave sport of his malicious frown,
For all his boastful mockery o'er men.
For thou wast born I know for this renown,
By my most magieal and inward ken,
That readeth ev'n at Fate's forestalling pen.

CV.

“ Nay, by the golden lustre of thine eye,
And by thy brow's most fair and ample span,
Thought's glorious palae, framed for fancies high,
And by thy cheek thus passionately wan,
I know the signs of an immortal man,—
Nature's chief darling, and illustrious mate,
Destined to foil old Death's oblivious plan,
And shine untarnish'd by the fogs of Fate,
Time's famous rival till the final date!

CVI.

“ O shield us then from this usurping Time,
And we will visit thee in moonlight dreams;
And teach thee tunes, to wed unto thy rhyme,
And dance about thee in all midnight gleams,
Giving thee glimpses of our magie schemes,
Such as no mortal's eye hath ever seen;
And, for thy love to us in our extremes,
Will ever keep thy chaplet fresh and green,
Such as no poet's wreath hath ever been!

CVII.

“ And we'll distil thee aromatic dews,
To charm thy sense, when there shall be no
flow'rs :

And flavour'd syrups in thy drinks infuse,
 And teach the nightingale to haunt thy bow'rs,
 And with our games divert thy weariest hours,
 With all that elfin wits can e'er devise.
 And, this churl dead, there 'll be no hast'ning hours
 To rob thee of thy joys, as now joy flies :"—
 Here she was stopp'd by Saturn's furious cries.

CVIII.

Whom, therefore, the kind Shade rebukes anew,
 Saying, "Thou haggard Sin, go forth, and scoop
 Thy hollow coffin in some churchyard yew,
 Or make th' autumnal flow'rs turn pale, and droop ;
 Or fell the bearded corn, till gleaners stoop
 Under fat sheaves,—or blast the piny grove ;—
 But here thou shalt not harm this pretty group,
 Whose lives are not so frail and feebly wove,
 But leased on Nature's loveliness and love.

CIX.

"'Tis these that free the small entangled fly,
 Caught in the venom'd spider's crafty snare ;—
 These be the petty surgeons that apply
 The healing balsams to the wounded hare,
 Bedded in bloody fern, no creature's care !—
 These be providers for the orphan brood,
 Whose tender mother hath been slain in air,
 Quitting with gaping bill her darlings' food,
 Hard by the verge of her domestic wood.

CX.

"'Tis these befriend the timid trembling stag,
 When, with the bursting heart beset with fears,
 He feels his saving speed begin to flag ;
 For then they quench the fatal taint with tears,
 And prompt fresh shifts in his alarum'd ears,
 So piteously they view all bloody morts ;
 Or if the gunner, with his arm, appears,
 Like noisy pyes and jays, with harsh reports,
 They warn the wild fowl of his deadly sports.

CXI.

“ For these are kindly ministers of nature,
 To soothe all covert hurts and dumb distress ;
 Pretty they be, and very small of stature,—
 For mercy still consorts with littleness ;—
 Wherefore the sum of good is still the less,
 And mischief grossest in this world of wrong ;—
 So do these charitable dwarfs redress
 The tenfold ravages of giants strong,
 To whom great malice and great might belong.

CXII.

“ Likewise to them are Poets much beholden
 For secret favours in the midnight glooms ;
 Brave Spenser quaff'd out of their goblets golden,
 And saw their tables spread of prompt mushrooms,
 And heard their horns of honeysuckle blooms
 Sounding upon the air most soothing soft,
 Like humming bees busy about the brooms,—
 And glanced this fair queen's witchery full oft,
 And in her magic wain soar'd far aloft.

CXIII.

“ Nay I myself, though mortal, once was nursed
 By fairy gossips, friendly at my birth,
 And in my childish ear glib Mab rehearsed
 Her breezy travels round our planet's girth,
 Telling me wonders of the moon and earth ;
 My gramarye at her grave lap I conn'd,
 Where Puck hath been convened to make me mirth ;
 I have had from Queen Titania tokens fond,
 And toy'd with Oberon's permitted wand.

CXIV.

“ With figs and plums and Persian dates they fed
 me,
 And delicate cates after my sunset meal,
 And took me by my childish hand, and led me

By craggy rocks crested with keeps of steel,
 Whose awful bases deep dark woods conceal,
 Staining some dead lake with their verdant dyes :
 And when the West sparkled at Phœbus' wheel,
 With fairy euphrasy they purged mine eyes,
 To let me see their cities in the skies.

CXV.

" 'Twas they first school'd my young imagination
 To take its flights like any new-fledged bird,
 And show'd the span of winged meditation
 Stretch'd wider than things grossly seen or heard.
 With sweet swift Ariel how I soar'd and stir'd
 The fragrant blooms of spiritual bow'rs !
 'Twas they endear'd what I have still prefer'd,
 Nature's blest attributes and balmy pow'rs,
 Her hills and vales and brooks, sweet birds and
 flow'rs !

CXVI.

" Wherefore with all true loyalty and duty
 Will I regard them in my honouring rhyme,
 With love for love, and homages to beauty,
 And magic thoughts gather'd in night's cool clime,
 With studious verse trancing the dragon Time,
 Strong as old Merlin's necromantic spells ;
 So these dear monarchs of the summer's prime
 Shall live unstartled by his dreadful yells,
 Till shrill larks warn them to their flowery cells."

CXVII.

Look how a poison'd man turns livid black,
 Drugg'd with a cup of deadly hellebore,
 That sets his horrid features all at rack,—
 So seem'd these words into the ear to pour
 Of ghastly Saturn, answering with a roar
 Of mortal pain and spite and utmost rage,
 Wherewith his grisly arm he raised once more,
 And bad the cluster'd sinews all engage,
 As if at one fell stroke to wreck an age.

CXVIII.

Whereas the blade flash'd on the dinted ground,
 Down through his steadfast foe, yet made no scar
 On that immortal Shade, or death-like wound;
 But Time was long benumb'd, and stood ajar,
 And then with baffled rage took flight afar,
 To weep his hurt in some Cimmerian gloom,
 Or meaner fames (like mine) to mock and mar,
 Or sharp his scythe for royal strokes of doom,
 Whetting its edge on some old Cæsar's tomb.

CXIX.

Howbeit he vanish'd in the forest shade,
 Distantly heard as if some grumbling pard,
 And, like Narcissus, to a sound decay'd;—
 Meanwhile the fays cluster'd the gracious Bard,
 The darling centre of their dear regard:
 Besides of sundry dances on the green,
 Never was mortal man so brightly starr'd,
 Or won such pretty homages, I ween.
 “Nod to him, Elves!” cries the melodious queen.

CXX.

“Nod to him, Elves, and flutter round about him,
 And quite inclose him with your pretty crowd,
 And touch him lovingly, for that, without him,
 The silk-worm now had spun our dreary shroud;—
 But he hath all dispersed death's tearful cloud,
 And Time's dread effigy scared quite away:
 Bow to him then, as though to me ye bow'd,
 And his dear wishes prosper and obey
 Wherever love and wit can find a way!

CXXI.

“Noint him with fairy dews of magic savours,
 Shaken from orient buds still pearly wet,
 Roses and spicy pinks,—and, of all favours,
 Plant in his walks the purple violet,

And meadow-sweet under the hedges set,
 To mingle breaths with dainty eglantine
 And honeysuckles sweet,—nor yet forget
 Some pastoral flowery chaplets to entwine,
 To vie the thoughts about his brow benign!

CXXII.

“Let no wild things astonish him or fear him,
 But tell them all how mild he is of heart,
 Till e’en the timid hares go frankly near him,
 And eke the dappled does, yet never start;
 Nor shall their fawns into the thickets dart,
 Nor wrens forsake their nests among the leaves,
 Nor speckled thrushes flutter far apart;—
 But bid the sacred swallow haunt his eaves,
 To guard his roof from lightning and from thieves.

CXXIII.

“Or when he goes the nimble squirrel’s visitor,
 Let the brown hermit bring his hoarded nuts,
 For, tell him, this is Nature’s kind Inquisitor,—
 Though man keeps cautious doors that conscience
 shuts,
 For conscious wrong all curious quest rebuts,—
 Nor yet shall bees uncease their jealous stings,
 However he may watch their straw-built huts;—
 So let him learn the crafts of all small things,
 Which he will hint most aptly when he sings.”

CXXIV.

Here she leaves off, and with a graceful hand
 Waves thrice three splendid circles round his head;
 Which, though deserted by the radiant wand,
 Wears still the glory which her waving shed,
 Such as erst crown’d the old Apostle’s head,
 To show the thoughts there harbour’d were divine,
 And on immortal contemplations fed:—
 Goodly it was to see that glory shine
 Around a brow so lofty and benign!—

CXXV.

Goodly it was to see the elfin brood
Contend for kisses of his gentle hand,
That had their mortal enemy withstood,
And stay'd their lives, fast ebbing with the sand.
Long while this strife engaged the pretty band ;
But now bold Chanticleer, from farm to farm,
Challeng'd the dawn creeping o'er eastern land,
And well the fairies knew that shrill alarm,
Which sounds the knell of every elfish charm.

CXXVI.

And soon the rolling mist, that 'gan arise
From plashy mead and undiscover'd stream
Earth's morning incense to the early skies,
Crept o'er the failing landscape of my dream.
Soon faded then the Phantom of my theme—
A shapeless shade, that fancy disavow'd,
And shrank to nothing in the mist extreme.
Then flew Titania,—and her little crowd,
Like flocking linnets, vanish'd in a cloud.

HERO AND LEANDER.

1827.

TO

S. T. COLERIDGE.

It is not with a hope my feeble praise
Can add one moment's honour to thy own,
That with thy mighty name I grace these lays;
I seek to glorify myself alone:
For that some precious favour thou hast shown
To my endeavour in a bygone time,
And by this token, I would have it known
Thou art my friend, and friendly to my rhyme!
It is my dear ambition now to climb
Still higher in thy thought,—if my bold pen
May thrust on contemplations more sublime.—
But I am thirsty for thy praise, for when
We gain applauses from the great in name,
We seem to be partakers of *their* fame.

HERO AND LEANDER.

I.

OH Bards of old ! what sorrows have ye sung,
And tragic stories, chronicled in stone,—
Sad Philomel restored her ravish'd tongue,
And transform'd Niobe in dumbness shown ;
Sweet Sappho on her love for ever calls,
And Hero on the drown'd Leander falls !

II.

Was it that spectacles of sadder plights
Should make our blisses relish the more high ?
Then all fair dames, and maidens, and true knights,
Whose flourish'd fortunes prosper in Love's eye,
Weep here, unto a tale of ancient grief,
Traced from the course of an old bas-relief.

III.

There stands Abydos !—here is Sestos' steep,
Hard by the gusty margin of the sea,
Where sprinkling waves continually do leap ;
And that is where those famous lovers be,
A builded gloom shot up into the gray,
As if the first tall watch-tow'r of the day.

IV.

Lo ! how the lark soars upward and is gone ;
Turning a spirit as he nears the sky,
His voice is heard, though body there is none,
And rain-like music scatters from on high ;

But Love would follow with a falcon spite,
To pluck the minstrel from his dewy height.

V.

For Love hath framed a ditty of regrets,
Tuned to the hollow sobbings on the shore,
A vexing sense, that with like music frets,
And chimes this dismal burthen o'er and o'er,
Saying, Leander's joys are past and spent,
Like stars extinguish'd in the firmament.

VI.

For ere the golden crevices of morn
Let in those regal luxuries of light,
Which all the variable east adorn,
And hang rich fringes on the skirts of night,
Leander, weaning from sweet Hero's side,
Must leave a widow where he found a bride.

VII.

Hark! how the billows beat upon the sand!
Like pawing steeds impatient of delay;
Meanwhile their rider, ling'ring on the land,
Dallies with love, and holds farewell at bay
A too short span.—How tedious slow is grief!
But parting renders time both sad and brief.

VIII.

“ Alas (he sigh'd), that this first glimpsing light,
Which makes the wide world tenderly appear,
Should be the burning signal for my flight
From all the world's best image, which is here;
Whose very shadow, in my fond compare,
Shines far more bright than Beauty's self else-
where.

IX.

Their cheeks are white as blossoms of the dark,
Whose leaves close up and show the outward pale,

And those fair mirrors where their joys did
spark,
All dim and tarnish'd with a dreary veil,
No more to kindle till the night's return,
Like stars replenish'd at Joy's golden urn.

X.

Ev'n thus they creep into the spectral gray,
That cramps the landscape in its narrow brim,
As when two shadows by old Lethe stray,
He clasping her, and she entwining him ;
Like trees wind-parted that embrace anon,
True love so often goes before 'tis gone.

XI.

For what rich merchant but will pause in fear,
To trust his wealth to the unsafe abyss ?
So Hero dotes upon her treasure here,
And sums the loss with many an anxious kiss,
Whilst her fond eyes grow dizzy in her head,
Fear aggravating fear with shows of dread.

XII.

She thinks how many have been sunk and
drown'd,
And spies their snow-white bones below the
deep,
Then calls huge congregated monsters round,
And plants a rock wherever he would leap ;
Anon she dwells on a fantastic dream,
Which she interprets of that fatal stream.

XIII.

Saying, " That honey'd fly I saw was thee,
Which lighted on a water-lily's cup,
When, lo ! the flow'r, enamour'd of my bee,
Closed on him suddenly and lock'd him up,
And he was smother'd in her drenching dew ;
Therefore this day thy drowning I shall rue."

XIV.

But next, remembering her virgin fame,
 She clips him in her arms and bids him go,
 But seeing him break loose, repents her shame,
 And plucks him back upon her bosom's snow;
 And tears unfix her iccd resolve again,
 As steadfast frosts are thaw'd by show'rs of rain.

XV.

O for a type of parting!—Love to love
 Is like the fond attraction of two spheres,
 Which needs a godlike effort to remove,
 And then sink down their sunny atmospheres,
 In rain and darkness on each ruin'd heart,
 Nor yet their melodies will sound apart.

XVI.

So brave Leander sunders from his bride;
 The wrenching pang disparts his soul in twain;
 Half stays with her, half goes towards the tide,—
 And life must ache, until they join again.
 Now wouldst thou know the wideness of the
 wound,
 Mete every step he takes upon the ground.

XVII.

And for the agony and bosom-throe,
 Let it be measured by the wide vast air,
 For that is infinite, and so is woe,
 Since parted lovers breathe it everywhere.
 Look how it heaves Leander's labouring chest,
 Panting, at poise, upon a rocky crest!

XVIII.

From which he leaps into the scooping brine,
 That shocks his bosom with a double chill;
 Because, all hours, till the slow sun's decline,
 That cold divorcer will betwixt them still;

Wherefore he likens it to Styx' foul tide,
Where life grows death upon the other side.

XIX.

Then sadly he confronts his twofold toil
Against rude waves and an unwilling mind,
Wishing, alas ! with the stout rower's toil,
That like a rower he might gaze behind,
And watch that lonely statue he hath left
On her bleak summit, weeping and bereft !

XX.

Yet turning oft, he sees her troubled locks
Pursue him still the furthest that they may ;
Her marble arms that overstretch the rocks,
And her pale passion'd hands that seem to pray
In dumb petition to the god's above :
Love prays devoutly when it prays for love !

XXI.

Then with deep sighs he blows away the wave,
That hangs superfluous tears upon his cheek,
And bans his labour like a hopeless slave,
That, chain'd in hostile galley, faint and weak,
Plies on despairing through the restless foam,
Thoughtful of his lost love, and far-off home.

XXII.

The drowsy mist before him chill and dank,
Like a dull lethargy o'erleans the sea,
When he rows on against the utter blank,
Steering as if to dim eternity,—
Like Love's frail ghost departing with the dawn ;
A failing shadow in the twilight drawn.

XXIII.

And soon is gone,—or nothing but a faint
And failing image in the eye of thought,
That mocks his model with an after-paint,

And stains an atom like the shape she sought;
 Then with her earnest vows she hopes to fee
 The old and hoary majesty of sea.

XXIV.

“ O King of waves, and brother of high Jove,
 Preserve my sumless venture there afloat;
 A woman’s heart, and its whole wealth of love,
 Are all embark’d upon that little boat;
 Nay, but two loves, two lives, a double fate,
 A perilous voyage for so dear a freight.

XXV.

“ If impious mariners be stain’d with erime,
 Shake not in awful rage thy hoary locks;
 Lay by thy storms until another time,
 Lest my frail bark be dash’d against the rocks:
 O rather smooth thy deeps, that he may fly
 Like Love himself, upon a seeming sky!

XXVI.

“ Let all thy herded monsters sleep beneath,
 Nor gore him with crook’d tusks, or wreathed
 horns;
 Let no fierce sharks destroy him with their teeth,
 Nor spine-fish wound him with their venom’d
 thorns;
 But if he faint, and timely succour lack,
 Let ruthless dolphins rest him on their back.

XXVII.

“ Let no false dimpling whirlpools suck him in,
 Nor slimy quicksands smother his sweet breath;
 Let no jagg’d corals tear his tender skin,
 Nor mountain billows bury him in death;”—
 And with that thought forestalling her own
 fears,
 She drown’d his painted image in her tears.

XXVIII.

By this, the climbing sun, with rest repair'd,
 Look'd through the gold embrasures of the sky,
 And ask'd the drowsy world how she had fared ;—
 The drowsy world shone brighten'd in reply ;
 And smiling off her fogs, his slanting beam
 Spied young Leander in the middle stream.

XXIX.

His face was pallid, but the hectic morn
 Had hung a lying crimson on his cheeks,
 And slanderous sparkles in his eyes forlorn ;
 So death lies ambush'd in consumptive streaks ;
 But inward grief was writhing o'er its task,
 As heart-sick jesters weep behind the mask.

XXX.

He thought of Hero and the lost delight,
 Her last embracings, and the space between ;
 He thought of Hero and the future night,
 Her speechless rapture and enamour'd mien,
 When, lo ! before him, scarce two galleys' space,
 His thought's confronted with another face !

XXXI.

Her aspect's like a moon divinely fair,
 But makes the midnight darker that it lies on ;
 'Tis so beclouded with her coal-black hair
 That densely skirts her luminous horizon,
 Making her doubly fair, thus darkly set,
 As marble lies advantaged upon jet.

XXXII.

She's all too bright, too argent, and too pale,
 To be a woman ;—but a woman's double,
 Reflected on the wave so faint and frail,
 She tops the billows like an air-blown bubble ;
 Or dim creation of a morning dream,
 Fair as the wave-bleach'd lily of the stream.

XXXIII.

The very rumour strikes his seeing dead :
 Great beauty like great fear first stuns the sense :
 He knows not if her lips be blue or red,
 Nor of her eyes can give true evidence :
 Like murder's witness swooning in the court,
 His sight falls senseless by its own report.

XXXIV.

Anon resuming, it declares her eyes
 Are tinted with azure, like two crystal wells
 That drink the blue complexion of the skies,
 Or pearls outpeeping from their silvery shells .
 Her polish'd brow, it is an ample plain,
 To lodge vast contemplations of the main.

XXXV.

Her lips might corals seem, but corals near,
 Stray through her hair like blossoms on a bower ;
 And o'er the weaker red still domineer,
 And make it pale by tribute to more power ;
 Her rounded cheeks are of still paler hue,
 Touch'd by the bloom of water, tender blue.

XXXVI.

Thus he beholds her rocking on the water,
 Under the glossy umbrage of her hair,
 Like pearly Amphitrite's fairest daughter,
 Naiad, or Nereid, or Syren fair,
 Mislodging music in her pitiless breast,
 A nightingale within a falcon's nest.

XXXVII.

They say there be such maidens in the deep,
 Charming poor mariners, that all too near
 By mortal lullabies fall dead asleep,
 As drowsy men are poison'd through the ear ;
 Therefore Leander's fears begin to urge,
 This snowy swan is come to sing his dirge.

XXXVIII.

At which he falls into a deadly chill,
 And strains his eyes upon her lips apart ;
 Fearing each breath to feel that prelude shrill,
 Pierce through his marrow, like a breath-blown
 dart
 Shot sudden from an Indian's hollow cane,
 With mortal venom fraught, and fiery pain.

XXXIX.

Here then, poor wretch, how he begins to crowd
 A thousand thoughts within a pulse's space ;
 There seem'd so brief a pause of life allow'd,
 His mind stretch'd universal, to embrace
 The whole wide world, in an extreme farewell,—
 A moment's musing—but an age to tell.

XL.

For there stood Hero, widow'd at a glance,
 The foreseen sum of many a tedious fact,
 Pale cheeks, dim eyes, and wither'd countenance,
 A wasted ruin that no wasting lack'd ;
 Time's tragic consequents ere time began,
 A world of sorrow in a tear-drop's span.

XLI.

A moment's thinking is an hour in words,—
 An hour of words is little for some woes ;
 Too little breathing a long life affords,
 For love to paint itself by perfect shows ;
 Then let his love and grief unwrong'd lie dumb,
 Whilst Fear, and that it fears, together come.

XLII.

As when the crew, hard by some jutting cape,
 Struck pale and panic'd by the billows' roar,
 Lay by all timely measures of escape,
 And let their bark go driving on the shore ;

So fray'd Leander, drifting to his wreck,
Gazing on Seylla, falls upon her neck.

XLIII.

For he hath all forgot the swimmer's art,
The rower's eunning, and the pilot's skill,
Letting his arms fall down in languid part,
Sway'd by the waves, and nothing by his will,
Till soon he jars against that glossy skin,
Solid like glass, though seemingly as thin.

XLIV.

Lo! how she startles at the warning shoek
And straightway girds him to her radiant breast,
More like his safe smooth harbour than his rock;
Poor wretch, he is so faint and toil-opprest,
He cannot loose him from his grappling foe,
Whether for love or hate, she lets not go.

XLV.

His eyes are blinded with the sleety brine,
His ears are deafen'd with the wildering noise;
He asks the purpose of her fell design,
But foamy waves choke up his struggling voice;
Under the ponderous sea his body dips,
And Hero's name dies bubbling on his lips.

XLVI.

Look how a man is lower'd to his grave;
A yearning hollow in the green earth's lap;
So he is sunk into the yawning wave,
The plunging sea fills up the watery gap;
Anon he is all gone, and nothing seen,
But likeness of green turf and hillocks green.

XLVII

And where he swam, the constant sun lies sleeping,
Over the verdant plain that makes his bed;
And all the noisy waves go freshly leaping,

Like gamesome boys over the churchyard dead ;
 The light in vain keeps looking for his face,
 Now screaming sea-fowl settle in his place.

XLVIII.

Yet weep and watch for him, though all in vain !
 Ye moaning billows, seek him as ye wander !
 Ye gazing sunbeams, look for him again !
 Ye winds, grow hoarse with asking for Leander !
 Ye did but spare him for more cruel rape,
 Sea-storm and ruin in a female shape !

XLIX.

She says 'tis love hath bribed her to this deed,
 The glancing of his eyes did so bewitch her.
 O bootless theft ! unprofitable meed !
 Love's treasury is sack'd, but she no richer ;
 The sparkles of his eyes are cold and dead,
 And all his golden looks are turn'd to lead !

L.

She holds the casket, but her simple hand
 Hath spill'd its dearest jewel by the way ;
 She hath life's empty garment at command,
 But her own death lies covert in the prey ;
 As if a thief should steal a tainted vest,
 Some dead man's spoil, and sicken of his pest.

LI.

Now she compels him to her deeps below,
 Hiding his face beneath her plentuous hair,
 Which jealously she shakes all round her brow,
 For dread of envy, though no eyes are there
 But seals', and all brute tenants of the deep,
 Which heedless through the wave their journeys
 keep.

LII.

Down and still downward through the dusky green
 She bore him, murmuring with joyous haste

In too rash ignoranee, as he had been
 Born to the texture of that watery waste ;
 That which she breathed and sigh'd, the emerald
 wave,
 How could her pleasant home become his grave !

LIII.

Down and still downward through the dusky
 green
 She bore her treasure, with a face too nigh
 To mark how life was alter'd in its mien,
 Or how the light grew torpid in his eye,
 Or how his pearly breath, unprison'd there,
 Flew up to join the universal air.

LIV.

She could not miss the throbbings of his heart,
 Whilst her own pulse so wanton'd in its joy ;
 She could not guess he struggled to depart,
 And when he strove no more the hapless boy !
 She read his mortal stillness for content,
 Feeling no fear where only love was meant.

LV.

Soon she alights upon her ocean-floor,
 And straight unyokes her arms from her fair
 prize ;
 Then on his lovely face begins to pore,
 As if to glut her soul ;—her hungry eyes
 Have grown so jealous of her arms' delight ;
 It seems, she hath no other sense but sight.

LVI.

But O sad marvel ! O most bitter strange !
 What dismal magie makes his cheek so pale ?
 Why will he not embrace,—why not exchange
 Her kindly kisses ;—wherefore not exhale
 Some odorous message from life's ruby gates,
 Where she his first sweet embassy awaits ?

LVII.

Her eyes, poor watchers, fix'd upon his looks,
 Are grappled with a wonder near to grief,
 As one, who pores on undecipher'd books,
 Strains vain surmise, and dodges with belief ;
 So she keeps gazing with a mazy thought,
 Framing a thousand doubts that end in nought.

LVIII.

'Too stern inscription for a page so young,
 The dark translation of his look was death !
 But death was written in an alien tongue,
 And learning was not by to give it breath ;
 So one deep woe sleeps buried in its seal,
 Which 'Time, untimely, hasteth to reveal.

LIX.

Meanwhile she sits unconscious of her hap,
 Nursing Death's marble effigy, which there
 With heavy head lies pillow'd in her lap,
 And elbows all unhinged ;—his sleeking hair
 Creeps o'er her knees, and settles where his hand
 Leans with lax fingers crook'd against the sand ;

LX.

And there lies spread in many an oozy trail,
 Like glossy weeds hung from a chalky base,
 That shows no whiter than his brow is pale ;
 So soon the wintry death had bleach'd his face
 Into cold marble,—with blue ehilly shades,
 Showing wherein the freezy blood pervades.

LXI.

And o'er his steadfast cheek a furrow'd pain
 Hath set, and stiffen'd like a storm in ice,
 Showing by drooping lines the deadly strain
 Of mortal anguish ;—yet you might gaze twice
 Ere Death it seem'd, and not his cousin, Sleep,
 That through those erevied lids did underpeep.

LXII.

But all that tender bloom about his eyes,
 Is death's own vi'lets, which his utmost rite
 It is to scatter when the red rose dies ;
 For blue is chilly, and akin to white :
 Also he leaves some tinges on his lips,
 Which he hath kiss'd with such cold frosty nips.

LXIII.

“ Surely,” quoth she, “ he sleeps, the senseless
 thing,
 Oppress'd and faint with toiling in the stream !”
 Therefore she will not mar his rest, but sing
 So low, her tune shall mingle with his dream ;
 Meanwhile, her lily fingers' task 's to twine
 His uncrispt locks uncurling in the brine.

LXIV.

“ O lovely boy !”—thus she attuned her voice,—
 “ Welcome, thrice welcome, to a sea-maid's home,
 My love-mate thou shalt be, and true heart's choice ;
 How have I long'd such a twin-self should come,—
 A lonely thing, till this sweet chance befell,
 My heart kept sighing like a hollow shell.

LXV.

“ Here thou shalt live, beneath this secret dome,
 An ocean-bow'r ; defended by the shade
 Of quiet waters, a cool emerald gloom
 To lap thee all about. Nay, be not fray'd,
 Those are but shady fishes that sail by
 Like antic clouds across my liquid sky !

LXVI.

“ Look how the sunbeam burns upon their scales,
 And shows rich glimpses of their Tyrian skins ;
 They flash small lightnings from their vigorous
 tails,
 And winking stars are kindled at their fins ;

These shall divert thee in thy weariest mood,
And seek thy hand for gamesomeness and food.

LXVII.

“Lo! those green pretty leaves with tassel bells,
My flow’rets those, that never pine for drowth;
Myself did plant them in the dappled shells,
That drink the wave with such a rosy mouth,—
Pearls wouldst thou have beside? crystals to shine?
I had such treasures once,—now they are thine.

LXVIII.

“Now, lay thine ear against this golden sand,
And thou shalt hear the music of the sea,
Those hollow tunes it plays against the land,—
Is’t not a rich and wondrous melody?
I have lain hours, and fancied in its tone
I heard the languages of ages gone!

LXIX.

“I too can sing when it shall please thy choise,
And breathe soft tunes through a melodious shell,
Though heretofore I have but set my voice
To some long sighs, grief harmonized, to tell
How desolate I fared;—but this sweet change
Will add new notes of gladness to my range!

LXX.

“Or bid me speak, and I will tell thee tales,
Which I have framed out of the noise of waves;
Ere now, I have communed with senseless gales,
And held vain colloquies with barren caves;
But I could talk to thee whole days and days,
Only to word my love a thousand ways.

LXXI.

“But if thy lips will bless me with their speech,
Then ope, sweet oracles! and I’ll be mute;
I was born ignorant for thee to teach,

Nay all love's lore to thy dear looks impute ;
 Then ope thine eyes, fair teachers, by whose light
 I saw to give away my heart aright !”

LXXII.

But cold and deaf the sullen creature lies,
 Over her knees, and with concealing clay,
 Like hoarding Avarice locks up his eyes,
 And leaves her world impoverish'd of day ;
 Then at his cruel lips she bends to plead,
 But there the door is closed against her need.

LXXIII.

Surely he sleeps,—so her false wits infer !
 Alas ! poor sluggard, ne'er to wake again !
 Surely he sleeps, yet without any stir
 That might denote a vision in his brain ;
 Or if he does not sleep, he feigns too long,
 Twice she hath reach'd the ending of her song.

LXXIV.

Therefore 'tis time she tells him to uncover
 Those radiant jesters, and disperse her fears,
 Whereby her April face is shaded over,
 Like rainy clouds just ripe for showering tears ;
 Nay, if he will not wake, so poor she gets,
 Herself must rob those lock'd up cabinets.

LXXV.

With that she stoops above his brow, and bids
 Her busy hands forsake his tangled hair,
 And tenderly lift up those coffer-lids,
 That she may gaze upon the jewels there,
 Like babes that pluck an early bud apart,
 To know the dainty colour of its heart.

LXXVI.

Now, picture one, soft creeping to a bed,
 Who slowly parts the fringe-hung canopies,

And then starts back to find the sleeper dead ;
 So she looks in on his uncover'd eyes,
 And seeing all within so drear and dark,
 Her own bright soul dies in her like a spark.

LXXVII.

Backward she falls, like a pale prophetess,
 Under the swoon of holy divination :
 And what had all surpass'd her simple guess,
 She now resolves in this dark revelation ;
 Death's very mystery,—oblivious death ;—
 Long sleep,—deep night, and an entrancèd breath.

LXXVIII.

Yet life, though wounded sore, not wholly slain,
 Merely obscured, and not extinguish'd, lies ;
 Her breath that stood at ebb, soon flows again,
 Heaving her hollow breast with heavy sighs,
 And light comes in and kindles up the gloom,
 To light her spirit from its transient tomb.

LXXIX.

Then like the sun, awaken'd at new dawn,
 With pale bewilder'd face she peers about,
 And spies blurr'd images obscurely drawn,
 Uncertain shadows in a haze of doubt ;
 But her true grief grows shapely by degrees,
 A perish'd creature lying on her knees.

LXXX.

And now she knows how that old Murther preys,
 Whose quarry on her lap lies newly slain :
 How he roams all abroad and grimly slays,
 Like a lean tiger in Love's own domain ;
 Parting fond mates,—and oft in flowery lawns
 Bereaves mild mothers of their milky fawns.

LXXXI.

O too dear knowledge ! O pernicious earning !
 Foul curse engraven upon beauty's page !

Ev'n now the sorrow of that deadly learning
 Ploughs up her brow, like an untimely age,
 And on her cheek stamps verdict of death's truth
 By canker blights upon the bud of youth!

LXXXII.

For as unwholesome winds decay the leaf,
 So her cheeks' rose is perish'd by her sighs,
 And withers in the sickly breath of grief;
 Whilst unacquainted rheum bedims her eyes,
 Tears, virgin tears, the first that ever leapt
 From those young lids, now plentifully wept.

LXXXIII.

Whence being shed, the liquid erystalline
 Drops straightway down, refusing to partake
 In gross admixture with the baser brine,
 But shrinks and hardens into pearls opaque,
 Hereafter to be worn on arms and ears;
 So one maid's trophy is another's tears!

LXXXIV.

“ O foul Arch-Shadow, thou old cloud of Night,
 (Thus in her frenzy she began to wail,)
 Thou blank oblivion—blotter out of light,
 Life's ruthless murderer, and dear love's bale!
 Why hast thou left thy havoe incomplete,
 Leaving me here, and slaying the more sweet ?

LXXXV.

“ Lo! what a lovely ruin thou hast made!
 Alas! alas! thou hast no eyes to see,
 And blindly slew'st him in misguided shade.
 Would I had lent my doting sense to thee!
 But now I turn to thee, a willing mark,
 Thine arrows miss me in the aimless dark!

LXXXVI.

“ O doubly cruel!—twice misdoing spite,
 But I will guide thee with my helping eyes,

Or walk the wide world through, devoid of sight,
 Yet thou shalt know me by my many sighs.
 Nay, then thou should'st have spared my rose, false
 Death,
 And known Love's flow'r by smelling his sweet
 breath ;

LXXXVII.

“ Or, when thy furious rage was round him dealing,
 Love should have grown from touching of his
 skin ;
 But like cold marble thou art all unfeeling,
 And hast no ruddy springs of warmth within,
 And being but a shape of freezing bone,
 Thy touching only turn'd my love to stone !

LXXXVIII.

“ And here, alas ! he lies across my knees,
 With cheeks still colder than the stilly wave,
 The light beneath his eyelids seems to freeze ;
 Here then, since love is dead and lacks a grave,
 O come and dig it in my sad heart's core—
 That wound will bring a balsam for its sore !

LXXXIX.

“ For art thou not a sleep where sense of ill
 Lies stingless, like a sense benumb'd with cold,
 Healing all hurts only with sleep's good-will ?
 So shall I slumber, and perchance behold
 My living love in dreams,—O happy night,
 That lets me company his banish'd spright !

XC.

“ O poppy Death !—sweet poisoner of sleep ;
 Where shall I seek for thee, oblivious drug,
 That I may steep thee in my drink, and creep
 Out of life's coil ? Look, Idol ! how I hug
 Thy dainty image in this strict embrace,
 And kiss this clay-cold model of thy face !

XCI.

“Put out, put out these sun-consuming lamps,
 I do but read my sorrows by their shine ;
 O come and quench them with thy oozy damps,
 And let my darkness intermix with thine ;
 Since love is blinded, wherefore should I see ?
 Now love is death,—death will be love to me !

XCII.

“Away, away, this vain complaining breath,
 It does but stir the troubles that I weep ;
 Let it be hush'd and quieted, sweet Death ;
 The wind must settle ere the wave can sleep,—
 Since love is silent I would fain be mute ;
 O Death, be gracious to my dying suit !”

XCIII.

Thus far she pleads, but pleading nought avails
 her,
 For Death, her sullen burthen, deigns no heed ;
 Then with dumb craving arms, since darkness fails
 her,
 She prays to heaven's fair light, as if her need
 Inspired her there were Gods to pity pain,
 Or end it,—but she lifts her arms in vain !

XCIV.

Poor gilded Grief! the subtle light by this
 With mazy gold creeps through her watery mine,
 And, diving downward through the green abyss,
 Lights up her palace with an amber shine ;
 There, falling on her arms,—the crystal skin
 Reveals the ruby tide that fares within.

XCV.

Look how the fulsome beam would hang a glory
 On her dark hair, but the dark hairs repel it ;
 Look how the perjured glow suborns a story

On her pale lips, but lips refuse to tell it ;
 Grief will not swerve from grief, however told
 On coral lips, or character'd in gold ;

XCVI.

Or else, thou maid ! safe anchor'd on Love's neck,
 Listing the hapless doom of young Leander,
 Thou would'st not shed a tear for that old wreck,
 Sitting secure where no wild surges wander ;
 Whereas the woe moves on with tragic pace,
 And shows its sad reflection in thy face.

XCVII.

Thus having travell'd on, and track'd the tale,
 Like the due course of an old bas-relief,
 Where Tragedy pursues her progress pale,
 Brood here awhile upon that sea-maid's grief,
 And take a deeper imprint from the frieze
 Of that young Fate, with Death upon her knees.

XCVIII.

Then whilst the melancholy muse withal
 Resumes her music in a sadder tone,
 Meanwhile the sunbeam strikes upon the wall,
 Conceive that lovely siren to live on,
 Ev'n as Hope whisper'd, the Promethean light
 Would kindle up the dead Leander's spright.

XCIX.

“ 'Tis light,” she says, “ that feeds the glittering stars,
 And those were stars set in his heavenly brow .
 But this salt cloud, this cold sea-vapour, mars
 Their radiant breathing, and obscures them now ;
 Therefore I'll lay him in the clear blue air,
 And see how these dull orbs will kindle there.”

C.

Swiftly as dolphins glide, or swifter yet,
 With dead Leander in her fond arms' fold,

She cleaves the meshes of that radiant net,
 The sun hath twined above of liquid gold,
 Nor slacks till on the margin of the land
 She lays his body on the glowing sand.

CI.

There, like a pearly waif, just past the reach
 Of foamy billows he lies east. Just then,
 Some listless fishers, straying down the beach,
 Spy out this wonder. Thence the curious men,
 Low crouching, creep into a thicket brake,
 And watch her doings till their rude hearts
 ache.

CII.

First she begins to chafe him till she faints,
 Then falls upon his mouth with kisses many,
 And sometimes pauses in her own complaints
 To list his breathing, but there is not any,—
 Then looks into his eyes where no light dwells;
 Light makes no pictures in such muddy wells.

CIII.

The hot sun parches his discover'd eyes,
 The hot sun beats on his discolour'd limbs,
 The sand is oozy whereupon he lies,
 Soiling his fairness;—then away she swims,
 Meaning to gather him a daintier bed,
 Plucking the cool fresh weeds, brown, green, and
 red.

CIV.

But, simple-witted thief, while she dives under,
 Another robs her of her amorous theft;
 The ambush'd fishermen creep forth to plunder,
 And steal the unwatch'd treasure she has left;
 Only his void impression dints the sands;
 Leander is purloin'd by stealthy hands!

CV.

Lo! how she shudders off the beaded wave!
 Like Grief all over tears, and senseless falls,
 His void imprint seems hollow'd for her grave;
 Then, rising, on her knees, looks round and calls
 On Heo! Hero! having learn'd this name
 Of his last breath, she calls him by the same.

CVI.

Then with her frantic hands she rends her hairs,
 And casts them forth, sad keepsakes to the wind,
 As if in plucking those she pluck'd her cares;
 But grief lies deeper, and remains behind
 Like a barb'd arrow, rankling in her brain,
 Turning her very thoughts to throbs of pain.

CVII.

Anon her tangled locks are left alone,
 And down upon the sand she meekly sits,
 Hard by the foam, as humble as a stone,
 Like an enchanted maid beside her wits,
 That ponders with a look serene and tragic,
 Stunn'd by the mighty mystery of magic.

CVIII.

Or think of Ariadne's utter trance,
 Crazed by the flight of that disloyal traitor,
 Who left her gazing on the green expanse
 That swallow'd up his track,—yet this would mate
 her,
 Ev'n in the cloudy summit of her woe,
 When o'er the far sea-brim she saw him go.

CIX.

For even so she bows, and bends her gaze
 O'er the eternal waste, as if to sum
 Its waves by weary thousands all her days,
 Dismally doom'd! meanwhile the billows come,

And coldly dabble with her quiet feet,
Like any bleaching stones they wont to greet.

CX.

And thence into her lap have boldly sprun ,
Washing her weedy tresses to and fro,
That round her crouching knees have dark y hung.
But she sits careless of waves' ebb and flow
Like a lone beacon on a desert coast,
Showing where all her hope was wreck'd and lost.

CXI.

Yet whether in the sea or vaulted sky,
She knoweth not her love's abrupt resort,
So like a shape of dreams he left her eye,
Winking with doubt. Meanwhile, the churls'
report
Has throng'd the beach with many a curious face,
That peeps upon her from its hiding-place.

CXII.

And here a head, and there a brow half seen,
Dodges behind a rock. Here on his hands,
A mariner his crumpled cheeks doth lean
Over a rugged crest. Another stands,
Holding his harmful arrow at the head,
Still check'd by human caution and strange dread.

CXIII.

One stops his ears,—another close beholder
Whispers unto the next his grave surmise ;
This crouches down,—and just above his shoulder,
A woman's pity saddens in her eyes,
And prompts her to befriend that lonely grief,
With all sweet helps of sisterly relief.

CXIV.

And down the sunny beach she paces slowly,
With many doubtful pauses by the way ;

Grief hath an influence so hush'd and holy,—
 Making her twice attempt, ere she can lay
 Her hand upon that sea-maid's shoulder white,
 Which makes her startle up in wild affright.

CXV.

And, like a seal, she leaps into the wave
 That drowns the shrill remainder of her scream ;
 Anon the sea fills up the watery cave,
 And seals her exit with a foamy seam,—
 Leaving those baffled gazers on the beach,
 Turning in uncouth wonder each to each.

CXVI.

Some watch, some call, some see her head emerge,
 Wherever a brown weed falls through the foam ;
 Some point to white eruptions of the surge :
 But she is vanish'd to her shady home,
 Under the deep, inscrutable,—and there
 Weeps in a midnight made of her own hair.

CXVII.

Now here, the sighing winds, before unheard,
 Forth from their cloudy caves begin to blow,
 Till all the surface of the deep is stirr'd,
 Like to the panting grief it hides below ;
 And heaven is cover'd with a stormy rack,
 Soiling the waters with its inky black.

CXVIII.

The screaming fowl resigns her finny prey,
 And labours shoreward with a bending wing,
 Rowing against the wind her toilsome way ;
 Meanwhile, the curling billows chafe, and fling
 Their dewy frost still further on the stones,
 That answer to the wind with hollow groans.

CXIX.

And here and there a fisher's far-off bark
 Flies with the sun's last glimpse upon its sail,

Like a bright flame amid the waters dark,
 Watch'd with the hope and fear of maidens pale ;
 And anxious mothers that upturn their brows,
 Freighting the gusty wind with frequent vows,

CXX.

For that the horrid deep has no sure track
 To guide love safe into his homely haven.
 And lo! the storm grows blacker in its wrath,
 O'er the dark billow brooding like a raven,
 That bodes of death and widow's sorrowing,
 Under the dusty covert of his wing.

CXXI.

And so day ended. But no vesper spark
 Hung forth its heavenly sign ; but sheets of flame
 Play'd round the savage features of the dark,
 Making night horrible. That night, there came
 A weeping maiden to high Sestos' steep,
 And tore her hair and gazed upon the deep.

CXXII.

And waved aloft her bright and ruddy torch,
 Whose flame the boastful wind so rudely fann'd,
 That oft it would recoil, and basely scorch
 The tender covert of her sheltering hand ;
 Which yet, for love's dear sake, disdain'd retire,
 And, like a glorying martyr, braved the fire.

CXXIII.

For that was love's own sign and beacon guide
 Across the Hellespont's wide weary space,
 Wherein he nightly struggled with the tide ;
 Look what a red it forges on her face,
 As if she blush'd at holding such a light,
 Ev'n in the unsecn presence of the night !

CXXIV.

Whereas her tragic cheek is truly pale,
 And colder than the rude and ruffian air

That howls into her ear a horrid tale
 Of storm, and wreck, and uttermost despair,
 Saying, "Leander floats amid the surge,
 And those are dismal waves that sing his dirge."

CXXV.

And hark!—a grieving voice, trembling and
 faint,
 Blends with the hollow sobbings of the sea;
 Like the sad music of a siren's plaint,
 But shriller than Leander's voice should be,
 Unless the wintry death had changed its tone,—
 Wherefore she thinks she hears his spirit moan.

CXXVI.

For now, upon each brief and breathless pause,
 Made by the raging winds, it plainly calls
 On Hero! Hero!—whereupon she draws
 Close to the dizzy brink, that ne'er appalls
 Her brave and constant spirit to recoil,
 However the wild billows toss and toil.

CXXVII.

"Oh! dost thou live under the deep deep sea?
 I thought such love as thine could never die;
 If thou hast gain'd an immortality
 From the kind pitying sea-god, so will I;
 And this false cruel tide that used to sever
 Our hearts, shall be our common home for
 ever!

CXXVIII.

"There we will sit and sport upon one billow,
 And sing our ocean ditties all the day,
 And lie together on the same green pillow,
 That curls above us with its dewy spray;
 And ever in one presence live and dwell,
 Like two twin pearls within the selfsame shell."

CXXIX.

One moment then, upon the dizzy verge
She stands;—with face upturn'd against the sky;
A moment more, upon the foamy surge
She gazes, with a calm despairing eye;
Feeling that awful pause of blood and breath
Which life endures when it confronts with death;—

CXXX.

Then from the giddy steep she madly springs,
Grasping her maiden robes, that vainly kept
Panting abroad, like unavailing wings,
To save her from her death.—The sea-maid wept,
And in a crystal cave her corse enshrined;
No meaner sepulchre should Hero find!

LYCUS, THE CENTAUR.

1827.

TO

J. H. REYNOLDS, ESQ.

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

You will remember "Lycus."—It was written in the pleasant spring-time of our friendship, and I am glad to maintain that association, by connecting your name with the Poem. It will gratify me to find that you regard it with the old partiality for the writings of each other, which prevailed in those days. For my own sake, I must regret that your pen goes now into far other records than those which used to delight me.

Your true Friend and Brother,

T. Hood.

LYCUS, THE CENTAUR.

FROM AN UNROLLED MANUSCRIPT OF APOLLONIUS
CURIUS.

THE ARGUMENT.

Lycus, detained by Circe in her magical dominion, is beloved by a Water Nymph, who, desiring to render him immortal, has recourse to the Sorceress. Circe gives her an incantation to pronounce, which should turn Lycus into a horse; but the horrible effect of the charm causing her to break off in the midst, he becomes a Centaur.

WHO hath ever been lured and bound by a spell
To wander, foredoom'd, in that circle of hell
Where Witchery works with her will like a god,
Works more than the wonders of time at a nod,—
At a word,—at a touch,—at a flash of the eye,
But each form is a cheat, and each sound is a lie,
Things born of a wish—to endure for a thought,
Or last for long ages—to vanish to nought,
Or put on new semblance? O Jove, I had given
The throne of a kingdom to know if that heaven,
And the earth and its streams were of Circe, or
whether
They kept the world's birth-day and brighten'd
together!
For I loved them in terror, and constantly dreaded
That the earth where I trod, and the cave where I
bedded,
The face I might dote on, should live out the lease
Of the charm that created, and suddenly cease:
And I gave me to slumber, as if from one dream
To another—each horrid—and drank of the stream

Like a first taste of blood, lest as water I quaff'd
 Swift poison, and never should breathe from the
 draught,—
 Such drink as her own monarch husband drain'd
 up
 When he pledged her, and Fate closed his eyes in
 the cup.
 And I pluck'd of the fruit with held breath, and a
 fear
 That the branch would start back and scream out
 in my ear ;
 For once, at my suppering, I pluck'd in the dusk
 An apple, juice-gushing and fragrant of musk ;
 But by daylight my fingers were crimson'd with
 gore,
 And the half-eaten fragment was flesh at the core ;
 And once—only once—for the love of its blush,
 I broke a bloom bough, but there came such a gush
 On my hand, that it fainted away in weak fright,
 While the leaf-hidden woodpecker shriek'd at the
 sight ;
 And oh ! such an agony thrill'd in that note,
 That my soul, starting up, beat its wings in my
 throat,
 As it long'd to be free of a body whose hand
 Was doom'd to work torments a Fury had plann'd !

There I stood without stir, yet how willing to
 flee,

As if rooted and horror-turn'd into a tree,—
 Oh ! for innocent death,—and to suddenly win it,
 I drank of the stream, but no poison was in it ;
 I plunged in its waters, but ere I could sink,
 Some invisible fate pull'd me back to the brink ;
 I sprang from the rock, from its pinnacle height,
 But fell on the grass with a grasshopper's flight ;
 I ran at my fears—they were fears and no more,
 For the bear would not mangle my limbs, nor the
 boar,

But moan'd,—all their brutalized flesh could not
smother
The horrible truth,—we were kin to each other!

They were mournfully gentle, and group'd for
relief,
All focs in their skin, but all friends in their grief:
The leopard was there,—baby-mild in its feature;
And the tiger, black barr'd, with the gaze of a
creature
That knew gentle pity; the bristle-back'd boar,
His innocent tusks stain'd with mulberry gore;
And the laughing hyena—but laughing no more;
And the snake, not with magical orbs to devise
Strange death, but with woman's attraction of eyes;
The tall ugly ape, that still bore a dim shine
Through his hairy eclipse of a manhood divine;
And the elephant stately, with more than its reason,
How thoughtful in sadness! but this is no season
To reckon them up from the lag-bellied toad
To the mammoth, whose sobs shook his poulderous
load.
There were woes of all shapes, wretched forms,
when I came,
That hung down their heads with a human-like
shame;
The elephant hid in the boughs, and the bear
Shed over his eyes the dark veil of his hair;
And the womanly soul turning sick with disgust,
Tried to vomit herself from her serpentine crust;
While all groan'd their groans into one at their lot,
As I brought them the image of what they were
not.

Then rose a wild sound of the human voice
choakiug
Through vile brutal organs—low tremulous croak-
ing;
Cries swallow'd abruptly—deep animal tones

Attuned to strange passion, and full-utter'd groans
 All shuddering weaker, till hush'd in a pause
 Of tongues in mute motion and wide-yawning jaws
 And I guess'd that those horrors were meant to
 tell o'er

The tale of their woes; but the silence told more
 That writhed on their tongues; and I knelt on the
 sod,

And pray'd with my voice to the cloud-stirring
 God,

For the sad congregation of supplicants there,
 That upturn'd to his heaven brute faces of prayer;
 And I ceased, and they utter'd a moaning so deep,
 That I wept for my heart-ease,—but they could
 not weep,

And gazed with red eyeballs, all wistfully dry,
 At the comfort of tears in a stag's human eye.

Then I motion'd them round, and, to soothe their
 distress,

I caress'd, and they bent them to meet my caress,
 Their necks to my arm, and their heads to my palm,
 And with poor grateful eyes suffer'd meekly and
 calm

Those tokens of kindness, withheld by hard fate
 From returns that might chill the warm pity to
 hate;

So they passively bow'd—save the serpent, that
 leapt

To my breast like a sister, and pressingly crept
 In embrace of my neck, and with close kisses
 blister'd

My lips in rash love,—then drew backward, and
 glisten'd

Her eyes in my face, and loud hissing affright,
 Dropt down, and swift started away from my sight!

This sorrow was theirs, but thrice wretched my
 lot,

Turn'd brute in my soul, though my body was not

When I fled from the sorrow of womanly faces,
 That shrouded their woe in the shade of lone
 places,
 And dash'd off bright tears, till their fingers were
 wet,
 And then wiped their lids with long tresses of jet :
 But I fled—though they stretch'd out their hands,
 all entangled
 With hair, and blood-stain'd of the breasts they
 had mangled,—
 Though they call'd—and perchance but to ask, had
 I seen
 Their loves, or to tell the vile wrongs that had
 been :
 But I stay'd not to hear, lest the story should hold
 Some hell-form of words, some enchantment once
 told,
 Might translate me in flesh to a brute ; and I dreaded
 'To gaze on their charms, lest my faith should be
 wedded
 With some pity,—and love in that pity perchance—
 'To a thing not all lovely ; for once at a glance
 Methought, where one sat, I descried a bright
 wonder
 That flow'd like a long silver rivulet under
 The long fenny grass, with so lovely a breast,
 Could it be a snake-tail made the charm of the
 rest ?

So I roam'd in that circle of horrors, and Fear
 Walk'd with me, by hills, and in valleys, and near
 Cluster'd trees for their gloom—not to shelter from
 heat—
 But lest a brute-shadow should grow at my feet ;
 And besides that full oft in the sunshiny place,
 Dark shadows would gather like clouds on its face,
 In the horrible likeness of demons, (that none
 Could see, like invisible flames in the sun ;)

But grew to one monster that seized on the light,

Like the dragon that strangles the moon in the
 night;
 Fierce sphinxes, long serpents, and asps of the
 South;
 Wild birds of huge beak, and all horrors that
 drouth
 Engenders of slime in the land of the pest,
 Vile shapes without shape, and foul bats of the
 West,
 Bringing Night on their wings; and the bodies
 wherein
 Great Brahma imprisons the spirits of sin,
 Many-handed, that blent in one phantom of fight
 Like a Titan, and threatfully warr'd with the light;
 I have heard the wild shriek that gave signal to
 close,
 When they rush'd on that shadowy Python of foes,
 That met with sharp beaks and wide gaping of
 jaws,
 With flappings of wings, and fierce grasping of
 claws,
 And whirls of long tails:—I have seen the quick
 flutter
 Of fragments dissever'd,—and necks stretch'd to
 utter
 Long screamings of pain,—the swift motion of
 blows,
 And wrestling of arms—to the flight at the close,
 When the dust of the earth startled upward in
 rings,
 And flew on the whirlwind that follow'd their wings.

Thus they fled—not forgotten—but often to
 grow
 Like fears in my eyes, when I walk'd to and fro
 In the shadows, and felt from some beings unseen
 The warm touch of kisses, but clean or unclean
 I knew not, nor whether the love I had won
 Was of heaven or hell—till one day in the sun,

In its very noon-blaze, I could fancy a thing
 Of beauty, but faint as the cloud-mirrors fling
 On the gaze of the shepherd that watches the sky,
 Half-seen and half-dream'd in the soul of his eye.
 And when in my musings I gazed on the stream,
 In motionless trances of thought, there would seem
 A face like that face, looking upward through
 mine ;
 With its eyes full of love, and the dim-drowned
 shine
 Of limbs and fair garments, like clouds in that blue
 Serene :—there I stood for long hours but to view
 Those fond earnest eyes that were ever uplifted
 Towards me, and wink'd as the water-weed drifted
 Between ; but the fish knew that presence, and
 plied
 Their long euryv tails, and swift darted aside.

There I gazed for lost time, and forgot all the
 things
 That once had been wonders—the fishes with
 wings,
 And the glimmer of magnified eyes that look'd up
 From the glooms of the bottom like pearls in a cup,
 And the huge endless serpent of silvery gleam,
 Slow winding along like a tide in the stream.
 Some maid of the waters, some Naiad, methought
 Held me dear in the pearl of her eye—and I
 brought
 My wish to that fancy ; and often I dash'd
 My limbs in the water, and suddenly splash'd
 The cool drops around me, yet clung to the brink.
 Chill'd by watery fears, how that Beauty might
 sink
 With my life in her arms to her garden, and bind
 me
 With its long tangled grasses, or eruelly wind me
 In some eddy to hum out my life in her ear,
 Like a spider-caught bee,—and in aid of that fear

Came the tardy remembrance—Oh falsest of
men!

Why was not that beauty remember'd till then?

My love, my safe love, whose glad life would have
run

Into mine—like a drop—that our fate might be
one,

That now, even now,—may-be,—clasp'd in a
dream,

That form which I gave to some jilt of the stream,
And gazed with fond eyes that her tears tried to
smother

On a mock of those eyes that I gave to another!

Then I rose from the stream, but the eyes of my
mind,

Still full of the tempter, kept gazing behind

On her crystalline face, while I painfully leapt

To the bank, and shook off the curst waters, and
wept

With my brow in the reeds; and the reeds to my
ear

Bow'd, bent by no wind, and in whispers of fear,
Growing small with large secrets, foretold me of
one

That loved me,—but oh to fly from her, and shun

Her love like a pest—though her love was as true

To mine as her stream to the heavenly blue;

For why should I love her with love that would
bring

All misfortune, like Hate, on so joyous a thing?

Because of her rival,—even Her whose witch-face

I had slighted, and therefore was doom'd in that
place

To roam, and had roam'd, where all horrors grew
rank,

Nine days ere I wept with my brow on that bank;

Her name be not named, but her spite would not
fail

To our love like a blight; and they told me the
 tale
 Of Seylla, and Picus, imprison'd to speak
 His shrill-screaming woe through a woodpecker's
 beak.

Then they ceased—I had heard as the voice of
 my star
 That told me the truth of my fortunes—thus far
 I had read of my sorrow, and lay in the hush
 Of deep meditation,—when lo! a light crush
 Of the reeds, and I turn'd and look'd round in the
 night
 Of new sunshine, and saw, as I sipp'd of the light
 Narrow-winking, the realized nymph of the stream,
 Rising up from the wave with the bend and the
 gleam
 Of a fountain, and o'er her white arms she kept
 throwing
 Bright torrents of hair, that went flowing and
 flowing
 In falls to her feet, and the blue waters roll'd
 Down her limbs like a garment, in many a fold,
 Sun-spangled, gold-broider'd, and fled far behind,
 Like an infinite train. So she came and reclined
 In the reeds, and I hunger'd to see her unseal
 The buds of her eyes that would ope and reveal
 The blue that was in them; and they oped and she
 raised
 Two orbs of pure crystal, and timidly gazed
 With her eyes on my eyes; but their colour and
 shine
 Was of that which they look'd on, and mostly of
 mine—
 For she loved me,—except when she blush'd, and
 they sank,
 Shame-humbled, to number the stones on the
 bank,
 Or her play-idle fingers, while lisp'ing she told me

How she put on her veil, and in love to behold
 me
 Would wing through the sun till she fainted away
 Like a mist, and then flew to her waters and lay
 In love-patience long hours, and sore dazzled her
 eyes
 In watching for mine 'gainst the midsummer skies.
 But now they were heal'd,—O my heart, it still
 dances
 When I think of the charm of her changeable
 glances,
 And my image how small when it sank in the deep
 Of her eyes where her soul was,—Alas! now they
 weep,
 And none knoweth where. In what stream do
 her eyes
 Shed invisible tears? Who beholds where her
 sighs
 Flow in eddies, or sees the ascent of the leaf
 She has pluck'd with her tresses? Who listens her
 grief
 Like a far fall of waters, or hears where her feet
 Grow emphatic among the loose pebbles, and beat
 Them together? Ah! surely her flowers float
 adown
 To the sea unaccepted, and little ones drown
 For need of her mercy,—even he whose twin-
 brother
 Will miss him forever; and the sorrowful mother
 Implores in vain for his body to kiss
 And cling to, all dripping and cold as it is,
 Because that soft pity is lost in hard pain!
 We loved,—how we loved!—for I thought not
 again
 Of the woes that were whisper'd like fears in that
 place
 If I gave me to beauty. Her face was the face
 Far away, and her eyes were the eyes that were
 drown'd

For my absence,—her arms were the arms that
 sought round,
 And clasp'd me to nought; for I gazed and be-
 came
 Only true to my falsehood, and had but one name
 For two loves, and call'd ever on Ægle, sweet
 maid
 Of the sky-loving waters,—and was not afraid
 Of the sight of her skin;—for it never could be,
 Her beauty and love were misfortunes to me!

