







SONGS OF THE SEA,

WITH

OTHER POEMS.

SONGS OF THE SEA,

WITH

OTHER POEMS,

BY

EPES SARGENT.

SECOND EDITION.

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P R E F A C E .

SEVERAL of the following poems, and among them the ballad of "Adelaide's Triumph," are now for the first time published. Others have appeared in different periodicals, with which the writer has been connected during the last ten years, and have met with a kind reception from the public. How far any of them may be deemed worthy of preservation, will be solved, probably, by the fate of this edition, which has been carefully revised, and contains the first and only complete and authorized collection of the writer's poetical pieces.

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NOTES.

SONGS OF THE SEA.

S O N G S
OF
T H E S E A .

THE LIGHT OF THE LIGHTHOUSE.

I.

THE closing of a day in June,
Mild, beautiful, and bright !
The setting sun, the crescent moon,
Mingling their doubtful light !
The west wind brings the odor sweet
Of flowers and new-mown hay ;
While murmuring billows at our feet
Breathe of the salt sea spray.

II.

We stroll along the wide sea-beach,
A ladye faire and I,
And con what Nature's page may teach
In ocean, earth, and sky.
And, as across the waters blue,
With roving glance we gaze,
A light springs suddenly to view —
It is a beacon's blaze!

III.

O, lambently the new-born flame
Disparts the purple air;
In childlike wonder we exclaim,
To see a sight so fair.
“How bright,” the ladye saith, “its ray
Shoots o'er the tranquil tide!
Now listen to the tale, I pray,
With yonder shaft allied.

IV.

“ Upon that island’s narrow ledge
Of rocks with sea-weed strown,
Fringed by the thinly-scattered sedge,
The lighthouse towers alone.
There, ’mid the sea’s perpetual swell,
The dash of breakers wild,
Two solitary beings dwell —
A father and his child !

V.

“ Three years ago, no friendly light
Across the dark reef beamed ;
A white flag on the rocky height,
The only signal, streamed.
Poor Francis Lorne had then a wife,
And he had children five ;
He led a fisherman’s bold life,
And merrily did he thrive.

VI.

“It was on Independence Day,
To Mary Lorne he said,
‘My sloop is rocking in the bay,
Our flag at her mast-head.
Come, gentle wife, your work throw down,
And, children, come with me;
And we’ll all take a trip to town,
This day’s great sights to see.

VII.

“‘On board! on board! Fair blows the gale;
My boat is swift and strong;
With streamers gay and loosened sail,
How will she sweep along!
The sky is clear and beautiful,
Bright gleams the breezy morn;
We’ll skim the blue waves like a gull!
We will!’ said Francis Lorne.

VIII.

“O, joyful heart, exult not so!

Mistrust that prospect fair;

It is the lure of death and woe,

The ambush of despair!

That night the storm, in wild array,

Clove through the billows dark,

And, in a cloud of foam and spray,

Rushed on the fated bark.

IX.

“The morning’s dim, unconscious smile,

That hushed the raging blast,

Disclosed upon that rock-bound isle

Two forms the surge had cast.

There, folded to the father’s breast,

His youngest daughter lay;

They are but two — where be the rest?

Ye ruthless billows, say!

X.

“ Alas for him! From death-like sleep,
When memory was recalled,
He could not groan—he could not weep—
His reason was appalled!
A grief, that blanched his sun-burnt face,
Thenceforth upon him grew—
A grief that time could not erase,
And hope could not subdue.

XI.

“ And when, at length, on yonder spot,
Was reared the lighthouse spire,
To him was given the lonely lot
To tend the beacon fire.
There, from the busy world apart,
Its clamor and its care,
He lives, with but one human heart
His solitude to share.

XII.

“ But O, Aurora’s crimson light,
That makes the watch-fire dim,
Is not a more transporting sight
Than Ellen is to him!
He pineth not for fields and brooks,
Wild-flowers and singing birds,
For Summer smileth in her looks,
And singeth in her words.

XIII.

“ A fairy thing, not five years old,
So full of joy and grace,
It is a rapture to behold
The beauty of her face!
And O, to hear her happy voice,
Her laughter ringing free,
Would make the gloomiest heart rejoice,
And turn despair to glee!

XIV.

“The ocean’s blue is in her eyes,
 Its coral in her lips;
And, in her cheek, the mingled dyes,
 No sea-shell could eclipse!
And, as she climbs the weedy rocks,
 And in the sunshine plays,
The wind that lifts her golden locks
 Seems more to love *their* rays.

XV.

“When the smoothed ocean sleeps unstirred,
 And, like a silver band,
The molten waters circling gird
 The island’s rim of sand,
She runs her tiny feet to lave,
 And breaks the liquid chain;
Then laughs to feel the shivered wave
 Coil down to rest again.

XVI.

“And, when the black squall rends the deep,
The tempest-cradled maid,
To see the white gulls o’er her sweep,
Mounts to the balustrade :
Above her head and round about,
They stoop without alarm,
And seem to flout her threatening shout,
And her up-stretching arm.

XVII.

“Once, Francis sought the neighboring town,
And she was left alone ;
When such a furious storm came down
As never had been known.
‘My child!’ the wretched parent cried ;
‘O friends, withhold me not !
The bravest man, in such a tide,
Would quail on that bleak spot.’

XVIII.

“He strove, till faint and out of breath,
His fragile boat to gain;
But all knew it was certain death
To tempt the hurricane:
And wilder grew the tempest’s power,
And doubly black the night,
When, lo! at the appointed hour,
Blazed forth that beacon-light!

XIX.

“The sea-fog, like a fallen cloud,
Rolled in and dimmed its fire;
Roared the gale louder and more loud,
And sprang the billows higher!
Above the gale that wailed and rang, —
Above the booming swell,
With steady and sonorous clang,
Pealed forth the lighthouse bell!

XX.

“Warned by the sound, ships inward bound
Again the offing tried;
And soon the baffled Tempest found
His anger was defied:
The billows fell, the winds, rebuked,
Crept to their caverns back;
And placidly the day-star looked
Out from the cloudy rack.

XXI.

“Bright through the window-panes it smiled
Upon the little bed,
Where, wrapped in slumber deep and mild,
Ellen reposed her head.
Her friends, her father seek the place;
Good saints have watched her charms!
Her blue eyes open on his face,
And she is in his arms!”

XXII.

The voice was mute, the tale was told ;
Sacred be my reply !
Along the wide sea-beach we strolled,
That ladye faire and I.
Blessed, ever blessed and unforgot,
Be that sweet summer night !
And blessings on that wave-girt spot,
The lighthouse and the light !

SHELLS AND SEAWEEDS.

RECORDS OF A SUMMER VOYAGE TO CUBA.

I.

THE DEPARTURE.

AGAIN thy winds are pealing in mine ear ;
Again thy waves are flashing in my sight ;
Thy memory-haunting tones again I hear,
As through the spray our vessel wings her flight.
On thy cerulean breast, now swelling high,
Again, thou broad Atlantic, am I cast.
Six years, with gathering speed, have glided by,
Since, an adventurous boy, I hailed thee last.
The sea-birds o'er me wheel, as if to greet
An old companion ; on my naked brow
The sparkling foam-drops not unkindly beat ;
Flows thro' my hair the freshening breeze : and now
The horizon's ring enclasps me ; and I stand
Gazing where fades from view, cloud-like, my father-
land.

II.

THE AWAKENING.

How changed the scene! Our parting gaze, last night,
Was on the three-hilled city's swelling dome, —
The dome o'erlooking from its stately height
Full many a sacred spire and happy home.
Rose over all, clouding the azure air,
A canopy of smoke, swart Labor's sign;
While like a forest Winter has stripped bare,
Bristled the masts along the water's line.
But now the unbroken ocean and the sky
Seem to enclose us in a crystal sphere;
A new creation fills the straining eye;
No bark save ours — no human trace is here!
But, in the brightening east, a crimson haze
Floats up before the sun, his incense fresh of praise.

III.

THE GALE.

The night came robed in terror. Through the air
Mountains of clouds, with lurid summits, rolled, —
The lightning kindling with its vivid glare
Their outlines, as they rose heaped fold on fold.
The wind, in fitful soughs, swept o'er the sea;
And then a sudden lull, serene as sleep,
Soft as an infant's breathing, seemed to be
Cast, like enchantment, on the throbbing deep.
But false the calm! for soon the strengthened gale
Burst in one loud explosion, far and wide,
Drowning the thunder's voice! With every sail
Close-reefed, our groaning ship heeled on her side;
The torn waves combed the deck; while, o'er the mast,
The meteors of the storm a ghastly radiance cast.

IV.

MORNING AFTER THE GALE.

Bravely our trim ship rode the tempest through;
And when the exhausted gale had ceased to rave,
How broke the day-star on the gazer's view!
How flushed the orient every crested wave!
The sun threw down his shield of golden light
In proud defiance on the ocean's bed;
Whereat the clouds betook themselves to flight,
Like routed hosts, with banners soiled and red.
The sky was soon all brilliance, east and west;
All traces of the gale had passed away;
The chiming billows, by the breeze caressed,
Shook lightly from their heads the feathery spray.
Ah! thus may Hope's auspicious star relume
The sorrow-clouded soul, and end its hour of gloom!

V.

TO A LAND BIRD.

Thou wanderer from green fields and leafy nooks !

Where blooms the flower and toils the honey-bee, —

Where odorous blossoms drift along the brooks,

And woods and hills are very fair to see, —

Why hast thou left thy native bough to roam,

With drooping wing, far o'er the briny billow ?

Thou canst not, like the ospray, cleave the foam,

Nor like the petrel make the wave thy pillow.

Thou'rt like those fine-toned spirits, gentle bird,

Which from some better land to this rude life

Seem borne. They struggle, 'mid the common herd,

With powers unfitted for the selfish strife :

Haply, at length, some zephyr wafts them back

To their own home of peace, across the world's dull

track.

VI.

A THOUGHT OF THE PAST.

I waked from slumber at the dead of night,
Moved by a dream too heavenly fair to last —
A dream of boyhood's season of delight;
It flashed along the dim shapes of the past;
And, as I mused upon its strange appeal,
Thrilling me with emotions undefined,
Old memories, bursting from Time's icy seal,
Rushed, like sun-stricken fountains, 'on my mind.
Scenes where my lot was cast in life's young day;
My favorite haunts, the shores, the ancient woods,
Where, with my schoolmates, I was wont to stray;
Green, sloping lawns, majestic solitudes —
All rose to view, more beautiful than then; —
They faded, and I wept — a child indeed again!

VII.

TROPICAL WEATHER.

Now we're afloat upon the tropic sea:

Here Summer holdeth a perpetual reign.

How flash the waters in their bounding glee!

The sky's soft purple is without a stain.

Full in our wake the smooth, warm trade-winds,
blowing,

To their unvarying goal still faithful run;

And, as we steer, with sails before them flowing,

Nearer the zenith daily climbs the sun.

The startled flying-fish around us skim,

Glossed like the humming-bird, with rainbow dyes;

And, as they dip into the water's brim,

Swift in pursuit the preying dolphin hies.

All, all is fair; and gazing round, we feel

Over the yielding sense the torrid languor steal.

VIII.

A CALM.

O for one draught of cooling northern air!

That it might pour its freshness on me now;
That it might kiss my cheek and cleave my hair,
And part its currents round my fevered brow!

Ocean, and sky, and earth—a blistering calm

Spread over all! How weary wears the day!
O, lift the wave, and bend the distant palm,
Breeze! wheresoe'er thy lagging pinions stay!
Triumphant burst upon the level deep,

Rock the fixed hull and stretch the clinging sail!
Arouse the opal clouds that o'er us sleep!

Sound thy shrill whistle! we will bid thee hail!
Though wrapped in all the storm-clouds of the North,
Yet, from thy home of ice, come forth, O breeze,
come forth!

IX.

A WISH.

That I were in some forest's green retreat !
Beneath a towering arch of proud old elms ;
Where a clear streamlet gurgled at my feet —
Its wavelets glittering in their tiny helms !
Thick clustering vines in many a rich festoon
From the high, rustling branches should depend ;
Weaving a net, through which the sultry Noon
Might stoop in vain its fiery beams to send.
There, prostrate on some rock's gray sloping side,
Upon whose tinted moss the dew yet lay,
Would I catch glimpses of the clouds that ride,
Athwart the sky — and dream the hours away ;
While through the alleys of the sunless wood
The fanning breeze might steal, with wild-flowers'
breath imbued.

X.

TROPICAL NIGHT.

But O! the night — the cool, luxurious night,
Which closes round us when the day grows dim,
And the sun sinks from his meridian height
Behind the ocean's occidental rim!
Clouds in thin streaks of purple, green and red,
Lattice his dying glory, and absorb —
Hung o'er his couch — the rallying lustre shed,
Like love's last tender glances, from his orb.
And now the moon, her lids unclosing, deigns
To smile serenely on the charméd sea,
That shines as if inlaid with lightning-chains,
From which it faintly struggled to be free.
Swan-like, with motion unperceived, we glide,
Touched by the downy breeze, and favored by the tide.

XI.

THE PLANET JUPITER.

Ever at night have I looked up for thee,
O'er thy sidereal sisterhood supreme!
Ever at night have scanned the purple sea
For the reflection of thy quivering beam!
When the white cloud thy diamond radiance screened,
And the Bahama breeze began to wail,
How on the plunging bows for hours I've leaned,
And watched the gradual lifting of thy veil!
Bright planet! lustrous effluence! thou ray
From the Eternal Source of life and light!
Gleam on the track where Truth shall lead the way,
And gild the inward as the outward night!
Shine but as now upon my dying eyes,
And Hope, from earth to thee, from thee to Heaven,
shall rise!

XII.

TO EGERIA.

The flying wave reflects thy angel face,
But soon the liquid mirror breaks in foam;
The severing cloud reveals thy form of grace,
And then thou'rt standing in thy fittest home;
A drifted vapor hides thy maiden shape —
Ocean and sky are all the gazer sees;
But, while he murmurs at thy swift escape,
He starts to hear thy whisper in the breeze.
Capricious phantom! why within my heart
Create the void of beauty and of love?
A spirit tells me, coy one, who thou art, —
Heard in the gale, or shadowed forth above —
The bright prefigurement of her who waits,
With snow-white veil and wreath, beside the Future's
gates!

XIII.

CUBA.

What sounds arouse me from my slumbers light ?

“ *Land ho ! all hands, ahoy !* ” — I’m on the deck :

’Tis early dawn : the day-star yet is bright ;

A few white vapory bars the zenith fleck ;

And lo ! along the horizon, bold and high,

The purple hills of Cuba ! Hail, all hail !

Isle of undying verdure, with thy sky

Of purest azure ! Welcome, odorous gale !

O, scene of life and joy ! thou art arrayed

In hues of unimagined loveliness.

