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THE  
POET  
AND  
HIS SELF



ARLO  
BATES

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Dr. C. S. Clark,  
with the regards of  
Alfred Bates.

Nov. 25, '91.







THE POET AND HIS SELF

By the Same Author.

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THE  
POET AND HIS SELF

ARLO BATES

BOSTON  
ROBERTS BROTHERS  
1891

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To the Memory  
of  
"Eleanor Putnam."

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## THE POET AND HIS SELF.

### I.

#### THE POET SPEAKS :

SINCE a lie that soothes is better  
Than a truth that bites and stings ;  
Since the manacled wretch in fetter  
Is happier dreaming of wings ;  
Let us make the whole world our debtor ;  
Go to ; let us sing smooth things !

Since fate has trapped us and caged us,  
Why should we beat at the bars?  
When cares of the earth have engaged us,  
Why need we long for the stars?  
When the old wounds have enraged us,  
Why should we risk fresh scars?

Let us live in a world of seeming,  
For the truth cannot be borne ;  
In fancy youth's pledges redeeming,  
Since reality still is forsworn ;  
Man is happy only in dreaming, —  
To waken is ever to mourn.

## II.

## HIS SELF SPEAKS :

**I**F fate has indeed ensnared thee,  
Foil her at least by thy scorn ;  
The deepest of woes is spared thee,  
And thou art not wholly forlorn,  
So long as thy manhood is left thee ; —  
When fate has of that bereft thee,  
Thou mayst curse the day thou wast born.

Who, then, art thou, who presumest  
Wisdom and hope to destroy ?  
What is this thing thou assumest,  
That the end of life is joy ?

Excusing thine own weak complaining  
Is this plea that no hope is remaining,  
That its visions are but fate's decoy.

Be brave, and in face of disaster  
Hold fast to thy courage, that so  
Thou mayst meet thy fate as its master,  
Not crouch as a slave to its blow.  
Life at worst is but pendulum swinging,  
From despair unto joy ever springing,  
As the morn after night doth show.

III.

THE POET SPEAKS :

WORDS, words, words ! I have heard them  
Said over a thousand times.  
The prophets and mockers who gird them,  
The poets and men of rhymes,  
Have raved them and said them and sung them,  
And with meaningless iterance rung them,  
Till they stale like grimaces of mimes !

What though one coward call me?  
A word — is it more than air?  
What evil more hard could befall me  
Than the pain of life to bear?  
Though I am but one, yet my vision  
Must for me set the seal of decision  
On life's gifts, be they foul or fair.

## IV.

## HIS SELF SPEAKS :

**D**OST thou remember how one summer morn —  
When all night through the blackness of the  
wood  
Had bitter fancies thy feet led and scorn  
Of all life offered thee of hope or good, —  
Thou cam'st to the fair margent of a stream  
Whose netted ripples snared the sun's first beam,  
Pale, broken flecks of gold with topaz gleam ;  
And how thou lookst across the little flood  
To where a hillside sloped, one lawn of green

Broken by snow of birch boles, and by bud  
Of daffodils not yet awake between ;  
And down a winding way light moving came  
A maid demure, in robe as white as flame,  
With eyes as pure as Mary's holy name.

And only that such loveliness could be  
Thou didst the bitter doubt of night forego.  
What was there changed between the world and thee?  
She did but smile, and from thy sight passed so ;  
And yet thou wert no more of sombre mind.  
Since beauty thus thy bitter thoughts could bind  
Canst thou not still in beauty comfort find?

V.

THE POET SPEAKS :

AH, me, how beautiful was she !  
With the slant sunbeams on her gold hair  
glinting,  
And stir of virginal white vesture, hinting  
How sweet the bosom's curve must be.

Too swift she passed, as through a rift  
Of cloud one sees the moon in beauty sailing  
But to be gone. Beneath her robe's soft trailing  
Their heads I saw the violets lift ;

And birds, though not a note was heard  
In all the vale till then, broke forth in singing,  
And voiced the rapture of my heart, upspringing  
In ecstasy beyond all word !

## VI.

## HIS SELF SPEAKS :

**D**OST thou remember how one storm-wild  
night  
Thou stoodst amid the surf that howled and hissed,  
And with a fume of froth that whelmed thy sight,  
Bit at the rocks and clutched them, fiercely roaring,  
And worried them, till in a rage of mist  
It sprang in fury skyward soaring ;

And how a boat, o'er the life-hungry swell  
'Swept by strong hands, fought its way to the shore ;

Till one brave sailor leaped into the hell  
Of waves like beasts blood-frantic ; how unshrinking  
Though torn and broken, he to safety bore  
A weak old man snatched from the frail bark  
sinking?

What was it all to thee? And yet thine heart  
Tingled and burned to glorify the deed.

Simply that thou and he were men, a part  
Thy spirit claimed in that brave act of daring.  
When man could thus heroic be, there seemed no need  
To ask if manhood were not worth the sharing.

VII.

THE POET SPEAKS :

**A**ND still I see the snarling wave draw back,  
And crouch, and spring again, swift as a thought  
And strong as fire !  
Maddened with baffled ire,  
It tore the sand and rent the rocks for lack  
Of the poor human prey it sought,  
Till of its own blind rage it died distraught.

## VIII.

## HIS SELF SPEAKS :

WHY do some names strewn down a printed  
page

Like pearls let fall upon red, orient sands,  
Make thine eyes glisten, and heroic rage

Beat hotly in thine heart? Of far off lands  
And other times the men who living bore them,  
And centuries their dusts have scattered o'er them.

What is Leonidas or Curtius

Or Winkelried to thee, that but their names  
Can move thee thus? Their deeds and courage thus

Make thy throat swell, and visionary flames  
Dazzle thine eyes? What won these men in dying  
That still they live, the centuries defying?



IX.

THE POET SPEAKS :

THEY loved their country with a love more strong  
Than death ; and while earth stands, so long  
Their names shall shine, enriching story.  
Fame for themselves have won a countless throng ;  
For all mankind these won eternal glory !

X.

HIS SELF SPEAKS :

THERE were two lovers walking by the sea,  
With eyes that spoke in flame and yet were  
pure ;  
The day was dying, but there could not be  
Or day or night to them, or cloud or sun,  
But in each other, all the world too poor  
To buy the wealth was in one look, in one  
Fond kiss of tenderness and fire,  
The apotheosis of chaste desire.

And thou upon the cliff above them lay,  
Touched with the tenderness such love behoved,  
And watched them bathed by dying day  
In flood of gold ; and all thy youth before thee  
Rose up again, and love's old languors o'er thee  
Lapsed like the sea. How deep thy soul was moved  
The tears hot springing to thine eyelids proved.

## XI.

## THE POET SPEAKS :

O H, love, that bids all else defiance,  
And makes men gods ! Love proves the deep  
alliance  
Of seen and unseen ; soul to kindred soul  
Is by it joined, although between them roll  
The star-floods of all space ; and walking there  
Symbol of holiest mysteries was this pair.

•

XII.

HIS SELF SPEAKS :

**I**F beauty, courage, patriotism, love,  
    Make thee exult in being ;  
If all life's ills they lift thy soul above  
    Only in others seeing ;  
    What must it be to kindle with such flame?  
    And who art thou a life so rich to blame?

Ever the spite of little souls 'gainst life  
    Finds vent in peevish railing ;  
The self-sick egotist with self at strife  
    Still seeketh unavailing  
    Some fair excuse his weakness to explain ;  
    And cries that life, not he, is void and vain.

XIII.

THE POET SPEAKS :

**B**UT man is like a child lost in the dark,  
    Who knows not where he is or how bested.  
What boots to offer toys to him? A spark  
    Of light were worth them all amid that dread.

What joy is joy to him who walks in fear?

Can life be comforted till 't is without  
The blinding pain of human ignorance,  
The stinging ache of human doubt?

#### XIV.

HIS SELF SPEAKS :

**L**IFE is here, life is now, and who spends it in  
yearning

To guess whither it tends, whence it comes,  
where it goes,

Only wastes golden hours, and fails in the learning  
The secret it hides or the lesson it shows.

Be content not to know ; life is doing, not knowing ;

Only be, only live, only do ; still foregoing

The unknown for the known while around thee it  
glows.

For the wisdom of life is to live, not to question

Of a meaning so hidden no eye can discern ;

Oft the secret is told in some lightest suggestion,

Who drinks deep of life's cup best life's meaning  
shall learn.

Be content not to know, and each moment shall teach  
    thee,  
Through beauty and love shall the mystery reach thee,  
    Though elusive it vanished before at each turn.

Life is good if we live without question. In sorrow  
    It is doubt that smites ever with bitterest blows ;  
To the grief of the present the dread of the morrow  
    Adds in anguish a sting the most cruel it knows.  
Be content not to know ; and with manly endeavor  
Battle down the grim fear of forever or never ; —  
    Live to-day, live to-day, live to-day, ere it goes !

Life is here, life is now, but the moment is fleeting ;  
    Live it fully in courage, as if it were all ;  
In the strength of thy manhood to make thy heart's  
    beating  
    Lead thee on unto victory e'en though thou fall !  
Be content not to know ; all the lore of the sages  
Nothing better can teach ; and the lesson of ages  
    Is but this : live to-day, for thy moment is small !

## XV.

THE POET SPEAKS :

**B**UT not to know ! To go on blindly  
From doubt to doubt ; unwitting if or kindly  
Or cruel be the god or chance or fate  
Whose will we wait !

## XVI.

HIS SELF SPEAKS :

**O**H, passing gleam on life's tumultuous sea,  
What then art thou ! Count all the tribes that  
swarm  
About the earth, that have been or shall be,  
Then reckon all the stars, whose glories warm  
The void illimitable, nor will the tale  
The sum of being to express avail.

When thou canst call the ocean dry if one  
Of all its drops shall fail, or count the earth,  
If one poor air-mote fall, a thing fordone,

Then mayst thou dare complain if in thy birth  
The All hath failed itself to justify.  
Till then be humble, and forbear thy cry.

A drop wave-scattered on the shore of time,  
A mote wind-blown, is in the universe  
As great a thing as thou. Eöns sublime  
And beings infinite, must he rehearse  
Who of the All would reason ; can its span  
Be measured by so small a scale as man ?

What is, has been and shall be. It is well  
In that it is. Be glad if thou of all  
Some tiny syllable of truth canst spell.  
Before the awful mystery to fall  
In reverence is man's part ; while onward roll  
The mighty marches of the Eternal Whole !

## CLARISINE THE COUNTESS.

LA MORT D'ARTHURE ; I, xcix.

**G**OD knows we were in such a desperate case  
The very warders at the city's gates  
Wept as our train passed out, and on each face  
Were fear and dole ; since he who held our fates  
In his sole grasp, the blameless king and high,  
Great Arthur, might our piteous prayer deny.

