

TWO MOCK EPICS

Hanuman

BY

SVATOPLUK CZECH

(translated from the 17th edition)

AND

Tantum Religio

OR, SIR BLASIUS

BY

W. W. STRICKLAND, B.A.



(TRIN: COLL: CAMB.)

LONDON

ROBERT FORDER, 28 STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.

1894

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JOHN MILTON

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(Tutor in Latin at St. John's College, Cambridge)

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ROBERT CLAY AND COMPANY, BUNGAY STREET, BUNGAY, SUFFOLK

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PREFACE.

“HANUMAN.”

IN order to preserve as far as possible the original metres and system of double-rhyming in the translation of this Slav mock-heroic poem, much has been deliberately sacrificed. It is a poem of some two thousand lines in length; and, in comparison with the Slavonic, our language is poor in rhymes. And not only have the exact combinations of double-rhymes in general been exactly reproduced, but also in many passages the exact rhythm of individual lines. More than this. In by far the greater part of the poem, the translation is not only a phonetic but also a word-for-word reproduction of the text. With more latitude, far greater fluency of versification could have been easily attained. Add to this the difficulty of transferring that subtle essence—humour—from one language to another. Lastly, the classical perfection of form which renders Slav humour a thing *sui generis* is necessarily in great part lost. Literary form is seen in perfection only in highly inflexed languages. Czech is more highly inflexed than Greek or Latin. English is fast returning to the agglutinative stage. However, in spite of these drawbacks, it is hoped that the poem, if it does not find a large audience, may at least please those who know what good writing is, and that the striking humour and admirable working out of the original conceit may to some extent counterbalance the inevitable defects of a translation.

“SIR BLASIUS.”

This preface could easily be extended to the length of the poem itself, or longer, if it were deemed desirable to cite a hundredth part of the barbarities practised, not in past times, but within the last fifty years, by Christians—both Papist and Protestant—upon one another or upon their opponents. To marshal the long and damning array of facts here would be itself a cruelty. They can always be held in reserve. Freethinkers have no desire unduly to wound the susceptibilities of Christians, but only to render the barbarities which hitherto have *invariably* accompanied *every* powerful Christian organisation, impossible for the future, or at any rate ridiculous.

PREFACE

"HARMONY"

In order to preserve as far as possible the original metre and system of double rhyming in the translation of this Slav mock-epic poem, much has been deliberately sacrificed. It is a poem of some two thousand lines in length, and in comparison with the language of our language is poor in rhythm. And not only have the exact combinations of double rhymes in general been exactly reproduced, but also in many passages the exact rhythm of individual lines. In fact the greater part of the poem, the translation is not only a phonetic but also a word-for-word reproduction of the text. With more latitude for greater fluency of execution could have been easily attained. Add to this the difficulty of transferring the metric accents - between - from one language to another. Lastly the classical perfection of form which renders so human a thing and which is necessarily in great part lost. Harmony form is seen in perfection only in highly inflected languages. Each is more highly inflected than Greek or Latin. English is lost starting to the agglutinative stage. However, in spite of these drawbacks it is hoped that the poem if it does not find a large audience may at least please those who know what good writing is, and that the striking humour and sentiment which work out of the original quest may to some extent counterbalance the technical defects of translation.

SIR BLAIR

This preface could easily be extended to the length of the poem itself, or longer, if it were desired desirable to cite a hundredth part of the barbarities practised, not in past times, but within the last fifty years, by Christians - both Episcopals and Protestants - upon one another or upon their opponents. It is not the long and drawn-out array of facts here would be necessary. They can always be held in reserve. Freshly they may be ready to wound the susceptibilities of Christians. Under the barbarities which hitherto have invariably attended every powerful Christian aggression, impossible for the future, or at any rate ridiculous.



Hanuman :

A POEM.

*Translated, in the original metre, from the Bohemian of
SVATOPLUK CECH.*

Sestri Levante, Feb. 1893.

I.

LIKE a desert prophet sighed I

For some fairy dreams elysian.

Rarach came meanwhile, the tempter,

Hopped into my cave, derision

In his eyes, and fluttered round me;

Straddlewise my nose bespanned,

Like a Cupid his pagoda,

With the lotus in his hand

Waved the wonder-working floweret,

Lo! a thousand imps and nixies,

Pucks and gnomes and winged goblins,

Fairies, elfin wisps and pixies

O'er the mussels swarmed in countless

Hosts, and lusty carols sung

In the crystal sea's recesses,

And their tinkling handbells rung.

All in vain I shouted "Hold ! and
 Elsewhere play those skipping jingles
 On jest's cymbal with the sistrum,
 That with sting of satire tingles ;
 For I crave a song whose rhythm
 From the soul of beauty brims,
 And with purest ore poetic
 Choirs enthusiastic hymns.

Thine's a troop of drolls fantastic,
 With their false and foreign spangles."
 "Nay, but o'er our meadows only
 Such a charming flower wreath dangles
 For the poet and such heroes
 In our own domestic runes,
 And this fellow must to Bombay
 Trudge in search of his buffoons."

All in vain : still thrums the timbrel
 Ceaseless hand and foot as pliant,
 Moulds the fulsome dance responsive,
 And the sparkling eye defiant
 Dares me, and the papery pinions
 With sham iris colours pearled,
 Flirt and buzz round like a night-moth :
 "Let us out into the world."

"Fly then ! on thy gummy vans, in-
 augurate a furtive Aden,
 Leading souls poetic, slily
 To thy jungles, legend-laden.

Then ensconced in thy liana-
 Swing, with thumb to nose deride him.
 Thou hast scandalized full other
 Brahmins not of Ind beside him."

II.

" Somewhere in thy jungles Hindostani
 Relics of a giant city sadly
 Brood o'er memories of departed glory,
 Splendors now collapsing to the tomb,
 Dreaming of the throngs that filled its churches,
 Of the swarms of worship-loving people
 And the palaces of haughty Nabobs,
 Jewelled thrones and flashing presence-room.

Minarets, pagodas, all in ruin
 And dismantled seats of mighty rajahs,
 Hide beneath the fans of wavy palm groves
 And the rank banana's spacious leaves
 In a heavy pall of fronds and flowers,
 Pitiful the virgin woodland shrouds them
 And a veil of hundred-fold lianas
 O'er the face of perished glory weaves

All among that web of airy tendrils
 Like a saucy gang of agile sailors
 In their rigging, now of sportive apes a
 Family their giddy dances run,
 Sacred and descendants of the fabled
 Hanuman, with whom the great one Vishnu,
 Taking on himself the form of Rama,
 Lanek, isle of giants, proudly won.

Here, in former times, these sacred monkeys
 In a lordly church were fondly cherished
 By the tender care of pious Hindoos,
 'Neath the goddess Durga's patron hand :
 But when Church and city fell to ruin,
 By the guile of wicked foes deflowered,
 They remained above the ruined city
 Only dwellers in that lonely land.

Sated were they with the luscious fruitage
 Of the forest lords whose green recesses
 Rang from morn to eve enlivened by the
 Dance and chatter of their apish fold.
 These grotesque of body were, a long tail
 Smartly clasped the branches like a lasso ;
 'Neath a front of irrepressive bristles
 Peeped a mask of wholly human mould.

Much as other apes they lived and flourished,
 Save obedient to divine prescription,
 One of them was recognised their monarch
 And the royal dignity began
 And descended in unbroke succession
 By inheritance from sire to sire,
 Handed downward from the half-divine one,
 Apedom's glorious hero—Hanuman.

Hanuman the last was now, in childhood,
 By his gracious mother fondly tended;
 And his virtues kindled every ape-heart
 With the prescience of his future fame.

But Parvati, with her dreadful sickle,
 Shore the leaf, the precious bud that shrouded
 And a flash of fate unkindly blasted
 All the proud spun dream of bliss and name.

In the shady leafage of a plane tree
 Once the queen was lulling him to slumber,
 Tenderly removing from the soft fur
 Aught that sucked audacious those blue veins ;
 Sudden from the bamboo thicket issued,
 In a sailor's garb, a human monster,
 Softened not that heart of flint the touching
 Sight of all that mother's love and pains.

O'er the woods a musket shot ; a piteous
 Cry ; the smoke cleared off and down the princess
 Toppled headlong from her leafy fastness
 Overtaken by the fatal lead ;
 From the mother's dying arms the murderer
 Tore the child and to his vessel bore him :
 So to distant lands in galling fetters
 Apedom's last surviving promise sped.

III.

Ah ! what anguish smote within thee, luckless
 Hanuman, as far away
 Thine ancestral wood and forest fastness
 Muffled in the mist-wreath lay,
 And beyond the stern thine eye went ranging
 Tearful, under foreign skies and changing
 Stars that bent o'er endless seas of grey.

Thou, around whose brow primeval legend
 Wove a starry crown, whose fame
 Holy Ganges, snow-clad Himalaya
 Echoed, at whose sacred name
 Pious Ind low looted, rude born sailors
 Now art made the butt of : rabble railers
 Taunt and pelt thee with the words of shame.

Thee who wont'st to be the bright exemplar
 To all creatures of thy race,
 And who knewest naught but warm affection
 In a mother's fond embrace,
 And the love her heart alone could offer :
 Now the stinging lash constrains to proffer
 Servile bows and tricks of little grace.

Thus the high-born captive sailed the ocean
 Many a night and many a day ;
 Flashed around him like a spangled dream-land
 Foreign shores in bright array,
 Till, at length, the vessel reached the clouded
 Northworld and by Albion's mists enshrouded,
 Moored within the echoing harbour lay.

There within the sailors' reeking tavern,
 On a mat of plaited cane,
 Crouched the ape, disconsolate, when o'er him
 Those colossi once again
 Waved their spreading boughs—and lo ! the lotus
 Through the serried gloom flashed out remote as
 Some wild eyeball from th' enchanted main.