Sing louder, brave old mariner ! and aid

My swelling heart its rapture to express ;

For, from enchanted memory, never more

Shall fade this dawn sublime, this fair, resplendent
shore.

XIV.

THE SEA-BREEZE AT MATANZAS.

After a night of languor without rest, —

Striving to sleep, yet wishing morn might come,
By the pent, scorching atmosphere oppressed,

Impatient of the vile mosquito's hum, —
With what reviving freshness from the sea,

Its airy plumage glittering with the spray,
Comes the strong day-breeze, rushing joyously
Into the bright arms of the encircling bay!

It tempers the keen ardor of the sun;

The drooping frame with life renewed it fills;
It lashes the green waters as they run;

It sways the graceful palm-tree on the hills;
It breathes of ocean solitudes, and caves,
Luminous, vast, and cool, far down beneath the waves.

XV.

MIDSUMMER RAINS.

The morning here, how beautiful and bright!

Look forth, and not a cloud-flake may be seen;
But, ere the sun has reached his noonday height,
Up from the horizon slides a vapory screen;
And now the firmament is all o'ercast:

Peals the hoarse thunder with stupendous roar;
The rain, a crushing torrent, lays the blast,
Foams on the wave, and hides the adjoining shore.
But, with a breath, it pauses; and a ray

Cleaves the huge keystone of the arch of gloom;
The shower attenuates to a filmy spray,
Bright rolls the sea again—the earth is bloom;
And, while the sun pours down a fiercer blaze,
The moisture reascends fast on his flaming rays.

XVI.

WEIGHING ANCHOR.

Like sweetest music are those cries that tell

Of weighing anchor ; — ay, we're homeward bound !

Ye orange groves and coffee walks, farewell !

Farewell, thou fire-scooped summit, forest-crowned !

Ah, bright thy shores and bountiful thy fruits,

Cuba ! and heaped with green thy river-banks ;

But here the noontide Pestilence recruits

(Stern minister !) Death's ever-gathering ranks.

And so, e'en while thy gales are breathing balm,

And thy rich growth our soil reluctant mocks,

O, give me back the cedar for the palm !

The cedar on its brown hills, ribbed with rocks !

'Tis Freedom's emblem ; and on Freedom's shore

It stands — though rough without, all fragrance at

the core !

THE MISSING SHIP.

1841.

GOD speed the noble PRESIDENT !

A gallant boat is she,
As ever entered harbor,
Or crossed a stormy sea.
Like some majestic castle
She towers upon the stream;
The good ships moored beside her
Like pigmy shallops seem.

How will her mighty bulwarks
The leaping surges brave !
How will her iron sinews
Make way 'gainst wind and wave !

Farewell, thou stately vessel !
Ye voyagers, farewell !
Securely on that deck shall ye
The tempest's shock repel.

The stately vessel left us,
In all her bold array ; —
A glorious sight, O landmen,
As she glided down our bay !
Her flags were waving joyfully,
And from her ribs of oak,
“ *Farewell!* ” to all the city
Her guns in thunder spoke.

Flee, on thy vapory pinions !
Back, back to England flee ;
Where patient watchers by the strand
Have waited long for thee ;
Where kindred hearts are beating
To welcome home thy crew,
And tearful eyes gaze constantly
Across the waters blue !

Alas, ye watchers by the strand,
 Weeks, months have rolled away,
But where, where is the President?
 And why is this delay?
Return, pale mourners, to your homes!
 Ye gaze, and gaze in vain;
O, never shall that pennoned mast
 Salute your eyes again!

And now your hopes, like morning stars,
 Have one by one gone out;
And stern Despair subdues at length
 The agony of doubt;
But still Affection lifts the torch
 By night along the shore,
And lingers by the surf-beat rocks,
 To marvel, to deplore.

In dreams, I see the fated ship
 Torn by the northern blast;
About her tempest-riven track
 The white fog gathers fast;

When, lo! above the swathing mist,
 Their heads the icebergs lift,
In lucent grandeur to the clouds —
 Vast continents adrift!

One mingled shriek of awe goes up,
 At that stupendous sight :
Now, helmsman, for a hundred lives,
 O, guide the helm aright!
Vain prayer! she strikes! and, thundering down,
 The avalanches fall!
Crushed, whelmed, the stately vessel sinks —
 The cold sea covers all!

Anon, unresting Fancy holds
 A direr scene to view,—
The burning ship, the fragile raft,
 The pale and dying crew.
Ah me! was such their maddening fate
 Upon the billowy brine?
Give up, remorseless Ocean,
 A relic and a sign!

No answer cometh from the deep,
 To tell the tale we dread;
No messenger of weal or woe
 Returneth from the dead;
But Faith looks up through tears, and sees,
 From earthly haven driven,
Those lost ones meet in fairer realms,
 Where storms reach not—in Heaven.

ROCKALL.

Rockall is a solid block of granite, growing, as it were, out of the sea, at a greater distance from the main land, probably, than any other island or rock of the same diminutive size in the world. It is only seventy feet high, and not more than a hundred yards in circumference. It lies at a distance of no fewer than one hundred and eighty-four miles nearly due west of St. Kilda, the remotest part of the Hebrides, and is two hundred and sixty miles from the north of Ireland.

PALE ocean rock! that, like a phantom shape,
 Or some mysterious spirit's tenement,
 Risest amid this weltering waste of waves,
 Lonely and desolate, thy spreading base
 Is planted in the sea's unmeasured depths,
 Where rolls the huge leviathan o'er sands
 Glistening with shipwrecked treasures. The strong
 wind
 Flings up thy sides a veil of feathery spray

With sunbeams interwoven, and the hues
Which mingle in the rainbow. From thy top
The sea-birds rise, and sweep with sidelong flight
Downward upon their prey ; or, with poised wings,
Skim to the horizon o'er the glittering deep.

Our bark, careening to the welcome breeze,
With white sails filled and streamers all afloat,
Shakes from her dipping prow the foam, while we
Gaze on thy outline mingling in the void,
And draw our breath like men who see, amazed,
Some mighty pageant passing. What had been
Our fate last night, if, when the aspiring waves
Were toppling o'er our mainmast, and the stars
Were shrouded in black vapors, we had struck
Full on thy sea-bound pinnacles, Rockall !

But now another prospect greets our sight,
And hope elate is rising with our hearts :
Intensely blue, the sky's resplendent arch
Bends over all serenely ; not a cloud
Mars its pure radiance ; not a shadow dims
The flashing billows. The refreshing air
It is a luxury to feel and breathe ;

The senses are made keener, and drink in
The life, the joy, the beauty of the scene.

Repeller of the wild and thundering surge!
For ages has the baffled tempest howled
By thee with all its fury, and piled up
The massive waters like a falling tower
To dash thee down; but there thou risest yet,
As calm amid the roar of storms, the shock
Of waves uptorn, and hurled against thy front,
As when, on summer eves, the crimsoned main,
In lingering undulations, girds thee round!

O, might I stand as steadfast and as free
'Mid the fierce strife and tumult of the world,
The crush of all the elements of woe,—
Unshaken by their terrors, looking forth
With placid eye on life's uncertain sea,
Whether its waves were darkly swelling high
Or dancing in the sunshine,—then might frown
The clouds of fate around me! Firm in faith,
Pointing serenely to that better world,
Where there is peace, would I abide the storm,
Unmindful of its rage and of its end.

THE HURRICANE'S AMBUSCADE.

Look upon those clouds that lie
Pillowed on the light blue sky,
So translucent and serene,
That they hardly dim its sheen:
Look upon the glittering deep,
Which the fiery sunbeams steep,
Scattering on its purple floor
Amethysts and golden ore!

Yet the Spirit of the storm
Masks his elemental form
Under this celestial smile,
Nature putteth on the while;

And the day shall not be ended,
Ere, with all his hosts attended,
We shall see the Hurricane
Ride upon this billowy plain.

Heralds of his coming swift,
O'er us blackest clouds shall drift;
And each foaming wave below
Seem a pall half-merged in snow;
Then the loosened gale shall break,
Scooping mountains for his wake,
And, with island-shaking roar,
Drive whole argosies ashore.

But we'll put our ship in trim,
And await this tempest grim,
Trusting not those tints of rose,
Lured not by this smooth repose:
Then, if comes the ambushed gale,
And his vassal waves prevail,
Foundered, wrecked, or tempest-driven,
Still we shall have nobly striven.

Ah! thou voyager, afloat
On life's sea, in painted boat,
Crystal skies above thee bend,
On thee prosperous airs attend;
But, when fortune seems securest,
Then of stealthy change be surest;
And, with spirit bold and steady,
For the sudden storm be ready.

From the earth those vapors mount,
And its moisture is their fount;
But above them, ever clear,
Shines the starry hemisphere:
This world's sorrows, this world's sighs,
Weave the clouds o'er life that rise;
But, eternally above,
Gleams the perfect light of love.

A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE.

SET TO MUSIC BY HENRY RUSSELL.

A LIFE on the ocean wave,
A home on the rolling deep;
Where the scattered waters rave,
And the winds their revels keep!
Like an eagle caged, I pine
On this dull, unchanging shore:
O! give me the flashing brine,
The spray and the tempest's roar!

Once more on the deck I stand,
Of my own swift-gliding craft:
Set sail! farewell to the land!
The gale follows fair abaft.

We shoot through the sparkling foam

Like an ocean-bird set free ; —

Like the ocean-bird, our home

We'll find far out on the sea.

The land is no longer in view,

The clouds have begun to frown ;

But with a stout vessel and crew,

We'll say, Let the storm come down !

And the song of our hearts shall be,

While the winds and the waters rave,

A home on the rolling sea !

A life on the ocean wave !

MIDSUMMER IN THE CITY.

O RUS, QUANDO TE ASPICIAM ?

I.

O, ye keen breezes from the salt Atlantic,
Which to the beach, where memory loves to wander,
On your strong pinions waft reviving coolness,
Bend your course hither !

II.

For, in the surf ye scattered to the sunshine,
Did we not sport together in my boyhood,
Screaming for joy amid the flashing breakers,
O rude companions ?

III.

Then to the meadows beautiful and fragrant,
Where the coy Spring beholds her earliest verdure
Brighten with smiles that rugged, sea-side hamlet,
How would we hasten!

IV.

There under elm-trees affluent in foliage,
High o'er whose summit hovered the sea-eagle,
Through the hot, glaring noontide have we rested,
After our gambols.

V.

Vainly the sailor called you from your slumber:
Like a glazed pavement shone the level ocean;
While, with their snow-white canvass idly drooping,
Stood the tall vessels. . . .

VI.

And, when at length, exulting ye awakened,
Rushed to the beach, and ploughed the liquid acres,
How have I chased you through the shivered billows,
In my frail shallop!

VII.

Playmates, old playmates, hear my invocation!
In the close town I waste this golden summer,
Where piercing cries and sounds of wheels in motion
Ceaselessly mingle.

VIII.

When shall I feel your breath upon my forehead?
When shall I hear you in the elm-trees' branches?
When shall we wrestle in the briny surges,
Friends of my boyhood?

MUSIC ON THE WATERS.

HARK ! while our ship is swinging
Above the ocean caves,
The twilight gale is bringing
Soft music o'er the waves.
Ah ! from what isle of pleasure
Floats the harmonious sound ?
To that entrancing measure,
A fairy troop might bound.

Hush ! now it faints, it lingers ;
Now with a peal sublime,
Struck by the wind-god's fingers,
It drowns the billowy chime.

The stars more brightly glisten ;
The waves beneath the moon
Fall down, and seem to listen,
Enchanted, to the tune.

Now mounting, now subsiding,
It swells, it sinks, it dies ;
Now on the swift breeze gliding,
Over the deep it flies.
So sweet and so endearing
The strain, that, ere 'tis done,
Thought seems absorbed in hearing,
All senses in the one.

THE NIGHT-STORM AT SEA.

'Tis a dreary thing to be
Tossing on the wide, wide sea,
When the sun has set in clouds,
And the wind sighs through the shrouds
With a voice and with a tone
Like a living creature's moan.

Look, how wildly swells the surge
Round the black horizon's verge!
See the giant billows rise,
From the ocean to the skies,
While the sea-bird wheels his flight
O'er their streaming crests of white!

List! the wind is wakening fast;
All the sky is overcast;
Lurid vapors, hurrying, trail
In the pathway of the gale,
As it strikes us with a shock
That might rend the deep-set rock.

Falls the strained and shivered mast!
Spars are scattered by the blast;
And the sails are split asunder,
As a cloud is rent by thunder;
And the struggling vessel shakes,
As the wild sea o'er her breaks.

Ah! what sudden light is this,
Blazing o'er the dark abyss?
Lo! the full moon rears her form
'Mid the cloud-rifts of the storm,
And, athwart the troubled air,
Shines, like hope upon despair!

Every leaping billow gleams
With the lustre of her beams,
And lifts high its fiery plume
Through the midnight's parting gloom,
While its scattered flakes of gold
O'er the sinking deck are rolled.

Father, low on bended knee,
Humbled, weak, we turn to thee;
Spare us, 'mid the fearful fight
Of the raging winds to-night;
Guide us o'er the threat'ning wave;
Save us;—thou alone canst save!

A SUMMER NOON AT SEA.

A HOLY stillness, beautiful and deep,
Reigns in the air and broods upon the ocean ;
The worn-out winds are quieted to sleep,
And not a wave is lifted into motion.

The fleecy clouds hang on the soft blue sky,
Into fantastic shapes of brilliance moulded,
Pillowed on one another broad and high,
With the sun's dazzling tresses interfolded.

The sea-bird skims along the glassy tide,
With sidelong flight and wing of glittering whiteness,
Or floats upon the sea, outstretching wide
A sheet of gold in the meridian brightness.

Our vessel lies, unstirred by wave or blast,
As she were moored to her dark shadow seeming,
Her pennon twined around the tapering mast,
And her loose sails like marble drapery gleaming.

How, at an hour like this, the unruffled mind
Partakes the quiet that is shed around us!
As if the Power that chained the impatient wind
With the same fetter of repose had bound us!

“FORGET ME NOT.”

“FORGET me not?” Ah, words of useless warning
To one whose heart is henceforth memory’s shrine!
Sooner the skylark might forget the morning,
Than I forget a look, a tone of thine.

Sooner the sunflower might forget to waken
When the first radiance lights the eastern hill,
Than I, by daily thoughts of thee forsaken,
Feel, as they kindle, no expanding thrill.

Oft, when at night the deck I’m pacing lonely,
Or when I pause to watch some fulgent star,
Will Contemplation be retracing only
Thy form, and fly to greet thee though afar.

When storms unleashed, with fearful clangor sweeping,
 Drive our strained bark along the hollowed sea,
 When to the clouds the foam-topped waves are leaping,
 Even then I'll not forget, beloved one, thee!

Thy image, in my sorrow-shaded hours,
 Will, like a sunburst on the waters, shine;
 'Twill be as grateful as the breath of flowers
 From some green island wafted o'er the brine.

