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J. S. Coates

THE BAYADERE

AND OTHER SONNETS

BY

FRANCIS SALTUS SALTUS

AUTHOR OF "HONEY AND GALL," "SHADOWS AND IDEALS," "THE
WITCH OF ENDOR," "DREAMS AFTER SUNSET"
"FLASKS AND FLAGONS"



G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

NEW YORK

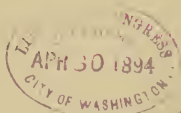
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TO

MADLINE VINTON DAHLGREN

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SONNETS.

THE BAYADERE.

N EAR strange, weird temples, where the Ganges' tide
Bathes domed Lahore, I watched, by spice-trees fanned,
Her agile form in some quaint saraband,
A marvel of passionate chastity and pride.

Nude to the loins, superb and leopard-eyed,
With fragrant roses in her jeweled hand,
Before some Kaât-drunk Rajah, mute and grand,
Her flexile body bends, her white feet glide.

The dull Kinoors throb one monotonous tune,
And wail with zeal as in a hasheesh trance ;
Her scintillant eyes in vague, ecstatic charm
Burn like black stars below the Orient moon,
While the suave, dreamy languor of the dance
Lulls the grim, drowsy cobra on her arm.

BAMBOO.

Whene'er I whirl thee in my fan, I see
 Kaolin turrets and pagodas rise,
 With lanterned kiosks that taper to the skies,
Where languid mandarins sip their perfumed tea.

The gongs of Pekin sound unto the sea,
 The wooden cangue free from a victim lies,
 And in a dream of wonder and surprise
The embattled walls of China tower up free.

Thou canst bring back to me the souvenir
 Of eyes when Nankin was begemmed with stars,
 And when Love's summer blossomed in my blood ;
Aye ! when I walked with Tchâ without a fear,
 And kissed in the dim glitter of bazaars
 Her lips as sweet as hawthorn in the bud !

CHIBOUQUE.

At Yeni-Djami, after Rhamadan,
The Pacha in his palace lolls at ease ;
Latakieh fumes his sensual palate please,
While round-limbed almées dance near his divan.

Slaves lure away *ennui* with flowers and fan ;
And as his gem-tipped chibouque glows, he sees,
In dreamy trance, those marvelous mysteries
The prophet sings of in the Al-Korán !

Pale, dusk-eyed girls, with sequin-studded hair,
Dart through the opal clouds like agile deer,
With sensuous curves his fancy to provoke ;
Delicious houris, ravishing and fair,
Who to his vague and drowsy mind appear
Like fragrant phantoms arabesqued in smoke !

IHLANG-IHLANG.

The gold Hoang-ho lulls with fluctuant tide
The marble palace of the Mandarin ;
Without bloom citron gardens, and within
Rise stately court-yards, porticoed and wide.

I hear of tinkling bells the silver din
From porcelain towers, whence caracole and ride
Great hosts of Mongols, while from Han-tung's side
The annual festivals with pomp begin.

Ravished I see a lithe, sweet, doe-eyed girl,
Che-Kiang's most sacred princess, passing through
The merry town where dragoned flags unfurl
Their gold and argent on her hair's dusk hue ;
I see her enter, catch her smile of pearl,
And smell a wondrous perfume, strange and new !

THE NAUTCH GIRL.

Her limbs are lithe and supple as the sea ;
 Jet hair in perfumed waves is windward whirled ;
 And, below tinted lashes, crisp and curled,
Her gold-black glances glitter like a bee !

Graceful and flexile as the desert tree,
 Her frame voluptuous, sapphire-starred and pearled,
 Slips in dusk radiance from its veil unfurled,
A luring vision of guile and ecstasy.

A Rajah's ransom glistens on a breast
 Burning with ardor as the timbrels boom ;
 And cruel eyes flash fire into the gloom,
Stirring the senses to a vague unrest ;
 While, in her pagan passion uncontroled,
Her dreams are red like blood and bright like gold !

THE SPHINX SPEAKS.

Carved by a mighty race whose vanished hands
 Formed empires more destructible than I,
 In sultry silence I forever lie,
Wrapped in the shifting garment of the sands.

Below me, Pharaoh's scintillating bands
 With clashings of loud cymbals have passed by,
 And the eternal reverence of the sky
Falls royally on me and all my lands.

The record of the future broods in me ;
 I have with worlds of blazing stars been crowned,
 But none my subtle mystery hath known
Save one, who made his way through blood and sea,
 The Corsican, prophetic and renowned,
 To whom I spake, one awful night alone !

TO A MUMMY.

Circled with perfumed bands and sweet with spice,
Thou lingerest in the stupor of the tomb,
Beneath great Cheops' everlasting gloom,
With money in thy withered hand, and rice

Wherewith to guard thy spirit from the vice
Of famished demons, harbingers of doom ;
And on thy shriveled front still dwells the bloom
Of antique Egypt's palmy Paradise.

Ages have gone, and thou still hast a form,
While Earth is filled with unarisen dead ;
Death heaps no horror on thy tranquil head.
Thy limbs are sweet, and night hath kept them warm,
And the dull eyes, perchance, beneath those lids,
Have seen the mighty birth of Pyramids !

FLEUR DE RIZ.

When vagrant fancy thy strange charm recalls,
Ravished, I think of those fair dames who graced,
With *mouche* on lip, light foot and wasp-like waist,
The stately splendor of the Bourbon balls.

At Versailles, through the vast and frescoed halls,
I watch them, perfumed, rouged and satin-laced,
Dance the minuet with that entrancing taste
Which every true and knightly mind enthralls.

And then again, as dream to dream doth pass,
I see the Regents' *roués*, warm with wine,
Chat with blonde Sabran or pert Parabère,
And sloe-eyed Manon at her looking-glass,
Beckoning Des Grieux with an amorous sign,
To unwind the powdered marvel of her hair!

LA GRISETTE.

All smiles and blushes, loving, arch and gay,
Delicious little vixen, merry sprite,
She toils to feed her birds the whole long night,
Or save her bracelets from the pawnshop's prey.

The woods of Meudon find her every May,
With dainty gaiter and saucy bonnet white ;
She falls in rapture with each favorite site,
Adores De Kock, and doats upon Musset.

Constant and true to lover, dark or blond,
His hardships, pains and joys she gayly shares,
Contented with the garret where he dwells,
Never complaining, although madly fond
(After sweet kisses and Beranger's airs)
Of pet canaries and fresh caramels.

ZAÏDA.

Sleepily, languorous, time to beguile,
 Wrapped in a harnacs' silk, indolent, rests
 Zaïda the princess of Egypt, whose jests
Show all the pearl and the rose of her smile.

Eunuchs stand nigh to her waiting her quests,
 There far beyond on the rippleless Nile,
 Sluggishly dreams the uncouth crocodile,
Dreamily rise the fair princess' breasts. . . .

Thinks she of Maleb and closes her lids. . . .
See yonder dust near the gray pyramids !

 Her Maleb is coming the sand-cloud attests,
Zaïda has seen it and watched it awhile. . . .

 See now the fluctuant wealth of her breasts,
See now the pearl and the rose of her smile.

THE JAPANESE FAN.

Cunningly fashioned by an artist's hand,
My frail, light stem of delicate bamboo
Upholds a spray of dazzling plumes, whose hue
Is rivaled by no bird on Yeddo's strand !

Upon my sandal ribs, when I expand,
The daintiest arabesques enchant the view !
Ruby pagodas, mandarins robed in blue,
Intricate curves and virgin faces bland.

My beauty made to serve and to delight
Some splendid Taïcoon's grand imperial ease,
When Occidental winds blow fierce and hot,
Is doomed, alas, to fan, night after night,
In some dark, dismal town beyond the seas,
The rough and musky cheeks of a *cocotte* !

PASTEL.

Among the priceless gems and treasures rare
Old Versailles shelters in its halls sublime,
I can recall one faded image fair,
A girl's sad face, praised once in every clime.

Poets have sung, in rich and happy rhyme,
Her violet eyes, the wonder of her hair.
An art-bijou it was, but dimmed by time,
A dreamy pastel of La Vallière !

I, too, remember in my heart a face
Whose charm I deemed would ever with me dwell ;
But as the days went by, its peerless grace
Fled like those dreams that blooming dawn dispel,
Till of its beauty there was left no trace,
Time having blurred it like that pale pastel !

LANGUAGE.

There is a language I have heard in dreams
Whispered by formless clouds, by outh and gnome,
Sound that like water breaking into foam
With sad unearthly song and music teems ;

An idiom unctuous like oil in streams,
Full of grand mellow words like "star," like "Rome" !
Such as cannot in any cobwebbed tome
Of antique lore be found ; whose carol quemes,

Subtle of strain like rich sonorous Zend
Full of strange syllables that have no end. . . .
A tongue wherein low liquid echoes swell
Of worlds unknown ; which mortals cannot speak ;
Something like velvet crushed upon a bell. . . .
Something like amorous sighs, or murmured Greek !

THE MONKEY.

In fiendish malice, wickedness and mirth,
Thou art indeed like man, great minds declare,
Thy wild, ferocious instinct will not spare,
A mutual fiend is in us all from birth.

Thy leer perpetual finds no thing of worth,
Mischief unto thy heart is ever rare,
With ceaseless jabbering thou dost soil the air,
Thou turbulent Eulenspiegel of the earth !

Yes, thou canst laugh at man, and at thine ease,
For he has worshiped * thee, and doth adore
Unto this day thy unknown, hidden powers.
Yea ! where amid a world of balmy trees,
Clad in the glory of a thousand towers,
The Indian sun showers fire upon Lahore.

* Monkey Temples of India (Benares).

LA BLASÉE.

Dans son boudoir Watteau, l'indolente Marquise,
Agace de son pied mutin, blanc et mignon,
Le museau moite et noir de son petit bichon,
Tout en baillant un peu d'une façon exquise.

Pour fuir le *spleen* naissant, Madame alors devise,
" Si je lisais Balzac ? . . . *bah !* ça m'énerve . . . non . . .
Pour charmer mes ennuis Gautier n'a plus le don,
Mais que faire mon Dieu ? pauvre femme incomprise !

Gounod est insipide, et j'exècre Verdi,
Encore un peu, ma foi, j'aimerais mon mari,
S'il venait consoler sa blonde délaissée ;
C'est drôle tout de même être ainsi désœuvrée.
Vraiment je n'y comprends rien, *rien* absolument,
Et pourtant j'ai changé ce mois deux fois d'amant !

TÊTE-À-TÊTE.

'Neath the soft mellow light of the silk shamas,
We were supping together, long after the ball.
In the scarlet and gold of her Indian shawl,
She sat nibbling a partridge and toyed with her glass.

We had chatted of music, of art, and of all
The grave people or gay at the fête we saw pass,
And I dared to broach love, too, if well I recall,
While I sipped my chablis with some splendid cold bass.

As I gazed on her beauty with fond eyes that dreamed
Through the undulate smoke of a blond cigarette,
I perceived her bite slowly a truffle—it seemed,
To my mind, over-languid with poetry yet,
As she touched the black dainty with white teeth that gleamed,
Like a glitter of pearls in a setting of jet.

THE JUNGFRAU.

Magnet of ice ! white-eyed, supreme, immense !
Thy grand imperial whitenesses of awe
Blur all my songful thought, and potent, draw
Into thy bosom's glooms my wandering sense ;
Rapt by the sheen diaphanous, intense
Of thy white virgin beauty, free of flaw.
Thy stiff cold tears of 'sdain that never thaw
All promise death as choicest recompense
To me, if I but cling to thee and climb
Thy giant breasts of frost, thy flanks of rime,
Or scale thy treacherous steeps to topmost peaks
And brave thy avalanche's dreaded flow !
Then shall I find what all my body seeks,
A tomb sublime in seas of endless snow !

OBLIVION.

Far in far Colorado's cañoned gloom,
Girt by the shadow of Titanic trees,
Swept by the swift and eagle-haunted breeze,
There stands a desolate and forgotten tomb.

No hunter knows the dead one's name or doom ;
No soul to garland it has passed the seas ;
It lies there one of earth's sad mysteries,
Where cougars crawl, where weeds and nettle bloom

The bounding bisons trample on the stone,
The tempests lull the unknown form to rest.
Unconsecrated, friendless and unblest,
It stands until the end of time, alone.
Such is the oblivion that I fain would win
When death relieves me of this life of sin.

THE ELEPHANT.

He strides, majestic, through his vast domain ;
All India's jungles unto him belong.
To battle with the pards God made him strong,
And he of his sharp, glittering tusks is vain.

There, sheltered from the sun-fire and the rain,
Unconscious of the javelin or the thong,
He thunders forth his wild and wooing song,
When monstrous loves have thrilled his flesh again.

But when I see him, with all courage fled,
Chained as a captive on an alien ground,
Far from the torrid pleasaunce of his home,
I think of those great days, forever dead,
When Hannibal led his ancestry renowned
To crush the Imperial phalanxes of Rome !

ROME.

Ruin and rot their raging rule have rolled,
Rebellious, o'er the glories of thy dead !
Recall not regal dreams of carnage red,
Revels and triumphs, routs and robes of gold,

Revert no vain regret on splendors fled ;
Rude, rushing time, with rigid, ruthless cold,
Ravishing, reckless, rusts thy royal head ;
Ravages sanctuaries once rose-souled.

Rest ! in the rank recesses of each dome.
Rest ! O grand town revered, a spirit-home
Ready wilt find when worlds have passed away,
Regions of air and odorous realms of sky !
Restored in spheres of everlasting day,
Rome, thou shalt never know what 't is to die !

STALACTITE.

The Earth has wept for grievous sins of man,
For pride of kings and muttered groans of slave.
It proves no pain in thunders when they rave,
Nor yet in desolate lightnings, blue and wan ;

But mourns, regretful, in some unknown cave,
Where gleams of sunshine can not reach to scan ;
Here does it weep, as only Nature can,
Sweet tears, as sweet as violets on a grave.

Deep in its breast, serene, sad breast of woe,
Deep in its heart, eternal heart of nights,
We find those tears Earth fain would never show
To all the odium of our torches' lights ;
Those deathless tears, diaphanous of flow,
Forged in the silence of cold stalactites.

ROME'S MAGNIFICENCE.

Oft through the mazes of the Roman mart
And quaint Trastevere I have strolled alone ;
And in St. Peter's miracle of stone,
Have felt the awe of God pervade my heart.

The stately city in its every part
Has to mine eyes its greatest splendor shown.
Its loves, and pains, and sufferings I have known,
Its dizzy Carnival, its peerless Art !

The Vatican recalls delicious days,
And, with the flawless, mellow moon o'erhead,
Through august ruins I have wandered free.
But, oh ! I marvel at all, yet dare not praise ;
On yonder green Campagna *she* lies dead,
And what is Rome's magnificence to me ?

GRAVES.

The sad night wind, sighing o'er sea and strand,
Haunts the cold marble where Napoleon sleeps ;
O'er Charlemagne's bones, far in the northern land,
A vigil through the centuries it keeps ;

O'er Grecian kings its plaintive music sweeps ;
Proud Philip's grave is by its dark wings fanned,
And round old Pharaoh's (deep in desert sand
When the grim Sphinx leers at the stars) it creeps

Yet weary it is of this chill, spectral gloom ;
For mouldering grandeurs it can have no care.
Rich mausoleums in their granite doom
It fain would leave, and wander on elsewhere,
To cool the violets upon Gautier's tomb,
And lull the long grass over Baudelaire.

THIS ONCE WAS GREECE !

The warm sun slants upon a myrtled plain ;
Brown linnets watch the blue Ilissus flow ;
Benignant gods their choicest gifts bestow ;
Calm and serene the shifting twilights wane.

The woods are still that heard war's pomp and pain ;
The silent beaches hide no ships of woe ;
And Thracian javelins no longer glow
Across the flowery hills like steely rain.

Dead and unvestaled is the temple's fire,
Flown are the valiant hosts of nobler kind,
And flown the dream of beauty and of peace ;
No hope, nor hope of hope, no new desire,
Naught but the drowsy murmur of the wind
Through voiceless glens, *and yet this once was Greece !*

TO AN ANTIQUE MIRROR.

In an old feudal castle hid in France,
Far in the vine-rich South, I found one day
A quaint, rare mirror, which all cobwebbed lay,
Its center shattered as if by a lance.

I looked within and saw, like some strange trance,
The shifting shadows of dead faces play ;
Pale profiles that have long been dust and clay,
And phantom forms, sad beyond utterance.

And then I dreamed how, in sweet by-gone days,
The grim queen-mother might have glanced therein
To count her wrinkles and receive no praise ;
Or how a king, still deaf by Ivry's din,
Might once have held it on his scars to gaze,
While Gabrielle caressed his tufted chin !

LA MAÑOLA.

A face of pink and nacre ! Tiger eyes,
 Fringed by long, silken lashes black as jet !
 A tortoise-comb high in soft tresses set,
A fan in hand of Oriental dyes,

Screening delicious spheres that fall and rise
 Draped in a frail mantilla's gauzy net.
A satin slipper on a foot that vies
 With Castile's Queen, and which will quickly fret

When, near the Prado, sounds of castanet
Of some great revelry or dance apprise.
A vague, strange look of passion you surmise,
 You catch a pleasant scent like mignonette !
She passes ! — while from sensuous lips there flies
 The blue smoke of her twisted cigarette !

RESURRECTION.

A placid lake dreamed the dull days away
In Scotland's leafy heart, the wild deer's home,
Yet never knew the ecstasy of foam,
The curl of waves, or the grim tempest's sway.

But storms encompassed it one fatal day,
The snaky lightnings o'er its bank did roam,
And to its sheltering snow-girt cedars clomb,
Stirring the blue depths in wild disarray.

Like that calm lake, my heart serenely dreamed,
Unconscious of alarm, until you came,
Leading Love with you, vigorous and free ;
Then the strong lights of passion grandly gleamed,
My heart arose, new-born, in fear and flame,
Made by new love one vast and troubled sea !

INFLUENCE.

Oft when some weary city calmly sleeps,
Oblivious for an hour of hate and spite,
The livid moon, with sad, phantasmal light,
Strange vigils in the spotless azure keeps.