O'er his fevered brow the giant palm leaves'
 Fringe of green their freshness shower,
 Like a winged gem the insect quivers
 In the gloom of branch and flower.
 Golden through its leaves the date—he graspeth
 For it—woe!—but empty air he claspeth.
 All is but a dream's deceptive power!

In a smart new suit next morn his master
 Dressed him: his two-cornered hat
 Cocked in rakish guise with gorgeous top-knot—
 Sure some gift of fairy that;
 Ruddy frock all filigree bedizened,
 Violet ducks, in huge top-boots imprisoned,
 Loose about his nether person sat.

Seated on a squeaking hurdy-gurdy
 Which his master's shoulder bore,
 Off he set o'er Rhineland, France, Italia,
 On his artist's wanderjahr,
 From the southern vine to Norway's larches,
 Half of Europe, covered with his marches,
 Did that landless prince of apes explore.

Hailed with wild acclaim and children's laughter,
 He must show his wit, the slum
 Of the town amuse, divert the village
 Tavern bumpkins rude and glum,
 Take his cap off, courtier-wise on one knee
 Drop, play cards or smoke the sailors' honey-
 Dew, walk on his head and tipple rum,

Neatly bind the napkin's snow-white corners
 Round his neck and eat his food
 Nicely, bit by bit, with fork impaling
 And, magnanimous of mood,
 To the waiter hand a frank and duly
 Ply his toothpick—crowning wonder truly!
 Wipe his small moustache with wine imbued,

In his chequered hat collect the pennies ;
 From some generous little hand
 Sometimes fell some sweet fruit from some orchard
 For him of that northern land.
 In his master's arms he slept : nor more he
 Moaned his forest home, it seemed the glory
 Of his heavenly home from thought was banned.

But at last that nomad life the outcast
 Wearied of, and now once more
 Yearned to coil the cable and the ocean's
 Boundless plain to voyage o'er ;
 And so once he stepped into the haven
 There the ship stood with the tall masts shaven
 And the sails set for some foreign shore.

Thus it chanced : a green-room Alexander
 Caught by a sublime idea,
 Would, this genius of an impressario,
 Forth to Himalaya steer ;
 Indus, Ganges, and Nerbudda's sluices
 Tap, a virgin soil for thirsty muses,
 Those to whom the Thespian art is dear.

What a host of needy mimes flock round him
 From the east-end and the west,
 Goddesses of fame and money avid,
 Ballerine light of vest—
 With an air or pirouette who ponder
 All thy diamond shoals to net Golconda,
 All thy wealth Benares to enchest.

Prima donnas' golden heads are running
 On a rain of golden posies
 In their laps, of topaz, sapphires, rubies,
 While the ballet sylph in hose is
 Panting for some spark in pearl-sewn turban,
 Or with supple thumb prepares suburban
 Pinches for proud Brahmins' august noses.

Scarce the ship, that ark of art, suffices
 In its cells to stow away
 All that world of lath and plaster fashioned,
 Which to India now would stray :
 All that medley—boxes, trunks, portmanteaus,
 Wardrobes, cases lined with unsold cantos,
 Rouge pots, hair dyes, wigs red, black and grey.

Ship of Argonauts—with song resounding,
 Boldly plough the furrowy blue !
 Hanuman's new master is thy captain :
 At his side, a comrade true,
 Bides the ape, oh ! how the small eye sparkles
 As unfolding free around it darkles
 Ocean's boundless zones of azure hue.

Oh! how throbb'd his heart as thro' the grating
 Criss-cross yard and rigging made him,
 Through warm nights again the Southern Cross's
 Gleam of welcome calm surveyed him
 As the ship, on Heaven's blue vault designing,
 Once again the slender palm-stems twining,
 Nearer, nearer to his home conveyed him.

And the nearer, oft'er sank in pensive
 Dreams and reveries the ape.
 Once he started—sure, there, in the distance
 'Twas his homeland's wooded cape!
 But swift tempest's fury long impending
 Sudden burst with thunder music blending
 Earth and sea and sky in one wild shape.

Oh! then on that ill-starred bark heartrending,
 Were the tragedies achieved
 By those wan-eyed singers, actors—ghastly
 Fair the opera they weaved,
 To which into drum and trumpet storming
 Tempest played the overture performing;
 Feats of art e'en Wagner ne'er conceived.

Hanuman from that wild tumult clambered
 To the main mast—terrors blight—
 Thunder deafens—stoops the groaning top-mast,
 It the surge-foams drift and bite;
 And with that small ape, firm hold maintaining,
 Wrathful ocean's deep, as if disdainng,
 Spat it forth on India's shores of light.

IV.

Oh! forest world, thou gorgeous affluence
 Of beauty, grandeur, magic, horror, wonder,
 Infinite treasures of form and sense,
 Light, color, shadow, scent and sound, as under
 Day's glowing kiss awoke to consciousness
 How passing fair! how clothe them in its sheen,
 Haughty, the veterans of thy wilderness,
 Waving their tropic wealth of glowing green,
 Flashing in emerald waves, a sea of splendour.
 But to the lower cycles of the grove
 Day from its crownéd monarchs deigns to rove
 Down to where yet a second forest tenders
 (Being but itself those giants' undergrowth,
 Shelter to thickets lower yet and blending
 Leaves great and small in wealth of forms unending,
 Fantastic groups you here may see of both
 Plumes and enormous fans which all around
 Spread from the palms' slim crowns a feather frond
 Massed into stately vault or ribbed network,
 Here emerald blades, here fringe of fairy fretwork ;
 And amid all those feather-forms unending
 Sportively night here battles with the daylight,
 'Mid a myriad shadows, exquisitely blending,
 Till, lower chased, she walks the dusky grey light,
 Free and unchallenged, in perpetual shades
 Where through her poisoned weeds entangled waste
 Slime and morass and serpent root enlaced
 No glance of curious day her gloom invades.
 But up above light strings a hundred bows
 And iris sparks. There, spreading in a rose

Yon targe of fronds, whose drooping tips around it,
 Like ornamental lace their fringes roll
 Flames lonely through the leafy shades that bound it,
 Some great Mogul's emblazoned parasol.
 Here the liana garland-wise festooning
 Platane and mango in its plaited maze,
 Swings the light blooms, their spotted bells attuning
 Into an arabesque of colour; blaze
 Ruby with sapphire, topaz, agate, banded :
 Here in full pomp the spacious dawn expanded.

Now freshly through the woods a spirit heaves
 As from dawn's bosom, bearing, pleasure-laden,
 A hundred odours, murmurs in all leaves,
 And wakes to myriad life the forest Aden.
 Here hails the sun the parrot's shrill acclaiming,
 As o'er his fluttering wing, with purple flaming,
 Light's tracery glints, he preens his emerald side,
 The woodland peacock flashing through the gloom,
 A glowing meteor, irridescent-eyed :
 The butterfly there poises on the bloom,
 A winged fire : aloft the apes in guise
 Of demons scare repose, in bough and trailer
 Entanglement ensconced, with dismal cries :
 Lower head-downward fly, hang by the tail or
 Swarm, lightning-like, o'er tree trunks, swarm or scatter :
 Daring upon festooned lianas swing
 In attitudes grotesque : while all sides ring,
 Above, below, with endless buzz and chatter.

To-day, a strange report in fits has flung 'em,
 Their Hanuman's alive, nay, he's among 'em,
 Sudden returned from distant lands in might
 And such a strange costume—their god of light,—

He they so long bewailed in orphan station.
 Now, at his bidding troop from every side
 In mighty conclave all the apish nation ;
 With gibbering goblins all the jungles chide
 As all rush off where stands 'mid ruins hoary all
 Their Parliament House from times immemorial.

'Mid most the ruined cities' crumbling eaves
 O'er which the wood a second roofage weaves
 A grey pagoda stands, all weather battered,
 Girdled with hosts of countless images,
 Cupids and animals and turrets scattered
 Concentric, mosses hide a ruined frieze,
 And on four trunks of elephants converging,
 Is seen a little spike-crowned dome emerging.

On this small cupola, as on a throne, is
 Already seated Hanuman, in clusters
 On statuettes and turrets lower down is
 All that of birth and breeding apedom musters ;
 Already, too, through all its precincts bustle,
 From tree and ruin, members here assembling,
 And o'er it all the waving branches rustle
 Forming a vault, some palace choir resembling.
 But now the cupola seems all alive,
 And by the little satans wondrous dances,
 Buzzing and swarming like a monkey hive,
 Changed to a waving world of mango plants is,
 Bread trees, bananas, banyans and filling
 Fast with live fruits that dangle from the ceiling.
 Lo ! all the branches round are swaying, spinning
 With swarms grotesque of bodies frizzed and furry,
 And with a hundred monkey masks are grinning :
 Down by the pendent, spreading creepers hurry

Groups thicker yet, and from its trellis dangling,
Down swings another heavy vintage wrangling.

How fix in words that hubbub and those japes,
Buzz, chatter, shrieks, the Parliament of apes
Rent all the wood with proffering its delight
At the lost king's return: and, heavenly sight!

There calmly sat the king on the pagoda:
That vaulted forest opening o'er his head,
A quivering stream of light upon him shed,
That like a glory round his person glowed—ah!
But what rare sight amidst it all was that?

A scarlet frock with golden frippery rigid
And violet breeks it wore, a costume pat
For kings designed: its head erect and frigid,
A hat of mighty mould and wondrous build, hid
In form and style like that so felted, wadded,
Thy brows, famed son of Corsica, once shielded,
Save that o'er this a plume stupendous nodded,
Of gilded wire, beads, feathers dyed and spangled,
While from each horn a golden tassel dangled,
'Faith, 'twas a costume worthy of a godhead!