And O, sweet lady, when, from home departed,
 I count the leagues between us with a sigh,—
 When, at the thought, perchance a tear has started,
 May I not dream in heart thou'rt sometimes nigh?

Ay, thou wilt, sometimes, when the wine-cup passes,
 And friends are gathering round in festal glee,
 While bright eyes flash as flash the brimming glasses,
 Let silent Memory pledge one health to me.

Farewell! My fatherland is disappearing
Faster and faster from my baffled sight;
The winds rise wildly, and thick clouds are rearing
Their ebon flags, that hasten on the night.

Farewell! The pilot leaves us; seaward gliding,
Our brave ship dashes through the foamy swell;
But Hope, forever faithful and abiding,
Hears distant welcomes in this last farewell!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

GONELLO.

'Twas in fair Florence, in the olden time,

A wight, Gonello named, was born and bred;
A famous jester, an unequalled mime,

Sworn foe to dulness of the heart and head.
Sunny his spirits as his own fair clime; .

Mirth was his raiment, and on mirth he fed:
In truth, he was a most diverting fellow;
No cross-grained Æsop, but — in short, Gonello.

But Dulness holds it treason to be witty;

And, having ridiculed some dolt of rank,
Gonello was condemned to leave the city, —

A hard return for such a harmless prank.

Neither his jokes nor tears could gain him pity,
And all his friends were busy or looked blank,
When he drew near to ask them for assistance,
Telling him, by their shrugs, to keep his distance.

He turned away in loneliness of heart,
Bestowing many a bitter gibe on those
Who, because Folly feared some random dart
While Wit was foraging, had grown his foes.
“Dear Florence,” quoth he, “must I then depart?
O Fun and Fortune, spare me further blows!”
Was it not Vandal cruelty to pester
With banishment so capital a jester?

Gonello shook the dust from off his shoes,
And the ungrateful city jokeless left.
One friend, please Fortune, he would never lose —
A merry heart — that still remained uncleft.
What should he do? what fit employment choose, —
Of home, of patron, and of means bereft?
At length he recollected a report,
A fool was wanted at Ferrara’s court.

Thither he went to seek the situation,

And urged his claims with such a comic face,
That he was made, by formal installation,

Prime fool and licensed jester to his grace;
And, having settled down in this vocation,

He put on motley as became his place;
And thenceforth passed his precious time in joking,
Punning and quizzing, revelling and smoking.

His jests, unlike some jests that we might name,

Had nothing in them of a mouldy savor;
But fresh, and apt, and tipped with point they came,
To put grim Melancholy out of favor;
To drive Imposture to his den of shame,

To scourge Pretence, and make true Merit braver:
So that you granted, after you had laughed,
Though Wit had feathered, Truth had barbed the shaft.

The marquis held him in esteem so great,

That, spite of motley wear, the jester soon
Became a dabster in affairs of state,

Though frowned upon by many a pompous loon

'Twas an odd combination of his fate —

A politician, honest man, buffoon !

But he was frank — rare trait in an adviser ;

And, though a fool, no senator was wiser.

And so, on rapid wing, his days flew by.

What though a league of dunces might oppose ?

From modest Worth he never drew the sigh,

And never added to Affliction's woes.

But, ah ! securest joy, mishap is nigh ;

The storm condenses while the noontide glows :

The marquis failed in health — grew more unwell ;

And, thereupon, a strange event befell.

His grace's illness was a quartan ague,

Which the physicians tried in vain to cure.

I hope, dear reader, it may never plague you :

Doubtless 'tis quite unpleasant to endure.

Should this digression seem a little vague, you

Will see how hard it is a rhyme to lure,

And pardon me the fault ; or, what is better,

Remould the stanza, and make me your debtor.

One remedy there was; but who would dare
Apply it, hazarding the patient's wrath?
'Twas simply this, — to take him unaware
And throw him overboard, by way of bath; —
A liberty he might not tamely bear,
But sweep the rash adventurer from his path.
Since the physicians would not then apply it,
Gonello secretly resolved to try it.

No great regard had he for outward rank;
And as the marquis strolled with him one day,
In idle mood, along the river's bank,
He pushed him over headlong from the quay;
Then, seeing him drawn out ere thrice he sank,
Turned a droll somerset, and ran away;
Knowing, unless he vanished with velocity,
His priceless ears might pay for the atrocity.

The marquis was pulled out, all wet and dripping,
Enraged at having been so vilely treated;
Albeit, indeed, the unexpected dipping
Had, strange to say, his malady unseated.

But still he swore, the knave should catch a whipping.

In this he quickly found himself defeated ; —
His followers said, Gonello had decamped ;
On learning which, his highness swore and stamped.

All with responsive choler were inflamed —

At least they said so — at the daring deed ;
And, the next day, an edict was proclaimed,
In which 'twas by authority decreed,
Gonello was a traitor, who had aimed

Even at his liege's life ; — and so, “take heed,
All ye whom it concerns, he dies, if found,
Ever again, upon Ferrara ground.”

Gonello read the merciless decree,

Then critically conned it o'er and o'er,
And pondered every syllable, to see
If no equivocal intent it bore.

Some subtle quirk, he thought, some jesting plea,
Might help his fame and favor to restore.

Yes! he has wrested an equivocation,
After hard study, from the proclamation.

“ ’Tis only on *Ferrara* ground,” he said,
“ The penalty here threatened can befall;
On ground of friendly *Padua* if I tread,
Do I infringe the edict? Not at all!”
So, without fear of jeopardizing his head,
He went to give his grace a morning call,
And crossed in motley state Ferrara’s bound,
Perched on a wagon, labelled “*Paduan Ground*.”

By this device he hoped to have evaded
The clutches of the prowling men of law;
But, ah! he did not view the thing as they did,
Who stood not for entreaty or for flaw,
But pulled him down, unpitied and unaided,
And thrust him in a prison’s greedy maw,—
Assuring him that, spite of needful haste,
The “affair” should be conducted in good taste.

“ The affair? Ha! what affair?” Gonello cried;
“ Can it then be I’m under mortal ban?
Is this the way ’gainst lapses to provide,—
To cut the head off of the erring man?

To make the law a ruthless homicide?

Is this the wisest, most remedial plan?

If I escape this sentence of impiety,

I'll found an anti-blood-spilling society."

Alas! 'tis only when the mischief reaches

Our own quick sense of wrong, we feel for others;

'Tis then Experience, the laggard, teaches

A truth the unfeeling world too often smothers,—

And yet a truth which conscience ever preaches,—

The good of all is lodged in one poor brother's.

O! when mankind shall feel this truth aright,

No Fourier need scheme, no Taylor fight.

But where's Gonello? To his dungeon-cell

A priest has come to give him absolution.

"Good father," quoth the jester, "all is well;—

The spirit carries its own retribution;—

Yes, its own bias is its heaven or hell.

But hark! the signal for my execution!

The knell of fun! Lead on! Though I'm a sinner,

By this fair light, I hope to be the winner!"

There stands the scaffold — there the fatal block!

What crowds have gathered to the scene of blood!

Gonello bows his head, and waits the shock

That shall unseal the life-encircling flood.

An interval succeeds, that seems to mock

The horror of the gasping multitude;

When, lo! the grinning minister of slaughter

Dashes upon the block a pail of water!

An uproar of applauses rends the air;—

“Long live the marquis, and Gonello long!

’Twas a sham sentence! O, requital fair!

And Mercy has but worn the mask of wrong!”

Thus, while rebounding joy succeeds despair,

Exclaim, ’mid wild hurrahs, the hustling throng;

And Laughter treads on Grief’s receding heel,

Stunning the fugitive with peal on peal.

But soft! the jester — why does he remain,

On the uncrimsoned platform, mute and still?

Has agonizing terror stunned his brain,

Or sudden gladness sent too fierce a thrill?

Faints he from rapture or excess of pain?

His heart beats not — his brow is pale and chill —
Light from his eyes, heat from his limbs has fled; —
Jesu Maria! he is dead — is dead!

Ay, the wrought spirit, straining for the light,
And fixed in its conceit that death was near,
Felt the sharp steel in harmless water smite,
Heard the air part as no one else could hear.
Its own volition was its power of flight
Above this gross, material atmosphere.
A phantom axe was wielded to forestall
The stroke it deemed the headsman would let fall.

And so the farce became a tragedy.

The moral of it you may briefly read; —
Carried too far, jokes practical may be
Edge tools to make the meddlers' fingers bleed.
But, poor Gonello! spendthrift child of glee!
Wit's bounteous almoner! 'twas hard indeed,
That thou, the prime dispenser of good jokes,
Should fall at last the victim of a hoax!

And yet the marquis, who had but designed
Rough trick for trick, deserves our pity more;
For, from that hour of grief, his peace of mind
Incurably was wounded at the core.
Mirth bade his heart farewell—he pined and pined,
As though Life held no further joy in store.
Gonello had both balked him of his jest,
And himself played his last one and his best.

THE MARTYR OF THE ARENA.

HONORED be the hero evermore,

Who at Mercy's call has nobly died !
Echoed be his name from shore to shore,
With immortal chronicles allied !

Verdant be the turf upon his dust,

Bright the sky above, and soft the air !
In the grove set up his marble bust,
And with garlands crown it, fresh and fair.

In melodious numbers, that shall live

With the music of the rolling spheres,
Let the minstrel's inspiration give
His eulogium to the future years !

Not the victor in his country's cause,
Not the chief who leaves a people free,
Not the framer of a nation's laws,
Shall deserve a greater fame than he.

Hast thou heard, in Rome's declining day,
How a youth, by Christian zeal impelled,
Swept the sanguinary games away
Which the Coliseum once beheld?

Crowds on crowds had gathered to the sight,
And the tiers their gazing thousands showed,
When two gladiators, armed for fight,
O'er the arena's sandy circle strode.

Rang the dome with plaudits loud and long,
As, with shields advanced, the athletes stood:
Was there no one in that eager throng
To denounce the spectacle of blood?

Ay, Telemachus, with swelling frame,
Saw the inhuman sport renewed once more :
Few were gathered there could tell his name,
And a cross was all the badge he wore ;

Yet, with brow elate and godlike mien,
Stepped he forth upon the circling sand ;
And, while all were wondering at the scene,
Checked the encounter with a daring hand.

“ Romans ! ” cried he, “ let this reeking sod
Never more with human blood be stained !
Let no image of the living God
In unhallowed combat be profaned !

“ Ah ! too long hath this colossal dome
Failed to sink and hide your brutal shows :
Here I call upon assembled Rome
Now to swear, they shall forever close ! ”

Parted thus, the combatants, with joy,
 'Mid the tumult found the means to fly;
In the arena stood the undaunted boy,
 And, with looks adoring, gazed on high.

Pealed the shout of wrath on every side;
 Every hand was forward to assail;
“Slay him! slay—” a thousand voices cried,
 Wild with fury; but he did not quail.

Hears he, as entranced he looks above,
 Strains celestial, which the menace drown?
Sees he angels, with their eyes of love,
 Beck'ning to him with a martyr's crown?

Fiercer swelled the people's angry shout;
 Launched against him flew the stones like rain;
Death and terror circled him about;
 But he stood and perished — not in vain!

Not in vain the youthful martyr fell :

Then and there he crushed a bloody creed ;
And his high example shall impel
Future heroes to as brave a deed.

Stony answers yet remain for those

Who would question and precede the time :
In their season, may they meet their foes,
Like Telemachus, with front sublime !

WOODHULL.

'TWAS when Long Island's heights beheld
The king's invading horde,
That, by outnumbering foes compelled,
Our chief gave up his sword.

Then spoke the victor : "Now from me
No mercy shall you wring,
Unless, base rebel, on your knee,
You cry, 'God save the king!'"

With reverent but undaunted tone,
Then Woodhull made reply, —
"No king I own, save one alone,
The Lord of earth and sky!

“But far from me the wish that ill
Your monarch should befall;
So, freely, and with right good will,
I’ll say, God save us all!”

Shouted the foeman, “Paltering slave!
Repeat, without delay,
‘God save the king,’ nor longer brave
The fury that can slay!”

But Woodhull said, “Unarmed, I hear;
Yet threats cannot appal;
Ne’er passed these lips the breath of fear,
And so, God save us all!”

“Then, rebel, rue thy stubborn will,”
The ruffian victor cried;
“This weapon shall my threat fulfil;
So perish in thy pride!”

Rapid as thought, the murderous blow
Fell on the prisoner's head;
With warrior rage he scanned his foe,
Then, staggering, sank and bled.

But anger vanished with his fall;
His heart the wrong forgave:
Dying, he sighed, "God save you all,
And me, a sinner, save!"

THE LAST OF HIS TRIBE.

A SUNNY slope upon a mountain's side :
 Green woods and yellow fields of waving corn
 Look down upon the Indians' birchen tents.
 The young men of the tribe are at their sports :
 Who is the fleetest hunter of them all ?
 Whose arrow floats the surest to the mark ?
 Who is in council wise, in battle brave ?

'Tis the youthful Etlah ; —
 On his breast is hung
 Many a shining trophy,
 Which proclaims his worth.

Years fled. The white men burst upon that vale,
 And the fair hamlet was a desolation.
 The warriors of the tribe are met in council :
 Whose kindling eye the indignant tear-drop fills ?

Whose matchless tones of eloquent appeal
With one vibration shake a thousand hearts,
And wake a thousand echoes to his cry?

'Tis the chieftain Etlah's;—

He is clad for fight,

And his cry is "Vengeance!"

As he lifts his spear.

The battle-field, the clangor, and the smoke;
The white man's trumpet, and the Indian's yell;
The flying steed, his fetlocks clogged with gore,
The trampled rider and the dying foe!
Whose rallying shout is loudest 'mid the fray?
In whose right hand has Havoc placed the axe?
Who, meteor-like, streams through the ranks in blood?

'Tis the avenging Etlah;—

Though his little band

Fall in heaps around him,

Yet he does not quail.

Night ends the combat. On the trodden grass,
Wet more with slaughter than the dews of heaven,

The unconscious stars, serenely bright, look down.
Beside a rushing stream, some dusky forms
Lie couched in slumber; but one stands apart,
Leans on his rifle and surveys the field:
What lonely watcher thus surveys the field?

'Tis the intrepid Etlah,
Calm in his despair;
Lo! his best and bravest
Lifeless strow the plain!

Under a tree scathed by the lightning's bolt,
Meet emblem of his fate, a warrior kneels; —
For him, no living heart beats tenderly;
Friend, kinsman, brother, sister, mother, wife —
All are no more! — his heart is desolate;
And for the shadowy hunting-grounds he sighs,
And prays to the Great Spirit for release:

'Tis the aged Etlah,
Last of all his tribe; —
Who remains to cheer him?
Who remains to mourn?

THE DEATH OF WARREN.

SET TO MUSIC BY W. R. DEMPSTER.