In ghostly ways she indolently creeps
Among the sable glories of the night,
And with insidious rays of deadly white
The dreamy town in one pale glamour steeps.

Then, should some mortal with enamoured eye
Gaze on her beauteous presence, chaste and proud,
With maddening joy her luminous fibers beat,
And beams more potent from her brightness fly ;
While men can hear the echo long and loud
Of maniac laughter in a startled street !

LIKE POOR OPHELIA.

Like poor Ophelia, pale, Murillo-fair,
The beauteous one, whose love once fired my brain,
Roams thro' my dwelling, silent and insane;
In the blond splendor of her tangled hair,

Unconsciously she bares the round and rare
Carrara of her breast without a stain,
While I, who of her beauty am still vain,
Smile grimly at her dull and vacant stare.

When, like an amorous cat, she towards me bounds,
I love to see her, warm with wanton fire,
Invent endearments new in bizarre wise ;
And when she lisps odd, idiotic sounds,
To watch the inferno of her strange desire
Gleam weirdly in her colorless dull eyes !

SONNET.

Deep in the claustral glooms of pillared aisles
I wandered to tempt calm. Toledo slept.
Its grand cathedral, lit by pearl-pale smiles—
From stars,—mused with the night, while o'er it crept

Gray waves of shadows, as I hushed my guiles
And at the Virgin's altar knelt, and wept :—
Wept o'er my deep wild thoughts, o'er wishful wiles,
O'er sins that mocked my strength, o'er sins that slept. . . .

For hours strove I to still the brutal yearn
That urged me to betray thy youth, and spurn
Thy love immaculate for fleshy pain,
But even at the shrine of martyred Christ
The flowers of vice within me bloomed again,—
Hell was my God—and Hell thy soul enticed. . . .

FLOWER MAD.

Morbidly languid, through long summer hours
She lay like some pale rose by dawn dews wet,
Dreaming amid a mass of mignonette,
Delicious roses and frail Orient flowers.

To cloy her whims insatiable, my powers
Were taxed before her dainty feet to set
An Eden of odorous pink and violet—
The sweetest plunder of a hundred bowers.

Ghoul-like she fattened in this flowerful Hell
That numbed my sense with sickening perfume,
Until my soul rebelled and would not bow. . . .
She now lies crowned with phlox and asphodel,
Deep in her chamber's suffocating gloom,
With one great rose of blood upon her brow !

PATTE DE VELOURS.

'T was in a conquered town—we warred in Spain ;
I was a gay lieutenant, rash and young,
Loving to lisp the Andalusian tongue
With jet-eyed charmers who to list would deign.

Oft by old Alcazars, with mandolin strung,
I would not warble long my amorous strain,
And, for my blue eyes' sake, one beauty hung
Over her balcon's gloom a silken skein.

Deluded boy, with fatuous pride elate,
I could not deem her love to danger led ;
Yet in that Spanish heart a world of hate
For me in each soft kiss more surely spread
And I was found one night beside her gate,
Her poniard in my throat and left for dead !

TO YULMA.

A MOORISH LOVER SPEAKS.

Like soft twin moons thy rounded bosoms gleam
 Veiled in the shade of Yani's minaret,
 And like an undulate tide of perfumed jet
Thy sequin-studded tresses downward stream.

Thine eyes recall the first triumphant beam
 That darts thro' daring clouds, that Westward met
 Ere the all-holy sun in state had set,
Leaving warm valleys in a hazy dream.

Here in the grim shades of the Alcazar,
 Listen, O love, unto my soft Kinoor,
That pulses like my heart for thee, afar !
 Hark to sweet Saâdis' words that all allure,
 And see, like hope, lighting yon barren moor,
The flawless splendor of our guardian star !

ESCURIAL.

Grand sepulcher of royal hates, dank grave
Of bitter thoughts morose, of cares and spleens,
Cyclops of granite, where at midnight rave
Through gelid crypts the souls of kings and queens,
What art thou in thy dismal desert, save—
The silent phantom of Spain's bygone scenes ?
Does not grim Philip's spirit haunt the naves
Of thy stern cloisters with his mind's gangrenes ?
O walls of groans ! O blood-hewn aisles and domes !
A sad, drear monotone of echoes roams
From Guadarramian heights around thy gloom,
The frozen prayers of Torquemada's slain !
Cursed be thy silence, monstrous, chilly tomb !
Crumble and rot, gray fiend of stone and pain !

THE SPIRIT OF RUINS.

I have hung my misty ivy over all

The pomps of antique Rome, and the gray blight
Of my grim touch upon the Rhine doth smite
Full many a haughty burg and crumbling wall.

In ways severe, implacable, I fall

Where colonnaded Parthenons rise white
Into the nimbus of the soft Greek light,
Or where proud Baalbec's dismal shades appall.

Oh, morbid joy have I, when towns of towers,

And insolent Karnacs, by grave sphinxes girt,
Perish before my dark, destructive powers.

And I am glad to view, with eyes alert,
The mute magnificence of their leafless bowers,
Their glory shattered in palatial dirt !

SUPERIOR.

Since Time began, the sun has wooed with fire
Vast, virgin solitudes of polar snows ;
And on each marvelous, icy Kremlin throws
The scintillant rays of its supreme desire.

A thought responsive it may ne'er inspire ;
The gaunt bergs move not from their bleak repose ;
But, with pure, lingering loves that never tire,
It offers still one grand auroral rose.

Patient and pleading, ever thrust aside,
I watch o'er thee, O fair and distant goal !
Cruelly conscious of thy utter right,
But nobler far than thy poor, paltry pride,
I, with the gold auroras of my soul,
Deluge thy frozen heart with lavish light !

FAITHFUL.

Supple and cruel as a languid snake
That awes a linnet with dull eyes of flame,
Thou lurest me by the magic of thy shame
To throw my life away for thy foul sake !

With lawless vice thy ignoble instincts ache,
And, Borgia-like, imperious, untame,
Thy soul, to gain its ignominious aim,
Would fain in blood some chaste existence take.

Pale incest stamps its horror on thy brows,
Red murder gleams in thy rebellious eyes,
And throes erotic thy base passions thrill.
No pity an outraged world for thee allows,
The scaffold claims thy carrion as prize,
But what is that to me ? *I* love thee still !

VULNERABLE.

When unsymmetric chaos in its might
 Ruled the dim, desolate Earth and left it bare,
 In gloomy caves there wandered everywhere
Amorphous monsters, larvæ of affright.

Deep in the vast, impenetrable night
 They lived and loved, dreading no future care,
 Until their souls were fired by just despair,
When God, to dazzle them, created Light.

Groping like them through life's unhappy gloom,
 I lived in callous stupor, sad and dumb,
 Pleased with my changeless lot without surprise.
Oh ! pardoning woman ! in thy summer's bloom,
 Why, to illumine my dark soul didst thou come
 And blind me with the splendor of thine eyes ?

SONNET IMPROVISÉ.

Tu rirais gentiment, coquette jouvencelle,
Si je te murmurais doucement et tout bas,
Que mon cœur t'appartient, que je te trouve belle,
Et qu'un baiser mignon vaudrait un noir trépas.

Ah, oui, tu sourirais, et la brune étincelle,
Jaillirait de tes yeux, si je faisais un pas,
Pourquoi me permets tu d'espérer, ma cruelle,
Quand je t'adore tant, si tu ne m'aimes pas ?

Ton cœur est donc fermé à triple cadenas ?
Mais, est-ce bien un cœur ? Non, une citadelle,
Qu'il faut prendre d'assaut à grand renfort de bras.
J'en ferai le doux siège, alert, armé, fidèle,
Pour conquérir ton cœur, mais si je tombe, hélas,
Daigneras tu panser ma blessure mortelle ?

NIAGARA.

Chaos and void of worlds preadamite !
Lylacqs of clouds, Babelian towers of air !
Maelstroms of seething elements, shade-night,
Immensities of space, ignescent glare

Of shifting meteors, dire, terrific, bright !
Bewildering grandeurs of a rising prayer !
God heard your cries for formal life, and light,
Pellucid, star-sprent heavens glimmered, fair !

A world was born, vast shapes, grand seas were fused
In perfect symmetry, and naught accused
The Lord of folly, save Niagara's land,
Whose soul rebelled and mocked a gift of mud ;
So smote He it with fire-glaive firm of hand,
The wound brings forth white cataracts of blood !

SONNET.

In great grand worlds above, my spirit soars,
Above our turbid spheres, above in air :
Roaming insatiate through the planet's glare
To sombrous vales ! to sunless, moonless shores !

In cloud-cathedrals prays it—and implores
The vital virile vim to win the rare
Prized benizon of reaching regions, where
The souls of fancy hide their precious stores.

Above ! above ! errs on my spirit-thought,
Spurred on to search for things unseen, untaught,
Tremulous, hope-girt, it pursues its flight
Through skies crepuscular of lurid glow
Bearing back marvels from beyond the Night—
To feed my mind awaiting them below !

SONNET.

From out the deep dark glooms of doubt and pain,
Thy love's star-radiance, nascent, soon shall shine,
Splendent of carnal glamour from thy brain
Like precious stones be-hued in tints divine,

That hide in dazzling depths a soul long lain,
A spirit crystallized, infused, benign !
The gem ignores its soul's deep glowing vein,
Thy soul ignores the gem-love that is thine !

But I have come to fray the path to spheres
Whose secret thrills, whose dizzy height endears,
For I will revel in their glorious gloom,
Born to enjoy the wonders of thine eyes—
The riot splendors of their vague perfume,
Thy soft and amorous symphonics of sighs—— !

SOUVENIR.

Like a Sultana clad in raiment bright,
Voluptuous Provence, draped in olive trees,
Balmy with grain and the soft southern breeze,
Dreamed to the star-thronged heaven one perfect night.

It seemed as if our God had made the site
His rare and unique fantasy to please,
And for his wonders and his mysteries
Created it from roses, calm and light !

'T was there—sweet spot !—where thy ripe lips divine,
In passionate embrace—O long-craved boon !—
Placed their soft, troubled warmth into my own ;
'T was there that thou wert mine, that I was thine ;
While over us the autumn mellow moon
Silvered the languorous ripples of the Rhone !

SONNET.

Like the sweet Biblic Ruth, thou art most fair,
The soul of Song dwells in thy tranquil gaze,
Which by its calm serenity could raise,
Divinest Hope from oceans of despair.

To win thy radiant smile I dare not dare,
My heart, so tortured by thy subtle ways,
Can find no throb thy loveliness to praise,
I simply bow and worship, as in prayer.

Ah ! why should I, audacious, strive to gain
The secrets of thy lips, a look from thee ?
Why should I hopeless for thy favor sigh ?
For in thy smile, which is my joy and pain,
Bewildered and alarmed, I only see
The alluring promise of the Lurelei !

1755.

Lisbon, enamoured of her beauty, lay
Girt with a rosary of fragrant flowers ;
Sun-loved and radiant in a maze of bowers,
She dreamed the idle Summer hours away.

In grateful mood, in shy, coquettish play,
She called the Spirits and mysterious Powers
That guard and beautify her with their dowers,
To come and share her soft, eternal May.

Then the earth trembled, and the flawless sky
Grew black with ominous shadows of despair,
While tall towers tottered in a sudden flame !
A fiery hurricane of hell swept by,
And in an utter darkness everywhere,
With death and doom, the awful Spirits came !

MOON SPLEEN.

Doomed by a cruel god to pine alone,
Chaste and serene, in continents of space,
I weary of gazing on the Earth's dull face,
Whose secrets since creation I have known.

I can recall the blond glow I have thrown
Where Babylon reared its grandeur and its grace,
And over pillared Karnac I can trace
Dead rays that linger on immortal stone.

But, ah ! the glories of Neronian Rome
And templed Greece are sweet no more to me !
I tire of lending light to mart and dome,
And loath the palpitant splendors of the sea ;
While desolate, in my star-encompassed home,
I roam forever in my white *ennui*.

QUARTETTO D'ITALIA.

NAPLES :—THE LAZZARONE.

Vesuvius, tranquil on its lava steeps,
Towers treacherous o'er the bloom of many trees,
Courting the orange-scented Ischian breeze,
That near its fuming summit faintly sweeps.

Among rich, amber fruits in luscious heaps
The lazzarone dreams by dreamy seas ;
Or, on the Chiaja, in delicious ease,
Scorning the fierce sun, indolently sleeps.

But sometimes the grim mountain hurls its fire
To earth and air with deadly throbs of light,
As if to tell the world its awful needs !
And, when war warms the lazzarone's ire,
He also wakens, while the placid night
Showers star-light on his great heroic deeds !

ROME :—LA TRASTEVERINA.

She wanders through the lightless lanes of Rome.

A flower of grace, with grave, nocturnal eyes ;
To her belong the calm Italian skies,
And all the Eternal City is her home.

In drugget wrapped she stands, and from her comb

Falls the dusk torrent of her hair, that flies
Windward, and in the twilight's tint that dies,
Her white teeth glimmer like the fleeting foam.

And I, who by fond words can call her mine,

Think, when I hear her sweet and pleading sighs,
Of subtle phantoms resurrect at last :
For in the willow of her arms that twine
Their softness round me, I can feel arise
The Imperial Messalinas of the past !

VENICE :—THE GONDOLIERS.

O'er many a blue and palace-girt lagoon
Idly from dawn to twilight thou dost skim,
With face patrician, perfect in each limb,
Lazily humming some Bellinian tune.

Or to the Lido, where the roses strewn
Please for an hour thy vague, poetic whim,
Thou ledest in the night from bridges dim,
Thy donna, white as the attendant moon.

But then again, some quick and avid eye
May watch thee, noiseless, in the shadows lurk,
While all the town is maddened by guitars,
And, as thy heedless rival saunters by,
Can see thy sharp and jewel-hilted dirk
Angrily glint beneath Venetian stars !

THE APENNINES :—THE BRIGAND.

Behind thick vines he paces to and fro,
Grasping a carbine strung with ribbons gay ;
Tiger-like waiting for a chance to slay,
While fires infernal in his dark eyes glow.

The sunny roads no weary traveler show,
And the dull, idle hours are whiled away
In dreams of deeds that may surpass some day
The bloody fame of Fra Diavolo !

Then, when is heard a slow, advancing tread,
Coward unto the heart, he swift will hide
To send his bullet with supreme address !
And, as he robs his victim, prone and dead,
In all the ignorance of his surly pride
He thanks the Virgin for his foul success.

LATIN.

Haunting old volumes of forgotten lore,
All cultured minds most avidly rehearse
Its puissant prose, its pure, delicious verse,
Ever unveiling pleasurable store.

Supremely it soundeth as the hollow shore,
Re-echoing waves, when ired by churchly curse ;
Noble it is with Cicero and terse,
And sweet on prayerful lips that God implore !

But when I read its lines, unto mine ear
With grandeur swells the Coliseum's roar !
I see the stalwart retiarii come
To hurl their grasping nets at glaive and spear !
And hear her sonorous words choked back by gore
When life and death hang on a vestal's thumb !

ITALIAN.

Mellifluous daughter of the rigid tongue
That Rome imperial taught worlds to revere ;
Like the rich, flawless resonance most clear
Of silver bells are thy soft sounds when sung.

I love thy suave, melodious tones among
Veronian lanes or Pisan squares to hear ;
And when in carnival, with jibe and jeer,
Thy words, in air, like fresh *confetti* are flung !

Before me, when I murmur thee, arise
Genoa's mart, high palaces and piers,
Or rosy Capri, redolent with June !
But sweeter still, below calm, starful skies,
I hear the *barcarolles* of gondoliers
In lonely Venice, aureoled by the moon !

ANGLO-SAXON.

High sounding, terse and energetic tongue,
Like boreal winds, impetuous and rough ;
There rings in thee the manly, haughty stuff
That suits a brawny chest, a Harold's lung.

Thy harsher beauties by old minstrels sung,
When tamed to deeper calm, were sweet enough
To please the robust Saxons, brave and bluff,
Who mouthed thy consonants when thou wast young.

But when thy short, sharp words fall on my ears
From tutored lips, their rich and powerful sound
Clangs like steel rapiers smiting brazen shields.
I picture up a revel of hostile spears,
And hear King Arthur to his foes around
Trumpet defiant words on battle-fields !

SPANISH.

When with an elegance that deftly strips
The ancestral Latin of its garb severe,
How like a rhythmic poem, rich and clear,
Thou soundest on soft Madrileña lips.

To murmur love, sweet as the flower, where sips
The amorous bee ; in councils, stern, austere,
But when hate floods the heart, or foes appear,
How thy fierce Moorish gutturals sting like whips !

Language of varied charm, whene'er I hear
Thy laughing vowels, they invoke the grand
And babbling turmoil of Granada's mart.
But when thy graver accents strike my ear,
I see Columbus, praised by Ferdinand,
Explain with beaming eyes an unknown chart.

GREEK.

Sonorous tongue, thy broad and unctuous speech
Sounds like soft summer winds through spicy trees,
Or like the languid splash of idle seas
That kiss the luminous sand on Nauplia's beach.

Fit for a god in prayer, in love to teach
Warm, amorous hearts serenest mysteries,
Thy beauty blossomed in Demosthenes,
And placid Plato could thy glories reach.

Yea, even in tame, degenerate Romaic,
Thy primal grandeur still augustly flows,
And wondrous sounds of melody awake
Visions of sun-kissed Archipelagoes,
Where hoary Homer, for the future's sake,
Sang his grand Iliad of sublimest woes.

FRENCH.

Color and grace adorn thy simplest word ;
Dainty as rhyme thy light, coquettish ease,
From lips of saucy *gamin* or *marquise*,
Seems like the twitter of some joyous bird.

By all adored, to every tongue preferred,
Delicate, brilliant, made to flash and please,
Thy hidden powers and subtle harmonies
By peerless Gautier in his dreams were heard.

But when thy welcome sounds I hear, my mind
Recalls those gay cafés, where Dumas *père*,
Reveled in wit, puffing his cigarette.
Or, by bold fantasy, myself I find
Once more a student, on a garret stair,
Chattering inanely with some pert grisette.

TEMPERAMENT.