The Parliament of apes, at all astounded,
Gazed, and full many a raptured cry resounded,
Though 'mid the tendrils, too, may be some blockhead
A stupid smile at that quaint little frock hid.

Until at length from all sides thundering ran:
"Be welcome home, prince, mighty Hanuman."

Then Apedom's chief took off the hat and, bowing,
Opened the Session with a speech as glowing.

"To Vishnu praise! and hearty thanks to thee,
Great ancestor, for sure thine interceding
With him who rules yon cloud-wrought canopy

(Past services to Rama tendered pleading
 With Vishnu) 'twas through rolling seas upbore me
 To where the star of destiny shone o'er me ;
 Now mine uncurtained gaze the truth descrieth,
 And opened wide before me, like a scroll,
 The book of apish fates and human lieth,
 I read each secret sign and judge the whole.

Ape, of creation diadem and pride,
 Issued from hands divine, dowered in full measure,
 And multiplied, his seats expanding wide ;
 But one part of that mighty brotherhood
 In unprogressive state stagnated, having
 Its dwelling in the trees—their fruits for food,
 The gift of nature—without labour craving,
 Neglecting its rare talents' cultivation,
 So that some atrophied, some wholly perished,
 And evermore approaching the base station
 Of those brute beasts, whose comradeship it cherished.
 Not so the other part ; this higher still
 Its gifts developed accent with each fresh endeavour,
 Earth, beings' empire, subjected to its will,
 Keeping along the road of progress ever.
 Of countless ages thus he reaped the promise
 So far excelled, his reason schooled so soundly,
 In grace of life and outward polish from his
 Arboreal brethren differed so profoundly,
 That now, if face and body's conformations
 Had not announced it, hard 'twere to believe in
 The common origin of those two nations :
 But our poor language fails to paint, O ! Heaven !
 My raptures when I think of thee, Europa ;
 Thou loveliest land of full-formed apedom proper !

To paint those cities, full of glittering treasure,
 Those fine turns-out, that swarm of smart costumes,
 That joy of life, its comfort, grace and leisure,
 Those polished manners and assembly rooms.
 Oh! I confess with shame, alas! we hairy 'uns,
 Compared with them, are little but barbarians.
 Like the brute beasts, who with us haunt the woods,
 We're only skilled to skip and climb and gobble.
 On us, no ray of Progress e'er intrudes,
 Nor poetry nor music us ennoble.
 To us, the theatre's scarce e'en a name;
 And as for politics, saloons - O! Brahm!
 What wonder if those apes of progress—or rest
 E'en the mere name *ape*'s now tabooed as shocking.
 The cultured race of man, then, looks down mocking
 Upon his uncouth brethren of the forest:
 Nay, 'tis but yesterday Cam's glorious son dared,
 After long ages, scornful, had denied it,
 To own the kinship, by his great heart guided,
 And what a storm of protest 'gainst him thundered!
 But better I than he intend to show 'em
 Our birth is one, and that the present chasm
 That scorned, degraded brother now below 'em
 Can span with ease and reach or perhaps surpass 'em.
 When first, out yonder, pain and shame at heart, I
 Compared our wretched lot with that of man,
 A sudden flash within my temples ran,
 And, in an instant, warmed my every part: ay,
 That flash the germ was of a great idea
 Which with the breath of blessed hope grew clear;
 And now my guiding star before me burneth,
 To which my glance enthusiastic turneth;

My race neglected, from its degradation,
 I'd raise by culture and civilization ;
 I'd till the glebe for spiritual sowing
 My ancestors, in secular neglect, had
 Let fallow : by my glorious deed bestowing
 On mine, the self-same rights the race elect had.

To-day, upon that glorious task I enter ;
 But ere to spheres of higher thought I venture,
 I'll touch on three things where the outward shape
 Differs most strikingly in man and ape.
 First, there's our tails, which only in derision
 Stream out behind us. This is my decision :
 Dock the superfluous adjunct with a chopper
 At once ; 'tis not nice, not to say improper.
 And then our foot, which long disuse degrading
 To be the hands' mere helpmate, blindly stumbles,
 Nor knows the art of orderly parading,
 But for its bough, with thumb inconstant fumbles
 Shall reach at last its natural destination
 And real top boots, its toes compressing tightly,
 Conform it promptly to the latest fashion.
 And then—woe's me ! that matters so unsightly
 In open Parliament should e'er be treated
 With unflushed cheeks—things scarce to be repeated.
 Woe's me ! your feelings have been so neglected—
 So dreadfully—my nation most respected,
 You'll hear, perhaps unflinching, what half-speechless
 I—nay, my modest tongue—words fail—you're breechless.
 Nay, never point for your more deep discredit
 On that coarse fur—that brute-beasts' vesture tedded
 That only muffles—shame if man now caught us !
 Enough about this object. Brief, I vow, sirs,

We'll into pourpoints, petticoats and trowsers ;
 Ay, promptly, too, and humanwise comport us.
 Our faith firm pinned on human dress, reliance
 On that shall soon conduct us to the van,
 O'er stepping-stones of morals, art and science—
 The glorious Church of brotherhood and man ! ”

The king has ceased ; around, the apish clusters
 Also hang motionless. Like meteor showers,
 Those grand conceptions blind their puny powers,
 Those glittering vistas—unimagined lustres.
 Then, by degrees, the rustling storm prevails,
 And wonder thrills those clumps of heads and tails.
 A hundred brandished hands through mid air flutter,
 A hundred polls go swagging up and down,
 A hundred figures dance and clutch and splutter,
 A hundred faces gibber, grin and frown ;
 But as to what they think, a dismal hum is
 The only oral clue—all mute and mum is ;
 And many a puzzled Chatham keeps his seat,
 And scratches both his ears with both his feet.

At length an aged ape of aspect sour,
 Grey eld with silver threads his scarce fur raying,
 His face a map of wrinkles, stubborn, dour,
 A mango fruit in one fist, th' other playing
 With the blue honors of his beard, and tightly
 An aery tendril with the third embracing
 Among the tropic creeper's interlacing,
 Wherein, as on a swing, he dangled lightly,
 Now stretched his fourth hand to the monarch breeched,
 And thus for rhetoric's crown of laurels reached :
 “ I say out plain ; I can't assent, great sire,
 That men than we—nay, we than men stand higher,

As stood our ancestors from earliest ages.
 Here's a clear proof from old world History's pages :
 When gracious Sita once was borne away
 By Ravana's to Lanka, to retrieve her,
 His bride, the god, then wearing human clay,
 Turned not for aid to men but us—Sugriva
 He summoned, and on Hanuman relied :
 And how those glorious apish chiefs achieved
 True miracles of valour ; how the bride
 Of Rama from the ogre was retrieved
 By Hanuman ; how one bold archway bended
 Across the sea to Ceylon's isle, suspended
 By hands of apes :—of this the lustrous story
 Is graved on History's slabs in deathless glory.
 And once e'en man our prior claim confessed :
 That half-divine Ind deems our race, the shrines
 Scattered from Simla to the sea attest,
 Where choirs of apes religious life refines.
 Oh ! just let us live on as lived our sires.
 The mango fruit—what sweeter in the wide world ?
 And life on boughs with scented blooms, this pied world
 Of woods - what nearer to the heart's desires ?
 'Tis just sheer folly and not worth a tittle,
 This progress, science, culture and the rest of it—
 For me this mango stone outweighs the best of it.
 I, too, have looked into the world a little,
 Have been as far as Bombay and Calcutta
 And watched the life of this mad western species.
 How starched it sits in circles—not a flutter !
 But like a puppet carved in boxwood each is,
 How anxiously its every movement weighed is !
 What gestures, vapid phrases, formal, flat,

Chewed and rechewed ; what stiff bows to the ladies !
 My humble thanks for such a life as that !
 No, no, these mountebanks had reason greater
 To fly to us, here rocked in freedom's arms
 From empty care and self-inflicted fetter
 To mother Nature's breast and life's pure charms.

To think of us going mimicking these flunkeys !
 Rather should they conform to us,—to monkeys !
 We've stayed as Nature's soul—as wisest essence
 Has fashioned us ; why fash ourselves because
 Man's farcicalities in effervescence
 Have marred the jollier scheme of heavenly laws.
 Disdain your tail, my lord, if you think fit,
 I wear mine with delight—I'm proud of it :
 Look at its tapering form so gently sportive,
 The grace and softness of each supple motion,
 In every one it wakens warm devotion
 Whose natural sense of beauty's not abortive.
 Its use for life on trees can't be denied,
 'Tis sanctioned, too, by countless generations.
 Sires, grandsires, gloried in this train's gyrations :
 'Twas Hanuman the Mighty's joy and pride :
 E'en fairest stars through night's autumnal trail
 In lines of glittering light a sparkling tail :
 And this choice decoration—we're to flout it
 Merely because mankind is now without it ?
 And feet, whose fingers free and unimpeded
 Are capable of touch, and work if needed,
 Why must their poor maimed thumbs, all knobs and sores
 Be cramped in Spanish pumps, to slip and fumble
 Through mire and dust, with many an awkward tumble ;
 Nay, rather we, intrepid on all fours,

Above the clods of earth, where man sticks bestial,
 Will climb to higher heights and realms celestial ;
 And quite content let's wear these furs delicious
 Wherewith, where need is, Nature kindly wraps us.
 This cant 'gainst nakedness is all fictitious—
 Man's prudishness—a mere eccentric lapsus ;
 Our members' forms,—'twas Nature's hand applied 'em,
 They're known ;—why hypocritically hide 'em ?
 You'll ne'er drill me into these chequered tatters ;
 I have grown grey untrowsered—by all hatters !
 I won't rig my old age in rags and motley !”