WHEN the war-cry of Liberty rang through the land,
 To arms sprang our fathers the foe to withstand;
 On old Bunker Hill their entrenchments they rear,
 When the army is joined by a young volunteer.
 "Tempt not death!" cried his friends; but he bade
 them good-by,
 Saying, "O! it is sweet for our country to die!"

The tempest of battle now rages and swells,
 'Mid the thunder of cannon, the pealing of bells;
 And a light, not of battle, illumes yonder spire—
 Scene of woe and destruction;—'tis Charlestown on
 fire!

The young volunteer heedeth not the sad cry,
 But murmurs, "'Tis sweet for our country to die!"

With trumpets and banners the foe draweth near :

A volley of musketry checks their career !

With the dead and the dying the hill-side is strown,
And the shout through our lines is, "The day is our
own !"

"Not yet," cries the young volunteer, "do they fly!
Stand firm !—it is sweet for our country to die !"

Now our powder is spent, and they rally again ;—

"Retreat !" says our chief, "since unarmed we re-
main !"

But the young volunteer lingers yet on the field,
Reluctant to fly, and disdaining to yield.

A shot ! Ah ! he falls ! but his life's latest sigh
Is, "'Tis sweet, O, 'tis sweet for our country to die !"

And thus Warren fell ! Happy death ! noble fall !
To perish for country at Liberty's call !

Should the flag of invasion profane evermore
The blue of our seas or the green of our shore,
May the hearts of our people reëcho that cry,—
"'Tis sweet, O, 'tis sweet for our country to die !"

ODE

FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY.

Tune — "HAIL, COLUMBIA!"

WHEN, on Yorktown's battle-field,
He beheld Cornwallis yield,
 "Cheer not!" said our patriot chief;
"Let Posterity's acclaim
Sound the triumph and the fame."
Mute were our victorious host;
And it was no empty boast:
We, and freemen yet unborn,
Shall salute his birthday morn.
 Now, then, let our voices ring;
 Now memorial tributes bring!
 Are there battles to be won?
 Let the cry be, "Washington!"

In our nation's doubtful day,
In her peril and dismay,

When the bravest hearts repined, —
Steadfast as the eternal rock,
He withstood the tempest-shock;
And when Victory came down
With her shining laurel-crown,
Still his glory found increase,
For he was the first in peace.

Though thy frame is in the dust,
Spirit of the brave and just,

Thou art all thy country's still:
Still thy great example lives,
And its life to millions gives;
Still thy influence we hail,
Still thy counsels shall prevail;
And thy very name shall be
Like a spell to Liberty!

THE DAYS THAT ARE PAST

WE will not deplore them, the days that are past :
The gloom of misfortune is over them cast ;
They were lengthened by sorrow and sullied by care,
Their griefs were too many, their joys were too rare ;
Yet now that their shadows are on us no more,
Let us welcome the prospect that brightens before !

We've cherished fair hopes, we've plotted brave
schemes, —

We've lived till we find them illusive as dreams ;
Wealth has melted like snow that is grasped in the
hand,

And the steps we have climbed sink beneath us like
sand ;

Yet shall we despond while of health unbereft,
And honor, bright honor, and freedom are left ?

O, shall we despond, while the pages of time
Yet open before us their records sublime?
While, ennobled by treasures more precious than gold,
We can walk with the heroes and martyrs of old?
While humanity whispers such tales in the ear,
As it softens the heart, like sweet music, to hear?

O, shall we despond, while, with vision still free,
We can gaze on the sky, and the earth, and the sea?
While the sunshine can waken a burst of delight,
And the stars are a joy and a glory by night?
While each harmony running through nature can raise,
In our spirits, the impulse of gladness and praise?

O, let us no longer then vainly lament
Over scenes that are faded, and days that are spent!
But, by faith unforsaken, unawed by mischance,
On Hope's waving banner still fixed be our glance;
And should Fortune prove cruel and false to the last,
Let us look to the future, and not to the past!

THE GAY DECEIVER.

SET TO MUSIC BY W. R. DEMPSTER.

SUMMER wind! Summer wind!

Where hast thou been?

Chasing the gossamer

Over the green?

Rifling the cowslip's wealth,

Down in the dale?

Light-pinioned pilferer,

Tell me thy tale!

"I am a rover gay,

Dashing and free,—

Now on the land astray,

Now on the sea.

I quaff the honey-breath
Of the young rose;
I kiss the violet
Where the brook flows."

Out on thee, fugitive,
Fickle, untrue!
Leaving the violet,
Whom wilt thou woo?
Canst thou delighted be
With hearts undone?
Canst thou show constancy
Never to one?

"Ah! hear me, maiden dear!
Turn not away:
I have a rover been
Until to-day;
But now I find a home
Where I can rest;—
Captive, I sink, at length,
Here on thy breast."

FLORETTE.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF A PICTURE.

SPRING-FLOWER of loveliness! gentle Florette!
 Who that once saw thee could ever forget?
 While a spark of life lingers, this heart and this brain
 Shall thy beauty recall and thy image retain.

Though Time has sped far on his merciless flight
 Since first thy dear features enchanted my sight,
 As clearly they rise upon memory yet
 As when, in the bloom of thy graces, we met.

'Twas a bright day in autumn: on hill-side and plain,
 Like a yellower sunshine, appeared the bright grain;
 And there 'mid the reapers, Florette, didst thou stand,
 With the spoils of the harvest half-clasped in thy hand.

Well and boldly the limner hath ventured to trace
Thy dark-folded hair and thy luminous face;
But the image engraven deep, deep in my heart,
Is matchless in nature and fairer than art.

THE SPRING-TIME WILL RETURN.

THE birds are mute, the bloom is fled,
Cold, cold the north winds blow;
And radiant Summer lieth dead
Beneath a shroud of snow.
Sweet Summer! well may we regret
Thy brief, too brief sojourn;
But, while we grieve, we'll not forget,
The Spring-time will return!

Dear friend, the hills rise bare and bleak
That bound thy future years;
Clouds veil the sky, no golden streak,
No rainbow light appears;

Mischance has tracked thy fairest schemes,
To wreck — to whelm — to burn ;
But wintry-dark though Fortune seems,
The Spring-time will return !

Beloved one ! where no sunbeams shine
Thy mortal frame we laid ;
But O, thy spirit's form divine
Waits no sepulchral shade !
No, by those hopes which, plumed with light,
The sod, exulting, spurn,
Love's paradise shall bloom more bright —
The Spring-time will return !

THE FOUNTAIN IN THE CITY.



AMID the city's din and dust, thy foaming column
springs,

And on the trodden soil around refreshing moisture
flings.

Thou'rt like that grateful human heart, O fountain
pure and bright !

Which, in the midst of sin and care, is ever fresh
and white ;

.

Which scatters love and joy around, and, as it gushes,
shows

Each ray from Heaven, its fountain-head, and Faith's
prismatic bows.

THE CAPTIVE.

“RISE from thy dungeon floor!

Captive, thy hour is nigh!

Look on the rising sun once more,

And then prepare to die!

Is not the green earth fair?

The morning gale how sweet!

With Spring's first odors in the air,

Her blossoms at our feet!

“Captive! gaze well around:

Wouldst leave this cheerful light—

This world, where pleasures so abound—

For death's unfathomed night?

Listen! a word, a sign,
That thou abjur'st thy creed,
Life, riches, honors—all are thine:
Ha! wilt thou now be freed?"

The captive gazed, and said,—
“O, lovely is the light;
And fairer scenes were never spread
Beneath my waking sight;
And fragrant is the breath
Of this reviving breeze;
But O, more fair than all, is death,
To him whose *spirit* sees!

“For that is life indeed,
Which heeds not time and space;
And freedom, where no bonds impede
The spirit's heavenward race.
O, speed me to that goal,
Beneath that brighter sky!
Death cannot daunt the immortal soul;—
Brother, lead on to die!”

FANTASY AND FACT.

THOU say'st we never met before
 Within the world's wide space;
And yet the more I gaze, the more
 I recollect thy face:
Each feature to my mind recalls
 An image of the past,
Which, where the shade of Memory falls,
 Is sacred to the last.

But she whose charms revive in thine
 Was not, alas! of earth;
And yet for earth not too divine,
 Though Fancy gave her birth.

She haunted me by summer streams,
And burst upon my sight,
When, through the pleasant Land of Dreams,
I roamed at will, by night.

Lost idol! why didst thou depart?
O, let thine earnest eyes —
Abstraction, vision, though thou art —
Once more my heart surprise!
She comes, a fair and sylph-like girl:
Whom, happy, doth she seek?
And raven curls their links unfurl
Adown her radiant cheek.

I clasp her hands in mine once more —
Again I am a boy!
'The past shows nothing to deplore,
The future is all joy.
We wander through deserted halls;
We climb the wooded height;
We hear the roar of waterfalls,
And watch the eagle's flight.

We stand where sunset colors lie
 Upon a lake at rest;
And O, what clouds of Tyrian dye
 Are sloping down the west!
And high above the purple pile,
 The evening star appears;
Till, as we gaze, the loved one's smile,
 Like twilight's, ends in tears.

I turn to thee, and start to see
 Again that bright ideal,—
The eyes, the shape, the ringlets free,
 The fanciful made real!
Two visions have waylaid my heart,
 A false one and a true;
And, by the soul of truth, thou art
 The fairer of the two!

A MORNING INVOCATION.



WAKE, slumberer! Summer's sweetest hours
Are speeding fast away;
The sun has waked the opening flowers
To greet the new-born day;
The deer leaps from his leafy haunt,
And swims the purple lake;
The birds their grateful carols chant,—
All Nature cries, "Awake!"

O, lose not in unconscious ease
An hour so heavenly fair:
Come forth, while yet the glittering trees
Wave in the genial air,—

While yet a dewy freshness fills
The morning's fragrant gale,
As o'er the woods and up the hills
The mist rolls from the vale.

Awake! Too soon, alas! too soon,
The glory shall decay,
And, in the fervid eye of noon,
The freshness fade away.
Then seize the hour so swift of flight,
Its early bloom partake:
By all that's beautiful and bright,
I call on thee, Awake!

THE FUGITIVE FROM LOVE.

Is there but a single theme
For the youthful poet's dream?
Is there but a single wire
To the youthful poet's lyre?
Earth below and heaven above —
Can he sing of nought but love?

Nay! the battle's dust I see —
God of war, I follow thee;
And, in martial numbers, raise
Worthy pæans to thy praise!
Ah! *she* meets me on the field —
If I fly not, I must yield.

Jolly patron of the grape,
To thy arms I will escape :
Quick, the rosy nectar bring —
“Io Bacche!” I will sing!
Ha! confusion! every sip
But reminds me of *her* lip.

Pallas, give me wisdom’s page,
And awake my epic rage!
Love is fleeting, love is vain ; —
I will try a nobler strain !
O, perplexity! my books
But reflect her haunting looks.

Jupiter, on thee I cry —
Take me and my lyre on high!
Lo! the stars beneath me gleam —
Here, O poet, is a theme!
Madness! *she* is come above!
Every chord is whispering, “Love!”

WHEN THE NIGHT-WIND BEWAILETH.

SET TO MUSIC BY W. R. DEMPSTER.

WHEN the night-wind bewaileth
The fall of the year,
And sweeps from the forest
The leaves that are sere,
I wake from my slumber
And list to the roar;
And it saith to my spirit,
“No more — never more!
O! never more!”

Through memory's chambers,
The forms of the past,
The joys of my childhood
Rush by with the blast;

And the lost one, whose beauty
I used to adore,
Seems to sigh with the night-breeze,
“No more — never more!
O! never more!”

The trees of the forest
Shall blossom again,
And the wild birds shall carol
A soul-thrilling strain;
But the heart fate has withered
No spring shall restore;
And its songs shall be joyful
No more — never more!
O! never more!

TO A SINGING BIRD.

BLITHE little prisoned warbler,
Thy silvery tones outbreak,
Like raindrops among summer leaves,
Or on a glassy lake!
How can such gleeful carols
Gush from thy quivering breast,
When in that gloomy cage thou'rt held,
Far from thy native nest?

O, dost thou never languish,
And droop thy head in pain;
Missing the genial island-home
Thou may'st not see again?

The palm-tree bent above thee
 With blossoms on its bough,
The vine-leaves clustered by thy side, —
 No verdure cheers thee now.

Thy wings, that chased the sunbeam,
 Have weak and nerveless grown;
And faded is the golden hue,
 That on thy plumage shone; —
Brick walls and dusty pavements
 Are all that meet thine eye,
For thou art even hidden from
 The blue, impartial sky.

And yet thou hast forgiven
 Thy nature's grievous wrong;
And thy full heart exultingly
 Pours itself forth in song; —
An exile and a captive,
 All lonely and bereft,
The impulse that now prompts thy lay,
 The rapture still is left.

O joy-creating minstrel!

I bless thee for the thought,
Which thy untutored harmony,
Thy hymn of love hath brought :
If, in thy hour of darkness,
Such grateful glee is thine,
How should the immortal hope within
Forbid me to repine !

THE FIRST SNOW-STORM.

As for the first wild flower,
 In the early time of spring;
As for the summer shower,
 When earth is languishing;
As for the rainbow's blending;
 As for the day-star's glow,—
Have I looked for the descending
 Of the first November snow.

It comes! on pinions airy
 The virgin flakes alight,
Like the torn plumes of a fairy,
 Or the apple-blossoms white;

With undulating motion,
 The frozen ground they reach,
Or melt into the ocean,
 That booms along the beach.

Why watch I thus the falling
 Of the first November snow?
Because on me 'tis calling
 In the voice of long ago;
Because it ever blendeth
 With the memories of the boy;—
Each flake, as it descendeth,
 Enshrouds a perished joy!

O! for those days when, rushing
 Into the powdery air,
I felt the free, wild gushing
 Of a spirit without care!
How, through the drifts that whitened
 Our window-sills at home,
I dashed, with heart unfrightened,
 Like a dolphin through the foam!

And then the merry ringing
 Of the sleigh-bells at the door,
And the winter evening, bringing
 A thousand pleasures more !
And the dear friends who surrounded
 Our log-devouring hearth,
And the old songs that resounded,
 And the hours of blameless mirth !

Ah, first snow of November !
 These joys thou dost recall ;
But with them I remember,
 They shall no more befall :
Companions have departed,
 With whom that season fled ;
And some are weary-hearted,
 And some are with the dead.

SUMMER IN THE HEART.

THE cold blast at the casement beats ;
The window-panes are white ;
The snow whirls through the empty streets :
It is a dreary night !
Sit down, old friend ; the wine-cups wait :
Fill, to o'erflowing, fill !
Though Winter howleth at the gate,
In our hearts 'tis summer still !

For we full many summer joys
And greenwood sports have shared,
When, free and ever-roving boys,
The rocks, the streams, we dared ;

And, as I look upon thy face,
Back, back o'er years of ill,
My heart flies to that happy place,
Where it is summer still.