A cruel despot reigned ; each living thing
Shuddered before him ; in his vast domains
Hundreds of suffering wretches died in chains ;
The land was weary of their clamoring.

He loved to see wild hands in anguish cling ,
His heart was shut to pity and to pains,
While death made riot in his city's lanes,
Reigning with him, a dreaded, mightier king.

Then came upon the land a blighting blow ;
All that had blossomed on the fields was swept
Skyward by tempests in their outraged power ;
For dreary months no shrub was known to grow,
And it was told that this harsh tyrant wept
When pressing to his lips one withered flower !

ENVY.

The imperious sun, grown sullen by great heat,
Holds in its mighty heart of light and fire
A wild and uncontrollable desire,
That night can soothe not, nor can time abate.

Dead æons numberless have seen it wait.
Haughtily patient in its awful ire,
Hopeless, alas ! yet striving to aspire
To goals impossible, as deaf as Fate.

Had it the power to merit one sweet boon,
Gladly it would forever in gloom eclipse
The glorious Heaven of light that in it glows,
For it is fain to silver, as did the moon,
Juliet's delicious and ecstatic lips,
When resting flower-wise upon Romeo's.

SONNET.

I can not love the myriad flakes of snow
That fall so gently over mead and moor ;
To my spleen-fostered mind they are too pure ;
Their white, chaste secrets I can never know.

Dark tides of discontent within me flow ;
Such rare perfection I can not endure.
That which delighteth the untutored boor
Leaves me despondent, and I fain would go

To some far tropic land where insolent flowers,
Gorgeously colorful, bloom but a day,
Where deadly perfumes scent the torrid air,
And where, like my strange thoughts, in snaky bowers
I could see Nature in superb decay
Be beautifully rank and foully fair.

TYLL OWLGLASS.

OBÛT 1530.

Like some mad meteor plunging through the dark
 Abysmal vastness of the silent night,
 Leaving a smoky trail of scintillant light
Behind, its weird and luminous route to mark,

So didst thou thro' the Middle Ages cark ;
 And thy rare humor and thy jesting bright
 Dispelled the gloom of men, who, awed by fright,
Prayed for the dawn of which *thou wast the lark!*

From that grim, tyrant-haunted, monkish time
 Of superstition, bigotry and ill,
 No kindlier record would have reached our ears
Than one long, dolorous tale of blood and crime,
 Had it not been for thee ! And we hear still
 Thy mellow laughter ebbing through the years !

FALSE WORSHIP.

Born in the deep, black hollow of a mine,
Nursed by weird songs that thrilled my wondering soul,
I lived amid vast labyrinths of coal,
Taught that, above, God reigned in light divine.

My mother told me, with soft words benign :
“ Of Earth’s great mystery thou wilt know the whole,
The blooming buds and trees will be thy goal,
A paradise of beauty will be thine.”

Ah ! sad, prophetic promise ! When she died,
And, even to my impatient mind, too soon,
I climbed, in trembling, to the Earth’s green sod,
And it was night ! Marveling, unsatisfied,
I saw the flawless splendor of the moon,
And swooning, cried in terror, “ This is God ! ”

ENIGMA.

My bosom bounds with rapturous fate elate ;
Youth in its spring stirs gently thro' my veins ;
Consciously strong, I fear no future pains ;
My sinless soul as yet knows naught of hate.

Unyielding, I can bear life's onerous weight,
Scorning the anger it for me retains ;
But, ah ! I dread the woman whom Fate ordains
To make me vile among all men, or great.

The awful query ever thrills my lips :
Shall the rich virgin treasures of my heart
Be given to some chaste creature, lily-frail ;
Or shall my soul, plunged down in dark eclipse,
Be lured to ruin by the infernal art
Of some white Eve-like harlot, passion pale ?

DELUDED.

I pity all whose superstitions need
Perpetual prayer vague terrors to allay ;
Poor trembling bigots who, till they turn gray,
Place fervent trust in some unworthy creed.

Dreading a phantom hell, they meekly plead,
The crafty priest religiously obey,
And think by genuflections night and day,
That God will for their frailties intercede !

Fools ! when the world is but an atom rolled
Amid the starry vastness of dim space,
This vain and miserable human chaff,
With confidence derisive to behold,
Dreams that to Heaven ascend its cries for grace,
And can not hear God's cold, contemptuous laugh.

A WISH.

It would be sweet to leave the joys of earth,
And all the crowded ways that men invade,
To seek the depths of some mysterious glade,
Untrodden since the universe had birth ;

To hear the wild birds fill with twittering mirth
The solemn elms, and in the twilight shade
Muse on the Power Supreme that all things made,
And with conflicting thoughts dispute His worth.

Yea, and to taunt this mighty Force unknown
With skeptic scorning and a cynic sneer,
Deeming His awful silence a disgrace ;
To doubt, and challenge Him upon His throne,
In tones accusative to teach me fear,
And then to suddenly meet Him, face to face !

OVERGROWTH.

God spoke to haggard Death : “ I bid thee cease
Thy grim destruction of unnumbered years,
For I am weary of my creatures’ tears ;
Until I call thee, go thy way in peace.”

And haughty Death, though scorning such release,
Obeyed ; while millions on the ample spheres
Marveled to see, with many doubts and fears,
Humanity in wondrous ways increase.

Until, grown sure of life, all men disdained
The Mighty’s boon and dreamed, in impious pride,
That they with immortality were blessed.
Then God in wrath called Death with power regained,
And suddenly the vile Earth, terrified,
Shrieked in the awful agonies of Pest !

WHEN THE SNOW FALLS.

The spider Spleen, that slowly and subtly weaves,
Its odious web upon my golden thought,
Left no foul hint forgotten or unsought
To taint a swerving soul that doubts and grieves.

My faith, once strong, is now like withered leaves
In the chill vortex of a tempest caught,
And, by the artful world's vile lessons taught,
I know that smiling chastity deceives.

There is no purity on earth, I cried ;
Gold of a virgin can a plaything make ;
There lives no stainless thing save burning fire !
While the pure snow upon the lowlands wide,
God's silent answer, fluttered as I spake,
But nothing proved ; the sun will make it mire.

INCONSISTENCY.

Once in the chancel of a church austere,
Upon the illumined altar-steps I prayed,
While near me knelt, in somber garb arrayed,
Hosts of repenting sinners thrilled with fear.

Without, the tempest swept by, swift and drear,
When suddenly a fiery and livid blade
Of lightning struck the shining spire, and laid
Its Gothic beauty shattered far and near !

And then the germs of doubt dawned in my soul,
Why, if God lived within this house to know
That suppliant bowed and dared to Him aspire,
Did He, with wrath and wondrous uncontrol,
Strike it to dust with His infuriate blow,
And mar its majesty with avenging fire ?

ORIGINALITY.

Once, as I pondered o'er strange books and sought
From secrets of the past some knowledge new,
Within my laboring mind there sudden grew
The perfect germ of a stupendous thought !

No bizarre brain as yet had ever wrought
This odd, weird wonder into shape, and few
Could from the store of fancy bring to view
A whim to equal this, to me untaught !

I hailed its brilliant advent with delight.

But, as I dreamed, I heard a sad voice say :

“ *I, who am living in a spirit home,*

With the *same thought* that pleasures thee to-night

Charmed grim Tiberius on a festal day,

And made tumultuous laughter roar through Rome ! ”

THE EARTH SPEAKS.

For years unnumbered I was pure and fair ;
When God created me to move in space,
His peerless smile was mirrored in my face,
There was a glory on me everywhere.

My mantle was of flowers and blossoms rare,
My gardens bloomed with an undying grace ;
Of dark decay there was no blighting trace,
Death of my bosom's riches had no share.

But then, alas ! man in his weakness came,
Upon me lived and loved, and wept and smiled
Perishing swiftly as he swiftly spread,
While I, all-pure, to my eternal shame,
Was by his crowded carrion defiled,
And filled each day with foul and sheeted dead !

SATISFACTION.

Men, tranced by beauty, pause and gaze upon
The azure-starred sublimity of night,
Or watch with moods of wondering delight
The shifting clouds that veil a dying sun.

They think of all the good the Lord hath done
In the stern calm of His eternal might,
And hardened sinners marvel at the sight
Of luminous spheres that move since time begun.

Ravished and mute, with eager eyes, they stand,
Feeling new awe within their spirit blend,
And of unending praise their lips are loud,
While, far above them, infinite and grand,
God hears this homage to the throne ascend,
And of His work is insolently proud.

THE IDOL.

STATUE OF VENUS, A.D. 500.

The fickle throngs of Rome no more adore
My haughty grace in these degenerate days,
But guard their genuflections and their praise
For one who preached upon a distant shore.

This Christus, whom they worship evermore,
Could cure all ills, they say, and He could raise
The buried dead themselves in wondrous ways,
And lull the sullen tempest's fiercest roar.

All this may be, but there will come a time
When He, the Master who was crucified,
Will be abjured by all and worshiped never ;
While I, in my mute majesty sublime,
Will still tower o'er them in my marble pride,
And be adored forever and forever !

SLEEP'S REGRET.

I, who am called the soother of all ill,
Who by all mortals am supremely blest,
Begin by strange misgivings unconfessed
To doubt the power my sweet task to fulfil !

For no nepenthean kiss of mine can still
The angry fevers of a suffering breast ;
Soaring Ambition scorns my proffered rest,
And haggard Grief defies my puissant will.

Divinely great, yet sadly incomplete,
I strive to quell my rage and not despair
When tortured flesh rebels at my soft breath ;
But all in vain ! I such resistance meet
That, balked and bitter, I wander elsewhere,
While grimly beckoning to my brother, Death.

A WOMAN'S WHIM.

Utterly weary of these modern creeds,
That hail the pain and passion of a cross,
My doubting soul, that finds in them but dross,
A far more grand and glorious worship needs.

This sempiternal God, that pants and bleeds
To save mankind, can locks all gory toss,
Thorn-crowned, superb, but I feel not His loss ;
Such useless martyrdom to my sense ne'er pleads.

Mahomet's cult, like Manitou's, is tame ;
Brahma and Buddhâ teach no lofty things ;
I see a God that can their powers eclipse,
And long in some wild chaos of sacred flame
To seek sweet shelter under Satan's wings,
And kiss all hell upon his perfect lips !

JEALOUSY.

Satan, an angel once in realms divine,
The loved and chosen of God by his sweet grace,
Dwelt with Him in miracles of space,
And worshiped with the hosts before His shrine.

But latent thoughts of perfidy malign,
Dusked the strange glory of his perfect face,
And God, who light in his dark soul could trace,
Hurled down to Hell the sinner saturnine !

Though stricken and ired, he did not then despair,
Grimly remembering how he once implored
And won, by haughty mien and accent proud,
The love of that vague creature, grandly fair,
Whose awful beauty Heaven itself adored,
And before whom God as a suppliant bowed !

FEAR.

The being supreme, that universes call
God ; He who made us in His matchless might ;
God, who exists in love, and song, and light,
Whose august name can doubting souls appall,

Disdains the humble homage of us all,
Weak, puny motes His fiery glaive can smite,
And scorns our prayers as age to age takes flight,
While the frail earth before Him bows, a thrall !

For he is tortured by intolerant dread !
The dismal knowledge of *superior* powers
That could annihilate him with a breath,
Thrills and dismays him, while, uncomforted,
Among his myriad stars he trembling cowers,
Filled with the unutterable fear of Death !

ULTIMA THULE.

My fancy shuns all fair historic land ;
 No white Alhambra, vested by orange trees,
 Or laughing Como, can my sorrow please ;
For me Greece is not fair, Rome is not grand.

Merry with birds and buds, each sunny strand
 That I behold can no regret appease,
 And I am mute before the glory of seas
That kiss green shores where marble temples stand.

I seek the landscape of my dreams, a spot
 Scorched barren by the lightning's lurid blight,
 Alike by timorous man and beast unsought,
Where stars, and sun, and hope, and God are not,
 And where the sad, unalterable night
 Is dark and desolate as my every thought.

SONNET.

TO —.

The vague and vestal beauty of thine eyes
Recalls the splendor of some Cuban night,
Where tropic storms, pulsing with golden light,
Hurl dizzy flashes through dark voids of skies !

The trustful look of sweet Actæa lies
Within their starry depths, that lure and smite
The souls of men who scorn all woman's might,
And, seeing them, marvel in supreme surprise.

Ah ! when those eyes before me burn and shine
In soft perfection, I can understand
White Aphrodite's glance half blurred by foam,
And how Cleopatra, pearl-crowned and divine,
Gazed upon Antony in her passion grand,
When for her sake he spurned Imperial Rome !

CURIOSITY.

The patient stars that, luminously strong,
Lavished on earth their sad, reluctant light,
The sullen sun doomed to be ever bright,
The weary moon we rhapsodize in song,

Will cry aloud some day : "What unknown wrong
Have we committed in Thy august sight,
O God most just, omnipotent and right ?
How long must we now serve Thee, ay, how long ?

"We weary of the ceaseless flow of years
That bring no change, and we are fain to die,
Born with the essence of the faith that saves."
Then, echoing through the voids of endless spheres,
A hollow voice of thunders will reply :
"Peace, wretched atoms, know that ye are slaves !"

EMBARRASSMENT.

Gaunt wreckers watch the wintry coast at night ;
The tempest rages in the outward gloom ;
Rough men are praying unto God to doom
A vessel struggling with the ocean's might.

Crowded and kneeling in supreme affright
Upon the fated ship, a floating tomb,
Vast, helpless throngs are seen when lightnings lume,
Beseeching God for salvatory light !

And He in highest Heaven doth hear these prayers
Offered by every soul with voice sincere,
Who for his sentence in distraction waits,
And He, environed by a million cares,
Looks on the scene of triumph and of fear,
Uplifts His judging hand, and—hesitates !

GOD'S ENNUI.

I am the Lord and Master over all ;
In me the essence of creation lies ;
I *will*, and from dim chaos life will rise ;
The comets at my bidding pass or fall.

I awe the timid spheres ; my whims appall
The wondering stars that beautify the skies,
And the dull insect, man, who cowers and cries
Upon the earth, gives homage at my call.

But weary of my unquestioned powers I grow,
Feeling at times that I could gladly see
The worlds I have created swoon and fade,
Annihilated by a single blow ;
And then again I often long to be
The lowliest worm that I have ever made !

DISCONTENT.

Roses may weary of their suave, rare scent ;
If the apparent azure of the sky
Were really fair, would white clouds hurry by ?
The songs of birds may be for Death's ear meant.

The brook perchance may moan its discontent,
And tremulous leaves wave litanies, to try
In these mute ways to move the power on high,
And by such sad appeal make God relent !

If Nature grieves, supremely unsatisfied,
Waiting in vain the paradise of decay,
I will not in life's desert, seeing this wrong,
Spaniel to unjust powers and please their pride,
Having no heart to sing their praise away,
I, who am crushed, poor Ishmael of song !

WORSHIP.

I, faithful, can not in a God believe
Who in majestic ways will be revered,
When I am dead and shall have disappeared,
Before whose altars men unborn will grieve.

To *my* God giving, from Him I would receive,
I being in jealous moods and fashions reared,
And crave to pray to One divinely feared,
One unto whom, when timorous, I can cleave.

If such be worshiped by the common throng,
To me It is not God, for I desire
Some Thing immense, omnipotent, alone,
Some Vagueness nameless in my feeble song ;
Some Power of splendor, fury and of fire,
Some mystic Wonder to the world unknown.

SONNET.

I once could weep when women wept ; their tears
Whether of joy or pain, or love for me,
Moved all the meekness of my soul ; for fears
And terrene guiles had spared me ; I was free

And pure of holiest thought, yet young in years.
My lips breathed freshness and its sympathy.
The coreless skeleton of Time now leers
Upon the threshold of my soul. I see

Callous, indifferent, scenes of blood and crime,
The poor despair, the wicked upward climb ;
My trusts in love and youth I long have spurned,
My sinning life-tides slowly Deathward creep,
But Oh ! how has my skeptic spirit yearned
To shed one simple tear when women weep !

SONNET.

I fain would find the home my sorrows crave,
A rocky shelter in some chill, still spot :
Live, cenobite estranged, within a grot—
Near sombrous firs ; where Alpine tempests rave—

With roots to suck, and hot raindrops to lave
My thirst ; secluded, would I live and rot
In drugget foul, glad in my chosen lot—
Though still a boy, to tamper with the grave !

Learn what I know, know what I learned and sought,
Plow through the sterile wilderness of thought,
Muse on the myriad mysteries of old,
Curse every day and hope 't will be my last.
Dream o'er my wishful life, its dreams of gold,
Dream of Eternity—and of the past ! . . .

THE TOWER OF BABEL SPEAKS.

In ways unknown to mortals, I regret
The memory of that grand and haughty hour,
When the symmetric insolence of my tower
Awed the pale heaven that braves my anger yet.

No stone of mine now crumbling can forget
My palm-clad pomp in those sweet days of power,
When my colossal summit made stars cower
And shrink before my awful silhouette.

Oh ! despicable, puny hordes of men !
When I held sky and space within my reach,
What souls had ye thus to be overcome ?
Why did your coward hands desert me, when
Jehovah, in His wrath, had blent all speech ?
Could ye not work, O fools ! though ye were dumb ?

SONNET.

I of a fiend the heart had, thou as God
Good and most lenient, merciful soul-kind,
Forgave my mutiny and rebel mind ;
Aye ! when thy hand could wield the avenging rod,

When at thy will thou couldst have crushed to sod,
(Barren and foul of thought like mine, where blind
I culled the dirt I threw thee, hadst thou pined
To hurl thy 'sdains upon my cringing nod

That all avowed !) yet thou wert nobly good,
As 'neath thy scathing gaze abashed I stood,
Penitent, pallid by fierce shames, but thou
Pardoned me all—my heinous sin and more ;
Does not the yielding wood of sandal bough
Perfume the cruel axe that strikes its core ?

IS LIFE WORTH LIVING ?