Thus our bliss had endured for a time-shorten'd
 space,
 Like a day made of three, and the smile of her
 face
 Had been with me for joy,—when she told me
 indeed
 Her love was self-task'd with a work that would
 need
 Some short hours, for in truth 'twas the veriest
 pity
 Our love should not last, and then sang me a
 ditty,
 Of one with warm lips that should love her, and
 love her
 When suns were burnt dim and long ages past
 over.
 So she fled with her voice, and I patiently nested
 My limbs in the reeds, in still quiet, and rested
 Till my thoughts grew extinct, and I sank in a
 sleep
 Of dreams,—but their meaning was hidden too
 deep
 'To be read what their woe was;—but still it was
 woe
 That was writ on all faces that swam to and fro
 In that river of night;—and the gaze of their eyes
 Was sad,—and the bend of their brows,—and their
 cries

Were seen, but I heard not. The warm touch of
 tears
 Travell'd down my cold cheeks, and I shook till
 my fears
 Awaked me, and lo! I was couch'd in a bower,
 The growth of long summers rear'd up in an hour
 Then I said, in the fear of my dream, I will fly
 From this magic, but could not, because that my
 eye
 Grew love-idle among the rich blooms; and the
 earth
 Held me down with its coolness of touch, and the
 mirth
 Of some bird was above me,—who, even in fear,
 Would startle the thrush? and methought there
 drew near
 A form as of Ægle,—but it was not the face
 Hope made, and I knew the witch-Queen of that
 place,
 Even Circe the Cruel, that came like a Death
 Which I fear'd, and yet fled not, for want of my
 breath.
 There was thought in her face, and her eyes were
 not raised
 From the grass at her foot, but I saw, as I gazed,
 Her spite—and her countenance changed with her
 mind
 As she plann'd how to thrall me with beauty, and
 bind
 My soul to her charms,—and her long tresses play'd
 From shade into shine and from shine into shade,
 Like a day in mid-autumn,—first fair, O how fair
 With long snaky locks of the adder-black hair
 That clung round her neck,—those dark locks that
 I prize,
 For the sake of a maid that once loved me with
 eyes
 Of that fathomless hue,—but they changed as they
 rolled

And brighten'd, and suddenly blazed into gold
 That she comb'd into flames, and the locks that fell
 down
 Turn'd dark as they fell, but I slighted their
 brown,
 Nor loved, till I saw the light ringlets shed wild,
 That innocence wears when she is but a child;
 And her eyes,—Oh I ne'er had been witch'd with
 their shine,
 Had they been any other, my Ægle, than thine!

Then I gave me to magic, and gazed till I
 madden'd
 In the full of their light,—but I sadden'd and
 sadden'd
 The deeper I look'd,—till I sank on the snow
 Of her bosom, a thing made of terror and woe,
 And answer'd its throb with the shudder of fears,
 And hid my cold eyes from her eyes with my
 tears,
 And strain'd her white arms with the still languid
 weight
 Of a fainting distress. There she sat like the Fate
 That is nurse unto Death, and bent over in shame
 To hide me from her—the true Ægle—that came
 With the words on her lips the false witch had
 forgiven
 To make me immortal—for now I was even
 At the portals of Death, who but waited the hush
 Of world-sounds in my ear to cry welcome, and
 rush
 With my soul to the banks of his black-flowing
 river.
 Oh would it had flown from my body forever,
 Ere I listen'd those words, when I felt with a
 start,
 The life-blood rush back in one throb to my heart,
 And saw the pale lips where the rest of that spell
 Had perish'd in horror—and heard the farewell

Of that voice that was drown'd in the dash of the
 stream !
 How fain had I follow'd, and plunged with that
 scream
 Into death, but my being indignantly lagg'd
 Through the brutalized flesh that I painfully
 dragg'd
 Behind me:—" O Circe ! O mother of spite !
 Speak the last of that curse ! and imprison me
 quite
 In the husk of a brute,—that no pity may name
 The man that I was,—that no kindred may claim
 The monster I am ! Let me utterly be
 Brute-buried, and Nature's dishonour with me
 Uninscribed !" —But she listen'd my prayer, that
 was praise
 To her malice, with smiles, and advised me to gaze
 On the river for love,—and perchance she would
 make
 In pity a maid without eyes for my sake,
 And she left me like Scorn. Then I ask'd of the
 wave,
 What monster I was, and it trembled and gave
 The true shape of my grief, and I turn'd with my
 face
 From all waters forever, and fled through that
 plae.
 Till with horror more strong than all magic I pass'd
 Its bounds, and the world was before me at last.

There I wander'd in sorrow, and shunn'd the
 abodes
 Of men, that stood up in the likeness of Gods,
 But I saw from afar the warm shine of the sun
 On their cities, where man was a million, not one ;
 And I saw the white smoke of their altars ascend-
 ing,
 That show'd where the hearts of the many were
 blending,

And the wind in my face brought shrill voices that
 came
 'rom the trumpets that gather'd whole bands in
 one fame
 As a chorus of man,—and they stream'd from the
 gates
 Like a dusky libation pour'd out to the Fates.
 But at times there were gentler processions of
 peace
 'That I watch'd with my soul in my eyes till their
 cease,
 There were women! there men! but to me a third
 sex
 I saw them all dots—yet I loved them as specks:
 And oft to assuage a sad yearning of eyes
 I stole near the city, but stole covert-wise
 Like a wild beast of love, and perchance to be
 smitten
 By some hand that I rather had wept on than
 bitten!
 Oh, I once had a haunt near a cot where a mother
 Daily sat in the shade with her child, and would
 smother
 Its eyelids in kisses, and then in its sleep
 Sang dreams in its ear of its manhood, while deep
 In a thicket of willows I gazed o'er the brooks
 That murmur'd between us and kiss'd them with
 looks;
 But the willows unbosom'd their secret, and never
 I return'd to a spot I had startled forever,
 Though I oft long'd to know, but could ask it of
 none,
 Was the mother still fair, and how big was her son?

For the haunters of fields they all shunn'd me by
 flight,
 The men in their horror, the women in fright;
 None ever remain'd save a child once that sported
 Among the wild bluebells, and playfully counted

The breeze; and beside him a speckled snake lay
Tight strangled, because it had hiss'd him away
From the flower at his finger; he rose and drew
near

Like a Son of Immortals, one born to no fear,
But with strength of black locks and with eyes
azure bright

To grow to large manhood of merciful might.
He came, with his face of bold wonder, to feel,
The hair of my side, and to lift up my heel,
And question'd my face with wide eyes; but when
under

My lids he saw tears,—for I wept at his wonder,
He stroked me, and utter'd such kindness then,
That the once love of women, the friendship of
men

In past sorrow, no kindness e'er came like a kiss
On my heart in its desolate day such as this!
And I yearn'd at his cheeks in my love, and down
bent,

And lifted him up in my arms with intent
To kiss him,—but he cruel-kindly, alas!
Held out to my lips a pluck'd handful of grass!
Then I dropt him in horror, but I felt as I fled
The stone he indignantly hurl'd at my head,
That dissever'd my ear,—but I felt not, whose fate
Was to meet more distress in his love than his hate!

Thus I wander'd, companion'd of grief and for-
lorn,
Till I wish'd for that land where my being was
born,
But what was that land with its love, where my
home
Was self-shut against me; for why should I come
Like an after-distress to my gray-bearded father,
With a blight to the last of his sight?—let him
rather
Lament for me dead, and shed tears in the urn

Where I was not, and still in fond memory turn
 To his son even such as he left him. Oh, how
 Could I walk with the youth once my fellows, but
 now
 Like Gods to my humbled estate?—or how bear
 The steeds once the pride of my eyes and the care
 Of my hands? Then I turn'd me self-banish'd and
 came
 Into Thessaly here, where I met with the same
 As myself. I have heard how they met by a stream
 In games, and were suddenly changed by a scream
 That made wretches of many, as she roll'd her wild
 eyes
 Against heaven, and so vanish'd.—The gentle and
 wise
 Lose their thoughts in deep studies, and others
 their ill
 In the mirth of mankind where they mingle them
 still.

THE TWO PEACOCKS OF BEDFONT.

I.

ALAS! that breathing Vanity should go
 Where Pride is buried,—like its very ghost,
 Uprisen from the naked bones below,
 In novel flesh, clad in the silent boast
 Of gaudy silk that flutters to and fro,
 Shedding its chilling superstition most
 On young and ignorant natures—as it wont
 To haunt the peaceful churchyard of Bedfont!

II.

Each Sabbath morning, at the hour of prayer,
 Behold two maidens, up the quiet green
 Shining, far distant, in the summer air

That flaunts their dewy robes and breathes be-
 tween
 Their downy plumes,—sailing as if they were
 'Two far-off' ships,—until they brush between
 The ehurehyard's humble walls, and watch and
 wait
 On either side of the wide open'd gate.

III.

And there they stand—with haughty neeks before
 God's holy house, that points towards the skies—
 Frowning reluctant duty from the poor,
 And tempting homage from unthoughtful eyes:
 And Youth looks lingering from the temple door,
 Breathing its wishes in unfruitful sighs,
 With pouting lips,—forgetful of the grace,
 Of health, and smiles, on the heart-conscious
 faee;—

IV.

Because that Wealth, which has no bliss beside,
 May wear the happiness of rich attire;
 And those two sisters, in their silly pride,
 May change the soul's warm glances for the
 fire
 Of lifeless diamonds;—and for health denied,—
 With art, that blushes at itself, inspire
 Their languid cheeks—and flourish in a glory
 That has no life in life, nor after-story.

V.

The aged priest goes shaking his gray hair
 In meekest censuring, and turns his eye
 Earthward in grief, and heavenward in pray'r,
 And sighs, and clasps his hands, and passes by.
 Good-hearted man! what sullen soul would wear
 Thy sorrow for a garb, and constantly
 Put on thy censure, that might win the praise
 Of one so gray in goodness and in days?

VI.

Also the solemn clerk partakes the shame
 Of this ungodly shine of human pride,
 And sadly blends his reverence and blame
 In one grave bow, and passes with a stride
 Impatient :—many a red-hooded dame
 Turns her pain'd head, but not her glance, aside
 From wanton dress, and marvels o'er again,
 That heaven hath no wet judgments for the vain.

VII.

'I have a lily in the bloom at home,"
 Quoth one, "and by the blessed Sabbath day
 I'll pluck my lily in its pride, and come
 And read a lesson upon vain array ;—
 And when stiff silks are rustling up, and some
 Give place, I'll shake it in proud eyes and say—
 Making my reverence,—'Ladies, an you please,
 King Solomon's not half so fine as these.'"

VIII.

Then her meek partner, who has nearly run
 His earthly course,—“Nay, Goody, let your text
 Grow in the garden.—We have only one—
 Who knows that these dim eyes may see the
 next ?
 Summer will come again, and summer sun,
 And lilies too,—but I were sorely vexed
 To mar my garden, and cut short the blow
 Of the last hly I may live to grow.”

IX.

“The last !” quoth she, “and though the last it
 were—
 Lo ! those two wantons, where they stand so
 proud
 With waving plumes, and jewels in their hair,
 And painted cheeks, like Dagon's to be bow'd

And curtesy'd to!—last Sabbath after pray'r,
 I heard the little Tomkins ask aloud
 If they were angels—but I made him know
 God's bright ones better, with a bitter blow!"

X.

So speaking, they pursue the pebbly walk
 That leads to the white porch the Sunday throng,
 Hand-coupled urehins in restrained talk,
 And anxious pedagogue that e chastens wrong,
 And posied ehurewarden with solemn stalk,
 And gold-bedizen'd beadle flames along,
 And gentle peasant clad in buff and green,
 Like a meek cowslip in the spring serene ;

XI.

And blushing maiden—modestly array'd
 In spotless white,—still conscions of the glass ;
 And she, the lonely widow, that hath made
 A sable covenant with grief,—alas !
 She veils her tears under the deep, deep shade,
 While the poor kindly-hearted, as they pass,
 Bend to unelouded ehildhood, and earess
 Her boy,—so rosy!—and so fatherless!

XII.

Thus, as good Christians ought, they all draw near
 The fair white temple, to the timely call
 Of pleasant bells that tremble in the ear.—
 Now the last froek, and scarlet hood, and shawl
 Fade into dusk, in the dim atmosphere
 Of the low porch, and heav'n has won them all,
 —Saving those two, that turn aside and pass,
 In velvet blossom, where all flesh is grass.

XIII.

Ah me ! to see their silken manors trail'd
 In purple luxuries—with restless gold,—
 Flaunting the grass where widowhood has wail'd

In blotted black,—over the heapy mould
 Panting wave-wantonly! They never quail'd
 How the warm vanity abused the cold;
 Nor saw the solemn faces of the gone
 Sadly uplooking through transparent stone:

XIV.

But swept their dwellings with unquiet light,
 Shocking the awful presence of the dead;
 Where gracious natures would their eyes benight,
 Nor wear their being with a lip too red,
 Nor move too rudely in the summer bright
 Of sun, but put staid sorrow in their tread,
 Meting it into steps, with inward breath,
 In very pity to bereaved death.

XV.

Now in the church, time-sobor'd minds resign
 To solemn pray'r, and the loud chaunted hymn,—
 With glowing picturings of joys divine
 Painting the mistlight where the roof is dim;
 But youth looks upward to the window shine,
 Warming with rose and purple and the swim
 Of gold, as if thought-tinted by the stains
 Of gorgeous light through many-colour'd panes;

XVI.

Soiling the virgin snow wherein God hath
 Enrobed his angels,—and with absent eyes
 Hearing of Heav'n, and its directed path,
 Thoughtful of slippers,—and the glorious skies
 Clouding with satin,—till the preacher's wrath
 Consumes his pity, and he glows, and cries
 With a deep voice that trembles in its might,
 And earnest eyes grown eloquent in light:

XVII.

“ Oh, that the vacant eye would learn to look
 On very beauty, and the heart embrace

True loveliness, and from this holy book
 Drink the warm-breathing tenderness and
 graee
 Of love indeed ! Oh, that the young soul took
 Its virgin passion from the glorious faee
 Of fair religion, and address'd its strife,
 To win the riches of eternal life !

XVIII.

“ Doth the vain heart love glory that is none,
 And the poor excellence of vain attire ?
 Oh go, and drown your eyes against the sun,
 The visible ruler of the starry quire,
 Till boiling gold in giddy eddies run,
 Dazzling the brain with orbs of living fire ;
 And the faint soul down darkens into night,
 And dies a burning martyrdom to light.

XIX.

“ Oh go, and gaze,—when the low winds of ev'n
 Breathe hymns, and Nature's many forests
 nod
 Their gold-crown'd heads ; and the rich blooms of
 heav'n
 Sun-ripen'd give their blushes up to God ;
 And mountain-rocks and cloudy steeps are riv'n
 By founts of fire, as smitten by the rod
 Of heavenly Moses,—that your thirsty sense
 May queneh its longings of magnificence !

XX.

“ Yet suns shall perish—stars shall fade away—
 Day into darkness—darkness into death—
 Death into silence ; the warm light of day,
 The blooms of summer, the rich glowing breath
 Of even—all shall wither and decay,
 Like the frail furniture of dreams beneath
 The touch of morn—or bubbles of rich dyes
 That break and vanish in the aehing eyes.”

XXI.

They hear, soul-blushing, and repentant shed
 Unwholesome thoughts in wholesome tears, and
 pour
 Their sin to earth,—and with low drooping head
 Receive the solemn blessing, and implore
 Its grace—then soberly with chasten'd tread,
 They meekly press towards the gusty door,
 With humbled eyes that go to graze upon
 The lowly grass—like him of Babylon.

XXII.

The lowly grass!—O water-constant mind!
 Fast-ebbing holiness!—soon-fading grace
 Of serious thought, as if the gushing wind
 Through the low porch had wash'd it from the
 face
 Forever!—How they lift their eyes to find
 Old vanities!—Pride wins the very place
 Of meekness, like a bird, and flutters now
 With idle wings on the curl-conscious brow!

XXIII.

And lo! with eager looks they seek the way
 Of old temptation at the lowly gate;
 To feast on feathers, and on vain array,
 And painted cheeks, and the rich glistening
 state
 Of jewel-sprinkled locks.—But where are they,
 The graceless haughty ones that used to wait
 With lofty neck, and nods, and stiffen'd eye?—
 None challenge the old homage bending by.

XXIV.

In vain they look for the ungracious bloom
 Of rich apparel where it glow'd before,—
 For Vanity has faded all to gloom,
 And lofty Pride has stiffen'd to the core,

For impious Life to tremble at its doom,—
 Set for a warning token evermore,
 Whereon, as now, the giddy and the wise
 Shall gaze with lifted hands and wond'ring eyes.

XXV.

The aged priest goes on each sabbath morn,
 But shakes not sorrow under his gray hair ;
 The solemn clerk goes lavender'd and shorn,
 Nor stoops his back to the ungodly pair ;—
 And ancient lips that pucker'd up in scorn,
 Go smoothly breathing to the house of pray'r ;
 And in the garden-plot, from day to day,
 The lily blooms its long white life away.

XXVI.

And where two haughty maidens used to be,
 In pride of plume, where plummy Death had trod,
 Trailing the gorgeous velvets wantonly,
 Most unmeet pall, over the holy sod ;—
 There, gentle stranger, thou may'st only see
 Two sombre Peacocks.—Age, with sapient nod
 Marking the spot, still tarries to declare
 How they once lived, and wherefore they are
 there.

THE TWO SWANS.

A FAIRY TALE.

I.

IMMORTAL Imogen, crown'd queen above
 The lilies of thy sex, vouchsafe to hear
 A fairy dream in honour of true love—
 True above ills, and frailty, and all fear—
 Perchance a shadow of his own career

Whose youth was darkly prison'd and long
twined

By serpent-sorrow, till white Love drew near,
And sweetly sang him free, and round his mind
A bright horizon threw, wherein no grief may
wind.

II.

I saw a tower builded on a lake,
Mock'd by its inverse shadow, dark and deep—
That seem'd a still intenser night to make,
Wherein the quiet waters sunk to sleep,—
And, whatso'er was prison'd in that keep,
A monstrous Snake was warden:—round and
round

In sable ringlets I beheld him creep
Blackest amid black shadows to the ground,
Whilst his enormous head the topmost turret
crown'd.

III.

From whence he shot fierce light against the
stars,

Making the pale moon paler with affright;
And with his ruby eye out-threaten'd Mars—
That blazed in the mid-heavens, hot and
bright—

Nor slept, nor wink'd, but with a steadfast spite
Watch'd their wan looks and tremblings in the
skies;

And that he might not slumber in the night,
The curtain-lids were pluck'd from his large
eyes,

So he might never drowse, but watch his secret
prize.

IV.

Prince or princess in dismal durance pent,
Victims of old Enchantment's love or hate,

Their lives must all in painful sighs be spent,
 Watching the lonely waters soon and late,
 And clouds that pass and leave them to their
 fate,
 Or company their grief with heavy tears :—
 Meanwhile that Hope can spy no golden gate
 For sweet escapement, but in darksome fears
 They weep and pine away as if immortal years.

V.

No gentle bird with gold upon its wing
 Will perch upon the grate—the gentle bird
 Is safe in leafy dell, and will not bring
 Freedom's sweet key-note and commission word
 Learn'd of a fairy's lips, for pity stirr'd—
 Lest while he trembling sings, untimely guest!
 Watch'd by that cruel Snake and darkly heard,
 He leave a widow on her lonely nest,
 To press in silent grief the darlings of her breast.

VI.

No gallant knight, adventurous, in his bark,
 Will seek the fruitful perils of the place,
 To rouse with dipping oar the waters dark
 That bear that serpent-image on their face.
 And Love, brave Love! though he attempt the
 base,
 Nerved to his loyal death, he may not win
 His captive lady from the strict embrace
 Of that foul Serpent, clasping her within
 His sable folds—like Eve enthralld by the old
 Sin.

VII.

But there is none—no knight in panoply,
 Nor Love, intrench'd in his strong steely coat
 No little speck—no sail—no helper nigh,
 No sign—no whispering—no splash of boat :—
 'The distant shores show dimly and remote,

Made of a deeper mist,—serene and gray,—
 And slow and mute the eloudy shadows float
 Over the gloomy wave, and pass away,
 Chased by the silver beams that on their marges
 play.

VIII.

And bright and silvery the willows sleep
 Over the shady verge—no mad winds tease
 Their hoary heads; but quietly they weep
 There sprinkling leaves—half fountains and half
 trees:
 There lilies be—and fairer than all these,
 A solitary Swan her breast of snow
 Launches against the wave that seems to freeze
 Into a ehaste reflection, still below
 Twin-shadow of herself wherever she may go.

IX.

And forth she paddles in the very noon
 Of solemn midnight like an elfin thing.
 Charm'd into being by the argent moon—
 Whose silver light for love of her fair wing
 Goes with her in the shade, still worshipping
 Her dainty plumage:—all around her grew
 A radiant eirelet, like a fairy ring;
 And all behind, a tiny little clue
 Of light, to guide her back across the waters blue.

X.

And sure she is no meaner than a fay,
 Redeem'd from sleepy death, for beauty's sake,
 By old ordainment:—silent as she lay,
 Touch'd by a moonlight wand I saw her wake,
 And eut her leafy slough, and so forsake
 The verdant prison of her lily peers,
 That slept amidst the stars upon the lake—
 A breathing shape—restored to human fears,
 And new-born love and grief—self-conscious of her
 tears.

XI.

And now she clasps her wings around her heart,
 And near that lonely isle begins to glide
 Pale as her fears, and oftentimes with a start
 Turns her impatient head from side to side
 In universal terrors—all too wide
 To watch; and often to that marble keep
 Upturns her pearly eyes, as if she spied
 Some foe, and crouches in the shadows steep .
 That in the gloomy wave go diving fathoms deep.

XII.

And well she may, to spy that fearful thing
 All down the dusky walls in circlets wound;
 Alas! for what rare prize, with many a ring
 Girding the marble casket round and round?
 His folded tail, lost in the gloom profound,
 Terribly darkeneth the rocky base;
 But on the top his monstrous head is crown'd
 With prickly spears, and on his doubtful face
 Glean his unwearied eyes, red watchers of the
 place.

XIII.

Alas! of the hot fires that nightly fall,
 No one will scorch him in those orbs of spite,
 So he may never see beneath the wall
 That timid little creature, all too bright,
 That stretches her fair neck, slender and white,
 Invoking the pale moon, and vainly tries
 Her throbbing throat, as if to charm the night
 With song—but, hush—it perishes in sighs,
 And there will be no dirge, sad swelling though
 she dies!

XIV.

She droops—she sinks—she leans upon the lake
 Fainting again into a lifeless flower;

But soon the chilly springs anoint and wake
 Her spirit from its death, and with new power
 She sheds her stifled sorrows in a shower
 Of tender song, timed to her falling tears—
 That wins the shady summit of that tower,
 And, trembling all the sweeter for its fears,
Fills with imploring moan that cruel monster's
 ears.

XV.

And, lo! the scaly beast is all deprest,
 Subdued like Argus, by the might of sound—
 What time Apollo his sweet lute addrest
 To magic converse with the air, and bound
 The many monster eyes, all slumber-drown'd :—
 So on the turret-top that watchful Snake
 Pillows his giant head, and lists profound,
 As if his wrathful spite would never wake,
Charm'd into sudden sleep for Love and Beauty's
 sake!

XVI.

His prickly crest lies prone upon his crown,
 And thirsty lip from lip disparted flies,
 To drink that dainty flood of music down—
 His scaly throat is big with pent-up sighs—
 And whilst his hollow ear entranced lies,
 His looks for envy of the charmed sense
 Are fain to listen, till his steadfast eyes,
 Stung into pain by their own impotence,
Distil enormous tears into the lake immense.

XVII.

Oh, tuneful Swan! Oh, melancholy bird!
 Sweet was that midnight miracle of song,
 Rich with ripe sorrow, needful of no word
 To tell of pain, and love, and love's deep
 wrong—

Hinting a piteous tale—perchance how long

Thy unknown tears were mingled with the lake,
 What time disguised thy leafy mates among—
 And no eye knew what human love and ache
 Dwelt in those dewy leaves, and heart so nigh to
 break.

XVIII.

Therefore no poet will ungently touch
 The water-lily, on whose eyelids dew
 Trembles like tears; but ever hold it such
 As human pain may wander through and
 through,
 Turning the pale leaf paler in its hue—
 Wherein life dwells, transfigured, not entomb'd,
 By magic spells. Alas! who ever knew
 Sorrow in all its shapes, leafy and plumed,
 Or in gross husks of brutes eternally inhumed?

XIX.

And now the winged song has sealed the height
 Of that dark dwelling, builded for despair,
 And soon a little casement flashing bright
 Widens self-open'd into the cool air—
 That music like a bird may enter there
 And soothe the captive in his stony cage;
 For there is nought of grief, or painful care,
 But plaintive song may happily engage
 From sense of its own ill, and tenderly assuage.

XX.

And forth into the light, small and remote,
 A creature, like the fair son of a king,
 Draws to the latticè in his jewell'd coat
 Against the silver moonlight glistening,
 And leans upon his white hand listening
 To that sweet music that with tenderer tone
 Salutes him, wondering what kindly thing
 Is come to soothe him with so tuneful moan,
 Singing beneath the walls as if for him alone!

XXI.

And while he listens, the mysterious song,
 Woven with timid particles of speech,
 Twines into passionate words that grieve along
 The melancholy notes, and softly teach
 The secrets of true love,—that trembling reach
 His earnest ear, and through the shadows dun
 He missions like replies, and each to each
 Their silver voices mingle into one,
 Like blended streams that make one music as they
 run.

XXII.

“Ah! Love, my hope is swooning in my heart,—
 Aye, sweet, my cage is strong and hung full high—
 Alas! our lips are held so far apart,
 Thy words come faint, they have so far to fly!—
 If I may only shun that serpent-eye,—
 Ah me! that serpent-eye doth never sleep;—
 Then, nearer thee, Love’s martyr, I will die!—
 Alas, alas! that word has made me weep!
 For pity’s sake remain safe in thy marble keep!

XXIII.

My marble keep! it is my marble tomb—
 Nay, sweet! but thou hast there thy living
 breath—
 Aye to expend in sighs for this hard doom;—
 But I will come to thee and sing beneath,
 And nightly so beguile this serpent wreath;—
 Nay, I will find a path from these despairs.
 Ah, needs then thou must tread the back of
 Death,
 Making his stony ribs thy stony stairs.—
 Behold his ruby eye, how fearfully it glares!”

XXIV.

Full sudden at these words, the princely youth
 Leaps on the scaly back that slumbers, still

Uneonscious of his foot, yet not for ruth,
 But numb'd to dulness by the fairy skill
 Of that sweet music (all more wild and shrill
 For intense fear) that charm'd him as he lay—
 Meanwhile the lover nerves his desperate will,
 Held some short throbs by natural dismay,
 Then down, down the serpent-track begins his
 darksome way.

XXV.

Now dimly seen—now toiling out of sight,
 Eclipsed and eover'd by the envious wall;
 Now fair and spangled in the sudden light,
 And clinging with wide arms for fear of fall;
 Now dark and shelter'd by a kindly pall
 Of dusky shadow from his wakeful foe;
 Slowly he winds adown—dimly and small,
 Watch'd by the gentle Swan that sings below,
 Her hope increasing, still, the larger he doth grow.

XXVI.

But nine times nine the serpent folds embrace
 The marble walls about—which he must tread
 Before his anxious foot may touch the base:
 Long is the dreary path, and must be sped!
 But Love, that holds the mastery of dread,
 Braces his spirit, and with constant toil
 He wins his way, and now, with arms out-
 spread,
 Impatient plunges from the last long coil:
 So may all gentle Love ungente Malice foil.

XXVII.

The song is hush'd, the charm is all complete,
 And two fair Swans are swimming on the lake:
 But scarce their tender bills have time to meet,
 When fiercely drops adown that cruel Snake—
 His steely scales a fearful rustling make,
 Like autumn leaves that tremble and foretell

The sable storm ;—the plummy lovers quake—
 And feel the troubled waters pant and swell,
 Heaved by the giant bulk of their pursuer fell.

XXVIII.

His jaws, wide yawning like the gates of Death,
 Hiss horrible pursuit—his red eyes glare
 The waters into blood—his eager breath
 Grows hot upon their plumes :—now, minstrel
 fair !

She drops her ring into the waves, and there
 It widens all around, a fairy ring
 Wrought of the silver light—the fearful pair
 Swim in the very midst, and pant and cling
 The closer for their fears, and tremble wing to
 wiug.

XXIX.

Bending their course over the pale gray lake,
 Against the pallid East, wherein light play'd
 In tender flushes, still the baffled Snake
 Circled them round continually, and bay'd
 Hoarsely and loud, forbidden to invade
 The sanctuary ring—his sable mail
 Roll'd darkly through the flood, and writhed and
 made

A shining track over the waters pale,
 Lash'd into boiling foam by his enormous tail.

XXX.

And so they sail'd into the distance dim,
 Into the very distance—small and white,
 Like snowy blossoms of the spring that swim
 Over the brooklets—follow'd by the spite
 Of that huge Serpent, that with wild affright
 Worried them on their course, and sore annoy,
 Till on the grassy marge I saw them 'light,
 And change, anon, a gentle girl and boy,
 Lock'd in embrace of sweet unutterable joy !

XXXI.

Then came the Morn, and with her pearly
 showers
 Wept on them, like a mother, in whose eyes
 Tears are no grief; and from his rosy bowers
 The Oriental sun began to rise,
 Chasing the darksome shadows from the skies;
 Wherewith that sable Serpent far away
 Fled, like a part of night—delicious sighs
 From waking blossoms purified the day,
 And little birds were singing sweetly from each
 spray.

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM.

'Twas in the prime of summer time,
 An evening calm and cool,
 And four-and-twenty happy boys
 Came bounding out of school:
 There were some that ran and some that leapt,
 Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds,
 And souls untouch'd by sin;
 To a level mead they came, and there
 They drave the wickets in:
 Pleasantly shone the setting sun
 Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
 And shouted as they ran,—
 Turning to mirth all things of earth,
 As only boyhood can;
 But the Usher sat remote from all,
 A melancholy man!

His hat was off, his vest apart,
 To catch heaven's blessed breeze ;
 For a burning thought was in his brow,
 And his bosom ill at ease :
 So he lean'd his head on his hands, and read
 The book between his knees !

Leaf after leaf he turn'd it o'er,
 Nor ever glanced aside,
 For the peace of his soul he read that book
 In the golden eventide :
 Much study had made him very lean,
 And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the ponderous tome,
 With a fast and fervent grasp
 He strain'd the dusky covers close,
 And fix'd the brazen hasp :
 " Oh, God ! could I so close my mind,
 And clasp it with a clasp ! "

Then leaping on his feet upright,
 Some moody turns he took,—
 Now up the mead, then down the mead,
 And past a shady nook,—
 And, lo ! he saw a little boy
 That pored upon a book !

" My gentle lad, what is 't you read—
 Romance or fairy fable ?
 Or is it some historic page,
 Of kings and crowns unstable ? "
 The young boy gave an upward glance,—
 " It is ' The Death of Abel. ' "

The Usher took six hasty strides,
 As smit with sudden pain,—
 Six hasty strides beyond the place,
 Then slowly back again ;

And down he sat beside the lad,
And talk'd with him of Cain ;

And, long since then, of bloody men,
Whose deeds tradition saves ;
Of lonely folk cut off unseen,
And hid in sudden graves ;
Of horrid stabs, in groves forlorn,
And murders done in caves ;

And how the sprites of injured men
Shriek upward from the sod,—
Ay, how the ghostly hand will point
To show the burial clod ;
And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God !

He told how murderers walk the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain,—
With crimson elouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain :
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain !

“ And well,” quoth he, “ I know, for truth,
Their pangs must be extreme,—
Woe, woe, unutterable woe,—
Who spill life's sacred stream !
For why ? Methought, last night, I wrought
A murder, in a dream !

“ One that had never done me wrong—
A feeble man and old ;
I led him to a lonely field,—
The moon shone clear and cold :
Now here, said I, this man shall die,
And I will have his gold !

“ Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,

One hurried gash with a hasty knife,—
And then the deed was done :
There was nothing lying at my foot
But lifeless flesh and bone !

“ Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
That could not do me ill ;
And yet I fear'd him all the more,
For lying there so still :
There was a manhood in his look,
That murder could not kill !

“ And, lo ! the universal air
Seem'd lit with ghastly flame ;—
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame :
I took the dead man by his hand,
And call'd upon his name !

“ Oh, God ! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain !
But when I touch'd the lifeless clay,
The blood gush'd out amain !
For every clot, a burning spot
Was scorching in my brain !

“ My head was like an ardent coal,
My heart as solid ice ;
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew,
Was at the Devil's price :
A dozen times I groan'd ; the dead
Had never groan'd but twice !

“ And now, from forth the frowning sky,
From the Heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice—the awful voice
Of the blood-avenging sprite :—
' Thou guilty man ! take up thy dead
And hide it from my sight !'

“ I took the dreary body up,
 And cast it in a stream,—
A sluggish water, black as ink,
 The depth was so extreme :—
My gentle Boy, remember this
 Is nothing but a dream !

“ Down went the corse with a hollow plunge,
 And vanish'd in the pool ;
Anon I eleansed my bloody hands,
 And wash'd my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young,
 That evening in the school.

“ Oh, Heaven ! to think of their white souls,
 And mine so black and grim !
I could not share in ehildish prayer,
 Nor join in Evening Hymn :
Like a Devil of the Pit I seem'd,
 'Mid holy Cherubim !

“ And peace went with them, one and all,
 And each calm pillow spread ;
But Guilt was my grim Chamberlain
 That lighted me to bed ;
And drew my midnight curtains round,
 With fingers bloody red !

“ All night I lay in agony,
 In anguish dark and deep,
My fever'd eyes I dared not close,
 But stared aghast at Sleep :
For Sin had render'd unto her
 The keys of Hell to keep !

“ All night I lay in agony,
 From weary ehime to chime,
With one besetting horrid hint,
 That ræk'd me all the time ;

A mighty yearning, like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime !

“ One stern tyrannic thought, that made
All other thoughts its slave ;
Stronger and stronger every pulse
Did that temptation crave,—
Still urging me to go and see
The Dead Man in his grave !

“ Heavily I rose up, as soon
As light was in the sky,
And sought the black accursed pool
With a wild misgiving eye ;
And I saw the Dead in the river bed,
For the faithless stream was dry.

“ Merrily rose the lark, and shook
The dew-drop from its wing ;
But I never mark'd its morning flight,
I never heard it sing :
For I was stooping once again
Under the horrid thing.

“ With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
I took him up and ran ;—
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began :
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,
I hid the murder'd man !

“ And all that day I read in school,
But my thought was other where ;
As soon as the mid-day task was done,
In secret I was there :
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And still the corse was bare !

“ Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,

For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep :
Or land or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

“ So wills the fierce avenging Sprite,
Till blood for blood atones !
Ay, though he 's buried in a eave,
And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh,—
The world shall see his bones !

“ Oh, God ! that horrid, horrid dream
Besets me now awake !
Again—again, with dizzy brain,
The human life I take ;
And my red right hand grows raging hot,
Like Cranmer's at the stake.

“ And still no peace for the restless clay,
Will wave or mould allow ;
The horrid thing pursues my soul,—
It stands before me now ! ”
The fearful Boy look'd up, and saw
Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin eyelids kiss'd,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist ;
And Eugene Aram walk'd between,
With gyves upon his wrist.

THE ELM TREE:

A DREAM IN THE WOODS.

“ And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees.” AS YOU LIKE IT.

’T WAS in a shady Avenue,
Where lofty Elms abound—
And from a Tree
There came to me
A sad and solemn sound,
That sometimes murmur’d overhead,
And sometimes underground.

Amongst the leaves it seem’d to sigh,
Amid the boughs to moan ;
It mutter’d in the stem, and then
The roots took up the tone ;
As if beneath the dewy grass
The dead began to groan.

No breeze there was to stir the leaves ;
No bolts that tempests launch,
To rend the trunk or rugged bark
No gale to bend the branch ;
No quake of earth to heave the roots,
That stood so stiff and stanch.
No bird was preening up aloft,
To rustle with its wing ;
No squirrel, in its sport or fear,
From bough to bough to spring ;
The solid bole
Had ne’er a hole
To hide a living thing !

No seeping hollow eell to lodge
A furtive beast or fowl,
The martin, bat,
Or forest eat

That nightly loves to prowl,
 Nor ivy nook so apt to shroud
 The moping, snoring owl.

But still the sound was in my ear,
 A sad and solemn sound,
 That sometimes murmur'd overhead,
 And sometimes underground—
 'Twas in a shady Avenue
 Where lofty Elms abound.

O hath the Dryad still a tongue
 In this ungenial clime ?
 Have Sylvan Spirits still a voice
 As in the classic prime—
 To make the forest voluble,
 As in the olden time ?

The olden time is dead and gone ;
 Its years have fill'd their sum—
 And e'en in Greece—her native Greece—
 The Sylvan Nymph is dumb—
 From Ash, and Beech, and aged Oak,
 No classic whispers come.

From Poplar, Pine, and drooping Birch,
 And fragrant Linden Trees ;
 No living sound
 E'er hovers round,
 Unless the vagrant breeze,
 The music of the merry bird,
 Or hum of busy bees.

But busy bees forsake the Elm
 That bears no bloom aloft—
 The Finch was in the hawthorn-bush,
 The Blackbird in the croft ;
 And among the firs the brooding Dove,
 That else might murmur soft.

Yet still I heard that solemn sound,
 And sad it was to boot,
 From ev'ry overhanging bough,
 And each minuter shoot ;
 From rugged trunk and mossy rind,
 And from the twisted root.

From these,—a melancholy moan ;
 From those,—a dreary sigh ;
 As if the boughs were wintry bare,
 And wild winds sweeping by—
 Whereas the smallest fleecy cloud
 Was steadfast in the sky.

No sign or touch of stirring air
 Could either sense observe—
 The zephyr had not breath enough
 The thistle-down to swerve,
 Or force the filmy gossamers
 To take another curve.

In still and silent slumber hush'd
 All Nature seem'd to be :
 From heaven above, or earth beneath,
 No whisper came to me—
 Except the solemn sound and sad
 From that MYSTERIOUS TREE !

A hollow, hollow, hollow sound,
 As is that dreamy roar
 When distant billows boil and bound
 Along a shingly shore—
 But the ocean brim was far aloof,
 A hundred miles or more.

No murmur of the gusty sea,
 No tumult of the beach,
 However they may foam and fret,
 The bounded sense could reach—

Methought the trees in mystic tongue
Were talking each to each!—

Mayhap, rehearsing ancient tales
Of greenwood love or guilt,
Of whisper'd vows
Beneath their boughs ;
Or blood obscurely spilt ;
Or of that near-hand Mansion House
A Royal Tudor built.

Perchance, of booty won or shared
Beneath the starry cope—
Or where the suicidal wretch
Hung up the fatal rope ;
Or Beauty kept an evil tryste,
Insnares by Love and Hope.

Of graves, perchance, untimely scoop'd
At midnight dark and dank—
And what is underneath the sod
Whereon the grass is rank—
Of old intrigues,
And privy leagues,
Tradition leaves in blank.

Of traitor lips that mutter'd plots—
Of Kin who fought and fell—
God knows the undiscover'd schemes,
The arts and acts of Hell,
Perform'd long generations since,
If trees had tongues to tell !

With wary eyes, and cars alert,
As one who walks afraid,
I wander'd down the dappled path
Of mingled light and shade—
How sweetly gleam'd that arch of blue
Beyond the green arcade !

How cheerly shone the glimpse of Heav'n
 Beyond that verdant aisle!
 All overarch'd with lofty elms,
 That quench'd the light, the while,
 As dim and chill
 As serves to fill
 Some old Cathedral pile!

And many a gnarlèd trunk was there,
 That ages long had stood,
 Till Time had wrought them into shapes
 Like Pan's fantastic brood;
 Or still more foul and hideous forms
 That Pagans carve in wood!

A crouching Satyr lurking here—
 And there a Goblin grim—
 As staring full of demon life
 As Gothic sculptor's whim—
 A marvel it had scarcely been
 To hear a voice from him!

Some whisper from that horrid mouth
 Of strange, unearthly tone;
 Or wild infernal laugh, to chill
 One's marrow in the bone.
 But no—it grins like rigid Death,
 And silent as a stone!

As silent as its fellows be,
 For all is mute with them—
 The branch that climbs the leafy roof—
 The rough and mossy stem—
 The crooked root,
 And tender shoot,
 Where hangs the dewy gem.

One mystic Tree alone there is,
 Of sad and solemn sound—

That sometimes murmurs overhead,
 And sometimes underground—
 In all that shady Avenue,
 Where lofty Elms abound.

PART II.

The Scene is changed! No green Areade,
 No Trees all ranged a-row—
 But scatter'd like a beaten host,
 Dispersing to and fro;
 With here and there a sylvan corse,
 That fell before the foe.

The Foe that down in yonder dell
 Pursues his daily toil;
 As witness many a prostrate trunk,
 Bereft of leafy spoil,
 Hard by its wooden stump, whereon
 The adder loves to coil.

Alone he works—his ringing blows
 Have banish'd bird and beast;
 The Hind and Fawn have eanter'd off
 A hundred yards at least;
 And on the maple's lofty top,
 The linnet's song has ceased.

No eye his labour overlooks,
 Or when he takes his rest;
 Except the timid thrush that peeps
 Above her secret nest,
 Forbid by love to leave the young
 Beneath her speckled breast.

The Woodman's heart is in his work,
 His axe is sharp and good:

With sturdy arm and steady aim
 He smites the gaping wood;
 From distant rocks
 His lusty knocks
 Reëcho many a rood.

His axe is keen, his arm is strong;
 The muscles serve him well;
 His years have reach'd an extra span,
 The number none can tell;
 But still his lifelong task has been
 The Timber Tree to fell.

Through Summer's parching sultriness,
 And Winter's freezing cold,
 From sapling youth
 To virile growth,
 And Age's rigid mould,
 His energetic axe hath rung
 Within that Forest old.

Aloft, upon his poising steel
 The vivid sunbeams glance—
 About his head and round his feet
 The forest shadows dance;
 And bounding from his russet coat
 The acorn drops askance.

His face is like a Druid's face,
 With wrinkles furrow'd deep,
 And tann'd by scorching suns as brown
 As corn that's ripe to reap;
 But the hair on brow, and cheek, and chin,
 Is white as wool of sheep.

His frame is like a giant's frame;
 His legs are long and stark;
 His arms like limbs of knotted yew;
 His hands like rugged bark;

So he felleth still
 With right good will,
 As if to build an Ark!

Oh! well within *His* fatal path
 The fearful Tree might quake
 Through every fibre, twig, and leaf,
 With aspen tremour shake;
 Through trunk and root,
 And branch and shoot,
 A low complaining make!

Oh! well to *Him* the Tree might breathe
 A sad and solemn sound,
 A sigh that murmur'd overhead,
 And groans from underground;
 As in that shady Avenue
 Where lofty Elms abound!

But calm and mute the Maple stands,
 The Plane, the Ash, the Fir,
 The Elm, the Beech, the drooping Birch,
 Without the least demur;
 And e'en the Aspen's hoary leaf
 Makes no unusual stir.

The Pines—those old gigantic Pines,
 That writhe—recalling soon
 The famous Human Group that writhes
 With Snakes in wild festoon—
 In ramous wrestlings interlae'd
 A Forest Laocoon—

Like Titans of primeval girth
 By tortures overcome,
 Their brown enormous limbs they twine,
 Bedew'd with tears of gum—
 Fierce agonies that ought to yell,
 But, like the marble, dumb.

Nay, yonder blasted Elm that stands
 So like a man of sin,
 Who, frantic, flings his arms abroad
 To feel the Worm within—
 For all that gesture, so intense,
 It makes no sort of din!

An universal silence reigns
 In rugged bark or peel,
 Except that very trunk which rings
 Beneath the biting steel—
 Meanwhile the Woodman plies his axe
 With unrelenting zeal!

No rustic song is on his tongue,
 No whistle on his lips;
 But with a quiet thoughtfulness
 His trusty tool he grips,
 And, stroke on stroke, keeps hacking out
 The bright and flying chips.

Stroke after stroke, with frequent dint
 He spreads the fatal gash;
 Till, lo! the remnant fibres rend,
 With harsh and sudden crash,
 And on the dull resounding turf
 The jarring branches lash!

Oh! now the Forest Trees may sigh,
 The Ash, the Poplar tall,
 The Elm, the Birch, the drooping Beech,
 The Aspens—one and all,
 With solemn groan
 And hollow moan
 Lament a comrade's fall!

A goodly Elm, of noble girth,
 That, thrice the human span—
 While on their variegated course

The constant Seasons ran—
Through gale, and hail, and fiery bolt,
Had stood erect as Man.

But now, like mortal Man himself,
Struck down by hand of God,
Or heathen Idol tumbled prone
Beneath th' Eternal's nod,
In all its giant bulk and length
It lies along the sod!

Ay, now the Forest Trees may grieve
And make a common moan
Around that patriarchal trunk
So newly overthrown;
And with a murmur recognize
A doom to be their own!

The Echo sleeps: the idle axe,
A disregarded tool,
Lies crushing with its passive weight
The toad's reputed stool—
The Woodman wipes his dewy brow
Within the shadows cool.

No Zephyr stirs: the ear may catch
The smallest insect-hum;
But on the disappointed sense
No mystic whispers come;
No tone of sylvan sympathy,
The Forest Trees are dumb.

No leafy noise, nor inward voice,
No sad and solemn sound,
That sometimes murmurs overhead,
And sometimes underground;
As in that shady Avenue,
Where lofty Elms abound!

PART III.

The deed is done: the Tree is low
That stood so long and firm ;
The Woodman and his axe are gone,
His toil has found its term ;
And where he wrought, the speckled Thrush,
Securely hunts the worm.

The Cony from the sandy bank
Has run a rapid race,
Through thistle, bent, and tangled fern,
To seek the open spae ;
And on its haunches sits ereet
To elean its furry face.

The dappled Fawn is elose at hand,
The Hind is browsing near,—
And on the Larch's lowest bough
The Ousel whistles elear ;
But checks the note
Within its throat,
As ehoked with sudden fear !

With sudden fear her wormy quest
The Thrush abruptly quits—
Through thistle, bent, and tangled fern
The startled Cony flits ;
And on the Larch's lowest bough
No more the Ousel sits.

With sudden fear
The dappled Deer
Effect a swift eseaPe ;
But well might bolder creatures start,
And fly, or stand agape,
With rising hair and curdled blood,
To see so grim a Shape !

The very sky turns pale above ;
 The earth grows dark beneath ;
 The human Terror thrills with cold,
 And draws a shorter breath—
 An universal panic owns
 The dread approach of DEATH !

With silent pace, as shadows come,
 And dark as shadows be,
 The grisly Phantom takes his stand
 Beside the fallen Tree,
 And scans it with his gloomy eyes,
 And laughs with horrid glee

A dreary laugh and desolate,
 Where mirth is void and null,
 As hollow as its echo sounds
 Within the hollow skull—
 “Whoever laid this tree along,
 His hatchet was not dull !

“The human arm and human tool
 Have done their duty well !
 But after sound of ringing axe
 Must sound the ringing knell ;
 When Elm or Oak
 Have felt the stroke
 My turn it is to fell !

“No passive unregarded tree,
 A senseless thing of wood,
 Wherein the sluggish sap ascends,
 To swell the vernal bud—
 But conscious, moving, breathing trunks
 That throb with living blood !

“No forest Monarch yearly clad
 In mantle green or brown ;
 That unrecorded lives, and falls

By hand of rustic clown—
But Kings who don the purple robe,
And wear the jewell'd crown.

“ Ah! little recks the Royal mind,
Within his Banquet Hall,
While tapers shine and Music breathes
And Beauty leads the Ball,—
He little recks the oaken plank
Shall be his palace wall!

“ Ah, little dreams the haughty Peer,
The while his Falcon flies—
Or on the blood-bedabbled turf
The antler'd quarry dies—
That in his own ancestral Park
The narrow dwelling lies.

“ But haughty Peer and mighty King—
One doom shall overwhelm!
The oaken cell
Shall lodge him well
Whose sceptre ruled a realm—
While he who never knew a home,
Shall find it in the Elm!

“ The tatter'd, lean, dejected wretch,
Who begs from door to door,
And dies within the cressy ditch,
Or on the barren moor,
The friendly Elm shall lodge and clothe
That houseless man and poor!

“ Yea, this recumbent rugged trunk,
That lies so long and prone,
With many a fallen acorn-cup,
And mast and firry cone—
This rugged trunk shall hold its share
Of mortal flesh and bone!

“ A Miser hoarding heaps of gold,
 But pale with ague-fears—
 A Wife lamenting love’s decay,
 With secret cruel tears,
 Distilling bitter, bitter drops
 From sweets of former years—

“ A man within whose gloomy mind
 Offence had darkly sunk,
 Who out of fierce Revenge’s cup
 Hath madly, darkly drunk—
 Grief, Avarice, and Hate shall sleep
 Within this very trunk !

“ This massy trunk that lies along,
 And many more must fall—
 For the very knave
 Who digs the grave,
 The man who spreads the pall,
 And he who tolls the funeral bell,
 The Elm shall have them all !

“ The tall abounding Elm that grows
 In hedgerows up and down ;
 In field and forest, copse and park,
 And in the peopled town,
 With colonies of noisy rooks
 That nestle on its crown.

“ And well th’ abounding Elm may grow
 In field and hedge so rife,
 In forest, copse, and wooded park,
 And ’mid the city’s strife,
 For, every hour that passes by
 Shall end a human life !”

The Phantom ends : the shade is gone ;
 The sky is clear and bright ;
 On turf, and moss, and fallen Tree,

There glows a ruddy light;
And bounding through the golden fern
The Rabbit comes to bite.

The Thrush's mate beside her sits
And pipes a merry lay;
The Dove is in the evergreens;
And on the Larch's spray
The Fly-bird flutters up and down,
To catch its tiny prey.

The gentle Hind and dappled Fawn
Are coming up the glade;
Each harmless furr'd and feather'd thing
Is glad, and not afraid—
But on my sadden'd spirit still
The Shadow leaves a shade.

A secret, vague, prophetic gloom,
As though by certain mark
I knew the fore-appointed Tree,
Within whose rugged bark
This warm and living frame shall find
Its narrow house and dark.

That mystic Tree which breathed to me
A sad and solemn sound,
That sometimes murmur'd overhead,
And sometimes underground;
Within that shady Avenue
Where lofty Elms abound.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

A ROMANCE.

“A jolly place,” said he, “in times of old,
 But something ails it now: the place is curst.”
 HART-LEAP WELL, BY WORDSWORTH.

PART I.

SOME dreams we have are nothing else but dreams,
 Unnatural and full of contradictions;
 Yet others of our most romantic schemes
 Are something more than fictions.

It might be only on enchanted ground;
 It might be merely by a thought's expansion;
 But in the spirit, or the flesh, I found
 An old deserted Mansion.

A residence for woman, child, and man,
 A dwelling-place,—and yet no habitation;
 A House,—but under some prodigious ban
 Of excommunication.

Unhinged the iron gates half open hung,
 Jarr'd by the gusty gales of many winters,
 That from its crumbled pedestal had flung
 One marble globe in splinters.

No dog was at the threshold, great or small;
 No pigeon on the roof—no household creature—
 No cat demurely dozing on the wall—
 Not one domestic feature.

No human figure stirr'd, to go or come,
 No face look'd forth from shut or open casement,
 No chimney smoked—there was no sign of Home
 From parapet to basement.

With shatter'd panes the grassy court was starr'd ;
The time-worn coping-stone had tumbled after ;
And through the ragged roof the sky shone, barr'd
With naked beam and rafter.

O'er all there hung a shadow and a fear ;
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted !

The flow'r grew wild and rankly as the weed,
Roses with thistles struggled for espial,
And vagrant plants of parasitic breed
Had overgrown the Dial.

But gay or gloomy, steadfast or infirm,
No heart was there to heed the hour's duration ;
All times and tides were lost in one long term
Of stagnant desolation.

The wren had built within the Porch, she found
Its quiet loneliness so sure and thorough ;
And on the lawn,—within its turfy mound,—
The rabbit made his burrow.

The rabbit wild and gray, that flitted through
The shrubby clumps, and frisk'd, and sat, and
vanish'd,
But leisurely and bold, as if he knew
His enemy was banish'd.

The wary crow,—the pheasant from the woods—
Lull'd by the still and everlasting sameness,
Close to the Mansion, like domestic broods,
Fed with a "shocking tameness."

The coot was swimming in the reedy pond,
Beside the water-hen, so soon affrighted ;
And in the weedy moat the heron, fond
Of solitude, alighted.

The moping heron, motionless and stiff,
That on a stone, as silently and stilly,
Stood, an apparent sentinel, as if
To guard the water-lily.

No sound was heard, except, from far away,
The ringing of the Whitwall's shrilly laughter,
Or, now and then, the chatter of the jay,
That Echo murmur'd after.

But Echo never moek'd the human tongue ;
Some weighty crime, that Heaven could not par-
A secret curse on that old Building hung, [don,
And its deserted Garden.

The beds were all untouch'd by hand or tool ;
No footstep mark'd the damp and mossy gravel,
Each walk as green as is the mantled pool,
For want of human travel.

The vine unpruned, and the neglected peaeh,
Droop'd from the wall with which they used to
grapple ;
And on the eanker'd tree, in easy reach,
Rotted the golden apple.

But awfully the truant shunn'd the ground,
The vagrant kept aloof, and daring Poacher ;
In spite of gaps that through the fences round
Invited the encroacher.

For over all there hung a cloud of fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted !

The pear and quinee lay squander'd on the grass ;
The mould was purple with unheeded showers
Of bloomy plums—a Wilderness it was
Of fruits, and weeds, and flowers !

The marigold amidst the nettles blew,
The gourd embraced the rose-bush in its ramble,
The thistle and the stock together grew,
The hollyhock and bramble.

The bear-bine with the lilac interlaced,
The sturdy burdock choked its slender neighbour,
The spicy pink. All tokens were effaced
Of human care and labour.

The very yew Formality had train'd
To such a rigid pyramidal stature,
For want of trimming had almost regain'd
The raggedness of nature.

The Fountain was a-dry—neglect and time
Had marr'd the work of artisan and mason,
And efts and croaking frogs, begot of slime,
Sprawl'd in the ruin'd bason.

The Statue, fallen from its marble base,
Amidst the refuse leaves, and herbage rotten,
Lay like the Idol of some bygone race,
Its name and rites forgotten.

On ev'ry side the aspect was the same,
All ruin'd, desolate, forlorn and savage :
No hand or foot within the precinct came
To rectify or ravage.

For over all there hung a cloud of fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted !

PART II.

O, very gloomy is the House of Woe,
Where tears are falling while the bell is knelling,

With all the dark solemnities which show
That Death is in the dwelling!

O very, very dreary is the room
Where Love, domestic Love, no longer nestles,
But smitten by the common stroke of doom,
The Corpse lies on the trestles!

But House of Woe, and hearse, and sable pall,
The narrow home of the departed mortal,
Ne'er look'd so gloomy as that Ghostly Hall,
With its deserted portal!

The centipede along the threshold crept,
The cobweb hung across in mazy tangle,
And in its winding-sheet the maggot slept,
At every nook and angle.

The keyhole lodged the earwig and her brood,
The emnets of the steps had old possession,
And march'd in search of their diurnal food
In undisturb'd procession.

As undisturb'd as the prehensile cell
Of moth or maggot, or the spider's tissue,
For never foot upon that threshold fell,
To enter or to issue.

O'er all there hung the shadow of a fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted.

Howbeit, the door I push'd—or so I dreamed—
Which slowly, slowly gaped,—the hinges creaking
With such a rusty eloquence, it seem'd
That Time himself was speaking.

But Time was dumb within that Mansion old,
Or left his tale to the heraldic banners

That hung from the corroded walls, and told
Of former men and manners.

Those tatter'd flags, that with the open'd door,
Seem'd the old wave of battle to remember,
While fallen fragments danced upon the floor
Like dead leaves in December.

The startled bats flew out—bird after bird—
The screechowl overhead began to flutter,
And seem'd to mock the cry that she had
 heard
Some dying vietim utter !

A shriek that echoed from the joisted roof,
And up the stair, and further still and further,
Till in some ringing chamber far aloof
It ceased its tale of murther !

Meanwhile the rusty armour rattled round,
The banner shudder'd, and the ragged streamer ;
All things the horrid tenor of the sound
Aeknowledged with a tremor.

The antlers, where the helmet hung and belt,
Stirr'd as the tempest stirs the forest branches,
Or as the stag had trembled when he felt
The bloodhound at his haunches.

The window jingled in its crumbled frame,
And thro' its many gaps of destitution
Dolorous moans and hollow sighings came,
Like those of dissolution.

The wood-louse dropp'd, and roll'd into a ball,
Touch'd by some impulse oecult or mechanic ;
And nameless beetles ran along the wall
In universal panic.

The subtle spider, that from overhead
 Hung like a spy on human guilt and error,
 Suddenly turn'd, and up its slender thread
 Ran with a nimble terror.

The very stains and fractures on the wall
 Assuming features solemn and terrific,
 Hinted some Tragedy of that old Hall,
 Lock'd up in hieroglyphic.

Some tale that might, perchance, have solved the [doubt,
 Wherefore amongst those flags so dull and livid,
 The banner of the BLOODY HAND shone out,
 So ominously vivid.

Some key to that inscrutable appeal,
 Which made the very frame of Nature quiver ;
 And ev'ry thrilling nerve and fibre feel
 So ague-like a shiver.

For over all there hung a cloud of fear,
 A sense of mystery the spirit daunted ;
 And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
 The place is Haunted !