Yes, though like sere leaves on the ground,
Our early hopes are strown,
And cherished flowers lie dead around,
And singing birds are flown,
The verdure is not faded quite,
Not mute all tones that thrill;
And seeing, hearing thee to-night,
In my heart 'tis summer still.

Fill up! The olden times come back
With light and life once more;
We scan the Future's sunny track
From Youth's enchanted shore;—
The lost return: through fields of bloom
We wander at our will;
Gone is the Winter's angry gloom —
In our hearts 'tis summer still.

THE CONQUEROR.

A TRAMPLED battle plain!

The work of death was done;
On the unburied slain,
Through mist, red looked the sun;
The trumpet's blare, the shout,
The quick artillery's roar,
The carnage and the rout
Shook the wide field no more.

Surrounded by the dead,
Wherever strayed his eyes,
His gory steed his bed,
The soldier strove to rise.

Vain was the effort — vain !

The death-wound in his side,
The ebbing blood, the pain,
Life's rallying power defied.

“And must I, then,” he said,
“With all my dreams of fame,
Of hosts to conquest led,
Perish without a name?
O, for my mother's voice!
My home, my native sky!
And her, my true heart's choice,
For whom in death I sigh !”

He paused : a maid, whose hair
Streamed loosely on the breeze,
Sank wounded by him there ;
It is herself he sees !
Death, thou canst not appall !
Ambition, quit the field !
Love is the conqueror — all
To woman's love must yield !

ADELAIDE'S TRIUMPH.

First Part.

“ADELAIDE, come stand beside me,
Stand beside my pillowed head; —
From my eyes the light is fading,
From my cheek the hue is fled:
Let me hold thy hand so dainty,
Let me touch thy silky hair;
Ringlets gray and fingers wasted
With them poorly may compare.

“Come, and let compassion summon
Thoughts of ruth to move thy heart, —
Gentle thoughts, that, full of pity,
Take the contrite sinner's part;

Reverential recollections

Of His words who came to save;
Of His words that breathed forgiveness,
Of His mercy that forgave.

“Where a stately stream is gliding,
Near a slope of wooded ground,
Rises Lord De Warrene's mansion,
Fairest of the country round:
Eighteen summers have I counted,
Since its widowed master brought
To this roof a female infant, —
Here a foster-mother sought.

“‘Too much care thou canst not show her,’
Said he, with a heavy sigh;
‘For to give the dear one being
Did my noble lady die.’
‘Proud am I to tend thy daughter,’
Answered I with zealous tone;
But I started, on comparing
That sweet infant with my own.

“ Child of health and matchless beauty,
Born to gladden, seemed the one;
While my own poor bud lay drooping,
Ere its morning was begun.

Lord De Warrene left his daughter;
But an evil thought had sway
In my soul, before he claimed her,
Two brief summers from that day.

“ Do not clasp my hand so tightly;
Gaze not with an air so wild;
I'm thy foster-mother only —
Yes! thou art De Warrene's child!
In the scroll beneath my pillow,
Proofs that none will question find; —
All I can of reparation,
Dying, would I leave behind.”

Wonder at the strange disclosure,
Anguish at the sight of death,
In the maiden's heart contending,
Seemed to battle for her breath:

But a step was heard approaching,
And a distant door unlatched;
Shaking off those stiffening fingers,
Eagerly the scroll she snatched.

When the last sad rites were ended,
In that room she stood alone;
Bare the rafters, coarse the ceiling,
And the floor of naked stone.
And a smile of bitter meaning
O'er her clouded features passed,
As that treasured scroll she opened,
And a look around her cast.

Then she read, and finished reading,
And her passion deeper grew;
To her brow the ruby mounted,
From her eyes the lightning flew.
“What!” she murmured, “was I cheated
Of my birth's exalted rights—
Of a lordly sire's affection,
Of a stately home's delights?

“ Was I made to herd unduly
 With the poor and lowly-bred ;
Made to join in rustic labors —
 Rise before the dawn from bed ?
Was I clothed in homely raiment,
 Fed on plain and frugal fare,
I, the Lord De Warrene's daughter,
 I, the Lord De Warrene's heir ?

“ Has, the while, a mere usurper —
 A discarded peasant child —
Filled the station I was born to,
 And my father's heart beguiled ?
Has she been the mansion's lady,
 Robed in silks with jewels rare,
While the whole of my adorning
 Was a wild rose for my hair ?

“ But the hour of retribution,
 Long deferred, at length has come ;
I will face this changeling lady,
 And a word shall strike her dumb :

I will say to knights and servants,
 ‘ Let the low impostor be !
And your true-born, lawful lady
 Clad in these poor garments, see !’

“ Then to Lord De Warrene turning,
 Bold in my attested claim,
Will I lay the proof before him,—
 Proof of her maternal shame !
Proudly will I wait his answer,
 At his feet in reverence kneel ;
Then my triumph, my requital,
 She shall surely see and feel !”

Thus, in menaces impatient,
 Forth the maiden's anger broke ;
Eagerly she threw her mantle
 O'er her shoulders, as she spoke ;
Then, accoutred for a journey,
 Hastened from that mean abode ;
And threw back the whitewashed wicket,
 Opening on the dusty road.

But not many steps she'd taken,
 When she paused and looked behind;
There the rose-bush she had planted,
 There the honey-suckle twined.
Do they mutely seem to chide her,
 That she turns in friendly quest,
Gathers flowers and buds, and gives them
 To her lily-shaming breast?

None could now dispute her beauty,
 As affection lit the gloom
In those eyes, whose tender beaming
 Fell upon her garden's bloom.
Shape, and mien, and chiselled feature,
 Drooping lash, and affluent hair,—
All seemed fairer by the token,
 In the heart was something fair.

But she paused a moment only;
 And, when she upraised her head,
Not the bough relieved from pressure
 Springs more buoyant than her tread.

Why on yonder wooded mountain
Hath she fixed her straining eyes?
Close behind that purple summit
Lord De Warrene's mansion lies.

Second Part.

IN a parlor wide and lofty,
Where the summer breezes came,
Sat the lady of the mansion,—
Constance was the lady's name.
Covered were the walls with velvet,—
Blue the tint, but heavenly light;
Nailed with frequent stars, all golden,
Mimicking the stars of night.

And a mirror reached, broad gleaming,
From the ceiling to the floor;
Set between two Gothic windows,
Fronting an emblazoned door;

And a carpet, rich and downy,
 Toil of many a 'Turkish loom,
Leaf and bud and flower inwoven,
 Lent its lustre to the room.

Light the maiden's silken labor ;
 Yet she quickly threw it by,
And her weary hands enfolding,
 Heaved a languor-laden sigh.
Tall and slender was her stature, —
 Blue her eyes and pale her cheek,
And the language of her features,
 Like Madonna's, pure and meek !

As she leaned, in idle dreaming,
 Where the sunset breeze blew cool,
Came a mingled sound of voices
 From the marble vestibule ;
And a lackey, in attendance,
 Uttered words as if to chide ;
While a youthful female stranger
 In a queenly tone replied.

With her words the door was opened;
And, in humble garb arrayed,
In the presence of the lady
Stood a fair and panting maid :
Of a long, unaided journey
Shoes and raiment bore the trace;
And exertion's humid crimson
Like a wet rose made her face.

With fatigue her limbs were failing,
Passion had her brain o'erwrought ;
And she leaned against the wainscot
To recall the power of thought.
“Tell me,” said the Lady Constance,
“Whom, sweet maiden, would'st thou seek ?
Tell me why thy breast is heaving ;
Why this crimson paints thy cheek.

“But I'll tax thee not to answer,
For thou'rt weak and trembling still ;
Thou shalt come and rest beside me,
And instruct me at thy will.”

Then, her flexile waist encircling,
Constance led her to a chair,
And with kerchief fine and fragrant,
Wiped her cheek and forehead fair.

Adelaide, in silent wonder,
Every look and motion scanned;
Noted well the lady's features,
And her thin, transparent hand.
She had dreamed of glances haughty,
Listened for a scornful word;
But she saw an angel smiling,
And an angel's accents heard.

"I'll not chide her," thought the maiden;
"Soft and mild shall be my tone;
For I should at least repay her
With a kindness like her own."
Then, the lady's hand uplifting,
Thrice she strove to tell her tale;
Thrice her heart, the purpose stifling,
On the brink made utterance fail.

But she rose and looked around her,
Over all that rich saloon;
Round on many a gilded moulding,
And on many a silk festoon.
And the maiden stepped elated
O'er the carpet's gay design,
As the thought swelled in her bosom,
"All these glittering gauds are mine!"

With that glance and that reflection
Came her half-retreating mood;
And, with footstep light and hasty,
She returned where Constance stood.
But as words for vent were struggling,
In her better nature's spite,
Suddenly a beauteous vision
Rose before her wandering sight.

'Twas the figure of a matron,
Who with mild and saint-like grace,
And all traits of mortal beauty,
Seemed to gaze into her face.

'Twas so lifelike that she started;

But the Lady Constance said,

"'Tis a painting of my mother,

Of my mother, who is dead."

"Of *thy* mother?" sighed the maiden,

Gazing on the picture still.

"Ay, thou strange one," answered Constance;

"Why do tears thy eyelids fill?"

"Ask not!" Adelaide besought her;

And upon her knees she fell,

Bowed upon her hands her forehead,

And let tears her passion tell.

"Hark!" exclaimed the Lady Constance,—

"Hark! I hear my father's tread!"

And she glided from the parlor,

While her pallid cheek grew red.

Then uplooked the kneeling maiden,

On that pictured face once more:

"O, my mother dear," she murmured,

"Hear me, guide me, I implore!

“ Well I know I may not meet thee
In thy happy home above,
Till each proud and selfish feeling
Is cast out by perfect love;
And I fear the thoughts are evil
Which within my bosom fight,
For thy smile hath waked my spirit,
And 'tis groping for the right.

“ Slender is my store of knowledge,
With the poor and simple bred;
But I know we live more fully
When this clog of flesh is dead;
And that God is just and gracious,
Every day I feel the more:
O, my mother, bid him help me, —
Hear me, guide me, I implore !”

Rising then, she brushed the tear-drop
From her cheek's vermilion bloom,
As, with Constance, Lord De Warrene
Entered hand in hand the room.

Noble not in title only,
But in heart and form he seemed,
And the gentleness of manhood
From his open features beamed.

To a dim recess withdrawing,
Adelaide observed him well;
Heard the fond paternal welcome
From his ready lips that fell;
Marked the love-lit glance responsive
In the lady's pleading eyes:
Were the twain not child and father,
Theirs were even holier ties.

And a struggle, brief but bitter,
Shook the maiden's inmost soul;
And from her fast-heaving bosom
She half drew the fatal scroll.
But the memory of her mother
Came to save her on the verge;
And she hid the tell-tale parchment
With her humble scarf of serge.

Of a clear and steadfast purpose
Now her kindling visage tells;
And the majesty of Conscience
Every recreant pleading quells.
Smile, ye ever watchful angels!—
She has won the heavenly palm;
And a peace the world can give not
Makes her confident and calm.

In his flaming bush, the martyr
May a lofty courage show;
With a pure, intrepid ardor,
Freedom's chief to battle go;
But, my maiden, in the combat
Of thy motives, good and bad,
Thou hast shown as true a mettle,
Thou as great a triumph had!

Third Part.

AND was this the end of trial?

Never more did pride assail?

Did her spirit, unrepining,

Never waver, never quail?

Ah! no lack of human leaven

Was there in the maiden's mould;

She could feel the charms of station,

She could prize the power of gold.

Goodness is no stable treasure

You within the heart may lock;

Like the air, it groweth purer

From the wind, the thunder-shock.

All its life in action lieth;

Without evil thoughts to try,

Without buffets, without sorrows,

Ere maturin^g it would die.

Handmaid to the Lady Constance
Now had Adelaide become.
She was slighted by the many,
Noted for her face by some;
And at length a noble gallant —
How could such a gallant fail? —
Knelt, and, with a graceful candor,
Breathed a strangely-pleasing tale.

“I was sent to woo thy mistress,”
Said he, with a gentle smile;
“And I might have loved her duly,
Had I not seen thee the while.
If, through lowly birth and station,
Thus thy modest graces shine,
How would'st thou adorn my household,
Could I make thee wholly mine!

“Much I may not boast of riches, —
Mine a younger son's estate;
And I brave a father's anger,
Asking thee to share my fate.

But a loving heart I bring thee,
And, wilt thou its love repay,
Hands to toil for thee I offer,
And a mind to win my way."

O, but then her courage tottered,
And hot tears her eyelids wet,
As new-springing Love with Duty
In a doubtful conflict met!
How one little word could level
All that barred her from his side!
But the word remained unspoken,
And his proffer she denied.

"Fare thee well!" he said, and parted,
Fame or fortune to pursue;
And the light that with him vanished,
Often, often did she rue.
Yet, upon her hours of grieving,
Peace would like a dove descend,
When her own true heart she questioned,
And found Conscience was her friend.

But a change was now impending
In the maiden's outward lot;
For her chastened soul no longer
Showed the one corroding spot.
Bleached beneath the winds of trial,
Washed by sorrow's clearing rain,
On its heavenly-shining raiment
Lay no trace of earthly stain.

So when use had made her happy
In her self-forgetful sphere, —
When no sigh for earthly grandeur
Wakened the regretful tear, —
Smitten by a mortal illness
Suddenly her mistress lay;
And the maiden watched beside her,
Ever fondly, night and day.

But it pleased our heavenly Father,
In his mercy, to dismiss
Constance to a brighter region,
To a world of purer bliss :

And to Adelaide she whispered,
Smiling with her latest breath,
“We shall meet again, my sister:
A sweet summoner is Death!”

When the bell had finished tolling,
And the sod had spread its green
Over all of form and feature
Mortal eye had ever seen, —
Where her flowers and birds seemed waiting
In that consecrated room,
Knelt the gray-haired Lord De Warrene,
Knelt in solitary gloom.

“O, my gentle child,” he murmured,
“Can I see thy face no more?
Little did my heart conjecture,
Thou so soon wouldst go before!
All my age might hope of comfort
In thy fragile life was bound:
Where shall now Affection wander,
Where a love like thine be found?”

Trembling in each limb and fibre,
Faltering as she slowly stept,
Adelaide approached her father,
Sank beside him as he wept;
And ere he could know her present,
Or could hear her timorous tread,
She had placed the scroll before him,
And all eagerly he read.

With a cry of wild amazement,
Suddenly he stood upright;
On the maiden gazed, and drew her
Nearer, nearer to the light.
"Child!" he gasped, "thou bring'st a title
Such as scrolls could not contain;
In that smile thy mother liveth,
In that face thy rights are plain!"

And with tears of tender transport,
He beheld her and embraced;
Twined his fingers in her ringlets,
Each familiar charm retraced.

But when came the slow conception
Of her trial's full extent,
O'er and o'er again he clasped her,
And with love was reverence blent.