All the court women and each damosel  
After the Duchess following, down the way  
Strewn with the signs of battle fierce and fell  
Our train rode slow, until before us lay  
The splendid circle of pavilions bright  
Where Arthur's Table Round encamped its might.

From lances in the greensward thrust hung shields  
And fluttered pennants gay with many a hue ;  
And helmets dinted deep in hard fought fields.



The silken curtains waving, gave to view  
Brave cups of gold with jewels set thereon,  
The spoil of cities Arthur's host had won.

And everywhere were signs of conquest ; spoil  
Of Lombardie, Braband, and high Almaine,  
Lorraine, and Flaunders ; wealth that patient toil  
Had gathered but to lose ; and now Tuskaine  
Must pay its share. And all about our town  
The moats were filled, the walls were broken down.

So piteous was the contrast, even I  
Who hated so this Duchess, could have wept  
To see her anguish as our train drew nigh  
King Arthur's tent, as if in dreams we stepped  
From a land smit with famine into one  
Where plenty smiled like the high noonday sun.

To see the pages crumble manchet bread  
To feed the hounds, made our mouths water. Meat  
In all our city there was none. Instead  
We ate of things here trodden under feet.  
I could have struggled with the pampered pack  
For a stray morsel, had not pride held back.

On the bare ground the Duchess bent her knees  
Before the English king, and all her train  
Kneeled as she kneeled; and crouching there with  
these

I seemed her bridal state to see again  
That day she came among us, and we bowed  
The knee in homage to her beauty proud.

That day lives in my memory when she came  
To wed my lord and love; and now my heart  
Swelled with so fierce a joy to view her shame  
My eyes with tears of bitter bliss did smart.  
That was her hour, and this, forsooth, was mine;  
Yet still I held my peace and gave no sign.

The King averted his visor, and his face  
Was meek and noble, while she humbly prayed  
He spare the town. "Have pity in your grace,"  
She pleaded kneeling. "Let the siege be stayed.  
For love of God receive the city's keys,  
And spare the helpless babes, old men and these."

And all we women beat upon the breast  
In woman's wise, and moaned and wept like rain;

Till Arthur swore his awful sword should rest,  
If but the city ceased resistance vain,  
And gave the Duke up that on him for all  
The vengeance of the conqueror might fall.

She that had moved the Duke to send us here,  
She that had slept within his arms and shared  
His children's love, she that had vowed more dear  
Than life to hold him, how was it she dared  
To hear such proffer nor to fling it back  
With scorn and rage, lest earth to gulf her crack !

There is a nook I wot of, by a stream,  
Shut round with pollard willows from the sun,  
Where once he kissed me on the lips. I deem,  
In sooth, had there between them been but one  
Embrace so full of love, she had not then  
Bartered her lord to save a world of men.

Helpless I heard him thus betrayed to save  
A paltry city ! God's blood ! My lip through  
I set my teeth to keep back curses. Grave,  
To which we all go, I will lie in you  
And curse this Duchess till the bolt of God  
Must needs flame out and smite her to the sod !

What were a thousand mighty cities' fates  
To his? Would all the fair lands of Tuskaine  
Were wrapped in flame, and every city's gates  
Swarmed with invaders, so he might remain  
Safe in his high estate, and unafraid.  
It was his wife and not his love betrayed !

And then anon the King stayed the assault ;  
And I must see, who could not flee away  
As common wenches might, and hide, how Rolt,  
The Duke's first son, so like him one might say  
'One were the other save for odds of years,  
Delivered up the keys. Quick-springing tears

Blinded my eyes, till each fair burnished shield  
Wavered with swimming outline, one dull blur  
The brave device emblazoned on its field ;  
He was so like his father ; not of her,  
His treacherous mother, one remotest trace.  
He might have been my son for all his face !

'Gay as a garden bed where tulips crowd,  
The knights of the Round Table stood, with plume  
And helm, and shield, in gold and samite proud,

And scarves, fair ladies' tokens, like the bloom  
Of all the flowers shall spring in fair Tuskaine  
From graves of her brave sons these swords have slain.

And flutes and rebecks, tabor, pipe and lute,  
Made mellow all the air, their notes elate  
With insolence of victory ; as mute  
We came a second time in mournful state.  
While in a litter, hurt and wounded sore,  
To hear his doom pronounced the Duke they bore.

How his eyes shone ! While he could hold a spear  
He would not yield. I thrust a bodkin deep  
Into my palfrey's side, and reined her near  
The litter as she bounded. I shall keep  
The look he gave me long as life may last,  
And it shall warm my grave when life is past !

A prison is his guerdon. In his sleep,  
Dreaming of home, he hears the northern sea  
Beat on the walls of Dover's craggy steep ;  
And through his dungeon bars in autumn he  
May see the birds fly south toward Tuskaine,  
And long to follow them, — but long in vain.

But when his thoughts fly yearning to the south,  
It cannot be to her. He knows her guile ;  
Sure he must hate her false, thin-lipped, pale mouth,  
And shudder thinking on her cruel smile.  
God's blood ! He is no longer hers but mine ;  
We shall be one in death. · Toward that I pine !

THE BALLAD OF BLOODY ROCK.

**I**N that dread book where page by page  
God's angel writes from age to age  
All sins and woes, till time assuage,

This wrong is written, to arise  
Blood red before all waiting eyes  
At that last day of Great Assize.

---

High mountain walls the valley close,  
In midst a noble river flows,  
Fed from their crests' eternal snows.

Far up a mountain side juts bold  
A rocky platform, firm of hold  
By span of stone like drawbridge old.

Upon its drawbridge, nature's hand  
Of granite hewed, a paltry band  
Might bring an army to a stand.

Thence might a watcher plainly trace  
All the wide valley's smiling face,  
Where the Chumaia had their place.

A valley where fair rivers flow,  
Where pine-nuts and the wild grain grow,  
And dappled deer dart to and fro.

Where 'mid the river's rustling reeds  
The water fowl to plumpness feeds,  
And to sleek trout shakes down ripe seeds.

Of California's valleys fair  
None nature with more kindly care  
Did for her children wild prepare.

Well the Chumaia loved this land,  
Where the Great Spirit held their band  
As in the hollow of his hand.

Here in the mountain's friendly shade  
Had they their humble wigwams made,  
And here their dusky children played



In peace, with rude and childish game ;  
And life was good ; and but a name  
Misfortune, till the pale-face came.

•

And then long years of blood and flame,  
And a black record writ in shame,  
Till the proud tribe was scarce a name ;

And from a last despairing fight  
A broken remnant took its flight,  
Right crushed beneath the heel of might.

Wild children of the wilderness,  
Bewildered by their wrongs' excess,  
Bitter beyond human redress,

They fled through woodland mazes known,  
Save to the beasts, to them alone,  
Since once this forest was their own.

A broken band they frantic fled  
To Bloody Rock ; and from its head  
Looked downward in despair and dread.

So swift their flight they could not hide  
Their trail ; and up the mountain side  
A band of foemen fierce and tried,

Like sleuth-hounds tracking down their game,  
Greedy for blood their white foes came,  
With cruel rifles, sure of aim.

Relentless, pitiless they stood  
Amid the coverts of the wood,  
Grim smiling at their vantage good.

The leader to the bridge drew near  
And called their foe with bitter jeer,  
His hard alternatives to hear.

“ We have you in a trap,” his cry ;  
“ To choose the way that you shall die  
We give you leave. If you defy

“ Our offer, our guns’ skill you know ; —  
Either to starve in torments slow,  
Or leap to sudden death below.”

What madness or what wile of Fate  
Led them to Bloody Rock to wait  
The coming of incarnate hate?

Its fastness was a fatal snare.  
Prisoned they stood, environed there  
With walls impassable of air !

Their choice was that of heroes when  
They chose the leap. They proved them then  
That still were the Chumaia men.

They locked their hands. In dusky line  
The red men stood, courage divine  
In their stout hearts ; of fear no sign.

Shrill on the air their death-chant rose,  
And e'en the cold hearts of their foes  
Its anguished wail with horror froze.

One parting sunbeam redly played,  
Like an accusing finger laid  
On Bloody Rock, as the sun stayed

Its downward course to point the spot  
To God, that He forget it not  
Though all mankind this thing forgot.

And far below they turned their gaze  
To where the setting sun's long rays  
Shot through the valley's purple haze.

The valley that had been their world  
Stretched sweet below. Its faint mists curled  
With gleaming jewel tints impearled,

As fair as Paradise in dreams ;  
From its long interlacing streams,  
Their fevered eyes caught silver gleams.

Chanting their death-song, weird and high,  
They pierced the air with bitter cry,  
Singing farewell to earth and sky.

Two score they stood in the red glow, —  
So far the valley lies below  
Its giant oaks like sage-bush show. —

An instant on the verge they hung,  
While yet their quivering death-chant rung, —  
Then to the awful depths they sprung.

They were and were not, ere the eye  
Could turn aside. Their dying cry  
Hardly outstripped their souls on high.

Then a great silence ; such as falls  
When human woe the heart appalls,  
And death with awful warning calls.

The night mists through the valley spread ;  
Dim shadows hid the mountain's head : —  
Darkness and peace were o'er the dead.

---

Its finger red the sun lays yet  
On Bloody Rock ere it will set ;  
And paints the cliff as it were wet  
With blood. And God does not forget.

## THE POPLARS.

**I**N the blue twilight, all along the shore,  
The poplars stood and watched her as she went,  
And whispered there behind her, though before  
They were so still, save only that they bent  
To peer at what she hid beneath her cloak,  
The burden over which her heart had broke.

She heard their dreadful whispers each to each,  
Telling her secret, which she came to hide  
Under the sand ; their sinister, low speech  
That thrilled her through. And still the lapsing tide  
Repeated what they said, and cried her shame,  
And the dishonor of her ancient name.

It had seemed that the very worst to bear  
Would be Ralph's eyes, and the fierce curse of Guy ;  
But now these poplars, standing solemn there,

Seemed to know something worse than these, and high  
Above her head she felt them speak of her  
And hint some awful secret in each stir.

Shivering she hurried on her bitter way  
To where the tall cliffs overhung the strand ;  
Her burden in their shadow black to lay,  
Hiding it underneath the wave-beat sand.  
When suddenly she stumbled, while her gaze  
Was fixed in horror of a wild amaze.

She sank down blindly, stricken to the ground,  
Dropping the thing she carried ; and laid bare  
From the dark wrappings which had swathed it round,  
Her dead babe tumbled on the sand. Its fair  
White hand lay like an empty, wave-tossed shell  
Beside a dead man's cheek there where it fell.

This was the secret that the poplars knew !  
Standing there silently, what had they seen  
When Ralph and Guy rode homeward? If one slew  
A man there in their sight, with dagger keen,  
Although it was her love they would not move,  
Unless it were to nod, as who approve.