If we could rub Aladdin's lamp each day,
And at our palm attentive genii find
To grant our every whim and wish resigned ;
Yea ! could we lure the golden goose to lay

A precious egg that we might keep alway ;
And had we wishing-mantles round us twined,
Or Fortunatus's rare wallet lined,
And youth's elixir to avert decay,—

Then life, perchance, might sweet and pleasant be.
Who knows ? Such magic might delight us much,
Yet we, perhaps, might yearn for something more.
We would find qualms and deem ourselves unfree,
Find life obnoxious to the light and touch,
And dream and doubt, dejected as before !

THE OAK.

When in the stately groves, where thou dost bloom,
I roam and gaze upon thee from below,
I glory in the grandeur thou dost show,
And even my thoughts thy majesty assume.

The storms of ages and the tempests' gloom
Have striven in vain to lay thy glory low,
While starred, serene and wreathed in mistletoe,
Thou giv'st to myriad birds a home or tomb ;

And as I mark thy brown and rugged trunk,
That Gallic lances proudly could defy,
I dream of those dead days in leafy June,
When, with white trailing robes and visage shrunk,
The truculent Druids grimly passed thee by
With bleeding victims haloed by the moon !

FLASKS AND FLAGONS.

WATER.

I HEAR strange voices in the warm, swift rain,
That falls in tumult upon town and field ;
It seems to tell a mystery unconcealed,
Yet hieroglyphic to a mortal's brain.

It sighs and moans as if in utter pain
Of some colossal sorrow, never healed ;
It warns of awful secrets unrevealed,
And every drop repeats the sad refrain.

And then I think of the enormous sea
Fed by these drops, with drifting wrecks bestrewn,
And dimly, vaguely, like a far-off sound,
The meaning of their sorrow comes to me,
For they may be, O rare, considerate boon,
Heaven's humble mourners for the unnumbered
drowned.

BEER.

What merry fairy, O cool, delicious beer,
Gave thee the power through centuries to maintain
A charm that soothes dull care, and laughs at pain ;
A power sad hearts to vitalize and cheer ?

No *blasé* palate of thy drops can fear ;
Once quaffed, lips eager, seek thy sweets again,
Without thee students sing no loud refrain ;
Laughter and mirth depart, be thou not near.

And when I drink thee to my soul's delight,
A vision of King Gambrinus, fat and gay,
Haunts me, and I behold bright tankards shine,
And hear him laugh with many a thirsty wight
And merry maiden, drinking night and day,
In quaint, old, gabled towns along the Rhine.

BASS'S ALE.

Whene'er thy foaming beads attract my lips,
A rapid vision passes o'er my mind
Of strong Cunarders, battling with the wind,
And cosy cabins, and the roll of ships.

I hear the tempest lash the sails like whips,
I see the rigid bow its pathway find
Deep in the night, leaving in sheen behind
A snaky trail of phosphorescent tips.

Or, when thy vigor to the lees I drain,
I, from the belfry of St. Paul's behold
Gigantic London in gray winter hours,
Waiting for drowsy dawn to come again,
While the great sun, veiled in a fog of gold,
Bursts in red glory on her haughty Towers !

GIN.

Grim cicerone of the towns of sin,
From thy rank drops, the germs of crime and lust,
Nurtured by sloth and hatred of the just,
In bestial minds to awful bloom begin.

Dulling all confidence in God or kin,
Thy woeful specter on humanity thrust,
Invokes sad pictures of supreme disgust,
A yelling harlot, or a bagnio's din.

I hear in St. Giles' slums, the dread
And blasphemous cries of ruffians in mad strife,
And, the shocked eye by odious magic led,
Sees in some garret, panting still with life,
A half-starved child clasping a woman, dead,
While o'er them leers a gaunt brute with a knife ! . . .

KÜMMEL.

Thy acrid fumes my laggard sense excite.

There 's war and wrangle hidden in thy heart
That make one's breast with expectation start,
Eager to seek armed enemies to smite.

Thy savor is a danger and delight,

For those of valorous souls, the favorite art,
Thy fire with all mine own becomes a part,
I yearn to battle madly for the right.

And on far Ukraine's snowy steppes I see

Pale, shackled Poles to far Siberia led,
Torn from the gentle pleasance of their homes.
And then I yearn to hasten and to free
Their hands, and trample upon Cossack dead,
Beneath the shade of Nijnii's golden domes !

CURAÇOA.

The memory haunts me, when in cheerful ease
I sip thy sweetness, of a land of balm,
Radiant with bowers and labyrinths of palm,
Far in the warm heart of the Celebes !

The golden orange crowns the swaying trees,
In fertile vales there dwells perpetual calm,
Where the swart hunter, free from any qualm,
Gazes on sultry leagues of dazzling seas.

And then strange fancy leads my spirit back
Unto the toil and tumult of a town,
Noisy with traffic and industrious feet.
I see the cheerless silhouette, dull and black,
Of Rotterdam's high minster of renown,
Or Zaandam's markets lashed by wintry sleet !

VERMOUTH.

Thou canst unbind by potency unique,
The tangled skein of misty souvenirs,
And bring again, defiant of dull years,
The mantling pulse of youth unto the cheek.

Urged by thy warmth, the fancy loves to seek
The roses of a past that disappears,
And by some recollection that endears,
Once more, in charm, forgotten words to speak.

The sunlight of the past will then return,
Warming the soul ; and I, O blessèd boon
And resurrection of the things that fade,
Recall the happy days for which all yearn,
When first I heard on Venice's lagoon,
The soft *adagio* of a serenade !

MARASCHINO.

There is a charm thy essences secrete,
Peopling the mind with many an airy dream,
Until in conscious pleasure it doth seem
Thy perfume hath a soul and can entreat.

So suave unto the sense, so subtly sweet,
That memories of pre-natal beauty teem,
And haunt the ravished brain in ways supreme,
Making our life less dark and incomplete.

I dream of the dim past, but not with pain ;
The suns of dead but resurrected years
Glitter once more on Venice the divine !
I see the town in bridal robes again,
Crowned by the Doge amid his gondoliers,
And eyes like Juliet's, softly seeking mine !

ANISETTE.

How swiftly thou canst dissipate all care,
Sweet Circe of *liqueurs*, when thou dost steal
Our fancies from us, and with subtle zeal
Make life more rosy-tinct and debonair.

There 's merry madness hidden in the air,
Gay as the *refrain* of a Vaudeville,
When the sweet sorcery, thou canst ne'er conceal,
Lures us to gentle laughter everywhere.

Thy very name makes resurrect to me
The shadowy past of bygone student days ;
The *guignols*, aye, the gay cafés, and lo,
The blooming fires of youth that used to be,
And kisses stolen in delicious ways,
Beneath the ancestral oaks of Fontainebleau !

ABSINTHE.

Whence comes thy fatal, fascinating charm ?
Thy fumes are sharp, dire as Medusa's tears,
In thy green depths a tempting demon leers,
Leading the victim on without alarm.

Thy trait'rous poison makes the senses warm ;
Dull minds, grown vivid, grasp the distant spheres ;
But, ah ! the sad reaction, when the tears
Of madness flow, when maniac fancies swarm !

To me, thy glorious Lethe ever shows
Some godless wretch, with haggard eyes and pale,
Seeking the shame of brutal bagnios.
Or, mixed with powder, when all else doth fail,
I see thee make impetuous Zouaves scale
Stern Malakoffs that teem with countless foes !

AMONTILLADO.

When thy inspiring warmth pervades my frame,
I see the smiling Guadalquiver stray
Through Andalusia's fields of endless May,
Crowned by the ripe wheat like a golden flame.

The *majos* sport in many a wanton game
At the soft setting of the ardent day,
And in the Alameda's shadows gray,
Fond lovers murmur their delicious shame.

And then again, the vision will arise
Before me, of the worn Campeador
Draining thy fire beneath the Alhambra's stars,
While with fierce Moslem-valor in their eyes,
I see bejeweled Caliphs, red with gore,
Battle to death in moated Alcazars !

KIRSCH.

The mysteries of the Schwarzwald in thee dwell !
Thou must be made in hidden fairies' homes,
Deep in dim glades, where, in the midnight roams
The sable Huntsman on his ride to hell !

Thy drops must aid red witches to foretell
Their awful secrets in unholy tomes,
And in the haunted dusk, the limping gnomes,
Meeting near somber firs, must know thee well.

To me, thou art associate ever more
With beldames' legends of the weird, blue Rhine,
Where white and wanton nixes bathe themselves.
I see thee luring travelers to the shore,
While in the gloomy forest near them shine
The lurid eyes of hell-obeying elves !

LAMBIC.

Lips that first taste thy asper charm are shy ;
Thou art not lightly wooed to prove a friend,
But, when all hesitations surely end,
How finely, fully, dost thou satisfy !

The sturdy essences that in thee lie,
With fumes tumultuous to the brain ascend,
And with a Herculean vigor rend
All lingering doubts and force their passage by.

And when I drink thee in some gabled inn,
Deep in the alleys of a Flemish town,
While buxom villagers around me romp,
I hear old, garrulous crones again begin
The story all of wonder and renown,
That still keeps green the laurels of Van Tromp !

BRANDY.

Thy mighty power stirs up the sluggish blood
To craft and cunning and rejuvenate fire.
And fills again with raptures of desire
The failing sense that drowns in amour's flood.

The spirit's song, freed from our carnal mud,
Then soars supreme, and grandlier doth aspire,
And with new vigor that can never tire,
The flowers of fancy burst within the bud.

In nobler ways, even yet, thou prov'st thy might,
When soldiers, strengthened by thy drops of flame,
Forget their gory wounds in frantic zeal,
And with high souls all thrilling for the fight,
Assault dread bastions for their country's fame,
And lead their flags thro' labyrinths of steel !

TOKAI.

A glass of thy reviving gold to me,
Whether or no my dreamy soul be sad,
Brings souvenirs of lovely Vienna, glad
In her eternal summer-time to be !

I hear, in joyous trills, resounding free,
The waltzes that the German fairies bade
The souls of Strauss and Lanner, music mad,
Compose, to set the brains of worlds alee.

And in the Sperl, dreaming away the sweet
Of pleasant life, and finding it all praise,
Dead to the past and scorning Death's surprise,
I see in calm felicity complete
Some fair Hungarian Jewess on me gaze,
With the black glory of Hebraic eyes !

CHAMBERTIN.

The blackest skies are bright when thou art near ;
Pain is a myth, and sorrow a refrain ;
Life, blood and vigor spurtle in each vein,
And even the lurking tomb is no more drear.

The joyous heart knows naught of Autumn's sere,
In woman's kiss there is no hidden bane ;
The monarch of the land deserves his reign,
The poor have rubies and all life is dear !

Alas, 't is but a dream ; yet, from thee came
The prowess of Napoleon the Great,
Who loved thee while his conquered foes did yield.
From thee was born fierce Borodino's flame,
Jena's stupendous charge of deathly hate,
And the red ruin of Marengo field !

GEISENHEIMER.

Thy laughing gold could steal the sense away
From gravest counselors and statesmen stern,
And with thy haunting redolence could learn,
The secrets of a Bismarck or Fouché.

Hearts closed by giant will would thee obey
And babble gayly, aye, to prate would burn,
Guilt would confess beyond all life's return,
And naked truth would revel for a day.

Therefore I dread thy cunning, and with care
Content myself with dreams when thou art near,
Checking the idle word that idly slips,
For by thy charm, who knows, when unaware,
I might divulge the name I hold most dear,
And all the passionate secrets of her lips ?

BÉNÉDICTINE.

Born in the cloistral solitude and gloom
Of gray La Trappes and monasteries drear,
Distilled between the Matin mass austere
And drearier Vespers, thou dost humbly bloom.

The damp, chill crypts a lighter guise assume,
And, with thy soothing perfume, disappear
Grim thoughts of death and of diurnal fear,
While rosy glammers hover o'er the tomb !

And when I sip thy cloying sweets, they bring
A faith, not wholly lost, unto my heart ;
I trust again the twitter of the birds ;
Sweet voices as of angels to me sing,
And strengthened, holier, I can live apart,
Finding new beauty in the Saviour's words.

RUM PUNCH.

The world to give thee lasting fame combines,
Jamaica sends thee sugar-cane, o'er seas ;
And pungent spices from the Antilles
Lend thee the perfumes of the southern vines.

France gives the crimson sorcery of her wines,
Mongolia lavishes her yellow teas,
And to endower thee with rare mysteries,
Sicily yields her lemons and sweet pines.

Thou dost recall to me days debonair,
And visions of the Quartier Latin, where,
Chatting around thy bluish spectral light,
Insouciant students and alert grisettes
Drank thee while puffing *régie* cigarettes,
Mocking with merry song the startled night !

CHÂTEAU MARGAUX.

There is a power within the succulent grape
That made thee, stronger than all human power.
It baffles death in its exulting hour,
And leaves its victim fortune to escape.

Thy cheering drops can magically drape
Atrocious thoughts of doom with bloom and flower,
Turning to laughing calm care's torment sour,
And flooding dreams with many a gentle shape.

Ecstatic hope and resurrection lie
In thy consoling beauty, and whene'er
Pale mortals sip thee, bringing soothing peace,
I see a blue and orange-scented sky,
A warm beach blessed by God's untainted air,
Circling the snowy parapets of Nice !

CHARTREUSE VERT.

How strange that thy enrapturing warmth should come
From the chill cloister of the prayerful monk,
To cheer the desolate heart in misery sunk,
And warm the lips that sorrow has made dumb !

Thou bring'st the merry twitter of birds that hum,
The soul's sweet exodus of song, when shrunk,
Expands again, when, all thy sweetness drunk,
Illumes the blood grown impotent and dumb.

And when I see thee, I most fondly dream
Thou must have been the genius and the slave
That led Aladdin in the legend old
Down thro' dim passages to goals extreme,
And in the arcana of a hidden cave
Have shown him marvelous treasuries of gold !

IRISH WHISKEY.

From Cork to Tipperary and Tralee,
There 's been more laughter, jollity and fun
Than yet 's been known beneath the risen sun
In all the world together, born of thee !

Thou bring'st out finely the old Celtic glee,
Yarns, jokes and glorious bulls surpassed by none,
Side-splitting stories, funny when begun,
And at the end one royal mental spree.

And when I drink thee quite alone ('t is rare),
I picture up a host of merry men,
Tasting thy charm and joking without stint,
And recognize the Hoods and Jerrols there
Who, gay and careless, never take a pen,
But cast their gems beyond the grasp of print !

SCOTCH WHISKEY.

How rare is thy rich, passion-giving worth,
When, weary of full many a Scottish mile,
One rests, and stirs thee with a knowing smile
In some dim inn of Edinburgh or Perth.

Gods must have drunk thee at their wondrous birth,
For in thee there is laughter and no guile,
And they, enraptured, from some heavenly aisle,
Perchance have given thee to this sorrowing earth.

For when thou art near, the devil has the pain,
No bitter frown is known, no caustic sneer,
The world on golden axles moves and turns.
And then ring out again, and yet again,
In manly accents, resolute and clear,
The immortal songs and glees of Bobby Burns !

MENTHE.

There is in thee a chill taste of the tomb,
A strange and perfumed warning of decay,
Thou warmest not, and yet thou canst allay,
For a brief span, all fantasies of gloom.

Then does the fancy sadder garb assume,
One wearies of the freshness of the May,
The dead seem nearer and poison the fair day,
On light and feathery clouds there hangs a doom.

I see when thou art near the fresh-dug graves
Of wan consumptives by the North fog spread,
Beside some mournful beach where dull waves curl ;
Or sadder still, when hope no longer saves,
I see some self-slain bankrupt, lying dead
Within the boudoir of a Cora Pearl !

ARRACK.

I see a sultry land of palm and rice
 Haunted by upas and malarial dust,
 Whene'er against the chilling world unjust
I drink thy fire, oblivion to entice.

Vistas of pagan gods of strange device,
 Mysterious worship and atrocious lust,
 Arise and linger, on my memory thrust
With sounds of gongs and burnings of sweet spice.

I see in Java's forests, when the night
 Burns all alive with stars, the savage priests
 Draining thy fire, with fragrant essence oiled ;
I see each motion weird, each awful rite
 When by thee drunk they sacrifice fell beasts
 And dance with cobras on nude bosoms coiled !

PORT.

When unto me they bring, with gentle care,
Thy nectar, sleeping in the cobwebbed flask,
There is no boon of fairy gods to ask
More pain-annihilating or more rare.

The gloomy gray of storm-clouds seemeth fair,
Thou makest light the long day's onerous task,
Uplifted lies life's tedium and its mask,
Light, love and laughter enter everywhere.

And then I see old bankers, flushed with pride,
Converse on politics, and gold, and Pitt ;
But cheerier far, in some dim tavern's nook,
I see in dreams dear Jerrold, by the side
Of glorious Thackeray, listening to the wit
And gay, infectious laugh of Theodore Hook !

CHAMPAGNE FRAPPÉ.

Delicious, effervescent, cold champagne,
Imprisoned sunshine, glorious and bright,
How many virtues in thy charm unite?
Who from thy tempting witchery can abstain?

Sad hearts by *ennui* vexed revive again
When in the frail, green glass thou foamest light,
And by thy spell our sophistry takes flight;
Fair queen of wines, long be thy merry reign.

To me thy sparkling souvenir recalls
Grand Boulevards, all dazzling with the glare
Of countless lights; the revel and uproar
Of midnight Paris and the Opera balls;
A maze of masks! a challenge flung to Care!
And charming suppers at the "Maison d'Or!"

TEA.

From what enchanted Eden came thy leaves
That hide such subtle spirits of perfume ?
Did eyes preadamite first see thee bloom,
Luscious nepenthe of the soul that grieves ?

By thee the tired and torpid mind conceives,
Fairer than roses brightening life's gloom,
Thy protean charm can every form assume
And turn December nights to April eves.

Thy amber-tinted drops bring back to me
Fantastic shapes of great Mongolian towers,
Emblazoned banners and the booming gong ;
I hear the sound of feast and revelry,
And smell, far sweeter than the sweetest flowers,
The kiosks of Pekin, fragrant of Oolong !

CHOCOLATE.