"O, how blest beyond deserving,
Am I in this joy!" he said;
"I, who questioned Heaven's disposal,
I, who deemed all comfort fled!
How hath God's own hand repaid me
The bereavement I deplore!
If he took an angel from me,
'Twas a seraph to restore!"

Could another grace be added
To the triumph of the maid,
I might tell thee what befell her
As the Lady Adelaide;
How that belted earls and barons,
High in honor and command,
Came, with royal state to back them,
And were suppliants for her hand;

How no hope, though e'er so distant,
 Could the boldest of them gain;
When, at length, a youth unnoted
 Sued, and did not sue in vain!
And, while belted earl and baron
 Smothered as they might their gall,
How the rumor was repeated,
 He had loved her first of all.

But my tale is fitly ended.
 We may safely trust her now.
Wealth and station cannot alter
 That serenely radiant brow.
Sin may tempt and sorrow wound her,
 Still she'll conquer in the strife;
And the self-denying maiden
 Be transcended in the wife.

THE DRAMA'S RACE.

SPOKEN BY MISS ELLEN TREE, AT THE PARK THEATRE.

THANKS! There is no illusion here:
Wit, Wisdom, Beauty, all appear,
 And grace our house to-night; —
Still striving, as we do, to please,
A rich requital, smiles like these —
 This fair inspiring sight!

Ah! as in boxes and in pit,
A goodly company, ye sit,
Are there no conjured shapes that flit
 Your fancy's gaze before?
Shapes which this storied dome recalls,
Which start from these half-conscious walls,
 Past pleasures to restore?

In worthiest state, I see them rise —
The brave, the beautiful, the wise,
 The guilty, and the good —
The Drama's race! They come, they pass,
In crowds, o'er Memory's magic glass, —
 A mingled multitude!

“Angels and ministers of grace
Defend us!” Is it Hamlet's face,
 Hamlet the Dane, I see?
He bends his melancholy eyes
On vacancy, and, hark! he sighs,
 “To be, or not to be!”

Indignant Hotspur rushes by,
And “Mortimer!” is still his cry —
 Nought can his rage restrain.
Shylock gasps forth, “Is that the law?”
Old Lear puts on his crown of straw;
 “Richard's himself again!”

Ah, Romeo! Romeo! is it thou?
Fair Juliet hears thy honeyed vow
 Beneath the moon's pale beam;
And lo! Macbeth, with blood-stained hands!
And see where black Othello stands,
 "Perplexed in the extreme!"

"Run, run, Orlando!" Rosalind
Thy tributary verse shall find—
 "The inexpressive she!"
Fear not to tell her of thy flame;
And do not fail to carve her name
 Upon the nearest *tree*.

"Farewell! farewell!" 'Tis Jaffier speaks;
And wretched Belvidera shrieks
 As only wretches can.
Ha, Benedick! thou'rt caught at last!
Fair Beatrice the net hath cast—
 Thou'lt be "the married man."

Lo, Brutus, with a fierce appeal,
O'er lost Lucretia lifts the steel,
 And shouts, "No more be slaves!"
And stern Virginius, pale and wild,
Folds to his breast his darling child; —
 Then, *thus!* — her honor saves!

"Ho, Ion! 'Tis thy father's life!"
He grasps the sacrificial knife,
 And seems transfixed with wonder;
And, as the fates of Argos roll
Their lurid terrors o'er his soul,
 Exclaims, "Was not that thunder?"

What an astounded group is seen,
Where falls my Lady Teazle's screen —
 To none but Charles a joke!
There Julia mourns her fatal choice;
And, list! "That voice! 'Tis Clifford's voice,
 If ever Clifford spoke!"

Hoping he don't "intrude," Paul Pry,
With his umbrella, comes to spy
 What mischief may be done.
Ha, Ollapod! for human ills,
Your jokes are better than your pills —
 "Good sir, I owe you one!"

Pizarro, Douglas, William Tell,
Pauline, Sir Giles—I know you well,
 As o'er the scene ye flock;
And Bardolph, with a cup of sack;
And there—"Well, go thy ways, old Jack,"
 And fight "by Shrewsbury clock."

But, hark! the impatient prompter stamps;—
A hint I've been before the lamps
 A reasonable space;
And, at that sound, the airy throng,
Like guilty creatures, crowd along,
 And, fading, leave no trace.

The spell is broken : — but, before
I heed the summons, one word more,
 If patience yet endures :
Till all its *stars* have disappeared,
May still the Drama's cause be cheered
 By hands and lips like yours !

FAREWELL ADDRESS.

SPOKEN BY MISS ELLEN TREE AT THE PARK THEATRE.

THE curtain falls — closed is the Drama's page :
 Why lingers Beatrice upon the stage ?
 Away, illusion ! — this is not thy sphere —
 The sigh is faithful, and the grief sincere.
 Should utterance tremble, should the tear-drop start,
 They will but echo and o'erflow the heart.

Three years, my friends — how brief they seem ! —
 have fled
 Since on your shore 'twas my good hap to tread ;
 And if some anxious fears were mine at first,
 How on my soul your liberal welcome burst !
 Ye cheered my efforts — took me by the hand :
 No more was I a stranger in the land.

A stranger! Why? on every side I heard
My native accents in each spoken word;
And every greeting which my toil beguiled
Was from the "well of English undefiled."
The mighty poet, whose creations bright
The Drama's spell evoked for you to-night, —
Did I not find his memory and his strains
Here as familiar as on Stratford's plains?
Your sires and he one Saxon stock could claim,
And ye with *us* partake his endless fame.

Ah! as the loiterer by some pleasant way,
Though duty bid him haste, would fain delay, —
Review the prospect beautiful — retrace
Each sunbright feature and each shadowy grace, —
So would I linger — so would I forget,
It is, alas! to part, that we have met.

Yet, ere I go, desponding Memory asks,
Is this the last of my too happy tasks?
Shall I no more a scene like this behold,
Or tread these boards, in your approval bold?
Too strong the chance that it will e'en be so —
Fate answers, "Ay!" but ah! Hope whispers, "No!"

And yet, though mute the voice, and closed the scene;
Though oceans stretch, and tempests roar between;
Whatever hues may mark my future lot,
Still let me dream that I'm not all forgot;
That Shakspeare's fair abstractions may restore
A thought of her who once their trophies wore;
That Talfourd's pathos, Knowles's tragic art,
Some wavering recollection may impart —
A look, a tone, that sympathy impressed,
That was the touch of nature to your breast.

But heedless Time hath brought our parting near:
Why do I still, superfluous, linger here?
Ah! think not ever an unreal part
So tasked my powers, and filled my beating heart!
I may not speak the thoughts that in it swell, —
I can but say, kind, generous friends, farewell!

DRAMATIC PIECES.

DRAMATIC PIECES.

THE CANDID CRITIC.

CHARACTERS.

DIONYSIUS, *King of Syracuse.*

PHILOXENUS, *A Poet and Critic.*

ALASTOR, *Secretary to Dionysius.*

PHORMIO, *An Athenian.*

XANTHE, *Daughter of Philoxenus.*

Guards, Parasites, Executioners, &c.

SCENE I.

The Palace Grounds in Syracuse. Enter PHORMIO.

PHORMIO.

A RESPITE! a reprieve! The gods be thanked,
I have escaped at last! O, Phormio, Phormio!
Did Fortune snatch thee from the howling waves
That gnash their white teeth on the rocks of Scylla,

Or coil their giant tresses round Charybdis,
To put thy patience to severer tests?
O, which way can I fly from Syracuse?
How rid me of the imminent infliction?

Enter PHILOXENUS.

PHILOXENUS.

Ho, Phormio! Is thy haste so very urgent,
Thou canst not tarry for a friend's embrace?

PHORMIO.

Philoxenus! Indeed I'm glad to see thee.

PHILOXENUS.

And I to welcome thee to Syracuse.
When didst leave Athens? Who bore off the prizes
At the Olympic games? Thou'rt out of breath:
Come, rest with me awhile beside this fountain.

PHORMIO.

Not there! Not on the palace steps! Remain;—
I shall be better instantly. O tyrant,
Remorseless in thy rancor!

PHILOXENUS.

Not so loud!

Thy dulcet compliments may reach the ears

Of Dionysius. More than two he owneth.

Hast thou already felt his cruelty —

Thou, an Athenian?

PHORMIO.

Ay, and yet am doomed
To feel it more. O, torment most refined!

PHILOXENUS.

What! hath he tried his newly-fashioned scourge
Upon thy back?

PHORMIO.

O, something worse than that!

PHILOXENUS.

Say'st thou? Perhaps, then, he prescribed a bath
Of molten lead: I've known it efficacious
In checking many troublesome eruptions.

PHORMIO.

No: that were honey-dew to what I've suffered.

PHILOXENUS.

Thou wast not crammed into a cask of spikes,
And rolled down hill?

PHORMIO.

'Twere pastime, merry pastime,
Compared with the extreme barbarity!

PHILOXENUS.

Thy flesh has not been torn with red-hot pincers,
Nor peeled in crimson ribbons by his engines;
Thy limbs have not been stretched upon the rack,
Nor thine eyes seared by plates of heated steel : —
Which of his little toys of torture was it
He chose for dalliance in his cheerful mood ?

PHORMIO.

Give thy imagination freer rein :
Sees it nought further in the realm of horrors ?

PHILOXENUS.

Indeed, I cannot guess thy punishment,
Unless — but, no ! there's life left in thee yet.

PHORMIO.

Unless what, would'st thou say ?

PHILOXENUS.

I know of nothing
Beyond these charming hospitalities,
Unless he made thee hear his poetry.

PHORMIO.

Thou'st hit the mark !

PHILOXENUS.

My miserable friend !

PHORMIO.

Ah me! You poets have imagined tortures:—
The pool of Tantalus, Ixion's wheel,
Prometheus with the vulture at his vitals,
Procrustes' bed, the bull of Phalaris—
All these you may consider quite ingenious;
But, pshaw! they're bubbles, straws, and thistle-down,
To what your Dionysius has invented.
Gods! he did make me hear his tragedy—
Tragic in nothing save the dire infliction!
With all my nerves braced to the serious task,
I sat and listened; but, before the scroll
Was half completed, such an earthquake yawn
Burst from me, that the wordy tyrant started,
And shouted for his guards. As they rushed in,
Alastor, the young scribe, in hurried whispers,
Suggested an excuse that saved my life:
Kneeling before the monarch, I protested
That the strange pathos of the well-wrought scene
Had, by its art, so won upon my senses,
Most inadvertently I groaned aloud.
Ha, ha! Forgetting all his guilty fears

Of ambushed cut-throats and disguised assassins,
He raised me in his arms, and kissed my cheek ;
Nor would he suffer me to quit the palace
Till I had promised to return to-night
To hear the rest of his vile tragedy.
My friend, shall I survive it ?

PHILOXENUS.

Thou wilt have
At least a partner in thy misery :
Know that I too am summoned to the palace,
Doubtless to be a victim with thyself ;
But, should this royal metromaniac ask
My poor opinion, frankly will I give it.

PHORMIO.

Nay, thou would'st only jeopardize thy life :—
His weakness 'tis to be esteemed a poet ;
And, to sink irony, 'tis surely better
That he should murder metaphors on parchment
Than stain the block with massacres of men.
So, tell him, if thou wilt, that he's no soldier ;
That he knows nothing of the art of war,
Nothing of all the useful arts of peace,

And that he daily, hourly, violates
His duties to the gods, the state, the people;
But do not — do not criticize his verses.

PHILOXENUS.

Or I'll be silent or avow the truth.
Wilt thou be at the palace?

PHORMIO.

For thy sake
Will I be there. Heighho!

PHILOXENUS.

Nay, smile, my friend!
Great sorrows have their lessons; and the gods
Would teach us, by this dispensation, patience.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter ALASTOR and XANTHE.

ALASTOR.

There goes thy father, Xanthe! I implore thee,
Go try once more to change his stubborn purpose.
Tell him the king himself approves our nuptials,
And promises to grace them with his presence.

XANTHE.

Already once to-day I've sued to him;
But neither tears nor blandishments availed.

ALASTOR.

Obdurate parent!

XANTHE.

Do not call him so!

In all things is he liberal and most kind.

ALASTOR.

O! thou may'st think him kind — in all things kind —

Kind in his opposition to our nuptials;

But I, who love not in so cool a fashion,

Chafe at this unexplained impediment —

Nay, sweet! I meant not to be harsh. Look up!

XANTHE.

Why wilt thou vex me with thy doubts, Alastor?

ALASTOR.

Why not remove at once all cause for doubt?

Become in truth my own, without regard

To thy allegiance elsewhere?

XANTHE.

No, Alastor,

Not for my life would I deceive my father;

For, since I lost my mother, he hath been

Doubly a parent to me, and I owe him

Double devotion, gratitude, obedience.

ALASTOR.

Canst tell me wherein lies his enmity
To our alliance? Am I stamped by nature
With any vile deformity of person?
Have I disgraced my name, or marred my fortune?
Am I in any way unworthy of thee?

XANTHE.

No, no! Thou'rt all that honor could desire.

ALASTOR.

Then, say, what is this Pelion piled on Ossa,
That towers between our fates?

XANTHE.

My father tells me,
'That 'tis not to thyself he has objection,
But to thy occupation.

ALASTOR.

Occupation!

Chief secretary to the king himself,
And yet the obstacle my occupation?

XANTHE.

Wert thou, he says, chief cook, or groom, or scullion,
So that we loved, he'd not oppose our union;

But that to be the tyrant's cruellest agent,
The hired transcriber of his fluent doggerel,
Is a disgrace, in which he cannot share.
There! I've dared tell thee all.

ALASTOR.

Thy father is —

Ah! 'tis a hinderance so delectable,
And thou proclaim'st it with such gravity,
That laughter gets the better of vexation.

XANTHE.

Thou tak'st it merrily.

ALASTOR.

Be not offended;
For I rejoice, with all my heart, at finding
The obstacle not insurmountable.
Go to thy father, Xanthe; and make known,
That, for thy dearest sake, I'll straight resign
My present post; and, should propitious fate
Break a groom's neck, or suffocate a scullion,
Or give some cook a surfeit that shall end him,
I'll instantly apply to Dionysius
For — for promotion.

XANTHE.

Nay, I'll plead once more
In our behalf, nor urge that hard condition.
Farewell, Alastor.

ALASTOR.

May the gods protect thee !
Farewell, true heart ! Bring back a gracious answer.
[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.

*An Apartment in the Palace. DIONYSIUS seated, perusing a
Scroll. Present, Parasites and Guards.*

DIONYSIUS.

Ah, here's true inspiration ! Dorian numbers,
That charm the ear with limpid melody,
And shining thoughts forged in poetic fire !
I marvel not that the Athenian youth,
Raised on the pinions of my soaring fancy,
Was terror-stricken at his exaltation,
And vented all unconsciously his wonder.
Here is the verse that so inwrapped his soul.