“ Enough, enough, ” broke in the prince here hotly,
 “ So untrimmed a discourse, one so provocative,
 No Senate's annals sure have e'er confessed.
 All's Greek to him—the Parliament's prerogative,
 And how 'tis meet that kings should be addressed !
 Forth from our Senate ! Off ! and be right glad
 We've not yet called our Law Courts—if we had
 The wheel those caitiff limbs had seen disjointed
 For gross offence against high heaven's anointed.”

The aged ape, aghast, perused him storming,
 Then turned its back upon his Senate, slowly
 Hand over hand o'er high lianas swarming,
 Sought the thick foliage of a pipal holy,
 And sucked its mango there, snarled wrathful, shifted,
 And flung the kernels down from palm uplifted.

And now the king had quite a host of reasons
 With which to quench the opposition treasons.
 “ My mighty grandsire from yon starry height
 Looks down, methinks, with no contented eye
 On such an advocate, and small delight
 To be the ancestor of such a guy.

'Tis well to reverence our great departed ;
 But when our comic side is thus paraded
 In sire's cast suits of fame, by sons degraded
 Who clash their swords, themselves being chicken-hearted,
 Like windbags puff themselves with those sires' fame :
 Methinks that fleas can boast themselves the same,
 A lion tolerates in his royal mane,
 That lion's blood is circling in their vein !

This bungler has to journey many a rood
 To fetch his proofs, to times before the flood ;
 For charlatans are more at home and able
 Where all clear outlines 'neath a dappled haze
 Subtract themselves from critics' serious gaze.
 But let us soberly review this fable :
 I honour Hanuman, his fame assert,
 Truth, though, will ne'er diminish his desert ;
 In Rama, in man's form, god being embodied,
 And not in ape, to man the preference gave.
 This man a warrior was, with whom a brave
 But mere ally, the apish hero plodded.
 Apes' prior claims ! 'tis a mere craze that haunts him,
 And in the magic bridge he vainly vaunts him ;
 'Twas, true enough, by apish hands erected
 But Samudra, the sea god, first projected
 The whole design ; we ape folk, to complete it,
 Brought nought but sturdy thews, which I've admitted,
 Nor wit nor mind—i'faith, a feeble nimbus—
 E'en trunks of elephants bear joists and timbers.

'Tis ludicrous to boast the modest share is
 Ours in the Hindoos' Pantheistic ritual
 When every loon can claim a place in it. You all
 Have heard how bulls are sacred in Benares.

And vulgar taste it is to eulogise—h'm !
 This good-for-naught posterior appendage—
 This obvious lapse of nature—this loose endage
 That flaps slap in thy face, Æstheticism !
 Man's foot, I'm told, constrains him to the mire,
 While ours, instead, to heaven exalts us higher.
 Yon foolish parrots reach yet higher regions ;
 Are we, for that, below those spottled pigeons ?
 The fashion of our feet—say, 'tis degenerate—
 For climbing's now adapted best, at any rate ?
 Yes ; but we've no desire with squirrels, thrushes,
 Henceforth to skip and hop o'er trees and bushes ;
 Nor scurry down lianas' high festoons,
 But nicely sit in orderly saloons.
 Last, as concerns our nudity—oh ! let
 Us thank our stars that to these woodland quarters,
 From Europe have not penetrated yet
 The Argus-eyes of newspaper reporters ;
 (That Europe where, in these days, in some places,
 Of fair maid's bosoms 'tis a crime to warble,
 And whose police scarce suffer naked graces
 In goddesses, though they're antiques and marble ;))
 For if he overheard our so immoral
 Debate and to his paper gave it entry,
 And added comic cuts, as well as oral,—
 As is the way with journalistic gentry—
 Our Senate's session would become the sport
 Of the whole world of cultivated thought.

Enough of words. But of this vow take heed :
 Let folly, let indifference resist,
 Obscurist, tailist, or reactionist,
 On with undaunted courage I'll proceed

Where bright above me beams the goal transcendent :
An apedom dressed, un-tailed and independent."

Applausive cries and clappings hailed the royal
Harangue, ay, one ape wishing, all too loyal,
To clap with all four palms at once, was found
After a thundering fall, upon the ground.

(For courtiers' arts e'en apes have not neglected.)

But well the quick-eyed monarch's glance detected
Not from the heart those cries applausive flowed ;

And therefore vexed, for sympathy he searches

Where lower, and most near the throne, bestrode

A trunk of elephant, 'neath the little church's

Domelet, an ape, as Bhandragura noted,

Noblest of all for lofty lineage voted ;

Of this rare magnate, then, the prince inquired :

"Our well loved Bhandragura, say, in verity,

What think'st thou of our plan ? and be inspired

In thy reply with frank, complete sincerity."

Then bowing low responded Bhandragura :

"Flattery apart, thy speech, O Majesty !

Ah ! 'twas one string of splendid thoughts, ay, sure a

Necklace—each word a pearl of wisdom high.

Blots on the sun I easier could detect

Than on the work thy genius has created.

A miracle of wit it must be rated,

And perfect through and through in each respect.

Above all, as to dress, in me, O Sire !

You'll find a preacher full of faith and fire.

Ah, me ! with what delight I, too, had ruffled

In that brave hat of thine ; my body muffled

In that fine frock, those picturesque cut breeches ;

But where to find 'em—that the one small hitch is."

Here in accord the Senate cheered revealing
 This doubt respondent to the general feeling ;
 And eager looks upon the king all rivet,
 To see what satisfaction he would give it.

But now o'er all the king emerged thrice glorious,
 And round and round the Senate glanced victorious,
 " Thrice honored be that word, so frank, so human,
 Without the useless gloss of flattery's spangle.
 Thee, forthwith, my prime minister I summon :
 But know our august work from every angle
 In all its parts we've marked with diligence.
 Not far from here, where round our forest fastness
 The sea beach winds and depths of ocean vastness,
 Upon a spot to which I'll lead you hence,
 As if in homage, Ocean's waves have brought us
 Of different suits a countless choice, a banquet
 Of gems and diamonds of the rarest waters,
 That from this store each one of you may prank it
 From head to heels in gold galoons and samet,
 Lace, silks — whate'er you will—you've but to name it."

This last announcement did indeed occasion
 Wild throes of joy to all the apish nation.
 From wold and ruin loud the cries were bruited,
 Tempests of praise through all the foliage ran,
 And thus the king in thunder tones saluted :
 " Long live our monarch, mighty Hanuman !"
 Then, not a moment waiting for his guidance,
 Like the wild huntsman's pack of phantoms chiding
 Through wintry woods, that mass of apes roll, gliding
 O'er branch and creeper, skip and hop and fly, dance
 Through the dense thickets, leap from trees to trees
 In one wild avalanche of deafening roar, all

Converging to where into depths of seas
The old wood's selvage peers from cliffs of coral.

V.

The rolling main, where yestreen's storm suspended
Its vapoury hills o'er myriad valleys blended
Where surge and thunder-peal rang forth and vivid
Heaven's cloud-born arrows leapt from darkness livid,
To-day, in tranquil majesty reposing
Beneath the gorgeous dome of southern skies,
A mighty sapphire half of space enclosing,
Flecked with the gold of myriad sparkles, lies.
Blue robe of Ocean, which the wavelets plashing,
Scarce heard, in crispy bands of snowy laces
'Neath the low shore-line fringe and, gorgeous, graces
A diadem of palms, with emerald flashing ;
Such the proud vanguard of that wood's recesses,
With sprays superb of towering growths, in motion,
And garlands drooping to a painted ocean
And flower bright wreaths entwined in darkling tresses :
And from the waves' transparent shield, far under
Glow, strangely fair, the sub-marine wrought Aden,
Girdling the shore with wealth of flower forms laden,
The tender polypes' patient work of wonder,
Those stems in ruby carved and turquoise blue,
Whose threads enamelled many a whorl embowers
Of slender-fashioned bells and living flowers
In hundred-fold delight of varying hues :—
Those globed Medusa's colours, the slim mould
Of other beings, that glassy microcosms'
Still insect life, that circles round its blossoms

Coralline :—bivalves strewn o'er sands of gold,
 Whose iris sheen at every moment varies,—
 'Tis like a glance on some bright haunt of fairies.

But yestreen's storm which with the Muses' Ark
 So many a proud hope at one blow had shattered
 Left 'mid those beauties, its dread power to mark,
 More than one piteous trace at random scattered.
 Upon the beach a medley strange is strewn
 Heaped up in sand and hither, thither bandied
 By force of waves and salt surf spoiled and stranded,
 Lie chest, case, hamper in disorder thrown.

And in the sea itself, a stone's throw farther,
 Lo ! by the splintered reefs and crags surrounded,
 That blacken where the snowy foam-wreaths gather,
 Half fallen on one side the ship's hull grounded.

Hark ! 'tis as though above the wooded reach
 Some sudden squall has burst with hundred guns,
 And hurrying near and nearer to the beach
 With gathering roar of crackling branches, runs :
 And in that din may be distinguished cries
 And yells from numerous throats : now, high in air
 Above the palms the frightened parrot flies,
 A tulip of the clouds, and vibrates there
 Its Iris plumes : from leafy covert lair
 An ape has sprung and down its tree trunk stair
 Slid lightning-like to earth : behind him fo'low,
 One, two, three, four : whole packs in full cry hollow ;
 Now from the brakes of pleated leaves is spilling
 A perfect cloud of these wild apish swarms,
 Down the lianas jerked, as if distilling
 A waterfall of fawn-furred pygmy forms.
 Each to the chests and packing cases scampers,

Rends the portmanteau-straps and tugs the hampers.