Liquid delectable, I love thy brown
 Deep-glimmering color like a wood-nymph's tress ;
 Potent and swift to urge on Love's excess,
Thou wert most loved in the fair Aztec town

Where Cortes, battling for Iberia's crown,
 First found thee, and with rough and soldier guess,
 Pronounced thy virtues of rare worthiness
And fit by Madrid's dames to gain renown.

When tasting of thy sweets, fond memories
 Of bygone days in Versailles will arise ;
 Before the King, reclining at his ease,
I see Dubarry in rich toilet stand,
 A gleam of passion in her lustrous eyes,
 A Sevres cup held in her jeweled hand !

COFFEE.

Voluptuous berry ! Where may mortals find
Nectars divine that can with thee compare,
When, having dined, we sip thy essence rare,
And feel towards wit and repartee inclined ?

Thou wert of sneering, cynical Voltaire
The only friend ; thy power urged Balzac's mind
To glorious effort ; surely Heaven designed
Thy devotees superior joys to share.

Whene'er I breathe thy fumes, 'mid Summer stars,
The Orient's splendid pomps my vision greet.
Damascus with its myriad minarets gleams !
I see thee, smoking, in immense bazars,
Or yet in dim seraglios, at the feet
Of blond Sultanas, pale with amorous dreams !

LACHRYMÆ CHRISTI.

There is a sadness in thy very name,
Chosen by holy monks in ways unknown.
Thou dost refresh, but, ah ! not that alone,
Dull wormwood lingers in thy ruddy flame.

Made warm by thee, the heart feels full of shame,
The merry birds of jocund thought have flown,
And, as by magic, meditative grown,
The mind no more can peace or pleasure claim.

For then I dream that in departed years,
On Calvary when the dark day was drear,
Shrouded by angry Heaven's supreme eclipse,
Thou, to assuage the suffering Saviour's tears,
Wert brutally tendered on a Roman spear,
In the foul sponge that withered His sweet lips !

PASTELS AND PROFILES.

HENRI DE LA ROCHEJAQUELEIN.

At the Battle of Chemillé, April 11, 1793.

I.

SOLDIERS ! Though yonder fiery flood should swallow me,
I, true, will fight for France,
And when you see me for her sake advance,
Follow me !

II.

Soldiers ! With joy yon deadly squares can thrill me,
I scorn their sabered might,
And should I turn or waver in the fight,
Kill me !

III.

And should a bullet with their corpses range me,
And leave me gashed or dead,
Soldiers, by God's omnipotence o'erhead,
Avenge me !

CALIGULA.

ROME.

Imbecile brute, monster of blood and crime,
A revel of slaughter, infamy and pain,
'T was thy atrocious, grand and impious reign
That soiled the laurels of Cæsar in Rome's shrine.

Yet what a marvelous festal life sublime !
Oceans of gore did the arenas stain ;
With what Imperial pride thou didst disdain,
In rapine, incest, lust, the Fates and Time !

But history, in its calm, impartial page,
Has doomed thy deeds to an undying shame,
But I, a dreamer, doubt the impeccable sage,
And openly avow I love thy name,
For in this vile and more degenerate age,
I find no sinners worthy of thy fame.

CÆSAR.

ROME.

Thy marvelous genius, perfect as the sun,
Gave light and vigor to the Roman gloom ;
Europe to hold thy legions had not room ;
Thy boundless mind craved worlds to overrun.

Thy will that shrank not at the Rubicon,
Could in grave council virtues new assume,
And while thy glory on the earth did bloom,
Proud nations hailed the grand deeds thou hadst done.

Thy clarion name will to all men recall
The lofty soul, the valor undismayed !
We see thee battling 'mid the groves of Gaul,
And when in robes Imperial arrayed,
Near Pompey's threatening marble thou didst fall,
Supremely scorning thy assassins' blade !

PHARAOH.

EGYPT.

Monarch o'er countless leagues of palm and sand,
What are to thee an unknown God's decrees ?
Numberless as thy sphinx's granite gries,
The hosts of Egypt wait thy first command.

Thou scorn'st the plagues that desolate thy land,
The awful darkness and the foul disease ;
With thy first-born clasped dead upon thy knees,
I see thee gaze, inflexible and grand !

Whene'er I hear thy puissant name, I dream
Of tapering obelisks and festal halls,
Bathed by the lotused Nile ; the pomp and awe
Of Phtá's dim temples where gold altars gleam ;
And, beneath Pyramids where the fierce sun falls,
I see pale, haggard Hebrews toil with straw.

ATTILA.

SCYTHIA.

Of Scythian wastes proud undisputed lord,
You led your blue-eyed stalwart Huns, whose cries
Of brutal joy and uncontrolled surprise,
Hailed Rome a vassal to your conquering sword !

But golden ransoms in your coffers poured ;
You that were named the scourge of God, unwise,
Duped by a Valentinian of the prize,
At victory's gates withdrew your impatient horde !

Whene'er my mind is haunted by your name
I see the Roman streets ablaze with light !
Your advent, white-haired senators proclaim,
All is confusion, consternation, fright !
The guard Prætorian buckles for the fight,
And the great city burns with rage and shame !

HAROUN-AL-RASCHID.

ARABIA.

Hail, glorious Caliph of the dear, dead days !
In your domains Art blossomed strong, secure !
Wise were your lips, noble your heart and pure,
Your worthy reign was one of utter praise.

In merchant's garb disguised, with black Mesrou, r,
You threaded lovely Bagdad's inner ways,
To see your people at their tasks and plays,
To guard the innocent and to bless the poor.

Whene'er of your magnificence I dream,
The luminous Orient rises proud and bright.
I see grand Mosques and minarets that gleam,
Saracen warriors rushing to the fight !
Vast, turbaned hosts, banners that wave and stream,
One mighty revel of color, pomp and light !

FREDERICK THE GREAT.

PRUSSIA.

Keen, silky ruse unsheathed your heart of stone,
You hid sharp tiger-claws among your lords.
When soft words failed, with sudden shock of swords,
To gain the prize your arm staked life and throne.

Intolerant Austria, rent by grave discords,
Despised your rising star, and left alone
Her fair Silesian rose, to find it prone,
Ravished and crushed by your invading hordes.

But when in dreams your memory steals to me,
I watch you amid your clamorous dogs repair
To some old, sombre room at Sans Souci,
To play upon the flute a favorite air,
And, by your side, I see, in devilish glee,
The mocking smile and cold sneer of Voltaire !

PETER THE GREAT.

RUSSIA.

Hero of iron, cast in a giant's mould,
Thy brow was formed for crowns, thy hands to sway,
From Finland to the Caspian's waves, and weigh
The destinies of nations young and bold.

Knight, warrior, statesman, genius uncontrolled,
Profound in council, reckless in the fray,
Thy soul prophetic doubted not the day
When thy trained legions toward Pultava rolled.

And when I ponder on thy mighty deeds,
Majestic visions float before mine eyes,
Of dismal, blood-stained steppes and burning homes,
Swedish hussars falling from maddened steeds,
And all the clash of steel 'mid conquering cries
Beneath great Kremllins and Byzantine domes !

CHARLES XII.

SWEDEN.

The star that glittered on thy natal day,
 Illumed thy path and taught thee to succeed ;
 It led thy legions on, impetuous Swede,
O'er Polish snows to conquer and to slay.

It followed thee unto that gloomy way,
 Where Norse and Goth made the dark Neva bleed,
 And where the Russian sceptre, like a reed,
Was snapped in Narva's desolating fray.

But northern mists then veiled it from thy sight ;
 Thou didst not see the Czar's advancing hordes ;
Giant ! before thou couldst turn back to smite,
 With riot of cannon and with clash of swords,
Thy great star, glittering in the Norway night,
 Fell with a shudder in the frozen fjords !

MONTEZUMA.

MEXICO.

Imperial Aztec, lord of valleys, where
Proud Tenochtitlan's palaces and bowers,
Girt by chinampas of delicious flowers,
Rose in white symmetry in the sunlight fair,

You failed to guess the crafty Spaniard's snare,
You lacked a faith in Quetzacoatl's powers,
And so your people perished in the showers
Of leaden hail because you would forbear !

Whene'er your name, poor martyr, meets mine eye,
I see, in revels of carnage and of pain,
Slate maquahuitls thud and oak bows strain,
And hear of Cortes the victorious cry,
While o'er the grim burnt teocallis fly
The torn, emblazoned bannerets of Spain !

CHRISTINA.

SWEDEN.

A wondrous Queen wert thou all men will own,
Proud scion of the grim, old, troublous Norse ;
Whether in robes of state, or on thy horse
Leading men battleward, thy genius shone.

Thy soul patrician yearned not for a throne,
But bloomed for Art and Lore, and found new force
When, leaving icy realms without remorse,
It sought the joys of Italy alone.

Yet wise men say thy abdication's shame
Was fear-inspired and that by danger pressed
Thou spurnedst the crown ! but history will proclaim
That thy pure, regal blood no dread confessed.
Let men who doubt, look to thy queenly name
Signed with a sword in Monaldeschi's breast !

RICHARD III.

ENGLAND.

Miraculous genius, grasping at the whole !

Gossiping history calls you cruel, mad.

Was not your hump enough to make you bad,
Politic despot? Aye, with bitter soul,

You played a grand and most stupendous rôle ;

 Numbing your secret nature, good and glad,

 To juggle with crowns as does with stones a lad,
And wade through blood to a stupendous goal !

Brave, cunning, reckless, on broad Bosworth field,

 Where red swords gleamed, when Death claimed you his own,
You did not falter, Richard, nor did yield,

 Or hear again the smothered princes' moan.

No victim-ghosts before your mind's eye reeled.

 What your grand soul regretted was a throne !

HENRY VIII.

ENGLAND.

The Tower looms grim, see of your reign the fruit,
Vile king ! an hapless folk is doomed to flame,
You hear the oak pyres burn, the royal name
Gains by such needless anguish no repute.

Bigoted fool, seed of a bigot root,
Do you not hear the tortured victims claim
Another throne in hell for you, of shame
Fit for your carrion ! soulless, sceptered brute ?

You cared but little for a dead man's bones.
Meseems, through history's mists, they gave no pain,
But should you deem your butcher prayer atones
For all the slaughter of your impious reign,
Remember, King, pale Howard's dying groans ;
Think of the axe that smote poor Ann Boleyn.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

ENGLAND.

Poor foolish virgin that foreswore Love's creeds
While a warm harlot heart throbb'd strong with lust,
Uncloy'd, it sour'd thy bosom with mistrust,
Prompting thy mind to base and cruel deeds.

With limitless power, vast as thy jealous greeds,
Thine iron hate no sympathy could rust,
When thy hand, tremulous with rage unjust,
Doom'd Mary's beauty in pale widow weeds.

Horrible proof of thy despotic power,
I see the heated steel for suffering backs ;
Whene'er I think of thee, the sullen Tower
Looms up thro' winter fogs—I hear the racks
Creak for fresh victims at the fatal hour,
And dream of Essex and a shining axe.

MARIE STUART.

SCOTLAND.

Sweet, prayerful martyr of the sullen days,
When grim old London lingered in the gloom
Of frowning gibbets and of pyres, whose blaze
Was fed by flesh, and when the Tower-bell's boom

Rang forth a knell lugubrious thro' dark ways !
When love, and sin, and crime found one same tomb,
Remember, Queen, thy odious, hurried doom,
Hath found in history an avenging praise.

The cold, sharp axe that smote thy regal head
Sundered not with it thy poetic breath,
For, thro' long ages that have waned and fled,
We guard thy name that ne'er will know of death,
While thy pure blood still spatters with its red,
The hideous wrinkles of Elizabeth !

MARY TUDOR.

BLOODY MARY.

O heartless queen, as orthodox as chaste,
Didst thou not weary of the famine-fire
Fed with sad martyr flesh that dared aspire
Only to gracious God ? whose pangs disgraced

Thy dawning reign, and for all time effaced
The glorious deeds and valor of thy sire ?
Wert thou of Nero blood that could not tire
To view foul slaughter on a desolate waste ?

Whene'er I think of thee, I see grim men,
Masked to the chin, within the Tower-hall stand.
Thy cherished Philip was morose again. . . .
Spurned British lioness, in thy fury grand,
I watch thee sign death-warrants with swift pen,
And doom a life with one wave of thy hand.

CHARLES V.

SPAIN.

Your steel-clad hosts, eager to conquer spheres,
O'er Flemish snows and desert sands unfurled
The banner of Spain, tattered and torn and curled,
Floating in glory through unnumbered years.

Your look was flame, your very name bred fears ;
Within your hand trembled the shackled world,
And Europe's chaos by your will was hurled
Back into symmetry with a thousand spears.

Statesman and conqueror, soldier, prince, we own
That you were born to curb, command and crush,
But when I summon you, to my mind alone,
One glorious act of yours will ever rush,
When, with great Titian, heedless of your throne,
You knelt to pick up his immortal brush.

PHILIP II.

SPAIN.

The Escorial frowns upon the great blue night,
O king, thou standest there, in calm, alone !
What do thy sad thoughts tell the listening stone ?
Do not the phantoms of thy youth's delight

Loom up and haunt thee ? I can hear thee moan
And gnaw thine ashen lips with creeping fright ;
Philip, the shades that flit before thy sight,
Are they of friends that perished for thy throne ?

No, no, tho' hidden by thy granite's gloom,
Faces more hideous haunt thy mind and stay. . . .
Not they who in battle found an honored tomb,
Not they who died in Indias far away,
The souls that haunt thee, thou, thyself, didst doom
To die in fire at thine Auto-da-fé !

CHARLES I.

ENGLAND.

Son of the haughty, antique Stuart stock,
Aristocratic in such fatal ways,
Thy people saw no new and pleasant days
Dawn by thy rule ; unyielding as a rock.

To grant just laws thy impatient soul would shock ;
Alas ! thou couldst not delve thro' treachery's maze,
Nor lull in time the Revolution's blaze
That lit thy royal pathway to the block.

I see thee in that court of high repute,
Gazing upon thy judges in surprise,
Switching with careless hand thy Spanish boot,
Scorning the mob's foul jibes and angry cries ;
While lo ! behind an arras, hidden and mute,
Stern Cromwell watches thee with lurid eyes !

CHARLES II.

ENGLAND.

A gay and brilliant court makes sport of care ;
A merry monarch revels with his kin ;
Delicious, flower-like women bloom within
Proud, stately halls, that teem with paintings rare.

Rochester, wigged and curled, has striven to win
The royal smile, while, young and debonair,
Charles smooths his favorite spaniel's flossy hair,
And jests behind a screen with pert Nell Gwynn.

Without, the sad town slumbers mute and dire ;
The fleets of Holland in the gray Thames rest ;
A starving people, mad by woe and ire,
Breathe the foul air still haunted by the pest,
And hear, with blanched cheeks and hearts oppressed,
Grave, ominous bells of brass that warn of fire !

FRANCIS I.

FRANCE.

A dazzling banquet-hall at Rambouillet,
A gold-crushed board flowing with spice and wine,
On silk and gems and burnished armor shine
The love-lit eyes of Diane de Poitiers.

From cups Cellini-chiseled, proud and gay,
The king quaffs deep unto their rays divine,
And while composing his rondel's last line,
Laughs at the ribald jests of Triboulet.

.
The field of Pavia glitters with the slain,
A king is there, by tides of foemen tossed,
His reeking glaive cleaveth thro' casque and brain,
A hundred lances on his breast are crossed,
While bleeding and weak he cries with pride and pain,
"All but my knightly honor now is lost!"

FRANCIS II.

FRANCE.

Your cruel mother, fiend of rack and rope,
Blood-bathed your crown, for she divined your reign
Would be but brief, a turmoil and a pain ;
Foul superstition gave her soul no hope.

Her necromancers drew your horoscope,
Wooing sad planets, but ne'er sought again,
The Valois star hung heavy on the wane,
And Catherine's will with Fate dared never cope.

But, while she trembled, what cared you, O king !
When life was sweet, tho' stained by bloody blots ;
You had loud right to love the rosy spring,
To shun the church, the mass, the Huguenots,
And you were wise to make good cheer, and sing
The lays of France with your white Queen of Scots.

HENRY III.

FRANCE.

Effeminate King, the gold weight of thy crown
Was far too massive for thy nerveless brows ;
Not in wild war, but in long, lewd carouse,
Did thy misspent reign reap its dull renown.

Thy frizzled pups, the damosels of thy house,
Absorbed thy vagrant thoughts, poor sceptered clown,
And the feigned anger of thy royal frown
Awed not thy *mignons* at their midnight bouse.

When curled and sashed, and in thy raiment dressed,
Thy lean buffoon a nobler mien hath shown,
The antique grandeur of the Valois crest
Gleamed lordlier on his satin than thine own.
He was the king, yet thou didst let his jest
Come with coarse laugh to mock thy very throne.

LAUZUN.

FRANCE.

Pet of a reign unequalled in its splendor,
Supremely beautiful and debonair,
Rich as a Cræsus, witty as Voltaire,
Whose heart before thy grace would not surrender.

Thy haughty court-dames elegantly slender,
Flowers of Versailles, visions of radiance fair,
Were proud to brook thy insolence, and share
The sweet enchantments of thy glances tender.

Of crime or treachery holding no alarms,
Through that grand epoch, pale with love's excesses,
I see thee pass with fascinating charms,
Receiving ever honors and caresses,
From august Louis, or the enamoured arms
Of pert soubrettes and powdered marchionesses.

HENRY IV.

FRANCE.

“ Long live our king, good Harry of Navarre ! ”

Shouted the soldiery through Ivry's heat ;
Thou led'st them on to victory complete,
Proud in the glamour of thy Huguenot star !

Good king, thy glorious deeds immortal are ;
France, old in years, thy memory still doth greet,
And peasants love thy great name to repeat,
Sapient in council, valorous in war.

I see thy Béarn face as histories tell,
Frank, open, winning, resolutely free ;
I see thee armed with helmet and poitreil.
And then again, in thy broad Tuilerie,
I hear thy joyous oath “ Ventre-saint-Gris,”
And see thee kiss thy swan-necked Gabrielle !

CHARLES VII.

FRANCE.

Improvident king that failed to make a mark,
Poor moth that fluttered in the Saxon light,
Heedless of armored foes that burn and smite,
To Honor's voice thy dull ear would not hark !