If but a rat had linger'd in the house,
 To lure the thought into a social channel !
 But not a rat remain'd, or tiny mouse,
 To squeak behind the panel.

Huge drops roll'd down the walls, as if they wept ;
 And where the cricket used to chirp so shrilly,
 The toad was squatting, and the lizard crept
 On that damp hearth and chilly.

For years no checrful blaze had sparkled there,
 Or glanced on coat of buff or knightly metal ;
 The slug was crawling on the vacant chair,—
 The snail upon the settle.

The floor was redolent of mould and must,
The fungus in the rotten seams had quicken'd ;
While on the oaken table coats of dust
Perennially had thicken'd.

No mark of leathern jack or metal cann,
No cup—no horn—no hospitable token,—
All social ties between that board and Man
Had long ago been broken.

There was so foul a rumour in the air,
The shadow of a Presence so atrocious ;
No human creature could have feasted there,
Even the most ferocious.

For over all there hung a cloud of fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted !

PART III.

'Tis hard for human actions to account,
Whether from reason or from impulse only—
But some internal prompting bade me mount
The gloomy stairs and lonely.

Those gloomy stairs, so dark, and damp, and cold,
With odours as from bones and relics carnal,
Deprived of rite, and consecrated mould,
The chapel vault, or charnel.

Those dreary stairs, where with the sounding stress
Of ev'ry step so many echoes blended,
The mind, with dark misgivings, fear'd to guess
How many feet ascended.

The tempest with its spoils had drifted in,
Till each unwholesome stone was darkly spotted.

As thickly as the leopard's dappled skin,
With leaves that rankly rotted.

The air was thick—and in the upper gloom
The bat—or something in its shape—was wing-
ing;
And on the wall, as chilly as a tomb,
The Death's-Head moth was clinging.

That mystic moth, which, with a sense profound
Of all unholy presence, augurs truly;
And with a grim significance flits round
The taper burning bluely.

Such omens in the place there seem'd to be,
At ev'ry crooked turn, or on the landing,
The straining eyeball was prepared to see
Some Apparition standing.

For over all there hung a cloud of fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted!

Yet no portentous Shape the sight amazed;
Each object plain, and tangible, and valid;
But from their tarnish'd frames dark Figures
gazed,
And Faces spectre-pallid.

Not mercy with the mimic life that lies
Within the compass of Art's simulation;
Their souls were looking thro' their painted eyes
With awful speculation.

On ev'ry lip a speechless horror dwelt;
On ev'ry brow the burthen of affliction;
The old Ancestral Spirits knew and felt
The House's malediction.

Such earnest woe their features overcast,
They might have stirr'd, or sigh'd, or wept, or spoken,
But, save the hollow moaning of the blast,
The stillness was unbroken.

No other sound or stir of life was there,
Except my steps in solitary clamber,
From flight to flight, from humid stair to stair,
From chamber into chamber.

Deserted rooms of luxury and state,
That old magnificence had richly furnish'd
With pictures, cabinets of ancient date,
And carvings gilt and burnish'd.

Rieh hangings, storied by the needle's art,
With scripture history, or classic fable;
But all had faded, save one ragged part,
Where Cain was slaying Abel.

The silent waste of mildew and the moth
Had marr'd the tissue with a partial ravage;
But undecaying frown'd upon the cloth
Each feature stern and savage.

The sky was pale; the eloud a thing of doubt;
Some hues were fresh, and some decay'd and duller
But still the BLOODY HAND shone strangely out
With vehemence of colour!

The BLOODY HAND that with a lurid stain
Shone on the dusty floor, a dismal token,
Projected from the casement's painted pane,
Where all beside was broken.

The BLOODY HAND significant of crime,
That glaring on the old heraldic banner,
Had kept its crimson unimpair'd by time,
In such a wondrous manner!

O'er all there hung the shadow of a fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted!

The Death-Watch tick'd behind the panell'd oak,
Inexplicable tremors shook the arras,
And echoes strange and mystical awoke,
The fancy to embarrass.

Prophetic hints that fill'd the soul with dread,
But thro' one gloomy entrance pointing mostly,
The while some secret inspiration said,
That Chamber is the Ghostly!

Across the door no gossamer festoon
Swung pendulous—no web—no dusty fringes,
No silky chrysalis or white cocoon
About its nooks and hinges.

The spider shunn'd the interdicted room,
The moth, the beetle, and the fly were banish'd,
And where the sunbeam fell athwart the gloom
The very midge had vanish'd.

One lonely ray that glanced upon a Bed,
As if with awful aim direct and certain,
To show the BLOODY HAND in burning red
Embroider'd on the curtain.

And yet no gory stain was on the quilt—
The pillow in its place had slowly rotted;
The floor alone retain'd the trace of guilt,
Those boards obscurely spotted.

Obscurely spotted to the door, and thence
With mazy doubles to the grated casement—
Oh what a tale they told of fear intense,
Of horror and amazement!

What human creature in the dead of night
 Had coursed like hunted hare that cruel distance?
 Had sought the door, the window, in his flight,
 Striving for dear existence?

What shrieking Spirit in that bloody room
 Its mortal frame had violently quitted?—
 Across the sunbeam, with a sudden gloom,
 A ghostly Shadow flitted.

Across the sunbeam, and along the wall,
 But painted on the air so very dimly,
 It hardly veil'd the tapestry at all,
 Or portrait frowning grimly.

O'er all there hung the shadow of a fear,
 A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
 And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
 The place is Haunted!

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

“Drown'd! drown'd!”—HAMLET

ONE more unfortunate,
 Weary of breath,
 Rashly importunate,
 Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
 Lift her with care;
 Fashion'd so slenderly,
 Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
 Clinging like cerements;

Whilst the wave constantly
 Drips from her clothing ;
 Take her up instantly,
 Loving, not loathing.—

Touch her not scornfully ;
 Think of her mournfully,
 Gently and humanly ;
 Not of the stains of her,
 All that remains of her
 Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
 Into her mutiny
 Rash and undutiful :
 Past all dishonour,
 Death has left on her
 Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
 One of Eve's family—
 Wipe those poor lips of hers
 Oozing so clammyly.

Loop up her tresses
 Escaped from the comb,
 Her fair auburn tresses ;
 Whilst wonderment guesses
 Where was her home ?

Who was her father ?
 Who was her mother ?
 Had she a sister ?
 Had she a brother ?
 Or was there a dearer one
 Still, and a nearer one
 Yet, than all other ?

Alas ! for the rarity
 Of Christian charity

Under the sun !
 Oh ! it was pitiful !
 Near a whole city full,
 Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
 Fatherly, motherly
 Feelings had changed :
 Love, by harsh evidence,
 Thrown from its eminence ;
 Even God's providence
 Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
 So far in the river,
 With many a light
 From window and casement,
 From garret to basement,
 She stood, with amazement,
 Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
 Made her tremble and shiver ;
 But not the dark arch,
 Or the black flowing river :
 Mad from life's history,
 Glad to death's mystery,
 Swift to be hurl'd—
 Any where, any where
 Out of the world !

In she plunged boldly,
 No matter how coldly
 The rough river ran,—
 Over the brink of it,
 Picture it—think of it,
 Dissolute Man !
 Lave in it, drink of it,
 Then, if you can !

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care ;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair !

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently,—kindly,—
Smooth, and compose them ;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly !

Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast !

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour !

THE SONG OF THE SHIRT.

WITH fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,

A woman sat in unwomanly rags,
 Plying her needle and thread—
 Stitch! stitch! stitch!
 In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
 And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
 She sang the "Song of the Shirt!"

"Work! work! work!
 While the cock is crowing aloof!
 And work—work—work,
 Till the stars shine through the roof!
 It's Oh! to be a slave
 Along with the barbarous Turk,
 Where woman has never a soul to save,
 If this is Christian work!

"Work—work—work
 Till the brain begins to swim;
 Work—work—work
 Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
 Seam, and gusset, and band,
 Band, and gusset, and seam,
 Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
 And sew them on in a dream!

"Oh, Men, with Sisters dear!
 Oh, Men, with Mothers and Wives!
 It is not linen you 're wearing out,
 But human creatures' lives!
 Stitch—stitch—stitch,
 In poverty, hunger and dirt,
 Sewing at once, with a double thread,
 A Shroud as well as a Shirt.

But why do I talk of Death?
 That Phantom of grisly bone,
 I hardly fear his terrible shape,
 It seems so like my own—
 It seems so like my own,

Because of the fasts I keep;
 Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
 And flesh and blood so cheap!

“ Work—work—work!
 My labour never flags;
 And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
 A crust of bread—and rags.
 That shatter’d roof—and this naked floor—
 A table—a broken chair—
 And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
 For sometimes falling there!

“ Work—work—work!
 From weary chime to chime,
 Work—work—work—
 As prisoners work for crime!
 Band, and gusset, and seam,
 Seam, and gusset, and band,
 Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumb’d,
 As well as the weary hand.

“ Work—work—work,
 In the dull December light,
 And work—work—work,
 When the weather is warm and bright—
 While underneath the caves
 The brooding swallows cling,
 As if to show me their sunny backs
 And twit me with the spring.

“ Oh! but to breathe the breath
 Of the cowslip and primrose sweet—
 With the sky above my head,
 And the grass beneath my feet,
 For only one short hour
 To feel as I used to feel,
 Before I knew the woes of want
 And the walk that costs a meal!

“ Oh ! but for one short hour !
 A respite however brief !
 No blessed leisure for Love or Hope,
 But only time for Grief !
 A little weeping would ease my heart,
 But in their briny bed
 My tears must stop, for every drop
 Hinders needle and thread ! ”

With fingers weary and worn,
 With eyelids heavy and red,
 A woman sat in unwomanly rags,
 Plying her needle and thread—
 Stitch ! stitch ! stitch !
 In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
 And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,
 Would that its tone could reach the Rich !
 She sang this “ Song of the Shirt ! ”

THE LADY'S DREAM.

THE lady lay in her bed,
 Her couch so warm and soft,
 But her sleep was restless and broken still ;
 For turning often and oft
 From side to side, she mutter'd and moan'd,
 And toss'd her arms aloft.

At last she startled up,
 And gazed on the vacant air,
 With a look of awe, as if she saw
 Some dreadful phantom there—
 And then in the pillow she buried her face
 From visions ill to bear.

The very curtain shook,
 Her terror was so extreme ;

And the light that fell on the broider'd quilt,
 Kept a tremulous gleam ;
 And her voice was hollow, and shook as she cried :--
 " Oh me ! that awful dream !

" That weary, weary walk,
 In the churchyard's dismal ground !
 And those horrible things, with shady wings,
 That came and flitted round,—
 Death, death, and nothing but death,
 In every sight and sound !

" And oh ! those maidens young,
 Who wrought in that dreary room,
 With figures drooping and spectres thin,
 And cheeks without a bloom ;—
 And the Voice that cried, ' For the pomp of pride,
 We haste to an early tomb !

" " For the pomp and pleasure of Pride,
 We toil like Afric slaves,
 And only to earn a home at last,
 Where yonder cypress waves ;'—
 And then they pointed—I never saw
 A ground so full of graves !

" And still the coffins came,
 With their sorrowful trains and slow ;
 Coffin after coffin still,
 A sad and sickening show ;
 From grief exempt, I never had dreamt
 Of such a World of Woe !

" Of the hearts that daily break,
 Of the tears that hourly fall,
 Of the many, many troubles of life,
 That grieve this earthly ball—
 Disease and Hunger, and Pain, and Want,
 But now I dreamt of them all ;

“ For the blind and the cripple were there,
And the babe that pined for bread,
And the houseless man, and the widow poor
Who begged—to bury the dead ;
The naked, alas. that I might have clad,
The famish'd I might have fed !

“ The sorrow I might have soothed,
And the unregarded tears ;
For many a thronging shape was there,
From long forgotten years,
Ay, even the poor rejected Moor,
Who rais'd my childish fears !

“ Each pleading look, that long ago
I scann'd with a heedless eye,
Each face was gazing as plainly there,
As when I pass'd it by :
Woe, woe for me if the past should be
Thus present when I die !

“ No need of sulphureous lake,
No need of fiery coal,
But only that crowd of human kind
Who wanted pity and dole—
In everlasting retrospect—
Will wring my sinful soul !

“ Alas ! I have walk'd through life
Too heedless where I trod ;
Nay, helping to trample my fellow worm,
And fill the burial sod—
Forgetting that even the sparrow falls
Not unmark'd of God !

“ I drank the richest draughts ;
And ate whatever is good—
Fish, and flesh, and fowl, and fruit,
Supplied my hungry mood ;

But I never remember'd the wretched ones
That starve for want of food !

“ I dress'd as the noble dress,
In cloth of silver and gold,
With silk, and satin, and costly furs,
In many an ample fold ;
But I never remember'd the naked limbs
That froze with winter's cold.

“ The wounds I might have heal'd !
The human sorrow and smart !
And yet it never was in my soul
To play so ill a part :
But evil is wrought by want of Thought,
As well as want of Heart ! ”

She clasp'd her fervent hands,
And the tears began to stream ;
Large, and bitter, and fast they fell,
Remorse was so extreme ;
And yet, oh yet, that many a Dame
Would dream the Lady's Dream !

THE WORKHOUSE CLOCK.

AN ALLEGORY.

THERE 's a murmur in the air,
A noise in every street—
The murmur of many tongues,
The noise of numerous feet—
While round the Workhouse door
The Labouring Classes flock,
For why ? the Overseer of the Poor
Is setting the Workhouse Clock.

Who does not hear the tramp
 Of thousands speeding along
 Of either sex and various stamp,
 Sickly, crippled, or strong,
 Walking, limping, creeping
 From court, and alley, and lane,
 But all in one direction sweeping
 Like rivers that seek the main ?
 Who does not see them sally
 From mill, and garret, and room,
 In lane, and court and alley,
 From homes in poverty's lowest valley,
 Furnished with shuttle and loom—
 Poor slaves of Civilization's galley—
 And in the road and footways rally,
 As if for the Day of Doom ?
 Some, of hardly human form,
 Stunted, crooked, and crippled by toil ;
 Dingy with smoke and dust and oil,
 And smirch'd besides with vicious soil,
 Clustering, mustering, all in a swarm.
 Father, mother, and careful child,
 Looking as if it had never smiled—
 The Sempstress, lean, and weary, and wan,
 With only the ghosts of garments on—
 The Weaver, her sallow neighbour,
 The grim and sooty Artisan ;
 Every soul—child, woman, or man,
 Who lives—or dies—by labour.

Stirred by an overwhelming zeal,
 And social impulse, a terrible throng !
 Leaving shuttle, and needle, and wheel,
 Furnace, and grindstone, spindle, and reel,
 Thread, and yarn, and iron, and steel—
 Yea, rest and the yet untasted meal—
 Gushing, rushing, crushing along,
 A very torrent of Man !

Urged by the sighs of sorrow and wrong,
 Grown at last to a hurricane strong,
 Stop its course who can !
 Stop who can its onward course
 And irresistible moral foree ;
 O ! vain and idle dream !
 For surely as men are all akin,
 Whether of fair or sable skin,
 According to Nature's scheme,
 That Human Movement contains within
 A Blood-Power stronger than Steam.

Onward, onward, with hasty feet,
 They swarm—and westward still—
 Masses born to drink and eat,
 But starving amidst Whitechapel's meat,
 And famishing down Cornhill !
 Through the Poultry—but still unfed—
 Christian Charity, hang your head !
 Hungry—passing the Street of Bread ;
 Thirsty—the Street of Milk ;
 Ragged—beside the Ludgate Mart,
 So gorgeous, through Mechanic-Art,
 With cotton, and wool, and silk !

At last, before that door
 That bears so many a knock
 Ere ever it opens to Siek or Poor,
 Like sheep they huddle and flock—
 And would that all the Good and Wise
 Could see the Million of hollow eyes,
 With a gleam derived from Hope and the skies,
 Upturn'd to the Workhouse Clock !

Oh ! that the Parish Powers,
 Who regulate Labour's hours,
 The daily amount of human trial,
 Weariness, pain, and self-denial,
 Would turn from the artificial dial

That striketh ten or eleven,
 And go, for once, by that older one
 That stands in the light of Nature's sun
 And takes its time from Heaven!

THE LAY OF THE LABOURER.

A SPADE! a rake! a hoe!
 A pickaxe, or a bill!
 A hook to reap, or a scythe to mow,
 A flail, or what ye will—
 And here 's a ready hand
 To ply the needful tool,
 And skill'd enough, by lessons rough,
 In Labour's rugged school.

To hedge, or dig the ditch,
 To lop or fell the tree,
 To lay the swarth on the sultry field,
 Or plough the stubborn lea;
 The harvest stack to bind,
 The wheaten rick to thatch,
 And never fear in my pouch to find
 The tinder or the match.

To a flaming barn or farm
 My fancies never roam;
 The fire I yearn to kindle and burn
 Is on the hearth of Home;
 Where children huddle and crouch
 Through dark long winter days,
 Where starving children huddle and crouch,
 To see the cheerful rays,
 A-glowing on the haggard cheek,
 And not in the haggard's blaze!

To Him who sends a drought
 To parch the fields forlorn,
 The rain to flood the meadows with mud,
 The blight to blast the eorn,
 To Him I leave to guide
 The bolt in its erooked path,
 To strike the miser's rick, and show
 The skies blood-red with wrath.

A spade! a rake! a hoe!
 A pickaxe, or a bill!
 A hook to reap, or a seythe to mow,
 A flail, or what ye will—
 The eorn to thrash, or the hedge to plash,
 The market-team to drive,
 Or mend the fence by the cover side,
 And leave the game alive.

Ay, only give me work,
 And then you need not fear
 That I shall snare his worship's hare,
 Or kill his grace's deer;
 Break into his lordship's house,
 To steal the plate so rich;
 Or leave the yeoman that had a purse
 To welter in a ditch.

Wherever Nature needs,
 Wherever Labour calls,
 No job I'll shirk of the hardest work,
 To shun the workhouse walls;
 Where savage laws begrudge
 The pauper babe its breath,
 And doom a wife to a widow's life,
 Before her partner's death.

My only claim is this,
 With labour stiff and stark,

By lawful turn my living to earn,
Between the light and dark ;
My daily bread, and nightly bed,
My bacon, and drop of beer—
But all from the hand that holds the land,
And none from the overseer !

No parish money, or loaf,
No pauper badges for me,
A son of the soil, by right of toil
Entitled to my fee.
No alms I ask, give me my task :
Here are the arm, the leg,
The strength, the sinews of a Man,
To work, and not to beg.

Still one of Adam's heirs,
Though doom'd by chance of birth,
To dress so mean and to eat the lean,
Instead of the fat of the earth ;
To make such humble meals
As honest labour can,
A bone and a crust, with a grace to God,
And little thanks to man !

A spade ! a rake ! a hoe !
A pickaxe, or a bill !
A hook to reap, or a scythe to mow,
A flail, or what ye will—
Whatever the tool to ply,
Here is a willing drudge,
With muscle and limb, and woe to him
Who does their pay begrudge !

Who every weekly score
Docks labour's little mite,
Bestows on the poor at the temple door,
But robb'd them over night.

The very shilling he hoped to save,
 As health and morals fail,
 Shall visit me in the New Bastile,
 The Spital, or the Gaol!

THE LEE-SHORE.

SLEET! and Hail! and Thunder!
 And ye Winds that rave,
 Till the sands thereunder
 Tinge the sullen wave—

Winds, that like a Demon,
 Howl with horrid note
 Round the toiling Seaman,
 In his tossing boat—

From his humble dwelling,
 On the shingly shore,
 Where the billows swelling,
 Keep such hollow roar—

From that weeping Woman,
 Seeking with her cries
 Succour superhuman
 From the frowning skies—

From the Urchin pining
 For his Father's knee—
 From the lattice shining,
 Drive him out to sea!

Let broad leagues dissever
 Him from yonder foam;—
 Oh, God! to think Man ever
 Comes too near his Home!

THE DEATH-BED.

WE watch'd her breathing thro' the night,
 Her breathing soft and low,
 As in her breast the wave of life
 Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seem'd to speak,
 So slowly moved about,
 As we had lent her half our powers
 To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
 Our fears our hopes belied—
 We thought her dying when she slept,
 And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
 And chill with early showers,
 Her quiet eyelids closed— she had
 Another morn than ours.

LINES

ON SEEING MY WIFE AND TWO CHILDREN SLEEPING IN
 THE SAME CHAMBER.

AND has the earth lost its so spacious round,
 The sky its blue circumference above,
 That in this little chamber there is found
 Both earth and heaven—my universe of love !
 All that my God can give me or remove,
 Here sleeping, save myself, in mimic death.
 Sweet that in this small compass I bchove
 To live their living and to breathe their breath !

Almost I wish that with one common sigh
 We might resign all mundane care and strife,
 And seek together that transcendent sky,
 Where Father, Mother, Children, Husband, Wife,
 Together pant in everlasting life !

COBLENTZ, NOV. 1835.

TO MY DAUGHTER,

ON HER BIRTHDAY.

I.

DEAR Fanny ! nine long years ago,
 While yet the morning sun was low,
 And rosy with the eastern glow
 The landscape smiled ;
 Whilst low'd the newly-waken'd herds—
 Sweet as the early song of birds,
 I heard those first, delightful words,
 “ Thou hast a child ! ”

II.

Along with that uprising dew
 Tears glisten'd in my eyes, though few,
 To hail a dawning quite as new
 To me, as Time :
 It was not sorrow—not annoy—
 But like a happy maid, though coy,
 With grief-like welcome, even Joy
 Forestalls its prime.

III.

So may'st thou live, dear ! many years,
 In all the bliss that life endears,
 Not without smiles, nor yet from tears,
 Too strictly kept :

When first thy infant littleness
 I folded in my fond caress,
 The greatest proof of happiness
 Was this—I wept.

Sept. 1839.

TO A CHILD

EMBRACING HIS MOTHER.

I.

LOVE thy mother, little one!
 Kiss and clasp her neck again,
 Hereafter she may have a son
 Will kiss and clasp her neck in vain.
 Love thy mother, little one!

II.

Gaze upon her living eyes,
 And mirror back her love for thee,—
 Hereafter thou may'st shudder sighs
 To meet them when they cannot see.
 Gaze upon her living eyes!

III.

Press her lips the while they glow
 With love that they have often told,—
 Hereafter thou may'st press in woe,
 And kiss them till thine own are cold.
 Press her lips the while they glow!

IV.

Oh, revere her raven hair!
 Altho' it be not silver-gray;
 Too early Death, led on by Care,
 May snatch save one dear lock away.
 Oh! revere her raven hair!

V.

Pray for her at eve and morn,
 That Heaven may long the stroke defer,—
 For thou may'st live the hour forlorn
 When thou wilt ask to die with her.
 Pray for her at eve and morn !

STANZAS.

I.

FAREWELL Life ! my senses swim,
 And the world is growing dim :
 Thronging shadows cloud the light,
 Like the advent of the night—
 Colder, colder, colder still,
 Upward steals a vapour chill ;
 Strong the earthy odour grows—
 I smell the mould above the rose !

II.

Welcome Life ! the Spirit strives !
 Strength returns and hope revives ;
 Cloudy fears and shapes forlorn
 Fly like shadows at the morn,—
 O'er the earth there comes a bloom ;
 Sunny light for sullen gloom,
 Warm perfume for vapour cold—
 I smell the rose above the mould !

April, 1845.

TO A FALSE FRIEND.

I.

OUR hands have met, but not our hearts ;
 Our hands will never meet again.
 Friends, if we have ever been,
 Friends we cannot now remain :
 I only know I loved you once,
 I only know I loved in vain ;
 Our hands have met, but not our hearts ;
 Our hands will never meet again !

II.

Then farewell to heart and hand !
 I would our hands had never met :
 Even the outward form of love
 Must be resign'd with some regret.
 Friends, we still might seem to be,
 If my wrong could e'er forget
 Our hands have join'd but not our hearts :
 I would our hands had never met !

THE POET'S PORTION.

WHAT is a mine—a treasury—a dower—
 A magic talisman of mighty power ?
 A poet's wide possession of the earth.
 He has th' enjoyment of a flower's birth
 Before its budding—ere the first red streaks,—
 And Winter cannot rob him of their cheeks.
 Look—if his dawn be not as other men's !
 Twenty bright flushes—ere another kens
 The first of sunlight is abroad—he sees
 Its golden 'lection of the topmost trees,

And opes the splendid fissures of the morn.
 When do his fruits delay, when doth his corn
 Linger for harvesting? Before the leaf
 Is commonly abroad, in his piled sheaf
 The flagging poppies lose their ancient flame.
 No sweet there is, no pleasure I can name,
 But he will sip it first—before the lees.
 'Tis his to taste rich honey,—ere the bees
 Are busy with the brooms. He may forestall
 June's rosy advent for his coronal;
 Before th' expectant buds upon the bough,
 Twining his thoughts to bloom upon his brow.
 Oh! blest to see the flower in its seed,
 Before its leafy presence; for indeed
 Leaves are but wings, on which the summer flies,
 And each thing perishable fades and dies,
 Escaped in thought; but his rich thinkings be
 Like overflows of immortality.
 So that what there is steep'd shall perish never,
 But live and bloom, and be a joy forever.

SONG.

O LADY, leave thy silken thread
 And flowery tapestry:
 There 's living roses on the bush,
 And blossoms on the tree;
 Stoop where thou wilt, thy careless hand
 Some random bud will meet;
 Thou canst not tread, but thou wilt find
 The daisy at thy feet.

'Tis like the birthday of the world,
 When earth was born in bloom;
 The light is made of many dyes,
 The air is all perfume;

There 's crimson buds, and white and blue—
 The very rainbow showers
 Have turn'd to blossoms where they fell,
 And sown the earth with flowers.

There 's fairy tulips in the east,
 The garden of the sun ;
 The very streams reflect the hues,
 And blossom as they run :
 While Morn opes like a crimson rose,
 Still wet with pearly showers ;
 Then, lady, leave the silken thread
 Thou twinest into flowers !

TIME, HOPE, AND MEMORY.

I HEARD a gentle maiden, in the spring,
 Set her sweet sighs to music, and thus sing :
 " Fly through the world, and I will follow thee,
 Only for looks that may turn back on me ;

Only for roses that your chance may throw—
 Though wither'd—I will wear them on my brow,
 To be a thoughtful fragrance to my brain ;
 Warm'd with such love, that they will bloom again.

Thy love before thee, I must tread behind,
 Kissing thy foot-prints, though to me unkind ;
 But trust not all her fondness, though it seem,
 Lest thy true love should rest on a false dream.

Her face is smiling, and her voice is sweet ;
 But smiles betray, and music sings deceit ;
 And words speak false ;—yet, if they welcome
 prove,
 I'll be their echo, and repeat their love.

Only if waken'd to sad truth, at last,
 The bitterness to come, and sweetness past;
 When thou art vext, then, turn again, and see
 Thou hast loved Hope, but Memory loved thee."

FLOWERS.

I WILL not have the mad Clytie,
 Whose head is turn'd by the sun;
 The tulip is a courtly quean,
 Whom, therefore I will shun;
 The cowslip is a country wench,
 The violet is a nun;—
 But I will woo the dainty rose,
 The queen of every one.

The pea is but a wanton witch,
 In too much haste to wed,
 And clasps her rings on every hand;
 The wolfsbane I should dread;—
 Nor will I dreary rosemaryc,
 That always mourns the dead;—
 But I will woo the dainty rose,
 With her cheeks of tender red.

The lily is all in white, like a saint,
 And so is no mate for me—
 And the daisy's cheek is tipp'd with a blush,
 She is of such low degree;
 Jasmine is sweet, and has many loves,
 And the broom's betroth'd to the bee;—
 But I will plight with the dainty rose,
 For fairest of all is she.

TO ———.

STILL glides the gentle streamlet on,
With shifting current new and strange ;
The water that was here is gone,
But those green shadows never change.

Serene or ruffled by the storm,
On present waves, as on the past
The mirror'd grove retains its form,
The self-same trees their semblance cast.

The hue each fleeting globule wears,
That drop bequeaths it to the next ;
One picture still the surface bears,
To illustrate the murmur'd text.

So, love, however time may flow,
Fresh hours pursuing those that flee,
One constant image still shall show
My tide of life is true to thee.

TO ———.

LET us make a leap, my dear,
In our love, of many a year,
And date it very far away,
On a bright clear summer day,
When the heart was like a sun
To itself, and falsehood none ;
And the rosy lips a part
Of the very loving heart,
And the shining of the eye
But a sign to know it by ;—

When my faults were all forgiven,
 And my life deserved of Heaven.
 Dearest, let us reckon so,
 And love for all that long ago ;
 Each absence count a year complete.
 And keep a birthday when we meet.

TO ———.

I LOVE thee—I love thee !
 'Tis all that I can say ;—
 It is my vision in the night,
 My dreaming in the day ;
 The very echo of my heart,
 The blessing when I pray :
 I love thee—I love thee !
 Is all that I can say.

I love thee—I love thee !
 Is ever on my tongue ;
 In all my proudest poesy
 That chorus still is sung ;
 It is the verdict of my eyes,
 Amidst the gay and young :
 I love thee—I love thee !
 A thousand maids among.

I love thee—I love thee !
 Thy bright and hazel glance,
 The mellow lute upon those lips,
 Whose tender tones entrance ;
 But most, dear heart of hearts, thy proofs
 That still these words enhance,
 I love thee—I love thee !
 Whatever be thy chance.

TO ———.

I.

WELCOME, dear Heart, and a most kind good-morrow ;

The day is gloomy, but our looks shall shine :—
Flowers I have none to give thee, but I borrow
Their sweetness in a verse to speak for thine.

II.

Here are red roses, gather'd at thy cheeks,
The white were all too happy to look white :
For love the rose, for faith the lily speaks ;
It withers in false hands, but here 'tis bright !

III.

Dost love sweet Hyacinth ? Its scented leaf
Curls manifold,— all love's delights blow double :
'Tis said this flow'ret is inscribed with grief,—
But let that hint of a forgotten trouble.

IV.

I pluck'd the Primrose at night's dewy noon ;
Like Hope, it show'd its blossoms in the night ;—
'Twas like Endymion, watching for the Moon !
And here are sunflowers, amorous of light !

V.

These golden Buttercups are April's seal,—
The Daisy stars her constellations be :
These grew so lowly, I was forced to kneel,
Therefore I pluck no Daisies but for thee !

VI.

Here's Daisies for the morn, Primrose for gloom,
Pansies and Roses for the noontide hours :—
A wight once made a dial of their bloom,—
So may thy life be measured out by flowers !

TO ———.

COMPOSED AT ROTTERDAM.

I GAZE upon a eity,—
 A city new and strange,
 Down many a watery vista
 My fancy takes a range ;
 From side to side I saunter,
 And wonder where I am ;
 And can *you* be in England,
 And *I* at Rotterdam !

Before me lie dark waters
 In broad canals and deep,
 Whereon the silver moonbeams
 Sleep, restless in their sleep ;
 A sort of vulgar Venice
 Reminds me where I am ;
 Yes, yes, you are in England,
 And I'm at Rotterdam.

Tall houses with quaint gables,
 Where frequent windows shine,
 And quays that lead to bridges,
 And trees in formal line,
 And masts of spiey vessels
 From western Surinam,
 All tell me you're in England,
 But I'm in Rotterdam.

Those sailors, how outlandish
 The faee and form of each !
 They deal in foreign gestures,
 And use a foreign speech ;
 A tongue not learn'd near Isis,
 Or studied by the Cam,

Declares that you're in England,
 Aud I'm at Rotterdam.

And now across a market
 My doubtful way I trace,
 Where stands a solemn statue,
 The Genius of the place ;
 And to the great Erasmus
 I offer my salaam ;
 Who tells me you're in England,
 But I'm at Rotterdam.

The coffee-room is open—
 I mingle in its crowd,—
 The dominos are noisy—
 The hookahs raise a cloud ;
 The flavour now of Fearon's,
 That mingles with my dram,
 Reminds me you're in England,
 And I'm at Rotterdam.

Then here it goes, a bumper—
 The toast it shall be mine,
 In schiedam, or in sherry,
 Tokay, or hock of Rhine ;
 It well deserves the brightest,
 Where sunbeam ever swam—
 " The Girl I love in England "
 I drink at Rotterdam !

March, 1835.

SERENADE.

I.

AH, sweet, thou little knowest how
 I wake and passionate watches keep ;
 And yet, while I address thee now,

Methinks thou smilest in thy sleep.
 'Tis sweet enough to make me weep,
 That tender thought of love and thee,
 That while the world is hush'd so deep,
 Thy soul's perhaps awake to me!

II.

Sleep on, sleep on, sweet bride of sleep
 With golden visions for thy dower,
 While I this midnight vigil keep,
 And bless thee in thy silent bower ;
 To me 'tis sweeter than the power
 Of sleep, and fairy dreams unfurl'd,
 That I alone, at this still hour,
 In patient love outwatch the world.

VERSES IN AN ALBUM.

I.

FAR above the hollow
 Tempest, and its moan,
 Singeth bright Apollo
 In his golden zone,—
 Cloud doth never shade him,
 Nor a storm invade him,
 On his joyous throne.

II.

So when I behold me
 In an orb as bright,
 How thy soul doth fold me
 In its throne of light !
 Sorrow never paineth,
 Nor a care attaineth,
 To that blessed height.

BALLAD.

I.

It was not in the winter
 Our loving lot was cast ;
 It was the time of roses,—
 We pluck'd them as we pass'd !

II.

That churlish season never frown'd
 On early lovers yet !
 Oh, no—the world was newly crown'd
 With flowers when first we met.

III.

'Twas twilight, and I bade you go,
 But still you held me fast ;
 It was the time of roses,—
 We pluck'd them as we pass'd !

BALLAD.

I.

SPRING it is cheery,
 Winter is dreary,
 Green leaves hang, but the brown must fly ;
 When he's forsaken,
 Wither'd and shaken,
 What can an old man do but die ?

II.

Love will not clip him,
 Maids will not lip him,
 Maud and Marian pass him by ;

Youth it is sunny,
 Age has no honey,—
 What can an old man do but die ?

III.

June it was jolly,
 O for its folly !
 A dancing leg and a laughing eye ;
 Youth may be silly,
 Wisdom is chilly,—
 What can an old man do but die ?

IV.

Friends they are scanty,
 Beggars are plenty,
 If he has followers, I know why ;
 Gold's in his clutches,
 (Buying him crutches!)—
 What can an old man do but die ?

BALLAD.

SHE'S up and gone, the graceless Girl!
 And robb'd my failing years;
 My blood before was thin and cold
 But now 'tis turn'd to tears;—
 My shadow falls upon my grave,
 So near the brink I stand,
 She might have stayed a little yet,
 And led me by the hand !

Ay, call her on the barren moor,
 And call her on the hill,
 'Tis nothing but the heron's cry,
 And plover's answer shrill ;
 My child is flown on wilder wings,

Than they have ever spread,
 And I may even walk a waste
 That widen'd when she fled.

Full many a thankless child has been,
 But never one like mine ;
 Her meat was served on plates of gold,
 Her drink was rosy wine ;
 But now she'll share the robin's food,
 And sup the common rill,
 Before her feet will turn again
 To meet her father's will !

BALLAD.

SIGH on sad heart, for Love's eclipse
 And Beauty's fairest queen,
 Tho' 'tis not for my peasant lips
 To soil her name between :
 A king might lay his sceptre down,
 But I am poor and nought,
 The brow should wear a golden crown
 That wears her in its thought.

The diamonds glancing in her hair,
 Whose sudden beams surprise,
 Might bid such humble hopes beware
 The glancing of her eyes ;
 Yet looking once, I look'd too long,
 And if my love is sin,
 Death follows on the heels of wrong,
 And kills the crime within.

Her dress seem'd wove of lily leaves,
 It was so pure and fine,
 O lofty wears, and lowly weaves,

But hoddan gray is mine;
 And homely hose must step apart,
 Where garter'd princes stand,
 But may he wear my love at heart
 That wins her lily hand!

Alas! there's far from russet frize
 To silks and satin gowns,
 But I doubt if God made like degrees,
 In courtly hearts and clowns.
 My father wrong'd a maiden's mirth,
 And brought her cheeks to blame,
 And all that's lordly of my birth,
 Is my reproach and shame!

'Tis vain to weep,—'tis vain to sigh,
 'Tis vain this idle speech,
 For where her happy pearls do lie,
 My tears may never reach;
 Yet when I'm gone, e'en lofty pride
 May say of what has been,
 His love was nobly born and died,
 Tho' all the rest was mean!

My speech is rude,—but speech is weak
 Such love as mine to tell,
 Yet had I words, I dare not speak,
 So, Lady, fare thee well;
 I will not wish thy better state
 Was one of low degree,
 But I must weep that partial fate
 Made such a churl of me.

THE ROMANCE OF COLOGNE.

'Tis even—on the pleasant banks of Rhine
 The thrush is singing and the dove is cooing ;
 A Youth and Maiden on the turf recline
 Alone—and he is wooing.

Yet woos in vain, for to the voice of love
 No kindly sympathy the Maid discovers,
 Though round them both, and in the air above,
 The tender spirit hovers.

Untouch'd by lovely Nature and her laws,
 The more he pleads, more coyly she represses ;
 Her lips denies, and now her hand withdraws,
 Rejecting his addresses.

Fair is she as the dreams young poets weave,
 Bright eyes and dainty lips and tresses curly,
 In outward loveliness a child of Eve,
 But cold as nymph of Lurley.

The more Love tries her pity to engross,
 The more she chills him with a strange behaviour
 Now tells her beads, now gazes on the Cross
 And image of the Saviour.

Forth goes the lover with a farewell moan,
 As from the presence of a thing unhuman ;—
 Oh, what unholy spell hath turn'd to stone
 The young warm heart of woman !

* * * *

'Tis midnight—and the moonbeam, cold and wan,
 On bower and river quietly is sleeping,
 And o'er the corse of a self-murder'd man
 The Maiden fair is weeping.

In vain she looks into his glassy eyes,
 No pressure answers to her hands so pressing;
 In her fond arms impassively he lies,
 Clay-cold to her caressing.

Despairing, stunn'd, by her eternal loss,
 She flies to succour that may best besem her,
 But, lo! a frowning figure veils the Cross
 And hides the blest Redeemer!

With stern right hand it stretches forth a scroll,
 Wherein she reads, in melancholy letters,
 The cruel, fatal pact that placed her soul
 And her young heart in fetters.

“Wretch! sinner! renegade! to truth and God,
 Thy holy faith for human love to barter!”
 No more she hears, but on the bloody sod
 Sinks, Bigotry’s last martyr!

And side by side the hapless Lovers lie;
 Tell me, harsh Priest! by yonder tragic token,
 What part hath God in such a bond, whereby
 Or hearts or vows are broken?

THE KEY,

A MOORISH ROMANCE.

“On the east coast, towards Tunis, the Moors still preserve the keys of their ancestors’ houses in Spain; to which country they still express the hopes of one day returning, and again planting the crescent on the ancient walls of the Alhambra.”—SCOTT’S TRAVELS IN MOROCCO AND ALGIERS.

“Is Spain cloven in such a manner as to want closing?”—SANCHO PANZA.

THE Moor leans on his cushion,
 With the pipe between his lips;

And still at frequent intervals
 The sweet sherbét he sips;
 But, spite of lulling vapour
 And the sober cooling cup,
 The spirit of the swarthy Moor
 Is fiercely kindling up!

One hand is on his pistol,
 On its ornamented stock,
 While his finger feels the trigger
 And is busy with the lock—
 The other seeks his ataghan,
 And clasps its jewell'd hilt—
 Oh! much of gore in days of yore
 That crooked blade has spilt!

His brows are knit, his eyes of jet
 In vivid blackness roll,
 And gleam with fatal flashes
 Like the fire-damp of the coal;
 His jaws are set, and through his teeth
 He draws a savage breath,
 As if about to raise the shout
 Of Victory or Death!

For why? the last Zebeck that came
 And moor'd within the Mole,
 Such tidings unto Tunis brought
 As stir his very soul—
 The cruel jar of civil war,
 The sad and stormy reign,
 That blackens like a thunder-cloud
 The sunny land of Spain!

No strife of glorious Chivalry,
 For honour's gain or loss,
 Nor yet that ancient rivalry,
 The Crescent with the Cross.
 No charge of gallant Paladins

On Moslems stern and stanch ;
 But Christians shedding Christian blood
 Beneath the olive's branch !

A war of horrid parricide,
 And brother killing brother ;
 Yea, like to " dogs and sons of dogs "
 That worry one another.
 But let them bite and tear and fight,
 The more the Kaffers slay,
 The sooner Hagar's swarming sons
 Shall make the land a prey !

The sooner shall the Moor behold
 Th' Alhambra's pile again ;
 And those who pined in Barbary
 Shall shout for joy in Spain—
 The sooner shall the Cresecent wave
 On dear Granada's walls ;
 And proud Mohammed Ali sit
 Within his father's halls !

" Alla-il-alla ! " tiger-like
 Upsprings the swarthy Moor,
 And, with a wide and hasty stride,
 Steps o'er the marble floor ;
 Across the hall, till from the wall,
 Where such quaint patterns be,
 With cager hand he snatches down
 An old and massive Key !

A massive Key of curious shape,
 And dark with dirt and rust,
 And well three weary centuries
 The metal might incrust !
 For since the King Boabdil fell
 Before the native stock,
 That ancient Key, so quaint to see,
 Hath never been in lock.

Brought over by the Saracens
Who fled across the main,
A token of the secret hope
Of going back again ;
From race to race, from hand to hand,
From house to house it pass'd ;
O will it ever, ever ope
The Palace gate at last ?

Three hundred years and fifty-two
On post and wall it hung—
Three hundred years and fifty-two
A dream to old and young ;
But now a brighter destiny
The Prophet's will accords :
The time is come to scour the rust,
And lubricate the wards.

For should the Moor with sword and lance
At Algesiras land,
Where is the bold Bernardo now
Their progress to withstand ?
To Burgos should the Moslem come,
Where is the noble Cid
Five royal crowns to topple down
As gallant Diaz did ?

Hath Xeres any Pounder now,
When other weapons fail,
With club to thrash invaders rash,
Like barley with a flail ?
Hath Seville any Percz still,
To lay his clusters low,
And ride with seven turbans green
Around his saddle-bow ?

No ! never more shall Europe see
Such Heroes brave and bold,
Such Valour, Faith, and Loyalty,

.

As used to shine of old !
 No longer to one battle cry
 United Spaniards run,
 And with their thronging spears uphold
 The Virgin and her Son !

From Cadiz Bay to rough Biscay
 Internal discord dwells,
 And Barcelona bears the scars .
 Of Spanish shot and shells.
 The fleets decline, the merchants pine
 For want of foreign trade ;
 And gold is scant ; and Alicante
 Is seal'd by strict blockade !

The loyal fly, and Valour falls,
 Opposed by court intrigue ;
 But treachery and traitors thrive,
 Upheld by foreign league ;
 While factions seeking private ends
 By turns usurping reign—
 Well may the dreaming, scheming Moor
 Exulting point to Spain !

Well may he cleanse the rusty Key
 With Afric sand and oil,
 And hope an Andalusian home
 Shall recompense the toil !
 Well may he swear the Moorish spear
 Through wild Castile shall sweep,
 And where the Catalonian sow'd
 The Saracen shall reap !

Well may he vow to spurn the Cross
 Beneath the Arab hoof,
 And plant the Crescent yet again
 Above th' Alhambra's roof
 When those from whom St. Jago's name
 In chorus once arose,

Are shouting Faction's battle-cries,
And Spain forgets to "Close!"

Well may he swear his ataghan
Shall rout the traitor swarm,
And carve them into Arabesques
That show no human form—
The blame be theirs whose bloody feuds
Invite the savage Moor,
And tempt him with the ancient Key
To seek the ancient door!

FAIR INES.

I.

O SAW ye not fair Ines?
She's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest:
She took our daylight with her, -
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

II.

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivall'd bright;
And blessed will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write!

III.

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,

Who rode so gayly by thy side,
 And whisper'd thee so near!——
 Were there no bonny dames at home,
 Or no true lovers here,
 That he should cross the seas to win
 The dearest of the dear ?

IV.

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
 Descend along the shore,
 With bands of noble gentlemen,
 And banners waved before ;
 And gentle youth and maidens gay,
 And snowy plumes they wore ;—
 It would have been a beauteous dream,
 —If it had been no more !

V.

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
 She went away with song,
 With Music waiting on her steps,
 And shoutings of the throng ;
 But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
 But only Music's wrong,
 In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,
 To her you've loved so long.

VI.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,
 That vessel never bore
 So fair a lady on its deck,
 Nor danced so light before,—
 Alas for pleasure on the sea,
 And sorrow on the shore !
 The smile that blest one lover's heart
 Has broken many more !

THE DEPARTURE OF SUMMER.

SUMMER is gone on swallows' wings,
 And earth has buried all her flowers :
 No more the lark, the linnet sings,
 But Silence sits in faded bowers.
 There is a shadow on the plain
 Of Winter ere he comes again,—
 There is in woods a solemn sound
 Of hollow warnings whisper'd round,
 As Echo in her deep recess
 For once had turn'd a prophetess.
 Shuddering Autumn stops to list,
 And breathes his fear in sudden sighs,
 With clouded face, and hazel eyes
 That quench themselves, and hide in mist.

Yes, Summer's gone like pageant bright ;
 Its glorious days of golden light
 Are gone—the mimic suns that quiver,
 Then melt in Time's dark-flowing river.
 Gone the sweetly-scented breeze
 That spoke in music to the trees ;
 Gone for damp and chilly breath,
 As if fresh blown o'er marble seas,
 Or newly from the lungs of Death.—
 Gone its virgin roses' blushes,
 Warm as when Aurora rushes
 Freshly from the god's embrace,
 With all her shame upon her face.
 Old Time hath laid them in the mould ;
 Sure he is blind as well as old,
 Whose hand relentless never spares
 Young cheeks so beauty-bright as theirs !
 Gone are the flame-eyed lovers now
 From where so blushing-blest they tarried
 Under the hawthorn's blossom-bough,

Gone ; for Day and Night are married.
 All the light of love is fled :—
 Alas ! that negro breasts should hide
 The lips that were so rosy red,
 At morning and at even-tide !

Delightful Summer ! then adieu
 Till thou shalt visit us anew :
 But who without regretful sigh
 Can say, adieu, and see thee fly ?
 Not he that e'er hath felt thy pow'r,
 His joy expanding like a flow'r
 That cometh after rain and snow,
 Looks up at heaven, and learns to glow :—
 Not he that fled from Babel-strife
 To the green sabbath-land of life,
 To dodge dull Care 'mid eluster'd trees,
 And cool his forehead in the breeze,—
 Whose spirit, weary-worn perhance,
 Shook from its wings a weight of grief,
 And perh'd upon an aspen leaf,
 For every breath to make it dance.

Farewell !—on wings of sombre stain,
 That blacken in the last blue skies,
 Thou fly'st ; but thou wilt come again
 On the gay wings of butterflies.
 Spring at thy approach will sprout
 Her new Corinthian beauties out,
 Leaf-woven homes, where twitter-words
 Will grow to songs, and eggs to birds ;
 Ambitious buds shall swell to flowers,
 And April smiles to sunny hours.
 Bright days shall be, and gentle nights
 Full of soft breath and echo-lights,
 As if the god of sun-time kept
 His eyes half-open while he slept.
 Roses shall be where roses were,
 Not shadows, but reality ;

As if they never perish'd there,
 But slept in immortality :
 Nature shall thrill with new delight,
 And Time's relumined river run
 Warm as young blood, and dazzling bright,
 As if its source were in the sun !

But say, hath Winter then no charms ?
 Is there no joy, no gladness warm
 His aged heart ? no happy wiles
 To cheat the hoary one to smiles ?
 Onward he comes—the cruel North
 Pours his furious whirlwind forth
 Before him—and we breathe the breath
 Of famish'd bears that howl to death.
 Onward he comes from rocks that blanch
 O'er solid streams that never flow,
 His tears all ice, his locks all snow,
 Just erept from some huge avalanche—
 A thing half-breathing and half-warm,
 As if one spark began to glow
 Within some statue's marble form,
 Or pilgrim stiffen'd in the storm.
 Oh ! will not Mirth's light arrows fail
 To pierce that frozen coat of mail ?
 Oh ! will not joy but strive in vain
 To light up those glazed eyes again ?

No ! take him in, and blaze the oak,
 And pour the wine, and warm the ale ;
 His sides shall shake to many a joke,
 His tongue shall thaw in many a tale,
 His eyes grow bright, his heart be gay,
 And even his palsy charm'd away.
 What heeds he then the boisterous shout
 Of angry winds that scold without,
 Like shrewish wives at tavern door ?
 What heeds he then the wild uproar
 Of billows bursting on the shore ?

In dashing waves, in howling breeze,
 There is a music that can charm him ;
 When safe, and shelter'd, and at ease,
 He hears the storm that cannot harm him.

But hark ! those shouts ! that sudden din
 Of little hearts that laugh within.
 Oh ! take him where the youngsters play,
 And he will grow as young as they !
 They come ! they come ! each blue-eyed Sport,
 The Twelfth-Night King and all his court—
 'Tis Mirth fresh crown'd with mistletoe !
 Music with her merry fiddles,
 Joy "on light fantastic toe,"
 Wit with all his jests and riddles,
 Singing and dancing as they go.
 And Love, young Love, among the rest,
 A welcome—nor unbidden guest.

But still for Summer dost thou grieve ?
 Then read our Poets—they shall weave
 A garden of green fancies still,
 Where thy wish may rove at will.
 They have kept for after treats
 The essences of summer sweets,
 And echoes of its songs that wind
 In endless music through the mind :
 They have stamped in visible traces
 The "thoughts that breathe," in words that shine—
 The flights of soul in sunny places—
 To greet and company with thine.
 These shall wing thee on to flow'rs—
 The past or future that shall seem
 All the brighter in thy dream
 For blowing in such desert hours.
 The summer never shines so bright
 As thought of in a winter's night ;
 And the sweetest loveliest rose
 Is in the bud before it blows ;

The dear one of the lover's heart
 Is painted to his longing eyes,
 In charms she ne'er can realize—
 But when she turns again to part.
 Dream thou then, and bind thy brow
 With wreath of fancy roses now,
 And drink of Summer in the cup
 Where the Muse hath mix'd it up;
 The "dance, and song, and sun-burnt mirth,"
 With the warm nectar of the earth:
 Drink! 'twill glow in every vein,
 And thou shalt dream the winter through:
 Then waken to the sun again,
 And find thy Summer Vision true!

ODE:

AUTUMN.

I.

I SAW old Autumn in the misty morn
 Stand shadowless like silence, listening
 To silence, for no lonely bird would sing
 Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,
 Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn;—
 Shaking his languid locks all dewy bright
 With tangled gossamer that fell by night,
 Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

II.

Where are the songs of Summer?—With the sun,
 Oping the dusky eyelids of the south,
 Till shade and silence waken up as one,
 And Morning sings with a warm odorous mouth.
 Where are the merry birds?—Away, away,

On panting wings through the inelement skies,
 Lest owls should prey
 Undazzled at noon-day,
 And tear with horny beak their lustrous eyes.

III.

Where are the blooms of Summer?—In the west,
 Blushing their last to the last sunny hours,
 When the mild Eve by sudden Night is prest
 Like tearful Proserpine, snatch'd from her flow'rs
 To a most gloomy breast.

Where is the pride of Summer,—the green prime,—
 The many, many leaves all twinkling?—Three
 On the moss'd elm; three on the naked lime
 Trembling,—and one upon the old cak-tree!

Where is the Dryad's immortality?—
 Gone into mouruful eypress and dark yew,
 Or wearing the long gloomy Winter through
 In the smooth holly's green eternity.

IV.

The squirrel gloats on his accomplish'd hoard,
 The ants have brimm'd their garner with ripe
 grain,

And honey bees have stored
 The Sweets of Summer in their luseious cells;
 The swallows all have wing'd across the main;
 But here the Autumn melancholy dwells,
 And sighs her tearful spells

Amongst the sunless shadows of the plain.

Alone, alone,

Upon a mossy stoue,

She sits and reckons up the dead and gone.
 With the last leaves for a love-rosary,
 Whilst all the wither'd world looks drearily,
 Like a dim picture of the drowned past
 In the hush'd mind's mysterious far away,
 Doubtful what ghostly thing will steal the last
 Into that distanee, gray upon the gray.

V.

O go and sit with her, and be o'ershadéd
Under the languid downfall of her hair :
She wears a coronal of flowers faded
Upon her forehead, and a face of care ;—
There is enough of wither'd everywhere
To make her bower,—and enough of gloom ;
There is enough of sadness to invite,
If only for the rose that died,—whose doom
Is Beauty's,—she that with the living bloom
Of conscíous cheeks most beautifies the light ;—
There is enough of sorrowing, and quite
Enough of bitter fruits the earth doth bear,—
Enough of chilly droppings for her bowl ;
Enough of fear and shadowy despair,
To frame her cloudy prison for the soul !

AUTUMN.

I.

THE Autumn skies are flush'd with gold,
And fair and bright the rivers run ;
These are but streams of winter cold,
And painted mists that quench the sun.

II.

In secret boughs no sweet birds sing,
In secret boughs no bird can shroud ;
These are but leaves that take to wing,
And wintry winds that pipe so loud.

III.

'Tis not trees' shade, but cloudy glooms
That on the cheerless valleys fall,
The flowers are in their grassy tombs,
And tears of dew are on them all.

AUTUMN.

THE Autumn is old,
 The sere leaves are flying;—
 He hath gather'd up gold,
 And now he is dying;—
 Old age, begin sighing!

The vintage is ripe,
 The harvest is heaping;—
 But some that have sow'd
 Have no riches for reaping;—
 Poor wretch, fall a weeping!

The year's in the wane,
 There is nothing adorning,
 The night has no eve,
 And the day has no morning;—
 Cold winter gives warning.

The rivers run chill,
 The red sun is sinking,
 And I am grown old,
 And life is fast shrinking;—
 Here's enow for sad thinking!

SONG.

FOR MUSIC.

I.

A LAKE and a fairy boat
 To sail in the moonlight clear,—
 And merrily we would float
 From the dragons that watch us here;

II.

Thy gown should be snow-white silk,
And strings of orient pearls,
Like gossamers dipp'd in milk,
Should twine with thy raven curls!

III.

Red rubies should deck thy hands,
And diamonds should be thy dow'r—
But Fairies have broke their wands,
And wishing has lost its pow'r!

SONG.

I.

THE stars are with the voyager
Wherever he may sail;
The moon is constant to her time;
The sun will never fail;
But follow, follow round the world,
The green earth and the sea;
So love is with the lover's heart,
Wherever he may be.

II.

Wherever he may be, the stars
Must daily lose their light;
The moon will veil her in the shade;
The sun will set at night.
The sun may set, but constant love
Will shine when he's away;
So that dull night is never night,
And day is brighter day.

HYMN TO THE SUN.

I.

GIVER of glowing light!
 Though but a god of other days,
 The kings and sages
 Of wiser ages
 Still live and gladden in thy genial rays.

II.

King of the tuneful lyre.
 Still poets' hymns to thee belong;
 Though lips are cold
 Whereon of old
 Thy beams all turn'd to worshipping and song!

III.

Lord of the dreadful bow,
 None triumph now for Python's death;
 But thou dost save
 From hungry grave
 The life that hangs upon a summer breath.

IV.

Father of rosy day,
 No more thy clouds of incense rise;
 But waking flow'rs
 At morning hours,
 Give out their sweets to meet thee in the skies.

V.

God of the Delphic fane,
 No more thou listenest to hymns sublime;
 But they will leave
 On winds at eve,
 A solemn echo to the end of time.

TO A COLD BEAUTY.

I.

LADY, wouldst thou heiress be
To Wiuter's cold and cruel part?
When he sets the rivers free,
Thou dost still lock up thy heart;—
Thou that shouldst outlast the snow,
But in the whiteness of thy brow?

II.

Scorn and cold neglect are made
For winter gloom and winter wind,
But thou wilt wrong the summer air,
Breathing it to words unkind,—
Breath which only should belong
To love, to sunlight, and to song!

III.

When the little buds unclose,
Red, and white, and pied, and blue,
And that virgin flow'r, the rose,
Opes her heart to hold the dew,
Wilt thou lock thy bosom up
With no jewel in its cup? .

IV.

Let not cold December sit
Thus in Love's peculiar throne;—
Brooklets are not prison'd now,
But crystal frosts are all agone,
And that which hangs upon the spray,
It is no snow, but flower of May!

RUTH.

SHE stood breast high amid the corn,
 Clasp'd by the golden light of morn,
 Like the sweetheart of the sun,
 Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
 Deeply ripen'd ;—such a blush
 In the midst of brown was born,
 Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
 Which were blackest none could tell,
 But long lashes veil'd a light,
 That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
 Made her tressy forehead dim ;—
 Thus she stood amid the stooks,
 Praising God with sweetest looks :—

Sure, I said, heav'n did not mean,
 Where I reap thou shouldst but glean,
 Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
 Share my harvest and my home.

THE SEA OF DEATH.

A FRAGMENT.

——— Methought I saw
 Life swiftly treading over endless space ;
 And, at her foot-print, but a bygone pace,

The ocean-past, which, with increasing wave,
Swallow'd her steps like a pursuing grave.

Sad were my thoughts that anchor'd silently
On the dead waters of that passionless sea,
Unstirr'd by any touch of living breath :
Silence hung over it, and drowsy Death,
Like a gorged sea-bird, slept with folded wings
On crowded carcasses—sad passive things
That wore the thin gray surface, like a veil
Over the calmness of their features pale.

And there were spring-faced cherubs that did sleep
Like water-lilies on that motionless deep,
How beautiful ! with bright unruffled hair
On sleek unfretted brows, and eyes that were
Buried in marble tombs, a pale eclipse !
And smile-bedimpled checks, and pleasant lips,
Meekly apart, as if the soul intense
Spake out in dreams of its own innocence :
And so they lay in loveliness, and kept
The birth-night of their peace, that Life e'en wept
With very envy of their happy fronts ;
For there were neighbour brows scarr'd by the
brunts

Of strife and sorrowing—where Care had set
His crooked autograph, and marr'd the jet
Of glossy locks, with hollow eyes forlorn,
And lips that curl'd in bitterness and scorn—
Wretched,—as they had breathed of this world's
pain,

And so bequeath'd it to the world again
Through the beholder's heart in heavy sighs.
So lay they garmented in torpid light,
Under the pall of a transparent night,
Like solemn apparitions lull'd sublime
To everlasting rest,—and with them Time
Slept, as he sleeps upon the silent face
Of a dark dial in a sunless place.