Now, hellish Breughle, lend thy pincers' aid
 That I, from far, may catch that mad parade ;
 My feeble pen can offer of that scene a
 Mere shade : of mummeries, tricks a record scanty
 Over the relics of those drowned cantanti,
 Those mimers, prime-donne, ballerine ;
 A whirlwind of impatient, apish pickers
 'Tis now that dips and rages in that frippery
 Of tinsel robes ;—with what grotesques it flickers,
 What comic postures as they tug the heap awry !
 Here with fantastic casque that frames in her face
 A cat ape's gibbering from the mirror's surface ;
 One in Mephisto's ruddy trowsers sticketh
 Her ape's hand : here a foot, in gauntlet shod, is
 Thrust through the sleeve of Margarita's bodice :
 On triangle with sceptre here one clicketh ;
 And here's an ape, his fur with snow-drift crowned,
 From full fist flings the puff powder around,
 Till all's just like a shop of Paris plaster :
 Behind him one, a mimic modern master,
 Stripes all his back, a brush assiduous plying
 Well charged with chalk and ruddle : here one, eyeing
 The scene through pince-nez, flourished to and fro,
 Dressed half antique-wise, half in rokoko,
 Head over heels above the drums goes flying.
 Some type here of all lands', all nations' clothes is,
 Arms that have threatened death in every age,
 Wigs and moustachios, with all sorts of noses,
 Masks, padded calves for sylph or ballet page.
 Here laurel wreaths with ribbon, goblet, fan, are
 Once more alive, scores wave and many a banner

Unrolls above the gibbering demon host,
 This way and that, in wild disorder tossed :
 And strains to match accompany the racket,
 A crash of tones, earth had not heard as yet,
 Apes' chatter, tom-toms' deafening thuds to back it,
 Crisp, tinkling bells, and clattering castanet.

And from the palms yet other throngs come showering
 That scarce the close-packed strip of beach will hold,
 That reckless rout of carnival, unrolled,
 Like some bright ball of ribbon, where go scouring
 The apish maskers : o'er the plunder tussle :
 Show sharp toothed gums, in one another's muzzle
 And challenge strife. Here one keen pair of eyes have
 Flown to the shipwreck on the reef; the cries of
 Their owner summoned others. Swift to leeward
 A troop of apes has scrambled up the plane tree
 That stiffens 'mid the palms—a lonely sentry,
 And one strong arm points furthest out to seaward.
 From this, in shorter time than takes to write it,
 Of apes and cat-apes swings a girdle dappled,
 Upon the branch, with feet and tail united.
 The first, head prone to earth, is firmly grappled,
 And, with both hands, the ape below it claspeth
 Fast by the tail; this ape a third's tail graspeth ;
 The third a fourth—and so ad libitum—
 Head downwards, back to seaward—sight amazing,
 They hang—the ground the last link all but grazing.
 And now this long and living pendulum,
 All hands and arms in rapid agitation,
 Swings to and fro, more swift at each pulsation,
 Till far beyond the wave line to where's lying
 Th' ill fated wreck, the lowest ape is flying :

Now his fore-arm has nipped the balustrade,
 And perfect thus, that living bridge compactly
 Built out of apish heads and tails exactly
 As Ulloa wrote, a mighty archway made
 (For that's maintained unshaken in his pages
 Which seems a mere quaint jest to modern sages).
 O'er the ape bridge now fresh detachments thundered,
 And in brief time the luckless vessel plundered
 Down to the very hold, fresh tawdry adding
 To that about the beach already gadding.

Here, last to show himself amongst his own,
 Lo! my lord Hanuman. Now, only, reader,
 He had caught up his subjects, tho' their leader.
 He really could not skip it o'er lianas
 But picked his way on land like us bimanas,
 Leaning upon a piece of sugar cane,
 A sorry trot being all he could attain,
 For every step, almost, he lost his balance,
 And bloody falls 'mid thorns tried his nonchalance,
 This kind of monkey scarce at all being able
 To walk upright like chimpanzee or cego.
 Thus, last, he tramped it o'er the sand and pebble
 And paused like some personified *Quos ego*.

"Ah! ha!" he shrieked, "this spectacle divine is!"
 Then raised his cane in threatening hand, but so
 Reft of that necessary prop, his highness
 Plumped on his fore-paws without more ado;
 And so, on all fours planted, like the rest,
 Continued thus to chide his hair-brained hopefuls:
 "Enough of foolishness and childish jest!
 What's in the hampers yet, just let there stop, fools!
 And first within our woodland empire be

All duly fetched in manner orderly ;
 Then only, when a proper invent'ry
 Is taken, will I serve all out in packets
 To each in keeping with his quality,
 And teach you how to live up to your jackets."

VI.

How Hanuman depict in fitting manner
 That mighty change in all things, high and low,
 Wherewith, great Peter's compeer, at a blow
 O'er Apedom thou didst hoist fair culture's banner !

How deftly wert thou skilled to use the stores
 The ship's broad shoulders brought thee to thy shores ;
 Those side scenes, costumes and a hundred trifles,
 Of which is built our real world's scenic rival's :
 With these thou hadst in thy still forest grove meant
 To found a world, of well bred apes the sure hope,
 Whose polish fine and cultivated movement
 Should more than run abreast with that of Europe.

Who could believe, but now, in simple fleeces
 Of their own hair, they crept o'er trees and trailers—
 Those figures, that now prank it in pelisses,
 Gowns, mantles, frock-coats cut by West-end tailors ;
 Who carry fans and double eyeglasses,
 And cut each other courtly reverences !
 Who'd ere divine an apish hind hand fleecy
 In those soft Paris pumps or Hessian pairs—
 You'd say, perhaps, the cobbler sewed too easy.
 And soon those forms—an upright gait is theirs.
 Out from the hip they swing in style disdaining
 All props—such wonders come from constant training.

The tail? beneath the steel, without restriction
 It fell, the name e'en being expunged from diction.
 Poor thing, it served to dust the floor or clothes :
 The ladies, though, kept theirs ; it came in handy
 As bustle paddings, in default of those
 That nowadays round off our female dandy.

Where palaces of ancient rajahs lifted,
 Mid-most the ruined streets, their blue walls rifted,
 Half in the wood's dense roofage disappearing,
 And bells of creepers on the façade bearing,
 Which many a trace of bygone glory cherished,
 The Ape chief raised his seat o'er those had perished.
 Before a time-worn gate, whose traceried fretwork,
 Moss overrun, and flower stars' heavier network,
 As guard of honour, to and fro, and making
 At need a military salute, lo ! paces
 Ape martial—in a uniform so taking,
 Cut à la Gerolstein—'twas once her Grace's.
 And 'neath the graceful archway of the portal
 With a cocked hat, fur tippet rich in laces,
 Gold mounted staff, his thin fist scarce embraces,
 Behold ape *concièrge*—as his colleagues mortal
 Cock their disdainful eye at you—he cocks his :
 The porter's lodge, by the way, a prompter's box is.
 And then you pass o'er Persian carpets, all of
 The finest work, through suites of gilt and buhl
 To where a spacious inner vestibule
 Conducts you to the monarch's audience hall, of
 The loveliest side scenes built, bespangled, clipped,
 And in unheard-of pomp and pride equipped.
 Fine silver-broidered tapestries here float o'er you,
 A splendid carved arm-chair, too, stands before you.

Here Sèvres, here real Japan, your notice claims ;
 A modern stove, in which dance tinsel flames ;
 A gallery of portraits, frames and all,
 Painted with taste direct upon the wall :
 And in the midst, in full imperial state,
 King Hanuman upon a throne reposes
 In the bright raiment luckless Lear of late
 Raved in ; the crown half o'er his ears and nose is—
 Being somewhat large ; but what of that? his right hand
 Grasps the gold lily-sceptre, type of might and
 Justice ; and on his lap th' imperial ball is
 With which his left hand languidly just dallies.
 A rostrum bears the statutes of the realm,—
 They're scores and actors' parts—as actors spell 'em,
 Old love letters, musk-scented, and cream-laid ones ;
 And tailors' bills—in general, unpaid ones.

And would the prince to rooms yet more resplendent,
 He just signs with his sceptre to the attendant—
 No more — and says : “ Ho ! throne room ! ” for example.
 Lo ! swarms of servants clutch at every angle,
 Detach the walls, return with walls more ample,
 Wheel, fit them : high and low the hammers jangle,
 And presto ! as by wizard's wand enchanted,
 The wished-for hall around the king is planted.
 Thus, without need to stir a foot, he changes
 Hall after hall, and which of all the range is
 The loveliest, who can say ? as though one dallies
 In fairy-land within a spell-bound palace.

And passing rich his robes, to fit his station,
 He's always at it, stripping and unstripping :
 His pearl-sewn chasuble, pre-Reformation,
 Succumbs to Louis Quinze, and now he's slipping

Into thy supple suit Napoleone.

Next stalks a Spanish general, proud and bony,—

Six times a day he changes everything—

August in all, and every hair a king.

And when he gives a banquet to his magnates

The tables groan beneath the load of dainties,

There peacock pasty, bright with every paint, is

And 'mid such tarts the vase of orchids stagnates.

Exalted guests sit round it circumspectly

And carve away, it does you good to see them,

At platefuls of well-moulded, graceful fishes,

And ptarmigan fried fast to golden dishes,

Though seldom knives are raised from what's beneath them

And but for form: for e'en apes' wit it passes

To learn a taste for coloured paper masses:

But who would in your cultured State aspire

Replete from your State banquet to retire.

Then there's a tasteful park for recreation,

With groves of palms and creepers' starry bowers,

Such as a tropic flora's bounty showers.