The valorous deeds of leal Joan of Arc
Rouse not thy dormant energy to the fight ;
The star of France swoons in the sullen night,
Chivalry sleeps, and the dire future 's dark !

Thrice blest be she within whose bosom burned,
The sacred love of liberty, whose spell
Prompted thee on to laurels yet unearned !
Who gave thee power, and her sweet love as well.
Hail to that woman, the world to praise has learned,
Ravishing, white-browed, lofty-souled Sorel !

CHARLES IX.

FRANCE.

The Louvre, guarded to its outer gate,
 Bristles with halberds ; the great culverin
Booms o'er the town ; deep-lunged and desolate,
 The iron tocsin clangs o'er flame and din ;

While thou, pale king, nurtured by gall and hate,
 Pantest within thine alcove, when begin
 The monstrous murders, offspring of thy sin,
Staining with infamy thy crown and state.

On that mad, tigerish night of pain and loss,
 How was thy sleep, King ? Were thine eyes not wet
With fiercest tears as on thy couch didst toss ?
 Didst thou not see, in dreams of vast regret,
A Huguenot Christ nailed to a martyr's cross
 Flooding thy France in drops of bloody sweat ?

LOUIS XI.

FRANCE.

We see thee in thy many-bastioned Plessis,
Tortured by mental pangs beyond all healing,
Abject before thy leaden virgins kneeling,
Praying and weeping as grim death progresses.

Fearing thy son, yet loving his caresses,
Suspicious tyrant, in thy hard heart stealing,
Dawns there no tender thought, no Christian feeling,
For all the guileless folk thy hand oppresses?

Nay, thou hast care but for the crown thou 'rt wearing ;
Pity would rob thy power of its ascendant ;
And still the horrid rack goes on unsparing. . . .
Astounded Death has found a new intendant ;
Touraine resounds with sighing and despairing,
And thou canst count a corpse from each tree pendent.

LOUIS XII.

FRANCE.

Your joyous youth, when heedless of a crown,
Passed amid laughing damosels and flowers,
Awed in grim Plessis, free in Touraine's bowers,
Loving to love, dreading a tyrant's frown !

Man of most nervous beauty and renown,
You knew the torture of eventless hours,
When, from the gloom of Bourge's antique towers,
You, desolate, gazed upon the dismal town.

But fate broke down your bars, and you were king
Of that white, perfect pearl of nations, France,
Loved by its people, lord and liege thereof.
Ah, why, when war by you had lost its sting,
When your sweet life could crush its stern advance,
Why, lecherous graybeard, did you die,—of love ?

LOUIS XIII.

FRANCE.

Thou couldst not bear, with its gigantic weight,
Thy royal father's fame indeed, but thou,
Puniest of kings, heldst on thy sallow brow
The mighty laurels none dared desecrate.

Of Richelieu, puissant in his love and hate,
Who knelt before thee, but who made thee bow
Thy anointed head ; this is thy glory now :
A twirl of scarlet made or marred thy state.

Yet history, lenient in caressing ways,
Tells of lewd courts, where thou wert forced to dwell,
And of thy chastity unto thy praise ;
And no encompassed king loved France so well
As thou didst, and thy foes recall the days
When thy strong glaive hung over La Rochelle.

LOUIS XIV.

FRANCE.

The world recalls thee, monarch, in thy state
And purple pomp of court ; it sees thee stand,
Ermined and blazoned o'er with gold, and grand,
While Europe's princes on thy bidding wait.

Turenne in war baptized thy name as great,
Versailles arose from naught at thy command,
But thou, O king, a scepter in thy hand,
Didst use as bludgeon its imperial weight.

I dream of thy dead reign in other ways,
When thou wert greatly blessed, before a care
Had gloomed thy heart, and see thee, to thy praise,
Gallant and beautiful, with talents rare,
In the sweet, sunny summer of thy days,
Kissing the fawn-like eyes of La Vallière.

LOUIS XV.

FRANCE.

A dream of Watteau was thy merry reign,
Reveling in witty song, gay foe to care ;
Warm was the wine at Folly's feast insane,
That pledged the court-dames' pastel-beauty rare.

Age of the dainty *mouche*, the powdered hair,
Of gallant *abbés*, poodles, balls, chicane,
Of ribbons, intrigues, duels, Parc aux Cerfs,
Fond age of pleasure trampling upon pain.

Thy name, O king, brings to my mind a glow
Of those bright days that ravish and allure ;
I see Dubarry's golden goblet flow
With sparkling foam, like to her wit as pure,
Or I can hear thy *blasé* whisperings, low,
Behind the ivory fan of Pompadour.

LOUIS XVI.

FRANCE.

A livid throng surrounds thy Tuileries,
A famished people, armed with gory spikes,
Treads on the ancient crown of its dislikes,
Rushing upon the palace like great seas,

In untamed fury, and thou hast no dykes
Of steel and cannon to stop men like these !
It needs more lenient treatment to appease
And curb an outraged nation when it strikes !

Poor, helpless king, thou couldst expect no grace
From men who, taunting thee with insults keen,
Resolved thy royal lineage to efface,
And doom thy life, thy court, thy son, thy queen !
Until the crimes of the whole Bourbon race
Were purged in blood upon the guillotine !

TO H. W. LONGFELLOW.

Sonetto composto pel nobile Signor Enrico W. Longfellow, dopo aver letto il suo capo lavoro " Il Ponte Vecchio di Firenze."

SONETTO.

Scritto hai di luoghi al cor Toscano santi,
Dell'Arno e di Santa Maria del Fiore,
D'Amalfi tutta rose ed amaranti,
Di Roma augusta in tutto il suo splendore !

Rifulge Italia d'immortali incanti,
Nei versi che t'inspira ardente il core ;
E le sue glorie, i pregi, i prieghi, i pianti,
Trovano un éco in te sempre d'amore !

E della bella Italia tu sei degno,
Che a te lasciò Petrarca l'armonioso
Pletto d'amor ; Boccaccio il suo sorriso ;
Ma di Danto il sublime e forte ingegno,
Rese il tuo spirito grande e vigoroso,
Nè mai il tuo nome fia dal suo diviso !

MICHAEL DMITRIEVITCH SKOBELEFF.

ОБИИТ 1882.

The lion is dead, and Prussia now can breathe
A little span before her doom draws nigh.
She will not hear thy gallant battle-cry,
Nor will she see thy glittering sword unsheathe.

But thy armed spirit will to the Russ bequeath
Its pristine valor that can never die,
While thy brave grenadiers go hurrying by
Their blades in German carrion to seethe.

Dead art thou not, O warrior! For thy name,
Thy prowess and the memory of thy deeds
Live indestructible through the Czar's domain ;
And, in some murderous battle's din and flame,
'Mid sabered Hessians and bewildered steeds,
Thy turbulent ghost shall find its sphere again !

NAPOLEON II.,
DUKE OF REICHSTADT.

FRANCE.

Dove that found birth within an eagle's nest,
Bauble of circumstance and shifting fate,
Thou wast too young to know thy imperial state,
Before thy marvelous father, foe-oppressed,

Fell like a hero ! And thou hadst not guessed,
In thy sweet, guileless play, that thou wast great,
And that his name, with its gigantic weight,
Upon thy weakness was ordained to rest.

When thou in after years, with tears and pain,
The dazzling records of his deeds supreme,
With all their pomp and splendor, didst peruse,
How must have passed in thy bewildered brain
Fantastic visions, fugitive as a dream,
Of glorious Jenas and dire Waterloos !

TO NAPOLEON.

After Reading Madame de Rémusat's Memoirs.

All carping fools that dream they have grown wise,
Molest thy memory by a puny sneer,
Snake-like, at last, their noisome heads they rear,
And on thy splendor look with jaundiced eyes.

They call thee tyrant in a thousand cries,
While every deed of thine evokes their fear ;
While bowing before thee, wonder of this sphere,
And trembling at a name that never dies.

Ah, let them in their coward stupor prate,
And all the ignorance of their mindlets show,
Unconscious how contemptible they are,
For worlds unborn will claim thy fame as great,
Supreme, unsullied of all minds we know,
Crowned by the glory of thy battle-star !

TO HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

After Reading His Italian Sonnet to the Old Bridge at Florence.

Thou sing'st of lands dear to the Tuscan heart ;
Of peerless Arno glittering in dull gold ;
Of rosy Amalfi, where thy feet have strolled ;
Of Rome's great gloom, or of the Pisan mart ;

In thy rare poesy, as perfect as thine art,
Italy revels in a flawless mold,
And all her prayers and sufferings manifold
Form of thy theme the supreme nobler part.

For Petrarch's spirit from the dimly grand
Vague lapse of centuries has thy fancy moved,
And languid suns Venetian o'er thee steal.
Italia's glory smiles at thy command,
While through thy song, which Dante would have loved,
I hear Boccaccio's silvery laughter peal.

GÉRARD DE NERVAL.

Thy gentle life was one long spirit-dream !
Pale envy on thy white soul left no stain !
Mauger ingratitude, neglect, disdain,
Thou held'st all men in sovereign esteem !

Poor wanderer through the earth's broad ways, thy theme
Was one of utter peace ; thy charming strain
Lulled with delicious balm our mental pain,
Greek in its Art, and in its Faith supreme !

Poet, the muse that such soft accents gave
To this bad world, stronger than antique creeds
Lives in our hearts, where naught her beauty mars.
As thy calm life has been, so is thy grave,
Tranquil and sweet amid the flowers and reeds,
Serene beneath the splendor of sad stars !

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE.

Giant of fancies grand, sun-perfumed soul !
Thy bubbling thoughts held revel in thy brain ;
Thy songs of sorrows sad, mistrusts and pain
In rhythmic harmonies forever roll.

Thy spirit-muse sought out the vivid *whole*
Of vast conceits : it spurned all tare, while grain,
Sweet grain, of wondrous sweetness by it lain
Proves that thy soaring soul attained its goal.

Thou king of voyellous words, of puissant rhyme,
Thy clear eye saw beyond all Night, all Time,
Yet have thy regal musings left no trace.
Dead, thou art still ignored—no welcome nod
Acclaims thy ghost ; few knew thy name or face,
Thou of all poets who could speak with God !

THE MUSKETEERS.

D'ARTAGNAN.

Thou art eternal, tho' the mighty brain
That brought thee forth from shadowland is dead ;
In thee he lives imperishable, wed
To every joy of thine, to every pain.

Thy valiant deeds indelible remain ;
We love thy young, hot blood in battle shed,
And by thy every daring deed are led
More firmly admiration to retain.

Whene'er thy name defiant meets mine eyes,
I see thee hurrying on a foaming steed
With valorous Porthos ripe from war's alarms.
And then again in sadness I surmise
How thy fond spirit must have bled, indeed,
When pressing thy dead Constance in thine arms !

THE MUSKETEERS.

ARAMIS.

Thy heart was one of craft, yet thou wast brave
As steel Castilian ; but ambition's bane
Lurked in the subtle essence of thy brain,
And naught beyond this passion didst thou crave.

Battling for decades by an open grave,
Thou didst not swerve, nor didst thou e'er restrain
Thy mental greeds, thy ceaseless chase for gain,
Which at the end thy comrade could not save.

Ah ! nobler far wast thou on that blue morn,
When Porthos, sinking in a grave of stone,
Fell like a Hercules, no more to rise.
Then, anguished, mute, irresolute, forlorn,
Thy heart lay broken by his dying groan,
And tears surprised the desert of thine eyes.

THE MUSKETEERS.

PORTHOS.

O child-like giant ! in thy massive frame
A heart that grasped the world did nobly beat.
Type of the gallant musketeer complete,
Thy blow was death, thy rapier was a flame !

Pleased with a bauble, a baronnie name,
No fertile plain or castle-crowned retreat
Could stay the riotous rushing of thy feet,
When time for wonderful adventure came !

I see thee battling with a hero's zeal,
Brave in that blessed land where all are brave,
Eager for *estocade* at dawn or gloom ;
And then, again, on pinnacled Belle Isle,
I see the grim, red hell-light of thy cave,
And watch thee die in thy Titanic tomb !

THE MUSKETEERS.

ATHOS.

Thy mind was fit for prehistoric time,
When man was perfect, ere the birth of guile ;
I love the gentle glamour of thy smile ;
I love thy heart beyond all taint or crime.

No passion base e'er touched thee with its slime ;
In thee dwelt radiant honor and no wile ;
And not a thought ignoble could defile
Thy soul, that ever higher seemed to climb !

Whene'er of all thy prowesses I read,
I see thee, grave, before me, with thy wine,
The mellow *vin d'Anjou* thou lov'dst so well ;
And then again, Homeric, on thy steed,
Clearing the foemen with a smile divine,
Below the embattled walls of La Rochelle !

TO VICTOR HUGO.*

IMPROMPTU.

Hail unto thee, grand literary giant !

Great voice that rings among us like a thunder :

Impeccable, unique, without a blunder,

To all in Nature comprehensive, pliant !

In thy rare art, immense and self-reliant,

Thy pure verse rends old crumbling creeds asunder.

Genius supreme, strange and immortal wonder,

We love thy omniscient heart, thy soul defiant !

We love the changes of thy spirit tender,

Serene, majestic bard with grave brows hoary !

The fortress of thy will knows no surrender.

Poet, philosopher of song and story,

Both foe and friend now celebrate thy splendor,

And unborn ages will proclaim thy glory !

* Upon receiving a letter from him.

SONNET.

" Par delà les confins des sphères étoilées."

—BAUDELAIRE.

À GEORGES EDGAR MONTGOMERY.

Poète de vingt ans, intelligence inure,
Tu tends vers l'avenir de suprêmes efforts ;
La Muse t'a légué des accents sains et forts,
Ta prophétique voix chante vibrante et pure.

Malgré les cris moqueurs de la critique obscure,
Aguerrissant ton cœur pour de nouveaux essors,
Tu vas, et l'on presse les merveilleux trésors
Que tu prodigueras un jour d'une main sure.

Comme un aiglon hardi, qui sans fatigue plane
Droit au soleil rêvé, dans le ciel diaphane,
Poursuis ton noble but, et ne regrette pas
La terre infructueuse et ses profonds abîmes !
L'Art luit devant tes yeux :—tu te reposeras
Sur ses sommets radieux, sur ses superbes cimes !

BAUDELAIRE.

Ame puissante en deuil ! Tes haines frémissantes
Ont peuplé ton esprit de sujets monstrueux ;
Les cauchemars affreux de tes nuits effrayantes
Viennent baver leur sang d'un noir enfer hideux.

L'Ennui ronge ton cœur, et les voix éclatantes
Des archanges divins, aux doux yeux radieux,
Ne sauraient t'éloigner de tes noires amantes,
La Mort ! et le Dégout ! poète merveilleux !

Ta Muse, au front rêveur, qui rugit et qui brâme,
Répond en ricanant à ce monde irrité,
Que le "Laid c'est le Beau," que le Laid est une âme,
Et ta rime de feu, pleine d'autorité,
Sait montrer à nos yeux aveugles et rebelles
Que la fange contient choses chastes et belles.

LE MARQUIS DE SADE.

Sublime libertin ! qu'on nomme à tort immonde,
J'admire tes hauts faits ; esclave du désir,
Tu ravageais Paris pour pouvoir assouvir
Tes fières passions, ta verve furibonde.

Pour toi, tout était bon, Marguerite ou Joconde,
Tes sens voluptueux ne savaient point dormir ;
Et, pour un amour vil, un bizarre soupir,
Ton cœur aurait voulu bouleverser un monde !

La douce vierge brune, ou la blonde marquise,
Les catins du trottoir, et les dames d'atours,
Ont reçu tes baisers, Roi de la paillardise !
Frère en péché, merci, de ton secret infâme,
Je sais enfin créer ces sublimes amours,
Qui font vibrer ma chair et rayonner mon âme !

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE.

Je suis émerveillé, ta splendide carrière,
O poète rêveur, apôtre de la foi !
L'Art pur et la Beauté font ta divine loi ;
Au doute tentateur tu sais crier " arrière ! "

Comme le grand Hugo, dans ta force plénière,
Bien loin du monde aimé qui t'acclamerait roi,
Tu cherches l'Idéal, en exil comme toi,
Et rien n'a pu flétrir ton âme chaste et fière.

Triste mais courageux, sans peur, sans défaillance
Tu caches à nos yeux les fièvres de tes nuits ;
Quand ton cœur dit *Néant*, ta voix dit *Espérance*.
Hélas, ami, je sens tes immenses ennuis ;
Tu chantes noblement, penché sur un abîme,
Et j'aime et je comprends ton dévouement sublime !

GIOVANNI TAGLIAPIETRA.

IN FAVORITA.

You sang the noble and the perfect part
Of Castile's King with passion and with grace,
All Donizetti's spirit lit your face ;
The notes came trembling from your very heart.

I listened, raptured, to your flawless art,
To all the mellow tones that charmed the space,
And in your modulation I could trace
The magic source that made the warm tears start.

And as I gazed, a strange and marvelous sound
Fell on my ear at the finale's close—
A sound that came alone from heavenly lands,
And then I understood in wonder bound,
That o'er the grand, melodious tumult rose
The ghostly applause of Donizetti's hands.

À T. B. ALDRICH.

Grand poëte amoureux de la beauté puissante,
Votre âme peut créer un fier accent vainqueur,
Pour chanter dignement d'une voix enivrante
Les fortes passions, la grâce et la douceur.

Partout dans vos beaux vers la muse nous enchante,
Et, captivés, émus, par leur pure splendeur,
Nous savons y trouver, ô surprise charmante,
L'exquise originalité de votre cœur !

Poëte, pour ces dons vous êtes adoré,
Et toujours, quand je lis, ébloui, pénétré,
Un de vos chants ailés et doux comme un mystère,
J'entends du haut du ciel un murmure, et je vois
Gautier, tout souriant, que de sa noble voix
Vous dit, " Béné sois-tu, mon bien-aimé, mon frère ! "

LATHAM CORNELL STRONG.

DIED DECEMBER, 1879.

Grim death has hushed the soft, melodious sound
That filled thy spirit, and the vital flame,
Engendering noble thoughts that graced thy name,
Is spent, while dismal ashes strew the ground.