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER.

I REMEMBER, I remember,
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn ;
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day,
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away !

I remember, I remember,
The roses, red and white,
The vi'lets, and the lily-cups,
Those flowers made of light !
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday,—
The tree is living yet !

I remember, I remember
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing ;
My spirit flew in feathers then,
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow !

I remember, I remember
The fir trees dark and high ;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky :
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from heav'n
Than when I was a boy.

THE WATER LADY.

I.

ALAS, the moon should ever beam
To show what man should never see !—
I saw a maiden on a stream,
And fair was she !

II.

I stayed awhile, to see her throw
Her tresses back, that all beset
The fair horizon of her brow
With clouds of jet.

III.

I stayed a little while to view
Her cheek, that wore in place of red
The bloom of water, tender blue,
Daintily spread.

IV.

I stayed to watch, a little space,
Her parted lips if she would sing ;
The waters closed above her face
With many a ring.

V.

And still I stayed a little more,
Alas ! she never comes again !
I throw my flowers from the shore,
And watch in vain.

VI.

I know my life will fade away,
I know that I must vainly pine,
For I am made of mortal clay,
But she's divine !

THE EXILE.

THE swallow with summer
 Will wing o'er the seas,
 The wind that I sigh to
 Will visit thy trees,
 The ship that it hastens
 Thy ports will contain,
 But me—I must never
 See England again !

There's many that weep there,
 But one weeps alone,
 For the tears that are falling
 So far from her own ;
 So far from thy own, love,
 We know not our pain ;
 If death is between us,
 Or only the main.

When the white cloud reclines
 On the verge of the sea,
 I fancy the white cliffs,
 And dream upon thee ;
 But the cloud spreads its wings
 To the blue heav'n and flies.
 We never shall meet, love,
 Except in the skies !

TO AN ABSENTEE.

O'ER hill, and dale, and distant sea,
 Through all the miles that stretch between,
 My thought must fly to rest on thee,
 And would, though worlds should intervene.

Nay, thou art now so dear, methinks
 The farther we are forced apart,
 Affection's firm elastic links
 But bind the closer round the heart.

For now we sever each from each,
 I learn what I have lost in thee ;
 Alas, that nothing less could teach,
 How great indeed my love should be !

Farewell ! I did not know thy worth,
 But thou art gone, and now 'tis prized :
 So angels walk'd unknown on earth,
 But when they flew were recognized !

ODE TO THE MOON.

I.

MOTHER of light ! how fairly dost thou go
 Over those hoary crests, divinely led !—
 Art thou that huntress of the silver bow
 Fabled of old ? Or rather dost thou tread
 Those cloudy summits thence to gaze below,
 Like the wild Chamois from her Alpine snow,
 Where hunter never climb'd,—secure from dread ?
 How many antique fancies have I read
 Of that mild presence ! and how many wrought !
 Wondrous and bright,
 Upon the silver light,
 Chasing fair figures with the artist, Thought !

II.

What art thou like ?—Sometimes I see thee ride
 A far-bound galley on its perilous way,
 Whilst breezy waves toss up their silvery spray ;—
 Sometimes behold thee glide,

Cluster'd by all thy family of stars,
 Like a lone widow, through the welkin wide,
 Whose pallid cheek the midnight sorrow mars ;
 Sometimes I watch thee on from steep to steep,
 Timidly lighted by thy vestal torch,
 Till in some Latmian eave I see thee creep,
 To catch the young Endymion asleep,—
 Leaving thy splendour at the jagged porch !—

III.

Oh, thou art beautiful, howe'er it be !
 Huntress, or Dian, or whatever named ;
 And he, the veriest Pagan, that first framed
 A silver idol, and ne'er worshipp'd thee !—
 It is too late, or thou shouldst have my knee ;
 Too late now for the old Ephesian vows,
 And not divine the erescent on thy brows !—
 Yet, eall thee nothing but the mere mild Moon,
 Behind those chestnut boughs,
 Casting their dappled shadows at my feet ;
 I will be grateful for that simple boon,
 In many a thoughtful verse and anthem sweet,
 And bless thy dainty faee whene'er we meet.

IV.

In nights far gone,—ay, far away and dead,—
 Before Care-fretted with a lidless eye,—
 I was thy wooer on my little bed,
 Letting the early hours of rest go by,
 To see thee flood the heaven with milky light,
 And feed thy snow-white swans, before I slept ;
 For thou wert then purveyor of my dreams,—
 Thou wert the fairies' armourer, that kept
 Their burnish'd helms, and crowns, and eorselets
 bright,
 Their spears, and glittering mails ;
 And ever thou didst spill in winding streams
 Sparkles and midnight gleams,
 For fishes to new gloss their argent scales !—

V.

Why sighs?—why creeping tears?—why clasped
hands?—

Is it to count the boy's expended dow'r?
That fairies since have broke their gifted wands?
That young Delight, like any o'erblown flow'r,
Gave, one by one, its sweet leaves to the ground?—
Why then, fair Moon, for all thou mark'st no hour,
Thou art a sadder dial to old Time

Than ever I have found

On sunny garden-plot, or moss-grown tow'r,
Motto'd with stern and melancholy rhyme.

VI.

Why should I grieve for this?—Oh I must yearn,
Whilst Time, conspirator with Memory,
Keeps his cold ashes in an ancient urn,
Richly emboss'd with childhood's revelry,
With leaves and cluster'd fruits, and flow'rs eterne,—
(Eternal to the world, though not to me,)
Aye there will those brave sports and blossoms be,
The deathless wreath, and undecay'd festoon,

When I am hearsed within,—

Less than the pallid primrose to the Moon,
That now she watches through a vapour thin.

VII.

So let it be :—Before I lived to sigh,
Thou wert in Avon, and a thousand rills,
Beautiful Orb! and so, whene'er I lie
Trodden, thou wilt be gazing from thy hills.
Blest be thy loving light, where'er it spills,
And blessed thy fair face, O Mother mild!
Still shine, the soul of rivers as they run,
Still lend thy lonely lamp to lovers fond,
And blend their plighted shadows into one:—
Still smile at even on the bedded child,
And close his eyelids with thy silver wand!

THE FORSAKEN.

THE dead are in their silent graves,
 And the dew is cold above,
 And the living weep and sigh,
 Over dust that once was love.

Once I only wept the dead,
 But now the living cause my pain :
 How couldst thou steal me from my tears,
 To leave me to my tears again ?

My Mother rests beneath the sod,—
 Her rest is calm and very deep :
 I wish'd that she could see our loves,—
 But now I gladden in her sleep.

Last night unbound my raven locks,
 The morning saw them turn'd to gray,
 Once they were black and well beloved,
 But thou art changed,—and so are they !

The useless lock I gave thee once,
 To gaze upon and think of me,
 Was ta'en with smiles,—but this was torn
 In sorrow that I send to thee.

ODE TO MELANCHOLY.

COME, let us set our careful breasts,
 Like Philomel, against the thorn,
 To aggravate the inward grief,
 That makes her accents so forlorn ;
 The world has many cruel points,

Whereby our bosoms have been torn,
 And there are dainty themes of grief,
 In sadness to outlast the morn,—
 True honour's dearth, affection's death,
 Neglectful pride, and cankering scorn,
 With all the piteous tales that tears
 Have water'd since the world was born.

The world!—it is a wilderness,
 Where tears are hung on every tree ;
 For thus my gloomy phantasy
 Makes all things weep with me !
 Come let us sit and watch the sky,
 And fancy clouds, where no clouds be ;
 Grief is enough to blot the eye,
 And make heav'n black with misery.
 Why should birds sing such merry notes,
 Unless they were more blest than we ?
 No sorrow ever chokes their throats,
 Except sweet nightingale ; for she
 Was born to pain our hearts the more
 With her sad melody.
 Why shines the sun, except that he
 Makes gloomy nooks for Grief to hide,
 And pensive shades for Melancholy,
 When all the earth is bright beside ?
 Let clay wear smiles, and green grass wave,
 Mirth shall not win us baek again,
 Whilst man is made of his own grave,
 And fairest clouds but gilded rain !

I saw my mother in her shroud,
 Her cheek was cold and very pale ;
 And ever since I've look'd on all
 As creatures doom'd to fail !
 Why do buds ope, except to die ?
 Ay, let us watch the roses wither,
 And think of our loves' cheeks ;
 And oh, how quickly time doth fly

To bring death's winter hither !
 Minutes, hours, days, and weeks,
 Months, years, and ages, shrink to nought ;
 An age past is but a thought !

Ay, let us think of Him a while,
 That, with a coffin for a boat,
 Rows daily o'er the Stygian moat,
 And for our table choose a tomb :
 There's dark enough in any skull
 To charge with black a raven plume ;
 And for the saddest funeral thoughts
 A winding sheet hath ample room,
 Where Death, with his keen-pointed style,
 Hath writ the common doom.
 How wide the yew-tree spreads its gloom,
 And o'er the dead lets fall its dew,
 As if in tears it wept for them,
 The many human families
 That sleep around its stem !
 How cold the dead have made these stones,
 With natural drops kept ever wet !
 Lo ! here the best, the worst, the world
 Doth now remember or forget,
 Are in one common ruin hurl'd,
 And love and hate are calmly met ;
 The loveliest eyes that ever shone,
 The fairest hands, and locks of jet.
 Is't not enough to vex our souls,
 And fill our eyes, that we have set
 Our love upon a rose's leaf,
 Our hearts upon a violet ?
 Blue eyes, red cheeks, are frailer yet ;
 And, sometimes, at their swift decay
 Beforehand we must fret :
 The roses bud and bloom again ;
 But love may hannt the grave of love,
 And watch the mould in vain.

O clasp me, sweet, whilst thou art mine,
And do not take my tears amiss ;
For tears must flow to wash away
A thought that shows so stern as this :
Forgive, if somehow I forget,
In woe to come, the present bliss.
As frighted Proserpine let fall
Her flowers at the sight of Dis,
Ev'n so the dark and bright will kiss.
The sunniest things throw sternest shade,
And there is ev'n a happiness
That makes the heart afraid !
Now let us with a spell invoke
The full orb'd moon to grieve our eyes ;
Not bright, not bright, but, with a cloud
Lapp'd all about her, let her rise
All pale and dim, as if from rest
The ghost of the late buried sun
Had crept into the skies.
The Moon ! she is the source of sighs,
The very face to make us sad ;
If but to think in other times
The same calm quiet look she had,
As if the world held nothing base,
Of vile and mean, of fierce and bad ;
The same fair light that shone in streams,
The fairy lamp that charm'd the lad ;
For so it is, with spent delights
She taunts men's brains, and makes them mad.
All things are touched with Melancholy,
Born of the secret soul's mistrust,
To feel her fair ethereal wings
Weighed down with vile degraded dust ;
Even the bright extremes of joy
Bring on conclusions of disgust,
Like the sweet blossoms of the May,
Whose fragrance ends in must.
O give her, then, her tribute just,

Her sighs and tears, and musings holy !
 There is no music in the life
 That sounds with idiot laughter solely ;
 There's not a string attuned to mirth,
 But has its chord in Melancholy.

ON A NATIVE SINGER

AFTER HEARING MISS ADELAIDE KEMBLE.

As sweet as the bird that by calm Bendemeer,
 Pours such rich modulations of tone—
 As potent, as tender, as brilliant, as clear—
 Still her voice has a charm of its own.

For lo ! like the skylark, when after its song
 It drops down to its nest from above,
 She reminds us her home and her music belong
 To the very same soil that we love.

GUIDO AND MARINA.

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

[Guido, having given himself up to the pernicious study of magic and astrology, casts his nativity, and resolves that at a certain hour of a certain day he is to die. Marina, to wean him from this fatal delusion, which hath gradually wasted him away, even to the verge of death, advances the hour-hand of the clock, He is supposed to be seated beside her in the garden of his palace at Venice.]

Guido. Clasp me again! My soul is very sad;
And hold thy lips in readiness near mine,
Lest I die suddenly. Clasp me again!
Tis such a gloomy day!

Mar. Nay, sweet, it shines.

Guido. Nay, then, these mortal clouds are in
mine eyes.

Clasp me again!—ay, with thy fondest force,
Give me one last embracè.

Mar. Love, I do clasp thee!

Guido. Then closer—closer—for I feel thee
not;

Unless thou art this pain around my heart.
Thy lips at such a time should never leave me.

Mar. What pain—what time, love? Art thou
ill? Alas!

I see it in thy cheek. Come, let me nurse thee.
Here rest upon my heart.

Guido. Stay, stay, Marina.

Look!—when I raise my hand against the sun,
Is it red with blood?

Mar. Alas! my love, what wilt
thou?

Thy hand is red—and so is mine—all hands
Show thus against the sun.

Guido. All living men's,
Marina, but not mine. Hast never heard
How death first seizes on the feet and hands,
And thence goes freezing to the very heart?

Mar. Yea, love, I know it; but what then?—
this hand
I hold is glowing.

Guido. But my eyes!—my eyes!
Look *there*, Marina—there is death's own sign.
I have seen a corpse,
E'en when its clay was cold, would still have
seemed

Alive, but for the eyes—such deadly eyes!
So dull and dim! Marina, look in mine!

Mar. Ay, they are dull. No, no—not dull, but
bright:

I see myself within them. Now, dear love,
Discard these horrid fears that make me weep.

Guido. Marina, Marina—where thy image lies
There must be brightness—or perchance they
glance

And glimmer like the lamp before it dies.

Oh, do not vex my soul with hopes impossible!

My hours are ending. [Clock strikes.

Mar. Nay, they shall not! Hark!
The hour—four—five—hark! six!—the very time!
And, lo! thou art alive! My love—dear love—
Now cast this eruel phantasm from thy brain—
This wilful, wild delusion—cast it off!

The hour is come—and *gone!* What! not a word!

What, not a smile, even, that thou livest for me!

Come, laugh and clap thy hands as I do—come.

Or kneel with me, and thank th' eternal God

For this blest passover! Still sad! still mute!—

Oh, why art thou not glad, as I am glad,

That death forbears thee? Nay, hath all my love

Been spent in vain, that thou art sick of life?

Guido. Marina, I'm no more attached to death
Than Fate hath doomed me. I am his elect,

That even now forestalls my little light,
 And steals with eold infringement on my breath :
 Already he bedims my spiritual lamp,
 Not yet his due—not yet—quite yet, though Time,
 Perchance, to warn me, speaks before his wont :
 Some minutes' space my blood has still to flow—
 Some scanty breath is left me still to spend
 In very bitter sighs.

But there's a point, true measured by my pulse,
 Beyond or short of which it may not live
 By one poor throb. Marina, it is near.

Mar. Oh, God of heaven !

Guido. Ay, it is *very* near.

Therefore, cling now to me, and say farewell
 Whilst I can answer it. Marina, speak !
 Why tear thine helpless hair ! it will not save
 Thy heart from breaking, nor pluck out the
 thought

That stings thy brain. Oh, surely thou hast known
 This truth too long to look so like Despair !

Mar. O, no, no, no—a hope—a little hope—
 I had erewhile—but I have heard its knell.
 Oh, would my life were measured out with thine—
 All my years numbered—all my days, my hours,
 My utmost minutes, all summed up with thine !

Guido. Marina—

Mar. Let me weep—no, let me kneel
 To God—but rather thee,—to spare this end
 That is so wilful. Oh, for pity's sake !
 Pluck back thy precious spirit from these clouds
 That smother it with death. Oh ! turn from death,
 And do not woo it with such dark resolve,
 To make me widowed.—

Guido. I have lived my term.

Mar. No—not thy term—no, not the natural
 term

Of one so young. Oh ! thou hast spent thy years
 In sinful waste upon unholy—

Guido. Hush !

Marina.

Mar. Nay, I must. Oh! cursed lore,
 That hath supplied this spell against thy life.
 Unholy learning—devilish and dark—
 Study!—O, God, O, God!—how can thy stars
 Be bright with such black knowledge! Oh, that
 men
 Should ask more light of them, than guides their
 steps
 At evening to love!

Guido. Hush, hush, oh, hush!
 Thy words have pained me in the midst of pain,
 True, if I had not read,—I should not die,
 For, if I had not read, I had not been.
 All of our acts of life are pre-ordained,
 And each pre-acted, in our several spheres,
 By ghostly duplicates. They sway our deeds
 By their performance. What if mine hath been
 To be a prophet and foreknow my doom?
 If I had closed my eyes, the thunder then
 Had roared it in my ears; my own mute brain
 Had told it with a tongue. What must be, must.
 Therefore I knew when my full time would fall —
 And now—to save thy widowhood of tears —
 To spare the very breaking of thy heart,
 I may not gain even a brief hour's reprieve!
 What see'st thou yonder?

Mar. Where?—a tree—the sun
 Sinking behind a tree.

Guido. It is no tree,
 Marina, but a shape—the awful shape
 That comes to claim me. Seest thou not his
 shade
 Darken before his steps? Ah, me! how cold
 It comes against my feet!—Cold, icy cold!
 And blacker than a pall.

Mar. My love!

Guido. Oh, heaven
 And earth, where are ye? Marina—

[*Guido dies.*]

Mar. I am here !
 What wilt thou? dost thou speak!—Methought I
 heard thee
 Just whispering—He is dead!—Oh, God! he's
 dead!

ANSWER

TO A LADY WHO REQUESTED THE AUTHOR TO WRITE
 SOME VERSES IN HER ALBUM DECLARATORY OF WHAT
 HE LIKED AND WHAT HE DISLIKED.

You bid me mention what I like,
 And, gaily smiling, little guess
 How deeply may that question strike
 The chords of solemn thankfulness.

I like my friends, my children, wife—
 The home they make so blessed a spot;
 I like my fortune—calling—life—
 In every thing I like my lot;
 And feeling thus, my heart's imbued
 With never-ceasing gratitude.

What I dislike, you next demand.
 A puzzling query—for in me
 Nought that proceeds from Nature's hand
 Awakens an antipathy.
 But what I like the least are those
 Who nourish an unthankful mind,
 Quick to discern imagined woes,
 To all their real blessings blind,
 For that is double want of love,
 To man below, and God above.

I.

TO THE OCEAN.

SHALL I rebuke thee, Oeean, my old love,
 That once, in rage with the wild winds at strife
 Thou darest menace my unit of a life,
 Sending my clay below, my soul above,
 Whilst roar'd thy waves, like lions when they rove
 By night and bound upon their prey by stealth?
 Yet didst thou ne'er restore my fainting health?—
 Didst thou ne'er murmur gently like the dove?
 Nay, didst thou not against my own dear shore
 Full break, last link between my land and me?—
 My absent friends talk in thy very roar,
 In thy waves' beat their kindly pulse I see,
 And, if I must not see my England more,
 Next to her soil, my grave be found in thee!

COBLENTZ, May, 1835.

II.

LEAR.

A POOR old king, with sorrow for my crown,
 Throned upon straw, and mantled with the wind—
 For pity, my own tears have made me blind
 That I might never see my ehildren's frown;
 And may be madness, like a friend, has thrown
 A folded fillet over my dark mind,
 So that unkindly speech may sound for kind,—
 Albeit I know not.—I am ehildish grown—
 And have not gold to purchase wit withal—
 I that have once maintain'd most royal state—

A very bankrupt now that may not call
 My child, my child—all-beggar'd save in tears,
 Wherewith I daily weep an old man's fate,
 Foolish—and blind—and overcome with years!

III.

SONNET TO A SONNET.

RARE composition of a poet-knight,
 Most chivalrous amongst chivalric men,
 Distinguish'd for a polish'd lance and pen
 In tuneful contest and in tourney-fight;
 Lustrous in scholarship, in honour bright,
 Accomplish'd in all graces current then,
 Humane as any in historic ken,
 Brave, handsome, noble, affable, polite;
 Most courteous to that race become of late
 So fiercely scornful of all kind advance,
 Rude, bitter, coarse, implacable in hate
 To Albion, plotting ever her mischance,—
 Alas, fair verse! how false and out of date
 Thy phrase “sweet enemy” applied to France!

IV.

FALSE POETS AND TRUE.

LOOK how the lark soars upward and is gone,
 Turning a spirit as he nears the sky!
 His voice is heard, but body there is none
 To fix the vague excursions of the eye.
 So, poets' songs are with us, tho' they die

Obscured, and hid by death's oblivious shroud,
 And earth inherits the rich melody,
 Like raining music from the morning cloud.
 Yet, few there be who pipe so sweet and loud,
 Their voices reach us through the lapse of space;
 The noisy day is deafen'd by a crowd
 Of undistinguish'd birds, a twittering race;
 But only lark and nightingale forlorn
 Fill up the silences of night and morn.

V.

TO ———.

My heart is sick with longing, tho' I feed
 On hope; Time goes with such a heavy pace
 That neither brings nor takes from thy embrace,
 As if he slept—forgetting his old speed:
 For, as in sunshine only we can read
 The march of minutes on the dial's face,
 So in the shadows of this lonely place
 There is no love, and Time is dead indeed.
 But when, dear lady, I am near thy heart,
 Thy smile is time, and then so swift it flies,
 It seems we only meet to tear apart
 With aching hands and lingering of eyes.
 Alas, alas! that we must learn hours' flight
 By the same light of love that makes them bright

VI.

FOR THE 14TH OF FEBRUARY.

No popular respect will I omit
 To do thee honour on this happy day,
 When every loyal lover tasks his wit
 His simple truth in studious rhymes to pay,
 And to his mistress dear his hopes convey.
 Rather thou knowest I would still outrun
 All calendars with Love's,—whose date alway
 Thy bright eyes govern better than the Sun,—
 For with thy favour was my life begun ;
 And still I reckon on from smiles to smiles,
 And not by summers, for I thrive on none
 But those thy cheerful countenance compiles :
 Oh ! if it be to choose and call thee mine,
 Love, thou art every day my Valentine.

VII.

TO A SLEEPING CHILD.

I.

OH, 'tis a touching thing to make one weep,—
 A tender infant with its curtain'd eye,
 Breathing as it would neither live nor die
 With that unchanging countenance of sleep !
 As if its silent dream, serene and deep,
 Had lined its slumber with a still blue sky,
 So that the passive cheeks unconscious lie
 With no more life than roses—just to keep
 The blushes warm, and the mild, odorous breath.
 O blossom boy ! so calm is thy repose,

So sweet a compromise of life and death,
 'Tis pity those fair buds should e'er unclose
 For memory to stain their inward leaf,
 Tinging thy dreams with unacquainted grief.

VIII.

TO A SLEEPING CHILD.

II.

THINE eyelids slept so beauteously, I deem'd
 No eyes could wake so beautiful as they :
 Thy rosy cheeks in such still slumbers lay,
 I loved their peacefulness, nor ever dream'd
 Of dimples ;—for those parted lips so seem'd,
 I never thought a smile could sweetlier play,
 Nor that so graceful life could chase away
 Thy graceful death,—till those blue eyes upheam'd
 Now slumber lies in dimpled eddies drown'd,
 And roses bloom more rosily for joy,
 And odorous silence ripens into sound,
 And fingers move to sound,—All-beauteous boy !
 How thou dost waken into smiles, and prove,
 If not more lovely, thou art more like Love !

IX.

THE World is with me, and its many cares,
 Its woes—its wants—the anxious hopes and fears
 That wait on all terrestrial affairs—
 The shades of former and of future years—
 Foreboding fancies, and prophetic tears,
 Quelling a spirit that was once elate.

Heavens! what a wilderness the world appears,
 Where Youth, and Mirth, and Health are out of
 date ;
 But no—a laugh of innocence and joy
 Resounds, like music of the fairy race,
 And, gladly turning from the world's annoy,
 I gaze upon a little radiant face,
 And bless, internally, the merry boy
 Who “ makes a *son-shine* in a shady place.”

WRITTEN IN A VOLUME OF SHAKSPEARE.

How bravely Autumn paints upon the sky
 The gorgeous fame of Summer which is fled !
 Hues of all flow'rs that in their ashes lie,
 Trophied in that fair light whercou they fed,
 Tulip, and hyacinth, and sweet rose red,—
 Like exhalations from the leafy mould,
 Look here how honour glorifies the dead,
 And warms their scutcheons with a glance of
 gold !—
 Such is the memory of poets old,
 Who on Parnassus' hill have bloom'd elate ;
 Now they are laid under their marbles cold,
 And turn'd to clay, whereof they were create ;
 But God Apollo hath them all enroll'd,
 And blazon'd on the very clouds of fate !

II.

TO FANCY.

Most delicate Ariel ! submissive thing,
 Won by the mind's high magic to its hest,—

Invisible embassy, or secret guest,—
 Weighing the light air on a lighter wing;—
 Whether into the midnight moon, to bring
 Illuminate visions to the eye of rest,—
 Or rich romances from the florid West,—
 Or to the sea, for mystie whispering,—
 Still by thy charm'd allegiance to the will,
 The fruitful wishes prosper in the brain,
 As by the fingering of fairy skill,—
 Moonlight, and waters, and soft music's strain,
 Odours, and blooms, and *my* Miranda's smile,
 Making this dull world an enchanted isle.

III.

TO AN ENTHUSIAST.

YOUNG ardent soul, graced with fair Nature's
 truth,
 Spring warmth of heart, and fervency of mind,
 And still a large late love of all thy kind,
 Spite of the world's cold practice and Time's tooth,
 For all these gifts, I know not, in fair sooth,
 Whether to give thee joy, or bid thee blind
 Thine eyes with tears,—that thou hast not resign'd
 The passionate fire and freshness of thy youth:
 For as the current of thy life shall flow,
 Gilded by shine of sun or shadow-stain'd,
 Through flow'ry valley or unwholesome fen,
 Thrice blessed in thy joy, or in thy woe
 Thrice cursed of thy race,—thou art ordain'd
 To share beyond the lot of common men.

' IV.

It is not death, that sometime in a sigh
 This eloquent breath shall take its speechless
 flight;
 That sometime these bright stars, that now reply
 In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night;
 That this warm conscious flesh shall perish quite,
 And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow;
 That thoughts shall cease, and the immortal spright
 Be lapp'd in alien clay and laid below;
 It is not death to know this,—but to know
 That pious thoughts, which visit at new graves
 In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go
 So duly and so oft,—and when grass waves
 Over the past-away, there may be then
 No resurrection in the minds of men.

V.

By ev'ry sweet tradition of true hearts,
 Graven by Time. in love with his own lore;
 By all old martyrdoms and antique smarts,
 Wherein Love died to be alive the more;
 Yea, by the sad impression on the shore,
 Left by the drown'd Leander, to endear
 That coast forever, where the billow's roar
 Moaneth for pity in the Poet's ear;
 By Hero's faith, and the foreboding tear
 That quench'd her brand's last twinkle in its fall;
 By Sappho's leap, and the low rustling fear
 That sigh'd around her flight; I swear by all,
 The world shall find such pattern in my act,
 As if Love's great examples still were lack'd.

VI.

ON RECEIVING A GIFT.

LOOK how the golden ocean shines above
 Its pebbly stones, and magnifies their girth;
 So does the bright and blessed light of love
 Its own things glorify, and raise their worth.
 As weeds seem flowers beneath the flattering brine,
 And stones like gems, and gems as gems indeed,
 Ev'n so our tokens shine; nay, they outshine
 Pebbles and pearls, and gems and coral weed;
 For where be ocean waves but half so clear,
 So calmly constant, and so kindly warm,
 As Love's most mild and glowing atmosphere,
 That hath no dregs to be upturn'd by storm?
 Thus, sweet, thy gracious gifts are gifts of price,
 And more than gold to doting Avarice.

VII.

SILENCE.

THERE is a silence where hath been no sound,
 There is a silence where no sound may be,
 In the cold grave—under the deep deep sea,
 Or in wide desert where no life is found,
 Which hath been mute, and still must sleep pro-
 found;
 No voice is hush'd—no life treads silently,
 But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,
 That never spoke, over the idle ground:
 But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
 Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,

Though the dun fox, or wild hyæna, calls,
 And owls, that flit continually between,
 Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,
 There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

VIII.

THE curse of Adam, the old curse of all
 Though I inherit in this feverish life
 Of worldly toil, vain wishes, and hard strife,
 And fruitless thought, in Care's eternal thrall,
 Yet more sweet honey than of bitter gall
 I taste, through thee, my Eva, my sweet wife.
 Then what was Man's lost Paradise!—how ripe
 Of bliss, since love is with him in his fall!
 Such as our own pure passion still might frame.
 Of this fair earth, and its delightful bow'rs,
 If no fell sorrow, like the serpent, came
 To trail its venom o'er the sweet'st flow'rs:—
 But oh! as many and such tears are ours,
 As only should be shed for guilt and shame!

IX.

LOVE, dearest Lady, such as I would speak,
 Lives not within the humour of the eye;—
 Not being but an outward phantasy,
 That skims the surface of a tinted cheek—
 Else it would wane with beauty, and grow weak.
 As if the rose made summer,—and so lie
 Amongst the perishable things that die,
 Unlike the love which I would give and seek
 Whose health is of no hue—to feel decay

With cheeks' decay, that have a rosy prime,
 Love is its own great loveliness always,
 And takes new lustre from the touch of time;
 Its bough owns no December and no May,
 But bears its blossom into Winter's clime.

MISS KILMANSEGG AND HER PRECIOUS LEG.

A GOLDEN LEGEND.

“What is here?
 Gold? yellow, glittering, precious gold?”
 TIMON OF ATHENS

Her Pedigree.

To trace the Kilmansegg pedigree,
 To the very roots of the family tree,
 Were a task as rash as ridiculous:
 Through antediluvian mists as thick
 As London fog such a line to pick
 Were enough, in truth, to puzzle Old Nick,
 Not to name Sir Harris Nicholas.

It wouldn't require much verbal strain
 To trace the Kill-man, perchance, to Cain;
 But waving all such digressions,
 Suffice it, according to family lore,
 A Patriarch Kilmansegg lived of yore,
 Who was famed for his great possessions.

Tradition said he feather'd his nest
 Through an Agricultural Interest
 In the Golden Age of Farming;
 When golden eggs were laid by the geese,
 And Colchian sheep wore a golden fleece,

And golden pippins—the sterling kind
Of Hesperus—now so hard to find—
Made Horticulture quite charming!

A Lord of Land, on his own estate,
He lived at a very lively rate,
But his income would bear carousing;
Such acres he had of pasture and heath,
With herbage so rich from the ore beneath,
The very ewe's and lambkin's teeth
Were turn'd into gold by browsing.

He gave, without any extra thrift,
A flock of sheep for a birthday gift
To each son of his loins, or daughter:
And his debts—if debts he had—at will
He liquidated by giving each bill
A dip in Pactolian water.

'Twas said that even his pigs of lead,
By crossing with some by Midas bred,
Made a perfect mine of his piggery.
And as for cattle, one yearling bull
Was worth all Smithfield-market full
Of the Golden Bulls of Pope Gregory.

The high-bred horses within his stud,
Like human creatures of birth and blood,
Had their Golden Cups and flagons:
And as for the common husbandry nags,
Their noses were tied in money-bags,
When they stopp'd with the carts and wagons.

Moreover, he had a Golden Ass,
Sometimes at stall, and sometimes at grass,
That was worth his own weight in money—
And a golden hive, on a Golden Bank,
Where golden bees, by alchemical prank,
Gather'd gold instead of honey.

Gold! and gold! and gold without end!
 He had gold to lay by, and gold to spend,
 Gold to give, and gold to lend,
 And reversions of gold *in futuro*.
 In wealth the family revell'd and roll'd,
 Himself and wife and sons so bold;—
 And his daughters sang to their harps of gold
 “O bella eta del' oro!”

Such was the tale of the Kilmansegg Kin,
 In golden text on a vellum skin,
 Though certain people would wink and grin,
 And declare the whole story a parable—
 That the Ancestor rich was one Jacob Ghrimes,
 Who held a long lease, in prosperous times,
 Of acres, pasture and arable.

That as money makes money, his golden bees
 Were the Five per Cents, or which you please,
 When his cash was more than plenty—
 That the golden cups were racing affairs;
 And his daughters, who sang Italian airs,
 Had their golden harps of Clementi.

That the Golden Ass, or Golden Bull,
 Was English John, with his pockets full,
 Then at war by land and water:
 While beef, and mutton, and other meat,
 Were almost as dear as money to eat,
 And Farmers reaped Golden Harvests of wheat
 At the Lord knows what per quarter!

Mer BIRTH.

What different dooms our birthdays bring!
 For instance, one little manikin thing
 Survives to wear many a wrinkle;
 While death forbids another to wake,
 And a son that it took nine moons to make
 Expires without even a twinkle!

Into this world we come like ships,
 Launch'd from the docks, and stocks, and slips,
 For fortune fair or fatal;
 And one little craft is east away
 In its very first trip in Babbicome Bay,
 While another rides safe at Port Natal.

What different lots our stars accord!
 This babe to be hail'd and woo'd as a Lord!
 And that to be shunn'd like a leper!
 One, to the world's wine, honey, and corn,
 Another, like Colchester native, born
 To its vinegar, only, and pepper.

One is litter'd under a roof
 Neither wind nor water proof,—
 That's the prose of Love in a Cottage,—
 A puny, naked, shivering wretch,
 The whole of whose birthright would not fetch,
 Though Robins himself drew up the sketch,
 The bid of "a mess of pottage."

Born of Fortunatus's kin,
 Another comes tenderly usher'd in
 To a prospect all bright and burnish'd:
 No tenant he for life's back slums—
 He comes to the world as a gentleman comes
 To a lodging ready furnish'd.

And the other sex—the tender—the fair—
 What wide reverses of fate are there!
 Whilst Margaret, charm'd by the Bulbul rare,
 In a garden of Gul reposes—
 Poor Peggy hawks nosegays from street to street,
 Till—think of that, who find life so sweet!—
 She hates the smell of roses!

Not so with the infant Kilnansegg!
 She was not born to steal or beg,

Or gather cresses in ditches ;
 To plait the straw, or bind the shoe,
 Or sit all day to hem and sew,
 As females must, and not a few—
 To fill their insides with stitches !

She was not doom'd, for bread to eat,
 To be put to her hands as well as her feet—
 To carry home linen from mangles—
 Or heavy-hearted, and weary limb'd,
 To dance on a rope in a jacket trimm'd
 With as many blows as spangles.

She was one of those who by Fortune's boon
 Are born, as they say, with a silver spoon
 In her mouth, not a wooden ladle :
 To speak according to poet's wont,
 Plutus as sponsor stood at her font,
 And Midas rock'd the cradle.

At her first *debut* she found her head
 On a pillow of down, in a downy bed,
 With a damask canopy over.
 For although by the vulgar popular saw
 All mothers are said to be "in the straw,"
 Some children are born in clover.

Her very first draught of vital air
 It was not the common chamelion fare
 Of plebeian lungs and noses,—
 No—her earliest sniff
 Of this world was a whiff
 Of the genuine Otto of Roses !

When she saw the light—it was no mere ray
 Of that light so common—so every day—
 That the sun each morning launches—
 But six wax tapers dazzled her eyes,
 From a thing—a gooseberry bush for size—
 With a golden stem and branches.

She was born exactly at half-past two,
 As witness'd a time-piece in or-molu
 That stood on a marble table—
 Showing at once the time of day,
 And a team of *Gildings* running away
 As fast as they were able,
 With a golden God, with a golden Star,
 And a golden Spear, in a golden Car,
 According to Grecian fable.

Like other babes, at her birth she cried ;
 Which made a sensatiou far and wide,
 Ay, for twenty miles around her ;
 For though to the ear 'twas nothing more
 Than an infant's squall, it was really the
 roar
 Of a Fifty-thousand Pounder !
 It shook the next heir
 In his library chair,
 And made him cry " Confound her ! "

Of signs and omens there was no dearth,
 Any more than at Owen Glendower's birth,
 Or the advent of other great people :
 Two bullocks dropp'd dead,
 As if knock'd on the head,
 And barrels of stout
 And ale ran about,
 And the village-bells such a peal rang out,
 That they crack'd the village-steeples.

In no time at all, like mushroom spawn,
 Tables sprang up all over the lawn ;
 Not furnish'd scantily or shabbily,
 But on scale as vast
 As that huge repast,
 With its loads and cargoes
 Of drink and botargoes,
 At the Birth of the Babe in Rabelais.

Hundreds of men were turn'd into beasts,
 Like the guests at Circe's horrible feasts,
 By the magic of ale and cider :
 And each country lass, and each country lad,
 Began to caper and dance like mad,
 And even some old ones appear'd to have had
 A bite from the Naples Spider.

Then as night came on,
 It had scared King John,
 Who considered such signs not risible,
 To have seen the maroons,
 And the whirling moons,
 And the serpents of flame,
 And wheels of the same,
 That according to some were "whizzable."

Oh, happy Hope of the Kilmanseggs !
 Thrice happy in head, and body, and legs
 That her parents had such full pockets !
 For had she been born of Want and Thrift,
 For care and nursing all adrift,
 It's ten to one she had had to make shift
 With rickets instead of rockets !

And how was the precious Baby drest ?
 In a robe of the East, with lace of the West.
 Like one of Cræsus's issue—
 Her best bibs were made
 Of rich gold brocade,
 And the others of silver tissue.

And when the Baby inclined to nap
 She was lull'd on a Gros de Naples lap,
 By a nurse in a modish Paris cap,
 Of notions so exalted,
 She drank nothing lower than Curaçoa,
 Maraschino, or pink Noyau,
 And on principle never malted.

From a golden boat, with a golden spoon,
 The babe was fed night, morning, and noon ;
 And altho' the tale seems fabulous,
 'Tis said her tops and bottoms were gilt,
 Like the oats in that Stable-yard Palace built
 For the horse of Heliogabalus.

And when she took to squall and kick—
 For pain will wring and pins will prick
 E'en the wealthiest nabob's daughter—
 They gave her no vulgar Dalby or gin,
 But a liquor with leaf of gold therein,
 Videlicet,—Dantzie Water.

In short, she was born, and bred, and nurst,
 And drest in the best from the very first.
 To please the genteelest censor—
 And then, as soon as strength would allow,
 Was vaccinated, as babes are now,
 With virus ta'en from the best-bred cow
 Of Lord Althorpe's—now Earl Spencer.

Her Christening.

Though Shakspeare asks us, "What's in a
 name?"

(As if cognomens were much the same,)

There's really a very great scope in it.

A name?—why, wasn't there Doctor Dodd,

That servant at once of Mammon and God,

Who found four thousand pounds and odd,

A prison—a cart—and a rope in it?

A name?—if the party had a voice,
 What mortal would be a Bugg by choice?
 As a Hogg, a Grubb, or a Chubb rejoice?
 Or any such nauseous blazon?
 Not to mention many a vulgar name,
 That would make a doorplate blush for shame,
 If doorplates were not so brazen!

A name?—it has more than nominal worth,
 And belongs to good or bad luck at birth—
 As dames of a certain degrec know.
 In spite of his Page's hat and hose,
 His Page's jacket, and buttons in rows,
 Bob only sounds like a page of prose
 Till turn'd into Rupertino.

Now to christen the infant Kilmansegg,
 For days and days it was quite a plague,
 To hunt the list in the Lexicon :
 And scores were tried, like coin, by the ring,
 Ere names were found just the proper thing
 For a minor rich as a Mexican.

Then eards were sent, the presence to beg
 Of all the kin of Kilmansegg,
 White, yellow, and brown relations :
 Brothers, Wardens of City Halls,
 And Uncles—rich as three Golden Balls
 From taking pledges of nations.

Nephews, whom Fortunc seem'd to bewitch,
 Rising in life like roekets—
 Nieces whose doweries knew no hitch—
 Aunts as eertain of dying rich
 As candles in golden sockets—
 Cousins German, and Cousin's sons,
 All thriving and opulent—some had tons
 Of Kentish hops in their poekets !

For money had stuck to the raec through life
 (As it did to the bushel when cash so rife
 Posed Ali Baba's brother's wife)—
 And down to the Cousins and Coz-lings,
 The fortunate brood of the Kilmanseggs,
 As if they had come out of golden eggs,
 Were all as wealthy as "Goslings."

It would fill a Court Gazette to name
 What East and West End people came
 To the rite of Christianity :
 The lofty Lord, and the titled Dame,
 All di'monds, plumes, and urbanity :
 His Lordship the May'r with his golden chain,
 And two Gold Sticks, and the Sheriffs twain,
 Nine foreign Counts, and other great men,
 With their orders and stars, to help M or N
 To renounce all pomp and vanity.

To paint the maternal Kilmansegg
 The pen of an Eastern Poet would beg,
 And need an elaborate sonnet ;
 How she sparkled with gems whenever she stirr'd,
 And her head niddle-noddled at every word,
 And seem'd so happy, a Paradise Bird
 Had nidificated upon it.

And Sir Jacob the Father strutted and bow'd,
 And smiled to himself, and laugh'd aloud,
 To think of his heiress and daughter—
 And then in his pockets he made a grope,
 And then, in the fulness of joy and hope,
 Seem'd washing his hands with invisible soap
 In imperceptible water.

He had roll'd in money like pigs in mud,
 Till it seem'd to have enter'd into his blood
 By some occult projection :
 And his cheeks, instead of a healthy hue,
 As yellow as any guinea grew,
 Making the common phrase seem true
 About a rich complexion.

And now came the nurse, and during a pause,
 Her dead-leaf satin would fitly cause
 A very autumnal rustle—

So full of figure, so full of fuss,
 As she carried about the babe to buss,
 She seem'd to be nothing but bustle.

A wealthy Nabob was Godpapa,
 And an Indian Begum was Godmamma,
 Whose jewels a Queen might covet—
 And the Priest was a Vicar, and Dean withal
 Of that Temple we see with a Golden Ball,
 And a Golden Cross above it.

The Font was a bowl of American gold,
 Won by Raleigh in days of old,
 In spite of Spanish bravado;
 And the Book of Pray'r was so overrun
 With gilt devices, it shone in the sun
 Like a copy—a presentation one—
 Of Humboldt's "El Dorado."

Gold! and gold! and nothing but gold!
 The same auriferous shine behold
 Wherever the eye could settle!
 On the walls—the sideboard—the ceiling-sky—
 On the gorgeous footmen standing by,
 In coats to delight a miner's eye
 With seams of the precious metal.

Gold! and gold! and besides the gold,
 The very robe of the infant told
 A tale of wealth in every fold,
 It lapp'd her like a vapour!
 So fine! so thin! the mind at a loss
 Could compare it to nothing except a cross
 Of cobweb with bank-note paper.

Then her pearls—'twas a perfect sight forsooth,
 To see them, like "the dew of her youth,"
 In such a plentiful sprinkle.
 Meanwhile, the Vicar read through the form,

And gave her another, not overwarm,
That made her little eyes twinkle.

Then the babe was cross'd and bless'd amain ;
But instead of the Kate, or Ann, or Jane,
Which the humbler female endorses—
Instead of one name, as some people prefix,
Kilmansegg went at the tails of six,
Like a carriage of state with its horses.

Oh, then the kisses she got and hugs !
The golden mugs and the golden jugs
That lent fresh rays to the midges !
The golden knives, and the golden spoons,
The gems that sparkled like fairy boons,
It was one of the Kilmansegg's own saloons,
But look'd like Rundell and Bridge's !

Gold ! and gold ! the new and the old !
The company ate and drank from gold,
They revell'd, they sang, and were merry ;
And one of the Gold Sticks rose from his chair,
And toasted " the Lass with the golden hair "
In a bumper of golden Sherry.

Gold ! still gold ! it rain'd on the nurse,
Who, unlike Danæ, was none the worse ;
There was nothing but guineas glistening !
Fifty were given to Doctor James,
For calling the little Baby names ;
And for saying, Amen !
The Clerk had ten,
And that was the end of the Christening.

Her Childhood.

Our youth ! our childhood ! that spring of springs
'Tis surely one of the blessedest things
That nature ever invented !

When the rich are wealthy beyond their wealth,
 And the poor are rich in spirits and health,
 And all with their lots contented !

There's little Phelim, he sings like a thrush,
 In the selfsame pair of patchwork plush,
 With the selfsame empty pockets,
 That tempted his daddy so often to cut
 His throat, or jump in the water-butt—
 But what cares Phelim ? an empty nut
 Would sooner bring tears to their sockets.

Give him a collar without a skirt,
 That's the Irish linen for shirt,
 And a slice of bread, with a taste of dirt,
 That's poverty's Irish butter,
 And what does he lack to make him blest ?
 Some oyster-shells, or a sparrow's nest,
 A candle-end and a gutter.

But to leave the happy Phelim alone,
 Gnawing, perchance, a marrowless bone,
 For which no dog would quarrel—
 Turn we to little Miss Kilmansegg,
 Cutting her first little toothy-peg
 With a fifty-guinea coral—
 A peg upon which
 About poor and rich
 Reflection might hang a moral.

Born in wealth, and wealthily nursed,
 Capp'd, papp'd, napp'd, and lapp'd from the first
 On the knees of Prodigality,
 Her childhood was one eternal round
 Of the game of going on Tiekler's ground
 Picking up gold—in reality.

With extempore carts she never play'd,
 Or the odds and ends of a Tinker's trade,

Or little dirt pies and puddings made,
 Like children happy and squalid ;
 The very puppet she had to pet,
 Like a bait for the "Nix my Dolly" set,
 Was a Dolly of gold—and solid !

Gold ! and gold ! 'twas the burden still !
 To gain the Heiress's early goodwill
 There was much corruption and bribery—
 The yearly cost of her golden toys
 Would have given half London's Charity Boys
 And Charity Girls the annual joys
 Of a holiday dinner at Highbury.

Bon-bons she ate from the gilt cornet ;
 And gilded queens on St. Bartlemy's day ;
 Till her fancy was tinged by her presents—
 And first a goldfinch excited her wish,
 Then a spherical bowl with its Golden fish,
 And then two Golden Pheasants.

Nay, once she squall'd and scream'd like wild—
 And it shows how the bias we give to a child
 Is a thing most weighty and solemn :—
 But whence was wonder or blame to spring
 If little Miss K.,—after such a swing—
 Made a dust for the flaming gilded thing
 On the top of the Fish Street column ?

Her Education.

According to metaphysical creed,
 To the earliest books that children read
 For much good or much bad they are debtors—
 But before with their A B C they start,
 There are things in morals, as well as art,
 That play a very important part—
 " Impressions before the letters."

Dame Education begins the pile,
 Mayhap in the graceful Corinthian style,
 But alas for the elevation !
 If the Lady's maid or Gossip the Nurse
 With a load of rubbish, or something worse,
 Have made a rotten foundation.

Even thus with little Miss Kilmansegg,
 Before she learnt her E for egg,
 Ere her Governess came, or her masters—
 Teachers of quite a different kind
 Had "cramm'd" her beforehand, and put her
 mind
 In a go-cart on golden castors.

Long before her A B and C,
 They had taught her by heart her L. S. D.
 And how she was born a great Heiress;
 And as sure as London is built of bricks,
 My Lord would ask her the day to fix,
 To ride in a fine gilt coach and six,
 Like Her Worship the Lady May'ress.

Instead of stories from Edgeworth's page,
 The true golden lore for our golden age,
 Or lessons from Barbould and Trimmer,
 Teaching the worth of Virtue and Health,
 All that she knew was the Virtue of Wealth,
 Provided by vulgar nursery stealth
 With a Book of Leaf Gold for a Primer.

The very metal of merit they told,
 And praised her for being as "good as gold!"
 Till she grew as a peacock haughty;
 Of money they talk'd the whole day round,
 And weigh'd dessert like grapes by the pound,
 Till she had an idea from the very sound
 That people with nought were naughty.

They praised—poor children with nothing at all !
 Lord ! how you twaddle and waddle and squall
 Like common-bred geese and ganders !
 What sad little bad little figures you make
 To the rich Miss K., whose plainest seed-cake
 Was stuff'd with corianders !

They praised her falls, as well as her walk,
 Flatterers make cream cheese of chalk,
 They praised—how they praised—her very small
 talk,
 As if it fell from a Solon ;
 Or the girl who at each pretty phrase let drop
 A ruby comma, or pearl full-stop,
 Or an emerald semi-colon.

They praised her spirit, and now and then,
 The Nurse brought her own little “ nevy ” Ben,
 To play with the future May'ress,
 And when he got raps, and taps, and slaps,
 Scratches, and pinches, snips, and snaps,
 As if from a Tigress, or Bearess,
 They told him how Lords would court that hand,
 And always gave him to understand,
 While he rubb'd, poor soul,
 His caroty poll,
 That his hair had been pull'd by “ a *Hairess* .

Such were the lessons from maid and nurse,
 A Governess help'd to make still worse,
 Giving an appetite so perverse
 Fresh diet whereon to batten—
 Beginning with A B C to hold
 Like a royal playbill printed in gold
 On a square of pearl-white satin.

The books to teach the verbs and nouns,
 And those about countries, cities, and towns,
 Instead of their sober drabs and browns,

Were in crimson silk, with gilt edges ; —
 Her Butler, and Enfield, and Entick—in short
 Her “ Early Lessons ” of every sort,
 Look'd like Souvenirs, Keepsakes, and Pledges.

Old Johnson shone out in as fine array
 As he did one night when he went to the play ;
 Chambaud like a beau of King Charles's day—
 Lindley Murray in like conditions—
 Each weary, unwelcome, irksome task,
 Appear'd in a fancy dress and a mask—
 If you wish for similar copies ask
 For Howell and James's Editions.

Novels she read to amuse her mind,
 But always the affluent match-making kind
 That ends with Promessi Sposi,
 And a father-in-law so wealthy and grand,
 He could give cheque-mate to Coutts in the
 Strand ;
 So, along with a ring and posy,
 He endows the Bride with Golconda off hand,
 And gives the Groom Potosi.

Plays she perused—but she liked the best
 Those comedy gentlefolks always possess'd
 Of fortunes so truly romantic—
 Of money so ready that right or wrong
 It always is ready to go for a song,
 Throwing it, going it, pitching it strong—
 They ought to have purses as green and long
 As the cucumber call'd the Gigantic.

Then Eastern Tales she loved for the sake
 Of the purse of Oriental make,
 And the thousand pieces they put in it—
 But Pastoral Scenes on her heart fell cold,
 For Nature with her had lost its hold,
 No field but the Field of the Cloth of Gold
 Would ever have caught her foot in it.

What more ? She learnt to sing, and dance,
 To sit on a horse, although he should prance,
 And to speak a French not spoken in France
 Any more than at Babel's building—
 And she painted shells, and flowers, and Turks,
 But her great delight was in Fancy Works
 That are done with gold or gilding.

Gold ! still gold !—the bright and the dead,
 With golden beads, and gold lace, and gold
 thread
 She work'd in gold, as if for her bread ;
 The metal had so undermined her.
 Gold ran in her thoughts and fill'd her brain,
 She was golden-headed as Peter's cane
 With which he walk'd behind her.

Her Accident.

The horse that carried Miss Kilmansegg,
 And a better never lifted leg,
 Was a very rich bay, call'd Banker—
 A horse of a breed and a metal so rare,—
 By Bullion out of an Ingot mare,—
 That for action, the best of figures, and air,
 It made many good judges hanker.

And when she took a ride in the Park,
 Equestrian Lord, or pedestrian Clerk,
 Was thrown in an amorous fever,
 To see the Heiress how well she sat,
 With her groom behind her, Bob or Nat,
 In Green, half smother'd with gold, and a hat
 With more gold lace than beaver.

And then when Banker obtain'd a pat,
 To see how he arch'd his neck at that !
 He snorted with pride and pleasure !

Like the Steed in the fable so lofty and grand,
 Who gave the poor Ass to understand,
 That *he* didn't carry a bag of sand,
 But a burden of golden treasure.

A load of treasure?—alas! alas!
 Had her horse but been fed upon English grass,
 And shelter'd in Yorkshire spinneys,
 Had he scour'd the sand with the Desart Ass,
 Or where the American whinnies—
 But a hunter from Erin's turf and gorse,
 A regular thorough-bred Irish horse,
 Why, he ran away, as a matter of course,
 With a girl worth her weight in guineas!

Mayhap 'tis the trick of such pamper'd nags
 To shy at the sight of a beggar in rags,
 But away, like the bolt of a rabbit,
 Away went the horse in the madness of fright,
 And away went the horsewoman mocking the
 sight—
 Was yonder blue flash a flash of blue light,
 Or only the skirt of her habit?

Away she flies, with the groom behind,—
 It looks like a race of the Calmuck kind,
 When Hymen himself is the starter:
 And the Maid rides first in the fourfooted strife,
 Riding, striding, as if for her life,
 While the Lover rides after to catch him a wife,
 Although it's catching a Tartar.

But the Groom has lost his glittering hat!
 Though he does not sigh and pull up for that—
 Alas! his horse is a tit for Tat
 To sell to a very low bidder—
 His wind is ruin'd, his shoulder is sprung,
 Things, though a horse be handsome and young,
 A purchaser *will* consider.

But still flies the Heiress through stones and
dust,

Oh, for a fall, if fall she must,

On the gentle lap of Flora!

But still, thank Heaven! she clings to her seat—

Away! away! she could ride a dead heat

With the Dead who ride so fast and fleet,

In the Ballad of Leonora!

Away she gallops!—it's awful work!

It's faster than Turpin's ride to York,

On Bess that notable clipper!

She has circled the Ring!—she crosses the

Park!

Mazeppa, although he was stripp'd so stark,

Mazeppa couldn't outstrip her!

The fields seem running away with the folks!

The Elms are having a race for the Oaks!

At a pace that all Jockeys disparages!

All, all is racing! the Serpentine

Seems rushing past like the "arrowy Rhine,"

The houses have got on a railway line,

And are off like the first-class carriages!

She'll lose her life! she is losing her breath!

A cruel chase, she is chasing Death,

As female shriekings forewarn her:

And now—as gratis as blood of Guelph—

She clears that gate, which has clear'd itself

Since then, at Hyde Park Corner!

Alas! for the hope of the Kilmanseggs!

For her head, her brains, her body, and legs,

Her life's not worth a copper!

Willy-nilly,

In Piccadilly,

A hundred hearts turn sick and chilly,

A hundred voices cry, "Stop her!"

And one old gentleman stares and stands,
Shakes his head and lifts his hands,
And says, "How very improper!"

On and on!—what a perilous run!
The iron rails seem all mingling in one,
To shut out the Green Park scenery!
And now the Cellar its dangers reveals,
She shudders—she shrieks—she's doom'd, she
feels,
To be torn by powers of horses and wheels,
Like a spinner by steam machinery!

Sick with horror she shuts her eyes,
But the very stones seem uttering eries,
As they did to that Persian daughter,
When she climb'd up the steep vociferous hill,
Her little silver flagon to fill
With the magical Golden Water!

"Batter her! shatter her!
Throw and scatter her!
Shouts each stony-hearted chatterer!
"Dash at the heavy Dover!
Spill her! kill her! tear and tatter her!
Smash her! crash her!" (the stones didn't flatter
her!)
"Kick her brains out! let her blood spatter her!
Roll on her over and over!"

For so she gather'd the awful sense
Of the street in its past unmacadamized tense,
As the wild horse overran it,—
His four heels making the clatter of six,
Like a Devil's tattoo, play'd with iron sticks
On a kettle-drum of granite!

On! still on! she's dazzled with hints
Of oranges, ribbons, and colour'd prints,

A Kaleidoseope jumble of shapes and tints,
 And human faces all flashing,
 Bright and brief as the sparks from the flints,
 That the desperate hoof keeps dashing!

On and on! still frightfully fast!
 Dover-street, Bond-street, all are past!
 But—yes—no—yes!—they're down at last!
 The Furies and Fates have found them!
 Down they go with a sparkle and crash,
 Like a Bark that's struck by the lightning flash—
 There's a shriek—and a sob—
 And the dense dark mob
 Like a billow closes around them!

* * * *

“ She breathes!”

“ She don't!”

“ She'll recover!”

“ She won't!”

“ She's stirring! she's living, by Nemesis!”
 Gold, still gold! on counter and shelf!
 Golden dishes as plenty as delf!
 Miss Kilmansegg's coming again to herself
 On an opulent Goldsmith's premises!

Gold! fine gold!—both yellow and red,
 Beaten, and molten—polish'd, and dead—
 To see the gold with profusion spread
 In all forms of its manufacture!
 But what avails gold to Miss Kilmansegg,
 When the femoral bone of her dexter leg
 Has met with a compound fraecture?

Gold may soothe Adversity's smart;
 Nay, help to bind up a broken heart;
 But to try it on any other part
 Were as certain a disappointment,
 As if one should rub the dish and plate,
 Taken out of a Staffordshire erate—

In the hope of a Golden Service of State—
With Singleton's "Golden Ointment."

Her Precious Leg.

"As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined,"
Is an adage often recall'd to mind,
Referring to juvenile bias:
And never so well is the verity seen,
As when to the weak, warp'd side we lean,
While Life's tempests and hurricanes try us.

Even thus with Miss K. and her broken limb,
By a very, very remarkable whim,
She show'd her early tuition:
While the buds of character came into blow
With a certain tinge that served to show
The nursery culture long ago,
As the graft is known by fruition!

For the King's Physician, who nursed the case,
His verdict gave with an awful face,
And three others concurr'd to egg it;
That the Patient to give old Death the slip,
Like the Pope, instead of a personal trip,
Must send her Leg as a Legate.

The limb was doom'd—it couldn't be saved!
And like other people the patient behaved,
Nay, bravely that cruel parting braved,
Which makes some persons so falter,
They rather would part, without a groan,
With the flesh of their flesh, and bone of their
bone,
They obtain'd at St. George's altar.

But when it came to fitting the stump
With a proxy limb—then flatly and plump
She spoke, in the spirit olden;

She couldn't—she shouldn't—she wouldn't—have
wood!

Nor a leg of cork, if she never stood;
And she swore an oath, or something as good,
The proxy limb should be golden!

A wooden leg! what, a sort of peg,
For your common Jockeys and Jennies!
No, no, her mother might worry and plague—
Weep, go down on her knees, and beg,
But nothing would move Miss Kilmansegg!
She could—she would have a Golden Leg,
If it cost ten thousand guineas!

Wood indeed, in Forest or Park,
With its sylvan honours and feudal bark,
Is an aristocratical article:
But split and sawn, and hack'd about town,
Serving all needs of pauper or clown,
Trod on! stagger'd on! Wood cut down
Is vulgar—fibre and particle!

And Cork!—when the noble Cork Tree shades
A lovely group of Castilian maids,
'Tis a thing for a song or sonnet!—
But cork, as it stops the bottle of gin,
Or bungs the beer—the *small* beer—in,
It pierced her heart like a corking-pin,
To think of standing upon it!