There apes bent double weed without cessation,

And now grand transformation scenes enthral

The eye, disposed at random here and there,

Bushes cut out in cardboard, flowers as rare,

E'en an old-fashioned fountain 'mid them all

Flings painted water-jets to heights aerial,

Here in these canvas grounds our Hanuman

Loved to parade, revolving many a plan,

Upon his brow a crowd of cares imperial,

And these, behind the rose—that one of paper—

He sometimes banished with an agile caper.

The rest, 'tis true, more poorly are provided,

And most of all is furniture deficient,
 One divan 'twixt two families divided,
 For one an old arm chair must be sufficient,
 And thus a law of true politeness is it
 To take your chair with you upon a visit.

To compensate of clothes there was a surfeit,
 That if he chose a populous empire
 The king could duly clothe in man's attire,
 For there was everything from rags to fur, fit
 For every calling, every social grade,
 Of which the intricate civic state is made,
 And nought remained, but give the apes a hint or two
 How to behave in their respective vestures,
 How cringe and regulate obsequious squint or toe,
 And how manipulate their smirks and gestures
 To have a folk just like the folk they copied,
 And here the prince gave without stint or stop aid.

His realm in all had human regulations,
 Ay, e'en a Constitution's delectations,
 He gave his apes the right, as Europe teaches,
 In halls of delegates to make fine speeches,
 Here deputies take thought about new taxes,
 Bright flower of empire these, in peace and quiet :
 Some, perhaps oppose : the Government relaxes :
 And all refer the question to the Diet.
 Of different laws with zeal, too, they debated,
 And their debate—before the king they laid it :
 Who, in full glory, from his throne just bending,—
 It was a spectacle august to view,—
 Gave ear to all, most bland and condescending,
 And then did just what he'd a mind to do.

The State a swarm of bureaucrats directed ;

They sat and sat, with pen behind the ear
 Behind a heap of ledgers, frowned, reflected.
 And how one storms and vents one's rage ; oh dear !
 Should some audacious cit distract one's labour.
 Then sometimes in frock coat, white belt and sabre
 One goes, one's back quite into horse-shoes bent,
 Oneself at one's head office to present.

Here barristers and lawyers lived in clover,
 These gave a crafty glance at one another,
 Exchanging briefs and actions ten times over—
 These being comic rolls,—my learned brother
 Adjourns the sitting—terms were kept and cases
 For jurisdiction summary, protracted
 A year : o'er long bills clients pulled long faces,
 For fees on palm leaves to a mite exacted.

Who pass in medicine their examinations
 Put on a look of wisdom far superior,
 With pins on parrots test inoculations,
 With opera glasses, too, "work out" bacteria ;
 Pulses they feel from morn to dewy even,
 The inward functions note, with ear to chest,
 And then prescribe ; would ours did so, by Heaven !
 Their patients, green-room bon-bons of the best.

And there were crowds, too, of Proffesor gibbons
 With gold-rimmed spectacles upon their noses ;
 From head to foot dry pedants in shrunk hoses,
 You'd scarce distinguish 'em from Europe's glib 'uns.
 These buzzed round books, as filings round a magnet,
 They fished them from the shipwreck with a bagnet,
 Tugged many a book to bits, brought scissors, glue, an'
 Hi ! presto ! from the old comes out a new 'un.
 But hark ! the shrilly professional wail :

"Peace! at our threshold, dunce! by all the Muses!
 We mean to throw some light upon your tail
 You say your Indian ape can run in nooses.
 Primeval forests, too, in Hindostan!
 That, and some other things, won't do, my bantling!
 Not even in a poem, no, my man!
 I stand abashed; my cheek shame's purple mantling."

Here theologians, plump, red-cheeked and hoary,
 Too, veiled themselves in supra-mundane glory:
 If orthodoxy murmur, to disarm her
 I say expressly, *these* apes worshipped Brahma.
 There Apery's Brachmans, all in robes and fringes,
 In spite of fasts grew wondrous fat and blooming,
 And proved Law, Science, Art, in brief resuming,
 Let's say the All on their own Vedas hinges.

Of course these Vedas, too, must be protected,
 So Apes a University erected:
 There Ape-professors took a world of trouble
 For every trick and trait to be the double
 Of Halle and Leipzig's learned, to a hair
 As Halle and Leipzig snuff, they snuffed and grumbled,
 While Apedom's beadle Deutschland's best out-Bumbled
 With gorgeous staff and cocked hat rich and rare.

Art, letters too, by no means retrograded
 With ruffled locks about a brow intensive
 And hand in bosom, geniuses paraded
 Their "welt-schmerz" on a cheek as sickly pensive,
 According to great patterns, ate, drank, slumbered,
 And many an apish Byron, apeland numbered.
 Here artists, too, in velveteens disported,
 With broad-brimmed hat on nape of neck, much courted.
 Well skilled they were to wield their blessed palettes

And miles of canvas daubed in greens and scarlets,
 And when the ape musicians meet to thump it
 With blows the drum, and this the cymbal riddles,
 This puffs with cheek cherubic at the trumpet,
 And others scrape infuriate bows on fiddles—
 You seem to hear, i' faith, the suave seductions
 Of our dramatic music's grave productions.

Thus from the inexhaustible provisions
 Of raiment that the sunken vessel offered,
 The king tricked out the types of all conditions
 That Europe's own capacious lap e'er coffered ;
 From simple stuffs of master tailor clipped out
 Milords and squires, while 'neath the scissors tripped out
 Troops of contractors, those who job in shares,
 Sleek Common Councilmen and staid Lord Mayors,
 Head gamekeepers and shopkeepers, jack tars,
 Waiters in black, with sleek solicitors,
 White-aproned cooks, Swiss chocolate and ice men,
 A dappled fire brigade and town policemen,
 Tapsters and postmen, those in cheese and butter
 Who deal, the threadbare scamps who pad the gutter ;
 And who was good for nothing else was set
 To circulate a Government gazette.

And in the mimic art were wonders truly,
 How soon the facile apish nation duly
 Its whole existence to its rôle adapted,
 Walking or standing still how deftly shaped it,
 In every smile and attitude and gesture,
 To what was just in keeping with its vesture.

Faith, if upon the apish Boulevard's border
 You'd marked an ape—one of the masher order—
 How dressed in pure French style—here loose and baggy,

Here, on the contrary, too tight and scraggy,
 It waved its tiny cane or opera glasses,
 And preened a comic coiffeur's frizzled masses,
 You, sure, forgetting there of apes the land is,
 Had cried : " Lo ! Pricop, one of thy prime dandies ! "

As to ape lady lionesses say,
 Who'd paint the lily or their charms pourtray ?
 Those gorgeous silks, those " parures " so transcendent,
 The subtle movement of those fine, dusk hands,
 When, like a love-net, many a fan resplendent
 Its wavering curves and chequered ribs expands,
 And listening to the soft and bird-like clattering
 You think of other fair ones' half-lisp'd kisses
 By moonlit Moldau, or the foreign spluttering
 Of malapropos by raw school-girl misses.

A heavy dream behind the apes it lay—
 That time of barbarous customs, clamberings, dances ;
 To keep in all the pure Caucasian way
 Each watched his neighbour with Draconian glances ;
 A crushing smile would stab the social sinner
 Who, absent-minded, trod the thronged saloons
 Without his tie or minus pantaloons,
 Or handed with his foot some dame to dinner.
 And " chronique scandaleuse " cut like a sabre
 With blighting taunt, and quickly gossip warmed up
 How this or that uncultivated neighbour,
 By day, quite unabashed the banyan swarmed up ;
 And if of lotus bloom or parrot ever
 Some lady ape a mild remark should venture,
 Bent shell-like ear to ear each female censor,
 " How naive ! nu ! she was never very clever ! "
 For well-bred apedom's small talk to two themes is

Confined : the Bois de Boulogne and St. James'.

But ah ! I see in soul, how o'er my fancies
 Like snow-white butterfly that flits o'er roses
 Too oft a tender hand o'er lips reposes—
 Lips whose light ennui e'en their charm enhances.
 And hear the sigh that flutters o'er my mystery,
 " Instead of rose and tender nightingale,"
 He limns us grinning monkey masks and fails
 E'en thus to keep the slight thread of his history.

Ah, me ! I feel the weight of your just anger,
 But peace ! the coming Canto shall work wonders,
 There, like a tempest, roars the battle's clangour
 And in a cataract the action thunders.

VII.

Long time in peace the ape empire bloomed, progressing,
 His work's success the king with pleasure filled,
 Only at times the parrot plague distilled
 A drop of wormwood in his cup of blessing.
 These spottled dolts we all know have the failing
 To mimic what they hear with dismal wailing.
 Thus it befel one graceless bird kept screeching
 " Humanity," here " Culture " one went preaching,
 Here " Progress," " Freedom," through the leaf-wove
 thatch whirred,
 There " Ideal " the fools squalled on and on,
 And clumps of parrots pealed their favourite catchword
 In chorus : " Ci—Civilization."
 These words exalted in those idiot echoes
 Rang as in scorn around the breeched makakoes
 And stung them all day long, nor could the king

See any help for it, save this : to fling
 Stones at these flocks and drive them to a distance,—
 'Gainst parrots who could think of armed resistance ?

A cloudlet this the apish heaven that covered,
 But heavier, stormier clouds behind it hovered.

Once to the palace Bhandragura hurried,
 Fear in his eye, a cloud of cares his brow hid,
 Nor did he ring, as was his wont, before he
 Withdrew the silks that veiled the throne room's glory,
 He raised the curtain, but stepped back much faster,
 For there in full undress, behold ! his master
 Sprawling about the baldachin and chucking
 This way and that the gold imperial pippin,
 The globe aloft with cuts of sceptre flipping,
 Catching again, in wondrous postures, ducking
 And all those capers cutting with it, briefly,
 That apes with apples ever cut most liefly.