The whole world whirled around her — save that still  
The poplars in the twilight, gaunt and tall,  
Watched in cold calm as if they had their will.  
She should have known this evil would befall ;  
Now she remembered Ralph's half pitying glance  
And Guy's derisive, baleful look askance !

She seemed to see her brothers riding down,  
Their horses' hoof-beats on the treacherous sand  
Too stealthy to give warning ; Ralph afrown  
With bitter sadness, Guy with eager hand  
Already on his dagger, and a smile  
More sharp than curses in its cruel guile.

She saw her lover turn as he had turned  
That June day at the tourney, when her face  
Across the lists had yearned to him, and burned  
The distance from between them till the space  
Vanished away, and they seemed heart to heart,  
Despite the field which held them wide apart.

How could her knight, taken thus unaware  
Here on the sands, hold out against the twain ?  
She had prayed that they kill her, laying bare



Her aching bosom to the knife in vain.  
Their vengeance had been bitterer — to kill  
Her lover and to let her live on still !

And yet it seemed the poplars should have stayed  
The dreadful deed ! She sprang up bitterly  
And cursed them where they stood. Their tall forms  
swayed

In the blue twilight, and she heard the sea  
Repeating what they whispered each to each,  
Telling her shame in sinister, low speech.

## THE SWALLOW.

I DOFF my hat to the robin,  
And I fling a kiss to the wren,  
The thrush's song sets my heart throbbing,  
For it makes me a child again ;  
But when you wing your airy flight,  
My soul springs up to follow ;  
I would be one with you, and I might,  
For I love you, love you, swallow !

I hear the many-voiced chatter  
Under the barn's broad eaves,  
As clear as the rain's blithe patter,  
Or lisp of crisp poplar leaves ;  
I seem to learn the way to be glad,  
Earth's joys no more seem hollow ;  
He who would flee from musings sad  
Should learn to love you, swallow.

Your flight is a song that lifts me  
    A moment to upper air ;  
That with strangest power gifts me  
    To buoyantly match you there.  
How high soe'er your course may run,  
    My eager thought doth follow ;  
Together we might reach the sun,  
    For I love you, love you, swallow !

## REUNION.

“Has this been thus before?”

*Rossetti; “Sudden Light.”*

THIS hath all been before ; and thou and I  
Were all in all unto each other ;  
And yet, when first my eager eye  
In this life on thee fell, keen bliss did smother  
Old memories, till my dull heart deemed  
This our first meeting, as it seemed.

This shall all be again ; past other deaths  
New futures blest await us, dearest ;  
Though lives shall pass like fleeting breaths,  
In every parting still thou nearest. —  
But sure I must remember, sweet,  
All that has been, when next we meet !

THE FINISHED TASK.

WHEN life is done, that it is done, if well,  
Should sure be cause for joy, even to those  
Who o'er their task unfinished see its close  
Through eyes which burn with tears. We may not tell

By what divine adroitness it befell  
Another wrought so swift the work which shows  
The approving seal of Death, which for repose  
Sends the worn laborer to his strait cell.

Long is the task of life, though it be wrought  
By dextrous hand and brain divinely keen.  
What end of toil but is with joyance fraught?

Why make lament that those whose lives have been  
Most quickly finished will delay for naught,  
But haste from toil to the reward unseen?

## THE RETURN OF THE DEAD.

WHEN the dead return, 't is not in garments  
ghostly,  
And shapes like those in life they wore ;  
Not as vague phantoms shivering through the case-  
ments,  
Like fugitives from night's dim shore ;

Not with signs and omens fearful is their coming ;  
No outward sense their forms may mark ;  
To spirit prescience alone their spirits  
Call sweetly from the outer dark.

When the dead return, 't is as a blest conviction  
That fills like light the waiting soul ;  
It is but this ; and like the daylight fading  
It vanishes without control.

Yet who has felt this bliss no more can sorrow  
    Hold utterly within her sway ;  
He knows how sharp soe'er may be his anguish  
    It can endure but for a day !

## AND AFTER.

WHEN love has been a flower  
One smelled of and laid by,  
Or set in a glass  
Where he useth to pass  
Till it should fade and die ;  
Then one with time forgets it,  
And another flower contents ;  
Or, if he brief regrets it,  
'T is that it pleased his sense.

When love has been the throbbing  
Of one's own inmost heart ;  
The light of his eyes,  
The breath of his sighs,  
His soul's bliss and its smart ;  
Then love by life is measured,  
Since love and life are one ;  
Together they are treasured,  
Together they are done.



IN THE LIGHTHOUSE.

THE light in the lighthouse tower  
Goes round and round and round,  
Like a fiery eye which searches  
For that which is never found ;  
The sea, on the rocks beneath it,  
Calls still for what does not come ;  
While the heart of the lighthouse keeper  
Yearns ever, but ever is dumb.

The sea-birds dash on the lantern  
And fluttering die in the night,  
In useless, vain endeavor  
To reach the beacon light.  
The winds cry out forever  
For that which no quest may reach ;  
But the keeper's strong desire  
Is far too deep for speech.

Night after night in the lantern  
    He sets the light aglow ;  
Night after night complaining  
    He hears the waves below.  
He hears the wind's fierce crying  
    And the sea-bird's death-note shrill ;  
But the pain of his love's denial  
    He suffers and is still.

THE GREAT SPHINX.

WHERE sea and shore locked in a stern embrace,  
Like mighty wrestlers who strain knee and  
thigh

In mortal combat, a primordial race

Whose latest memory ages had let die  
Ages ago, builded the Sphinx, to stand

Watching that strife, impartial and sublime ;  
And on the wave-washed border of the land  
The Sphinx crouched like embodied time.

Slow inch by inch the land pressed back the sea

With mighty strain, till the Sphinx' listening ear  
The wave's hoarse roar heard faintly ; steadfastly

It fought the tides, as year dropped after year  
Like swift sands in the glass. Age followed age

As in the fervid sun melts morning's rime ;  
And still, eternity its heritage,

The Sphinx crouched like embodied time.

Men came and went ; race after race decayed ;  
Even the stars grew old, till here and there  
One paled and died ; a late-come people stayed  
To pile the pyramids, ere they should fare  
To tombs whose very stones are dust ; the gods  
Themselves fell from their many-templed prime ;  
While still in watchfulness nor sleeps nor nods,  
The Sphinx crouched like embodied time.

Farther away the battle fared, the shore  
Still straining every thew against the tide ;  
Till wide plains fertile lay where wide of yore  
The bitter water stretched but might not bide.  
Amid its sheen of emerald and gold  
A small stream crept, bred, like an asp, in slime ;  
Watching the new-born Nile wax broad and old,  
The Sphinx crouched like embodied time.

And men forgot the races who of eld  
Had in their turn forgotten that the sea  
Once laved the Sphinx's feet. Calm it beheld  
Monarchs arise, and reign, and cease to be ;  
Proud cities like mirages rise and fall ;  
Peace marred by war and virtue crossed with crime

And wisdom stained with folly ; seeing all  
The Sphinx crouched like embodied time.

And all the golden glory of the East  
Waxed 'round it till one matchless woman bloomed,  
Its perfect flower ; then swift as it increased  
Waned Egypt's greatness, in its flower doomed.  
Stealthy as its own lioness, the waste  
Pressed ever forward ; but with front sublime  
And motionless regard its bound'ry traced  
The Sphinx, crouched like embodied time.

The sand waves beat its feet as once the brine,  
But moved it not ; the hot, dry billows pressed  
Up to its throat, and could no more ; divine  
It stayed their ravage with its stony breast.  
Till sea and desert be no more, it stands  
In solitude superb, unmatched in age or clime ;  
Changeless as fate, while men waste like the sands,  
The Sphinx waits like embodied time.

## BY THE SEA.

**G**LITTERS the water with myriad stars  
That but flash as they flee ;  
Crossed is the heaven with milky bars,  
While, a russet band,  
The line of the land  
Cuts the pale blue sky from the steely sea.

Boats hurry by with the sun on their sails  
And the foam on their lee ;  
Yet all their speed as nothing avails  
To match the swift flight  
Of the fleet gulls, white  
'Gainst the pale blue sky and the steely sea.

Over the waves of a creek far remote,  
Like a dim memory,  
Steals some dark Indian in birchen boat ;  
And his bright blade dips  
Like a meteor that slips  
From the pale blue sky to the steely sea.

## NIGHT SONG.

I STOLE along through the dark,  
And I trembled for who might hear,  
As I followed the casement's spark  
That guided me to my dear.

*For I thrill with such rapturous pain,  
And the languor of keenest desire,  
To revive in thy smile again,  
And to glow with thy kisses' fire!*

The roses quivered with love  
Till their dew-wet petals fell,  
As I watched the dim lattice above  
For the signal I knew so well ;

*But the sweet, dusky night wastes away,  
And my love is all fervor and flame ;  
Oh, awake ere the moon betray, —  
Canst thou sleep when I murmur thy name !*

## POPE JOHN XXIII.

[BALTHAZAR COSSA.]

WITH bare feet brown as the dust he trod,  
He trudged toward Rome his sturdy way ;  
The while in childish treble shrill  
He trolled the ritornella gay :  
“ Oh, flower of the broom,  
How fleeting is youth's bloom !

“ And whither goest ? ” asked shepherd folk.  
Toward Rome he nodded curl-crowned head.  
“ And what wouldst thou with Rome ? ” they cried.  
“ I shall be Pope, ” he said.  
Oh, flower of the heath,  
What shall abash youth's faith ?

The soil of Rome is foul and rich,  
And fast grows what is sown therein ;  
Page, soldier, intriguer was he, —



Then was he priest absolving sin.  
Oh, flower of the rose,  
How oft with youth faith goes !

By ways of guile and ways of force,  
He rose the scarlet hat to wear ;  
Did he remember how he came  
With curl-crowned head and brown feet bare?  
Oh, flower of the thyme,  
What memories crowd life's prime !

Then the tiara crowned his head ;  
An emperor held his bridle-rein,  
Barefooted walking at his side ;  
And nobles sued for grace in vain.  
Oh, flower of the grass,  
Yet swiftly all things pass !

In pride and power he waxed, as if  
There were no end to rule and place ;  
Then death's hand touched him, and he got  
For all his might delay nor grace.  
Oh, flower of the quince,  
Forsooth, how fares he since ?

## GUILT.

ONCE in a dream, meseemed I fell  
Upon my foe and slew him ; then  
Standing beside his corse, felt swell  
Remorse so keen I waked again.

“It was a dream, my soul is clear,”  
I said, “since he is living yet.”  
“Not so,” my soul cried ; “guilt is here  
While you that he escaped regret !”

ENCOUNTER.

**T**WO spirits swirled along the vast,  
Meeting, each other clutched in fear ;  
While each his woe outbreathed, aghast  
The other's bitter plaint to hear.

“Alas !” one mourned, “from bridal bliss  
Death tore me, newly wed this morn.”  
The other wailed : “Far worse than this  
My pain ; I hasten to be born !”