A Leg of Gold—solid gold throughout,
Nothing else, whether slim or stout,
Should ever support her, God willing!
She must—she could—she would have her
whim,
Her father, she turn'd a deaf ear to him—
He might kill her—she didn't mind killing!
He was welcome to cut off her other limb—
He might cut her all off with a shilling!

All other promised gifts were in vain,
 Golden Girdle, or Golden Chain,
 She writhed with impatience more than pain,
 And utter'd "pshaws!" and "pishes!"
 But a Leg of Gold! as she lay in bed,
 It daneed before her—it ran in her head!
 It jump'd with her dearest wishes!

"Gold—gold—gold! Oh, let it be gold!"
 Asleep or awake that tale she told,
 And when she grew delirious:
 Till her parents resolved to grant her wish,
 If they melted down plate, and goblet, and
 dish,
 The case was getting so serious.

So a Leg was made in a comely mould,
 Of Gold, fine virgin glittering gold,
 As solid as man could make it—
 Solid in foot, and calf, and shank,
 A prodigious sum of money it sank;
 In fact 'twas a Branch of the family Bank,
 And no easy matter to break it.

All sterling metal—not half-and-half,
 The Goldsmith's mark was stamp'd on the calf—
 'Twas pure as from Mexican barter!
 And to make it more costly, just over the knee,
 Where another ligature used to be,
 Was a circle of jewels, worth shillings to see,
 A new-fangled Badge of the Garter!

'Twas a splendid, brilliant, beautiful Leg,
 Fit for the Court of Scander-Beg,
 That Precious Leg of Miss Kilmansegg!
 For, thanks to parental bounty,
 Secure from Mortification's touch,
 She stood on a Member that cost as much
 As a Member for all the County!

Her Fame.

To gratify stern ambition's whims,
 What hundreds and thousands of precious limbs
 On a field of battle we scatter !
 Sever'd by sword, or bullet, or saw,
 Off they go, all bleeding and raw,—
 But the public seems to get the lock-jaw,
 So little is said on the matter !

Legs, the tightest that ever were seen,
 The tightest, the lightest, that danced on the
 green,
 Cutting capers to sweet Kitty Clover ;
 Shatter'd, scatter'd, cut, and bowl'd down,
 Off they go, worse off for renown,
 A line in the *Times*, or a talk about town,
 Than the leg that a fly runs over !

But the Precious Leg of Miss Kilmansegg,
 That gowden, goolden, golden leg,
 Was the theme of all conversation !
 Had it been a Pillar of Church and State,
 Or a prop to support the whole Dead Weight,
 It could not have furnish'd more debate
 To the heads and tails of the nation !

East and west, and north and south,
 Though useless for either hunger or drouth,—
 The Leg was in everybody's mouth,
 To use a poetical figure,
 Rumour, in taking her ravenous swim,
 Saw, and seized on the tempting limb,
 Like a shark on the leg of a nigger.

Wilful murder fell very dead ;
 Debates in the House were hardly read ;
 In vain the Police Reports were fed

With Irish riots and *rumpuses*—
 The Leg! the Leg! was the great event,
 Through every circle in life it went,
 Like the leg of a pair of compasses.

The last new Novel seem'd tame and flat,
 The Leg, a novelty newer than that,
 Had tripp'd up the heels of Fiction!
 It Burked the very essays of Burke,
 And, alas! how Wealth over Wit plays the Turk:
 As a regular piece of goldsmith's work,
 Got the better of Goldsmith's dietion.

“ A leg of gold! what of solid gold? ”
 Cried rich and poor, and young and old—
 And Master and Miss and Madam—
 'Twas the talk of 'Change—the Alley—the
 Bank—
 And with men of seientifie rank,
 It made as much stir as the fossil shank
 Of a Lizard coeval with Adam!

Of course with Greenwich and Chelsea elves,
 Men who had lost a limb themselves,
 Its interest did not dwindle—
 But Bill, and Ben, and Jack, and Tom
 Could hardly have spun more yarns therefrom,
 If the leg had been a spindle.

Meanwhile the story went to and fro,
 Till, gathering like the ball of snow,
 By the time it got to Stratford-le-Bow,
 Through Exaggeration's touches,
 The Heiress and Hope of the Kilmanseggs
 Was propp'd on *two* fine Golden Legs,
 And a pair of Golden Crutches!

Never had Leg so great a run!
 'Twas the “go” and the “Kick” throw'n into
 one!

The mode—the new thing under the sun,
 The rage—the fancy—the passion !
 Bonnets were named, and hats were worn,
A la Golden Leg instead of Leghorn,
 And stockings and shoes,
 Of golden hues,
 Took the lead in the walks of fashion !

The Golden Leg had a vast career,
 It was sung and danced—and to show how
 near
 Low Folly to lofty approaches,
 Down to society's very dregs,
 The Belles of Wapping wore "Kilmanseggs,"
 And St. Giles's Beaux sported Golden Legs
 In their pinchbeck pins and brooches !

Her First Step.

Supposing the Trunk and Limbs of Man
 Shared, on the allegorical plan,
 By the Passions that mark Humanity,
 Whichever might claim the head, or heart,
 The stomach, or any other part,
 The Legs would be seized by Vanity.

There's Bardus, a six-foot column of fop,
 A lighthouse without any light atop,
 Whose height would attract beholders,
 If he had not lost some inches clear
 By looking down at his kerseymere,
 Ogling the limbs he holds so dear,
 Till he got a stoop in his shoulders.

Talk of Art, of Science, or Books,
 And down go the everlasting looks,
 To his crural beauties so wedded !
 Try him, whenever you will, you find

His mind in his legs, and his legs in his mind,
 All prongs and folly—in short a kind
 Of fork—that is Fiddle-headed.

What wonder, then, if Miss Kilmansegg,
 With a splendid, brilliant, beautiful leg,
 Fit for the Court of Scander-Beg,
 Disdain'd to hide it like Joan or Meg,
 In petticoats stuff'd or quilted?
 Not she! 'twas her convalescent whim
 To dazzle the world with her precious limb,—
 Nay, to go a little high-kilted.

So cards were sent for that sort of mob
 Where Tartars and Africans hob-and-nob,
 And the Cherokee talks of his cab and cob
 To Polish or Lapland lovers—
 Cards like that hieroglyphical call
 To a geographical Fancy Ball
 On the recent Post-Office covers.

For if Lion-hunters—and great ones too—
 Would mob a savage from Latakoo,
 Or squeeze for a glimpse of Prince Le Boo,
 That unfortunate Sandwich scion—
 Hundreds of first-rate people, no doubt,
 Would gladly, madly, rush to a rout,
 That promised a Golden Lion!

Met Fancy Ball.

Of all the spirits of evil fame
 That hurt the soul or injure the frame,
 And poison what's honest and hearty,
 There's none more needs a Mathew to preach
 A cooling, antiphlogistic speech,
 To praise and enforce
 A temperate course,
 Than the Evil Spirit of Party.

Go to the House of Commons, or Lords,
 And they seem to be busy with simple words
 In their popular sense or pedantie—
 But, alas! with their cheers, and sneers, and jeers,
 They're really busy, whatever appears,
 Putting peas in each other's ears,
 To drive their enemies frantic!

Thus Tories love to worry the Whigs,
 Who treat them in turn like Schwalbaeh pigs,
 Giving them lashes, thrashes, and digs,
 With their writhing and pain delighted—
 But after all that's said, and more,
 The malice and spite of Party are poor
 To the malice and spite of party next door,
 To a party not invited.

On with the eap and out with the light,
 Weariness bids the world good night,
 At least for the usual season;
 But hark! a clatter of horses' heels;
 And Sleep and Silence are broken on wheels,
 Like Wilful Murder and Treason!

Another crash—and the carriage goes—
 Again poor Weariness seeks the repose
 That Nature demands imperious;
 But Echo takes up the burden now,
 With a rattling chorus of row-de-dow-dow,
 Till Silenee herself seems making a row,
 Like a Quaker gone delirious!

'Tis night—a winter night—and the stars
 Are shining like winkin'—Venus and Mars
 Are rolling along in their golden ears
 Through the sky's serene expansion—
 But vainly the stars dispense their rays,
 Venus and Mars are lost in the blaze
 Of the Kilmanseggs' luminous mansion!

Up jumps Fear in a terrible fright!
 His bedchamber windows look so bright,
 With light all the Square is gluttet!
 Up he jumps, like a sole from the pan,
 And a tremor sickens his inward man,
 For he feels as only a gentleman can,
 Who thinks he's being "guttet."

Again Fear settles, all snug and warm;
 But only to dream of a dreadful storm
 From Autumn's sulphurous locker;
 But the only electric body that falls,
 Wears a negative coat and positive smalls,
 And draws the peal that so appalls
 From the Kilmanseggs' brazen knoecker!

'Tis Curiosity's Benefit night—
 And perchance 'tis the English Second-Sight,
 But whatever it be, so be it—
 As the friends and guests of Miss Kilmansegg
 Crowd in to look at her Golden Leg,
 As many more
 Mob round the door,
 To see them going to see it!

In they go—in jackets and cloaks,
 Plumes, and bonnets, turbans, and toques,
 As if to a Congress of Nations:
 Greeks and Malays, with daggers and dirks,
 Spaniards, Jews, Chinese, and Turks—
 Some like original foreign works,
 But mostly like bad translations.

In they go, and to work like a pack,
 Juan, Moses, and Shacabac,
 Tom, and Jerry, and Springheel'd Jack,
 For some of low Fancy are lovers—
 Skirting, zigzagging, easting about,
 Here and there, and in and out,

With a crush, and a rush, for a full-bodied rout
 In one of the stiffest of covers.

In they went, and hunted about,
 Open mouth'd like chub and trout,
 And some with the upper lip thrust out,
 Like that fish for routing, a barbel—
 While Sir Jacob stood to welcome the crowd,
 And rubb'd his hands, and smiled aloud,
 And bow'd, and bow'd, and bow'd, and bow'd,
 Like a man who is sawing marble.

For Princes were there, and Noble Peers;
 Dukes descended from Norman spears;
 Earls that dated from early years;
 And Lords in vast variety—
 Besides the Gentry both new and old—
 For people who stand on legs of gold,
 Are sure to stand well with society.

“But where—where—where?” with one accord
 Cried Moses and Mufti, Jack and my Lord,
 Wang-Fong and Il Bondocani—
 When slow, and heavy, and dead as a dump,
 They heard a foot begin to stump,
 Thump! lump!
 Lump! thump!
 Like the Spectre in “Don Giovanni!”

And lo! the Heiress, Miss Kilmansegg,
 With her splendid, brilliant, beautiful leg,
 In the garb of a Goddess olden—
 Like chaste Diana going to hunt,
 With a golden spear—which of course was blunt,
 And a tunic loop'd up to a gem in front,
 To show the Leg that was Golden!

Gold! still gold! her Crescent behold,
 That should be silver, but would be gold;

And her robe's auriferous spangles !
 Her golden stomacher—how she would melt !
 Her golden quiver, and golden belt,
 Where a golden bugle dangles !

And her jewell'd Garter ? Oh, Sin ! Oh, Shame,
 Let Pride and Vanity bear the blame,
 That brings such blots on female fame !
 But to be a true recorder,
 Besides its thin transparent stuff,
 The tunic was loop'd quite high enough
 To give a glimpse of the Order !

But what have sin or shame to do
 With a Golden Leg—and a stout one too ?
 Away with all Prudery's panics !
 That the precious metal, by thick and thin,
 Will cover square acres of land or sin,
 Is a fact made plain
 Again and again,
 In Morals as well as Mechanics.

A few, indeed, of her proper sex,
 Who seem'd to feel her foot on their necks,
 And fear'd their charms would meet with
 checks
 From so rare and splendid a blazon—
 A few cried “ fie ! ”—and “ forward ”—and
 “ bold ! ”
 And said of the Leg it might be gold,
 But to them it look'd like brazen !

'Twas hard they hinted for flesh and blood,
 Virtue, and Beauty, and all that's good,
 To strike to mere dross their topgallants—
 But what were Beauty, or Virtue, or Worth,
 Gentle manners, or gentle birth,
 Nay, what the most talented head on earth
 To a leg worth fifty Talents !

But the men sang quite another hymn
 Of glory and praise to the precious Limb—
 Age, sordid Age, admired the whim,
 And its indecorum pardon'd—
 While half of the young—ay, more than half—
 Bow'd down and worshipp'd the Golden Calf,
 Like the Jews when their hearts were harden'd.

A Golden Leg! what fancies it fired!
 What Golden wishes and hopes inspired!
 To give but a mere abridgment—
 What a leg to leg-bail Embarrassment's serf!
 What a leg for a Leg to take on the turf!
 What a leg for a marching regiment!

A Golden Leg!—whatever Love sings,
 'Twas worth a bushel of "Plain Gold Rings"
 With which the Romantic wheedles.
 'Twas worth all the legs in stockings and socks—
 'Twas a leg that might be put in the Stocks,
 N. B —Not the parish beadle's!

And Lady K. nid-nodded her head,
 Lapp'd in a turban fancy-bred,
 Just like a love-apple, huge and red,
 Some Mussul-womanish mystery;
 But whatever she meant
 To represent,
 She talk'd like the Muse of History.

She told how the filial leg was lost;
 And then how much the gold one cost;
 With its weight to a Trojan fraction:
 And how it took off, and how it put on;
 And call'd on Devil, Duke, and Don,
 Mahomet, Moses, and Prester John,
 To notice its beautiful action.

And then of the Leg she went in quest;
 And led it where the light was best;

And made it lay itself up to rest
 In postures for painters' studies:
 It cost more tricks and trouble by half,
 Than it takes to exhibit a six-legg'd Calf
 To a boothful of country Cuddies.

Nor yet did the Heiress herself omit
 The arts that help to make a hit,
 And preserve a prominent station.
 She talk'd and laugh'd far more than her
 share;
 And took a part in "Rich and Rare
 Were the gems she wore"—and the gems were
 there,
 Like a Song with an illustration.

She even stood up with a Count of France
 To dance—alas! the measures we dance
 When Vanity plays the Piper!
 Vanity, Vanity, apt to betray,
 And lead all sorts of legs astray,
 Wood, or metal, or human elay,—
 Since Satan first play'd the Viper!

But first she doff'd her hunting gear,
 And favour'd Tom Tug with her golden spear,
 To row with down the river—
 A Bonze had her golden bow to hold;
 A Hermit her belt and bugle of gold;
 And an Abbot her golden quiver.

And then a space was clear'd on the floor,
 And she walk'd the Minuet de la Cour,
 With all the pomp of a Pompadour,
 But although she began *andante*,
 Conceive the faces of all the Rout,
 When she finish'd off with a whirligig bout,
 And the Precious Leg stuck stiffly out
 Like the leg of a *Figuranté*!

So the courtly dance was goldenly done,
 And golden opinions, of course, it won
 From all different sorts of people—
 Chiming, ding-dong, with flattering phrase,
 In one vociferous peal of praise,
 Like the peal that rings on Royal days
 From Loyalty's parish-steeple.

And yet, had the leg been one of those
 That dance for bread in flesh-colour'd hose,
 With Rosina's pastoral bevy,
 The jeers it had met,—the shouts! the scoff!
 The cutting advice to "take itself off,"
 For sounding but half so heavy.

Had it been a leg like those, perchance,
 That teach little girls and boys to dance,
 To set, poussette, recede, and advance,
 With the steps and figures most proper,—
 Had it hopp'd for a weekly or quarterly sum,
 How little of praise or grist would have come
 To a mill with such a hopper!

But the Leg was none of those limbs forlorn—
 Bartering capers and hops for corn—
 That meet with public hisses and scorn,
 Or the morning journal denounces—
 Had it pleased to caper from morn till dusk,
 There was all the music of "Money Musk"
 In its ponderous bangs and bounces.

But hark!—as slow as the strokes of a pump,
 Lump, thump!
 Thump, lump!
 As the Giant of Castle Otranto might stump
 To a lower room from an upper—
 Down she goes with a noisy dint,
 For taking the crimson turban's hint,
 A noble Lord at the Head of the Mint
 Is leading the Leg to supper!

But the supper, alas! must rest untold,
 With its blaze of light and its glitter of gold,
 For to paint that scene of glamour,
 It would need the Great Enchanter's charm,
 Who waves over Palace, and Cot, and Farm,
 An arm like the Goldbeater's Golden Arm
 That wields a Golden Hammer.

He—only HE—could fitly state
 THE MASSIVE SERVICE OF GOLDEN PLATE,
 With the proper phrase and expansion—
 The Rare Selection of FOREIGN WINES—
 The ALPS OF ICE and MOUNTAINS OF PINES,
 The punch in OCEANS and sugary shrines,
 The TEMPLE OF TASTE from GUNTER'S DE-
 SIGNS—
 In short, all that WEALTH with A FEAST com-
 bines,
 In a SPLENDID FAMILY MANSION.

Suffice it each mask'd outlandish guest
 Ate and drank of the very best,
 According to critical conners—
 And then they pledged the Hostess and Host,
 But the Golden Leg was the standing toast,
 And as somebody swore,
 Walk'd off with more
 Than its share of the "Hips!" and honours!

"Miss Kilmansegg!—
 Full glasses I beg!—
 Miss Kilmansegg and her precious Leg!"
 And away went the bottle careering!
 Wine in bumpers! and shouts in peals!
 Till the Clown didn't know his head from his heels,
 The Mussulman's eyes danced two-some reels,
 And the Quaker was hoarse with eheering!

Her Dream.

Miss Kilmansegg took off her leg,
 And laid it down like a eribbage-peg,
 For the Rout was done and the riot :
 The square was hush'd ; not a sound was heard ;
 The sky was gray, and no creature stirr'd,
 Except one little precocious bird,
 That chirp'd—and then was quiet.

So still without,—so still within ;—
 It had been a sin
 To drop a pin—
 So intense is silence after a din,
 It seem'd like Death's rehearsal !
 To stir the air no eddy came ;
 And the taper burnt with as still a flame,
 As to flicker had been a burning shame,
 In a calm so universal.

The time for sleep had come at last ;
 And there was the bed, so soft, so vast,
 Quite a field of Bedfordshire clover ;
 Softer, cooler, and calmer, no doubt,
 From the pieee of work just ravell'd out,
 For one of the pleasures of having a rout
 Is the pleasure of having it over.

No sordid pallet, or truekle mean,
 Of straw, and rug, and tatters unelean ;
 But a splendid, gilded, carved machine,
 That was fit for a Royal Chamber.
 On the top was a gorgeous golden wreath ;
 And the damask eurtains hung beneath,
 Like clouds of crimson and amber.

Curtains, held up by two little plump things,
 With golden bodies and golden wings,—
 Mere fins for such solidities—

Two Cupids, in short,
Of the regular sort,
But the housemaid call'd them "Cupidities."

No patchwork quilt, all seams and scars,
But velvet, powder'd with golden stars,
A fit mantle for *Night-Commanders* !
And the pillow, as white as snow undimm'd,
And as cool as the pool that the breeze had
skimm'd,
Was cased in the finest eambrie, and trimm'd
With the costliest lace of Flanders.

And the bed—of the Eider's softest down,
'Twas a place to revel, to smother, to drown
In a bliss inferr'd by the Poet ;
For if Ignorance be indeed a bliss,
What blessed ignorance equals this,
To sleep—and not to know it ?
Oh, bed ! oh, bed ! delicious bed !

That heaven upon earth to the weary head ;
But a place that to name would be ill-bred,
To the head with a wakeful trouble—
'Tis held by such a different lease !
To one, a place of comfort and peace,
All stuff'd with the down of stubble geese,
To another with only the stubble !

To one a perfect Haleyon nest,
All calm, and balm, and quiet, and rest,
And soft as the fur of the cony—
To another, so restless for body and head,
That the bed seems borrow'd from Nettlebed,
And the pillow from Stratford the Stony !

To the happy, a first-class carriage of ease,
To the Land of Nod, or where you please ;
But alas ! for the watchers and weepers,

Who turn, and turn, and turn again,
 But turn, and turn, and turn in vain,
 With an anxious brain,
 And thoughts in a train
 That does not run upon *sleepers* !

Wide awake as the mousing owl,
 Night-Hawk, or other nocturnal fowl,—
 But more profitless vigils keeping—
 Wide awake in the dark they stare,
 Filling with phantoms the vacant air,
 As if that Crook-back'd Tyrant Care
 Had plotted to kill them sleeping.

And oh ! when the blessed diurnal light
 Is quench'd by the providential night,
 To render our slumber more certain,
 Pity, pity the wretches that weep,
 For they must be wretched who cannot sleep
 When God himself draws the curtain !

The careful Betty the pillow beats,
 And airs the blankets, and smooths the sheets,
 And gives the mattress a shaking—
 But vainly Betty performs her part,
 If a ruffled head and a rumbled heart
 As well as the couch want making.

'There's Morbid, all bile, and verjuice, and nerves,
 Where other people would make preserves,
 He turns his fruits into pickles :
 Jealous, envious, and fretful by day,
 At night, to his own sharp fancies a prey,
 He lies like a hedgehog roll'd up the wrong way,
 Tormenting himself with his prickles.

But a child—that bids the world good night,
 In downright earnest and euts it quite—
 A Cherub no Art ean eopy,—

'Tis a perfect picture to see him lie
 As if he had supp'd on dormouse pie,
 (An ancient classical dish by the by)
 With a sauce of syrup of poppy.

Oh, bed! bed! bed! delicious bed!
 That heaven upon earth to the weary head,
 Whether lofty or low its condition!
 But instead of putting our plagues on shelves,
 In our blankets how often we toss ourselves,
 Or are toss'd by such allegorical elves
 As Pride, Hate, Greed, and Ambition!

The independent Miss Kilmansegg
 Took off her independent Leg
 And laid it beneath her pillow,
 And then on the bed her frame she cast,
 The time for repose had come at last,
 But long, long, after the storm is past
 Rolls the turbid, turbulent billow.

No part she had in vulgar cares
 That belong to common household affairs—
 Nocturnal annoyances such as theirs
 Who lie with a shrewd surmising
 That while they are couchant (a bitter cup!)
 Their bread and butter are getting up,
 And the coals—confound them!—are rising.

No fear she had her sleep to postpone,
 Like the crippled Widow who weeps alone,
 And cannot make a doze her own,
 For the dread that mayhap on the morrow,
 The true and Christian reading to balk,
 A broker will take up her bed and walk,
 By way of curing her sorrow.

No cause like these she had to bewail:
 But the breath of applause had blown a gale,
 And winds from that quarter seldom fail

To cause some human commotion ;
 But whenever such breezes coincide
 With the very spring-tide
 Of human pride,
 There's no such swell on the ocean !

Peace, and ease, and slumber lost,
 She turn'd, and roll'd, and tumbled, and toss'd,
 With a tumult that would not settle :
 A common case, indeed, with such
 As have too little, or think too much,
 Of the precious and glittering metal.

Gold !—she saw at her golden foot
 The Peer whose tree had an olden root,
 The Proud, the Great, the Learned to boot,
 The handsome, the gay, and the witty—
 The Man of Science—of Arms—of Art,
 The man who deals but at Pleasure's mart,
 And the man who deals in the City.

Gold, still gold—and true to the mould !
 In the very scheme of her dream it told ;
 For, by magical transmutation,
 From her Leg through her body it seem'd to go,
 Till, gold above, and gold below,
 She was gold, all gold, from her little gold toe
 To her organ of Veneration !

And still she retain'd, through Fancy's art,
 The Golden Bow, and the Golden Dart,
 With which she had play'd a Goddess's part
 In her recent glorification.
 And still, like one of the self-same brood,
 On a Plinth of the self-same metal she stood
 For the whole world's adoration.

And hymns of incense around her roll'd,
 From Golden Harps and Censers of Gold,—

For Fancy in dreams is as uncontroll'd
 As a horse without a bridle :
 What wonder, then, from all cheeks exempt,
 If, inspired by the Golden Leg, she dreamt
 She was turn'd to a Golden Idol ?

Her Courtship.

When leaving Eden's happy land
 The grieving Angel led by the hand
 Our banish'd Father and Mother,
 Forgotten amid their awful doom,
 The tears, the fears, and the future's gloom,
 On each brow was a wreath of Paradise bloom,
 That our Parents had twined for each other.

It was only while sitting like figures of stone,
 For the grieving Angel had skyward flown,
 As they sat, those Two, in the world alone,
 With disconsolate hearts nigh cloven,
 That scenting the gust of happier hours,
 They look'd around for the precious flow'rs,
 And lo !—a last relic of Eden's dear bow'rs—
 The chaplet that Love had woven !

And still, when a pair of Lovers meet,
 There's a sweetness in air, unearthly sweet,
 That savour still of that happy retreat
 Where Eve by Adam was courted :
 Whilst the joyous Thrush, and the gentle Dove,
 Woo'd their mates in the boughs above,
 And the Serpent, as yet, only sported.

Who hath not felt that breath in the air,
 A perfume and freshness strange and rare,
 A warmth in the light, and a bliss everywhere,
 When young hearts yearn together ?
 All sweets below, and all sunny above,
 Oh ! there's nothing in life like making love,
 Save making hay in fine weather !

Who hath not found amongst his flow'rs
 A blossom too bright for this world of ours,
 Like a rose among snows of Sweden?
 But to turn again to Miss Kilmansegg,
 Where must Love have gone to beg,
 If such a thing as a Golden Leg
 Had put its foot in Eden!

And yet—to tell the rigid truth—
 Her favour was sought by Age and Youth—
 For the prey will find a prowler!
 She was follow'd, flatter'd, courted, address'd,
 Woo'd, and coo'd, and wheedled, and press'd,
 By suitors from North, South, East, and West,
 Like that Heiress, in song, Tibbie Fowler!

But, alas! alas! for the Woman's fate,
 Who has from a mob to choose a mate!
 'Tis a strange and painful mystery!
 But the more the eggs, the worse the hatch;
 The more the fish, the worse the catch;
 The more the sparks, the worse the match;
 Is a fact in Wouau's history.

Give her between a brace to pick,
 And, mayhap, with luck to help the trick,
 She will take the Faustus, and leave the Old
 Nick—

But her future bliss to baffle,
 Amongst a score let her have a voice,
 And she'll have as little cause to rejoice,
 As if she had won the "Man of her choice"
 In a matrimonial raffle!

Thus, even thus, with the Heiress and Hope,
 Fulfilling the adage of too much rope,
 With so ample a competition,
 She chose the least worthy of all the group,
 Just as the Vulture makes a stoop,

And singles out from the herd or troop
The beast of the worst condition.

A Foreign Count, who came incog.,
Not under a cloud, but under a fog,
In a Calais packet's fore-cabin,
To charm some lady British-born,
With his eyes as black as the fruit of the thorn,
And his hooky nose, and his beard half-shorn,
Like a half-converted Rabbin.

And because the Sex confess a charm
In the man who has slash'd a head or arm,
Or has been a throat's undoing,
He was dress'd like one of the glorious trade,
At least when glory is off parade,
With a stock, and a frock, well trimm'd with
braid,
And frogs—that went a-wooing.

Moreover, as counts are apt to do,
On the left-hand side of his dark surtout,
At one of those holes that buttons go through,
(To be a precise recorder,
A ribbon he wore, or rather a scrap,
About an inch of ribbon mayhap,
That one of his rivals, a whimsical chap,
Described as his "Retail Order.")

And then—and much it help'd his chance—
He could sing, and play first fiddle, and dance,
Perform charades, and Proverbs of France—
Act the tender, and do the cruel;
For amongst his other killing parts,
He had broken a brace of female hearts,
And murder'd three men in duel!

Savage at heart, and false of tongue,
Subtle with age, and smooth to the young,

Like a snake in his coiling and curling—
 Such was the Count—to give him a niche—
 Who came to court that Heiress rich,
 And knelt at her foot—one needn't say which—
 Besieging her Castle of *Sterling*.

With pray'rs and vows he open'd his trench,
 And plied her with English, Spanish, and French
 In phrases the most sentimental:
 And quoted poems in High and Low Dutch,
 With now and then an Italian touch,
 Till she yielded, without resisting much,
 To homage so continental.

And then the sordid bargain to close,
 With a miniature sketch of his hooky nose,
 And his dear dark eyes, as black as sloes,
 And his beard and whiskers as black as those,
 The lady's consent he requited—
 And instead of the lock that lovers beg,
 The Count received from Miss Kilmansegg
 A model, in small, of her Precious Leg—
 And so the couple were plighted!

But, oh! the love that gold must crown!
 Better—better, the love of the clown,
 Who admires his lass in her Sunday gown,
 As if all the fairies had dress'd her!
 Whose brain to no crooked thought gives birth,
 Except that he never will part on earth
 With his true love's crooked tester!

Alas! for the love that's link'd with gold!
 Better—better a thousand times told—
 More honest, happy, and laudable,
 The downright loving of pretty Cis,
 Who wipes her lips, though there's nothing amiss,
 And takes a kiss, and gives a kiss,
 In which her heart is audible!

Pretty Cis, so smiling and bright,
 Who loves as she labours, with all her might,
 And without any sordid leaven !
 Who blushes as red as haws and hips,
 Down to her very finger-tips,
 For Roger's blue ribbons—to her, like strips
 Cut out of the azure of Heaven !

Her Marriage.

'Twas morn—a most auspicious one !
 From the Golden East, the Golden Sun
 Came forth his glorious race to run,
 Through clouds of most splendid tinges ;
 Clouds that lately slept in shade,
 But now seem'd made
 Of gold brocade,
 With magnificent golden fringes.

Gold above, and gold below,
 The earth reflected the golden glow,
 From river, and hill, and valley ;
 Gilt by the golden light of morn,
 The Thames—it look'd like the Golden Horn,
 And the Barge, that carried coal or eorn,
 Like Cleopatra's Galley !

Bright as elusters of Golden-rod,
 Suburban poplars began to nod,
 With extempore splendour furnish'd ;
 While London was bright with glittering elocks,
 Golden dragons, and Golden cocks,
 And above them all,
 The dome of St. Paul,
 With its golden Cross and its Golden Ball,
 Shone out as if newly burnish'd !

And lo ! for Golden Hours and Joys,
 Troops of glittering Golden Boys

Danced along with a joeund noise,
 And their gilded emblems carried !
 In short, 'twas the year's most Golden Day,
 By mortals eall'd the First of May,
 When Miss Kilmansegg,
 Of the Golden Leg,
 With a Golden Ring was married !

And thousands of children, women, and men,
 Counted the elock from eight till ten,
 From St. James's sonorous steeple ;
 For next to that interesting job,
 The hanging of Jack, or Bill, or Bob,
 There's nothing so draws a London mob
 As the noosing of very rich people.

And a treat it was for a mob to behold
 The Bridal Carriage that blazed with Gold !
 And the Footmen tall, and the Coachman bold,
 In liveries so resplendent—
 Coats you wonder'd to see in place,
 They seem'd so rich with golden lace,
 That they might have been independent.

Coats that made those menials proud
 Gaze with scorn on the dingy crowd,
 From their gilded elevations ;
 Not to forget that sancy lad
 (Ostentation's favourite cad),
 The page, who look'd, so splendidly clad,
 Like a Page of the "Wealth of Nations."

But the Coachman carried off the state,
 With what was a Laneashire body of late
 Turn'd into a Dresden Figure ;
 With a bridal Nosegay of early bloom,
 About the size of a birchen broom,
 And so huge a White Favour, had Gog been
 Groom,
 He need not have worn a bigger.

And then to see the Groom! the Count!
 With Foreign Orders to such an amount,
 And whiskers so wild—nay, bestial;
 He seem'd to have borrow'd the shaggy hair
 As well as the Stars of the Polar Bear,
 To make him look celestial!

And then—Great Jove!—the struggle, the crush,
 The screams, the heaving, the awful rush,
 The swearing, the tearing, and fighting,—
 The hats and bonnets smash'd like an egg—
 To catch a glimpse of the Golden Leg,
 Which, between the steps and Miss Kilmansegg,
 Was fully display'd in alighting!

From the Golden Ankle up to the Knee
 There it was for the mob to see!
 A shocking act had it chanced to be
 A crooked leg or a skinny:
 But although a magnificent veil she wore,
 Such as never was seen before,
 In case of blushes, she blush'd no more
 Than George the First on a guinea!

Another step, and lo! she was launch'd!
 All in white, as Brides are *blanch'd*,
 With a wreath of most wonderful splendour—
 Diamonds, and pearls, so rich in device,
 That, according to calculation nice,
 Her head was worth as royal a price
 As the head of the Young Pretender.

Bravely she shone—and shone the more
 As she sail'd through the crowd of squalid and
 poor
 Thief, beggar, and tatterdemalion—
 Led by the Count, with his sloe-black eyes
 Bright with triumph, and some surprise,
 Like Anson on making sure of his prize
 The famous Mexican Galleon!

Anon came Lady K., with her face
 Quite made up to act with grace,
 But she cut the performance shorter ;
 For instead of pacing stately and stiff,
 At the stare of the vulgar she took a miff,
 And ran, full speed, into Church, as if
 To get married before her daughter.

But Sir Jacob walk'd more slowly, and bow'd
 Right and left to the gaping crowd,
 Wherever a glance was seizable ;
 For Sir Jacob thought he bow'd like a Guelph,
 And therefore bow'd to imp and elf,
 And would gladly have made a bow to him-
 self,
 Had such a bow been feasible.

And last—and not the least of the sight,
 Six “ Handsome Fortunes,” all in white,
 Came to help in the marriage rite,—
 And rehearse their own hymeneals ;
 And then the bright procession to close
 They were followed by just as many Beaux
 Quite fine enough for Ideals.

Glittering men, and splendid dames,
 Thus they enter'd the porch of St. James',
 Pursued by a thunder of laughter ;
 For the Beadle was forced to intervene,
 For Jim the Crow, and his Mayday Queen,
 With her gilded ladle, and Jack i' the Green,
 Would fain have follow'd after !

Beadle-like, he hush'd the shout ;
 But the temple was full “ inside and out,”
 And a buzz kept buzzing all round about
 Like bees when the day is sunny—
 A buzz universal that interfered
 With the rite that ought to have been revered,

As if the couple already were smear'd
With Wedlock's treacle and honey!

Yet Wedlock's a very awful thing!
'Tis something like that feat in the ring
Which requires good nerve to do it—
When one of a "Grand Equestrian Troop"
Makes a jump at a gilded hoop,
Not certain at all
Of what may befall
After his getting through it!

But the Count he felt the nervous work
No more than any polygamous Turk,
Or bold piratical skipper,
Who, during his buccaneering search,
Would as soon engage "a hand" in church
As a hand on board his clipper!

And how did the Bride perform her part?
Like any Bride who is cold at heart,
Mere snow with the ice's glitter;
What but a life of winter for her!
Bright but chilly, alive without stir,
So splendidly comfortless,—just like a Fir
When the frost is severe and bitter.

Such were the future man and wife!
Whose bale or bliss to the end of life
A few short words were to settle—
Wilt thou have this woman?

I will—and then,

Wilt thou have this man?

I will, and Amen—

And those Two were one Flesh, in the Angels' [ken,
Except one Leg—that was metal.

Then the names were sign'd—and kiss'd the kiss:
And the Bride, who came from her coach a Miss,

As a Countess walk'd to her carriage—
 Whilst Hymen preen'd his plumes like a dove,
 And Cupid flutter'd his wings above,
 In the shape of a fly—as little a Love
 As ever look'd in at a marriage!

Another crash—and away they dash'd,
 And the gilded carriage and footmen flash'd
 From the eyes of the gaping people—
 Who turn'd to gaze at the toe-and-heel
 Of the Golden Boys beginning a reel,
 To the merry sound of a wedding-peal
 From St. James's musical steeple.

'Those wedding-bells! those wedding-bells!
 How sweetly they sound in pastoral dells
 From a tow'r in an ivy-green jacket!
 But town-made joys how dearly they cost;
 And after all are tumbled and tost,
 Like a peal from a London steeple, and lost
 In town-made riot and racket.

'The wedding-peal, how sweetly it peals
 With grass or heather beneath our heels,—
 For bells are Music's laughter!—
 But a London peal, well mingled, be sure,
 With vulgar noises and voices impure,
 What a harsh and discordant overture
 To the Harmony meant to come after!

But hence with Discord—perchance, too soon
 To cloud the face of the honeymoon
 With a dismal occultation!—
 Whatever Fate's concerted trick,
 The Countess and Count, at the present nick,
 Have a chicken and not a crow to pick
 At a sumptuous Cold Collation.

A Breakfast—no unsubstantial mess,
 But one in the style of Good Queen Bess,

Who,—hearty as hippocampus,—
 Broke her fast with ale and beef,
 Instead of toast and the Chinese leaf,
 And in lieu of anchovy—grampus!

A breakfast of fowl, and fish, and flesh,
 Whatever was sweet, or salt, or fresh;
 With wines the most rare and curious—
 Wines, of the richest flavour and hue;
 With fruits from the worlds both Old and
 New;
 And fruits obtain'd before they were due
 At a discount most usurious.

For wealthy palates there be, that scout
 What is *in* season, for what is *out*,
 And prefer all precocious savour:
 For instance, early green peas, of the sort
 That costs some four or five guineas a quart;
 Where the *Mint* is the principal flavour.

And many a wealthy man was there,
 Such as the wealthy City could spare,
 To put in a portly appearance—
 Men whom their fathers had help'd to gild:
 And men who had had their fortunes to build
 And—much to their credit—had richly fill'd
 Their purses by *pursy-verance*.

Men, by popular rumour at least,
 Not the last to enjoy a feast!
 And truly they were not idle!
 Luckier far than the chestnut tits,
 Which, down at the door, stood champing their
 bits,
 At a different sort of bridle.

For the time was come—and the whisker'd
 Count
 Help'd his Bride in the carriage to mount,

And fain would the Muse deny it,
 But the crowd, including two butchers in blue,
 (The regular killing Whitechapel hue,)
 Of her Precious Calf had as ample a view,
 As if they had come to buy it!

Then away! away! with all the speed
 That golden spurs can give to the steed,—
 Both Yellow Boys and Guineas, indeed,
 Concurr'd to urge the cattle—
 Away they went, with favours white,
 Yellow jackets, and pannels bright,
 And left the mob, like a mob at night,
 Agape at the sound of a rattle.

Away! away! they rattled and roll'd,
 The Count, and his Bride, and her Leg of Gold—
 That faded charm to the charmer!
 Away,—through Old Brentford rang the din,
 Of wheels and heels, on their way to win
 That hill, named after one of her kin,
 The Hill of the Golden Farmer!

Gold, still gold—it flew like dust!
 It tipp'd the post-boy, and paid the trust;
 In each open palm it was freely thrust;
 There was nothing but giving and taking!
 And if gold could ensure the future hour,
 What hopes attended that Bride to her bow'r,
 But alas! even hearts with a four-horse pow'r
 Of opulence end in breaking!

Her Honeymoon.

The moon—the moon, so silver and cold,
 Her fickle temper has oft been told,
 Now shady—now bright and sunny—
 But of all the lunar things that change,
 The one that shows most fickle and strange,

And takes the most eccentric range
Is the moon—so call'd of honey!

To some a full-grown orb reveal'd,
As big and as round as Norval's shield,
And as bright as a burner Bnde-lighted.
To others as dull, and dingy, and damp,
As any oleaginous lamp,
Of the regular old parochial stamp,
In a London fog benighted.

To the loving, a bright and constant sphere
That makes earth's commonest scenes appear
All poetic, romantic, and tender:
Hanging with jewels a cabbage-stump,
And investing a common post, or a pump,
A currant-bush, or a gooseberry clump,
With a halo of dreamlike splendour.

A sphere such as shone from Italian skies,
In Juliet's dear, dark, liquid eyes,
Tipping trees with its argent braveries—
And to couples not favour'd with Fortune's
boons
One of the most delightful of moons,
For it brightens their pewter platters and spoons
Like a silver service of Savory's!

For all is bright, and beauteous, and clear,
And the meanest thing most precious and dear,
When the magic of love is present:
Love, that lends a sweetness and grace
To the humblest spot and the plainest face—
That turns Wilderness Row into Paradise Place,
And Garlick Hill to Mount Pleasant!

Love that sweetens sugarless tea,
And makes contentment and joy agree
With the coarsest boarding and bedding:

Love that no golden ties can attach,
 But nestles under the humblest thatch,
 And will fly away from an Emperor's match
 To dance at a Penny Wedding!

Oh, happy, happy, thrice happy state,
 When such a bright Planet governs the fate
 Of a pair of united lovers!
 'Tis theirs, in spite of the Serpent's hiss,
 To enjoy the pure primeval kiss,
 With as much of the old original bliss
 As mortality ever recovers!

There's strength in double joints, no doubt,
 In double X Ale, and Dublin Stout,
 That the single sorts know nothing about—
 And a fist is strongest when doubled—
 And double aqua-fortis, of course,
 And double soda-water, perforce,
 Are the strongest that ever bubbled!

There's double beauty whenever a Swan
 Swims on a Lake, with her double thereon;
 And ask the gardener, Luke or John,
 Of the beauty of double-blowing—
 A double dahlia delights the eye;
 And it's far the loveliest sight in the sky
 When a double rainbow is glowing!

There's warmth in a pair of double soles;
 As well as a double allowance of coals—
 In a coat that is double-breasted—
 In double windows and double doors;
 And a double U wind is blest by scores
 For its warmth to the tender-chested.

There's twofold sweetness in double pipes;
 And a double barrel and double snipes
 Give the sportsman a duplicate pleasure:

There's double safety in double locks,
 And double letters bring cash for the box;
 And all the world knows that double knocks
 Are gentility's double measure.

There's a double sweetness in double rhymes,
 And a double at Whist, and a double Times
 In profit are certainly double—
 By doubling, the Hare contrives to escape:
 And all seamen delight in a doubled Cape,
 And a double-reef'd topsail in trouble.

There's a double ehuck at a double ehin,
 And of course there's a double pleasure therein,
 If the parties are brought to telling:
 And however our Dennises take offense,
 A double meaning shows double sense;
 And if proverbs tell truth,
 A double tooth
 Is Wisdom's adopted dwelling!

But double wisdom, and pleasure, and sense,
 Beauty, respect, strength, comfort, and thence
 Through whatever the list discovers,
 They are all in the double blessedness summ'd,
 Of what was formerly double-drumm'd,
 The Marriage of two true Lovers!

Now the Kilmansegg Moon—it must be told—
 Though instead of silver it tipp'd with gold—
 Shone rather wan, and distant, and eold,
 And before its days were at thirty,
 Sueh gloomy elouds began to collect,
 With an ominous ring of ill effect,
 As gave but too much cause to expeet
 Sueh weather as seamen eall dirty!

And yet the moon was the "Young May Moon,"
 And the seented hawthorn had blossom'd soon,

And the thrush and the blackbird were singing—
 The snow-white lambs were skipping in play,
 And the bee was humming a tune all day
 To flowers as welcome as flowers in May,
 And the trout in the stream was springing!

But what were the hues of the blooming earth,
 Its scents—its sounds—or the music and mirth
 Or its furr'd or its feather'd creatures,
 To a Pair in the world's last sordid stage,
 Who had never look'd into Nature's page,
 And had strange ideas of a Golden Age,
 Without any Arcadian features?

And what were joys of the pastoral kind
 To a Bride—town-made—with a heart and mind
 With simplicity ever at battle?
 A bride of an ostentatious race,
 Who, thrown in the Golden Farmer's place,
 Would have trimm'd her shepherds with golden
 lace,
 And gilt the horns of her cattle.

She could not please the pigs with her whim,
 And the sheep wouldn't cast their eyes at a
 limb

For which she had been such a martyr:
 The deer in the park, and the colts at grass,
 And the cows unheeded let it pass;
 And the ass on the common was such an ass,
 That he wouldn't have swapp'd
 The thistle he cropp'd
 For her Leg, including the Garter!

She hated lanes, and she hated fields—
 She hated all that the country yields—
 And barely knew turnips from clover;
 She hated walking in any shape,
 And a country stile was an awkward scrape,

Without the bribe of a mob to gape
At the Leg in clambering over!

O blessed nature, "O rus! O rus!"
Who cannot sigh for the country thus,
Absorb'd in a worldly torpor—
Who does not yearn for its meadow-sweet breath,
Untainted by care, and crime, and death,
And to stand sometimes upon grass or heath—
That soul, spite of gold, is a pauper!

But to hail the pearly advent of morn,
And relish the odour fresh from the thorn,
She was far too pamper'd a madam—
Or to joy in the daylight waxing strong,
While, after ages of sorrow and wrong,
The scorn of the proud, the misrule of the strong,
And all the woes that to man belong,
The lark still carols the self-same song
That he did to the uncurst Adam!

The Lark! she had given all Leipsic's flocks
For a Vauxhall tune in a musical box;
And as for the birds in the thicket,
Thrush or ousel in leafy niche,
The linnet or finch, she was far too rich
To care for a Morning Concert to which
She was welcome without any ticket.

Gold, still gold her standard of old,
All pastoral joys were tried by gold,
Or by fancies golden and crural—
Till ere she had pass'd one week unblest,
As her agricultural Uncle's guest,
Her mind was made up and fully imprest
That felicity could not be rural!

And the Count?—to the snow-white lambs at
play,
And all the scents and the sights of May,

And the birds that warbled their passion,
 His ears, and dark eyes, and decided nose,
 Were as deaf and as blind and as dull as those
 That overlook the Bouquet de Rose,
 The Huile Antique,
 And Parfum Unique,
 In a Barber's Temple of Fashion,

To tell, indeed, the true extent
 Of his rural bias so far it went
 As to covet estates in ring fences—
 And for rural lore he had learn'd in town
 That the country was green, turn'd up with brown.
 And garnish'd with trees that a man might cut
 down
 Instead of his own expenses.

And yet had that fault been his only one,
 The Pair might have had few quarrels or none,
 For their tastes thus far were in common;
 But faults he had that a haughty bride
 With a Golden Leg could hardly abide—
 Faults that would even have roused the pride
 Of a far less metalsome woman!

It was early days indeed for a wife,
 In the very spring of her married life,
 To be chill'd by its wintry weather—
 But instead of sitting as Love-Birds do,
 Or Hymen's turtles that bill and coo—
 Enjoying their "moon and honey for two,"
 They were scarcely seen together!

In vain she sat with her Precious Leg
 A little exposed *à la* Kilmansegg,
 And roll'd her eyes in their sockets!
 He left her in spite of her tender regards,
 And those loving murmurs described by bards,
 For the rattling of dice and the shuffling of cards,
 And the poking of balls into pockets!

Moreover, he loved the deepest stake
 And the heaviest bets the players would make ;
 And he drank—the reverse of sparely,—
 And he used strange curses that made her fret ;
 And when he play'd with herself at piquet,
 She found, to her cost,
 For she always lost,
 That the Count did not count quite fairly.

And then came dark mistrust and doubt,
 Gather'd by worming his secrets out,
 And slips in his conversations—
 Fears, which all her peace destroy'd,
 That his title was null—his coffers were void—
 And his French Château was in Spain, or enjoy'd
 The most airy of situations.

But still his heart—if he had such a part—
 She—only she—might possess his heart,
 And hold his affections in fetters—
 Alas! that hope, like a crazy ship,
 Was forced its anchor and cable to slip
 When, seduced by her fears, she took a dip
 In his private papers and letters.

Letters that told of dangerous leagues ;
 And notes that hinted as many intrigues
 As the Count's in the " Barber of Seville "—
 In short such mysteries came to light,
 That the Countess-Bride, on the thirtieth night,
 Woke and started up in affright,
 And kick'd and scream'd with all her might,
 And finally fainted away outright,
 For she dreamt she had married the Devil !

Der Mitschep.

Who hath not met with home-made bread,
 A heavy compound of putty and lead—

And home-made wines that rack the head,
 And home-made liqueurs and waters?
 Home-made pop that will not foam,
 And home-made dishes that drive one from
 home,
 Not to name each mess,
 For the face or dress,
 Home-made by the homely daughters?

Home-made physic, that sickens the sick;
 Thick for thin and thin for thick;—
 In short each homogeneous trick
 For poisoning domesticity?
 And since our Parents, call'd the First,
 A little family squabble nurst,
 Of all our evils the worst of the worst
 Is home-made infelicity.

There's a Golden Bird that elaps its wings,
 And dances for joy on its perch, and sings
 With a Persian exultation:
 For the Sun is shining into the room,
 And brightens up the carpet-bloom,
 As if it were new, bran new from the loom,
 Or the lone Nun's fabrication.

And thence the glorious radiance flames
 On pictures in massy gilded frames—
 Enshrining, however, no painted Dames,
 But portraits of colts and fillies—
 Pictures hanging on walls which shine,
 In spite of the bard's familiar line,
 With clusters of "gilded lilies."

And still the flooding sunlight shares
 Its lustre with gilded sofas and chairs,
 That shine as if freshly burnish'd—
 And gilded tables, with glittering stocks
 Of gilded china, and golden clocks,

Toy, and trinket, and musieal box,
That Peaee and Paris have furnish'd.

And lo! with the brightest gleam of all
The glowing sunbeam is seen to fall
On an object as rare as splendid—
The golden foot of the Golden Leg
Of the Countess—once Miss Kilmansegg—
But there all sunshine is ended.

Her cheek is pale, and her eye is dim,
And downward cast, yet not at the limb,
Once the centre of all speculation;
But downward drooping in eomfort's dearth,
As gloomy thoughts are drawn to the earth—
Whence human sorrows derive their birth—
By a moral gravitation.

Her golden hair is out of its braids,
And her sighs betray the gloomy shades
That her evil planet revolves in—
And tears are falling that catch a gleam
So bright as they drop in the sunny beam,
That tears of *aqua regia* they seem,
The water that gold dissolves in!

Yet, not in filial grief were shed
Those tears for a mother's insanity;
Nor yet because her father was dead,
For the bowing Sir Jacob had bow'd his head,
To Death—with his usual urbanity;
The waters that down her visage rill'd
Were drops of unrectified spirit distill'd
From the limbec of Pride and Vanity.

Tears that fell alone and uncheekt,
Without relief, and without respect,
Like the fabled pearls that the pigs neglect,
When pigs have that opportunity—

And of all the griefs that mortals share,
The one that seems the hardest to bear
Is the grief without community.

How bless'd the heart that has a friend
A sympathizing ear to lend
To troubles too great to smother !
For as ale and porter, when flat, are restored
Till a sparkling bubbling head they afford,
So sorrow is cheer'd by being pour'd
From one vessel into another.

But friend or gossip she had not one
To hear the vile deeds that the Count had done,
How night after night he rambled ;
And how she had learn'd by sad degrees
That he drank, and smoked, and worse than these,
That he "swindled, intrigued, and gambled."

How he kiss'd the maids, and sparr'd with John ;
And came to bed with his garments on ;
With other offences as heinous—
And brought *strange* gentlemen home to dine,
That he said were in the Fancy Line,
And they fancied spirits instead of wine,
And call'd her lap-dog "Wenus!"

Of "making a book" how he made a stir,
But never had written a line to her,
Once his idol and *Cara Sposa* :
And how he had storm'd, and treated her ill,
Because she refused to go down to a mill,
She didn't know where, but remember'd still
That the Miller's name was Mendoza.

How often he waked her up at night,
And oftener still by the morning light,
Reeling home from his haunts unlawful ;
Singing songs that shouldn't be sung,

Except by beggars and thieves unhung—
Or volleying oaths, that a foreign tongue
Made still more horrid and awful !

How oft, instead of otto of rose,
With vulgar smells he offended her nose,
From gin, tobacco, and onion !
And then how wildly he used to stare !
And shake his fist at nothing, and swear,—
And pluck by the handful his shaggy hair,
Till he look'd like a study of Giant Despair
For a new Edition of Bunyan !

For dice will run the contrary way,
As well is known to all who play,
And cards will conspire as in treason :
And what with keeping a hunting box,
Following fox—
Friends in flocks,
Burgundies, Hocks,
From London Docks ;
Stultz's frocks,
Manton and Nock's
Barrels and locks,
Shooting blue rocks,
Trainers and jocks,
Buskins and socks,
Pugilistical knocks,
And fighting-cocks,
If he found himself short in funds and stocks,
These rhymes will furnish the reason !

His friends, indeed, were falling away—
Friends who insist on play or pay—
And he fear'd at no very distant day
To be cut by Lord and by cadger,
As one who was gone or going to smash,
For his checks no longer drew the cash,
Because, as his comrades explain'd in flash,
“ He had overdrawn his badger.”

Gold, gold—alas! for the gold
 Spent where souls are bought and sold,
 In Vice's Walpurgis revel!
 Alas! for muffles, and bulldogs, and guns,
 The leg that walks, and the leg that runs,
 All real evils, though Fancy ones,
 When they lead to debt, dishonour, and duns,
 Nay, to death, and perchance the devil!

Alas! for the last of a Golden race!
 Had she cried her wrongs in the market-place,
 She had warrant for all her clamour—
 For the worst of rogues, and brutes, and rakes,
 Was breaking her heart by constant aches,
 With as little remorse as the Pauper who breaks
 A flint with a parish hammer!

Her Last Will.

Now the Precious Leg while cash was flush,
 Or the Count's acceptance worth a rush,
 Had never excited dissension;
 But no sooner the stocks began to fall,
 Than, without any ossification at all,
 The limb became what people call
 A perfect bone of contention.

For alter'd days brought alter'd ways,
 And instead of the complimentary phrase,
 So current before her bridal—
 The Countess heard, in language low,
 That her Precious Leg was precious slow,
 A good 'un to look at but bad to go,
 And kept quite a sum lying idle.

That instead of playing musical airs,
 Like Colin's foot in going up-stairs—
 As the wife in the Scottish ballad declares—
 It made an infernal stumping.

Whereas a member of cork, or wood,
 Would be lighter and cheaper and quite as good,
 Without the unbearable thumping.

P'rhaps she thought it a decent thing
 To show her calf to cobbler and king,
 But nothing could be absurder—
 While none but the crazy would advertise
 Their gold before their servants' eyes,
 Who of course some night would make it a prize.
 By a Shocking and Barbarous Murder.

But spite of hint, and threat, and scoff,
 The Leg kept its situation :
 For legs are not to be taken off
 By a verbal amputation.
 And mortals when they take a whim,
 The greater the folly the stiffer the limb
 That stands upon it or by it—
 So the Countess, then Miss Kilmansegg,
 At her marriage refused to stir a peg,
 Till the Lawyers had fasten'd on her Leg,
 As fast as the Law could tie it.

Firmly then—and more firmly yet—
 With scorn for scorn, and with threat for threat,
 The Proud One confronted the Cruel :
 And loud and bitter the quarrel arose,
 Fierce and merciless—one of those,
 With spoken daggers, and looks like blows,
 In all but the bloodshed a duel !

Rash, and wild, and wretched, and wrong,
 Were the words that came from Weak and
 Strong,
 Till madden'd for desperate matters,
 Fierce as tigress escaped from her den,
 She flew to her desk—'twas open'd—and then,
 In the time it takes to try a pen,

Or the clerk to utter his slow Amen,
Her Will was in fifty tatters !

But the Count, instead of curses wild,
Only nodded his head and smiled,
As if at the spleen of an angry child ;
But the calm was deceitful and sinister !
A lull like the lull of the treacherous sea—
For Hate in that moment had sworn to be
The Golden Leg's sole Legatee,
And that very night to administer !

Her Death.

'Tis a stern and startling thing to think
How often mortality stands on the brink
Of its grave without any misgiving :
And yet in this slippery world of strife,
In the stir of human bustle so rife,
There are daily sounds to tell us that Life
Is dying, and Death is living !

Ay, Beauty the Girl, and Love the Boy,
Bright as they are with hope and joy,
How their souls would sadden instanter,
To remember that one of those wedding bells,
Which ring so merrily through the dells,
Is the same that knells
Our last farewells,
Only broken into a canter !

But breath and blood set doom at nought—
How little the wretched Countess thought,
When at night she unloosed her sandal,
That the Fates had woven her burial-cloth,
And that Death in the shape of a Death's Head
Was fluttering round her candle ! [Moth,

As she look'd at her clock of or-molu,
For the hours she had gone so wearily through

At the end of a day of trial—
 How little she saw in her pride of prime
 The dart of Death in the Hand of Time—
 That hand which moved on the dial !

As she went with her taper up the stair,
 How little her swollen eye was aware
 That the Shadow which follow'd was double !
 Or when she closed her chamber door,
 It was shutting out, and for evermore,
 The world—and its worldly trouble.

Little she dreamt, as she laid aside
 Her jewels—after one glance of pride—
 They were solemn bequests to Vanity—
 Or when her robes she began to doff,
 That she stood so near to the putting off
 Of the flesh that clothes humanity.

And when she quench'd the taper's light,
 How little she thought as the smoke took flight,
 That her day was done—and merged in a
 night
 Of dreams and duration uncertain—
 Or, along with her own,
 That a Hand of Bone
 Was closing mortality's curtain !

But life is sweet, and mortality blind,
 And youth is hopeful, and Fate is kind
 In concealing the day of sorrow ;
 And enough is the present tense of toil—
 For this world is, to all, a stiffish soil—
 And the mind flies back with a glad recoil
 From the debts not due till to-morrow.

Wherefore else does the spirit fly
 And bid its daily cares good-bye,
 Along with its daily clothing.

Just as the felon condemn'd to die—
 With a very natural loathing—
 Leaving the Sheriff to dream of ropes,
 From his gloomy cell in a vision elopes,
 To caper on sunny greens and slopes,
 Instead of the dance upon nothing.

Thus, even thus, the Countess slept,
 While Death still nearer and nearer crept,
 Like the Thane who smote the sleeping—
 But her mind was busy with early joys,
 Her golden treasures and golden toys,
 That flash'd a bright
 And golden light
 Under lids still red with weeping.

The golden doll that she used to hug !
 Her coral of gold, and the golden mug !
 Her godfather's golden presents !
 The golden service she had at her meals,
 The golden watch, and chain, and seals,
 Her golden scissors, and thread, and reels,
 And her golden fishes and pheasants !

The golden guineas in silken purse—
 And the Golden Legends she heard from her
 nurse,
 Of the Mayor in his gilded carriage—
 And London streets that were paved with gold—
 And the Golden Eggs that were laid of old—
 With each golden thing
 To the golden ring
 At her own auriferous Marriage !

And still the golden light of the sun
 Through her golden dream appear'd to run,
 Though the night that roar'd without was one
 To terrify seamen or gypsies—
 While the moon, as if in malicious mirth

Kept peeping down at the ruffled earth,
 As though she enjoy'd the tempest's birth,
 In revenge of her old eclipses.