Thy worshiped muse with thee in plenty found
Delicious charm and beauty without blame ;
Yet, while thy laurels were prepared by Fame,
Thou didst not wait to be supremely crowned !

Oh, pious pilgrim in the paths of art,
Thy gentle labor has not been in vain,
Exalting excellence, combating wrong !
For all thy words were warm unto the heart,
And ere thy days were done men saw thee gain
The rare and radiant Mecca of sweet song !

CHARLES GOUNOD.

The muse of melody from nameless gloom,
Courts the pale bards of earth to win their song :
In wondrous tones she sings the weird night long,
Peans of life or lullabies of the tomb.

Delicious anthems from her essence bloom,
In Babels of soft sound, that blend and throng,
To tempt some lover, who, of fancy strong,
Can in bold thought her suavest charm assume.

You who have gazed on calm Italian nights,
Upon the muse with meditative eyes,
Did not then follow in the grander flights
Her warbling soul, nor yearn for Mozart's prize,
But were content, and fame thy toil requites,
To mark the deathless music of her sighs !

FERDINAND HILLER.

To-day thou standest laureled before all,
 Deep in the hearts of multitudes enshrined !
 The soul of music hovers in thy mind,
And hastens on white pinions at thy call.

Thy great conceptions manifold enthrall,
 And in the story of thy life we find
 One flawless record gloriously signed,
And towers of strength that will not swerve or fall.

Whene'er thy strains are wafted to my ear,
 Full of most subtle meaning, sweet and strong,
 I see in dreams the Rhenish vales in bloom,
And with keen ravishment I seem to hear
 The mighty genius of old German song
 Sing to the stars beneath the Schwarzwald's gloom !

CARL MARIA VON WEBER.

Great dreamer, from the Schwarzwald's dreaded night,
Thy spirit brought strange sounds to haunt our ears ;
Concerts sublime that teemed with ghostly fears,
And wondrous strains that fill the soul with fright.

But, with the dawn, thy muse leaps to the light,
Dipping white wings in hope that soothes and cheers ;
Again, in sadder ways, it claims our tears,
Until thy waltzes to the dance invite.

Oh, perfect poet of the songful heart,
Thou hast combined in laughter and in pain
The varied moods within all bosoms rife.
And with a peerless grace and stainless art,
Enchanter of the senses and the brain,
Thy genius shows us life and all of life.

TO KARL FORMES.

Perchance the voice that slumbers in thy breast
Was once a Titan's, when the world was young,
While the grand echo of the songs he sung
Is now by thee in majesty possessed.

The longings of the world it has expressed
In marvelous accents, and with puissant tongue ;
And lo ! it seems that thy great soul has wrung
The secrets from the demons and the blest.

And, when its grandeur falls upon mine ear,
Full of divinest power, in flawless ease,
In chants sublime with mighty passions weighed,
Ravished, I pause, and wondering, seem to hear,
Blent with the laugh of Mephistopheles,
The voice of Peter preaching his Crusade !

PIETRO BIGNARDI.

True art within your mind has found a shrine,
Where fire and feeling beautifully blend ;
To every *rôle* nobility you lend,
And skill with taste most soulfully combine.

Raoul sublime and *Gonarro* benign
Find by your voice new beauty to commend,
And faithless *Ugo's* pitiable end
Is, as the master's melodies, divine.

Your brow is decked and laureled by sweet fame,
And in art's annals your resplendent name
Will e'er be greeted and will flourish long ;
For now an earned repose has come at last,
And in the future, even as in the past,
Admiring throngs will hail you " King of Song."

FRANCISCO MAZZOLENI.

Great Donizetti would have loved thee well,
Had he but heard thy voice supreme and rare
Ring in *Edgardo's* terrible despair,
Or by the *Borgia's* devastating spell.

No tones more rich and wonderful e'er fell
From human lips, and their sweet sound could bear
Far from the mind all vestiges of care,
And all the sorrow of the soul dispel.

The world has echoed with thy matchless fame,
Thy brows are laureled from the fields of Art,
And now thou standest beautiful and strong :
While countless lovers of thy glorious name,
Hail the nobility of thy valiant heart,
And crown thee monarch of Italian song !

DE ANNA, KING OF BARITONES.

Thou art the Ashton of Gaetano's* mind ;
Thou art the real Chevreuse his fancy sought ;
Thy heart knows well his heart, thy thought his
thought ;
His inspiration in thy voice we find.

New laurels for his fame thine art can bind,
The value of his genius thou hast taught ;
His subtlest meaning thou hast ably wrought,
And in thy soul his memory is enshrined.

With firmest feet thou tread'st the path of fame,
Charming all men by thy prodigious art,
But still a vast regret o'erfills my heart,
Wherein I hear the praises of thy name,
For Donizetti, dead, can not rejoice
And marvel at the glory of thy voice !

* Gaetano Donizetti.

TO MAX MARETZEK.

*On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Mr. Max Maretzek's
appearance as an impresario and manager.*

Master ! thy chosen mission in this land
Was one of melody and art divine ;
Thou cam'st to purify and to refine,
And teach us what was beautiful and grand.

Thy restless spirit, nurtured to command,
Warmed us and moved us like a generous wine !
While every honor of this boon is thine,
Created by thy brain and nobly planned.

The deathless bays are many on thy brow ;
Thou hast not labored o'er life's path in vain ;
At lofty shrines thy head alone would bow.
Therefore our gratitude can never wane,
And for all time, thy memory, as now,
Sweet and imperishable will remain.

CARLO ALBERTO CAPPÀ.

Band-Master Seventh Regiment, N. Y. S. M.

No paltry preference of school is thine,
Thy soul finds room for all called great and true.
Mozart and Gluck are perfect in thy view,
In thee no stale comparisons combine.

Weber, and Bach, and Donizetti shine ;
The older styles are treasured with the new.
Verdi and Händel have from thee their due,
And all who hold the passion-spark divine.

Thy genius finds the jewels of their thought,
The mystic secrets of their deathless song,
And all the lessons that to them belong
Unto our willing ears thy wand has taught,
And in the future, as to-day, thy name,
Honest, eclectic, will go down to fame.

CARLOS SOBRINO.

Though young in years, thou hast the sacred flame :
In thee pure Gottschalk's dreamy graces shine,
The soul is thine of Liszt and Rubinstein,
Fraternity with Chopin thou canst claim.

Plante and Thalberg both in thee combine
The highest sphere is thy ambitious aim,
And thou canst tread the rugged paths of fame,
Blessed by thy muse, melodious and divine.

Modest art thou, and fired by studious zeal ;
But time will lead thee to the cherished goal,
For thou hast feeling, sympathy, and soul,
And all thy master's meaning thou dost feel.
Therefore pursue thy way with fearless mind,
And thou shalt be like all of these combined.

GAETANO DONIZETTI.

Degno sei tu d'Italia, o genio santo.

Fulge il tuo nome in immortal splendore,

Ed i sospir del tuo celeste cuore

Ai nostri spirti daran sempre incanto.

L'accento tuo, o sia di riso o pianto,

Sarà pel suol natiò eterno onore,

Poichè, per te la Musa con amore

Vestissi tutta d'un novello ammanto.

Gl' ispirati concenti di *Lucia*,

Prova de genio e di preclara mente,

Riviveranno in rimembranza pia

Di te chi festi elettrizzar la gente !

Saranno un letto di olezzanti fiori,

Perpetueranno insiem gloria ed onori !

TO LOUIS BLUMENBERG, VIOLONCELLIST.

The soul that lingers in the silent strings
Rises in rhythmic magic by thy hand,
A tuneful vassal e'er at thy command,
A soul invisible that weeps or sings.

Melodious strains, like passing angels' wings,
Seem from the speaking maple to be fanned
While graver meaning, mystical and grand,
A matchless grace unto our senses brings.

Ah ! when those strains fall gently on my ear,
I breathe in ravishment and seem to hear
Seraphic choirs that worship and adore,
And I, a skeptic, marveling in surprise,
Feel wondrous tears of pity fill my eyes,
And, penitent, believe in God once more.

E. L. DAVENPORT.

AS "SIR GILES."

Ne'er yet have passions with fierce pangs intense,
Loomed up so grandly livid, to defy
With withering hate the awed and hollow sky,
As thine ! They haunt the hot and harrowed sense

With throes of wonder ; from mad lips thy cry
Of rage, turns foam in its magnificence
Of utter anguish, while thy lurid eye
Glints through its blood in agonies immense !

Thou King of Tragedy, unique, superb !
What triumph thine to force strong wills to start !
How sweet for thee to see the masses curb
Their tremulous heads all haloed by thine art !
And feel the power the skeptic to disturb,
Thou peer of Garrick with a Talma's heart !

E. L. DAVENPORT

AS "RICHARD III."

Hybrid and shrunken Cæsar, odd-boned clown ;
Lynx-like, rude, wanton, treacherous, severe ;
Thy cold red eyes, over thy pallid leer
And hump accursed, glisten when glancing down.

I see in thee vague warnings of a bier,
A cunning smile half dwindling to a frown,
A sneer, a threat, a blasphemy of fear,
A toss of head that craveth for a crown !

Intolerant passions gnaw thee to the core,
Thy bosom is rent with keen impatient smart ;
Hates, hidden, stenchful as a leper's sore,
Arise from out thy dead, remorseless heart . . .
Thou art grim Richard, and thou can'st restore
His odious presence by thy wondrous art !

E. L. DAVENPORT.

AS "RICHELIEU."

Thou art that puissant man who could withstand
The will of kings, who paved a gory way
Up to fame's temple : destined to command
With rigid brows, with cruel, crafty sway.

France felt his might and dared not disobey,
When, scarlet-robed, imperious, and grand
He held her white throat in his bony hand,
Stained with the blood of Cinq-Mars and Chalais !

History revived breathes in thy language terse :
Thy brow is gray with shadows of foul racks ;
Tiger then fox, thine iron passions wax
Strong, and tower up like some black-plumed hearse !
For e'en when hurling forth thy churchly curse,
I see behind thee gleam the headman's axe !

E. L. DAVENPORT.

AS "HAMLET."

Doubt plows deep furrows in thy restless brain,
Filled with dull seeds that bring no definite fruit ;
With fancies troubled, vague, irresolute,
It swerves to sweet, and strives to hush its pain !

Sure, and not sure, it vacillates again—
Now fired by faith, now sullen as a brute
In stupor ; while thy galled heart sad and mute,
Struggles and doubts, oh, pale and fitful Dane !

Interpreter of thoughts so grandly penned,
Thy toil hath crowned them with an aureole
Of charm : oh ! Hamlet, lover, hater, friend !
With Art thine aim, with Art supreme as goal,
The rich rare glories of thy genius blend,
Completing all in one great flood of soul !

E. L. DAVENPORT.

AS "OTHELLO."

Oh, how my soul blooms up and clings to thine,
When from the distant Turks thou com'st to claim
With artless diction and with pulse of flame,
Thy Desdemona's eager love benign !

Thy heart of bronze by twenty wars untame,
Throbs with delicious passion, leoline
Of force, yet like a child's in charm ; thine aim
Aspires to cull what she would fain resign !

But when Iago with foul phrasing tells
The bitter lies no scorn can e'er assuage ;
How thy swart face reveals the hidden Hells
That seethe within thee, and mad tumult wage !
Then as thy frenzied anger grandly swells,
I love to hear the splendors of thy rage !

E. L. DAVENPORT.

AS "MACBETH."

Ambition, like a cancer, rots thy breast,
With furious spasms, while remorseful fear
Whispers of peril in thy coward ear,
Oh ! superstitious Thane with dreams opprest.

Thou need'st thy callous lady's hint austere,
To fully crush thy conscience and unrest,
When in thy grave eyes one last pitying tear
Dries up and scorches hellward at her quest !

The shade of Shakespeare hovers through the gloom
Of vanished centuries, in the vale of Death ;
It sees its buds of fancy blossom and bloom
By thy fond art to flowers, and its strong breath
Calls unto thee in rapture from the tomb,
"Oh, son of mine, thou art my heart's Macbeth !"

HENRY IRVING.

By toil and grand tradition, you have found
The luminous path to an undying fame !
Great throngs bring willing tribute to your name,
In many a heart you stand enshrined and crowned !

Wit, humor and fancy in your soul abound ;
None can your noble life dispraise or blame ;
And that rich laughter which a god would claim,
Still rings about our ears with mellow sound.

Most peerless master ! honor of the stage,
Long may you live the meed of all to earn ;
Serene among the treasures of your heart,
Proving to men that genius has no age,
While future generations love and learn
The marvelous secrets of your perfect art !

TO ERNESTO ROSSI, IN "HAMLET."

Could glorious Shakespeare walk the earth again,
Right merrily would he laugh at all the toil
Of men bespangled, who forever soil
His perfect "Hamlet," marvel of his brain.

Yea, he would smile at their insensate Dane,
Who, of his genius, was the proudest spoil.
From all their frowns and groans he would recoil,
And his great ghost would reason and complain.

But, if he knew thee, Rossi, he would cry,
"I see my 'Hamlet'; yea, the one I love
Within my spirit's depths. I see the goal
Of my own mind that is not born to die,
And find in *thine* the thought which God above
Gave to the deathless essence of my soul!"

GAETANO DONIZETTI.

A thousand godsent melodies found birth,
And, flower-like, sprang from thine angelic mind,
To lull the unceasing sorrow of mankind,
And charm the changeless *ennui* of the earth.

Then, when the soul was moved, thy reaper, Mirth,
Usurped dark Melancholy's throne, and twined
Light sheaves of song, as buoyant as the wind,
Turning the dross of care to golden worth !

Thy deathless Fame before no tomb shall bow !
No grave can close upon thy matchless art !
Cherished, supreme in palace as in mart,
In proud, immortal calm thou standest now,
With all the grace of Italy in thy heart,
With all the glory of Song upon thy brow !

AGOSTINO SUSINI.

OBITU 1884.

There was a time when, laureled by sweet fame,
You stood in youth's magnificence and pride,
Your glorious tones now charmed, now terrified,
And throngs attentive marveled at your name.

Then the sere autumn of existence came,
The meed of praise no longer could abide,
And to the world, estranged and cast aside,
Your artist soul no future praise could claim.

But I remember the triumphant past,
The charm and splendor of your perfect art,
When on your brow was shrined all manhood's
bloom.

And, as the years pass on, I come at last
To place, while sorrow thrills me to the heart,
This humble flower of Song upon your tomb.

FOUR SONNETS.

I.—ADELINA PATTI.

La noche, cuando oi tu voz divina,
El limpio canto y el immortal accento,
He comprendido el bello firmamento
O casta *Amina*, O graciosa *Adina*.

No tiene angel la voz mas cristalina,
No tiene pecho humanomas sentimiento :
Dulce con fuerza como el puro viento,
Que llora, piensa que tambien fulmina.

Cierto, su noble son es un diamante
Que yo temblando con placer adoro,
Supremo, grande, claro, triunfante !
Y, quebrantado y hechizado imploro
A Dios, en su gloria centellante
Llamarte reina del celeste coro.

II.—FAURE.

J'admire la beauté de ton talent splendide,
Tu sais comprendre enfin les mystères du cœur,
Sans défaillance aucune et pour ton art avide,
Tu braves le dédain des ignorantes, sans peur.

L'amour sacré du *vrai* t'inspire et puis te guide,
De l'inconnu tu sais découvrir la valeur :
Car c'est toi *Nelusko*, c'est toi *Juan* perfide,
C'est toi le fier *Pietro*, c'est toi *Hamlet* rêveur !

Mais quand je vois ton nom, de douloureux regrets
M'accablent, car je pense aux jours qui sont passés,
Les jours ensoleillés de ta jeunesse heureuse,
Le temps si glorieux de tes plus beaux efforts,
Car le divin Mozart et le grand Gluck sont morts
Sans avoir entendu ta voix mélodieuse !

III.—SANTLEY.

The northern blood that courses through thy frame
Is warm and passionate with a southern fire,
And ever prompt to strengthen and inspire
The nobler efforts which thy soul could claim.

We feel its subtle presence, and admire
Thy march triumphant from an artist's aim
Up to the distant, dizzy heights of Fame,
Thy goal, thy ultimatum, thy desire !

Yea, and thou hast not swerved, thou hast not turned ;
Straight to the end over the cheerless ground
Thou hast made progress worthy of thy dream,
And now, when stragglers on Art's path are spurned,
Thou standest resolute with thy laurels crowned,
And, of thy future, arbiter supreme !

IV.—MARIO.

Artista degno d'ogni gloria e onore,
Tu sei il Dio del sublime canto
Havvi nella tua voce il riso e il pianto
L'idillio ameno e i gridi di furore.

Il sentimento nato nel tuo cuore
E inver delizioso, quasi santo,
E noi t'amiamo d'un ardor cotanto
Che mettiamo in oblio ogni dolore.

Edgardo, Fausto, Lionel, Elvino,
Sono i gioielli della tua corona
L'emulo sei di Duprez, di Rubini
E anzi o favorito del destino,
Nella tua voce vive, grida e suona
L'anima colossale del Salvini.

MODJESKA AS "CAMILLE."

Stately, she moves in calm, patrician grace,
Conscious of power the multitude to thrill !
While, as a slave, proud Passion at her will
Leaves on her cheek its fiery or tearful trace.

The glooms of anguish dust her mobile face,
When cruel words, that maddening thoughts instill,
Sting, by a prescient sense of future ill,
The new, pure heart that throbs beneath the lace.

But in that sad and agonising hour,
When fate relentless taints her perfect dream,
And lips that loved insult what they should prize,
It seems as if all Art by her grand power
Had taken visible shape, to come supreme
And gaze upon us from her luminous eyes !

MARIO.

Art reigned incarnate in thy lofty soul,
Tuning that voice which was Rubini's peer,
And whose delicious accents, firm and clear,
Could hold each changing passion in control.

But thou wast greatest in some thrilling *rôle*
That shook the heart or drew the rebel tear ;
And memories of thee, forever dear,
Will live and linger now from pole to pole.