## WHEN FIRST LOVE COMES.

(RONDEAU.)

WHEN first love comes, this stranger guest  
Youth little knows, as in his breast  
Keen thrills he feels, half bliss, half pain.  
Yet not for worlds would he again  
Return to the old quiet blessed.

Such pleasure dwells in this unrest,  
This ecstasy he counts the best  
Of all life's savors sweet or vain,  
When first love comes.

And still with longing unrepressed  
Backward does age look, dispossessed,  
When of youth's fervors none remain  
And all its gracious hopes are slain ;  
Remembering with sighs life's zest  
When first love comes.

*SLEEP.*

## I.

**O**H, Sleep, how soft thy kiss ; how cool and sweet  
The touch of thy pale hand upon the brow  
That throbs with pain. All else grows old ; but thou  
Art ever young. He who pursued thee fleet

In youth's hot flush, no less before thy feet  
In palsied age a suppliant comes to bow.  
To thee, though thus forsworn, love pays its vow ;  
Thy kiss consoles the vanquished for defeat,

And is best bliss the conqueror obtains.  
Night shows the sorrowing one thy silken tent,  
And in thine arms doth he forget his pains.

Though fortune frown, refusing to relent,  
If thou art kind, the best of life remains,  
And we despair only when from thee rent.

## II.

So dear thou art, so passing sweet and fair,  
Not even Egypt's dusky queen had spell  
Potent as thine — or schemed with wiles as fell !  
How prodigal the heart thou dost ensnare !

How dearly buy we each endearment rare ;  
How lavishly for every kiss we tell  
Its price in golden time sands, knowing well  
The bitter poverty that we must bear.

We give thee all that is, all that may be,  
All that has been, nor once the price regret,  
Since worthless were it all bereft of thee.

We know thee cruel as the grave, and yet  
Our love pour out as lavish as the sea,  
Since none save thee can teach us to forget !

FROM A SKETCH-BOOK.

AFTER THE STORM.

OVER the green and purple bay  
Like eager gulls the white crests flock ;  
Like wild gray falcon, bent on prey,  
The fleet boat speeds and spreads dismay,  
Till they rush to death on the shore's black rock.

A SUNSET.

The lighthouse floats on the milky sea,  
As if it were hung in air ;  
The setting sun all crimson flames,  
While, unwarmed by its glare,  
The moon sails high  
In the dimming sky,  
Of every cloud-fleck bare.

## THE CLIFF.

Peaked, ebon ledges, with shining spray powdered,  
Showers of pearls from some Titan's great hands ;  
Cliffs gray and sombre, and gaunt forests spectral ;  
White gulls like memories of far-away lands.

## A SOUTHERN SUNSET.

The palmettoes tall against a sky  
Of saffron and rose and pearl  
Stand as if cut from jade. The shadows lie  
About their feet, where black roots curl  
Like water-snakes that writhe and coil  
Out of the water thick and smooth as oil.

With eyes hand-shaded looks the quadron girl  
Across the lake's smooth sheen, bespread  
With faint reflected clouds of gray and red ;  
While like the spirit of the coming night  
The heron wings on high his sullen flight.



AN AFTERNOON.

So blue the sea that all the sky looks pale,  
And white as snow the fleet yacht's rounded sail ;  
And white as snow along the black reef's line  
The breaker's curling edges gleam and shine ;  
While dark against the sky, against the bay,  
The gnarled boughs of a tall pine writhe and sway.

NIGHTFALL.

In red and brown the sun goes down,  
In crimson cloud and sombre rack ;  
A crescent moon, new-born since noon,  
The smooth sea mirrors back.

UNDER THE MOON.

The wavelets edge themselves with flame  
As the dark tide turns to flow  
In molten silver under the moon,  
Over the sands of snow :

As if the seething sea in rage  
Foamed with a spume of fire  
Thus to be baffled by the land,  
Burning in futile ire.

OFF IRELAND.

Rocks furred with the velvety heather  
As brown as the dun deer's horns in the spring ;  
Where the sea-birds, like bees in June weather  
That hum 'round the hive, on untiring wing  
Hover in clouds of gray ;  
While far below,  
The wavering line of spray  
Rims the cliff's foot with snow,  
Where restless waves their foam-wreaths fling,  
And isle and ocean melt together.

THE INSCRUTABLE SEA.

Flashes innumerable come and go,  
Teasing the sun-god burning for love's blisses,  
As the sea warmed with ardor to his kisses ;

Yet on their way remorseless down below  
Sweep the fell currents with untiring motion,  
Hid by the sparkles which bewitching glow,  
The Mona Lisa smile of the ocean.

A MARCH DAY.

A single boat lies on the glass-smooth bay.  
As gray the water as spun flax ; and gray  
The sky as smoke ; and gray as moss-grown stone  
Crumbling on some old grave, forgot and lone,  
The shore and boat and tree,  
The stretches of beaches,  
The long sandy reaches,  
The wavering dunes, and the wide, windy sea.

## HARUN.

ABU, the sage, master among the wise,  
Said to his pupil, Harun :

“To their end  
Flow all my years. When death shall close my eyes,  
To thee my mantle and my rule descend.

“In token of thy mission shall be thine  
Three wishes. See that thou art wise in choice,  
That thou the very heart of truth divine,  
Since thou must teach when dust hath choked my  
voice.”

“Master,” quoth Harun, “be first boon to stand  
In thought upon the farthest star man’s sight  
May eager reach when, on the desert’s sand,  
His vision yearns through the abyss of night.”

The master bowed assent. Straightway a trance  
Wrapped Harun’s sense, passed him and left him  
free.

“What sawest thou?” asked Abu.

“The advance  
Of mote-thick stars down the immensity.”

The master smiled.

“Thy second boon,” he said.

“In thought to stand upon that star the last  
My vision conquered.”

Abu bent his head ;  
This too was granted, and the vision passed.

“What sawest thou?”

“As thick as dust when high  
By the simoon the desert sands are swirled,  
The stars hang in the void, far as the eye  
Could pierce the gloom, each one a perfect world.”

“Thy third wish?” Abu said.

“Once more to look  
From that last star which trembled, far and dim,  
Upon my vision’s utmost verge.”

Scarce shook  
The master’s beard of snow, ere unto him

This too had come, — and passed. With eyes as quick  
As youthful lover's, set 'neath brows of snow,  
Still Abu asked :

“What sawest thou?”

“Stars thick  
As thoughts of mortals which no number know

“Reach on down the illimitable dread.”

“Now of the boon that thou hast reached the span,  
What hast thou gained?”

“The secret,” Harun said ;  
“The heart of truth, — the nothingness of man !”

A REMINISCENCE.

**I**N that time, ten centuries back,  
When I was an Eastern king,  
I was weary of life for lack  
Of a love that could comfort bring.

And a girl with breath like nard,  
With sleek, long limbs, and eyes  
Which glowed like the eyes of a pard  
In the jungle that drowsy lies,

Came and danced in the torches' glow  
Till once more there was savor in life ;  
And my sluggish blood had the flow  
Of youth with its passionate strife.

When the irksomeness of to-day  
Seems more than my soul can endure,  
On a sudden the time melts away,  
And my heart, like a hawk to its lure,

Flies back to that night long past,  
In the centuries set like a star ;  
For a moment I hold her fast,  
In that antique world afar.

I feel her warm, sweet breath  
And her burning lips on mine,  
And the fluttering heart which death  
Has scattered in dust on the wind.

A moment — and then to-day  
Comes back all dull and stale ;  
As the vision fades away  
Like the breath of a finished tale.

And if I shall find her again  
In the centuries yet to see,  
Who knoweth ; or if in vain  
Forever my quest must be ?



THE ADVANCE.

WITH the thunder of legions the army advances,  
With hoarse clangor of trumpets and clamor  
of drums ;

With hot prancing of horses and glancing of lances,  
And with wild, tingling bugle-notes onward it comes !  
Who remembers his babes at his wife's knee soft  
prattling,

Or who sighs that afar weeps his mother white-haired,  
Now that empty of steel every scabbard is rattling  
And with glitter foreboding each sword flashes  
bared !

There was yesterday love, there 'll be fame for to-  
morrow —

But to-day there is neither ; the need of the hour  
Has o'erwhelmed all beside, and nor pleasure nor  
sorrow

Nor the heart's dearest hope now has meaning or  
power.

It is but the mad zeal to beat down yonder foemen  
Now possesses all souls as a flame wraps a pyre ;  
'That now thrills every fibre of leaders and yeomen,  
With a wild, awful rage in which mingles no ire.

Men no longer are men, but of one force gigantic  
Is each warrior a part, yearning forward to slay ;  
As resistless the tide sweeps the mighty Atlantic  
Sweep the columns along on their blood-flooded way.  
And the blare of the trumpets, with clash of arms  
vying,  
Shrieks on high for a carnage shall glut e'en Death's  
maw ;  
While the cries of the trampled, turned human in  
dying,  
Fall on ears deaf to prayers, — for, oh, God ! this  
is war !

LOVE IS A KNAVE.

RONDEAU.

LOVE is a knave ; he plucks a rose  
Or twines a curl, — and toys like this  
He spreads to snare fond hearts ; he knows  
How little else than light breath goes  
To vows and bubbles both, I wis.

The most bewitching airs he blows  
On sweet-voiced pipes ; while promised bliss,  
Pledged with no sure fruition, shows  
Love is a knave.

Sweet, to deprive us of repose,  
Love weaves his schemes ; but, naught amiss,  
We laugh to scorn his threatened woes,  
And cry, with warmest clasp and kiss,  
“ Love is a knave ! ”

## PULPIT ROCK.

NAHANT.

WHEN the tide comes in, cooing and wooing  
sweet

With soft, fond kisses in the summer noon,  
And lays largess of treasures at its feet,

Sea-wrack and shells and every gracious boon  
Love can devise — passionless and austere  
The gray rock stands, and will not see or hear.

When the tide comes in in wrath of winter  
night,

Beating with giant hands, and shouting hoarse  
Like viking in berserker rage, and might

Of all the whirlwinds rushing from their source —  
Untouched alike by anger or by fear,  
Steadfast the rock abides the tempest drear.

Well were it for the heart unmoved to brave  
The bitter storms of fate which fierce assail ;  
To see the welkin darken with the wave  
Over its head, yet steadfast to prevail ; —  
But better be fate's slave, than cold and dumb  
When love's sweet tides in fond persuasion come !

## TO A SLIPPER.

WHEN my great-great-great-grandmamma  
Was but a maid of sweet sixteen,  
This slipper, faded now and frayed,  
Was hers in pride of satin sheen.

'T hath danced in stately minuet,  
And as it twinkled in and out  
Beneath her brocade petticoat  
'T hath tortured many a heart, no doubt.