But vainly, vainly, the thunder fell,
 For the soul of the Sleeper was under a spell
 That time had lately embitter'd—
 The Count, as once at her foot he knelt—
 That foot which now he wanted to melt!
 But—hush!—'twas a stir at her pillow she
 felt—
 And some object before her glitter'd.

'Twas the Golden Leg!—she knew its gleam!
 And up she started, and tried to scream,—
 But ev'n in the moment she started—
 Down came the limb with a frightful smash,
 And, lost in the universal flash
 That her eyeballs made at so mortal a crash,
 The Spark, call'd Vital, departed!

* * * *

Gold, still gold! hard, yellow, and cold,
 For gold she had lived, and she died for gold—
 By a golden weapon—not oaken;
 In the morning they found her all alone—
 Stiff, and bloody, and cold as stone—
 But her Leg, the Golden Leg, was gone,
 And the “Golden Bowl was broken!”

Gold—still gold! it haunted her yet—
 At the Golden Lion the Inquest met—
 Its foreman, a carver and gilder—
 And the Jury debated from twelve till three
 What the Verdict ought to be,
 And they brought it in as Felo-de-Se,
 “Because her own Leg had kill'd her!”

Mer Moral.

Gold! Gold! Gold! Gold!
 Bright and yellow, hard and cold,
 Molten, graven, hammer'd and roll'd;
 Heavy to get, and light to hold;
 Hoarded, barter'd, bought, and sold,
 Stolen, borrow'd, squander'd, doled:
 Spurn'd by the young, but hugg'd by the old
 To the very verge of the churchyard mould;
 Price of many a crime untold;
 Gold! Gold! Gold! Gold!
 Good or bad a thousand-fold!

How widely its agencies vary—
 To save—to ruin—to curse—to bless—
 As even its minted coins express,
 Now stamp'd with the image of Good Queen
 Bess,
 And now of a Bloody Mary.

A TALE OF A TRUMPET.

“Old woman, old woman, w'il you go a-shearing?
 Speak a little louder, for I'm very hard of hearing.”
 OLD BALLAD.

OF all old women hard of hearing,
 The deafest, sure, was Dame Eleanor Spearing!
 On her head, it is true,
 Two flaps there grew,
 That served for a pair of gold rings to go through;
 But for any purpose of ears in a parley,
 'They heard no more than ears of barley.

No hint was needed from D. E. F.
 You saw in her face that the woman was deaf:
 From her twisted mouth to her eyes so peery,

Each queer feature ask'd a query ;
 A look that said in a silent way,
 " Who ? and What ? and How ? and Eh ?
 I'd give my ears to know what you say !"
 And well she might ! for each auricular
 Was deaf as a post—and that post in particular
 That stands at the corner of Dyott Street now,
 And never hears a word of a row !
 Ears that might serve her now and then
 As extempore racks for an idle pen ;
 Or to hang with hoops from jewellers' shops
 With coral, ruby, or garnet drops ;
 Or, provided the owner so inclined,
 Ears to stick a blister behind ;
 But as for hearing wisdom or wit,
 Falsehood, or folly, or tell-tale-tit,
 Or politics, whether of Fox or Pitt,
 Sermon, lecture, or musical bit,
 Harp, piano, fiddle, or kit,
 They might as well, for any such wish,
 Have been butter'd, done brown, and laid in a
 dish !

She was deaf as a post,—as said before—
 And as deaf as twenty similes more,
 Including the adder, that deafest of snakes,
 Which never hears the coil it makes.

She was deaf as a house—which modern tricks
 Of language would call as deaf as bricks—

For her all human kind were dumb,

Her drum, indeed, was so muffled a drum,
 That none could get a sound to come,
 Unless the Devil who had Two Sticks !

She was deaf as a stone—say one of the stones
 Demosthenes suck'd to improve his tones ;

And surely deafness no further could reach
 Than to be in his mouth without hearing his
 speech !

She was deaf as a nut—for nuts, no doubt,
 Are deaf to the grub that's hollowing out—
 As deaf, alas! as the dead and forgotten—
 (Gray has noticed the waste of breath,
 In addressing the "dull, cold ear of death,")
 Or the Felon's ear that was stuff'd with Cotton—
 Or Charles the First, *in statue quo* ;
 Or the still-born figures of Madame Tussand,
 With their eyes of glass, and their hair of flax,
 That only stare whatever you "ax,"
 For their ears, you know, are nothing but wax.

She was deaf as the ducks that swam in the pond,
 And wouldn't listen to Mrs. Bond,—
 As deaf as any Frenchman appears,
 When he puts his shoulders into his ears :
 And—whatever the citizen tells his son—
 As deaf as Gog and Magog at one !
 Or, still to be a simile-seeker,
 As deaf as dog's-ears to Enfield's Speaker !

She was deaf as any tradesman's dummy,
 Or as Pharaoh's mother's mother's mummy ;
 Whose organs, for fear of our modern sceptics,
 Were plugg'd with gums and antiseptics.

She was deaf as a nail—that you cannot hammer
 A meaning into, for all your clamour—
 There never *was* such a deaf old Gammer !
 So formed to worry
 Both Lindley and Murray,
 By having no ear for Music or Grammar !

Deaf to sounds, as a ship out of soundings,
 Deaf to verbs, and all their compoundings,
 Adjective, noun, and adverb, and particle,
 Deaf to even the definite article—
 No verbal message was worth a pin,
 Though you hired an earwig to carry it in !

In short, she was twice as deaf as Deaf Burke,
 Or all the deafness in Yearsley's Work,
 Who in spite of his skill in hardness of hearing,
 Boring, blasting, and pioneering,
 To give the dunny organ a clearing,
 Could never have eured Dame Eleanor Spearing

Of course the loss was a great privation,
 For one of her sex—whatever her station—
 And none the less that the Dame had a turn
 For making all families one concern,
 And learning whatever there was to learn
 In the prattling, tattling village of Tringham—
 As who wore silk? and who wore gingham?
 And what the Atkins's shop might bring 'em?
 How the Smiths contrived to live? and whether
 The fourteen Murphys all pigg'd together?
 The wages per week of the Weavers and Skinners,
 And what they boil'd for their Sunday dinners?
 What plates the Bugsbys had on the shelf,
 Crockery, china, wooden, or delf?
 And if the parlour of Mrs. O'Grady
 Had a wicked French print, or Death and the
 Lady?

Did Snip and his wife continue to jangle?
 Had Mrs Wilkinson sold her mangle?
 What liquor was drunk by Jones and Brown?
 And the weekly score they ran up at the Crown?
 If the Cobbler could read, and believed in the
 Pope?

And how the Grubbs were off for soap?
 If the Snobbs had furnish'd their room up stairs,
 And how they managed for tables and chairs,
 Beds, and other household affairs,
 Iron, wooden, and Staffordshire wares;
 And if they could muster a whole pair of bellows?
 In fact she had much of the spirit that lies
 Perdu in a notable set of Paul Prys,
 By courtesy call'd Statistical Fellows—

A prying, spying, inquisitive clan,
 Who had gone upon much of the self-same plan,
 Jotting the Labouring Class's riches ;
 And after poking in pot and pau,
 And routing garments in want of stitches,
 Have ascertain'd that a working man
 Wears a pair and a quarter of average breeches !

But this, alas ! from her loss of hearing,
 Was all a seal'd book to Dame Eleanor Spearing ;
 And often her tears would rise to their founts—
 Supposing a little scandal at play
 'Twixt Mrs. O'Fie and Mrs. Au Fait—
 That she couldn't audit the Gossips' accounts.
 'Tis true, to her cottage still they came,
 And ate her muffins just the same,
 And drank the tea of the widow'd Dame,
 And never swallow'd a thimble the less
 Of something the Reader is left to guess,
 For all the deafness of Mrs. S.,
 Who *saw* them talk, and chuckle, and cough,
 But to *see* and not share in the social flow,
 She might as well have lived you know,
 In one of the houses in Owen's Row,
 Near the New River Head, with its water cut off !

And yet the almond-oil she had tried,
 And fifty infallible things beside,
 Hot, and cold, and thick, and thin,
 Dabb'd, and dribbled, and squirted in :
 But all remedies fail'd ; and though some it was clear
 (Like the brandy and salt
 We now exalt)
 Had made a noise in the public ear,
 She was just as deaf as ever, poor dear !

At last—one very fine day in June—
 Suppose her sitting,
 Busily knitting,

And humming she didn't quite know what tune ;
 For nothing she heard but a sort of a whizz,
 Which, unless the sound of a circulation,
 Or of thoughts in the process of fabrication,
 By a Spinning-Jennyish operation,

It's hard to say what buzzing it is.
 However, except that ghost of a sound,
 She sat in a silence most profound—
 The cat was purring about the mat,
 But her Mistress heard no more of that
 Than if it had been a boatswain's cat ;
 And as for the clock the moments nicking,
 The Dame only gave it credit for ticking.
 The bark of her dog she did not catch ;
 Nor yet the click of the lifted latch ;
 Nor yet the creak of the opening door ;
 Nor yet the fall of the foot on the floor—
 But she saw the shadow that crept on her gown
 And turn'd its skirt of a darker brown.

And lo! a man! a Pedlar? ay, marry,
 With a little back-shop that such tradesmen earry,
 Stock'd with brooches, ribbons, and rings,
 Spectacles, razors, and other odd things,
 For lad and lass, as Autolycus sings ;
 A chapman for goodness and cheapness of ware,
 Held a fair dealer enough at a fair,
 But deem'd a piratical sort of invader
 By him we dub the "regular trader,"
 Who luring the passengers in as they pass
 By lamps, gay pannels, and mouldings of brass,
 And windows with only one huge pane of glass,
 And his name in gilt characters, German or Roman,
 If he isn't a Pedlar, at least is a Showman!

However, in the stranger came,
 And, the moment he met the eyes of the Dame,
 Threw her as knowing a nod as though
 He had known her fifty long years ago ;

And presto! before she could utter "Jack"—
 Much less "Robinson"—open'd his pack—
 And then from amongst his portable gear,
 With even more than a Pedlar's tact,—
 (Slick himself might have envied the act)—
 Before she had time to be deaf, in fact,
 Popp'd a Trumpet into her ear.

"There, Ma'am! try it!

You needn't buy it—

The last New Patent—and nothing comes nigh it
 For affording the Deaf, at little expense,
 The sense of hearing, and hearing of sense!
 A Real Blessing—and no mistake,
 Invented for poor Humanity's sake;
 For what can be a greater privation
 Than playing Dummy to all creation,
 And only looking at conversation—
 Great Philosophers talking like Platos,
 And Members of Parliament moral as Catos,
 And your ears as dull as waxy potatoes!
 Not to name the mischievous quizzers,
 Sharp as knives, but double as scizzors,
 Who get you to answer quite by guess
 Yes for No, and No for Yes."
 ("That's very true," says Dame Eleanor S.)
 "Try it again! No harm in trying—
 I'm sure you'll find it worth your buying,
 A little practice—that is all—
 And you'll hear a whisper, however small,
 Through an Act of Parliament party-wall,—
 Every syllable clear as day,
 And even what people are going to say—
 I wouldn't tell a lie, I wouldn't,
 But my trumpets have heard what Solomon's
 couldn't;
 And as for Scott, he promises fine,
 But can he warrant his horns like mine
 Never to hear what a Lady shouldn't—

Only a guinea—and can't take less."

("That's very dear," says Dame Eleanor S.)

"Dear!—Oh dear, to call it dear!

Why it isn't a horn you buy, but an ear;

Only think, and you'll find on reflection [tion;

You're bargaining, Ma'am, for the Voice of Affec-

For the language of Wisdom, and Virtue, and

Truth,

And the sweet little innocent prattle of youth:

Not to mention the striking of clocks—

Cackle of hens—crowing of cocks—

Lowling of cow, and bull, and ox—

Bleating of pretty pastoral flocks—

Murmur of waterfall over the rocks—

Every sound that Echo mocks—

Vocals, fiddles, and musical-box—

And zounds! to call such a concert dear!

But I mustn't swear with my horn in your ear.

Why, in buying that Trumpet you buy all those

That Harper, or any trumpeter, blows

At the Queen's Levees, or the Lord Mayor's Shows,

At least as far as the music goes,

Including the wonderful lively sound

Of the Guards' key-bugles all the year round.

Come—suppose we call it a pound!

Come," said the talkative Man of the Pack,

"Before I put my box on my back,

For this elegant, useful Conductor of Sound,

Come—suppose we call it a pound!

"Only a pound! it's only the price

Of hearing a Concert once or twice.

It's only the fee

You might give Mr. C.,

And after all not hear his advice,

But common prudence would bid you stump it;

For, not to enlarge,

It's the regular charge

At a Fancy Fair for a penny trumpet.
 Lord! what's a pound to the blessing of hearing!"
 ("A pound's a pound," said Dame Eleanor Spear-
 ing.)

"Try it again! no harm in trying!
 A pound's a pound there's no denying;
 But think what thousands and thousands of pounds
 We pay for nothing but hearing sounds;
 Sounds of Equity, Justice, and Law,
 Parliamentary jabber and jaw,
 Pious cant and moral saw,
 Hocus-pocus, and Nong-tong-paw,
 And empty sounds not worth a straw;
 Why it costs a guinea, as I'm a sinner,
 To hear the sounds at a Public Dinner!
 One pound one thrown into the puddle,
 To listen to Fiddle, Faddle, and Fuddle!
 Not to forget the sounds we buy
 From those who sell their sounds so high,
 That unless the Managers pitch it strong,
 To get a Signora to warble a song [prong.
 You must fork out the blunt with a haymaker's

"It's not the thing for me—I know it—
 To crack my own Trumpet up and blow it;
 But it is the best, and time will show it.

There was Mrs. F.

So very deaf,

That she might have worn a percussion-cap, [snap;
 And been knock'd on the head without hearing it
 Well, I sold her a horn, and the very next day
 She heard from her husband at Botany Bay!
 Come—eighteen shillings—that's very low,
 You'll save the money as shillings go,
 And I never knew so bad a lot,
 By hearing whether they ring or not!
 Eighteen shillings! it's worth the price,
 Supposing you're delicate-minded and nice,

To have the medical man of your choice,
 Instead of the one with the strongest voice—
 Who comes and asks you how's your liver,
 And where you ache, and whether you shiver,
 And as to your nerves so apt to quiver,
 As if he was hailing a boat on the river!
 And then, with a shout, like Pat in a riot,
 Tells you to keep yourself perfectly quiet!

“ Or a tradesman comes—as tradesmen will—
 Short and crusty about his bill,
 Of patience, indeed, a perfect scorner,
 And because you're deaf and unable to pay,
 Shouts whatever he has to say,
 In a vulgar voice that goes over the way,
 Down the street and round the corner!
 Come—speak your mind—it's ‘ No or Yes.’ ”
 (“ I've half a mind,” said Dame Eleanor S.)

“ Try it again—no harm in trying,
 Of course you hear me, as easy as lying;
 No pain at all, like a surgical trick,
 To make you squall, and struggle, and kick,
 Like Juno, or Rose,
 Whose ear undergoes
 Such horrid tugs at membrane and gristle,
 For being as deaf as yourself to a whistle!

“ You may go to surgical chaps if you choose,
 Who will blow up your tubes like copper flues,
 Or cut your tonsils right away,
 As you'd shell out your almonds for Christmas-day;
 And after all a matter of doubt,
 Whether you ever would hear the shout
 Of the little blackguards that bawl about,
 ‘ There you go with your tonsils out!’ ”

 Why, I knew a deaf Welshman who came from
 Glamorgan
 On purpose to try a surgical spell,

And paid a guinea, and might as well
 Have call'd a monkey into his organ!
 For the Aurist only took a mug,
 And pour'd in his ear some acoustical drug,
 That instead of curing deafen'd him rather,
 As Hamlet's uncle served Hamlet's father!
 That's the way with your surgical gentry!
 And happy your luck
 If you don't get stuck
 Through your liver and lights at a royal entry,
 Because you never answer'd the sentry!

“Try it again, dear Madam, try it!
 Many would sell their beds to buy it.
 I warrant you often wake up in the night,
 Ready to shake to a jelly with fright,
 And up you must get to strike a light,
 And down you go, in you know what,
 Whether the weather is chilly or not,—
 That's the way a cold is got,—
 To see if you heard a noise or not!

“Why, bless you, a woman with organs like yours
 Is hardly safe to step out of doors!
 Just fancy a horse that comes full pelt,
 But as quiet as if he was ‘shod with felt,’
 Till he rushes against you with all his force,
 And then I needn't describe of course,
 While he kicks you about without remorse,
 How awkward it is to be groom'd by a horse!
 Or a bullock comes, as mad as King Lear,
 And you never dream that the brute is near,
 Till he pokes his horn right into your ear,
 Whether you like the thing or lump it,—
 And all for want of buying a trumpet!

“I'm not a female to fret and vex,
 But if I belong'd to the sensitive sex,
 Exposed to all sorts of indelicate sounds,

I wouldn't be deaf for a thousand pounds.

Lord! only think of chucking a copper
To Jaek or Bob with a timber limb,
Who looks as if he was singing a hymn,

Instead of a song that's very improper!
Or just suppose in a public place

You see a great fellow a-pulling a face,
With his staring eyes and his mouth like an O,—
And how is a poor deaf lady to know,—

The lower orders are up to such games—

If he's calling 'Green Peas,' or calling her names?'
("They're tenpence a peck!" said the deafest of
Dames.)

"'Tis strange what very strong advising,
By word of mouth, or advertising,
By chalking on walls, or placarding on vans,
With fifty other different plans,
The very high pressure, in fact, of pressing
It needs to persuade one to purchase a blessing!
Whether the Soothing American Syrup,
A safety Hat, or a Safety Stirrup,—
Infallible Pills for the human frame,
Or Rowland's O-don't-o (an ominous name!)
A Doudney's suit which the shape so hits
That it beats all others into *fits*;
A Mechi's razor for beards unshorn,
Or a Ghost-of-a-Whisper-Catching Horn!

"Try it again, Ma'am, only try!"
Was still the voluble Pedlar's cry;
"It's a great privation, there's no dispute,
To live like the dumb unsociable brute,
And to hear no more of the *pro* and *con*,
And how Society's going on,
Than Mumbo Jumbo or Prester John,
And all for want of this *sine quâ non*;
Whereas, with a horn that never offends,
You may join the genteelest party that is,

And enjoy all the scandal, and gossip, and quiz,
 And be certain to hear of your absent friends ;—
 Not that elegant ladies, in fact,
 In genteel society ever detract,
 Or lend a brush when a friend is black'd,
 At least as a mere malicious act,—
 But only talk scandal for fear some fool
 Should think they were bred at *charity* school.

Or, maybe, you like a little flirtation,
 Which even the most Don Juanish rake
 Would surely object to undertake
 At the same high pitch as an altercation.
 It's not for me, of course, to judge
 How much a Deaf Lady ought to begrudge ;
 But half-a-guinea seems no great matter—
 Letting alone more rational patter—
 Only to hear a parrot chatter ;
 Not to mention that feather'd wit,
 The Starling, who speaks when his tongue is slit ;
 The Pies and Jays that utter words,
 And other Dicky Gossips of birds,
 That talk with as much good sense and decorum
 As many *Beaks* who belong to the quorum.

“ Try it—buy it—say ten and six,
 The lowest price a miser could fix :
 I don't pretend with horns of mine,
 Like some in the advertising line,
 To '*magnify sounds*' on such marvellous scales,
 That the sounds of a cod seem as big as a whale's ;
 But popular rumours, right or wrong,—
 Charity Sermons, short or long,—
 Lecture, speech, concerto, or song,
 All noises and voices, feeble or strong,
 From the hum of a gnat to the clash of a gong,
 This tube will deliver distinct and clear ;
 Or supposing by chance
 You wish to dance,
 Why, it's putting a *Horn-pipe* into your ear !

Try it—buy it!

Buy it—try it!

The last New Patent, and nothing comes nigh it,

For guiding sounds to proper tunnel:

Only try till the end of June,

And if you and the trumpet are out of tune,

I'll turn it gratis into a Funnel!"

In short the Pedlar so beset her,—

Lord Bacon couldn't have gammon'd her better,—

With flatteries plump and indirect,

And plied his tongue with such effect,—

A tongue that could almost have butter'd a crum-
pet,—

The deaf Old Woman bought the Trumpet.

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[ance,

The Pedlar was gone. With the Horn's assist-

She heard his steps die away in the distance;

And then she heard the tick of the clock,

The purring of puss, and the snoring of Shock!

And she purposely dropt a pin that was little,

And heard it fall as plain as a skittle!

'Twas a wonderful Horn, to be but just!

Nor meant to gather dust, must, and rust:

So in half a jiffy, or less than that,

In her scarlet cloak and her steeple hat,

Like old Dame Trot, but without her Cat,

The Gossip was hunting all Tringham thorough,

As if she meant to canvass the borough,

Trumpet in hand, or up to the cavity:—

And, sure, had the horn been one of those

The wild Rhinoceros wears on his nose,

It couldn't have ripp'd up more depravity!

Depravity! mercy shield her ears!

'Twas plain enough that her village peers

In the ways of vice were no raw beginners;

For whenever she raised the tube to her drum,
 Such sounds were transmitted as only come
 From the very Brass Band of human sinners !
 Ribald jest and blasphemous curse
 (Bunyan never vented worse,)
 With all those weeds, not flowers, of speech
 Which the seven Dialecticians teach ;
 Filthy Conjunctions, and Dissolute Nouns,
 And Particles pick'd from the kennels of towns,
 With Irregular Verbs for irregular jobs,
 Chiefly active in rows and mobs,
 Picking Possessive Pronouns' fobs
 And Interjections as bad as a blight,
 Or an Eastern blast, to the blood and the sight ;
 Fanciful phrases for crime and sin,
 And smacking of vulgar lips where Gin,
 Garlic, Tobacco, and offals go in—
 A jargon so truly adapted, in fact,
 To each thievish, obscene, and ferocious act,
 So fit for the brute with the human shape,
 Savage Baboon, or libidinous Ape,
 From their ugly mouths it will certainly come
 Should they ever get weary of shamming dumb !

Alas ! for the Voice of Virtue and Truth,
 And the sweet little innocent prattle of youth !
 The smallest urchin whose tongue could tang,
 Shock'd the Dame with a volley of slang,
 Fit for Fagin's juvenile gang ;
 While the charity chap,
 With his muffin cap,
 His crimson coat, and his badge so garish,
 Playing at dumps, or pitch in the hole,
 Cursed his eyes, limbs, body, and soul,
 As if they didn't belong to the Parish !
 'Twas awful to hear as she went along,
 The wicked words of the popular song ;
 Or supposing she listen'd—as gossips will—
 At a door ajar, or a window agape,

To catch the sounds they allow'd to escape,
 Those sounds belong'd to Depravity still!
 The dark allusion, or bolder brag
 Of the dexterous "dodge," and the lots of "swag,"
 The plunder'd house—or the stolen nag—
 The blazing rick, or the darker crime
 That quench'd the spark before its time—
 The wanton speech of the wife immoral—
 The noise of drunken or deadly quarrel,—
 With savage menaces, which threaten'd the life,
 Till the heart seem'd merely a strop "for the knife;"
 The human liver, no better than that
 Which is sliced and thrown to an old woman's cat;
 And the head, so useful for shaking and nodding,
 To be punch'd into holes, like "a shocking bad hat"
 That is only fit to be punch'd into wadding!

In short, wherever she turn'd the horn,
 To the highly bred or the lowly born,
 The working man who look'd over the hedge,
 Or the mother nursing her infant pledge,
 The sober Quaker, averse to quarrels,
 Or the Governess pacing the village through,
 With her twelve Young Ladies, two and two,
 Looking, as such young ladies do,
 Truss'd by Decorum and stuff'd with morals—
 Whether she listen'd to Hob or Bob,
 Nob or Snob,
 The Squire on his cob,
 Or Trudge and his ass at a tinkering job,
 To the Saint who expounded at "Little Zion"—
 Or the "Sinner who kept the Golden Lion"—
 The man teetotally wean'd from liquor—
 The Beadle, the Clerk, or the Reverend Vicar—
 Nay, the very Pie in its cage of wicker—
 She gather'd such meanings, double or single,
 That like the bell
 With muffins to sell,
 Her ear was kept in a constant tingle!

But this was nought to the tales of shame,
 The constant runnings of evil fame,
 Foul, and dirty, and black as ink,
 That her ancient cronies, with nod and wink,
 Pour'd in her horn like slops in a sink :

While sitting in conclave, as gossips do,
 With their Hyson or Howqua, black or green,
 And not a little of feline spleen

Lapp'd up in "Catty packages," too,
 To give a zest to the sipping and sipping ;
 For still by some invisible tether,
 Scandal and Tea are link'd together,

As surely as Scarification and Cupping ;
 Yet never since Scandal drank Bohea—
 Or sloe, or whatever it happen'd to be,

For some grocerly thieves
 Turn over new leaves

Without much amending their lives or their tea—
 No, never since cup was fill'd or stirr'd
 Were such vile and horrible anecdotes heard,
 As blacken'd their neighbours, of either gender,
 Especially that which is call'd the Tender,
 But instead of the softness we fancy therewith,
 As harden'd in vice as the vice of a smith.

Women ! the wretches ! had soil'd and marr'd

Whatever to womanly nature belongs ;
 For the marriage tie they had no regard,
 Nay, sped their mates to the sexton's yard,

(Like Madame Laffarge, who with poisonous
 pinches

Kept cutting off her L by inches)

And as for drinking, they drank so hard

That they drank their flat-irons, pokers, and
 tongs !

The men—they fought and gambled at fairs ;
 And poach'd—and didn't respect grey hairs—
 Stole linen, money, plate, poultry, and corses ;
 And broke in houses as well as horses ;

Unfolded folds to kill their own mutton,
 And would their own mothers and wives for a
 button—

But not to repeat the deeds they did,
 Baeksliding in spite of all moral skid,
 If all were true that fell from the tongue,
 There was not a villager, old or young,
 But deserved to be whipp'd, imprison'd, or hung,
 Or sent on those travels which nobody hurries
 To publish at Colburn's, or Longmans', or Murray's.

Meanwhile the Trumpet, *con amore*,
 Transmitted each vile diabolical story ;
 And gave the least whisper of slips and falls,
 As that Gallery does in the Dome of St. Paul's,
 Which, as all the world knows, by practice or print,
 Is famous for making the most of a hint.

Not a murmur of shame,

Or buzz of blame,

Not a flying report that flew at a name,
 Not a plausible gloss, or significant note,
 Not a word in the scandalous cireles afloat
 Of a beam in the eye or diminutive mote,
 But vortex-like that tube of tin
 Suck'd the censorious particle in ;

And, truth to tell, for as willing an organ

As ever listen'd to serpent's hiss,

Nor took the viperous sound amiss,

On the suaky head of an ancient Gorgon !

The Dame, it is true, would mutter " Shocking ! "

And give her head a sorrowful rocking,

And make a clucking with palate and tongue,

Like the call of Partlett to gather her young,

A sound, when humau, that always proclaims

At least a thousand pities and shames,

But still the darker the tale of sin,

Like certain folks when calaunities burst,

Who find a comfort in " hearing the worst,"

The farther she poked the Trumpet in.

Nay, worse, whatever she heard, she spread
 East and West, and North and South,
 Like the ball which, according to Captain Z,
 Went in at his ear, and came out at his mouth.

What wonder between the horn and the Dame,
 Such mischief was made wherever they came,
 That the Parish of Tringham was all in a flame!

For although it requires such loud discharges,
 Such peals of thunder as rumbled at Lear,
 To turn the smallest of table-beer,
 A little whisper breathed into the ear

Will sour a temper "as sour as varges."

In fact such very ill blood there grew,
 From this private circulation of stories,
 That the nearest neighbours the village through,
 Look'd at each other as yellow and blue
 As any electioneering crew

Wearing the colours of Whigs and Tories.

Ah! well the Poet said, in sooth,
 That "whispering tongues can poison Truth,"
 Yea, like a dose of oxalic acid,
 Wrench and convulse poor Peace, the plaicid,
 And rack dear Love with internal fuel,
 Like arsenic pastry, or what is as cruel,
 Sugar of lead, that sweetens gruel,
 At least such torments began to wring 'em

From the very morn

When that mischievous Horn

Caught the whisper of tongues in Tringham.

The Social Clubs dissolved in huffs,
 And the Sons of Harmony came to cuffs,
 While feuds arose, and family quarrels,
 That discomposed the mechanics of morals,
 For screws were loose between brother and
 brother,

While sisters fasten'd their nails on each other:

Such wrangles, and jangles, and miff, and tiff,
 And spar, and jar—and breezes as stiff
 As ever upset a friendship or skiff!
 The plighted Lovers, who used to walk,
 Refused to meet, and declined to talk;
 And wish'd for *two* moons to reflect the sun,
 That they mightn't look together on one;
 While wedded affection ran so low,
 That the oldest John Anderson snubbed his Jo--
 And instead of the toddle adown the hill,
 Hand in hand
 As the song has plann'd,
 Scratch'd her, penniless, out of his will!

In short, to describe what came to pass
 In a true, though somewhat theatrical way,
 Instead of "Love in a Village"—alas!
 The piece they perform'd was "The Devil to
 Pay!"

However, as secrets are brought to light,
 And mischief comes home like chickens at night;
 And rivers are track'd throughout their course,
 And forgeries traced to their proper source;—
 And the sow that ought
 By the ear is caught,—
 And the sin to the sinful door is brought;
 And the cat at last escapes from the bag—
 And the saddle is placed on the proper nag;
 And the fog blows off, and the key is found—
 And the faulty scent is pick'd out by the hound—
 And the fact turns up like a worm from the
 ground—
 And the matter gets wind to waft it about;
 And a hint goes abroad, and the murder is out—
 And the riddle is guess'd—and the puzzle is
 known—
 So the truth was sniff'd, and the Trumpet was
 blown!

* * * * *

'Tis a day in November—a day of fog—
 But the Tringham people are all agog ;
 Fathers, Mothers, and Mothers' Sons,—
 With sticks, and staves, and swords, and guns,—
 As if in pursuit of a rabid dog ;
 But their voices—raised to the highest pitch—
 Declare that the game is “ a Witch!—a Witch ! ”
 Over the Green, and along by the George—
 Past the Stocks, and the Church, and the Forge,
 And round the Pond, and skirting the Pond,
 Till they come to the whitewash'd cottage beyond,
 And there at the door they muster and cluster,
 And thump, and kick, and bellow, and bluster—
 Enough to put old Nick in a fluster !
 A noise, indeed, so loud and long,
 And mix'd with expressions so very strong,
 That supposing, according to popular fame,
 “ Wise Woman ” and Witch to be the same,
 No hag with a broom would unwisely stop,
 But up and away through the chimney-top ;
 Whereas, the moment they burst the door,
 Planted fast on her sanded floor,
 With her Trumpet up to her organ of hearing,
 Lo and behold !—Dame Eleanor Spearing !

Oh ! then arises the fearful shout—
 Bawl'd and scream'd, and bandied about—
 “ Scize her !—Drag the old Jezebel out ! ”
 While the Beadle—the foremost ôf all the band,
 Snatches the Horn from her trembling hand—
 And after a pause of doubt and fear,
 Puts it up to his sharpest ear.

“ Now silence—silence—one and all ! ”
 For the Clerk is quoting from Holy Paul !
 But before he rehearses
 A couple of verses,
 The Beadle lets the trumpet fall ;
 For instead of the words so pious and humble,
 He hears a supernatural grumble.

Enough, enough! and more than enough;—
 Twenty impatient hands and rough,
 By arm, and leg, and neck, and scruff,
 Apron, 'kerchief, gown of stuff—
 Cap, and pinner, sleeve, and cuff—
 Are clutching the Witch wherever they can,
 With the spite of Woman and fury of Man;
 And then—but first they kill her cat,
 And murder her dog on the very mat—
 And crush the Infernal Trumpet flat;—
 And then they hurry her through the door
 She never, never, will enter more!

Away! away! down the dusty lane
 They pull her, and haul her, with might and
 main:

And happy the hawbuck, Tom or Harry
 Dandy, or Sandy, Jerry, or Larry,
 Who happens to get “a leg to carry!”
 And happy the foot that can give her a kick,
 And happy the hand that can find a brick—
 And happy the fingers that hold a stick—
 Knife to cut, or pin to prick—
 And happy the Boy who can lend her a lick;—
 Nay, happy the Urehin—Charity-bred,
 Who can shy very nigh to her wicked old head!

Alas! to think how people's creeds
 Are contradicted by people's deeds!

But though the wishes that Witches utter
 Can play the most diabolical rigs—
 Send styes in the eye—and measles the pigs—
 Grease horses' heels—and spoil the butter;
 Smut and mildew the corn on the stalk—
 And turn new milk to water and chalk,—
 Blight apples—and give the chickens the pip—
 And cramp the stomach—and cripple the hip—
 And waste the body—and addle the eggs—
 And give a baby bandy legs;

Though in common belief a Witch's curse
 Involves all these horrible things and worse—
 As ignorant bumpkins all profess,
 No Bumpkin makes a poke the less
 At the back or ribs of old Eleanor S.!

As if she were only a sack of barley ;
 Or gives her credit for greater might
 Than the Powers of Darkness confer at night
 On that other old woman, the parish Charley ;

Ay, now's the time for a Witch to call
 On her Imps and Sucklings one and all—
 Newes, Pyewacket, or Peck in the Crown,
 (As Matthew Hopkins has handed them down,)
 Dick, and Willet, and Sugar-and-Sack,
 Greedy Grizel, Jarmara the Black,
 Vinegar Tom and the rest of the pack—
 Ay, now's the nick for her friend old Harry
 To come " with his tail " like the bold Glengarry,
 And drive her foes from their savage job
 As a mad Black Bullock would scatter a mob :

But no such matter is down in the bond ;
 And spite of her cries that never cease,
 But scare the ducks and astonish the geese,
 The Dame is dragg'd to the fatal pond !

And now they come to the water's brim—
 And in they bundle her—sink or swim ;
 Though it's twenty to one that the wretch must
 drown,

With twenty sticks to hold her down ;
 Including the help to the self-same end,
 Which a travelling Pedlar stops to lend.
 A Pedlar!—Yes!—The same!—the same!
 Who sold the Horn to the drowning Dame!
 And now is foremost amid the stir,
 With a token only revealed to her ;
 A token that makes her shudder and shriek,
 And point with her finger, and strive to speak—

But before she can utter the name of the Devil,
Her head is under the water level !

Moral.

There are folks about town—to name no names—
Who much resemble that deafest of Dames ;
And over their tea, and muffins, and crumpets,
Circulate many a scandalous word,
And whisper tales they could only have heard
Through some such Diabolical Trumpets !

THE IRISH SCHOOLMASTER.

I.

ALACK! 'tis melancholy theme to think
How Learning doth in rugged states abide,
And, like her bashful owl, obscurely blink,
In pensive glooms and corners, scarcely spied ;
Not, as in Founders' Halls and domes of pride,
Served with grave homage, like a tragic queen,
But with one lonely priest compell'd to hide,
In midst of foggy moors and mosses green,
In that clay cabin hight the College of Kilreen !

II.

This College looketh South and West alsoe,
Because it hath a cast in windows twain ;
Crazy and crack'd they be, and wind doth blow
Thorough transparent holes in every pane,
Which Dan, with many paines, makes whole
again
With nether garments, which his thrift doth
teach,
To stand for glass, like pronouns, and when rain
Stormeth, he puts, "once more unto the breach,"
Outside and in, tho' broke, yet so he mendeth each.

III.

And in the midst a little door there is,
 Whereon a board that doth congratulate
 With painted letters, red as blood I wis,
 Thus written, “**C**hildren taken in to **B**ate ;”
 And oft, indeed, the inward of that gate,
 Most ventriloque, doth utter tender squeak,
 And moans of infants that bemoan their fate,
 In midst of sounds of Latin, French, and Greek,
 Which, all i’ the Irish tongue, he teacheth them to
 speak.

IV.

For some are meant to right illegal wrongs,
 And some for Doctors of Divinitie,
 Whom he doth teach to murder the dead tongues,
 And soe win academical degree ;
 But some are bred for service of the sea,
 Howbeit, their store of learning is but small,
 For mickle waste he counteth it would be
 To stock a head with bookish wares at all,
 Only to be knocked off by ruthless cannon ball.

V.

Six babes he sways,—some little and some big,
 Divided into classes six ;—alsoe,
 He keeps a parlour boarder of a pig,
 That in the College fareth to and fro,
 And picketh up the urchins’ crumbs below—
 And eke the learned rudiments they scan,
 And thus his A, B, C, doth wisely know—
 Hereafter to be shown in caravan,
 And raise the wonderment of many a learned man

VI.

Alsoe, he schools some tame familiar fowls,
 Whereof, above his head, some two or three
 Sit darkly squatting, like Minerva’s owls,

But on the branches of no living tree,
 And overlook the learned family ;
 While, sometimes, Partlet, from her gloomy perch,
 Drops feather on the nose of Dominic,
 Meanwhile, with serious eye, he makes research
 In leaves of that sour tree of knowledge—now a
 birch.

VII.

No chair he hath, the awful Pedagogue,
 Such as would magisterial hams imbed,
 But sitteth lowly on a beechen log,
 Secure in high authority and dread :
 Large, as a dome for learning, seems his head,
 And like Apollo's, all beset with rays,
 Because his locks are so unkempt and red,
 And stand abroad in many several ways :—
 No laurel crown he wears, howbeit his cap is baise.

VIII.

And, underneath, a pair of shaggy brows
 O'erhang as many eyes of gizzard hue,
 That inward giblet of a fowl, which shows
 A mongrel tint, that is ne brown ne blue ;
 His nose,—it is a coral to the view ;
 Well nourish'd with Pierian Potheen,—
 For much he loves his native mountain dew—
 But to depict the dye would lack, I ween,
 A bottle-red, in terms, as well as bottle-green.

IX.

As for his coat, 'tis such a jerkin short
 As Spencer had, ere he composed his Tails ;
 But underneath he hath no vest, nor aught,
 So that the wind his airy breast assails ;
 Below, he wears the nether garb of males,
 Of crimson plush, but non-plushed at the knee :—
 Thence further down the native red prevails,
 Of his own naked fleecy hosierie :—
 Two sandals, without soles, complete his cap-a-pie.

X.

Nathless, for dignity, he now doth lap
 His function in a magisterial gown,
 That shows more countries in it than a map,—
 Blue tinct, and red, and green, and russet brown,
 Besides some blots, standing for country-town,
 And eke some rents, for streams and rivers wide ;
 But, sometimes, bashful when he looks adown,
 He turns the garment of the other side,
 Hopeful that so the holes may never be espied !

XI.

And soe he sits, amidst the little pack
 That look for shady or for sunny noon,
 Within his visâge, like an almanack,—
 His quiet smile foretelling gracious boon :
 But when his mouth droops down, like rainy
 moon,
 With horrid chill each little heart unwarms,
 Knowing, that infant show'rs will follow soon,
 And with forebodings of near wrath and storms
 They sit, like timid hares, all trembling on their
 forms.

XII.

Ah ! luckless wight, who cannot then repeat
 “ Corduroy Colloquy,”—or “ Ki, Kæ, Kod,”—
 Full soon his tears shall make his turfy seat
 More sodden, tho' already made of sod,
 For Dan shall whip him with the word of God,—
 Severe by rule, and not by nature mild,
 He never spoils the child and spares the rod,
 But spoils the rod and never spares the child,
 And soe with holy rule deems he is reconciled.

XIII.

But surely the just sky will never wink
 At men who take delight in childish throe,

And stripe the nether-urchin like a pink
 Or tender hyacinth, inscribed with woe ;
 Such bloody Pedagogues, when they shall know,
 By useless birches, that forlorn recess,
 Which is no holiday, in Pit below,
 Will hell not seem design'd for their distress,—
 A melaneholy place, that is all bottomlesse ?

XIV.

Yet would the Muse not ehide the wholesome
 use
 Of needful discipline, in due degree.
 Devoid of sway, what wrongs will time produce,
 Whene'er the twig untrain'd grows up a tree,
 This shall a Carder, that a Whiteboy be,
 Ferocious leaders of atrocious bands,
 And Learning's help be used for infamie,
 By lawless clerks, that, with their bloody hands,
 In murder'd English write Rock's murderous com-
 mands.

XV.

But ah ! what shrilly cry doth now alarm
 The sooty fowls that doz'd upon the beam,
 All sudden fluttering from the brandish'd arm
 And cackling chorus with the human scream ;
 Meanwhile the scourge plies that unkindly seam
 In Phelim's brogues, which bares his naked skin,
 Like traitor gap in warlike fort, I deem,
 That falsely lets the fierce besieger in,
 Nor seeks the Pedagogue by other course to win.

XVI.

No parent dear he hath to heed his cries ;—
 Alas ! his parent dear is far aloof,
 And deep in Seven-Dial cellar lies,
 Killed by kind cudgel-play, or gin of proof,
 Or elimbeth, catwise, on some London roof,
 Singing, perchance, a lay of Erin's Isle,

Or, whilst he labours, weaves a fancy-woof,
 Dreaming he sees his home,—his Phelim smile ;
 Ah me ! that luckless imp, who weepeth all the
 while !

XVII.

Ah ! who can paint that hard and heavy time,
 When first the scholar lists in learning's train,
 And mounts her rugged steep enforc'd to climb,
 Like sooty imp, by sharp posterior pain,
 From bloody twig, and eke that Indian came,
 Wherein, alas ! no sugar'd juices dwell ?
 For this, the while one stripling's sluices drain,
 Another weepeth over chilblains fell,
 Always upon the heel, yet never to be well !

XVIII.

Anon a third, for his delicious root,
 Late ravish'd from his tooth by elder ehit,
 So soon is human violence afoot,
 So hardly is the harmless biter bit !
 Meanwhile, the tyrant, with untimely wit
 And mouthing face, derides the small one's
 moan,
 Who, all lamenting for his loss, doth sit,
 Alack,—mischance comes seldom times alone,
 But aye the worried dog must rue more curs than
 one.

XIX.

For lo ! the Pedagogue, with sudden drub,
 Smites his scald head, that is already sore,—
 Superfluous wound,—such is Misfortune's rub !
 Who straight makes answer with redoubled roar,
 And sheds salt tears twice faster than before,
 That still with backward fist he strives to dry ;
 Washing with brackish moisture, o'er and o'er,
 His muddy cheek, that grows more foul thereby,
 Till all his rainy face looks grim as rainy sky.

XX.

So Dan, by dint of noise, obtains a peace,
 And with his natural untender knack,
 By new distress, bids former grievance cease,
 Like tears dried up with rugged huckaback,
 That sets the mournful visage all arack ;
 Yct soon the childish countenance will shine
 Even as thorough storms the soonest slack,
 For grief and beef in adverse ways incline,
 This keeps, and that decays, when duly soak'd in
 brine.

XXI.

Now all is hush'd, and, with a look profound,
 The Dominie lays ope the learned page ;
 (So be it called) although he doth expound
 Without a book, both Greek and Latin sage ;
 Now telleth he of Rome's rude infant age,
 How Romulus was bred in savage wood,
 By wet-nurse wolf, devoid of wolfish rage,
 And laid foundation-stone of walls of mud,
 But watered it, alas ! with warm fraternal blood.

XXII.

Anon, he turns to that Homeric war,
 How Troy was sieged like Londonderry town ;
 And stout Achilles, at his jaunting-car,
 Dragged mighty Hector with a bloody crown :
 And eke the bard, that sung of their renown,
 In garb of Greece most beggar-like and torn,
 He paints, with colly, wand'ring up and down
 Because, at once, in seven citics born ;
 And so, of parish rights, was, all his days, for
 lorn.

XXIII.

Anon, through old Mythology he goes,
 Of gods defunct, and all their pedigrees,

But shuns their scandalous amours, and shows
 How Plato wise, and clear-eyed Socrates,
 Confess'd not to those heathen hes and shies ;
 But thro' the clouds of the Olympic cope
 Beheld St. Peter with his holy keys,
 And own'd their love was naught, and bow'd to
 Pope,
 Whilst all their purblind race in Pagan mist did
 grope.

XXIV.

From such quaint themes he turns, at last, aside,
 To new philosophies, that still are green,
 And shows what railroads have been track'd to
 guide
 The wheels of great political machine ;
 If English corn should grow abroad, I wcen,
 And gold be made of gold, or paper sheet ;
 How many pigs be born to each spalpeen ;
 And ah ! how man shall thrive beyond his meat,—
 With twenty souls alive, to one square sod of peat !

XXV.

Here, he makes end ; and all the fry of youth,
 That stood around with serious look intense,
 Close up again their gaping eyes and mouth,
 Which they had open'd to his eloquence,
 As if their hearing were a threefold sense.
 But now the eurrent of his words is done,
 And whether any fruits shall spring from thence,
 In future time, with any mother's son !
 It is a thing, God wot ! that can be told by none.

XXVI.

Now by the creeping shadows of the noon,
 The hour is come to lay aside their lore ;
 The cheerful Pedagogue perceives it soon,
 And cries, " Begone ! " unto the imps,—and four
 Snatch their two hats and struggle for the door,

Like ardent spirits vented from a cask,
 All blithe and boisterous,—but leave two more,
 With Reading made Uneasy for a task,
 To weep, whilst all their mates in merry sunshine
 bask.

XXVII.

Like sportive Elfin, on the verdant sod,
 With tender moss so sleekly overgrown,
 That doth not hurt, but kiss, the sole unshod,
 So soothly kind is Erin to her own !
 And one, at Hare and Hound, plays all alone,—
 For Phelim's gone to tend his step-dame's cow ;
 Ah ! Phelim's step-dame is a canker'd crone !
 Whilst other twain play at an Irish row,
 And, with shillelah small, break one another's brow

XXVIII.

But careful Dominie, with ceaseless thrift,
 Now changeth ferula for rural hoe ;
 But, first of all, with tender hand doth shift
 His college gown, because of solar glow,
 And hangs it on a bush, to seare the crow :
 Meanwhile, he plants in earth the dappled bean,
 Or trains the young potatoes all a-row,
 Or plucks the fragrant leek for pottage green,
 With that crisp curly herb, call'd Kale in Aber-
 deen.

XXIX.

And so he wisely spends the fruitful hours,
 Link'd each to each by labour, like a bee ;
 Or rules in Learning's hall, or trims her bow'rs ;—
 Would there were many more such wights as he,
 To sway each capital academie
 Of Cam and Isis ; for alack ! at each
 There dwells, I wot, some dronish Dominie,
 That does no garden work, nor yet doth teach,
 But wears a floury head, and talks in flow'ry speech !

THE FORGE.

A ROMANCE OF THE IRON AGE.

"Who's here, beside foul weather?"

KING LEAR.

"Mine enemy's dog, though he had bit me,
Should have stood that night against my fire."

CORDELIA.

PART I.

LIKE a dead man gone to his shroud,
The sun has sunk in a coppery cloud,
And the wind is rising squally and loud
With many a stormy token,—
Playing a wild funeral air,
Through the branches bleak, bereaved, and bare,
To the dead leaves dancing here and there—
In short, if the truth were spoken,
It's an ugly night for anywhere,
But an awful one for the Brocken!

For oh! to stop
On that mountain top,
After the dews of evening drop,
Is always a dreary frolic—
Then what must it be when nature groans,
And the very mountain murmurs and moans
As if it writhed with the cholic—
With other strange supernatural tones,
From wood, and water, and echoing stones,
Not to forget unburied bones—
In a region so diabolic!

A place where he whom we call old Scratch,
By help of his Witches—a precious batch—
Gives midnight concerts and sermons,

In a Pulpit and Orchestra built to match,
 A plot right worthy of him to hatch,
 And well adapted, he knows, to catch
 The musical, mystical Germans !

 However it's quite
 As wild a night
 As ever was known on that sinister height
 Since the Demon-Dance was morriced—
 The earth is dark, and the sky is scowling,
 And the blast through the pines is howling and
 growling,
 As if a thousand wolves were prowling
 About in the old BLACK FOREST !

Madly, sadly, the Tempest raves
 Through the narrow gullies and hollow caves,
 And bursts on the rocks in windy waves,
 Like the billows that roar
 On a gusty shore
 Mourning over the mariners' graves—
 Nay, more like a frantic lamentation
 From a howling set
 Of demons met
 To wake a dead relation.

Badly, madly, the vapours fly
 Over the dark distracted sky,
 At a pace that no pen can paint !
 Black and vague like the shadows of dreams,
 Scudding over the moon that seems
 Shorn of half her usual beams,
 As pale as if she would faint !

 The lightning flashes,
 The thunder crashes,
 The trees encounter with horrible clashes,
 While rolling up from marish and bog,
 Rank and rich,

As from Stygian ditch,
 Rises a foul sulphureous fog,
 Hinting that Satan himself is agog,—
 But leaving at once this heroical pitch,
 The night is a very bad night in which
 You wouldn't turn out a dog.

Yet ONE there is abroad in the storm,
 And whenever by chance
 The moon gets a glance,
 She spies the Traveller's lonely form,
 Walking, leaping, striding along,
 As none can do but the super-strong ;
 And flapping his arms to keep him warm,
 For the breeze from the North is a regular starver,
 And to tell the truth,
 More keen, in sooth,
 And cutting than any German carver !

However, no time it is to lag ;
 And on he scrambles from crag to crag,
 Like one determined never to flag—
 Now weathers a block
 Of jutting rock,
 With hardly room for a toe to wag ;
 But holding on by a timber snag,
 That looks like the arm of a friendly hag ;
 Then stooping under a drooping bough,
 Or leaping over some horrid chasm,
 Enough to give any heart a spasm !
 And sinking down a precipice now,
 Keeping his feet the Deuce knows how,
 In spots whence all creatures would keep aloof,
 Except the Goat, with his cloven hoof,
 Who clings to the shallowest ledge as if
 He grew like the weed on the face of the cliff !
 So down, still down, the Traveller goes,
 Safe as the Chamois amid his snows,
 Though fiercer than ever the hurricane blows,

And round him eddy, with whirl and whizz,
 Tornadoes of hail, and sleet, and rain,
 Enough to bewilder a weaker brain,
 Or blanch any other visage than his,
 Which spite of lightning, thunder, and hail,
 The blinding sleet, and the freezing gale,
 And the horrid abyss,
 If his foot should miss,
 Instead of tending at all to pale,
 Like cheeks that feel the chill of affright—
 Remains—the very reverse of white !

His heart is granite—his iron nerve
 Feels no convulsive twitches ;
 And as to his foot, it does not swerve,
 Tho' the Screech-Owls are flitting about him that
 serve
 For parrots to Broeken Witches !

Nay, full in his very path he spies
 The gleam of the Wehr Wolf's horrid eyes ;
 But if his members quiver—
 It is not for *that*—no, it is not for *that*—
 Nor rat,
 Nor cat,
 As black as your hat,
 Nor the snake that hiss'd, nor the toad that spat,
 Nor glimmering candles of dead men's fat,
 Nor even the flap of the Vampire Bat,
 No anserine skin would rise thereat,
 It's the cold that makes *Him* shiver !

So down, still down, through gully and glen,
 Never trodden by foot of men,
 Past the Eagle's nest, and the She-Wolf's den,
 Never earing a jot how steep
 Or how narrow the track he has to keep,
 Or how wide and deep
 An abyss to leap,

Or what may fly, or walk, or creep,
 Down he hurries through darkness and storm,
 Flapping his arms to keep him warm—
 Till threading many a pass abhorrent,
 At last he reaches the mountain gorge,
 And takes a path along by a torrent—
 The very identical path, by St. George !
 Down which young Fridolin went to the Forge,
 With a message meant for his own death-warrant !

Young Fridolin ! young Fridolin !
 So free from sauce, and sloth, and sin,
 The best of pages
 Whatever their ages,
 Since first that singular fashion came in—
 Not he like those modern and idle young gluttons
 With little jackets, so smart and spruce,
 Of Lincoln green, sky-blue, or puce—
 And a little gold lace you may introduce—
 Very showy, but as for use,
 Not worth so many buttons !

Young Fridolin ! young Fridolin !
 Of his duty so true a fulfiller—
 But here we need no farther go,
 For whoever desires the Tale to know
 May read it all in Schiller.
 Faster now the Traveller speeds,
 Whither his guiding beacon leads,
 For by yonder glare
 In the murky air,
 He knows that the Eisen Hutte is there !
 With its sooty Cyclops, savage and grim,
 Hosts, a guest had better forbear,
 Whose thoughts are set upon dainty fare—
 But stiff with cold in every limb,
 The Furnace Fire is the bait for *Him* !

Faster and faster still he goes,
 Whilst redder and redder the welkin glows.

And the lowest clouds that seud in the sky
 Get erimson fringes in flitting by.
 Till lo! amid the lurid light,
 The darkest object intensely dark,
 Just where the bright is intensely bright,
 The Forge, the Forge itself is in sight,
 Like the pitch-black hull of a burning bark,
 With volleying smoke, and many a spark,
 Vomiting fire, red, yellow, and white!

Restless, quivering tongues of flame!
 Heavenward striving still to go,
 While others, reversed in the stream below,
 Seem seeking a place we will not name,
 But well that Traveller knows the same,
 Who stops and stands,
 So rubbing his hands,
 And snuffing the rare
 Perfumes in the air,
 For old familiar odours are there,
 And then direct by the shortest cut,
 Like Alpine Marmot, whom neither rut,
 Rivers, rocks, nor thickets rebut,
 Makes his way to the blazing Hut!

PART II.

Idly watching the Furnace-flames,
 The men of the stithy
 Are in their smithy,
 Brutal monsters, with bulky frames,
 Beings Humanity scarcely claims,
 But hybrids rather of demon race,
 Unbless'd by the holy rite of grace,
 Who never had gone by Christian names,
 Mark, or Matthew, Peter, or James—
 Naked, foul, unshorn, unkempt,
 From touch of natural shame exempt,
 Things of which Delirium has dreamt—

But wherefore dwell on these verbal sketches,
 When traced with frightful truth and vigour,
 Costume, attitude, face, and figure,
 Retsch has drawn the very wretches!

 However, there they lounge about,
 The grim, gigantic fellows,
 Hardly hearing the storm without,
 That makes so very dreadful a rout,
 For the constant roar
 From the furnace door,
 And the blast of the monstrous bellows!

 Oh, what a scene
 That Forge had been
 For Salvator Rosa's study!
 With wall, and beam, and post, and pin,
 And those ruffianly creatures, like Shapes of Sin,
 Hair, and eyes, and rusty skin;
 Illumed by a light so ruddy
 The Hut, and whatever there is therein,
 Looks either red-hot or bloody!

And, oh! to hear the frequent burst
 Of strange extravagant laughter,
 Harsh and hoarse,
 And resounding perforce
 From echoing roof and rafter!
 Though curses, the worst
 That ever were curst,
 And threats that Cain invented the first,
 Come growling the instant after!

But again the livelier peal is rung,
 For the Smith-hight Salamander,
 In the jargon of some Titanic tongue,
 Elsewhere never said or sung,
 With the voice of a Stentor in joke has hung
 Some cumbrous sort
 Of sledge-hammer retort
 At Red-Beard, the crew's commander.

Some frightful jest—who knows how wild,
 Or obscene, from a monster so defiled,
 And a horrible mouth, of such extent,
 From flapping ear to ear it went,
 And show'd such tusks whenever it smiled—
 The very mouth to devour a child!

But fair or foul the jest gives birth
 To another bellow of demon mirth,
 That far outroars the weather,
 As if all the Hyænas that prowl the earth
 Had clubb'd their laughs together!

And lo! in the middle of all the din,
 Not seeming to care a single pin,
 For a prospect so volcanic,
 A stranger steps abruptly in,
 Of an aspect rather Satanic:
 And he looks with a grin, at those Cyclops
 grim,
 Who stare and grin again at him
 With wondrous little panic.

Then up to the Furnace the Stranger goes,
 Eager to thaw his ears and nose,
 And warm his frozen fingers and toes—
 While each succeeding minute,
 Hotter and hotter the smithy grows,
 And seems to declare,
 By a fiercer glare,
 On wall, roof, floor, and everywhere,
 It knows the Devil is in it!

Still not a word
 Is utter'd or heard,
 But the beetle-brow'd Foreman nods and winks.
 Much as a shaggy old Lion blinks,
 And makes a shift
 To impart his drift

To a smoky brother, who joining the links,
 Hints to a third the thing he thinks ;
 And whatever it be,
 They all agree
 In smiling with faces full of glee,
 As if about to enjoy High Jinks.

What sort of tricks they mean to play
 By way of diversion, who can say,
 Of such ferocious and barbarous folk,
 Who chuckled, indeed, and never spoke
 Of burning Robert the Jäger to coke,
 Except as a capital practical joke !
 Who never thought of Mercy, or heard her,
 Or any gentle emotion felt ;
 But hard as the iron they had to melt,
 Sported with Danger and romp'd with Murder !

 Meanwhile the Stranger—
 The Brocken Ranger,
 Besides another and hotter post,
 That renders him not averse to a roast,—
 Creeping into the Furnace almost,
 Has made himself as warm as a toast—
 When, unsuspecting of any danger,
 And least of all of any such maggot,
 As treating his body like a faggot,
 All at once he is seized and shoven
 In pastime cruel,
 Like so much fuel,
 Headlong into the blazing oven !

In he goes ! with a frightful shout
 Mock'd by the rugged ruffianly band,
 As round the Furnace mouth they stand,
 Bar, and shovel, and ladle in hand,
 To hinder their Butt from crawling out,
 Who making one fierce attempt, but vain,
 Receives such a blow
 From Red-Beard's crow

As crashes the skull and gashes the brain,
 And blind, and dizzy, and stunn'd with pain,
 With merely an interjectional oh!
 Back he rolls in the flames again.
 "Ha! Ha! Ho! Ho!" That second fall
 Seems the very best joke of all,
 To judge by the roar,
 Twice as loud as before,
 That fills the Hut from the roof to the floor,
 And flies a league or two out of the door,
 Up the mountain and over the moor—
 But scarcely the jolly echoes they wake,
 Have well begun
 To take up the fun,
 Ere the shaggy Felons have cause to quake,
 And begin to feel that the deed they have
 done,
 Instead of being a pleasant one,
 Was a very great error—and no mistake.