FIRST PARASITE.

Is it, most mighty liege, but mightier poet,
That passage which thy majesty vouchsafed
Graciously to rehearse, the other day,
Where Polymestor, of his sight deprived,
Heaps curses on the ruthless dames of Troy?
O, that indeed was beautiful!—most grand!
Methought I never heard a more divine—
A more—Your majesty!—

DIONYSIUS.

Dolt! dotard! driveller!

By all the gods forsaken and accursed!
'Twas from Euripides—that feeble passage:—
I but compared it with the imprecation
Which, in my poem, I make Ajax utter
Against the sons of Atreus. Tasteless blockhead!
Since thou'rt so charmed with Polymestor's ravings,
Thou shalt partake his doom. Ho! guards! The
quarries!

There let the varlet study to distinguish
Between Euripides and Dionysius.

[First Parasite is dragged away.]

SECOND PARASITE.

In sooth, my liege, thy sentence was too lenient;
But 'tis thy failing — clemency.

DIONYSIUS.

Be silent!

Who asked thy comments, babbler, on my failings?
Was ever king so hedged by fleeing fools?

Enter PHORMIO and PHILOXENUS.

Aha! my young Athenian! Give you welcome!
Philoxenus, we must be better friends.
Be seated, gentlemen. The feast is ready —
Ambrosial meats — an intellectual feast.

PHILOXENUS, (*aside.*)

Would that I were an intellectual ostrich!

PHORMIO.

My liege, the prisoner whom we just encountered
Besought our intercession —

DIONYSIUS.

Let him pass!

Bœotia never bred a bigger ass.

PHORMIO.

He but entreats the priceless privilege
Of listening to thy poem.

PHILOXENUS.

After which,
We do not doubt, my liege, he'll die content.

DIONYSIUS.

Bring back the culprit : tell him he is pardoned.

PHORMIO, (*aside to PHILOXENUS.*)

The invention was well-timed.

PHILOXENUS, (*aside to PHORMIO.*)

Remorseless Phormio !
Would'st thou reserve him for a crueler doom ?

FIRST PARASITE, (*entering and kneeling to the King.*)
My gracious master !

DIONYSIUS.

Rise ! Thy wish is granted.
Philoxenus, you've never heard our " Ajax,"
If I remember ?

PHILOXENUS.

You forget, my liege :
I was a listener at the royal theatre
On its first presentation.

DIONYSIUS.

There 'twas murdered,
Unconscionably murdered by the players.

The rascals! I improved their elocution
Before they quitted Syracuse.

PHILOXENUS.

And how?

DIONYSIUS.

Cut out the tongue of every one of them.
Didst ever have a tragedy performed?
Be happy, in thy inexperience, then!
More woful than the woe of Niobe
Was it, to see the children of my brain
Dismembered, mangled, strangled, torn and swallowed,
By those word-butchers! Maledictions on them!
Great Nemesis! I let them off too lightly.

FIRST PARASITE.

Indeed, my liege, 'twould only have been justice
To have tried the new-made engine on their limbs;—
That would have served them after their own fashion.

DIONYSIUS.

Well thought of! But, Philoxenus, now tell me,
What thought you of the play?

PHORMIO, (*aside to PHILOXENUS.*)

For Xanthe's sake,

Be prudent now.

DIONYSIUS.

Which passage pleased thee best?

PHILOXENUS.

The closing one, my liege.

DIONYSIUS.

Ay, that was fair ;

But which didst think most moving?

PHILOXENUS.

'Twas all moving.

(*Aside.*) And yet I sat it through !

DIONYSIUS.

Indeed, I'm glad

It pleased thee.

PHILOXENUS.

Said I that?

PHORMIO, (*aside.*)

Restrain thy tongue.

DIONYSIUS.

How ! Pleased it not ? Speak out, Philoxenus !

I prize judicious censure. Think me not

One of those tender-skinned, conceited scribblers,

Who, prurient for praise, recoil and smart

Under the touch of blame.

PHILOXENUS.

That's wise—that's royal!

For, let this be admitted: the true poet
Carries the consciousness of his high gift
Like an impenetrable shield before him.
He knows his oracles are from the gods,
And, like the gods, immutable, immortal,
Albeit the tardy age receive them not.
What though the laugh of bigotry and hate,
The taunt of scurrile infamy and falsehood,
The sneer of worldly-wise expediency,
Fall on his ears? The echo is not heard
In the serene seclusion of his soul!
'Tis the false prophet whom the critics reach:
Never a true one by their shafts was wounded.

DIONYSIUS.

My thoughts, adroitly uttered! Tell me now,—
Now that I know to value thy opinion,—
Wast thou not charmed with "Ajax"?

PHILOXENUS.

Frankly, no.

DIONYSIUS.

Dost jest?

PHILOXENUS.

The gods forbid, so great a king
Should be a poet!

DIONYSIUS.

Insolent! Thy life —

PHORMIO, (*to PHILOXENUS.*)

Rash one! Thou'rt lost!

FIRST PARASITE.

Ho! Democles and guards!
Seize on this churlish traitor.

PHILOXENUS.

Why, thou viper!
Art thou already warm enough to sting?

DIONYSIUS.

No poet! I no poet! Democles!
Conduct this carping rebel to the quarries.

PHILOXENUS.

The quarries! Are they always good, my liege,
In such distempers?

DIONYSIUS.

What distempers, sirrah?

PHILOXENUS.

A sort of indigestion of the mind —

A state in which the judgment cannot stomach
What's put upon it.

DIONYSIUS.

Drag him from my sight!

PHILOXENUS.

And wilt thou then be any more a poet?

DIONYSIUS.

Away! No words! Now, Phormio, thou shalt hear
The rest of "Ajax."

PHILOXENUS, (*to the Guards.*)

Quick, quick to the quarries!

[*Exit with Guards.*]

PHORMIO.

My liege, he's mad! Forgive him; spare my friend!

[*He kneels to DIONYSIUS as the Scene closes.*]

SCENE III.

A Dungeon. Enter PHILOXENUS. Two Executioners, unperceived of him, follow.

PHILOXENUS.

Could all poor poets thus confute their critics,

Dulness might drone, unpricked, among her poppies.
Good sooth! here's room enough to criticize,—
And matter too,—with very patient listeners.
The ceiling is a thought too nigh the floor;
The architecture of a style too heavy;
A mouldy moisture hangs upon the air,
If air it may be called by courtesy.
A caviller might find even other faults;
But, when I think on all that I've escaped,
This dungeon smiles a welcome. Who approach?
Ah, worthy sirs! I knew not you were present.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

A merry knave! Eh, comrade?

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

'Tis a marvel
To see a man smile here. Art in thy senses?

PHILOXENUS.

Ay, sir, and they in me. Canst say as much?
Pardon me — am I right? — your gentle craft —
Is it not — are ye not the executioners?

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

The same, sir, at your service.

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

We shall be

Better acquainted soon.

PHILOXENUS.

Ha! that's a comfort.

How long have ye pursued your cheerful calling?

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

More than ten years.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

And I—let me consider!

When had we the great plague in Syracuse?

I came in with the plague.

PHILOXENUS.

A worthy colleague!

Well, ye must be no bunglers at your trade

By this time, gentle sirs. I'll warrant me,

In bringing down an axe upon the block,

Tying a noose, or nailing to the rack,

Ye've ne'er had rivals;—ye can do it deftly?

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Ah! thou may'st say it. I defy the man

Can do those jobs more neatly.

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

Hold thy tongue!

Bah! 'Thou'rt a scandal to the craft — a botcher!

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Dost hear the jealous rogue? Go to! go to!

'Thou'rt a mere boy.

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

When had I to strike twice

At a man's neck? O! thou'rt a matchless workman!

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Fellow! I scorn thy malice. There was cause

Why I should miss that aim: the light was dim.

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

Thy eyes, more like.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Fellow, I say thou liest!

PHILOXENUS.

Nay, gentlemen, this generous strife must end.

Ye both are artists — 'tis a pride to know you; —

Artists, I say — the first in your vocation,

Though your vocation may not be the first!

Ye do abhor all tyros — all pretenders,

Devoid of skill and genius. Yesterday,
The king's chief barber fell beneath your axe,
For rashly boasting that the royal weasand
Was at his mercy daily.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Marry, I
Took care of him. A very pretty job!
A handsome throat he had—made a good mark.

PHILOXENUS.

Sir, spoken like an artist! Hear me now:
I am an artist equally—a poet.

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

We could have sworn thou wast no honest man.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Did I not tell you 'twas a desperate knave?

PHILOXENUS.

Well, listen to my case: your lord, the king,
Though neither born nor bred to my vocation,—
Without that natural gift no toil can lend,
Or that acquaintance study may supply,—
Attempts the poet's function, and then asks
My frank opinion of his verses. I

Tell him I like them not : for which offence,
Behold me here ! Now put it to yourselves :
What had the king essayed your handicraft,
And, emulous to wield the axe like you,
Hacked off my head, — then asked, “ Was’t not well
done ? ” —

Would ye’ve said, Ay ?

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Not were he twice a king !

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

No ! Each man to his trade, is still my maxim.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

’Tis a shrewd knave. Well, well ; enough of prating !

SECOND EXECUTIONER, (*aside to PHILOXENUS.*)

I like thy humor ; — view me as thy friend.

’Twill be thy privilege to choose the arm

That is to —

PHILOXENUS.

Yes, I fully comprehend.

SECOND EXECUTIONER, (*aside to PHILOXENUS.*)

Give me the chance, and I’ll outdo myself.

Thou shalt be featly dealt with ; — thou shalt see

A marvellous nice stroke — no butchery,
But smooth, clean, faultless headsmanship.

PHILOXENUS.

Good sir,

How shall I show my gratitude? Thy claims
Shall be considered.

FIRST EXECUTIONER, (*aside to PHILOXENUS.*)

If your head
Is to come off, consider me your man.
Marry, 'twill do your heart good when you see
How dexterously I'll do it. You'll confess
That I'm the better artist.

PHILOXENUS.

You o'erwhelm me.

[*Exeunt Executioners.*]

Well, by the gods, I hold in reverence more
A skilful headsman than a charlatan!
O, 'tis the curse of every liberal art,
There still are vile pretenders who defame it.
In painting, what mere daubers do we see,
Who, born to guide the plough, mislead the pencil!
In music, what deluded sciolists

Evoked strange discords and tormented sounds
From chords which, smitten by responsive fingers,
Give up the very soul of harmony !
And how art thou, divinest Poesy,
Shamed and molested by the wretched herd,
Who, unordained, profane thy sacred temples,
And claim to utter oracles of thine,
Mistaking the foul tumors of their brains
For a god's impregnation ! Scribbling fools,
Innocent cheats, and facile poetasters !
O, would they quit the pen and grasp the spade,
Apollo should not curse, but Flora bless !

Enter XANTHE.

My child ! thy footstep was so feathery light,
Methought, a moment, 'twas thy mother's spirit,
With sainted beauty, come to light my dungeon.

XANTHE.

Whatever doom may be for thee reserved,
Behold me here to share it !

PHILOXENUS.

Tremble not.

I cannot think the king will do me harm ;

But, should capricious cruelty impel him
To prematurely quench life's sinking taper,
Know, that it was not with a serious purpose,
I've interposed objections to the choice
Of thy surrendered heart.

XANTHE.

Ah, do not turn
My thoughts from thy great peril on myself!
Another time, those words had made me start
With a too vivid joy; but now, alas!
They bring no consolation;—I should hate
My own ungrateful spirit if they did.

Enter Executioners.

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

'Tis the king's order;—we must e'en obey it.

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Poor fellow! Well, come, master!

XANTHE.

Who are these?

PHILOXENUS.

Command thyself—the executioners!

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

We both are sorry for thee, master poet;
But the king's will is final.

PHILOXENUS.

Do ye bear
His written mandate?

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

Ay, sir; more's the pity!

XANTHE.

Away! ye grim and lying murderers!
Ye shall hew off these limbs before ye reach him.

PHILOXENUS.

Let me behold your order.

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

If you doubt it,
Read for yourself. Marry, 'tis plain as daylight.

PHILOXENUS, (*reading aside.*)

"And let Philoxenus appear to-night
At the king's banquet." (*Laughs.*)

XANTHE.

Ah, that frantic laughter!
'Tis even more terrible than tears.

PHILOXENUS.

A summons

To attend the king! These gentlemen, my child,
Are wags in their small way. Unmannered caitiffs!
Why did ye palter with us?

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

Be not angry.

We gladly would have served you, master poet;
But then his majesty, you know, is wilful.

PHILOXENUS.

Well, I can pardon you the disappointment
With all my heart. And now, good sirs, farewell!
Nay, we must tear ourselves from your embraces.

[Exit with XANTHE.]

FIRST EXECUTIONER.

'Tis always thus our choicest customers
Find a reprieve.

SECOND EXECUTIONER.

Bear up, bear up, old fellow!

Fear not the king will let our axes rust.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

The King's Banqueting-Room. — Enter PHORMIO and ALASTOR.

PHORMIO.

Art thou assured the king has pardoned him ?

ALASTOR.

Ay, he is bidden to the evening banquet ;
And, sir, as thou'rt his friend, I do implore thee
Counsel him nevermore to criticize
The monarch's verses.

PHORMIO.

I shall venture much
To shield him from imprudence.

ALASTOR.

Fare thee well.

[*Exit.*]

PHORMIO.

And yet I fear, in spite of chains and dungeons,
His thoughts will spurn disguise. The gods themselves
Could not extort the praise his heart denied ; —
Will he then stoop to flatter Dionysius ?

Enter PHILOXENUS.

PHILOXENUS.

What! do I see thee, Phormio, and alive?

PHORMIO.

Beware! thou'st found it somewhat hazardous
To sport with tigers counterfeiting tameness;—
A scratch, a look may rouse the bloody instinct
That marks thee for its prey—and so, be prudent.

PHILOXENUS.

I seek not this encounter. May the gods
Desert me when I fawn upon a tyrant!
My friend, I loathe hypocrisy.

PHORMIO.

Not less

Is my aversion to it; but, alas!
We all, in a degree, are hypocrites,—
Always deceiving others or ourselves.
Some thoughts concealed we not from our best friends,
They'd be our friends no longer;—looked we closely
To our own derelictions,—did we not,
With flattering fantasies and dear delusions,
Juggle our ready hearts,—we'd soon abhor
The life we cling to.

PHILOXENUS.

Phormio, thou hast studied
Among the Sophists, and canst aptly wield
The two-edged weapons of that specious school.
The king approaches.

PHORMIO.

Now let caution rule thee
In look and word.

PHILOXENUS.

I'll not forget myself.

Enter DIONYSIUS, ALASTOR, XANTHE, Parasites, &c.

DIONYSIUS.

Philoxenus, sit here at our right hand,
And pledge us in this cup.

PHILOXENUS.

Most thankfully.