It hath a high, unsteady heel,  
And such a piquant, pointed toe,  
That with a strangely mincing gait,  
She must have been constrained to go.

Yet I doubt not her powdered hair  
And glancing eyes accorded well  
With these same marionette-like steps,  
And made her lovers' bosoms swell.

My dear great-great-great-grandmamma  
Long since was clothed in heavenly guise ;  
For 'spite this slipper frivolous  
She walked this world in godly wise.

And as she strays through Paradise  
With golden sandals, jewelled clear,  
Sure she must smile, if she recall  
This slipper that she danced in here.

## IN TULIPEE.

WHEN the pulse of spring stirs in the blood  
And blithe birds northward soar ;  
When bough and heart begin to bud,  
Though old they be, and hoar ;  
'T is then, in the hush which morning brings,  
A sound long gone in memory rings ;  
As of old I listening seem to be  
To the tinkling mule-bells of Tulipee.

When the morning star begins to fade,  
And day's pink finger-tips  
On the edge of Heaven's gate are laid,  
Before she through it slips, —  
'T is then the mule-bells ringing clear  
My inner sense so well can hear ;  
Till again the palm-girt walls I see  
Where winds the road through Tulipee.

There was one palm bent like a bow  
That leaned above a wall,



That its long shadow, moving slow,  
    To tell the hours let fall ;  
And one knew when it reached so far  
Would Nina take her water-jar  
    Down to the fountain gurgling free  
    By the river Lisa in Tulipee.

A line of shapes in the morning dim  
    Went the muleteers their way  
To where on the broad bay's silver rim  
    The city waiting lay ;  
And as under my lattice they passed along  
Each morn I waked to hear their song,  
    For it seemed a message to bring to me  
    From her nest they passed in Tulipee.

Oh, long are the years have fled since then,  
    And cold are the skies above ;  
Little this sombre north doth ken  
    Of the zest of a tropic love.  
But when spring comes, I glow again  
With the old time fires of bliss and pain ;  
    All life hath left I would give to be  
    Young, and with Nina in Tulipee !

---

## A FLOWER CYCLE.

TO G. W. C.

## I.

## THE CROCUS.

**B**RAVE crocus, out of time and rash,  
You come when skies are all amorn and chill ;  
Too soon to find how cruel hail can dash,  
And bitter winds can kill.

You are like early loves, most sure,  
Which die so soon in this world's nipping air ;  
Your mission like to theirs, — not to endure,  
But to make springtime fair.

## II.

## THE TRILLIUMS.

“Wake, robin ! Wake, robin !” the trilliums call,  
Though never a word they say ;

“Wake, robin! Wake, robin!” while bud-sheaths  
fall,  
And violets greet the day.

The soft winds bring the spring again,  
The days of snow are done ;  
The stir of life 's in every vein,  
And warmly shines the sun.

The trillium stars are white as milk,  
They beckon as they swing ;  
The trillium's leaves are soft as silk,  
They make the robins sing.

Soon all the hill and all the dale  
Shall once again be gay ;  
When trilliums from the tree-set vale  
Open their cups to-day.

“Wake, robin! Wake, robin!” the trilliums cry,  
Though never a sound they make ;  
“Wake, robin! Wake, robin!” till wings whirl by,  
And robins sing for their sake.

## III.

## THE WATER LILY.

Where the dark waters lave,  
Where the tall rushes wave,  
Safe from rude winds that rave,  
    Floats the fair lily ;  
White as my sweetheart's breast,  
Pure as her dreamings blest,  
Lying in cradled rest,  
    When night is stilly.

Oft wooing comes the bee  
On light wings eagerly,  
Leaving the pleasant lea  
    Luscious with clover ;  
Then to her heart of gold,  
'Mid petals half unrolled,  
Fond doth the lily fold  
    The amorous rover.

Sweetheart, within thine arms  
Fold me with all thy charms,

Safe from more rude alarms  
    Than thy heart's beating.  
Let the sweet lily be  
Emblem for thee and me ;  
Be thou as kind as she  
    In thy fond greeting !

IV.

THE WILD-BRIAR.

The wild-briar dabbles his finger-tips  
    In the wine till they are red ;  
Then over the hedge he climbs and slips,  
And kisses the wild rose on the lips  
    Till blushing she bows her head.

The wild-briar clammers from spray to spray,  
    For an ardent wooer he ;  
But once he has won, he hastes away,  
Nor tears nor prayers avail to stay  
    His fickle fancy free.

The wild-briar riots the thicket through,  
    Like a wanton, lusty faun ;

He strings for the cedar berries blue,  
 He vows to the alder homage true,  
 He sighs to woo the dawn !

For the fire of love and the fire of youth  
 Fill his veins with zest divine ;  
 Till winter has seized him without ruth,  
 And thickets are bare ; oh, then, in sooth,  
 He longs for spring's glad wine !

## V.

## THE COLUMBINE.

Gay in her red gown, trim and fine,  
 Dances the merry columbine.  
 Never she thinks if her petals shall fall ;  
 Cold rains beating she does not dread ;  
 Sunshine is round her and spring birds call,  
 Blue are the skies above her head.  
 So in her red gown, trim and fine,  
 Merrily dances the columbine.

Blithe with her white throat, smooth and fine,  
 Dances the careless columbine.

If she coquets with the wandering bee,  
When he goes does she toss her head ;  
Heart-whole and frolicsome still is she,  
Lovers enough she finds instead.  
So with her white throat smooth and fine,  
Carelessly dances the columbine.

Bright in her coronet, golden and fine,  
Dances the mocking columbine.  
Gay is she still, whatsoever befall,  
Loveless wanton, on pleasure bent ;  
Now is her moment, her day, her all ; —  
Where will she be when it is spent ?  
Then will be dust all her coronet fine ;  
Dust, only dust, mocking columbine.

## VI.

## THE FOXGLOVE.

In grandmamma's garden in shining rows,  
The box smells sweet as it trimly grows ;  
The sun-dial quaint the hours tells,  
'Mid foxgloves tall with spotted bells ;

And all is dear, and all is fair,  
As childhood's self had dwelling there.

In grandmamma's garden a child I played  
With naught save bees to make afraid ;  
I counted the spots on the foxglove's cheek,  
And knew it could tell, if it would but speak,  
How cunning fairies painted them  
And made each like a shining gem.

In grandmamma's garden the foxgloves gay  
With every wind would nod and sway ;  
Full well I knew that they were wise,  
And watched with childhood's eager eyes  
To see them whisper each to each,  
And catch the secrets of their speech.

In grandmamma's garden still I walk,  
And still the foxgloves seem to talk.  
Their speech not yet my manhood learns,  
But when I see them youth returns ;  
I wonder at them still in vain,—  
But with them am a child again.



VII.

THE CARDINAL FLOWER.

When days are long and steeped in sun  
The brown brooks loiter as they run,  
    And lingering eddy as they flow  
    Full loth to leave the meadows low ;  
For then the cardinal, ablaze  
With splendid fires, their fancy stays.

Like a tall Indian maiden, dressed  
In scarlet robes, with tranquil breast  
    That ne'er has known love's humbling thrall  
    But haughty queens it over all,  
The flower her image mirrored throws,  
While proud as beautiful she glows.

She sees the speckled trout dart by,  
And swift-winged flit the dragon-fly  
    Over the brook's smooth waters dun ;  
    Naught doth she heed them, all or one ;  
Even the sun-god when he woos  
With proud indifference she views.

The saucy swallow darts athwart  
The topaz brook, but wins him naught  
Of notice from the haughty queen.  
    Wrapped in her beauteous self, serene  
She dwells alone, untouched by praise,  
Through the brief splendor of her days.

## VIII.

## THE LUPINE.

Ah, lupine, with silvery leaves  
    And blossoms blue as the skies,  
I know a maid like thee,  
    And blue, too, are her eyes.  
Gray as a nun's her dress ;  
    How lowly,  
    And holy .  
Her mien, cannot mere words express.

Fair lupine, the dew-drop shines  
    A gem night gives to thee ;  
So pure her radiant soul  
    Within her breast must be.

Like thee, she dwells alone ;  
    All sweetness,  
    And meetness,  
As in thyself in her are known.

Ah, lupine, I pluck thy bloom,  
    But how her grace may I win?  
So pure, so fair, is she  
    My suit may not begin  
Unless I send thy flower  
    To prove her,  
    And move her,  
Me with her priceless love to dower !

IX.

THE MEADOW RUE.

The tall white rue stands like a ghost  
    That sighs for days departed,  
Ere life's woes gathered like a host  
    And sorrow's tears had started.  
And 't is, oh, to be a child again  
    Where meadow brooks are playing,

Where the long grass nods with sound like rain  
To south wind through it straying !  
Oh, the rue grows tall and fair to see ;  
Sweet ' herb of grace ' and memory.

The white rue trembles as it stands,  
As if some spirit seeing,  
As if it yearned toward unseen hands —  
Some loved one near, but fleeing.  
And 't is, oh, to taste lost youth once more,  
When well-loved lips were meeting ;  
When the heart was light that now is sore,  
Nor dreamed love's bliss is fleeting.  
Oh, the rue grows tall and fair to see ;  
Sweet ' herb of grace ' and memory.

## X.

## THE JASMINE.

The soft, warm night wind flutters  
Up from the dim lagoon,  
While the timorous shadows hide them  
From the red new-risen moon ;

The scent of the jasmine lingers  
Like a languorous pain divine,  
Till the night-moth reels in its fragrance,  
Drunken as if with wine.  
Oh, jasmine fair ;  
Oh, southern night most rare !

The warm air beats with passion  
As some hot bosom throbs,  
While an amorous night-bird murmurs,  
As its bliss found vent in sobs ;  
The breath of the jasmine pulses,  
It comes and goes on the wind ;  
Could one climb o'er its lattice  
What bliss might he not find !  
Oh, jasmine blest ;  
What dreams of cradled rest !

A spark from the casement flickers,  
And touches the jasmine's bloom,  
Till the blossoms glow like star gems  
As they gleam in the fragrant gloom.  
I know not what breath from their chalice  
Has stirred my soul like wine,

Till I reel like the drunken night-moth  
With love's keen pain divine.  
Oh, jasmine sweet,  
Why speeds the night so fleet?

## XI.

## THE PURPLE ASTER.

When the brown birds take flight and hot summer is  
over,  
When leaves fall fluttering down from the trees,  
When the sweet flowers fade, and the bee, wanton  
rover,  
Safe hid at home takes his honey-fed ease ;  
Then comes all alone, and unmindful of summer,  
The stanch purple aster, with goodliest cheer ;  
And blithe is the heart of the sturdy late comer  
That blooms all alone in the bleak of the year.

With its messages brave all the lorn meadows cheering,  
It lifts its chalices up to the sky ;  
As in promises sure that the chill winter nearing,  
Must yield its sway to the spring by-and-by.