For why?—in lieu
 Of its former hue,
 So natural, warm, and florid,
 The Furnace burns of a brimstone blue,
 And instead of the *couleur de rose* it threw,
 With a cooler reflection,—justly due—
 Exhibits each of the Pagan crew,
 Livid, ghastly, and horrid!
 But vainly they close their guilty eyes
 Against prophetic fears;
 Or with hard and horny palms devise
 To dam their enormous ears—
 There are sounds in the air,
 Not here or there,
 Irresistible voices everywhere,
 No bulwarks can ever rebut,
 And to match the screams,
 Tremendous gleams,
 Of Horrors that like the Phantoms of dreams

They see with their eyelids shut!
 For awful coveys of terrible things,
 With forked tongues and venomous stings,
 On hagweed, broomsticks, and leathern wings,
 Are hovering round the Hut!

Shapes, that within the focus bright
 Of the Forge, are like shadows and blots;
 But farther off, in the shades of night,
 Clothed with their own phosphoric light,
 Are seen in the darkest spots.

Sounds! that fill the air with noises,
 Strange and indescribable voices,
 From Hags, in a diabolical clatter—
 Cats that spit curses, and apes that chatter
 Scraps of cabalistical matter—

Owls that screech, and dogs that yell—
 Skeleton hounds that will never be fatter—

All the domestic tribes of Hell,
 Shrieking for flesh to tear and tatter,

Bones to shatter,

And limbs to scatter,

And who it is that must furnish the latter

Those blue-looking men know well!

Those blue-looking men that huddle together,

For all their sturdy limbs and thews,

Their unshorn locks, like Nazarene Jews,

And buffalo beards, and hides of leather,

Huddled all in a heap together,

Like timid lamb, and ewe, and wether,

And as females say,

In a similar way,

Fit for knocking down with a feather!

In and out, in and out,

The gathering Goblins hover about,

Ev'ry minute augmenting the rout;

For like a spell

The unearthly smell

That fumes from the Furnace, chimney and mouth,

Draws them in—an infernal Legion—
 From East, and West, and North, and South,
 Like carrion birds from ev'ry region,
 Till not a yard square
 Of the sickening air
 But has a Demon or two for its share,
 Breathing fury, woe, and despair.
 Never, never was such a sight!
 It beats the very Walpurgis Night,
 Display'd in the story of Doctor Faustus,
 For the scene to describe,
 Of the awful tribe,
 If we were *two* Göthes would quite exhaust us!
 Suffice it, amid that dreary swarm,
 There musters each foul repulsive form
 That ever a fancy overwarm
 Begot in its worst delirium;
 Besides some others of monstrous size,
 Never before revealed to eyes,
 Of the genus *Megatherium*!

Meanwhile the demons, filthy and foul,
 Gorgon, Chimera, Harpy, and Ghoul,
 Are not contented to jibber and howl
 As a dirge for their late commander;
 But one of the bevy—witch or wizard,
 Disguised as a monstrous flying lizard,
 Springs on the grisly Salamander,
 Who stoutly fights, and struggles, and kicks,
 And tries the best of his wrestling tricks,
 No paltry strife,
 But for life, dear life,
 But the ruthless talons refuse to unfix,
 Till far beyond a surgical ease,
 With starting eyes and blaek in the face,
 Down he tumbles as dead as bricks!
 A pretty sight for his mates to view!
 Those shaggy murderers looking so blue,
 And for him above all,

Red-bearded and tall,
 With whom, at that very particular nick,
 There is such an unlucky crow to pick,
 As the one of iron that did the trick
 In a recent bloody affair—
 No wonder feeling a little sick,
 With pulses beating uncommonly quick,
 And breath he never found so thick,
 He longs for the open air!

Three paces, or four,
 And he gains the door ;
 But ere he accomplishes one,
 The sound of a blow comes, heavy and dull,
 And clasping his fingers round his skull,
 However the deed was done,
 That gave him that florid
 Red gash on the forehead—
 With a roll of the eyeballs perfectly horrid,
 There's a tremulous quiver,
 The last death-shiver,
 And Red-Beard's course is run!

Halloo! Halloo!
 They have done for two!
 But a heavyish job remains to do!
 For yonder, sledge and shovel in hand,
 Like elder Sons of Giant Despair,
 A couple of Cyclops make a stand,
 And fiercely hammering here and there,
 Keep at bay the Powers of Air—
 But desperation is all in vain!
 They faint—they choke,
 For the sulphurous smoke
 Is poisoning heart, and lung, and brain,
 They reel, they sink, they gasp, they smother ;
 One for a moment survives his brother,
 Then rolls a corpse across the other!

Hulloo! Hulloo!
And Hullabaloo!

There is only one more thing to do—
And seized by beak, and talon, and claw,
Bony hand and hairy paw,
Yea, crooked horn, and tusky jaw,
The four huge Bodies are haul'd and shoven
Each after each in the roaring oven!

*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*

That Eisen Hutte is standing still,
Go to the Hartz whenever you will,
And there it is beside a hill,
And a rapid stream that turns many a mill;
The self-same Forge,—you'll know it at sight—
Casting upward, day and night,
Flames of red, and yellow, and white!

Ay, half a mile from the mountain gorge,
There it is, the famous Forge,
With its Furnace,—the same that blazed of yore,—
Hugely fed with fuel and ore;
But ever since that tremendous Revel,
Whatever Iron is melted therein,—
As travellers know who have been to Berlin—
Is all *as black as the Devil!*

"THE LAST MAN."

'Twas in the year two thousand and one,
A pleasant morning of May,
I sat on the gallows-tree all alone,
A chanting a merry lay,—
To think how the pest had spared my life,
To sing with the larks that day!

When up the heath came a jolly knave,
 Like a scarecrow, all in rags :
 It made me crow to see his old duds
 All abroad in the wind, like flags :—
 So up he came to the timbers' foot
 And pitch'd down his greasy bags.—

Good Lord ! how blithe the old beggar was !
 At pulling out his scraps,—
 The very sight of his broken orts
 Made a work in his wrinkled chaps :
 “ Come down,” says he, “ you Newgate-bird,
 And have a taste of my snaps ! ”——

Then down the rope, like a tar from the mast,
 I slid, and by him stood ;
 But I wish'd myself on the gallows again
 When I smelt that beggar's food,—
 A foul beef-bone and a mouldy crust ;—
 “ Oh ! ” quoth he, “ the heavens are good ! ”

Then after this grace he cast him down,
 Says I, “ You'll get sweeter air
 A pace or two off, on the windward side,”—
 For the felons' bones lay there—
 But he only laugh'd at the empty skulls,
 And offer'd them part of his fare.

“ I never harm'd *them*, and they won't harm me :
 Let the proud and the rich be cravens ! ”
 I did not like that strange beggar man,
 He look'd so up at the heavens.
 Anon he shook out his empty old poke,
 “ There's the crumbs,” saith he, “ for the ravens ! ”

It made me angry to see his face,
 It had such a jesting look ;
 But while I made up my mind to speak,
 A small case-bottle he took :

Quoth he, "Though I gather the green water-cress,
My drink is not of the brook!"

Full manners-like he tender'd the dram;
Oh, it came of a dainty cask!
But, whenever it came to his turn to pull,
"Your leave, good Sir, I must ask;
But I always wipe the brim with my sleeve,
When a hangman sups at my flask!"

And then he laugh'd so loudly and long,
The churl was quite out of breath;
I thought the very Old One was come
To mock me before my death,
And wish'd I had buried the dead men's bones
That were lying about the heath!

But the beggar gave me a jolly clap—
"Come, let us pledge each other,
For all the wide world is dead beside,
And we are brother and brother—
I've a yearning for thee in my heart,
As if we had come of one mother.

"I've a yearning for thee in my heart
That almost makes me weep,
For as I pass'd from town to town
The folks were all stone-asleep,—
But when I saw thee sitting aloft,
It made me both laugh and leap!"

Now a curse (I thought) be on his love,
And a curse upon his mirth,—
An' it were not for that beggar man
I'd be the King of the earth,—
But I promised myself, an hour should come
To make him rue his birth!—

So down we sat and bous'd again
Till the sun was in mid-sky,

When, just when the gentle west-wind came,
 We hearken'd a dismal cry ;
 “ Up, up, on the tree,” quoth the beggar man
 “ Till these horrible dogs go by !”

And, lo ! from the forest's far-off skirts,
 They came all yelling for gore,
 A hundred hounds pursuing at once,
 And a panting hart before,
 Till he sunk adown at the gallows' foot
 And there his haunches they tore !

His haunches they tore, without a horn
 To tell when the chase was done ;
 And there was not a single scarlet coat
 To flaunt it in the sun !—
 I turn'd, and look'd at the beggar man,
 And his tears dropt one by one !

And with curses sore he chid at the hounds
 Till the last dropt out of sight,
 Anon, saith he, “ let's down again,
 And ramble for our delight,
 For the world's all free, and we may choose
 A right cozie barn for to-night !”

With that, he set up his staff on end,
 And it fell with the point due West ;
 So we far'd that way to a city great,
 Where the folks had died of the pest—
 It was fine to enter in house and hall,
 Wherever it liked me best ;—

For the porters all were stiff and cold,
 And could not lift their heads ;
 And when he came where their masters lay,
 The rats leapt out of the beds :—
 The grandest palaces in the land
 Were as free as workhouse sheds.

But the beggar man made a mumping face,
 And knoek'd at every gate:
 It made me curse to hear how he whin'd,
 So our fellowship turn'd to hate,
 And I badc him walk the world by himself,
 For I seorn'd so humble a mate!

So *he* turn'd right and *I* turn'd left,
 As if we had never met;
 And I chose a fair stone house for myself,
 For the city was all to let;
 And for three brave holidays drank my fill
 Of the choicest that I could get.

And because my jerkin was coarse and worn,
 I got me a properer vest;
 It was purple velvet, stitch'd o'er with gold,
 And a shining star at the breast,—
 'Twas enough to fetch old Joan from her grave
 To see me so purely drest!—

But Joan was dead and under the mould,
 And every buxom lass;
 In vain I watch'd at the window pane,
 For a Christian soul to pass;—
 But sheep and kine wander'd up the street,
 And brows'd on the new-come grass.—

When lo! I spied the old beggar man,
 And lustily he did sing!—
 His rags were lapp'd in a scarlet eloak,
 And a crown he had like a King;
 So he stept right up before my gate
 And daneed me a saucy fling!

Heaven mend us all!—but, within my mind,
 I had kill'd him then and there;
 To see him lording so braggart-like
 That was born to his beggar's fare,

And how he had stolen the royal crown
His betters were meant to wear.

But God forbid that a thief should die
Without his share of the laws !
So I nimbly whipt my tackle out,
And soon tied up his claws,—
I was judge myself, and jury, and all,
And solemnly tried the cause.

But the beggar man would not plead, but
cried
Like a babe without its corals,
For he knew how hard it is apt to go
When the law and a thief have quarrels,—
There was not a Christian soul alive
To speak a word for his morals.

Oh, how gaily I doff'd my costly gear,
And put on my work-day clothes ;
I was tired of such a long Sunday life,—
And never was one of the sloths ;
But the beggar man grumbled a weary deal,
And made many crooked mouths.

So I haul'd him off to the gallows' foot,
And blinded him in his bags ;
'Twas a weary job to heave him up,
For a doom'd man always lags ;
But by ten of the clock he was off his legs
In the wind and airing his rags !

So there he hung and there I stood,
The LAST MAN left alive,
To have my own will of all the earth :
Quoth I, now I shall thrive !
But when was ever honey made
With one bee in a hive !

My conscience began to know my heart,
 Before the day was done,
 For the other men's lives had all gone out,
 Like candles in the sun!—
 But it seem'd as if I had broke, at last,
 A thousand necks in one!

So I went and cut his body down,
 To bury it decentlie;—
 God send there were any good soul alive
 To do the like by me!
 But the wild dogs came with terrible speed,
 And bay'd me up the tree!

My sight was like a drunkard's sight,
 And my head began to swim,
 To see their jaws all white with foam,
 Like the ravenous ocean-brim;—
 But when the wild dogs trotted away
 Their jaws were bloody and grim!

Their jaws were bloody and grim, good Lord!
 But the beggar man, where was he?—
 There was nought of him but some ribbons of
 rags
 Below the gallows' tree!—
 I know the Devil, when I am dead,
 Will send his hounds for me!—

I've buried my babies one by one,
 And dug the deep hole for Joan,
 And cover'd the faces of kith and kin,
 And felt the old churchyard stone
 Go cold to my heart, full many a time,
 But I never felt so lone!

For the lion and Adam were company,
 And the tiger him beguil'd;
 But the simple kine are foes to my life,

And the household brutes are wild.
 If the veriest cur would lick my hand,
 I could love it like a child !

And the beggar man's ghost besets my dream,
 At night, to make me madder,—
 And my wretched conscience, within my breast,
 Is like a stinging adder ;—
 I sigh when I pass the gallows' foot,
 And look at the rope and ladder !

For hanging looks sweet,—but, alas ! in vain,
 My desperate fancy begs,—
 I must turn my cup of sorrows quite up,
 And drink it to the dregs,—
 For there is not another man alive,
 In the world, to pull my legs !

THE SEASON.

SUMMER'S gone and over !
 Fogs are falling down ;
 And with russet tinges
 Autumn's doing brown.

Boughs are daily rifled
 By the gusty thieves,
 And the Book of Nature
 Getteth short of leaves.

Round the tops of houses,
 Swallows, as they flit,
 Give, like yearly tenants,
 Notices to quit.

Skies, of fickle temper,
 Weep by turns, and laugh—

Night and Day together
Taking half-and-half.

So September endeth—
Cold, and most perverse—
But the Month that follows,
Sure will pinch us worse !

LOVE.

O LOVE! what art thou, Love? the ace of hearts,
Trumping earth's kings and queens, and all its
suits;

A player, masquerading many parts
In life's odd carnival;—a boy that shoots,
From ladies' eyes, such mortal woundy darts;
A gardener, pulling heart's-ease up by the roots;
The Puck of Passion—partly false—part real—
A marriageable maiden's "beau ideal."

O Love! what art thou, Love? a wicked thing,
Making green misses spoil their work at school;
A melancholy man, cross-gartering?
Grave ripe-faced wisdom made an April fool?
A youngster, tilting at a wedding ring?
A sinner, sitting on a cuttie stool?
A Ferdinand de Something in a hovel,
Helping Matilda Rose to make a novel?

O Love! what art thou, Love? one that is bad
With palpitations of the heart—like mine—
A poor bewilder'd maid, making so sad
A necklace of her garters—fell design!
A poet, gone unreasonably mad,
Ending his sonnets with a hempen line?
O Love!—but whither, now? forgive me, pray;
I'm not the first that Love hath led astray.

FAITHLESS SALLY BROWN.

AN OLD BALLAD.

YOUNG Ben he was a nice young man,
A carpenter by trade ;
And he fell in love with Sally Brown,
That was a lady's maid.

But as they fetch'd a walk one day,
They met a press-gang crew ;
And Sally she did faint away,
Whilst Ben he was brought to.

The Boatswain swore with wicked words,
Enough to shock a saint,
That though she did seem in a fit,
'Twas nothing but a feint.

“ Come, girl,” said he, “ hold up your head,
He'll be as good as me ;
For when your swain is in our boat,
A boatswain he will be.”

So when they'd made their game of her,
And taken off her elf,
She roused, and found she only was
A coming to herself.

“ And is he gone, and is he gone ? ”
She cried, and wept outright :
“ Then I will to the water side,
And see him out of sight.”

A waterman came up to her,
“ Now, young woman,” said he,
“ If you weep on so, you will make
Eye-water in the sea.”

“ Alas ! they’ve taken my beau, Ben,
 To sail with old Benbow ; ”
 And her woe began to run afresh,
 As if she’d said, Gee woe !

Says he, “ They’ve only taken him
 To the Tender-ship, you see ; ”
 “ The Tender-ship,” cried Sally Brown,
 “ What a hard-ship that must be !

“ Oh ! would I were a mermaid now,
 For then I’d follow him ;
 But Oh !—I’m not a fish-woman,
 And so I cannot swim.

“ Alas ! I was not born beneath
 The virgin and the scales,
 So I must curse my cruel stars,
 And walk about in Wales.”

Now Ben had sail’d to many a place
 That’s underneath the world ;
 But in two years the ship came home,
 And all her sails were furl’d.

But when he call’d on Sally Brown,
 To see how she got on,
 He found she’d got another Ben,
 Whose Christian-name was John.

“ Oh, Sally Brown, Oh, Sally Brown,
 How could you serve me so,
 I’ve met with many a breeze before,
 But never such a blow ! ”

Then reading on his ’bacco box,
 He heaved a heavy sigh,
 And then began to eye his pipe,
 And then to pipe his eye.

And then he tried to sing "All's Well,"
But could not, though he tried ;
His head was turn'd, and so he chew'd
His pigtail till he died.

His death, which happen'd in his birth,
At forty-odd befell :
They went and told the sexton, and
The sexton toll'd the bell.

FAITHLESS NELLY GRAY.

A PATHETIC BALLAD.

BEN BATTLE was a soldier bold,
And used to war's alarms ;
But a cannon-ball took off his legs,
So he laid down his arms !

Now as they bore him off the field,
Said he, " Let others shoot,
For here I leave my second leg,
And the Forty-second Foot !"

The army-surgeons made him limbs :
Said he, " They're only pegs :
But there's as wooden members quite,
As represent my legs !"

Now Ben he loved a pretty maid,
Her name was Nelly Gray ;
So he went to pay her his devours,
When he devoured his pay !

But when he called on Nelly Gray,
She made him quite a scoff ;

And when she saw his wooden legs,
Began to take them off!

“ Oh, Nelly Gray! Oh, Nelly Gray!
Is this your love so warm?
The love that loves a scarlet coat
Should be more uniform!”

Said she, “ I loved a soldier once,
For he was blithe and brave,
But I will never have a man
With both legs in the grave!

“ Before you had those timber toes,
Your love I did allow,
But then, you know, you stand upon
Another footing now!”

“ Oh, Nelly Gray! Oh, Nelly Gray!
For all your jeering speeches,
At duty's call, I left my legs,
In Badajos's *breaches!*”

“ Why then,” said she, “ you've lost the feet
Of legs in war's alarms,
And now you cannot wear your shoes
Upon your feats of arms!”

“ Oh, false and fickle Nelly Gray!
I know why you refuse:—
Though I've no feet—some other man
Is standing in my shoes!

“ I wish I ne'er had seen your face;
But, now, a long farewell!
For you will be my death;—alas!
You will not be my *Nell!*”

Now when he went from Nelly Gray,
His heart so heavy got—

And life was such a burthen grown,
It made him take a knot!

So round his melancholy neck,
A rope he did entwine,
And, for his second time in life,
Enlisted in the Line!

One end he tied around a beam,
And then removed his pegs,
And, as his legs were off,—of course,
He soon was off his legs!

And there he hung, till he was dead
As any nail in town,—
For, though distress had cut him up,
It could not cut him down!

A dozen men sat on his corpse,
To find out why he died—
And they buried Ben in four cross-roads,
With a *stake* in his inside!

BIANCA'S DREAM.

A VENETIAN STORY.

I.

BIANCA!—fair Bianca!—who could dwell
With safety on her dark and hazel gaze,
Nor find there lurk'd in it a witching spell,
Fatal to balmy nights and blessed days?
The peaceful breath that made the bosom swell,
She turn'd to gas, and set it in a blaze;
Each eye of hers had Love's Eupyrion in it,
That he could light his link at in a minute.

II.

So that, wherever in her charms she shone,
 A thousand breasts were kindled into flame ;
 Maidens who cursed her looks forgot their own,
 And beaux were turn'd to flambeaux where she
 came ;
 All hearts indeed were conquer'd but her own,
 Which none could ever temper down or tame :
 In short, to take our haberdasher's hints,
 She might have written over it,—“ From Flints.”

III.

She was, in truth, the wonder of her sex,
 At least in Venice—where with eyes of brown,
 Tenderly languid, ladies seldom vex
 An amorous gentle with a needless frown ;
 Where gondolas convey guitars by pecks,
 And love at casements climbeth up and down,
 Whom for his tricks and custom in that kind,
 Some have considered a Venetian blind.

IV.

Howbeit, this difference, was quickly taught,
 Amongst more youths who had this cruel jailor,
 To hapless Julio—all in vain he sought
 With each new moon his hatter and his tailor ;
 In vain the richest padusoy he bought,
 And went in bran new beaver to assail her—
 As if to show that Love had made him *smart*
 All over—and not merely round his heart.

V.

In vain he labour'd thro' the sylvan park
 Bianca haunted in—that where she came,
 Her learned eyes in wandering might mark
 The twisted cipher of her maiden name,
 Wholesomely going thro' a course of bark :
 No one was touch'd or troubled by his flame,

Except the Dryads, those old maids that grow
In trees,—like wooden dolls in embryo.

VI.

In vain complaining elegies he writ,
And taught his tuneful instrument to grieve,
And sang in quavers how his heart was split,
Constant beneath her lattice with each eve ;
She mock'd his wooing with her wicked wit,
And slash'd his suit so that it match'd his sleeve,
Till he grew silent at the vesper star,
And quite despairing, hamstring'd his guitar.

VII.

Bianca's heart was coldly frosted o'er
With snows unmelting—an eternal sheet,
But his was red within him, like the core
Of old Vesuvius, with perpetual heat ;
And oft he long'd internally to pour
His flames and glowing lava at her feet,
But when his burnings he began to spout,
She stopp'd his mouth, and put the *crater* out.

VIII.

Meanwhile he wasted in the eyes of men,
So thin, he seem'd a sort of skelcton-key
Suspended at death's door—so pale—and then
He turn'd as nervous as an aspen-tree ;
The life of man is threescore years and ten,
But he was perishing at twenty-three,
For people truly said, as grief grew stronger,
“ It could not shorten his poor life—much longer.”

IX.

For why, he neither slept, nor drank, nor fed,
Nor relish'd any kind of mirth below ;
Fire in his heart, and frenzy in his head,
Love had become his universal foe,
Salt in his sugar—nightmare in his bed,

At last, no wonder wretched Julio,
A sorrow-ridden thing, in utter dearth
Of hope,—made up his mind to cut her girth !

X.

For hapless lovers always died of old,
Sooner than chew reflection's bitter cud ;
So Thisbe stuck herself, what time 'tis told,
The tender-hearted mulberries wept blood ;
And so poor Sappho, when her boy was cold,
Drown'd her salt tear drops in a salter flood,
Their fame still breathing, tho' their breath be past,
For those old *suitors* lived beyond their last.

XI.

So Julio went to drown,—when life was dull,
But took his corks, and merely had a bath ;
And once, he pull'd a trigger at his skull,
But merely broke a window in his wrath ;
And once, his hopeless being to annul,
He tied a pack-thread to a beam of lath,
A line so ample, 'twas a query whether
'Twas meant to be a halter or a tether.

XII.

Smile not in scorn, that Julio did not thrust
His sorrows thro'—'tis horrible to die !
And come down with our little all of dust,
That dun of all the duns to satisfy ;
To leave life's pleasant city as we must,
In Death's most dreary sponging-house to lie,
Where even all our personals must go
To pay the debt of Nature that we owe !

XIII.

So Julio lived :—'twas nothing but a pet
He took at life—a momentary spite ;
Besides, he hoped that time would some day get
The better of love's flame, however bright ;

A thing that time has never compass'd yet,
 For love, we know, is an immortal light.
 Like that old fire, that, quite beyond a doubt,
 Was always in,—for none have found it out.

XIV.

Meanwhile, Bianca dream'd—'twas once when
 Night

Along the darken'd plain began to creep,
 Like a young Hottentot, whose eyes are bright,
 Altho' in skin as sooty as a sweep :
 The flow'rs had shut their eyes—the zephyr light
 Was gone, for it had rock'd the leaves to sleep,
 And all the little birds had laid their heads
 Under their wings—sleeping in feather beds.

XV.

Lone in her chamber sate the dark-eyed maid,
 By easy stages jaunting thro' her prayers,
 But list'ning side-long to a serenade,
 That robb'd the saints a little of their shares ;
 For Julio underneath the lattice play'd
 His Deh Vieni, and such amorous airs,
 Born only underneath Italian skies,
 Where every fiddle has a Bridge of Sighs.

XVI.

Sweet was the tune—the words were even sweeter,
 Praising her eyes, her lips, her nose, her hair,
 With all the common tropes wherewith in metre
 The hackney poets overcharge their fair.
 Her shape was like Diana's, but completer ;
 Her brow with Grecian Helen's might compare.
 Cupid, alas ! was cruel Sagittarius,
 Julio—the weeping water-man Aquarius.

XVII.

Now, after listing to such laudings rare,
 'Twas very natural indeed to go—

What if she did postpone one little pray'r—
 To ask her mirror "if it was not so?"
 'Twas a large mirror, none the worse for wear,
 Reflecting her'at once from top to toe:
 And there she gazed upon that glossy track,
 That show'd her front face tho' it "gave her
 back."

XVIII.

And long her lovely eyes were held in thrall,
 By that dear page where first the woman reads:
 That Julio was no flatt'rer, none at all,
 She told herself—and then she told her beads;
 Meanwhile, the nerves insensibly let fall
 Two curtains fairer than the lily breeds;
 For sleep had erept and kiss'd her unawares,
 ust at the half-way milestone of her pray'rs.

XIX.

Then like a drooping rose so bended she,
 Till her bow'd head upon her hand reposed;
 But still she plainly saw, or seem'd to see,
 That fair reflection, tho' her eyes were closed,
 A beauty bright as it was wont to be,
 A portrait Fancy painted while she dozed:
 'Tis very natural, some people say,
 To dream of what we dwell on in the day.

XX.

Still shone her face—yet not, alas! the same,
 But 'gan some dreary touches to assume,
 And sadder thoughts, with sadder changes came—
 Her eyes resign'd their light, her lips their
 bloom,
 Her teeth fell out, her tresses did the same,
 Her cheeks were tinged with bile, her eyes with
 rheum:
 There was a throbbing at her heart within,
 For, oh! there was a shooting in her chin.

XXI.

And lo! upon her sad desponding brow,
 The cruel trenches of besieging age,
 With seams, but most unseemly, 'gan to show
 Her place was booking for the seventh stage;
 And where her raven tresses used to flow,
 Some locks that time had left her in his rage,
 And some mock ringlets, made her forehead shady
 A compound (like our Psalms) of tête and braidy.

XXII.

'Then for her shape—alas! how Saturn wrecks,
 And bends, and corkscrews all the frame about,
 Doubles the hams, and crooks the straightest necks,
 Draws in the nape, and pushes forth the snout,
 Makes backs and stomachs concave or convex:
 Witness those pensioners call'd In and Out,
 Who all day watching first and second rater,
 Quaintly unbend themselves—but grow no
 straighter.

XXIII.

So Time with fair Bianca dealt, and made
 Her shape a bow, that once was like an arrow;
 His iron hand upon her spine he laid,
 And twisted all awry her “winsome marrow.”
 In truth it was a change!—she had obey'd
 The holy Pope before her chest grew narrow,
 But spectacles and palsy seem'd to make her
 Something between a Glassite and a Quaker.

XXIV.

Her grief and gall meanwhile were quite extreme,
 And she had ample reason for her trouble;
 For what sad maiden can endure to seem
 Set in for singleness, tho' growing double.
 The fancy madden'd her; but now the dream,
 Grown thin by getting bigger, like a bubble,

Burst,—but still left some fragments of its size,
That, like the soapsuds, smarted in her eyes.

XXV.

And here—just here—as she began to heed
The real world, her clock chimed out its score ;
A clock it was of the Venetian breed,
That cried the hour from one to twenty-four ;
The works moreover standing in some need
Of workmanship, it struck some dozens more ;
A warning voice that elench'd Bianca's fears,
Such strokes referring doubtless to her years.

XXVI.

At fifteen chimes she was but half a nun,
By twenty she had quite renounced the veil ;
She thought of Julio just at twenty-one,
And thirty made her very sad and pale,
To paint that ruin where her charms would run ;
At forty all the maid began to fail,
And thought no higher, as the late dream cross'd
her,
Of single blessedness, than single Gloster.

XXVII.

And so Bianca changed ;—the next sweet even,
With Julio in a black Venetian bark,
Row'd slow and stealthily—the hour, eleven,
Just sounding from the tow'r of old St. Mark
She sate with eyes turn'd quietly to heav'n,
Perchance rejoicing in the grateful dark
That veil'd her blushing cheek,—for Julio brought
her
Of course—to break the ice upon the water.

XXVIII.

But what a puzzle is one's serious mind
To open ;—oysters, when the ice is thick,
Are not so difficult and disinclined ;

And Julio felt the declaration stick
 About his throat in a most awful kind ;
 However, he contrived by bits to pick
 His trouble forth,—much like a rotten cork
 Groped from a long-neck'd bottle with a fork.

XXIX.

But love is still the quickest of all readers ;
 And Julio spent besides those signs profuse
 That English telegraphs and foreign pleaders,
 In help of language, are so apt to use,
 Arms, shoulders, fingers, all were interceders,
 Nods, shrugs, and bends,—Bianca could not
 choose
 But soften to his suit with more facility,
 He told his story with so much agility.

XXX.

“ Be thou my park, and I will be thy dear,
 (So he began at last to speak or quote ;)
 Be thou my bark, and I thy gondolier,
 (For passion takes this figurative note ;)
 Be thou my light, and I thy chandelier ;
 Be thou my dove, and I will be thy cote :
 My lily be, and I will be thy river ;
 Be thou my life—and I will be thy liver.”

XXXI.

This, with more tender logic of the kind,
 He pour'd into her small and shell-like ear,
 That timidly against his lips inclined ;
 Meanwhile her eyes glanced on the silver
 sphere
 That even now began to steal behind
 A dewy vapour, which was lingering near,
 Wherein the dull moon crept all dim and pale,
 Just like a virgin putting on the veil:—

XXXII.

Bidding adieu to all her sparks—the stars,
 That erst had woo'd and worshipping'd in her train,
 Saturn and Hesperus, and gallant Mars—
 Never to flirt with heavenly eyes again.
 Meanwhile, remindful of the convent bars,
 Bianca did not watch these signs in vain,
 But turn'd to Julio at the dark eclipse,
 With words, like verbal kisses, on her lips.

XXXIII.

He took the hint full speedily, and, back'd
 By love, and night, and the occasion's meetness,
 Bestow'd a something on her cheek that smack'd
 (Tho' quite in silence) of ambrosial sweetness;
 That made her think all other kisses lack'd
 Till then, but what she knew not, of complete-
 ness:
 Being used but sisterly salutes to feel,
 Insipid things—like sandwichees of veal.

XXXIV.

He took her hand, and soon she felt him wring
 The pretty fingers all instead of one;
 Anon his stealthy arm began to cling
 About her waist that had been elasp'd by none;
 Their dear confessions I forbear to sing,
 Since cold description would but be outrun;
 For bliss and Irish watehes have the pow'r,
 In twenty minutes, to lose half an hour!

THE DEMON-SHIP.

'TWAS off the Wash—the sun went down—the sea
 look'd black and grim,
 For stormy clouds with murky fleece, were muster-
 ing at the brim;

Titanic shades ! enormous gloom !—as if the solid
 night
 Of Erebus rose suddenly to seize upon the light !
 It was a time for mariners to bear a wary eye,
 With such a dark conspiracy between the sea and
 sky !

Down went my helm—close reef'd—the tack held
 freely in my hand—
 With ballast snug—I put about, and scudded for
 the land.
 Loud hiss'd the sea beneath her lee—my little boat
 flew fast,
 But faster still the rushing storm came borne upon
 the blast.
 Lord ! what a roaring hurricane beset the straining
 sail !
 What furious sleet, with level drift, and fierce
 assaults of hail !
 What darksome caverns yawn'd before ! what
 jagged steeps behind !
 Like battle-steeds, with foamy manes, wild tossing
 in the wind.
 Each after each sank down astern, exhausted in the
 chase,
 But where it sank another rose and gallop'd in its
 place ;
 As black as night—they turn'd to white, and cast
 against the cloud
 A snowy sheet, as if each surge upturn'd a sailor's
 shroud :
 Still flew my boat ; alas ! alas ! her course was
 nearly run !
 Behold you fatal billow rise—ten billows heap'd in
 one !
 With fearful speed the dreary mass came rolling,
 rolling, fast,
 As if the scooping sea contain'd one only wave at
 last !

As met my gaze, when first I look'd on that accursed
night!

I've seen a thousand horrid shapes begot of fierce
extremes

Of fever; and most frightful things have haunted
in my dreams—

Hyenas—cats—blood-loving bats—and apes with
hateful stare,—

Pernicious snakes, and shaggy bulls—the lion and
she-bear—

Strong enemies, with Judas looks, of treachery and
spite—

Detested features, hardly dimm'd and banish'd by
the light!

Pale-sheeted ghosts, with gory locks, upstarting
from their tombs—

All phantasies and images that flit in midnight
glooms—

Hags, goblins, demons, lemures, have made me all
aghast,—

But nothing like that GRIMLY ONE who stood
beside the mast!

His cheek was black—his brow was black—his
eyes and hair as dark:

His hand was black, and where it touch'd, it left
a sable mark;

His throat was black, his vest the same, and when
I look'd beneath,

His breast was black—all, all was black, except his
grinning teeth.

His sooty crew were like in hue, as black as Afric
slaves!

Oh, horror! e'en the ship was black that plough'd
the inky waves!

“Alas!” I cried, “for love of truth and blessed
mercy's sake,

Where am I? in what dreadful ship? upon what
dreadful lake?

What shape is that, so very grim, and black as any
coal?

It is Mahound, the Evil One, and he has gain'd
my soul!

Oh, mother dear! my tender nurse! dear meadows
that beguil'd

My happy days, when I was yet a little sinless
child,—

My mother dear—my native fields, I never more
shall see:

I'm sailing in the Devil's Ship, upon the Devil's
sea!"

Loud laugh'd that SABLE MARINER, and loudly
in return

His sooty crew sent forth a laugh that rang from
stem to stern—

A dozen pair of grimly cheeks were crumpled on
the nonce—

As many sets of grinning teeth came shining out at
once:

A dozen gloomy shapes at once enjoy'd the merry
fit,

With shriek and yell, and oaths as well, like demons
of the Pit.

They crow'd their fill, and then the Chief made
answer for the whole;—

"Our skins," said he, "are black ye see, because
we carry coal;

You'll find your mother sure enough, and see your
native fields—

For this here ship has pick'd you up—the Mary
Ann of Shields!"

SPRING.

A NEW VERSION.

Ham. "The air bites shrewdly—it is very cold.*Hor.* It is a nipping and an eager air." HAMLET.

"COME, *gentle* Spring! ethereal *mildness* come!"

Oh! Thomson, void of rhyme *às* well as reason,
How couldst thou thus poor human nature hum?
There's no such season.

The Spring! I shrink and shudder at her name!
For why, I find her breath a bitter blighter!
And suffer from her *blows* as if they came
From Spring the Fighter.

Her praises, then, let hardy poets sing,
And be her tuneful laureates and upholders,
Who do not feel as if they had a *Spring*
Pour'd down their shoulders!

Let others eulogize her floral shows,
From me they cannot win a single stanza,
I know her blooms are in full blow—and so's
The Influenza.

Her cowslips, stocks, and lilies of the vale,
Her honey-blossoms that you hear the bees at,
Her pansies, daffodils, and primrose pale,
Are things I sneeze at!

Fair is the vernal quarter of the year!
And fair its early buddings and its blowings—
But just suppose Consumption's seeds appear
With other sowings!

For me, I find, when eastern winds are high,
A frigid, not a genial inspiration:

Nor can, like Iron-Chested Chubb, defy
An inflammation.

Smitten by breezes from the land of plague,
To me all vernal luxuries are fables,
Oh! where's the *Spring* in a rheumatic leg,
Stiff as a table's?

I limp in agony,—I wheeze and cough;
And quake with Ague, that great Agitator;
Nor dream, before July, of leaving off
My Respirator.

What wonder if in May itself I lack
A peg for laudatory verse to hang on?
Spring mild and gentle!—yes, a Spring-heeled
Jack
To those he sprang on.

In short, whatever panegyrics lie
In fulsome odes too many to be cited,
The tenderness of Spring is all my eye,
And that is blighted!

THE FLOWER.

ALONE, across a foreign plain,
The Exile slowly wanders,
And on his Isle beyond the main
With sadden'd spirit ponders:

This lovely Isle beyond the sea,
With all its household treasures;
Its cottage homes, its merry birds,
And all its rural pleasures:

Its leafy woods, its shady vales,
 Its moors, and purple heather ;
 Its verdant fields bedeck'd with stars
 His childhood loved to gather :

When lo ! he starts, with glad surprise,
 Home-joys come rushing o'er him,
 For " modest, wee, and crimson-tipp'd,"
 He spies the flower before him !

With eager haste he stoops him down,
 His eyes with moisture hazy,
 And as he plucks the simple bloom,
 He murmurs, " Lawk-a-daisy !"

THE SEA-SPELL.

" *Cauld, cauld*, he lies beneath the deep."
Old Scotch Ballad.

It was a jolly mariner !
 The tallest man of three,—
 He loosed his sail against the wind,
 And turn'd his boat to sea :
 The ink-black sky told every eye,
 A storm was soon to be !

But still that jolly mariner
 Took in no reef at all,
 For, in his pouch, confidingly,
 He wore a baby's caul ;
 A thing, as gossip-nurses know,
 That always brings a squall !

His hat was new, or, newly glazed,
 Shone brightly in the sun ;
 His jacket, like a mariner's,

True blue as e'er was spun ;
His ample trousers, like Saint Paul,
Bore forty stripes save one.

And now the fretting foaming tide
He steer'd away to cross ;
The bounding pinnace play'd a game
Of dreary pitch and toss ;
A game that, on the good dry land,
Is apt to bring a loss !

Good Heaven befriend that little boat,
And guide her on her way !
A boat they say, has canvas wings,
But cannot fly away !
Though, like a merry singing-bird,
She sits upon the spray !

Still south by east the little boat,
With tawny sail, kept beating :
Now out of sight, between two waves,
Now o'er th' horizon fleeting ;
Like greedy swine that feed on mast,—
The waves her mast seem'd eating !

The sulken sky grew black above,
The wave as black beneath ;
Each roaring billow show'd full soon
A white and foamy wreath ;
Like angry dogs that snarl at first,
And then display their teeth.

The boatman look'd against the wind,
The mast began to creak,
The wave, per saltum, came and dried,
In salt upon his check !
The pointed wave against him rear'd,
As if it own'd a pique !

Nor rushing wind, nor gushing wave,
The boatman could alarm,
But still he stood away to sea,
And trusted in his charm ;
He thought by purchase he was safe,
And arm'd against all harm !

Now thick and fast and far aslant,
The stormy rain came pouring,
He heard, upon the sandy bank,
The distant breakers roaring,—
A groaning intermitting sound,
Like Gog and Magog snoring !

The sea-fowl shriek'd around the mast,
A-head the grampus tumbled,
And far off, from a copper cloud,
The hollow thunder rumbled ;
It would have quail'd another heart,
But his was never humbled.

For why ? he had that infant's caul ;
And wherefore should he dread ?
Alas ! alas ! he little thought,
Before the ebb-tide sped,—
That, like that infant, he should die,
And with a watery head !

The rushing brine flowed in apace ;
His boat had ne'er a deck :
Fate seem'd to call him on, and he
Attended to her beck ;
And so he went, still trusting on,
Though reckless—to his wreck !

For as he left his helm, to heave
The ballast bags a-weather,
'Three monstrous seas came roaring on,

Like lions leagued together.
The first two waves the little boat
Swam over like a feather,—

The first two waves were past and gone,
And sinking in her wake ;
The hugest still came leaping on,
And hissing like a snake.
Now helm a-lee ! for through the midst,
The monster he must take !

Ah me ! it was a dreary mount !
Its base as blaek as night,
Its top of pale and livid green,
Its crest of awful white,
Like Neptune with a leprosy,—
And so it rear'd upright !

With quaking sails the little boat
Climb'd up the foaming heap ;
With quaking sails it paused awhile,
At balance on the steep ;
Then, rushing down the nether slope,
Plunged with a dizzy sweep !

Look, how a horse, made mad with fear,
Disdains his eareful guide ;
So now the headlong headstrong boat,
Unmanaged, turus aside,
And straight presents her reeling flank
Against the swelling tide !

The gusty wind assaults the sail ;
Her ballast lies a-lee !
The sheet's to windward taut and stiff,
Oh ! the Lively—where is she ?
Her eapsized keel is in the foam,
Her pennon's in the sea !

The wild gull, sailing overhead,
 Three times beheld emerge
 The head of that bold mariner,
 And then she screamed his dirge !
 For he had sunk within his grave,
 Lapp'd in a shroud of surge !

The ensuing wave, with horrid foam,
 Rushed o'er and covered all,
 The jolly boatman's drowning scream
 Was smother'd by the squall,
 Heaven never heard his cry, nor did
 The ocean heed his *caul*.

A SAILOR'S APOLOGY FOR BOW-LEGS

There's some is born with their straight legs by
 natur—

And some is born with bow-legs from the first—
 And some that should have grow'd a good deal
 straighter,

But they were badly nurs'd,
 And set, you see, like Bacchus, with their pegs
 Astride of casks and kegs ;
 I've got myself a sort of bow to larboard,
 And starboard,
 And this is what it was that warp'd my legs.—

'Twas all along of Poll, as I may say,
 That foul'd my cable when I ought to slip ;
 But on the tenth of May,
 When I gets under weigh,
 Down there in Hartfordshire, to join my ship,
 I sees the mail
 Get under sail,
 The only one there was to make the trip.

Well—I gives chase,
 But as she run
 Two knots to one,
 'There warn't no use in keeping on the race !

Well—casting round about, what next to try on,
 And how to spin,
 I spies an ensign with a Bloody Lion,
 And bears away to leeward for the inn,
 Beats round the gable,
 And fetches up before the coach-horse stable :
 Well—there they stand, four kickers in a row,
 And so

I just makes free to cut a brown 'un's cable.
 But riding isn't in a seaman's natur—
 So I whips out a toughish end of yarn,
 And gets a kind of sort of a land-waiter
 To splice me, heel to heel,
 Under the she-mare's keel,
 And off I goes, and leaves the inn a-starn !

My eyes ! how she did pitch !
 And wouldn't keep her own to go in no line,
 Tho' I kept bowsing, bowsing at her bow-line,
 But always making lee-way to the ditch,
 And yaw'd her head about all sorts of ways.
 The devil sink the craft !

And wasn't she trimendous slack in stays !
 We couldn't, no how, keep the inn abaft !

Well—I suppose
 We hadn't run a knot—or much beyond—
 (What will you have on it ?)—but off she goes,
 Up to her bends in a fresh-water pond !

There I am !—all a-back !
 So I looks forward for her bridle-gears,
 To heave her head round on the t'other tack ;
 But when I starts,
 The leather parts,
 And goes away right over by the ears !

What could a fellow do,
 Whose legs, like mine, you know, were in the bil-
 boes,
 But trim myself upright for bringing-to,
 And square his yard-arms, and brace up his elbows,
 In rig all snug and clever,
 Just while his craft was taking in her water?
 I didn't like my burth tho', howsomdever,
 Because the yarn, you see, kept getting tauter,—
 Says I—I wish this job was rather shorter!

The ehase had gain'd a mile
 A-head, and still the she-mare stood a-drinking.
 Now, all the while
 Her body didn't take of course to shrinking.
 Says I, she's letting out her reefs, I'm thinking—
 And so she swell'd, and swell'd,
 And yet the tackle held,
 Till both my legs began to bend like winkin.
 My eyes! but she took in enough to founder!
 And there's my timbers straining every bit,
 Ready to split,
 And her tarnation hull a-growing rounder!

Well, there—off Hartford Ness,
 We lay both lash'd and water-logg'd together,
 And ean't eontrive a signal of distress;
 'Thinks I, we must ride out this here foul weather,
 Tho' sick of riding out—and nothing less;
 When, looking round, I sees a man a-starn:—
 Hollo! says I, come underneath her quarter!—
 And hands him out my knife to eut the yarn.
 So I gets off, and lands upon the road,
 And leaves the she-mare to her own consarn,
 A-standing by the water.
 If I get on another, I'll be blow'd!—
 And that's the way, you see, my legs got bow'd!

THE BACHELOR'S DREAM.

My pipe is lit, my grog is mix'd,
 My curtains drawn and all is snug;
 Old Puss is in her elbow-chair,
 And Tray is sitting on the rug.
 Last night I had a curious dream,
 Miss Susan Bates was Mistress Mogg—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog?

She look'd so fair, she sang so well,
 I could but woo and she was won,
 Myself in blue, the bride in white,
 The ring was placed, the deed was done!
 Away we went in chaise-and-four,
 As fast as grinning boys could flog—
 What d'yc think of that, my Cat?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog?

What loving tête-à-têtes to come!
 But tête-à-têtes must still defer!
 When Susan came to live with me,
 Her mother came to live with her!
 With sister Belle she couldn't part,
 But all *my* ties had leave to jog—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog?

The mother brought a pretty Poll—
 A monkey too, what work he made!
 The sister introduced a Beau—
 My Susan brought a favourite maid.
 She had a tabby of her own,—
 A snappish mongrel christen'd Gog—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog?

The Monkey bit—the Parrot scream'd,
 All day the sister strumm'd and sung;
 The petted maid was such a scold!
 My Susan learu'd to use her tongue;
 Her mother had such wretched health,
 She sate and croak'd like any frog—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog?

No longer Deary, Duck, and Love,
 I soon came down to simple "M!"
 The very servants cross'd my wish,
 My Susan let me down to them.
 The poker hardly seem'd my own,
 I might as well have been a log—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog?

My clothes they were the queerest shape!
 Such coats and hats she never met!
 My ways they were the oddest ways!
 My friends were such a vulgar set!
 Poor Tomkinson was snubb'd and huff'd,
 She could not bear that Mister Blogg—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog?

At times we had a spar, and then
 Mama must mingle in the song—
 The sister took a sister's part—
 The Maid declar'd her Master wrong—
 The Parrot learn'd to call me "Fool!"
 My life was like a London fog—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog?

My Susan's taste was superfine,
 As proved by bills that had no end—
 I never had a decent coat—

*I never had a coin to spend !
 She forced me to resign my Club,
 Lay down my pipe, retrench my grog—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat ?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog ?*

*Each Sunday night we gave a rout
 To fops and flirts, a pretty list ;
 And when I tried to steal away,
 I found my study full of whist !
 Then, first to come and last to go,
 There always was a Captain Hogg—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat ?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog ?*

*Now was not that an awful dream
 For one who single is and snug—
 With Pussy in the elbow-chair
 And Tray reposing on the rug ?
 If I must totter down the hill,
 'Tis safest done without a clog—
 What d'ye think of that, my Cat ?
 What d'ye think of that, my Dog ?*

THE WEE MAN.

A ROMANCE.

*It was a merry company,
 And they were just afloat,
 When lo ! a man, of dwarfish span,
 Came up and hail'd the boat.*

*“ Good morrow to ye, gentle folks,
 And will you let me in ?—
 A slender space will serve my case,
 For I am small and thin.”*

They saw he was a dwarfish man,
And very small and thin ;
Not seven such would matter much,
And so they took him in.

They laugh'd to see his little hat,
With such a narrow brim ;
They laugh'd to note his dapper coat,
With skirts so scant and trim.

But barely had they gone a mile
When, gravely, one and all,
At once began to think the man
Was not so very small.

His coat had got a broader skirt,
His hat a broader brim,
His leg grew stout, and soon plump'd out
A very proper limb.

Still on they went, and as they went,
More rough the billows grew,
And rose and fell, a greater swell,
And he was swelling too !

And lo ! where room had been for seven,
For six there scarce was space !
For five !—for four !—for three !—not more
Than two could find a place !

There was not even room for one !
They crowded by degrees—
Ay—closer yet, till elbows met,
And knees were jogging knees.

“ Good sir, you must not sit a-stern,
The wave will else come in !”
Without a word he gravely stirr'd,
Another seat to win.

“ Good sir, the boat has lost her trim,
 You must not sit a-lee !”
 With smiling face, and courteous grace,
 The middle seat took he.

But still, by constant quiet growth,
 His back became so wide,
 Each neighbour wight, to left and right,
 Was thrust against the side.

Lord ! how they chided with themselves,
 That they had let him in ;
 To see him grow so monstrous now,
 That came so small and thin.

On every brow a dew-drop stood,
 They grew so scared and hot,
 “ P the name of all that’s great and tall,
 Who are ye, sir, and what ? ”

Loud laugh’d the Gogmagog, a laugh
 As loud as giant’s roar—
 “ When first I came, my proper name
 Was Little—now I’m *Moore* ! ”

ETCHING MORALIZED.

TO A NOBLE LADY.

“ To point a moral.”—JOHNSON.

FAIREST Lady and Noble, for once on a time,
 Condescend to accept, in the humblest of rhyme,
 And a style more of Gay than of Milton,
 A few opportune verses design’d to impart
 Some didactical hints in a Needlework Art,
 Not described by the Countess of Wilton.

An Art not unknown to the delicate hand
 Of the fairest and first in this insular land,
 But in Patronage Royal delighting;
 And which now your own feminine fantasy wins,
 Tho' it scarce seems a lady-like work that begins
 In a *scratching* and ends in a *biting*!

Yet oh! that the dames of the Scandalous School
 Would but use the same acid, and sharp-pointed
 tool,

That are plied in the said operations— [sketch!
 Oh! would that our Candours on copper would
 For the first of all things in beginning to etch
 Are—good *grounds* for our representations.

Those protective and delicate coatings of wax,
 Which are meant to resist the corrosive attacks
 That would ruin the copper completely;
 Thin cerements which whoso remembers the Bee
 So applauded by Watts, the divine LL. D.,
 Will be careful to spread very neatly.

For why? like some intricate deed of the law,
 Should the ground in the process be left with a
 flaw,

Aquafortis is far from a joker;
 And attacking the part that no coating protects,
 Will turn out as distressing to all your *effects*
 As a landlord who puts in a broker.

Then carefully spread the conservative stuff,
 Until all the bright metal is cover'd enough,
 To repel a destructive so active;
 For in Etching, as well as in Morals, pray note
 That a little raw spot, or a hole in a coat,
 Your ascetics find vastly attractive.

Thus the ground being laid, very even and flat,
 And then smoked with a taper, till black as a hat,

Still from future disasters to screen it,
 Just allow me, by way of precaution, to state,
 You must hinder the footman from changing your
plate,
 Nor yet suffer the butler to clean it.

Nay, the Housemaid, perchance, in her passion to
 scrub,
 May suppose the dull metal in want of a rub,
 Like the Shield which Swift's readers remem-
 ber—
 Not to mention the chance of some other mis-
 haps,
 Such as having your copper made up into caps
 To be worn on the First of September.

But aloof from all damage by Betty or John,
 You secure the veil'd surface, and trace thereupon
 The design you conceive the most proper :
 Yet gently, and not with a needle too keen,
 Lest it pierce to the wax through the paper be-
 tween,
 And of course play Old Scratch with the copper.

So in worldly affairs, the sharp-practising man
 Is not always the one who succeeds in his plan,
 Witness Shylock's judicial exposure ;
 Who, as keen as his knife, yet with agony found,
 That while urging his *point* he was losing his
ground,
 And incurring a fatal disclosure.

But, perhaps, without tracing at all, you may
 choose
 To indulge in some little extempore views,
 Like the old artistical people ;
 For example, a Corydon playing his pipe,
 In a Low Country marsh, with a Cow after Cuypp,
 And a Goat skipping over a steeple.

A wild Deer at a rivulet taking a sup,
 With a couple of pillars put in to fill up,
 Like the columns of certain diurnals;
 Or a very brisk sea, in a very stiff gale,
 And a very Dutch boat, with a very big sail—
 Or a bevy of Retzsch's Infernals.

Architectural study—or rich Arabesque—
 Allegorical dream—or a view picturesque,
 Near to Naples, or Venice, or Florence;
 Or “as harmless as lambs and as gentle as doves,”
 A sweet family cluster of plump little Loves,
 Like the Children by Reynolds or Lawrence.

But whatever the subject, your exquisite taste
 Will ensure a design very charming and chaste,
 Like yourself, full of nature and beauty—
 Yet besides the *good points* you already reveal,
 You will need a few others—of well temper'd steel,
 And especially form'd for the duty.

For suppose that the tool be imperfectly set,
 Over many *weak lengths in your line* you will fret,
 Like a pupil of Walton and Cotton,
 Who remains by the brink of the water, agape,
 While the jack, trout, or barbel, effects its escape
 Thro' the gut or silk line being rotten.

Therefore let the steel point be set truly and round,
 That the finest of strokes may be even and sound,
 Flowing glibly where fancy would lead 'em.
 But alas! for the needle that fetters the hand,
 And forbids even sketches of Liberty's land
 To be drawn with the requisite freedom!

Oh! the botches I've seen by a tool of the sort,
 Rather hitching than etching, and making, in short,
 Such stiff, crabbed, and angular scratches,
 That the figures seem'd statues or mummies from
 tombs,

While the trees were as rigid as bundles of brooms,
And the herbage like bunches of matches!

The stiff clouds as if carefully iron'd and starch'd,
While a cast-iron bridge, meant for wooden, o'er-
arch'd

Something more like a road than a river.
Prythee, who in such characteristics could see
Any trace of the beautiful land of the free—
The Free-Mason—Free-Trader—Free-Liver!

But prepared by a hand that is skilful and nice,
The fine point glides along like a skate on the ice,
At the will of the Gentle Designer,
Who impelling the needle just presses so much,
That each line of her labour *the copper may touch*,
As if done by a penny-a-liner.

And behold! how the fast-growing images gleam!
Like the sparkles of gold in a sunshiny stream,
Till perplex'd by the glittering issue,
You repine for a light of a tenderer kind—
And in choosing a substance for making a blind,
Do not sneeze at the paper call'd *tissue*.

For, subdued by the sheet so transparent and white,
Your design will appear in a soberer light,
And reveal its defects on inspection,
Just as Glory achieved, or political scheme,
And some more of our dazzling performances seem
Not so bright on a *cooler reflection*.

So the Juvenile Poet with ecstasy views
His first verses, and dreams that the songs of his
Muse

Are as brilliant as Moore's, and as tender—
Till some critical sheet scans the faulty design,
And alas! *takes the shine out of every line*
That had form'd such a vision of splendour.

Certain objects, however, may come in your sketch,
 Which, design'd by a hand unaccustom'd to etch,
 With a luckless result may be branded ;
 Wherefore add this particular rule to your code,
 Let all vehicles take the *wrong* side of the road,
 And man, woman, and child, be *left-handed*.

Yet regard not the awkward appearance with
 doubt,
 But remember how often mere blessings fall out,
 That at first seem'd no better than curses ;
 So, till *things take a turn*, live in hope, and depend
 That whatever is wrong will come right in the end.
 And console you for all your *reverses*.

But of errors why speak, when for beauty and
 truth,
 Your free, spirited Etching is worthy, in sooth,
 Of that Club (may all honour betide it!)
 Which, tho' dealing in copper, by genius and taste,
 Has accomplish'd *a service of plate* not disgraced
 By the work of a Goldsmith beside it!*

So your sketch superficially drawn on the plate,
 It becomes you to fix in a permanent state,
 Which involves a precise operation,
 With a keen biting fluid, which *eating its way*—
 As in other professions is common they say—
 Has attain'd an artistical station.

And it's oh ! that some splenetic folks I could name
 If they *must* deal in acids would use but the same,
 In such innocent graphical labours !
 In the place of the virulent spirit wherewith—
 Like the polecat, the weasel, and things of that
 kith—
 They keep biting the backs of their neighbours!

* The Deserted Village. Illustrated by the Etching Club.

But beforehand, with wax or the shoemaker's
pitch,
You must build a neat dyke round the margin, in
which

You may pour the dilute aquafortis.
For if raw, like a dram, it will shock you to trace,
Your design with a horrible froth on its face,
Like a wretch in articulo mortis.

Like a wretch in the pangs that too many endure,
From the use of *strong waters*, without any pure,
A vile practice, most sad and improper!
For, from painful examples, this warning is found,
That the raw burning spirit will *take up the ground*,
In the churchyard, as well as on copper!

But the Acid has duly been lower'd, and bites
Only just where the visible metal invites,
Like a nature inclined to meet troubles ;
And behold ! as each slender and glittering line
Effervesces, you trace the completed design
In an elegant bead-work of bubbles !

And yet, constantly, secretly, eating its way,
The shrewd acid is making the substance its prey,
Like some sorrow beyond inquisition,
Which is gnawing the heart and the brain all the
while
That the face is illumined by its cheerfulest smile,
And the wit is in bright ebullition.

But still stealthily feeding, the treacherous stuff
Has corroded and deepened some portions
enough—

The pure sky, and the water so placid—
And these tenderer tints to defend from attack,
With some turpentine, varnish, and sooty lamp-
black

You must *stop* out the ferreting acid.

But before with the varnishing brush you proceed,
 Let the plate with cold water be thoroughly freed
 From the other less innocent liquor—
 After which, on whatever you want to protect,
 Put a *coat* that will act to that very effect,
 Like the black one that hangs on the Vicar.

Then the varnish well dried—urge the biting
 again,
 But how long at its meal the *eau forte* may re-
 main,
 Time and practice alone can determine :
 But of course not so long that the Mountain, and
 Mill,
 The rude Bridge, and the Figures, whatever you
 will,
 Are as black as the spots on your ermine.

It is true, none the less, that a dark-looking scrap,
 With a sort of Blackheath, and Black Forest, may-
 hap,
 Is considered as rather Rembrandty ;
 And that very black cattle, and very black sheep,
 A black dog, and a shepherd as black as a sweep
 Are the pets of some great Dilettante.

So with certain designers, one needs not to name,
 All this life is a dark scene of sorrow and shame,
 From our birth to our final adjourning—
 Yea, this excellent earth and its glories, alack !
 What with ravens, palls, cottons, and devils, as
 black
 As a Warehouse for Family Mourning !

But before your own picture arrives at that pitch,
 While the lights are still light, and the shadows
 though rich,
 More transparent than ebony shutters,
 Never minding what Black-Arted critics may say,

Stop the biting, and pour the green fluid away,
As you please, into bottles or gutters.

Then removing the ground and the wax *at a heat*,
Cleansc the surface with oil, spermaceti, or sweet—
For your hand a performance scarce proper—
So some careful professional person secure—
For the Laundress will not be a safe amateur—
To assist you in *cleaning the copper*.