The minister with fine tact first coughed slightly,
 Paused, then coughed louder, paused, again asserted
 His presence, paused, then touched the bell rope lightly,
 E'en thus, perhaps, the king he'd disconcerted ;
 There was a thud as if some weight fell down,
 And minutes passed ere " Come in " was repeated :
 But Bhandragura, entering, on the throne
 Already saw the monarch gravely seated :
 Th' imperial apple his unquavering fist held
 And every august hair enquiry bristled.

The minister with knee to earth low looted
 And raised to heaven sick look and hands : " Confusion !
 Ah ! king," he cried, " and were my tongue outrooted
 That I need not announce it : Revolution !"
 The monarch trembled as that dread word sounded,

And from his palm the globe of empire bounded,
 He stooped to pick it up, and vaguely stuck it
 Into his royal robes posterior tucket,
 Then, having stowed away that gold potato,
 Shrieked : " Revolution ! what ! and in my State, too ? "

With anguish Bhandragura answering sighed : " Ra-
 -jah, know Rebellion crawls with subtle slyness,
 Then raises all at once its head of hydra :
 Perhaps thou dost recal the old ape, Highness,
 Named Vindragupta, who once in full session
 Challenged thy sovereign will, at thine accession,
 Stormed against Progress, raved of continuity,
 And when the t—h'm ! that rearward superfluity
 Thou badest to dock—blew up sedition's bellows
 And strove to head a rising of his fellows ;
 But, not succeeding, found in flight salvation,
 And next, from what I hear, took up his station
 In a remote woodside, just like a hermit,
 Upon a banyan huge, where parrots permit
 To share their noisy roost, a very Tartar.
 His plots, oh ! king, this uproar's soul and heart are.

" The lapse of morals, which in part pervaded
 Our lower orders, I'd long marked unaided :
 Their ringleaders were beings sunk in excesses,
 Who from neglect or sheer corrupt caprices
 Had spoiled their previously becoming dresses,
 Lawyers with half a gown and cap in creases,
 Schoolmasters with their spectacles all shattered,
 And geniuses in mantles ragged and tattered ;
 These looked with evil eye on all henceforward
 Who kept their shoes and stockings neat and shining.
 ' We wants our rights ' they whined, and still are whining.

Ay! hardy looks they even dared on your ward-
 -robe, king, to fix, and murmured ever bolder,
 ‘ We’re out at elbows, our broadcloth’s all rusty,
 There on the shelves by thousands fine suits moulder,
 And moths are pasturing on those samets musty.’

“ Ah! ha! methought, the social crisis: full sure
 We’ll lay the knife to this corrupting ulcer:
 Lynx-eyed I watched: chastised with knout and rope-end,
 Only at last my eyes were fully opened.

“ In base degraded souls ’tis deep implanted
 The will to bring all down to their soiled level;
 In others, if the ideals they once vaunted
 Their breath of scorn can tarnish, how they revel!
 Thus e’en this worn-out riff-raff of the slum
 Against the well-to-do beats loud the drum,
 And neat, well-kept costumes with venom acrid
 Reviles, and all things which to us are sacred.
 One of them sat to-day ’mid yon birth-wort’s leaves,
 High o’er the public highway, in his shirtsleeves,
 A public scandal ’twas to see the varlet:
 (The schoolgirl apes, who just then with their mistress
 Passed two and two that way, all blushed quite scarlet
 Behind their fans, poor things, with shame and distress.)
 Ay, worse—disgust mine utterance chokes—this fellow—
 The Tartar—a bird’s nest upon his lap held
 And made a fine feast off the egglets dappled,
 Sucking their raw contents with lips all yellow.

“ And when I would have chid the cool-faced rascal
 He rounded on me thus: ‘ To prate is easy
 In purple frock and ruffs; but look here, please ye,
 Who’d recognise a human suit, I ask all,
 Here in the sorry relics of my blouse?’

As to these eggs, I'll eat them if I choose,
 Why not? when pleasanter than figs' fresh juices
 Upon my palate melt their honied sluices,
 And do me good. These yolks, sucked raw, all ages
 Have prized beyond all sweets. The present's page is
 Just like the rest. If you chastise as penal
 What all indulge in secret and think venal,
 Though publicly they feign to loathe as poison,
 Yourself with all your realm must off to prison :
 Nay, folk do say—but what that vile tongue uttered
 Should scarce in closest confidence be muttered—
 Only to sate the sight, the prince his rations
 Has served of painted fishes and crustaceans,
 And while amongst his guests he lauds the courses
 Of chamois, quail and pheasant without truce,
 Behind the Spanish wall restore his forces
 The fresh and tender shoots of young bamboos.' ”

Here Bhandragura toward the carpet carried
 His bloodshot orbs, meanwhile the royal eyes
 Above that sunset, twirled into the skies ;
 Thus long in mute embarrassment they tarried.
 At length the minister resumed, impressive :
 “ Those treasonable words I fain had chided,
 But lo ! my ape rounds on me, sharp, aggressive ;
 And all the abandoned rabble with him sided,
 The rascal shouted : “ Cutting to the marrow
 Were Vindragupta's words which smote the prince's
 In full assembly with a Parthian arrow.
 Let's go to him. For still their truth convinces,
 We lived in peace the life our sires had taught us,
 On trees, devoid of care and gay as Persians,
 Until the prince, a pack from Europe brought us

Of poisons, human riff-raff and perversions.
 Why have we to abjure our own traditions
 And proper being, once free from care's attritions,
 And that disdain which nature's powers assign us,
 And to which use and custom both incline us,
 To ape grotesquely the human puppet's dances,
 Merely to gratify the king's vain fancies,
 Who yet from apes real human beings wont fashion,
 Ay, scarcely wins a smile from the Caucasian.
 Nay, take again your spotted rags and scout us,
 We'll bend no more a collared neck like horses,
 But plunge our breasts in apedom's purest sources :
 Play out your sorry comedy without us.'

"Consentient hands applauded and decisive
 Stripped off their rags : then, houp la ! o'er lianas
 To tree-tops, once more full-blown quadrumanas,
 They swarmed and scampered off with squeals derisive :
 Then only dawned on me that speech was mainly
 An echo of another more diffusive,
 When Vindragupta's eloquence abusive
 With rank breath fanned rebellion's flame, but vainly.
 Perhaps, their secret head long undetected,
 He'd been en rapport with the disaffected."

The monarch heard him out with visage troubled,
 His eye electric flashed, his small fist doubled :
 "Ha ! traitors ! but I swear by Para-brahma,
 By Brama, Siva, ay, by Krishma, Rama,
 By all gods—by thy streams oh ! sacred Ganges,
 By thee, great-grandsire, Hanuman, th' anointed
 By heaven, to which this hand of mine is pointed,
 By throne and crown, by these gold-glittering flanges
 I swear upon my purple, on this brand,

Th' imperial apple which I hold in hand,
By this—"

The king looked down, a little flurried,
Then in the purple vainly plunged a finger,
Then round and round with searching glances hurried,
Which now on Bhandragura vaguely linger,
Whose own, belated, toward the ceiling skurried
And the throne's baldachin, then sank devoted
Earthward before the monarch's, but alas! his
Had caught already 'mid those silken masses,
And not without embarrassment there noted
The precious sceptre's tip which like a cockade's
Peeped out high o'er the baldachin's rich brocades.

Awhile he paused, then, wrathful, thus continued :

" I vow if to reclaim them Justice hath ways
I will not leave them blinded thus to sin nude,
But turn the traitors back to culture's pathways.
In name of outraged Progress and Good Manners
And all those priceless Ideals called human
Unfurl, oh! Bhandragura, war's red banners
And mine heroic army swiftly summon,
To-morrow's sun, as o'er the world it glances,
Shall blench with fear before our glittering lances,
Before th' heroic hosts—er—I shall muster
To roll these hardy rebels in the dust—er."

Now, Muse, to war's turmoils attune the lyre,
And with a wing enraptured thrill the chords,
That I in fitting numbers may aspire
To chaunt the deeds of those heroic hordes,
As ranked behind their warrior king they thunder,
And war's dread scourge the woodland rifts asunder.

The valiant infantry 's already mustered,

When Mistress Sun peeps sily through the thicket,
 And views in awe the tips of long spikes clustered,
 And formidable muskets of the pickets.
 Views, too, impressed, those uniforms so mottled,
 Not one with less than four bright colours spottled,
 So that this military simian crop is
 To look at much like an immense parterre
 Of mallows, tulips, pæonies, and poppies
 Or our own Civic Council and Lord Mayor.
 All the world's armies here are represented,
 Look where you will 'tis all gold fringe and lacings,
 A choice of all the shakos e'er invented,
 With epaulettes, plumes, cockades, corded facings,
 And grenadiers' red caps with spiky crown,
 So that they look much like a lobster salad,
 And 'neath whose brim of gold ape warriors frown,
 Haughty as those of troubadour and ballad.

As for the cavalry, its gleam and glint
 Fatigues the eye like sparkles struck from flint.
 Here gold cuirasses in the sun are glancing,
 Here quaintly crested casque and helmet flash,
 Where elf-long wisps of horse-hair mane are dancing,
 Here blinks a cutlass drawn from sheath and sash :
 The riders' boots are drawn up tight and bound
 Under the armpits with a pair of braces,
 Else had their ample veal-skins beat the ground,
 Where, as it is, each spur a furrow traces :
 Half down the calf within, the small foot dips,
 Although the tops are braced up to the hips :
 And in default of horseflesh these dragoons
 Are mounted on high-spirited baboons.

Before his guards, a bow stupendous wielding,

Amongst his staff, behold ! the monarch ride,
 Strapped in a case of leather sleek and yielding,
 His field perspective dangling at his side :
 Once from the stalls alone the foot's light course
 It spied, but now surveys both foot and horse.