Its heart is of gold, and sweet faith is the burden  
Its blossoming teaches when hope seems to flee ;  
Small love or reward does it win as its guerdon,  
Yet fails not its cheer though the skies clouded be.

When the shrill, merry horn of the hunter is sounding,  
And hounds are baying from valley to hill ;  
When the hot, panting stag in his flight hurries  
bounding,  
While speeds the hunt with a turbulent will ;  
Then the frosts come at night, and the aster drops  
slowly  
Its pale, purple petals, like flakes, one by one ;  
Till all its brave beauty lies scattered and lowly,  
And shrivels to dust 'neath the cold autumn sun.

## FRAGRANCE.

A FANTASIA.

NOT all the sensuousness of melting sound  
Can move our being as sweet fragrances  
Steal with insinuations delicate  
Into the mind. The lute's low melody,  
Plaintive as love ; the organ's reverent tone ;  
The horn's inspiring blast ; the wild appeal  
Of hautboys sentient of all life's deep pain ;  
The eager clamor of the drum's fierce beat ;  
Touch, thrill, or rouse, yet leave us still ourselves.

But who has breathed the scent of violets  
And not that moment been some lover glad  
That to his love is clasped in heavenly kiss ;  
Who smelled the earth new turned, and not a space  
Been the blithe husbandman robust and free ;  
Who drunk the perfume of the ripening grape  
Like wine, nor straightway felt himself a god ?



All memories, or sad or piercing sweet,  
Come on the wings of fragrance ; all desire  
Wakes at its bidding with resistless stress ;  
Old dreams are in its keeping ; youth and love  
Wait on its will, and not the thoughts which serve  
Their sweet behests move with more subtile law,  
Swifter or more mysteriously.

The sea

Sends its compelling message on the wind  
In scent of brine, and who may say it nay.  
The woods their odors balsamic breathe out  
As slow swung censers all the minster fill  
With fume of incense, and who strays therein  
Forgets the world and fame and love and gold.  
The sudden breath of some old fragrance long  
Remembered, our lost youth gives back again ;  
And only by this mystic alchemy  
Is the past from its ashes recreate.

What song of siren, over the hushed waves  
Persuasive wooing to the yearning ear  
Of mariners long storm-tossed, wins his sense  
Like wafts of perfume from some isle of spice,

Seductive telling of groves dimly lit  
With green light filtered through dark cassia boughs,  
And honeyed hushes 'twixt the birds' low lays?  
Of more delights than sense can speak they hint ;  
And weary wanderings on the bitter brine,  
The toilsome oar, the stinging wind, the wave  
Insatiate hounding down its cowering prey,  
Are all forgotten in that luring spell.

What ecstasy of sense is like to that  
One breathes in walking through the bosky way  
Of the fresh woods in June? Odor of pines,  
The heavy sweetness which the barberry pours,  
And the divine aroma of the bloom  
Of wild grapes matted o'er some rustic wall,  
Or eglantine, mingling its spicy smell  
With that of luscious honeysuckle horns.

What vague romances old flit through the brain  
When on the air rich scents are shaken out  
From Orient stuffs wrought with dull gold and silks  
Dim with a hundred hues. All the fair time  
Of great Alraschid seems to live again,

And dreams are real. Was not that sound the note  
Of flutes contending with the nightingale?  
Did not a signal taper's welcome spark  
A moment from the loved one's lattice gleam?

Something there is more sublimate in scent  
Than in aught else of which our earthly sense  
Has cognizance. It trembles on the line  
Which marks where spirit doth with matter blend.  
Angels might talk with fragrances for speech  
As we with sounds; and truth so deep and high  
Words cannot compass it, might be outbreathed  
In perfumes, had we gift to understand.

Here an uncomprehended mystery,  
There may be worlds where, its deep secret guessed,  
It is the key which shall make all things plain!

## DEATH AND LOVE.

ONCE Death in malice cruel sought to slay  
Love the immortal, and with poison dart  
Smote down a bright-winged cherub in my heart ;  
And came in glee again upon a day

To gloat above the corse, and mocking say :  
“ Aha ! how desolate and lone thou art !  
Where is the balm shall ease thee of this smart ?  
Rise up, and make a grave and there Love lay.”

And I, for answer, bade him turn and gaze  
Where in my heart, as in a hallowed shrine,  
Sat Love in deathless state. With sore amaze,

He cried, “ I surely slew this god of thine ! ”  
“ Love cannot die,” I said. “ It lives always.  
Thy stroke slew Passion, but not Love divine ! ”

BEREAVEMENT.

**L**IKE a star that on water wind-vexed  
Its tremulous image has thrown,  
So over my soul, grief-perplexed,  
Thy radiant presence has shone.

But as clouds shut the stars from man's sight  
Has death closed between us. Below  
Surge the billows in blackness of night. —  
Of the star lost to view who may know?

## THE LOVE OF THE DEAD.

**W**OFUL and desolate beyond all word  
A ghost bent o'er her sleeping child ;  
With mother-passion all her being stirred  
To bear it on her breast through Noland wild.

But by the child the father slumbering lay,  
And her name murmured in his sleep.  
With bitter moan she turned and fled away ;  
A double loss she could not make him weep.

THE SPHINX.

AGES unsolved my question waits  
A nobler race with broader span ;  
My riddle Œdipus guessed not,  
He but rephrased it — “ man.”

A higher race the doubt must solve  
As man of brute or plant doth learn ;  
As brute to man, so man to these  
Who shall the secret's core discern.

Till then unmoved I silent brood  
With smile half pity and half scorn ;  
With cold contempt I see men die,  
But pity wakes when men are born.

CHOPIN'S NOCTURNE IN G MINOR.

Faint through the twilight hazes  
    Shimmers one palpitant star ;  
Faint through the woodland mazes  
    The Angelus sounds afar.

Only the brook's murmur golden  
    Falls on the wanderer's ear ;  
Voices of memories olden  
    The soul holds breath to hear.

Voices of joy and sorrow  
    Vanished and far away  
As the dawn of the sun-bathed morrow  
    Seems from this dying day,

When faint through the twilight hazes  
    Shimmers eve's palpitant star ;  
And faint through the woodland mazes  
    The Angelus dies afar.



A SONG OF TOKENS.

I.

WHEN the spring on the hills sets her sandaled  
feet lightly  
And with honeyed breath hastens the wasting of  
snows,  
Amid thickets where lately the frost stars shone  
brightly  
There a flower all peerless awakens and grows.  
The cold memory of drifts and the promise of summer  
Are commingled to one in the lovely new comer,  
Till in union of snows and of rose the spring knows  
How her own splendid flower the kalmia blows.

II.

When the summer in state hides her pulse's hot  
tingling  
Under robes of rich verdure and jewel-like sheen,

When her pride and her passion upbound in their  
mingling,

Is the sign of her mood in a flower still seen.

From the cool brooks it rises, and burns 'mid the  
rushes

Like a flame springing upward to outsoar the thrushes.

All love's poignant, fierce pain, sweet and vain, bliss  
and bane,

In the cardinal summer embodies amain.

### III.

When the autumn sits pensive, and calls back with  
sighing

All the dear lost delights of the days that are dead,  
Half unconscious she weaves from the hues that are  
dying

On the hill and the lake, one last wreath for her  
head.

Of faint purple and gold are the blossoms she chooses,  
For the hope that she holds and the joy that she loses ;  
And the first frosts surprise her with eyes where tears  
rise,

While a garland of asters upon her brow dies.

IV.

When the winter comes slowly with footsteps that  
linger .

All along the lone way where his loved ones have  
trod,

Not one blossom or bud does his chill, numbing finger

Set to shine upon bush or the meadow's brown sod.

Far too deep is his grief to be shown by such token,

And he covers from sight all his hopes fond and

broken ;

For when grief is most deep, then must weeping still

steep

The sad soul, till to silence at last death adds sleep.

## A MAN'S REPROACH.

WHEN into my life you came  
    You gave me no promise, yet still  
Dare I charge on you the shame  
    Of a pledge you have failed to fulfil.

Said not each tone of your voice,  
    Said not each look of your eye,  
"Measure my truth at your choice ;  
    No means of proof I deny" ?

Was it for nothing your glance  
    Held itself, flame pure, to mine ?  
Needed there speech to enhance  
    The strength of its promise divine ?

Was there no pledge in that smile,  
    Dazzling beyond all eclipse ?  
Only God measures your guile  
    When you could lie with those lips !

You fail me, in spite of it all,  
And smile that no promise you break.  
No word you have need to recall ;  
Your self is the vow you forsake !

## A BIRTH-CHANCE.

A WOMAN lay in travail,  
While the candle by her bed  
Burned down toward its socket ;  
And Fate, with fine smile, said :

“ If the candle live to light him  
Let the boy's life joyful be ;  
But let him be born to sorrow  
If its gleam he do not see.”

Slowly the anguished moments  
One after one went by,  
Till the wan flame died in darkness, —  
And there followed the babe's birth-cry !

## FORWARD!

LIVE swiftly, that thy slow years may not falter  
    Dragging dull feet along time's weary way ;  
In quick succession let emotions alter,  
    And crowd the life of years into a day ;  
They miss the secret who with trifles palter  
    And dally idly when they fleet should run.  
Be thy course as of splendid comet wheeling  
    Its matchless march onward from sun to sun ;  
Waymarks along our path are throes of feeling,  
    Who soonest lives them through is swiftest speeding  
    Along the road to loftiest being leading.

Forward! If through pain's thorns thy pathway  
    leadeth  
    'T were surely best to hasten to be done.  
If in joy's meads, yet linger not ; he speedeth  
    To fuller bliss who spurns the meaner one.  
As the hot runner not an instant heedeth  
    What lies anear so that the goal be far,

So let thy race unslacking be and breathless,  
Thy goal as distant as the farthest star ;  
In haste forsake the dying for the deathless ;  
Be in an instant old, and youth's endeavor  
Leave far behind in flight toward the Forever.

Only if love's cup to thy lip be lifted, —  
Love sweet and cruel as an altar flame, —  
Be thou with this supremest guerdon gifted,  
Drink reverently, as men the sacred Name  
Pronounce, and slowly, slowly as are shifted  
The stars eternal in their lofty place ;  
So slowly that no precious drop be wasted,  
No subtlest flavor fail to yield its grace.  
Who fully this divinest cup has tasted  
Knows in the draught all life's true worth and  
blessing, —  
His moments more than loveless years progressing.



A REMORSE.

SHE was a milk-white nun  
With a soul like night's first star ;  
Sturdy and fleet my steed  
That carried us fast and far.  
But something in her eyes  
Prayed me my will forego,  
And all beguiling lies  
Met with a sacred "No."

So I spoke naked truth,  
And said : " Our love is crime  
That will smirch your swan-white soul  
Blacker than hell's own grime."  
So I said : " The price soul-wreck,  
Will you buy love's blisses so ?"  
And she clung about my neck  
And wept, though she said " No."