And, in truth, 'tis a rather unpleasantish job,
To be done on a hot German stove, or a hob—
Though as sure of an instant forgetting
When—as after the dark clearing off of a storm—
The fair landscape shines out in a lustre as warm
As the glow of the sun in its setting!

Thus your Etching complete, it remains but to hint,
That with certain assistance from paper and print,
Which the proper Mechanic will settle,
You may charm all your Friends—without any sad
tale
Of such perils and ills as beset Lady Sale—
With a *fine India Proof of your Metal*.

DEATH'S RAMBLE.

ONE day the dreary old King of Death
Inclined for some sport with the carnal,
So he tied a pack of darts on his back,
And quietly stole from his charnel.

His head was bald of flesh and of hair,
His body was lean and lank,
His joints at each stir made a crack, and the cur
Took a gnaw, by the way, at his shank.

And what did he do with his deadly darts,
This goblin of grisly bone ?
He dabbled and spill'd man's blood, and he kill'd
Like a butcher that kills his own.

The first he slaughter'd it made him laugh,
(For the man was a coffin-maker,)
To think how the mutes, and men in black suits,
Would mourn for an undertaker.

Death saw two Quakers sitting at church,
Quoth he, " We shall not differ."
And he let them alone, like figures of stone,
For he could not make them stiffer.

He saw two duellists going to fight,
In fear they could not smother ;
And he shot one through at once—for he knew
They never would shoot each other.

He saw a watchman fast in his box,
And he gave a snore infernal ;
Said Death, " He may keep his breath, for his sleep
Can never be more eternal."

He met a coachman driving his coach
So slow, that his fare grew sick ;
But he let him stray on his tedious way,
For Death only wars on the *quick*.

Death saw a tollman taking a toll,
In the spirit of his fraternity ;
But he knew that sort of man would extort,
Though summon'd to all eternity.

He found an author writing his life,
But he let him write no further ;
For Death, who strikes whenever he likes,
Is jealous of all self-murder !

Death saw a patient that pull'd out his purse,
 And a doctor that took the sum;
 But he let them be—for he knew that the “fee”
 Was a prelude to “faw” and “fum.”

He met a dustman ringing a bell,
 And he gave him a mortal thrust;
 For himself, by law, since Adam's flaw,
 Is contractor for all our dust.

He saw a sailor mixing his grog,
 And he mark'd him out for slaughter;
 For on water he scarcely had cared for Death,
 And never on rum-and-water.

Death saw two players playing at eards,
 But the game wasn't worth a dump,
 For he quickly laid them flat with a spade,
 To wait for the final trump!

THE PROGRESS OF ART.

O HAPPY time! Art's early days!
 When o'er each deed, with sweet self-praise,
 Narcissus-like I hung!
 When great Rembrandt but little seem'd,
 And such Old Masters all were deem'd,
 As nothing to the young!

Some scratchy strokes—abrupt and few,
 So easily and swift I drew,
 Sufficed for my design;
 My sketchy, superficial hand,
 Drew solids at a dash—and spann'd
 A surfaee with a line.

Not long my eye was thus content,
 But grew more critical—my bent
 Essay'd a higher walk ;
 I copied leaden eyes in lead—
 Rheumatic hands in white and red,
 And gouty feet—in chalk.

Anon my studious art for days
 Kept making faces—happy phrase,
 For faces such as mine !
 Accomplish'd in the details then,
 I left the minor parts of men,
 And drew the form divine.

Old Gods and Heroes—Trojan—Greek,
 Figures—long after the antique,
 Great Ajax justly fear'd ;
 Hectors, of whom at night I dreamt,
 And Nestor, fringed enough to tempt
 Bird-nesters to his beard.

A Bacchus, leering on a bowl,
 A Pallas, that out-stared her owl,
 A Vulcan—very lame ;
 A Dian stuck about with stars,
 With my right hand I murder'd Mars—
 (One Williams did the same.)

But tired of this dry work at last,
 Crayon and chalk aside I cast,
 And gave my brush a drink ?
 Dipping—" as when a painter dips
 In gloom of earthquake and eclipse,"—
 That is—in Indian ink.

Oh then, what black Mont Blancs arose,
 Crested with soot, and not with snows :
 What clouds of dingy hue !
 In spite of what the bard has penn'd,

I fear the distance did not "lend
Enchantment to the view."

Not Radclyffe's brush did e'er design
Black Forests, half so black as mine,
Or lakes so like a pall;
The Chinese cake dispersed a ray
Of darkness, like the light of Day
And Martin over all.

Yet urchin pride sustain'd me still,
I gazed on all with right good will,
And spread the dingy tint;
"No holy Luke help'd me to paint,
The Devil surely, not a Saint,
Had any finger in't!"

But colours came!—like morning light,
With gorgeous hues displacing night,
Or Spring's enliven'd scene:
At once the sable shades withdrew;
My skies got very, very blue;
My trees extremely green.

And wash'd by my cosmetic brush,
How Beauty's cheek began to blush;
With lock of auburn stain—
(Not Goldsmith's Auburn)—nut-brown hair,
That made her loveliest of the fair;
Not "loveliest of the plain!"

Her lips were of vermilion hue;
Love in her eyes, and Prussian blue,
Set all my heart in flame!
A young Pygmalion, I adored
The maids I made—but time was stored
With evil—and it came!

Perspective dawn'd—and soon I saw
My houses stand against its law;

And "keeping" all unkept!
 My beauties were no longer things
 For love and fond imaginings;
 But horrors to be wept!

Ah! why did knowledge ope my eyes?
 Why did I get more artist-wise?
 It only serves to hint,
 What grave defects and wants are mine;
 That I'm no Hilton in design—
 In nature no Dewint!

Thrice happy time!—Art's early days!
 When o'er each deed with sweet self-praise,
 Narcissus-like I hung!
 When great Rembrandt but little seem'd,
 And such Old Masters all were deem'd
 As nothing to the young!

A FAIRY TALE.

On Hounslow heath—and close beside the road,
 As western travellers may oft have seen,—
 A little house some years ago there stood,
 A minikin abode;
 And built like Mr. Birkbeck's, all of wood;
 The walls of white, the window-shutters green;—
 Four wheels it had at North, South, East, and West,
 ('Tho' now at rest)
 On which it used to wander to and fro,
 Because its master ne'er maintain'd a rider,
 Like those who trade in Paternoster Row;
 But made his business travel for itself,
 Till he had made his pelf,
 And then retired—if one may call it so,
 Of a roadsider.

Perchance, the very race and constant riot
 Of stages, long and short, which thereby ran,
 Made him more relish the repose and quiet
 Of his now sedentary caravan ;
 Perchance, he loved the ground because 'twas
 common,
 And so he might impale a strip of soil,
 That furnish'd, by his toil,
 Some dusty greens, for him and his old woman ;—
 And five tall hollyhocks, in dingy flower.
 Howbeit, the thoroughfare did no ways spoil
 His peace,—unless, in some unlucky hour,
 A stray horse came and gobbled up his bow'r !

But, tired of always looking at the coaches,
 The same to come,—when they had seen them one
 day !

And, used to brisker life, both man and wife
 Began to suffer N U F's approaches,
 And feel retirement like a long wet Sunday,—
 So, having had some quarters of school-breeding,
 They turn'd themselves, like other folks, to reading ;
 But setting out where others nigh have done,
 And being ripen'd in the seventh stage,
 The childhood of old age,
 Began, as other children have begun,—
 Not with the Pastorals of Mr. Pope,
 Or Bard of Hope,
 Or Paley ethical, or learned Porson,—
 But spelt, on Sabbaths, in St. Mark, or John,
 And then relax'd themselves with Whittington,
 Or Valentine and Orson—
 But chiefly fairy tales they loved to con,
 And being easily melted, in their dotage,
 Slobber'd,—and kept
 Reading,—and wept
 Over the White Cat, in their wooden cottage.

Thus reading on—the longer [stronger
 They read, of course, their childish faith grew

In Gnomes, and Hags, and Elves, and Giants
 grim,—
 If talking Trees and Birds reveal'd to him,
 She saw the flight of Fairyland's fly-wagons,
 And magic-fishes swim
 In puddle ponds, and took old crows for dragons,—
 Both were quite drunk from the enchanted flagons;
 When, as it fell upon a summer's day,
 As the old man sat a feeding
 On the old babe-reading,
 Beside his open street-and-parlour door,
 A hideous roar
 Proclaim'd a drove of beasts was coming by the way.

Long-horn'd, and short, of many a different breed,
 Tall, tawny brutes, from famous Lincoln-levels,
 Or Durham feed,
 With some of those unquiet black dwarf devils
 From nether side of Tweed,
 Or Firth of Forth ;
 Looking half wild with joy to leave the North,—
 With dusty hides, all mobbing on together,—
 When,—whether from a fly's malicious comment
 Upon his tender flank, from which he shrank ;
 Or whether
 Only in some enthusiastic moment,—
 However, one brown monster, in a frisk,
 Giving his tail a perpendicular whisk,
 Kick'd out a passage thro' the beastly rabble ;
 And after a pas seul,—or, if you will, a
 Horn-pipe before the Basket-maker's villa,
 Leapt o'er the tiny pale,—
 Back'd his beef-steaks against the wooden gable,
 And thrust his brawny bell-rope of a tail
 Right o'er the page,
 Wherein the sage
 Just then was spelling some romantic fable.

The old man, half a scholar, half a dunce,

Could not peruse,—who could?—two tales at once ;

 And being huff'd
At what he knew was none of Riquet's Tuft,
 Bang'd-to the door,
But most unluckily enclosed a morsel
Of the intruding tail, and all the tassel :—
 The monster gave a roar,
And bolting off with speed, increased by pain,
The little house became a coach once more,
And, like Macheath, “ took to the road ” again !

Just then, by fortune's whimsical decree,
The ancient woman stooping with her crupper
Towards sweet home, or where sweet home should
 be,

Was getting up some household herbs for supper :
Thoughtful of Cinderella, in the tale,
And quaintly wondering if magic shifts
Could o'er a common pumpkin so prevail,
To turn it to a coach,—what pretty gifts
Might come of cabbages, and curly kale :
Meanwhile she never heard her old man's wail,
Nor turn'd, till home had turn'd a corner, quite,
 Gone out of sight !

At last, conceive her, rising from the ground,
Weary of sitting on her russet clothing ;
 And looking round
 Where rest was to be found,
There was no house—no villa there—no nothing !
 No house !

 The change was quite amazing ;
It made her senses stagger for a minute,
The riddle's explication seem'd to harden ;
But soon her superannuated *nous*
Explained the horrid mystery ;—and raising
Her hand to heaven, with the cabbage in it,
 On which she meant to sup,—

“ Well! this is Fairy Work! I’ll bet a farden,
 Little Prince Silverwings has ketch’d me up,
 And set me down in some one else’s garden!”

THE TURTLES.

A FABLE.

“ The rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle.”
 BYRON.

ONE day, it was before a civic dinner,
 Two London Aldermen, no matter which,
 Cordwainer, Girdler, Patten-maker, Skinner—
 But both were florid, corpulent, and rich,
 And both right fond of festive demolition,
 Set forth upon a secret expedition.
 Yet not, as might be fancied from the token,
 To Pudding Lane, Pie Corner, or the Street
 Of Bread, or Grub, or anything to eat,
 Or drink, as Milk, or Vintry, or Portsoken,
 But eastward to that more aquatic quarter,
 Where folks take water,
 Or bound on voyages, secure a berth
 For Antwerp or Ostend, Dundee or Perth,
 Calais, Boulogne, or any Port on earth!

Jostled and jostling, through the mud,
 Peculiar to the Town of Lud,
 Down narrow streets and crooked lanes they dived,
 Past many a gusty avenue, through which
 Came yellow fog, and smell of pitch,
 From barge, and boat, and dusky wharf derived;
 With darker fumes, brought, eddying by the
 draught,
 From loco-smoko-motive craft;

Mingling with scents of butter, cheese, and gammons,
 Tea, coffee, sugar, pickles, rosin, wax,
 Hides, tallow, Russia-matting, hemp and flax,
 Salt-cod, red-herrings, sprats, and kipper'd salmons,
 Nuts, oranges, and lemons,
 Each pungent spice, and aromatic gum,
 Gas, pepper, soaplees, brandy, gin, and rum ;
 Alamode-beef and greens—the London soil—
 Glue, coal, tobacco, turpentine, and oil,
 Bark, assafœtida, squills, vitriol, hops,
 In short, all whiffs, and sniffs, and puffs, and snuffs,
 From metals, minerals, and dyewood stuffs,
 Fruits, victual, drink, solidities, or slops—
 In flasks, casks, bales, trucks, wagons, taverns,
 shops,
 Boats, lighters, cellars, wharfs, and warehouse-tops,
 That, as we walk upon the river's ridge,
 Assault the nose—below the bridge.

A walk, however, as tradition tells,
 That once a poor blind Tobit used to choose,
 Because, incapable of other views,
 He met with "such a sight of smells."
 But on, and on, and on,
 In spite of all unsavoury shocks,
 Progress the stout Sir Peter and Sir John,
 Steadily steering ship-like for the docks—
 And now they reach a place the Muse, unwilling,
 Recalls for female slang and vulgar doing,
 The famous Gate of Billing
 That does not lead to cooing—
 And now they pass that House that is so ugly
 A Customer to people looking smuggl'y—
 And now along that fatal Hill they pass
 Where centuries ago an Oxford bled,
 And proved—too late to save his life, alas!—
 That *he* was "off his head."

At last before a lofty brick-built pile
 Sir Peter stopp'd, and with mysterious smile
 Tingled a bell that served to bring
 The wire-drawn genius of the ring,
 A species of commercial Samuel Weller—
 To whom Sir Peter, tipping him a wink,
 And something else to drink,
 “ Show us the cellar.”

Obsequious bow'd the man, and led the way
 Down sundry flights of stairs, where windows small,
 Dappled with mud, let in a dingy ray—
 A dirty tax, if they were tax'd at all.
 At length they came into a cellar damp,
 With venerable eobwebs fringed around,
 A cellar of that stamp
 Which often harbours vintages renown'd,
 The feudal Hock, or Burgundy the courtly,
 With sherry, brown or golden,
 Or port, so olden,
 Bereft of body 'tis no longer portly—
 But old or otherwise—to be veracious—
 That eobwebb'd cellar, damp, and dim, and spacious,
 Held nothing crusty—but crustaceous.

Prone on the chilly floor,
 Five splendid turtles—such a five !
 Natives of some West Indian shore
 Were flapping all alive,
 Late landed from the Jolly Planter's yawl—
 A sight whereon the dignitaries fix'd
 Their eager eyes, with ecstasy unmix'd,
 Like fathers that behold their infants crawl,
 Enjoying every little kick and sprawl.
 Nay—far from fatherly the thoughts they bred,
 Poor loggerheads from far Ascension ferried !
 The aldermen too plainly wish'd them dead
 And Aldermanbury'd !
 “ There !” cried Sir Peter, with an air

Triumphant as an ancient victor's,
 And pointing to the creatures rich and rare,
 "There's picters!"

"Talk of Olympic Games! They're not worth
 mention;
 The real prize for wrestling is when Jack,
 In Providence or Ascension,
 Can throw a lively turtle on its back!"

"Ay!" cried Sir John, and with a score of
 nods,
 Thoughtful of classical symposium,
 "There's food for Gods!
 There's nectar! there's ambrosium!
 There's food for Roman Emperors to eat—
 Oh, there had been a treat
 (Those ancient names will sometimes hobble us)
 For Helio-gobble-us!"

"There were a feast for Alexander's Feast!
 The real sort—none of your mock or spurious!"
 And then he mention'd Aldermen deccased,
 And "Epicurius,"
 And how Tertullian had enjoy'd such foison;
 And speculated on that *verdigrease*
 That isn't poison.

"Talk of your Spring, and verdure, and all that!
 Give *me* green fat!
 As for your Poets with their groves of myrtles
 And billing turtles,
 Give me, for poetry, them Turtles there,
 A-billing in a bill of fare!"

"Of all the things I ever swallow—
 Good, well-dress'd turtle beats them hollow—
 It almost makes me wish, I vow,
 To have *two* stomachs, like a cow!"

And lo! as with the cud, an inward thrill
 Upheaved his waistcoat and disturb'd his frill,
 His mouth was oozing and he work'd his jaw—
 "I almost think that I could eat one raw!"

And thus, as "inward love breeds outward talk,"
 The portly pair continued to discourse;
 And then—as Gray describes of life's divorce,—
 With "longing lingering look" prepared to
 walk,—

Having thro' one delighted sense, at least,
 Enjoy'd a sort of Barmecidal feast,
 And with prophetic gestures, strange to see,
 Forestall'd the civic Banquet yet to be,
 Its callipash and callipee!

A pleasant prospect—but alack!
 Scarcely each Alderman had turn'd his back,
 When seizing on the moment so propitious,
 And having learn'd that they were so delicious
 To bite and sup,
 From praises so high flown and injudicious,—
 And nothing could be more pernicious!
 The turtles fell to work, and ate each other up!

Moral.

Never, from folly or urbanity,
 Praise people thus profusely to their faces,
 Till quite in love with their own graces,
 They're eaten up by vanity!

THE DESERT-BORN.

“Fly to the desert, fly with me.”

LADY HESTER STANHOPE.

'TWAS in the wilds of Lebanon, amongst its barren
hills,—
To think upon it, even now, my very blood it
chills!—
My sketch-book spread before me, and my pencil
in my hand,
I gazed upon the mountain range, the red tumult-
uous sand,
The plummy palms, the sombre firs, the cedars tall
and proud,—
When lo! a shadow pass'd across the paper like a
cloud,
And looking up I saw a form, apt figure for the
scene,
Methought I stood in presence of some oriental
queen!

The turban on her head was white as any driven
snow;
A purple bandalctte past o'er the lofty brow
below,
And thence upon her shoulders fell, by either
jewell'd ear;
In yellow folds voluminous she wore her long
cachemere;
Whilst underneath, with ample sleeves, a Turkish
robe of silk
Envelop'd her in drapery the colour of new
milk;
Yet oft it floated wide in front, disclosing under-
neath
A gorgeous Persian tunic, rich with many a
broider'd wreath,

Compell'd by clasps of costly pearl around her
 neck to meet—
 Aud yellow as the amber were the buskins on
 her feet!

Of course I bow'd my lowest bow—of all the things
 on earth,
 The reverence due to loveliness, to rank, or ancient
 birth,
 'To pow'r, to wealth, to genius, or to any thing
 uncommon,
 A man should bend the lowest in a *Desert* to a
Woman!

Yet some strange influence stronger still, though
 vague and undefined,
 Compell'd me, and with magic might subdued my
 soul and mind;

There was a something in her air that drew the
 spirit nigh,
 Beyond the common witchery that dwells in
 woman's eye!

With reverence deep, like any slave of that pecu-
 liar land,

I bow'd my forehead to the earth, and kissed the
 arid sand;

And then I touched her garment's hem, devoutly
 as a Dervise, [vicc.

Predestinated (so I felt) for ever to her ser-

Nor was I wrong in auguring thus my fortune
 from her face,

She knew me, seemingly, as well as any of her
 race;

“Welcome!” she cried, as I uprose submissive to
 my feet;

“It was ordain'd that you and I should in this
 desert meet!

Ay, ages since, before thy soul had burst its
 prison bars,

This interview was promised in the language of
 the stars!"
 Then elapping, as the Easterns wont, her all-
 commanding hands,
 A score of mounted Arabs came fast spurring o'er
 the sands,
 Nor rein'd they up their foaming steeds till in my
 very face
 They blew the breath impetuous, and panting from
 the race.
 "Fear nought," exelaim'd the radiant one, as I
 sprang off aloof,
 "Thy precious frame need never fear a blow from
 horse's hoof!
 Thy natal star was fortunate as any orb of
 birth,
 And fate hath held in store for thee the rarest gift
 of earth."
 Then turning to the dusky men, that humbly
 waited near,
 She eried, "Go bring the BEAUTIFUL—for lo!
 the MAN is here!"

Off went th' obsequious train as swift as Arab
 hoofs could flee,
 But fancy fond outraced them all, with bridle
 loose and free,
 And brought me baek, for love's attack, some fair
 Cireassian bride,
 Or Georgian girl, the Harem's boast, and fit for
 sultan's side;
 Methought I lifted up hēr veil, and saw dark eyes
 beneath,
 Mild as gazelle's, a snowy brow, ripe lips, and
 pearly teeth,
 A swanlike neek, a shoulder round, full bosom,
 and a waist
 Not too compact, and rounded limbs, to oriental
 taste.

So men have trifled with the axe before the fatal
stroke.

“Lady, if mine had been the luck in Yorkshire
to be born,
Or any of its *ridings*, this would be a blessed
morn;
But, hapless one! I cannot ride—there’s something
in a horse
That I can always honour, but I never could
endorse—
To speak still more commercially, in riding I am
quite [sight:
Averse to running long, and apt to be paid off at
In legal phrase, for every class to understand me
still,
I never was in stirrups yet a tenant but at will;
Or, if you please, in artist terms, I never went
a-straddle
On any horse without ‘a want of keeping’ in the
saddle.
In short,” and here I blush’d, abash’d and held my
head full low,
“I’m one of those whose infant ears have heard
the chimes of Bow!”

The lady smiled, as houris smile, adown from
Turkish skies,
And beams of cruel kindness shone within her
hazel eyes;
“Stranger,” she said, “or rather say, my nearest,
dearest friend,
There’s something in your eyes, your air, and that
high instep’s bend,
That tells me you’re of Arab race,—whatever spot
of earth,
Cheapside, or Bow, or Stepney, had the honour of
your birth, [changed at nurse
The East it is your country! Like an infant

By fairies, you have undergone a nurtureship
perverse ;

But this—these desert sands—these palms, and
cedars waving wild,

All, all, adopt thee as their own—an oriental
child—

The cloud may hide the sun awhile.—but soon or
late, no doubt,

The spirit of your ancestry will burst and sparkle
out!

I read the starry characters—and lo! 'tis written
there,

Thou wert foredoom'd of sons of men to ride
upon this Mare,

A Mare till now was never back'd by one of
mortal mould,

Hark, how she neighs, as if for thee she knew that
she was foal'd!"

[simoom

And truly—I devoutly wish'd a blast of the
Had stifled her!—the Mare herself appeared to
mock my doom ;

With many a bound she caper'd round and round
me like a dance,

I fear'd indeed some wild caress would end the
fearful prance,

And felt myself, and saw myself—the phantasy
was horrid!—

Like old Redgauntlet, with a shoe imprinted on
my forehead!

On bended knees, with bowing head, and hands
upraised in pray'r,

I begg'd the turban'd Sultanness the issue to for-
bear ;

I painted weeping orphan babes, around a widow'd
wife,

And drew my death as vividly as others draw from
life ;

[feats unfit,

“Behold,” I said, “a simple man, for such high

Who never yet has learn'd to know the erupper
 from the bit,
 Whereas the boldest horsemanship, and first eques-
 trian skill,
 Would well be task'd to bend so wild a creature
 to the will."
 Alas! alas! 'twas all in vain, to supplicate and
 kneel,
 The quadruped could not have been more cold to
 my appeal!

"Fear nothing," said the smiling Faté, "when
 human help is vain,
 Spirits shall by thy stirrups fly, and fairies guide
 the rein ;
 Just glanee at yonder animal, her perfect shape
 remark,
 And in thy breast at once shall glow the oriental
 spark!
 As for thy spouse and tender babes, no Arab
 roams the wild
 But for a Mare of such descent, would barter wife
 and child."

"Nay then," cried I—(Heav'n shrive the lie!)
 "to tell the secret truth,
 'Twas my unhappy fortune once to over-ride a
 youth!
 A playful child,—so full of life!—a little fair-
 haired boy,
 His sister's pet, his father's hope, his mother's
 darling joy!
 Ah me! the frantic shriek she gave! I hear it ring-
 ing now! [vow ;
 That hour upon the bloody spot, I made a holy
 A solemn compaet, deeply sworn, to witness my
 remorse,
 That never more these limbs of mine should mount
 on living horse!"

Good Heav'n! to see the angry glance that flash'd
 upon me now!
 A chill ran all my marrow through—the drops were
 on my brow!
 I knew my doom, and stole a glance at that ac-
 cursed Mare,
 And there she stood, with nostrils wide, that snuff'd
 the sultry air.
 How lion-like she lash'd her flanks with her abun-
 dant tail;
 While on her neck the stormy mane kept tossing
 to the gale!
 How fearfully she roll'd her eyes between the earth
 and sky,
 As if in wild uncertainty to gallop or to fly!
 While with her hoof she scoop'd the sand as if
 before she gave
 My plunge into eternity she meant to dig my
 grave!

And I, that ne'er could calmly bear a horse's ears
 at play—
 Or hear without a yard of jump his shrill and
 sudden neigh—
 Whose foot within a stable door had never stood
 an inch—
 Whose hand to pat a living steed would feel an
 awful flinch,—
 I that had never thrown a leg across a pony small,
 To scour the pathless desert on the tallest of the
 tall!
 For oh! it is no fable, but at ev'ry look I cast,
 Her restless legs seem'd twice as long as when I
 saw them last!

In agony I shook,—and yet, although congealed by
 fears,
 My blood was boiling fast, to judge from noises in
 my ears;

I gasp'd as if in vacuo, and thrilling with despair,
 Some secret Demon seem'd to pass his fingers
 through my hair.
 I could not stir—I could not speak—I could not
 even see—
 A sudden mist rose up between that awful Mare
 and me,—
 I tried to pray, but found no words—tho' ready
 ripe to weep,
 No tear would flow,—o'er ev'ry sense a swoon
 began to creep,—
 When lo! to bring my horrid fate at once unto the
 brunt,
 Two Arabs seized me from behind, two others in
 the front,
 And ere a muscle could be strung to try the strife
 forlorn,
 I found myself, Mazeppa-like, upon the Desert-
 Born!

Terrific was the neigh she gave, the moment that
 my weight
 Was felt upon her back, as if exulting in her
 freight;
 Whilst dolefully I heard a voice that set each nerve
 ajar,—
 “Off with the bridle—quick!—and leave his guid-
 ance to his star!”

“Allah! il Allah!” rose the shout, and starting
 with a bound,
 The dreadful Creature clear'd at once a dozen
 yards of ground;
 And grasping at her mane with both my cold con-
 vulsive hands,
 Away we flew—away! away! across the shifting
 sands!
 My eyes were closed in utter dread of such a fear-
 ful race,

But yet by certain signs I knew we went no earthly
 pace,
 For turn whichever way we might, the wind with
 equal force
 Rush'd like a torrid hurricane still adverse to our
 course—
 One moment close at hand I heard the roaring
 Syrian Sea,
 The next it only murmur'd like the humming of a
 bee !
 And when I dared at last to glance across the wild
 immense,
 Oh ne'er shall I forget the whirl that met the dizzy
 sense !
 What seem'd a little sprig of fern, ere lips could
 reckon twain,
 A palm of forty cubits high, we passed it on the
 plain !
 What tongue could tell,—what pencil paint,—what
 pen describe the ride ?
 Now off—now on—now up—now down,—and flung
 from side to side !
 I tried to speak, but had no voice, to soothe her
 with its tone—
 My scanty breath was jolted out with many a sud-
 den groan—
 My joints were rack'd—my back was strain'd, so
 firmly I had clung—
 My nostrils gush'd, and thrice my teeth had bitten
 through my tongue—
 When lo !—farewell all hope of life !—she turn'd
 and faced the rocks.
 None but a flying horse could clear those monstrous
 granite blocks !
 So thought I,—but I little knew the desert pride
 and fire,
 Derived from a most deer-like dam, and lion-
 hearted sire ;
 Little I guess'd the energy of muscle, blood and [bone,

Bound after bound, with eager springs, she clear'd
 each massive stone ;—
 Nine mortal leaps were pass'd before a huge gray
 rock at length
 Stood planted there as if to dare her utmost pitch
 of strength—
 My time was come ! that granite heap my monu-
 ment of death !
 She paused, she snorted loud and long, and drew a
 fuller breath ;
 Nine strides and then a louder beat that warn'd
 me of her spring,
 I felt her rising in the air like eagle on the wing—
 But oh ! the crash !—the hideous shock !—the mil-
 lion sparks around !
 Her hindmost hoofs had struck the crest of that
 prodigious mound !
 Wild shriek'd the headland Desert-Born—or else
 'twas demons' mirth,
 One second more, and Man and Mare roll'd breath-
 less on the earth !

* * * *

How long it was I cannot tell ere I revived to
 sense,
 And then but to endure the pangs of agony in-
 tense ;
 For over me lay powerless, and still as any stone,
 The Corse that erst had so much fire, strength,
 spirit, of its own.
 My heart was still—my pulses stopp'd—midway
 'twixt life and death,
 With pain unspeakable I fetch'd the fragment of a
 breath,
 Not vital air enough to frame one short and feeble
 sigh,
 Yet even that I loath'd because it would not let me
 die.
 Oh ! slowly, slowly, slowly on, from starry night
 till morn,

Time flapp'd along, with leaden wings, across that
waste forlorn !
I cursed the hour that brought me first within this
world of strife—
A sore and heavy sin it is to scorn the gift of life—
But who hath felt a horse's weight oppress his
labouring breast ?
Why any who has had, like me, the NIGHT MARE
on his chest.

LOVE LANE.

IF I should love a maiden more,
And woo her ev'ry hope to crown,
I'd love her all the country o'er,
But not declare it out of town.

One even, by a mossy bank,
That held a hornet's nest within,
To Ellen on my knees I sank,—
How snakes will twine around the shin !

A bashful fear my soul unnerved,
And gave my heart a backward tug ;
Nor was I cheer'd when she observed,
Whilst I was silent,—“ What a slug ! ”

At length my offer I preferr'd,
And Hope a kind reply forebode—
Alas ! the only sound I heard
Was, “ What a horrid ugly toad ! ”

I vow'd to give her all my heart,
To love her till my life took leave,
And painted all a lover's smart—
Except a wasp gone up his sleeve !

But when I ventured to abide
 Her father's and her mother's grants—
 Sudden, she started up, and cried,
 " O dear ! I am all over ants ! "

Nay when beginning to beseech
 The cause that led to my rebuff,
 The answer was as strange a speech,
 A " Daddy-Longlegs sure enough ! "

I spoke of fortune—house,—and lands
 And still renew'd the warm attack,—
 'Tis vain to offer ladies hands
 That have a spider on the back !

'Tis vain to talk of hopes and fears,
 And hope the least reply to win,
 From any maid that stops her ears
 In dread of earwigs creeping in !

'Tis vain to call the dearest names
 Whilst stoats and weasels startle by—
 As vain to talk of mutual flames,
 To one with glowworms in her eye !

What check'd me in my fond address,
 And knock'd each pretty image down ?
 What stopp'd my Ellen's faltering Yes ?
 A caterpillar on her gown !

To list to Philomel is sweet—
 To see the Moon rise silver-pale,—
 But not to kneel at Lady's feet
 And crush a rival in a snail !

Sweet is the eventide, and kind
 Its zephyr, balmy as the south ;
 But sweeter still to speak your mind
 Without a chafer in your mouth !

At last, embolden'd by my bliss,
 Still fickle Fortune play'd me foul,
 For when I strove to snatch a kiss
 She scream'd—by proxy, through an owl!

Then, Lovers, doom'd to life or death,
 Shun moonlight, twilight, lanes, and bats,
 Lest you should have in self-same breath
 To bless your fate—and curse the gnats!

DOMESTIC POEMS.

“It's hame, hame, hame.”—A. CUNNINGHAM.

“There's no place like home.”—CLARI.

I.

HYMENEAL RETROSPECTIONS.

O KATE! my dear Partner, through joy and through
 strife!

When I look back at Hymen's dear day,
 Not a lovelier bride ever changed to a wife,
 Though you're now so old, wizen'd, and gray!

Those eyes, then, were stars, shining rulers of fate!
 But as liquid as stars in a pool;
 Though now they're so dim, they appear, my dear
 Kate,
 Just like gooseberries boil'd for a fool!

That brow was like marble, so smooth and so fair;
 Though it's wrinkled so crookedly now,
 As if Time, when those furrows were made by the
 share,
 Had been tipsy whilst driving his plough!

Your nose, it was such as the sculptors all chose,
 When a Venus demanded their skill ;
 Though now it can hardly be reckon'd a nose,
 But a sort of Poll-Parrotty bill !

Your mouth, it was then quite a bait for the bees,
 Such a nectar there hung on each lip ;
 Though now it has taken that lemon-like squeeze,
 Not a blue-bottle eomes for a sip !

Your chin, it was one of Love's favourite haunts,
 From its dimple he could not get loose ;
 Though now the neat hand of a barber it wants,
 Or a singe, like the breast of a goose !

How rich were those locks, so abundant and full,
 With their ringlets of auburn so deep !
 Though now they look only like frizzles of wool,
 By a bramble torn off from a sheep !

That neck, not a swan eould excel it in grace,
 While in whiteness it vied with your arms :
 Though now a grave 'kerchief you properly
 place,
 To conceal that scrag-end of your charms !

Your figure was tall, then, and perfectly straight,
 'Though it now has two twists from upright—
 But bless you ! still bless you ! my Partner ! my
 Kate !
 Though you be such a perfect old fright !

II.

“THE SUN WAS SLUMBERING IN THE WEST.”

The sun was slumbering in the West,
 My daily labours past ;
 On Anna's soft and gentle breast

My head reclined at last ;
 The darkness closed around, so dear
 To fond congenial souls,
 And thus she murmur'd at my ear,
 " My love, we're out of coals ! "

" That Mister Bond has call'd again,
 Insisting on his rent ;
 And all the Todds are coming up
 To see us, out of Kent ;—
 I quite forgot to tell you John
 Has had a tipsy fall ;—
 I'm sure there's something going on
 With that vile Mary Hall ! "—

" Miss Bell has bought the sweetest silk,
 And I have bought the rest—
 Of course, if we go out of town,
 Southend will be the best.
 I really think the Jones's house
 Would be the thing for us ;—
 I think I told you Mrs. Pope
 Had parted with her *nus*—"

" Cook, by the way, came up to-day,
 To bid me suit myself—
 And what d'ye think ? the rats have gnaw'd
 The victuals on the shelf,—
 And, lord ! there's such a letter come,
 Inviting you to fight !
 Of course you don't intend to go—
 God bless you, dear, good night ! "

III.

A PARENTAL ODE TO MY SON, AGED THREE YEARS AND
 FIVE MONTHS.

Thou happy, happy elf !
 (But stop,—first let me kiss away that tear)—

Thou tiny image of myself!
 (My love, he's poking peas into his ear!)
 Thou merry, laughing sprite!
 With spirits feather-light,
 Untouch'd by sorrow, and unsoil'd by sin—
 (Good heavens! the child is swallowing a pin!)

Thou little tricksy Puck!
 With antic toys so funnily bestuck,
 Light as the singing bird that wings the air—
 (The door! the door! he'll tumble down the stair!)
 Thou darling of thy sire!
 (Why, Jane, he'll set his pinafore a-fire!)
 Thou imp of mirth and joy!
 In Love's dear chain so strong and bright a link,
 Thou idol of thy parents—(Drat the boy!
 There goes my ink!)

Thou cherub—but of earth;
 Fit playfellow for Fays, by moonlight pale,
 In harmless sport and mirth,
 (That dog will bite him if he pulls its tail!)
 Thou human humming-bee, extracting honey
 From ev'ry blossom in the world that blows,
 Singing in Youth's Elysium ever sunny,
 (Another tumble!—that's his precious nose!)

Thy father's pride and hope!
 (He'll break the mirror with that skipping-rope!)
 With pure heart newly stamp'd from Nature's
 mint—
 (Where *did* he learn that squint?)
 Thou young domestic dove!
 (He'll have that jug off, with another shove!)
 Dear nurseling of the Hymeneal nest!
 (Are those torn clothes his best?)
 Little epitome of man!
 (He'll climb upon the table, that's his plan!)
 Touch'd with the beauteous tints of dawning life—
 (He's got a knife!)

Thou enviable being!
 No storms, no clouds, in thy blue sky foresceing,
 Play on, play on,
 My elfin John!
 Toss the light ball—bestride the stick—
 (I knew so many cakes would make him sick!)
 With fancies, buoyant as the thistle-down,
 Prompting the face grotesque, and antic brisk,
 With many a lamb-like frisk,
 (He's got the scissors, snipping at your gown!)

Thou pretty opening rose!
 (Go to your mother, child, and wipe your nose!)
 Balmy and breathing music like the South,
 (He really brings my heart into my mouth!)
 Fresh as the morn, and brilliant as its star,
 (I wish that window had an iron bar!)
 Bold as the hawk, yet gentle as the dove,—
 (I'll tell you what, my love,
 I cannot write, unless he's sent above!)

IV.

A SERENADE.

“Lullaby, oh, lullaby!”
 Thus I heard a father cry,
 “Lullaby, oh, lullaby!”
 The brat will never shut an eye;
 Hither come, some power divine!
 Close his lids, or open mine!”

“Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
 What the devil makes him cry?
 Lullaby, oh, lullaby!
 Still he stares—I wonder why,
 Why are not the sons of earth
 Blind, like puppies, from the birth?”

“ Lullaby, oh, lullaby ! ”
 Thus I heard the father cry ;
 “ Lullaby, oh, lullaby ! ”
 Mary, you must come and try !—
 Hush, oh, hush, for mercy’s sake—
 The more I sing, the more you wake ! ”

“ Lullaby, oh, lullaby !
 Fie, you little creature, fie !
 Lullaby, oh, lullaby !
 Is no poppy-syrup nigh ?
 Give him some, or give him all,
 I am nodding to his fall ! ”

“ Lullaby, oh, lullaby !
 Two such nights, and I shall die !
 Lullaby, oh, lullaby !
 He’ll be bruised, and so shall I,—
 How can I from bedposts keep,
 When I’m walking in my sleep ? ”

“ Lullaby, oh, lullaby !
 Sleep his very looks deny—
 Lullaby, oh, lullaby ;
 Nature soon will stupefy—
 My nerves relax,—my eyes grow dim—
 Who’s that fallen—me or him ? ”

A PLAIN DIRECTION.

“ Do you never deviate ? ”—*John Bull.*

In London once I lost my way
 In faring to and fro,
 And ask’d a little ragged boy
 The way that I should go ;

He gave a nod, and then a wink,
And told me to get there
"Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square."

I box'd his little saucy ears,
And then away I strode ;
But since I've found that weary path
Is quite a common road.
Utopia is a pleasant place,
But how shall I get there ?
"Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square."

I've read about a famous town
That drove a famous trade,
Where Whittington walk'd up and found
A fortune ready made.
The very streets are paved with gold ;
But how shall I get there ?
"Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square."

I've read about a Fairy Land,
In some romantic tale,
Where Dwarfs if good are sure to thrive
And wicked Giants fail.
My wish is great, my shoes are strong,
But how shall I get there ?
"Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square."

I've heard about some happy Isle,
Where every man is free,
And none can lie in bonds for life
For want of L. S. D.
Oh ! that's the land of Liberty !
But how shall I get there ?
"Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square."

I've dreamt about some blessed spot,
Beneath the blessed sky,
Where Bread and Justice never rise
Too dear for folks to buy.
It's cheaper than the Ward of Cheap,
But how shall I get there ?
" Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square."

They say there is an ancient House,
As pure as it is old,
Where Members always speak their minds,
And votes are never sold.
I'm fond of all antiquities,
But how shall I get there ?
" Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square."

They say there is a Royal Court
Maintain'd in noble state,
Where every able man, and good,
Is certain to be great !
I'm very fond of seeing sights,
But how shall I get there ?
" Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square."

They say there is a Temple too,
Where Christians come to pray ;
But canting knaves and hypocrites,
And bigots keep away.
O ! that's the parish church for me !
But how shall I get there ?
" Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square."

They say there is a Garden fair,
That's haunted by the dove,
Where love of gold doth ne'er eclipse
The golden light of love—

The place must be a Paradise,
But how shall I get there ?
“ Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square.”

I've heard there is a famous Land
For public spirit known—
Whose Patriots love its interests
Much better than their own.
The Land of Promise sure it is !
But how shall I get there ?
“ Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square.”

I've read about a fine Estate,
A Mansion large and strong ;
A view all over Kent and back,
And going for a song.
George Robins knows the very spot.
But how shall I get there ?
“ Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square.”

I've heard there is a Company
All formal and enroll'd,
Will take your smallest silver coin
And give it back in gold.
Of course the office door is mobb'd,
But how shall I get there ?
“ Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square.”

I've heard about a pleasant Land,
Where omelettes grow on trees,
And roasted pigs run erying out,
“ Come eat me, if you please.”
My appetite is rather keen,
But how shall I get there ?
“ Straight down the Crooked Lane,
And all round the Square.”

A TABLE OF ERRATA.

(Hostess loquitur.)

WELL! thanks be to Heaven,
 The summons is given ;
 It's only gone seven
 And should have been six ;
 There's fine overdoing
 In roasting and stewing,
 And victuals past chewing
 To rags and to sticks !

How dreadfully chilly !
 I shake, willy-nilly ;
 That John is so silly,
 And never will learn.
 This plate is a cold one,
 That cloth is an old one,
 I wish they had told one,
 The lamp wouldn't burn.

Now then for some blunder,
 For nerves to sink under :
 I never shall wonder,
 Whatever goes ill.
 That fish is a riddle !
 It's broke in the middle.
 A Turbot ! a fiddle !
 It's only a Brill !

It's quite over-boil'd too,
 The butter is oil'd too,
 The soup is all spoil'd too,
 It's nothing but slop.
 The smelts looking flabby,
 The soles are as dabby,

It all is so shabby
That Cook shall not stop!

As sure as the morning,
She gets a month's warning,
My orders for scorning—
There's nothing to eat!
I hear such a rushing,
I feel such a flushing,
I know I am blushing
As red as a beet!

Friends flatter and flatter,
I wish they would chatter;
What *can* be the matter
That nothing comes next?
How very unpleasant!
Lord! there is the pheasant!
Not wanted at present,
I'm born to be vexed!

The pudding brought on too
And aiming at ton too!
And where is that John too,
The plague that he is?
He's off on some ramble:
And there is Miss Campbell,
Enjoying the scramble,
Detestable Quiz!

The veal they all eye it,
But no one will try it,
An Ogre would shy it,
So ruddy as that!
And as for the mutton,
The cold dish it's put on,
Converts to a button
Each drop of the fat.

The beef without mustard !
 My fate's to be fluster'd,
 And there comes the custard
 To eat with the hare !
 Such flesh, fowl and fishing,
 Such waiting and dishing,
 I cannot help wishing
 A woman might swear !

Oh dear ! did I ever—
 But no, I did never—
 Well, come, that is clever,
 To send up the brawn !
 That cook, I could scold her,
 Gets worse as she's older ;
 I wonder who told her
 That woodcocks are drawn !

It's really audacious !
 I cannot look gracious,
 Lord help the voracious
 That came for a cram !
 There's Alderman Fuller
 Gets duller and duller.
 Those fowls, by the colour,
 Were boil'd with the ham !

Well, where is the curry ?
 I'm all in a flurry.
 No, cook's in no hurry—
 A stoppage again !
 And John makes it wider,
 A pretty provider !
 By bringing up cider
 Instead of champagne !

My troubles come faster !
 There's my lord and master
 Detects each disaster,

And hardly can sit :
 He cannot help seeing,
 All things disagreeing ;
 If *he* begins d—ing
 I'm off in a fit !

This cooking ?—it's messing !
 The spinach wants pressing,
 And salads in dressing
 Are best with good eggs.
 And John—yes, already—
 Has had something heady,
 That makes him unsteady
 In keeping his legs.

How *shall* I get through it !
 I never can do it,
 I'm quite looking to it,
 To sink by and by.
 Oh ! would I were dead now,
 Or up in my bed now,
 To cover my head now,
 And have a good cry !

A ROW AT THE OXFORD ARMS.

“Glorious Apollo from on high beheld us.”
 OLD SONG

As latterly I chanced to pass
 A Public House, from which, alas !
 The Arms of Oxford dangle !
 My ear was startled by a din,
 That made me tremble in my skin,
 A dreadful hubbub from within,
 Of voices in a wrangle—

Voices loud, and voices high,
 With now and then a party-cry,
 Such as used in times gone by
 To scare the British border :
 When foes from North and South of Tweed—
 Neighbours—and of Christian creed—
 Met in hate to fight and bleed,
 Upsetting Social Order.
 Surprised, I turn'd me to the crowd,
 Attracted by that tumult loud,
 And ask'd a gazer, beetle-brow'd,
 The cause of such disquiet.
 When lo! the solemn-looking man,
 First shook his head on Burleigh's plan,
 And then, with fluent tongue, begau
 His version of the riot :—

A row!—why yes,—a pretty row, you might hear
 from this to Garmany,
 And what is worse, it's all got up among the Sons
 of Harmony,
 The more's the shame for them as used to be in
 time and tune,
 And all unite in chorus like the singing-birds in
 June !
 Ah! many a pleasant chant I've heard in passing
 here along,
 When Swiveller was President a-knocking down
 a song ;
 But Dick's resign'd the post, you see, and all them
 shouts and hollers
 Is 'cause two other candidates, some sort of larned
 scholars,
 Are squabbling to be Chairman of the Glorious
 Apollers!

Lord knows their names, I'm sure I don't, no more
 than any yokel, [vocal ;
 But I never heard of either as connected with the

Nay, some do say, although of course the public
 rumour varies,
 They've no more warble in 'em than a pair of hen
 canaries ;
 Though that might pass if they were dabs at t'other
 sort of thing,
 For a man may make a song, you know, although
 he cannot sing ;
 But lork ! it's many folks' belief they're only good
 at prosing,
 For Catnach swears he never saw a verse of their
 composing ;
 And when a piece of poetry has stood its public
 trials,
 If pop'lar, it gets printed off at once in Seven
 Dials,
 And then about all sorts of streets, by every little
 monkey,
 It's chanted like the " Dog's Meat Man," or " If I
 had a Donkey."
 Whereas, as Mr. Catnach says, and not a bad judge
 neither,
 No ballad worth a ha'penny has ever come from
 either,
 And him as writ " Jim Crow," he says, and got
 such lots of dollars,
 Would make a better Chairman for the Glorious
 Apollers.

Howsomever that's the meaning of the squabble
 that arouses
 This neighbourhood, and quite disturbs all decent
 Heads of Houses,
 Who want to have their dinners and their parties,
 as is reason,
 In Christian peace and charity according to the
 season.
 But from Number Thirty-Nine—since this election-
 eering job,

Ay, as far as Number Ninety, there's an everlast-
 ing mob ;
 Till the thing is quite a nuisance, for no creature
 passes by,
 But he gets a card, a pamphlet, or a summut in his
 eye ;
 And a pretty noise there is !—what with canvassers
 and spouters,
 For in course each side is furnish'd with its backers
 and its touters ;
 And surely among the Clergy to such pitches it is
 carried,
 You can hardly find a Parson to get buried or get
 married ;
 Or supposing any accident that suddenly alarms,
 If you're dying for a surgeon, you must fetch him
 from the " Arms :"
 While the Schoolmasters and Tooters are neglect-
 ing of their scholars,
 To write about a Chairman for the Glorious
 Apollers.

Well, that, sir, is the racket ; and the more the sin
 and shame
 Of them that help to stir it up, and propagate the
 same ;
 Instead of vocal ditties, and the social flowing
 cup,—
 But they'll be the House's ruin, or the shutting of
 it up,—
 With their riots and their hubbubs, like a garden
 full of bears,
 While they've damaged many articles and broken
 lots of squares,
 And kept their noble Club Room in a perfect dust
 and smother,
 By throwing *Morning Heralds*, *Times*, and *Stand-*
ards at each other ; [to repeat,
 Not to name the ugly language Gemmen oughtn't

And the names they call each other—for I've
 heard 'em in the street—
 Such as Traitors, Guys, and Judases, and Vipers,
 and what not,
 For Pasley and his divers an't so blowing-up a lot.
 And then such awful swearing!—for there's one
 of them that cusses
 Enough to shock the cads that hang on opposition
 'busses ;
 For he cusses every member that's agin him at the
 poll,
 As I wouldn't cuss a donkey, tho' it hasn't got a
 soul ;
 And he cusses all their families, Jack, Harry, Bob,
 or Jim,
 To the babby in the cradle, if they don't agree
 with him.
 Whereby, altho' as yet they have not took to use
 their fives,
 Or, according as the fashion is, to sticking with
 their knives,
 I'm bound there'll be some milling yet, and
 shakings by the collars,
 Afore they choose a Chairman for the Glorious
 Apollers !

To be sure it is a pity to be blowing such a squall,
 Instead of clouds, and every man his song, and
 then his call—
 And as if there wasn't Whigs enough and Tories
 to fall out,
 Besides politics in plenty for our splits to be about—
 Why, a cornfield is sufficient, sir, as anybody
 knows,
 For to furnish them in plenty who are fond of
 picking crows—
 Not to name the Maynooth Catholics, and other
 Irish stews,
 'To agitate society and loosen all its screws ;

And which all may be agreeable and proper to
their spheres,—

But it's not the thing for musicals to set us by the
ears.

And as to College larning, my opinion for to
broach,

And I've had it from my cousin, and he driv a
college coach,

And so knows the University, and all as there
belongs,

And he says that Oxford's famouser for sausages
than songs,

And seldom turns a poet out like Hudson that can
chant,

As well as make such ditties as the Free and
Easies want,

Or other Tavern Melodists I can't just call to
mind—

But it's not the classic system for to propagate the
kind.

Whereby it so may happen as that neither of them
Scholars

May be the proper Chairman for the Glorious
Apollers!

For my part in the matter, if so be I had a
voice,

It's the best among the vocalists I'd honour with
the choice;

Or a poet as could furnish a new Ballad to the
bunch;

Or at any rate the surest hand at uixing of the
punch;

'Cause why, the members meet for that and other
tuneful frolics—

And not to say, like Muffincaps, their Catichiz and
Collec's.

But you see them there Itinerants that preach so
long and loud,

And always takes advantage like the prigs of any
crowd,
Have brought their jangling voices, and as far as
they can compass,
Have turn'd a tavern shindy to a seriouser
rumpus,
And him as knows most hymns—altho' I can't see
how it follers—
They want to be the Chairman of the Glorious
Apollers!

Well, that's the row—and who can guess the
upshot after all?
Whether Harmony will ever make the "Arms" her
House of call,
Or whether this here mobbing—as some longish
heads foretell it,
Will grow to such a riot that the Oxford Blues
must quell it,
Howsomever, for the present, there's no sign of
any peace,
For the hubbub keeps a growing, and defies the
New Police;—
But if I was in the Vestry, and a leading sort of
Man,
Or a Member of the Vocals, to get backers for my
plan,
Why I'd settle all the squabble in the twinkle of a
needle,
For I'd have another candidate—and that's the
Parish Beadle,
Who makes such lots of Poetry, himself, or else by
proxy,
And no one never has no doubts about his ortho-
doxy;
Whcreby—if folks was wise—instead of either of
them Scholars,
And straining their own lungs along of contradic-
tious hollers,

They'll lend their ears to reason, and take my
 advice as follers,
 Namely—Bumble for the Chairman of the Glorious
 Apollers!

EQUESTRIAN COURTSHIP.

I.

IT was a young maiden went forth to ride,
 And there was a wooer to pace by her side ;
 His horse was so little, and hers so high,
 He thought his Angel was up in the sky.

II.

His love was great, tho' his wit was small ;
 He bade her ride easy—and that was all.
 The very horses began to neigh,—
 Because their betters had nought to say.

III.

They rode by elm, and they rode by oak,
 They rode by a churchyard, and then he spoke :—
 “ My pretty maiden, if you'll agree
 You shall always ramble through life with me.”

IV.

The damsel answer'd him never a word,
 But kick'd the gray mare, and away she spurr'd.
 The wooer still follow'd behind the jade,
 And enjoy'd—like a wooer—the dust she made.

V.

They rode thro' moss, and they rode thro' moor,—
 The gallant behind and the lass before ;—
 At last they came to a miry place,
 And there the sad wooer gave up the chase.

VI.

Quoth he, "If my nag were better to ride,
 I'd follow her over the world so wide.
 Oh, it is not my love that begins to fail,
 But I've lost the last glimpse of the gray mare's
 tail!"

AN OPEN QUESTION.

"It is the king's highway, that we are in, and in this way it's
 that thou hast placed the lions."—BUNYAN.

I.

WHAT! shut the Gardens! lock the latticed
 gate!

Refuse the shilling and the Fellow's ticket!
 And hang a wooden notice up to state,
 "On Sundays no admittance at this wicket!"
 The Birds, the Beasts, and all the Reptile race
 Denied to friends and visitors till Monday!
 Now, really, this appears the common case
 Of putting too much Sabbath into Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

II.

The Gardens—so unlike the ones we dub
 Of Tea, wherein the artisan carouses,—
 Mere shrubberies without one drop of shrub,—
 Wherefore should they be closed like public-
 houses?
 No ale is vended at the wild Deer's Head,—
 Nor rum—nor gin—not even of a Monday—
 The Lion is not carved—or gilt—or red,
 And does not send out porter of a Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs Grundy?

III.

The Bear denied! the Leopard under locks!
 As if his spots would give contagious fevers!
 The Beaver close as hat within its box;
 So different from other Sunday beavers!
 The Birds invisible—the Gnaw-way Rats—
 The Seal hermetically seal'd till Monday—
 The Monkey tribe—the Family of Cats,—
 We visit other families on Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

IV.

What is the brute profanity that shocks
 The super-sensitively serious feeling?
 The Kangaroo—is he not orthodox
 To bend his legs, the way he does, in kneeling?
 Was strict Sir Andrew, in his sabbath coat,
 Struck all a heap to see a *Coati mundi*?
 Or did the Kentish Plumtree faint to note
 The Pelicans presenting bills on Sunday?—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

V.

What feature has repulsed the serious set?
 What error in the bestial birth or breeding,
 To put their tender fancies on the fret?
 One thing is plain—it is not in the feeding!
 Some stiffish people think that smoking joints
 Are earnal sins 'twixt Saturday and Monday—
 But then the beasts are pious on these points,
 For they all eat cold dinuers on a Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

VI.

What change comes o'er the spirit of the place,
 As if transmuted by some spell organie?
 Turns fell Hyæna of the Ghoulish race?
 The Snake, *pro tempore*, the true Satanie?

Do Irish minds,—(whose theory allows
That now and then Good Friday falls on Mon-
day)—

Do Irish minds suppose that Indian Cows
Are wicked Bulls of Bashan on a Sunday—
But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

VII.

There are some moody Fellows, not a few,
Who, turn'd by Nature with a gloomy bias,
Renounce black devils to adopt the blue,
And think when they are dismal they are pious
Is't possible that Pug's untimely fun
Has sent the brutes to Coventry till Monday—
Or p'rhaps some animal, no serious one,
Was overheard in laughter on a Sunday—
But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

VIII.

What dire offence have serious Fellows found
To raise their spleen against the Regent's
spinney?
Were charitable boxes handed round,
And would not Guinea Pigs subscribe their
guinea?
Perchance, the Demoiselle refused to moult
The feathers in her head—at least till Mouday;
Or did the Elephant, unsecmly, bolt
A tract presented to be read on Sunday—
But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

IX.

At whom did Leo struggle to get loose?
Who mourns through Monkey tricks his damaged
clothing?
Who has been hiss'd by the Canadian Goose?
On whom did Llama spit in utter loathing?
Some Smithfield Saint did jealous feelings tell
To keep the Puma out of sight till Monday,

Because he prey'd extempore as well
 As certain wild Itinerants on Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

X.

To me it seems that in the oddest way
 (Begging the pardon of each rigid Socius)
 Our would-be Keepers of the Sabbath-day
 Are like the Keepers of the brutes ferocious—
 As soon the Tiger might expect to stalk
 About the grounds from Saturday till Monday,
 As any harmless man to take a walk,
 If Saints could clap him in a cage on Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

XI.

In spite of all hypocrisy can spin,
 As surely as I am a Christian scion,
 I cannot think it is a mortal sin—
 (Unless he's loose) to look upon a lion.
 I really think that one may go, perchance,
 To see a bear, as guiltless as on Monday--
 (That is, provided that he did not dance)
 Bruin's no worse than bakin' on a Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

XII.

In spite of all the fanatic compiles,
 I cannot think the day a bit diviner,
 Because no children, with forestalling smiles,
 Throng, happy, to the gates of Eden Minor—
 It is not plain, to my poor faith at least,
 That what we christen "Natural" on Monday,
 The wondrous history of Bird and Beast,
 Can be Unnatural because it's Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy?

XIII.

Whereon is sinful fantasy to work?
 The Dove, the wing'd Columbus of man's haven?

The tender Love-Bird—or the filial Stork ?
 The punctual Crane—the providential Raven ?
 The Pelican whose bosom feeds her young ?
 Nay, must we cut from Saturday till Monday
 That feather'd marvel with a human tongue,
 Because she does not preach upon a Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy ?

XIV.

The busy Beaver—that sagacious beast !
 The Sheep that own'd an Oriental Shepherd—
 That Desert-ship, the Camel of the East,
 The horn'd Rhinoceros—the spotted Leopard—
 The Creatures of the Great Creator's hand
 Are surely sights for better days than Monday—
 The Elephant, although he wears no band,
 Has he no sermon in his trunk for Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy ?

XV.

What harm if men who burn the midnight-oil,
 Weary of frame, and worn and wan in feature,
 Seek once a week their spirits to assoil,
 And snatch a glimpse of “ Animated Nature ? ”
 Better it were if, in his best of suits,
 The artisan, who goes to work on Monday,
 Should spend a leisure hour amongst the brutes,
 Than make a beast of his own self on Sunday—
 But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy ?

XVI.

Why, zounds ! what raised so Protestant a fuss
 (Omit the zounds ! for which I make apology)
 But that the Papists, like some Fellows, thus
 Had somehow mix'd up *Dens* with their Theology ?
 Is Brahma's Bull—a Hindoo God at home—
 A papal Bull to be tied up till Monday—

Or Leo, like his namesake, Pope of Rome,
That there is such a dread of them 'on Sunday—
But what is your opinion Mrs. Grundy ?

XVII.

Spirit of Kant ! have we not had enough
To make Religion sad, and sour, and snubbish,
But Saints Zoological must cant their stuff,
As vessels cant their ballast—rattling rubbish !
Once let the sect, triumphant to their text,
Shut Nero up from Saturday till Monday,
And sure as fate they will deny us next
'To see the Dandelions on a Sunday—
But what is your opinion, Mrs. Grundy ?





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The poetical works of Thomas Hood

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