Death can not ravish thy eternal fame,
Nor can it snatch the laurel from thy brow ;
The ermine of thy life is free of stain,
And, for all time, thy ever-glorious name,
Shrined in the future, as 't is honored now,
Will pure, supreme and beautiful remain.

BERTEL THORWALDSEN.

Life springs from Death inert, at your command,
A rugged mass is fashioned into grace,
And the dumb spirit in the marble face
Is beckoned earthward by your magic hand.

Heroes and warriors of our native land
Live in the Paros Time can not erase,
And in your studio, like a sainted place,
The hosts of marble dream, serene or grand.

The silent sons and daughters of your brain
Honor the halls of many a home of arts,
Or on broad thoroughfares in pride arise.
But when you pass them by in sun or rain,
You do not hear the throbbing of their hearts,
Nor see the grateful glory in their eyes !

SONNETS.

TO HELENA.

WHENE'ER I gaze upon thy beauteous face,
Free from the touch of all terrestrial taint,
With soft smiles haloed, like a praying saint,
A beaming scrap of Paradise's grace,
Within its charming contour I can trace
A long-lost look that memory scarce can paint—
Something ethereal and divinely faint,
That can not appertain unto our race.

I feel that by some wondrous avatar,
Some strange metempyschosis most sublime,
Bright Aphrodite, rising from the sea,
Has gazed upon thee from her love-lit star ;
And, eager, to transmit her charms to time,
Has made Greek Helen breathe again in thee.

THE NORTH SEA MAID.

A Boreal moon pours beam on silver beam,
Far on the northern fiords all still and cold,
The rime-tipped pines on snow-encrusted wold
Stand up like sentinels on mere and stream ;

While over Norseland, with vague eyes of gold,
The freezing stars gaze solemnly and dream—
White dreams of frost, pale, chilly dreams that teem
With memories of bleak icebergs southward rolled.

Within a cot, a distaff by her side,
A maiden watches the sad, hueless skies !
Long flaxen hair, knotted in tresses wide,
Is tinged by moonbeams as they fall and rise,
While all their cold-hued pearliness has dyed
Clear sparks of silver in her icy eyes.

SNOW SONG.

In dreams I hear a music made of snow,
Harmonic chilly idyl of cold sound ;
Its echo-twin in polar stars is found,
It moans to still white moons its utter woe.

Gaunt ghost-musicians by the frost-gods crowned,
Drunk upon icicles and snow-drops, glow
With dismal thought in frigid murmurs drowned.
I hear ice melodies through dreamland flow.

Sounds like a dark, cold pond, inviting rime,
Sounds like the freezing, vague, uncertain chime
Of distant bells through airs of endless mist,
Clanging unconsciously to fates above ;
Cold as regrets of some frustrated tryst,
Cold as the kiss of lips that know no love.

JENA.

OCTOBER 14, 1806.

The Prussian eagle in its eerie screamed,
And, from the sandy plains in war's array,
Dense hordes of stolid, boorish soldiers streamed
To meet the men of Rivoli that day ;
The martial hosts yearning to smite and slay,
Stood there defiant with bare swords that gleamed,
And in calm, haughty insolence, they seemed
Like hungry condors watching for their prey.

The Titan fray began, and with disdain
The laureled grenadiers of France marched on,
Stern and majestic, through the bullets' rain,
Until the corpse-clogged field was nobly won.
While the astounded Vandals fled in vain
Before the cold sneer of Napoleon.

JUDAS THE SECOND.

His Christ came unto him, and from the pain
And dismal sloughs of misery and care
Raised him with friendship saintly and most rare,
Saying, "Be thou my friend, my friend remain."

His Christ did more : He let his hand attain
Honors he dared not humbly beg in prayer ;
His sinful past in mercy he did spare,
And to uplift him to a throne did deign !

Then, with the liberal laurels on his brows,
The gift of one immortal, noble heart,
Who made irradiant his disgraceful lot,
He, traitor to his country and his vows,
Betrayed that Master with a devil's art ;
And hell doth know him now as *Bernadotte* !

INFLUENCE.

I fear to guess why such a morbid mood
Should in my callous spirit slowly grow,
But I have felt within me madly glow
An utter greed for desolate solitude.

Phantasmal fancies, bizarre and unwooded,
Have urged me with resistless force to go
Where chill winds over cemeteries blow,
And where among dank tombs the strange birds
brood.

Vague hands, invisible, have often led
My vacillating steps to such drear ways,
I know not wherefor, but in deep dismay,
Whene'er I roam amid the hosts of dead,
I feel beside me in the spectral haze
The wan, attendant skeleton of Gray.

AUSTERLITZ.

On to the goal the impatient legions come !
Ulm haloes with success an army's might ;
Far 'mid the mists and gloom of Austrian night,
Hear the advancing steeds, the ominous drum !

Europe cowers shuddering, and strong kings are dumb ;
A Cæsar leads a nation to the fight,
And o'er the allied camps the flaming light
Of his great star strikes the rude masses numb !

Five hundred thundering cannon boom and glow,
A sun of victory on the keen steel slants,
There on the gore-strewn plains of pine and snow
Russ clutches Gaul in labyrinths of lance,
While o'er the hurrying hell of war and woe
Floats the Imperial, blood-stained flag of France.

PAX ET PURITAS.

Whene'er my sad gaze lingers in thine eyes,
That glow with all the idyllic warmth of Greece,
I find from care a lovable release,
My heart throbs faster in a charmed surprise.

Floods of strange fancy wake, and I surmise,
While subtle pleasures, vaguely known, increase,
That the calm spirit of delicious Peace,
Candid and beautiful, within them lies.

Then, as I look again, with whims and dreams,
Another shape appears in stainless white,
Smiling upon me radiant and fair ;
And, to my rapt and ravished mind, it seems
As if sweet Purity, in robes of light,
Had come to take eternal refuge there.

IN A SEVILLIAN CLOISTER.

In a Sevillian cloister, old and quaint,
I wandered once, and saw a picture rare :
A goddess with sublimities of hair,
Holding a rose-leaf to a suppliant saint.

Her dark and perfect locks without restraint
Fell on an ample bosom, white and fair,
And, marveling much, I murmured, half in prayer
“ ’T is but a dream an artist loved to paint ;

“ A vagrant fancy of a fevered mind.”
For none beheld such glorious tresses shine
On earth or sea, and they will ne’er be seen !
This I believed, until my eyes did find
The misty marvel of thy hair divine,
Fit for the brow of some celestial queen.

CONFIDANTS.

One perfect night, when June lay wrapped in bloom,
I strolled among the paths of Père la Chaise,
And, by the cloudless moon's phantasmal rays,
Read the old names on many a grass-wreathed tomb.

Strange moods had lured me to this hallowed gloom,
And, urged by unknown powers that burn and craze,
Happy above all men, I sought its ways,
To find, for thoughts exultant, air and room.

I did not dare confide to mortal ear
The new, sweet bliss that through my spirit spread,
Nor murmur it in prayer to God above ;—
But I could tell my secret without fear
To those I pity, the forgotten dead,
Who have not seen the miracle I love !

TO-DAY, DELICIOUS AGNES, BLOND AND FAIR.

To-day, delicious Agnes, blond and fair,
In humble ways I reverently greet
Thy youth that blossoms in woman's grace complete,
Crowned by the golden glory of thy hair.

In thy deep eyes of blue, intense and rare,
My sad and musing spirit loves to meet
A soul whose essence is sublime and sweet,
Soft as the breath of dawn, and pure as prayer.

And when on thee in ravishment I gaze,
Vague dreams my wandering fancy will surprise ;
Visions of Phidias and his unfound goal !
And I, too timid e'er to speak or praise,
Think that I do behold in modern guise
Some white Greek statue that enshrines a soul.

THE DROWSY GLADE.

The drowsy glade, all mellowed by the moon,
Lavished its fragrance through the midnight air ;
The breeze was suave and languorous with June,
Nature and I waited thy coming there !

I watched the crimson of the roses, strewn
As if to carpet thee love's pathway rare,
And listened to thy signal, that soft tune
Once lulled within the great heart of Schubert !

I heard thy footfall ;—joy hath one surprise
Death can not conquer with its cruel power.
The starry scraps of Heaven within thine eyes
Still light my soul in that delicious hour
When I in rapture, trusting in thy sighs,
Culled love upon thy sweet lips like a flower.

SONNET.

TO —.

The garden, crowned by soft and fragrant June,
 Blooms nonchalant beneath the mute, blue sky.
 In fleecy shoals the stainless clouds pass by.
Each poplar quivers to a linnets' tune.

The souls of roses by the zephyrs strewn,
 Perfume the air in myriads ere they die,
 And seem in redolent agony to lie,
Lacking the benediction of the moon.

An aureole of light tints every tree,
 Nature unsullied dreams her dream of love,
 Wooing the sun unto her nuptial bowers,
And, in the emerald distance, I can see
 A maiden, white as Aphrodite's dove
 Pass like a queen amid her sister flowers !

THINE EYES.

I love thine eyes that beckon smiles ; two souls
 Radiant with lustres flashing forth grand fires !
 Their opulence of glamour goads desires ;
Should sad words murmur, then their glance condoles.

A harmony of tears, heart's manna, rolls
 Down cheeks disrobed, until a lip inquires
 Grief's secrets ; then the first woe-ebb retires
In tranquil tides, alone, the gaze consoles.

A smile ! reflection of the soul's bright sun,
Chases all chimeras of pain ; I shun
 Dark grooves of palsied thought, becharmed, I look
 And rivet all mine essence in thine eyes,
Vague as the music of a moon-bathed brook,
 Vague as great sultry clouds, as twilight skies !

OUTRE TOMBE.

One pale and perfect twilight eve in May,
Pensive of mood, I sought her cherished tomb ;
The air was fragrant with a suave perfume,
The earth had woven into flowers the way.

With saddened thought I knelt me down to pray,
Wondering how Nature, lacking her, could bloom,
When, oh, most strange ! a rose-bush from the gloom
Caught in my sleeve as if to bid me stay.

I dared not doubt, her fond soul at my feet
Breathed in the beauteous bosom of the flowers,
And charmed my sense, as when in bliss complete
Upon the blue Garonne, near feudal towers,
Her white, soft, jeweled hands and kisses sweet
Were wont to lure me back in vanished hours.

YELLOW.

A northern sun tinged with sallow light,
A sea that swoons on leagues of citron sand ;
While in the dreamy background grimly stand
Groves of weird willows sered by autumn's blight.

The sky in strawy strips is covered quite
By indolent clouds which, nonchalantly fanned
By drowsier winds, blend on the aureate land
With stacks of wheat, ungarnered, dry and bright.

A golden dusk serenely falls and fades
As if it shrank to love the sere earth more ;
Sky, clouds and leaves fuse in one color rare,
While by the sad waves, flecked with fluctuant shades
A blond girl watches the mad sea-gulls soar,
With scraps of sunlight in her wind-loved hair.

HANDS.

How dear the hand that chases pain away
 With the soft touch of Florence Nightingale ;
 And dear is friendship's hand that should not fail,
But ah, how often does its grasp betray !
There are firm hands that in mad battle slay,
 Hands that spread midnight poisons, parched and pale,
 Low, venal ones, whose pens like serpents trail,
And holy ones that succor, soothe, allay.

Sweet is the pressure of an honest hand ;
 Tender and true when dying parents bless,
Awful when men livid with murder stand,
 Noble, when thousands some great wrong suppress !
But I love most the little hand that fanned
 My heart to love when all was wretchedness.

TO ANNA SALTUS.

Thou shouldst not, Christian lady, bend to grief,
And blame this heartless world for ills of thine ;
Thou knowest well that brilliant suns do shine
Behind this life's dark cloud :—they bring relief

And pitying rays for all thy sighs, that pine
And long lament ; thou prov'st it by belief
In God's omnipotence and love divine,
Knowing that earthly cares below are brief. . . .

God loves thy past, and gives thee grace to bear
The pains and anguish of the world's sad cold,
To few proves He thy proud heart strong and rare,
To few thy virtues does His might unfold,
But still He gives thee grand and generous share,
Thy smile like sunbeams ! and thy love like gold.

SOUVENIR.

The forest flutters with a breath of May ;
The sun slants softly thro' a mist of greens :
Upon my arm a gentle beauty leans ;
Through labyrinths of swaying leaves we stray ;

Like the sweet Spring, we, too, are fresh and gay,
And envy not the lot of kings and queens :
To veil our love no pale care intervenes.
There is no night to our love's perfect day.

We walk and dream and dream again, and see
The brown birds watching as in mute surprise.
Languid, we feel blue scraps of mellow skies
Blend with our sense in silent harmony.
And I, loved, loving, see upturned to me,
The luring splendor of two lustrous eyes.

THE AWAKENING.

Her arms lay bare about his neck, and still
 In dream, her lips half open with a sigh
 As though to woo her dream some sweet reply.
All slowly her enthralled senses fill,

As valley waters from a mountain rill
 Swollen by storm. Her bosom'd treasures lie
 Encircled by his arms, and still sweeps by
The swelling tide into the Deep's deep will.

And he, too, dreams—in Love's night-hidden day—
 Until the shallows, murmuring, rise and leap,
And lap the spirit within that sweet clay
 Against his breast. Then lips that trysting keep,
Unconsciously, nearer and closer lay
 Till sudden kisses burst the bonds of sleep.

THE HEART'S SAD SONG.

There is an antique song, a quaint old tune,
Hidden within my heart, divinely sweet ;
The theme is of a delicate conceit,
Vague and mysterious as some Northern Rune,

A sound that Donizetti in his June
Might still have found, tender yet incomplete—
A strain that spirits might alone repeat,
Or larks invisible that haunt the moon.

Whene'er its magic melody I hear,
Now calm with peace, now tremulous with dread,
I picture to my soul a face once dear ;
Its graceful rhythm seems a fawn-like tread,
Past sighs return and gentle ghosts appear :
O wondrous song ! art thou that voice now dead ?

THE GALLERY OF THE MIND.

There is a gallery in every mind,
A mental Louvre full of empty frames ;
We strive to fill them with desires and aims,
Or try within their void some form to find.

Sometimes a face appears, but half defined,
Greeting us sadly, and its look proclaims
A wish fulfilled ; while still another names
That fortune to our secret hopes was kind.

Visions of love and friendship come and go,
Sad frames, alas ! unfulfilled, for time remain ;
Others, unheeded once, hold faces new,
Welcome in tenderness or sad in woe,
And so continue through this life of pain,
Till death blurs every picture from our view.

PROFILE.

Half of a face love I, superbly Greek !

The other half ignore, and would not know
Its charms or its deceits ; why should I seek
The fair uncertainties that sight might show,

When to mine eyes a perfect profile, sleek
And softly languorous of artistic flow,
Smileth in splendid curves from front to cheek,
Rubied between by lips of luscious glow ?

No ! in rapt contemplation I prefer
To gaze upon its Nauplian mould, and stir
My chaos of mad musings to revere
The peerless purity of such a face ;
For God had sculptured from an angel's tear
This pale, proud profile of sublimest grace !

A SOUL MAY LINGER THERE.

Tread not upon the humble roadside flower ;
Who knows the secrets its soft core contains ?
Perhaps the soul of some dead friend remains
Hidden within its petals, and our power

Can never fathom all its pangs and pains,
When under heedless feet its senses cower ;
Nor yet conceive its joy, when, for an hour,
Some tender hand to pluck its beauty deigns.

The voiceless soul that dreams there evermore,
Saved from the haggard ruin of a tomb,
Will then in gracefulness our care implore ;
And in our trust a lovelier hue assume,
While the sweet memory of a friend of yore,
Breathes forth its love in poems of perfume !

MOON-MUSIC.

Blond moonbeams shine in symphonies of light
 Upon the surface of a sleeping lake,
 Blue shadows, deep in dormant depths opaque
Flit under dainty ripples, moonlit, bright ;

Around, the myriad voices of the night
 Blend with the moon's vague song, and make
 Wonderful concerts of soft tunes, that break
In foam, in sheen, in toneful soulful flight :

Sound like the kiss of wave upon a pearl—
Sound like the flesh-thrill of an amorous girl—
 Music so dreamlike subtle, that no ear
 Save that of muser can enjoy its balm—
Sound like the murmur of a falling tear—
 Sound like a twilight hush of endless calm. . . .

PERFUME.

When thou art from me, when I can not glance
 Upon thy rarest beauty, and when mind
 And soul are panoplied in veils unkind
Of thought forgetful, errant ; when a trance

Dims all my sense, then a sweet spirit grants
 A power to feel thy presence : for I find
 Thine image in strange forms, when musings wind
Coils of aromas, steeped like vines of France

In fragrant vagueness, redolent and sharp ;
Perfumes that bring to mind a soul-thrilled harp,
 Odors ecstatic, smells of youth's desire,
 Musk blent with sound, or music heard through air,
The scents of breaths that gasp with lovely fire
 Scents of thy loveliness, nude, white and fair !

ROSE-WINDOW.

In Blois Cathedral, shunning care's restraint,
In twilight hours I oft have sighed, alas!
When gazing on its wondrous colored glass,
Emblazoned with bright forms of god and saint.

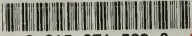
When, pensive, through the lofty aisles I pass,
I seem to see a subtle life-tint faint
Steal o'er their cheeks whene'er the solemn plaint
Of claustral voices chants the vesper mass.

And the strange thought will cling unto my mind,
How the dead artists, who their charms have made,
Live in those panes before me, side by side ;
Some as pale martyrs, some apostles kind ;
All in rare, radiant robes of light arrayed,
Guarding the shrines their art has beautified.

THE IDEAL.

Toil on, poor muser, to attain that goal
Where Art conceals its grandest, noblest prize ;
Count every tear that dims your aching eyes,
Count all the years that seem as days, and roll
The death-tides slowly on ; count all your sighs ;
Search the wide, wondrous earth from pole to pole,
Tear unbelief from out your martyred soul ;
Succumb not, chase despondency, be wise ;
Work, toil and struggle with the brush or pen,
Revel in rhyme, strain intellect and ken ;
Live on and hope despite man's skeptic leers ;
Praise the Ideal with your every breath,
Give it life, youth and glory, blood and tears,
And to possess it pay its tribute—Death.

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