God knows I did not lie,  
    Yet was I sore to blame  
That I kissed her yearning lips  
    As a flame melts into a flame ! . . .  
In anguish of self-scorn  
    Slowly my black years go ;  
But first remorse was born  
    When she unsaid that " No."

TO MY INFANT SON.

**I**N what fair land you dwelt before you came  
To this our earth, truly I cannot tell ;  
But much I fear you hold yourself to blame  
When you reflect, and doubt if you did well  
So far to range. What wild caprice did move you  
On quest so rash as changing worlds to prove you?

Much of that world I wonder, while I try  
Still to discover in your speech or mien  
Some clue its place or sort may signify.

I surely something of that land unseen  
May gather if I do but watch you shrewdly,  
Although, perchance, I form my guesses crudely.

It must a region be of sweetest clime  
And wholesome air that one so fair has bred ;  
It much misheartens me that this world's grime

Your milk-white soul may smirch ere all be said.  
Brought you no amulet or magic token  
By which all spells of evil may be broken?

That you were wise with wisdom of that land  
Your canny winsomeness full well doth show ;  
Though some strange vow I cannot understand  
Has sealed your lips from telling what you know.  
No hint can I beguile from your discretion  
To give me of its lore the least impression.

I am assured by your right regal air  
You were a prince therein, of sway supreme ;  
Sooth, it behooves me speak Your Highness fair  
Against the day you shall your crown redeem !  
I pray consider, if at times I thwart you,  
'T is but that useful lessons may be taught you.

Belike from your superior heights you deem  
Much that I count of weight but little worth ;  
To you, no doubt, as idle fardels seem  
The things men strive for in this gurlly earth.  
But do not by your former standards measure ;  
These are the best we know of worth or pleasure.

Had we the knowledge renders you so wise,  
We too, mayhap, would all these trifles scorn ;  
Would hold earth's honors as the emptiest lies,  
Its gains as windle-straws trampled forlorn.  
Yet, certes, we already hold them lightly ;  
Sad were our case to rate them yet more slightly.

Methinks I was a fool that your sweet speech,  
When first you came, I did not strive to learn,  
But cumbered rather mine to you to teach,  
When surely yours had better served your turn,  
If you were minded any hints to scatter  
Of the hid way you came, or such high matter.

They much must miss you in your former place ;  
It chills my heart to think how lorn and sad  
Would be the home had known, but lost, your grace.  
Prithee consider, fair sojourning lad,  
How little able I to live without you,  
And slip not back, even should fortune flout you.

Some time, it may be, fate will be so kind  
As passports to us both at once to send ;  
And I myself your guest, perhaps, may find,

And watch you as you debonairly bend  
To the glad plaudits of your subjects loyal,  
Half mad with joy to greet their master royal.

Ah, well ; if so it fall, though I should be  
Far from the throne set in the lower ranks,  
Yet I at least your kingly state may see,  
And babble garrulous to those around of pranks  
You played while here incognito you tarried,  
And out of sight your wings and aureole carried.

Meanwhile, since my son's shape you deign to wear,  
If I fall short in aught, beseech you, naught  
Set down to malice. Since within you share  
A king's state yet, with kingly kindness fraught  
Be still your thought. Reflect : we both walk blindly ;  
Then why should either bear himself unkindly ?

FARDELS.

THE MOON-MAIDENS.

L ONGING, each lovely moon-maiden  
Looks on the earth, which rides  
Round as a shield light-laden  
In which the love-god bides ;

While earth's love-lorn daughters, longing,  
Gaze on the moon with sighs ;  
Fall amorous impulses thronging  
From those moon-maidens' eyes ?

AGE-DREAD.

Sad must it be when one is old  
To feel the heart of youth  
Hot beating though the blood be cold ;  
And panting in self-ruth

Like some wild bird that beats its wings  
Buried beneath the snow  
The stealthy avalanche sudden flings,  
Whelming the vales below.

## FOR A SUN-DIAL.

The shadows on the dial fall,  
But who can tell  
How soon a cloud may end them all —  
And life as well !

## A WOMAN'S THOUGHT.

Though you the heights of love have trod  
And walked the depths of hate ;  
Though power tremble at your nod,  
And deed on will await ;

Life's keenest joy you yet have missed,  
Nor can you understand,  
Till you your baby's mouth have kissed,  
Have touched your baby's hand.



## THE WHOLE OF TRUTH.

I prayed a spirit who bade ask a boon :  
“ Show me the whole of truth.” He bent his head  
With look of awe. “ Globed like unto the moon  
The perfect truth ; complete its round,” he said.  
“ Only the All that compasseth its sphere  
May see the whole, whose parts to us appear.”

## A DULL DAY.

The daisy grows,  
The daisy blows ;  
The foot of the clown  
Treads its down.  
Be life the fairest,  
Be hope the rarest,  
The guerdon for lover and saint and knave  
Is a grave.

The child is born  
White-souled ; forlorn  
The man, black as crime  
With earth's grime.

What eyes 'scape the smarting  
 Of sorrow's tears starting?  
 What hope or endeavor to blessing wins  
 More than sins?

## THE CHANGE.

When I met Death, I said :  
 "Alive in humble state I shrank ;  
 Now with the mightiest I rank,  
 Being dead."

But he replied : " Not so.  
 Death changes not the soul, which still  
 Is in itself its good or ill,  
 Its joy or woe."

## A WORD'S WEIGHT.

Taunts and reproaches poured on me my foe  
 And moved me not ; and yet when soft and low  
 One syllable so light it scarce was heard  
 My loved one murmured, all my soul was stirred !

## ABANDONMENT.

The jasmine drops its blossoms,  
Yellow as gold and as sweet as myrrh,  
As if it lived but to strew the path,  
And to die in serving her.

She treads them down unheeding,  
Blossoms or hearts that bestrew her way ;  
And yet my heart in her path I fling,  
Though her feet she will not stay.

## SOLITUDE.

One sought a place a crime to dare,  
So lone not even God should be aware.  
God gave his wish and drew aloof ;  
Yet not alone he found himself in proof,  
Since his own soul was there.

## TO A COQUETTE.

They say, forsooth, thou hast no heart, —  
What does it matter, with those eyes?

They say thou answerest truth with art, —  
I care not since that voice replies !  
Whate'er thine inner self may be,  
I needs must worship what I see.

## PARTING.

I parted from my friend,  
While wailed the sea  
That love-lit days must end  
And parting be.

I parted from my foe ;  
No less the sea  
Sounded its wail of woe  
That partings be.

## TANTALUS.

I clasp thee in my arms ;  
I gaze into thine eyes,  
Till far down in their deeps  
I see thy soul arise.

For that I thirst and burn,  
Content with naught beside  
While still thy soul of souls  
Is to my grasp denied !

*CUPID'S BARGAIN.*

When Love was young, the wilful boy  
His own affairs conducted,  
And strangest errors made, because  
He would not be instructed.

But age o'ertook the rogue at last,  
And stopped this wild proceeding.  
Full soon he found, throughout the world,  
His power fast receding.

And so, for quite a handsome sum, —  
Though Cupid's name for gammon  
Was still retained, — his business all  
Love traded off to Mammon.

## AN ANSWER.

“The gods have hated me,” one said,  
 “That they send black-browed Woe to sit  
 Beside my hearth.” Her sombre head  
 Woe raised, and answered : “Slow of wit

“In sooth thou art, and dull of sight,  
 Who thus the eternal gods dost blame.  
 To those whom the gods’ hate doth blight  
 Is sent in wrath not Woe, but Shame !”

## WEE ROSE.

Wee Rose is but three  
 Yet coquets she already ;  
 I can scarcely agree  
 Wee Rose is but three  
 When her archness I see !  
 Are the sex born unsteady ?  
 Wee Rose is but three,  
 Yet coquets she already.

TO A FLYING-FISH.

FISH, most uneasy,  
Through air so breezy  
An instant, silver-wing'd, you soar ;  
Then downward lunging  
Behold you plunging  
Into the waves that darkly roar.

Your flight gulls follow,  
Intent to swallow  
Your hapless self with hungry greed ;  
Beneath the water  
Sharks, bent on slaughter,  
No less are mad on you to feed.

Sure either danger  
Might fright a ranger,  
But you, poor fish, must both endure ;

'Twixt air and ocean  
Ever in motion,  
And yet in neither e'er secure.

Though ne'er you know it,  
Much like the poet  
You take your way through flood and air.  
He soars in fancy,  
Strange necromancy  
Holding him one bright moment there ;

Then downward falling,  
With plunge appalling,  
He sinks into cold fact absurd.  
Though more than man, he  
Not spirit can be, —  
As you are neither fish nor bird.

Like gulls to swallow  
The critics follow  
His flight that yearns toward the sky ;  
While care and hunger  
And the book-monger  
Below in ambush darkly lie.



Bitter the choosing,  
Though its refusing  
Doth cruel fate deny the bard.  
Though song bring anguish,  
Yet mute to languish  
To poet's heart were pain more hard.

Yet still the minute  
While one is in it  
That flight seems worth all pain below ;  
Though fate phlegmatic  
Its joys ecstatic  
Will swiftly drown in waves of woe.

And, fish, believe me,  
It much would grieve me  
Were you content your wings to spare ;  
No pains that rive you,  
Can e'er deprive you  
Of raptures felt when up you fare !

## A SHAPE.

ONCE in a dreadful dream I saw a shape  
Too horrible for human word to tell ;  
With sting to pierce, talons to hold, and gape  
Of fangs to rend, as horrible as hell.

Its eyes smote like the basilisk's ; a flame  
Enveloped it, despoiling all sans ruth.  
" See me and fear," it cried. " Hear but my name,  
And flee me shuddering, for I am Truth ! "

## JUDITH.

SHE was lithe and supple and straight  
As the palm-tree at her gate ;  
The wild pard had not her grace,  
While the splendors of her face  
Ate into men's hearts like flame.  
Burned her eyes with amorous fire,  
And the greed of their desire  
Was for soul as well as limb. —  
But she made their radiance dim,  
And to Holofernes came.

To the hero, lust and wine  
Made half bestial, half divine,  
Came Judith with smooth neck bare,  
Arms naked, and breasts as fair  
As the white and full-orbed moon.  
In alluring disarray  
Slipped her loosened robes away ;  
While her smile, with fell intent,  
In and out of hiding went  
Like a wolf will ravage soon.

It was while he sleeping lay,  
    When the night paled into day ;  
Strength and power and renown  
    By her woman's guile struck down ;  
    That her blow fell, sure and swift.  
Her imperial, ivory side  
    His hot life-blood, spurting, dyed ;  
While her quick, insatiate eyes  
    Gloat above him where he lies,  
    And her hands his great head lift.