DIONYSIUS.

What news, Sir Poet, bring'st thou from the quarries?

PHILOXENUS.

Incredible, my liege! The headsmen languish
For want of occupation.

DIONYSIUS.

Ha! that's bitter.

PHILOXENUS.

The sunshine of the court shall sweeten me.

DIONYSIUS.

What if we had consigned thee to the block
For thy unmeasured rudeness?

PHILOXENUS.

There had been
One man the less in Syracuse, who dared
To speak the truth to all men at all times.

DIONYSIUS.

A prodigy at court, I do confess!
But, come: they tell me thou'st a taste proficient
In poetry and art; and here's a passage—
'Tis very brief—which above all I prize,
In my great poem. Read it.

PHILOXENUS, (*aside.*)

Cruel fate!

PHORMIO, (*aside to PHILOXENUS.*)

Now, if thou canst applaud not, pray be silent.

[PHILOXENUS reads in dumb show from a scroll
which DIONYSIUS hands him.

Beautiful! Is it not, Philoxenus?

(*Aside.*) Say, Yes: that little word may make thy fortune.

DIONYSIUS.

Do those lines please thee? Speak, Philoxenus!
Now for thy frank opinion!

PHILOXENUS.

Are thy guards
Within there?

DIONYSIUS.

What, ho! guards!

[The Guards come forward.]

PHILOXENUS, *(to the Guards.)*

I pray you, lead me
Back to the quarries.

PHORMIO.

Now thou'rt lost, indeed.

FIRST PARASITE.

Seize the disloyal churl! He must not live
After such insolence.

SECOND PARASITE.

Death to the knave!
Torture and death!

XANTHE.

Ah, no, sirs! he's my father!
Urge not such desperate penalties.

ALASTOR.

The king,
Kind sirs, is still a king; he does not ask
Any of your dictation.

FIRST PARASITE.

By the gods,
I cannot quietly stand by and hear
My sovereign liege insulted, nor defend him.

DIONYSIUS.

Thy sovereign liege, fool! can defend himself.
Ye forward brawlers, leave the royal presence!
Leave Syracuse, forever! Are ye gone?

[*Exeunt Parasites.*]

And now, Philoxenus, we must devise
Some punishment for thee, albeit I fear
Thou'rt quite incorrigible. Since the quarries
Have failed to make thee pliant, I must try
Severer measures. Xanthe and Alastor,
If tell-tale eyes speak truly, in your hearts
Already are ye wedded: lo, I join
Your hands in nuptial union! There's thy sentence,
Philoxenus!

PHILOXENUS.

Magnanimous avenger !

Great Dionysius ! With surprise and joy
I'm all confounded ! Why not always, thus,
With clemency o'erwhelm the offender's soul ?
O, is not gratitude a sweeter draught
Than vengeance ever tasted ?

DIONYSIUS.

Rise, my friends !

Athenian, rise ! We would not have thee think
Mercy so rare a mood with Dionysius.
Now, for the banquet !— But, a moment, stay !
Philoxenus, in truth, canst thou discern
No merit in my “ Ajax ” ? Can I write
Poetry, think you ?

PHILOXENUS.

No. But thou canst act it ;
And that is nobler.

DIONYSIUS.

Then am I content.

Curtain falls.

THE LAMPOON.

Present, VICTOR. Enter PEDRILLO, with a Newspaper.

VICTOR.

How now, Pedrillo? Pr'ythee, what's the matter,
That thus you tramp the room, and chafe, and pant,
As if to madness baited?

PEDRILLO.

Look at that;
And wonder at my equanimity!

VICTOR.

A very Stoic, truly! mild as moonbeams,
Reluctant as gun-cotton to take fire,
And quiet as a ribbon in a whirlwind!
Patience personified!

PEDRILLO.

Read that, I say!

VICTOR.

An if you roar so loudly, my Pedrillo,
You'll wake the watchman snoring on the doorstep.
Compose yourself?

PEDRILLO.

I shall go mad indeed!
What! you have seen it — read it — laughed at it —
Retailled it, at the club, as a good joke!
But, as the moon 's above us, I'll have vengeance!

VICTOR.

Well done! The action and the word well suited!
How such a climax would bring down the bravos!
Othello, Hotspur, Gloster — say, what part
Shall be selected for your first appearance?

PEDRILLO.

Torture! I thought you were my friend. Farewell!

VICTOR.

Stay, till you prove me otherwise. Explain:
What direful, strange affliction hath o'erwhelmed you?
Have you been plundered, cuffed, knocked down, and
 stamped on?
Perhaps your uncle's dead, and, in his will,

Has left you but a halter? No? Has Laura
Eloped with that long-haired, black-whiskered bandit,
Count Loferini?

PEDRILLO.

Pah! he's her abhorrence.

Read — read that paragraph in that vile print!
Behold me dragged before a grinning public;
Pointed at, squibbed, traduced, and ridiculed —
Made the town's butt; the mockery of my friends!
'Sdeath! I'll be no man's butt! The lying caitiff!
The inky cutthroat! The pen-stabbing footpad!
The paltering, prying, prostituting pander!
I'll have his ears or his apology!

VICTOR.

Bah! Give me a regalia. Can it be
Abuse from such a one can stir your choler?
Wait till the blackguard praises you, and then,
Curse, if you please, the fellow's impudence.

PEDRILLO.

What! shall I take no notice of the knave
And his base lies?

VICTOR.

By all means notice him,
If you would flatter. Challenge — flog — demand
Instant retraction — sue him for a libel; —
So may his aims be answered, and the kicks
Of a true gentleman may do him honor,
As royalty dubs knighthood — with a blow!

PEDRILLO.

Would you not have me show a due resentment?

VICTOR.

Tell him his sting is felt, and he'll rejoice:
Let it strike harmless on the triple mail
Of conscious honor; and the baffled viper
Will writhe and hiss, to find his venom wasted.

PEDRILLO.

Ah! but the public scorn!

VICTOR.

The public scorn!
Tell me what scorn the public can inflict,
Which, if unmerited, an honest man
Cannot repay tenfold? The public scorn!
O paroxysm of most insane conceit,

To think a ribald gazetteer's worst spite
Could pull upon your head the public scorn —
Could raise you half an inch above the mass,
For public contemplation! Ah, my friend,
Time will reverse thy telescope; and objects,
Which strike thee now as monstrous, will appear
Ridiculously dwarfish: it will teach thee
That, in this jostling, struggling, whirling world,
The most notorious are but little known,
The observed of all observers little seen,
The loftiest low, the noisiest little heard;
And that attacks like this, conceived in envy, —
False, flippant, venal, venomous, and vulgar, —
By the judicious are at once despised,
By the unthinking are at once forgotten.
O, shallower than the ostrich's device,
Who buries in the desert sand his eyes,
That no one may discern him, is the folly,
Which could persuade you that the public gaze,
From the innumerable concerns of life,
Was turned by this frail slander on yourself!
So, never fear to walk the street to-morrow: —

The boys will not hoot after you ; the ladies
Will not ejaculate as you pass by.
My life upon it, you will go unharmed,
Unpersecuted. But I'll flout no more ;
Though, sooth to say, this sensitive alarm,
This prurient shyness, and unmeasured anger,
Spring merely from egregious self-conceit,
Or grosser ignorance. Yet have I known
Mistakes as marvellous — have seen a man —
A high-souled, honorable, valiant one —
Sickened and blasted by a slanderous breath.
And I have witnessed, too, a sadder sight —
A maiden in the bloom of youth and beauty,
And good as fair, and innocent as gifted,
By the same pestilence struck down and killed ;
While he, the spotted wretch, who did the murders,
Was — O, the puniest of all creeping things !
The press ! What is that terrifying engine
In hands of fools and knaves ? An empty scarecrow !
A sword of lath ! a pop-gun ! a tin trumpet !
O, piteous the delusion, that could fancy

The minds of men, of veritable men,
Were swayed by such impostures !

PEDRILLO.

Are they not ?

VICTOR.

No ! Dupes and fools may be ;—for such I care not :
Their good esteem is worthless as their hate !

PEDRILLO.

True, every word ! You have prevailed, my friend ;—
The smart is over, and the anger vanished.
Henceforth, these slight and slimy paper-hoppers
Shall less annoy than that superior insect,
The shrill cicada of our summer pathways,
Which harmless springs before us from the grass,
Sinks at our feet, and straightway is forgotten.

NOTES.

Page 67. *Gonello.*

THIS is a true story. Gonello, the son of a glover, in Florence, was born between the years 1390 and 1400. While still a young man, he was received into the service of Nicolo the Third, Marquis of Ferrara, who installed him as his Fool, and became so much attached to him, that he surrounded him with favors, and even consulted him, sometimes, in state affairs. The traits of Gonello's character, and the events of his history and death, as I have metrically described them, are almost literally accordant with the historical account. He was convicted of *lèse-majesté*, inasmuch as he had laid violent hands on his sovereign; was seized and punished in the manner narrated in the poem. The marquis ordered a pompous funeral; nor was any circumstance omitted that could evince his respect for the memory of the jester. The life of Gonello, forming a considerable volume, was written by one Bartolomeo del Uomo.

Page 78. *The Martyr of the Arena.*

In the year of our Lord 404, a young Asiatic monk, named Telemachus, lost his life in a generous attempt to

prevent the combat of the gladiators, in the amphitheatre at Rome. He had stepped into the arena to separate the combatants, when the spectators, surprised and exasperated at his interruption of the brutal exhibition, overwhelmed him with a shower of stones. But from that time forth the human sacrifices of the amphitheatre were abolished. In allusion to the fate of Telemachus, Gibbon, with more acrimony than truth, remarks, "Yet no church has been dedicated, no altar has been erected, to the *only* monk who died a martyr to the cause of humanity." I have no especial partiality for monks, but history repeatedly gives the lie to Gibbon's assertion. It shows to what a discreditable extent of recklessness he could be carried by his prejudices, where his choice lay between an implied compliment to Christianity and a misrepresentation of facts.

Page 83. *Woodhull.*

General Nathaniel Woodhull was born at Mastic, Long Island, in 1722, and was engaged in several gallant actions, during the war of the American revolution. At the time of the invasion of Long Island by the royal forces, in 1776, he was overtaken at Jamaica, with two or three companions, by a detachment of the seventeenth regiment of British dragoons, and the seventy-first regiment of infantry. He gave up his sword in token of surrender; but the subordinate officer, who first approached, ordered him to say, "God save the king." This Woodhull refused to do; for which the officer struck him severely over the head with his sword; and of the effects of the wound Woodhull eventually died.

Page 89. *The Death of Warren.*

"*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*," was the reply of Warren to the friends who tried to dissuade him from exposing his person at the battle of Bunker Hill.

Page 91. *He beheld Cornwallis yield.*

Washington, though present at the surrender at Yorktown, deputed General Lincoln to receive the sword of Lord Cornwallis. This was done in a retaliatory spirit. When the Americans capitulated at Charleston, Cornwallis, instead of receiving Lincoln's sword himself, slightly directed him to deliver it to Colonel St. Leger. The affront thus offered to one of his favorite officers was not forgotten by Washington; and when the appropriate time came, he resented it, by meting out a similar measure of indignity to his lordship.

My authority for this anecdote is my kinsman, the late Major Winthrop Sargent, in whose mental custody it could hardly have remained for a series of years had it not been true. Major Sargent was major of artillery at the battle of Brandywine, September 11th, 1777, and adjutant-general at the terrible battle of the Miami Villages, November 4th, 1791. On both occasions he was wounded—on the latter, severely. He shared the privations of our army at Valley Forge, and was one of a delegation sent by Washington to make a representation of them to the Congress, at Philadelphia. On the consummation of our independence, Major Sargent contemplated pursuing his military career in Europe; and

Washington transmitted through General Knox the following certificate: "I certify that Major Winthrop Sargent, lately an officer in the line of artillery and aid-de-camp to Major-General Howe, has served with great reputation in the armies of the United States of America; that he entered into the service of his country at an early period of the war, and, during the continuance of it, displayed a zeal, integrity, and intelligence, which did honor to him as an officer and a gentleman. Given under my hand and seal, this 18th day of June, 1785. (Signed) George Washington, late Commander-in-chief, &c. &c." Major Sargent subsequently received the appointment of governor of the territory of Mississippi.

Page 122. *It is herself he sees.*

A letter dated Monterey, October 7th, 1846, describes a Mexican woman as having been mortally wounded while going to succor a dying soldier on the field of battle. "I think it was an accidental shot that struck her," says the writer. "Passing the spot, next day, I saw her body still lying there, with the bread by her side, and the broken gourd with a few drops of water still in it—emblems of her errand."

Page 123. *Adelaide's Triumph.*

The narrative from which the main incident of this little ballad is drawn appeared, some time since, in a French journal, as I learn from a friend, to whose recollection I am indebted for the story. He will perceive that in giving it a

poetical dress, I have materially altered it, and lost, I fear, much of the simple pathos which struck me in his oral narration.

Page 147. *The Drama's Race.*

This address was originally written for the occasion of a complimentary benefit to the manager of the Park Theatre, September 27th, 1839. Among the performers who appeared that evening were Mr. Power, the celebrated Irish comedian, who was shortly afterwards lost in the President, Miss Tree, Madame Caradori Allan, Madame Vestris, Mr. Charles Matthews, Mr. Barry, and Mr. Browne.

Page 159. *The Candid Critic.*

There is something quite comical in the accounts that have come down to us of the characteristic traits of the elder Dionysius. His ruling ambition was to be esteemed a poet; and his mode of dealing with individuals who refused to praise his verses was original indeed: his literary opponents were in danger of being confined in the *quarries*, as the common prison of Syracuse was called. On two occasions, he transmitted poems to be recited at the Olympic games; but, much to his chagrin, they were dreadfully hissed. The Athenians were more indulgent; and, when the news reached him that they had awarded the prize to a tragedy from his pen, he was almost beside himself with joy.

Various versions of his quarrel with Philoxenus, the poet, are given by ancient historians. As the story is told in the

Ποικίλη Ἱστορία of Ælian, Dionysius had submitted a drama to the poet to revise, and the latter drew his pen through the whole of it—an affront which may naturally have aroused the indignation of the monarch. But I have preferred following the account given by Diodorus, as better adapted to dramatic treatment. Fragments of a burlesque poem, entitled *Λεῖπρον*, or the Entertainment, preserved by Athenæus, are all that remain to us of the writings of Philoxenus.

Page 195. *The Lampoon.*

Byron expresses his surprise that poor Keats should have allowed his soul to be “snuffed out by an article.” But an exaggerated estimate of the importance of published abuse is among the commonest fallacies. This dramatic sketch was written at a time when the community had been recently shocked by the intelligence of two deaths, one of which was self-inflicted, in consequence of scurrilous personal attacks from an utterly worthless and discreditable print. Let the thin-skinned object of such attacks bear in mind, that “no man can be written down except by himself.”

THE END.

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
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