Then with holy mien she goes,  
    As if early from repose  
Called by pious thoughts to prayer ;  
    And the thin, chill morning air  
    With the scent of blood she taints.  
All her heart's fierce lusts full fed  
    Walks she with abased head,  
Cruel in her glee as hell ; —  
    Till all Israel's praises swell  
    For this chiefest of their saints !

## SUNG TO AN ANTIQUE LUTE FOR SYLVIA.

## I.

I WAITED in the pleasance fair  
My Sylvia to behold ;  
The while a mossy dial there  
The lagging moments told.  
“Oh, silly dial, sooth,” I said,  
“How slow thy shade doth move ;  
Persuade thine hours more quick to fly,  
And bring me her I love !”

At last she came ; but out, alas,  
Bliss flees as soon as won !  
But one brief instant seemed to pass  
Before my sweet was gone.  
“Oh, cruel dial,” cried I, “sooth,  
Couldst thou not slower move ?  
Hadst thou no single jot of ruth  
To part me from my love ?”

## II.

Dear Mistress Sylvia, in thine eyes  
Do I such sweetness see  
That all my soul with joy would melt  
Were they but sweet for me.  
Ah, why so quick to cold disdain  
Doth all that sweetness turn  
If I but breathe the passion vain  
With which for thee I burn?

Dear Mistress Sylvia, though thy scorn  
My outward form doth win,  
Yet surely love must touch thine heart  
Couldst thou but look within.  
Look on me as a casket graced  
With precious gems divine,  
Or as a cup which to thy taste  
Doth proffer priceless wine.

## III.

Give me a look of cold disdain,  
And all my hope is lost ;  
I pine like flowers that have been slain  
By an untimely frost.  
Let kindness but one dear glance fill,  
And straight such life 't will give,  
New hope and joy my pulses thrill,  
And in thy glance I live.

I laid a rosebud in thy hand  
Soft flushing like thy cheek ;  
Its message thou couldst understand,  
And yet thou wouldst not speak.  
Oh, like that rosebud, doubly blessed,  
Might I thy bosom know,  
I'd be content to seek thy breast,  
And die upon its snow !

## IV.

I heard the flutes and viols play  
Full many a merry tune,  
Like choirs of birds that wanton gay  
In thickets green with June ;  
And yet again they plaintive wailed  
In cadence sad and slow,  
As if nor string nor pipe availed  
To voice their bitter woe.

And if they grave or jocund rang  
Still seemed my heart to speak ;  
My thought of Sylvia yet they sang,  
For which were word too weak.  
They breathed my grief and joy profound,  
Yet could not half reveal ;  
For love is sweeter than all sound,  
More deep than song's appeal !



## V.

Dear Mistress Sylvia, as I went,  
My heart was filled with thee ;  
Thy presence with my musings blent,  
Thine image walked with me.  
New-fallen all about my feet  
The fresh, unsmirchèd snow  
Of thy pure life a semblance meet  
Did in its whiteness show.

But as I walked, my trace I left,  
Unsightly and unfair,  
Which straight my heart of joy bereft,  
And filled my breast with care.  
Dear, should I thus thy life besmutch,  
I give my passion o'er ;  
Since, though I prize thy love so much,  
I prize thy whiteness more !

## THE SPANISH MAIN.

DEVON, 1575.

COME, shake out the sails, and clear up the decks,  
The wind is piping and free ;  
Clap hard down the helm, till in snow-storm of flecks,  
The foam flies up from the lee ;  
Once more we begin to live again,  
We are off, brave lads, for the Spanish Main !

Get cutlass and matchlock ready for use, —  
We are going for more than play !  
For throat of the Spaniard get ready the noose, —  
The yard-arm is ready alway !  
For quarter who begs will beg in vain,  
When we settle scores on the Spanish Main.

A galleon sails for Cadiz with freight  
Of pearls and opals and gold ;  
Alert in her track will our stanch vessel wait,

Her ingots shall stuff our hold.  
The black-bearded dogs shall lose their gain,  
And reckon with us on the Spanish Main.

Queen Bess with a mouth-filling oath shall declare  
Were ne'er lads more worthy her grace ;  
Old Devon shall ring with the names that we bear,  
And think of the pride in Drake's face !  
Then, hearties, be quick ; the very planks strain  
In their eager zest for the Spanish Main.

Remember the comrades starved in the dark  
Of Spain's black dungeons' despair ;  
We fight in God's quarrel ; what man has a spark  
Of soul, and yet could forbear ?  
Up, lads, we are off to the proof again  
If England or Hell rules the Spanish Main !

## A BURIAL.

THE moon, as yellow as a citron, smoulders  
In the brown dusk of air ;  
Dull, oily scum on the black water moulders,  
Laced with long weeds like hair.

With lurid flame the smoky torches burning  
Make blinder still the night ;  
The loathsome flood in viscid eddies turning  
Swirls in the rower's sight.

Dim, noisome reptile shapes after it thronging,  
Into the dark lagoon  
A thing is slipped that throbbed with love and longing  
When last the sun marked noon.

BY A GRAVE.

SO fierce he was that with his might  
He smote down lies, and put to flight  
With tongue like sword of light  
That flashing flies.

So fine he was that each appeal,  
Though plea most faint, could straightway feel  
Deep will to help and heal  
Answer complaint.

Oh, fine and fierce ! Could death subdue  
That strength of will, and take from you  
That ardor ever new,  
And burning still?

Oh, fierce and fine ! Oh, comrade leal,  
These tears of mine tell what I feel  
Better than words reveal —  
Or sounding line.

Dead others lie beyond recall ;  
You might defy whate'er befall ;  
Fierce, fine, above us all,  
    You could not die !

## THE ORIOLE.

LIKE a live flame wind-wafted from altars celestial  
Floats the blithe oriole through the bright air ;  
Dropping down as half won by spring's glories  
terrestrial

Buoyantly upward swift fleeting to fare.  
Like the light on a fount's rippling bosom that glances  
With the wavering pulse of its rhythmical flow,  
Now he rises, now falls ; or, as leaf blast-tossed dances,  
In whimsical mazes he sweeps to and fro.

In the meadows beneath him the buttercups' chalices  
Gleam, beaten gold, in the glowing June sun ;  
The red clovers are fragrant as spikenard of palaces,  
Blue blooms the iris where topaz brooks run ;  
But oh, what so sweet, what so fair as his singing !  
What so lucent, so mellow ! Oh, oriole dear,  
Thy notes down the mist-muffled Stygian meads  
ringing  
Even shadowless ghosts, hope-abandoned, might  
cheer.

How the fervor of being, the zest of life glorious,  
Seethes in the lay like the spirit in wine  
As it foams in the cup of some hero victorious,  
Triumphing splendid at banquets divine.  
With what gurgling delight is his song brimming over ;  
With what infinite glee, like the laughter of Pan !  
As the sunshine of June, the perfume of the clover,  
The caress of the west wind commingled and ran.

How he sings with his flight, till the song-tide out-  
bubbling  
Hardly less motion than melody seems ;  
In ecstasy ever his passion redoubling,  
Flinging his notes as the sun flings its beams ;  
Like the amber of honey from fragrant combs dripping  
Where the bees of Hymettus have made them brim  
o'er,  
Like the shower of gold 'round the polished limbs  
slipping,  
When the god unto Danaë descended of yore.

Jocund bird, might I join in the joy that thou utterest,  
Dear would life be, as it once was of old ;



As of old might my heart leap as light as thou  
flutterest,

Clovers be censers and buttercups gold.

Like the day when love comes is the oriole's singing,

When from fulness of bliss all the fond bosom  
aches ; —

Oh, sweet oriole, sing ! Drown the death-bell's dread  
ringing,

For when love hears that clang, then the lonely  
heart breaks !

## THE BEGINNING AND ENDING.

WHEN God strewed the stars down the void  
As a sower flings wheat to the field ;  
When all space trembled under  
His footsteps of thunder,  
And the lightning His pathway revealed ;  
When the systems like legions of angels deployed,  
And their suns were as dust to His breath ;  
Behind all His splendor supernal  
There brooded a darkness eternal ;  
And the name of that darkness was Death.

It lurked like a shadow which lies  
Where some planet floats lonely in space ;  
Like the blackness which follows  
The moon's mountain hollows  
Till they darken forever her face ;

Like a garment it clung, as through infinite skies .  
The Creator in majesty trod,  
In glory immensurate glowing,  
Ineffable radiance bestowing,  
The unspeakable lustre of God.

'Then life through the universe swept  
As a whirlwind of flame wraps a star.  
From the godhead up-welling,  
Its floods ever swelling,  
Burst in billows gigantic afar.  
'To the bound'ries of space and God's thought life  
out-leapt,  
There its infinite largess to pour,  
As the moon-driven tide of the ocean  
In the stress of resistless commotion  
Overwhelms with its waters the shore.

Like dust on the wild blasts of space  
Countless millions of races were swirled,  
Till each star-mote that slumbered  
With beings was cumbered,  
And was waked to its weird as a world.  
Though all universe-wide was dissevered their place,

In their destiny still were they one ;  
Blind, pitiful, helpless, unknowing,  
Like sparks on a wintry wind blowing,  
Which even beginning are done.

Wherever life's tide flooded grand,  
All the universe broad thrilling through,  
Death followed its waking,  
As wave on crag breaking  
In recoil dashes backward anew.  
As the seed in its germ holds the forest unspanned,  
Thus the word of creation hid death ;  
Existence was like that illusion  
Where rainbows above the confusion  
Of the maelstrom hang frail as a breath.

Like a heart which unfaltering beats,  
So the infinite tumult of life  
Throbbled in mighty pulsation,  
The ceaseless mutation  
Of being's unquenchable strife.  
As an arrow unswerving which swift forward fleets,  
So the world-tide unwavering sped,  
Sweeping on to that end which was fated,

That doom which already awaited  
When the word of creation was said.

When God shall upgather the stars  
As a gleaner upgathers the wheat ;  
When the suns all their splendor  
Forever surrender,  
Plucked like corn from the paths where they fleet ;  
When His hand, which hath builded the universe, mars,  
And to nothingness brings it again ; —  
A presence shall still lurk behind Him,  
A power resistless shall bind Him,  
As the fiat of fate doth constrain.

Then into Death's keeping at last  
Will He render the spoils of His hand,  
Their substance dissolving,  
Fate's debt thus absolving,  
Till all space bare and empty doth stand ;  
Till the Darkness and God only dwell in the vast,  
And that moment of God men call time  
Hath vanished like flash of star falling ;  
And voice of deep unto deep calling  
Wakes no longer the echoes sublime.

Then the All in the vast broods supreme,  
Undivided, as when cosmic dust  
    In one globe-fire hath blended ;  
    There self-comprehended,  
Self-sphered, self-perfected, august,  
As a soul unto consciousness waked from a dream,  
Broods the All when existence is done.  
    For God, who is glory supernal,  
    And Death, which is darkness eternal,  
The Beginning and Ending, are One !

THE END.









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