Like some death-bearing cloud through dell and cover
 The host rolls on : around in terror hover
 Flocks of macaws, and fly with fitful wailing
 Before the rattling drum and shrill fife sailing.

In stately pomp march forth the royal forces,
 But rather slow : to quick march, run or double,
 Not yet avail the simian foot's resources,
 And every step they take's a world of trouble :
 Dense brushwood clogs the van : a quagmire swallows
 A whole battalion, uniforms grow rarer
 Minced on the thorns, the recreant helmet follows
 The tendrils' noose twitched high above its wearer ;
 Tree stumps trip many up, the overweighted
 Dragoons' unlucky steeds are quite checkmated,
 And without fail capsize at every root,
 So that the horse remains behind the foot.

Not Flora only, all the woodland Fauna,
 Seems also up in arms at every corner :
 A cloud of winged ants with every dole 'tis
 That first invests them—like a mustard poultice :
 Foul leeches here festoon their shuddering trotters,
 Before a hissing snake the vanguard totters,
 And here all thrill with dread, a form divining
 More awful yet, yon bamboos' ambush lining.

When half its daily course the sun completed,
 Within that wood's yet unexplored dominions
 They pitched their camp all footsore, tired, and heated,

The king and generals 'neath their tents' proud pinions
 ('Twas but a tent in outline, being restricted
 To that side of the cloth on which depicted),
 Discussed the campaign's further prosecution,
 And 'twas resolved to wait there in seclusion
 Till dusk, then by a night march in three sections
 Reduce the rebels, right and left wing wheeling,
 Their way round Vindragupta's quarters feeling,
 The rest straight forward, then all join connections,
 A chain impenetrable round the foe form,
 And having him thus snared, at leisure go for him.

While for that march by sleep the host's preparing,
 The king, awake, succumbs to reveries daring,
 Now glory, o'er her favourite fondly stooping,
 Infuses hopes of deeds immortal, storied,
 The rainbow winnowing of her pinions drooping
 To fan the fever of his glowing forehead.
 So yet he tarried while the night descended,
 Phantasmal, and its dragon wings extended,
 Far o'er that forest world in shadows blended,
 Then woke the camp to roll of drums, and parted
 In three, in three directions so light-hearted,
 Upon that march of gloom and midnight started.

Straight to the goal the king and centre aiming
 Paced gingerly, each step a halt proclaiming
 Suspicious sounds to note, without stop or rest,
 Or spy about them in the still, dark forest.
 And that old wood a dreadful form took on,
 The cloak of gloom its arrows fear-compelling
 Shot all around, and when the crescent wan
 Rained silvery shafts among the tree-tops swelling
 All changed its being and weirdly stirred and eddied,

As if to midnight's spectral ghost-world wedded.
 Those foliage fans and clusters that resembled,
 Bathed in the moonlight, sprays all diamond showered,
 Swayed by a secret hand fantasmal, trembled
 And in the branches' vast arch, high embowered,
 Titanic shadows came and went fantastic,
 A gnarled face of bark, all tendrils braided,
 Its death's head on a ghastly nape paraded
 Above a coil of serpent-roots elastic.

Here, through the gloom, two fire-stars blue and hoary
 Announced the beast of night, the lurking lory
 And ghost-moths huge upon the night-breeze shiver,
 And bats hawk wheeling o'er a stagnant river;
 At every crackling twig the army finches,
 Some wild beast's distant roar the terror clinches.
 But if those sounds ill-omened cease, you'll scarcely
 Detect the rustling steps, they fall so sparsely;
 So noiselessly the host, this, that way peeping,
 As though some caravan of ghosts 'twere, creeping.
 No clink of sword disturbs the night air balmy,
 All hold their breath and damp their small feet's pattering,
 The silence of the grave broods o'er the army,
 Scarce broken by the warriors' poor teeth chattering.

Lo! here a massive trunk decumbent branches,
 Loaded with heavy fruitage, earthward launches,
 How temptingly its luscious load stoops o'er 'em!
 Each ape-mouth's watering, and—hi cockalorum!
 The vanguard's pulling down the promised branches,
 But all at once recoils upon its haunches
 In panic terror, thunder-struck, half-dying,
 And with a squeal the ranks are tumbling, flying,
 For ugh! it is transformed, that fruity banquet

To vampires which, by hinder claws suspended
 In drowsy slumber, fruit-like forms protended,
 Swathed in their olive pinions' oil-skin blanket.
 But now, in wild nocturnal rigs is wheeling
 On dusk-brown bats' wings o'er the army's squealing.

Nay, those vicissitudes I'll limn no more, or
 That glorious march pourtray, that night of horror.
 Now I would rather deal with what befel in
 That banyan huge, headquarters of the villain
 Called Vandragupta, when the mob plebeian
 Fled to that fortress of the empyrean.

It Vindragupta greeted with complaisance :
 " Shades of the mighty dead for this renaissance
 Shall render thanks. Long have they marked in anger
 How 'tis disdained by this modern Treason—
 Their sacred watchword—hatred of the stranger :
 But now has triumphed healthy simian reason
 And soon shall beam the bright dawn long attended,
 When from our backs this human trash we'll scour,
 There long by crazy vanity suspended,
 And apedom pure reclaim the woodland bower.
 Welcome first heralds of a better time,
 Again o'er creepers on all fours we'll climb,
 Eat what the woods prepare so rich and fruity,
 And naked creep in pristine classic beauty.
 Off with all foreign manners ! foreign varnish !
 Again in all be Apery's Laws applied
 In my true apedom that no spot can tarnish,
 You have a flawless mirror for your guide,
 Then in pure philosimianism's glory, ah !
 Purge your whole essence from all human scoria."

Under his guidance on the following day,

The true ape style of life resumed its sway,
 O'er boughs and vines they wreathed their wood gymnastic;
 The foot so long in boots benumbed and strained,
 Once more it quick prehensile touch regained;
 To unperverted ape-grins jowls grew plastic;
 In perfect discords all the wood went squealing,
 And shewed its grinning teeth from floor to ceiling,
 Nay, tails were luted on with gum or mastic
 To prove them perfect apes in form and feeling.
 If one resumed his human rôle, forgetful
 Of self-respect, and like a dandy swaggered,
 Blinked crafty eyes of advocate, or haggard
 Smiled the thin sickly smile of poet fretful,
 A nasty pinch or sharp reproof at any rate
 Would warn him such things smacked of the degenerate.
 Nay, they surpassed what Apery's creed demands,
 And only ate with feet and walked with hands.

How softly when late dusk their sports abated,
 Up to the neck with figs and durians sated,
 Beneath the star-wrought vault of heaven's clear bowers,
 On odorous boughs of trees wrought o'er with flowers,
 Filled with some strange delight they sank to rest,
 Oh! Mother Nature! on thy kindly breast.

But on the morrow all jumped up confounded,
 Cries, blares of trump and dizzying drums resounded;
 And when they first peered down in dread and wonder,
 Flashed ghastly on their sight, in that bright morning,
 Close coiled around like some bronze anaconda
 The chain of deadly Mars in silent warning.
 Where'er they sped with pupils fear-distended
 That band of uniforms so variegated,
 Casques, sabres, pikes and muskets also wended,

And apish jowls with thirst of war inflated.
 Not without effort Vindragupta lulled
 His followers' fears and improvised a rapid
 Plan of defence and fitting weapons culled,
 Displaying here a humour rude but sapid.
 The Indian fig in which the rebels nested
 Reared high its bole's broad bulwark, uncontested,
 And massive tangled branches, foliage matted
 Into a crown gigantic spread around,
 And from the lower branches, thick and plaited,
 Like wreathed columns, suckers sought the ground,
 There rooted, and again their sapling grove
 Of shoots upreared, which circle wise emerging,
 With roots aerial picturesquely wove
 A strangely complex trellis work, converging
 Into impenetrable thickets graced
 E'en these, with slim liana stems enlaced.
 Thus the whole tree a natural fort afforded
 Wherein, unseen, full speed to earth the rebels
 Slid down the coiling suckers, tendril-corded,
 And swiftly to the crown returned with pebbles,
 And plucked, besides, the fig-tree's purpling grapes,
 Then calmly waited for the other apes.

A royal gesture silenced horn and drum, and
 The king alone the misled miscreants summoned :
 " Though all, by rights, deserve the law's last sentence,
 My clemency accepts of late repentance.
 Come down at once and show your true contrition
 By promise of perpetual submission,
 Or be assured that when I've stormed your stockades,
 Your heads all fall upon the block, ye blockheads."

Alas ! the leader of the rising turned

A deaf ear and that gracious pardon spurned ;
 Nor e'en, if all be true that history vouches,
 Vouchsafed one brief response ; the graceless Nero,
 Only in speechless wrath, discharged his pouches,
 Screened by the foliage, on the royal hero.

Ha ! how the ape-king now his bile discharged,
 How gnashed and scraped his teeth ! his eyes enlarged !
 And thus with rapid speech his troops exhorted :
 " Now grasp your swords, my lads, now guns be ported ;
 In glorious war we'll reap immortal honours,
 Who fall in Culture's sacred cause are martyrs :
 To-day all Europe's eyes are fixt upon us.
 Then hurrah ! forward, boys, and at the Tartars ! "

As to some cliff, when wintry seas are spuming
 Around a rock-girt isle, in fleecy vastness,
 The waves roll on and charge the granite fastness,
 Surge high and all is foaming, bubbling, booming,
 So 'mid the roll of drums, the trumpets' blaring,
 The clash of arms, and still indignant swearing,
 The ape hosts round the fated banyan rumble,
 But weak of foot and 'neath their harness gasping,
 They fall in heaps : the foot are all a-stumble,
 Despairing horsemen chargers' necks are clasping.
 The ground is but one motley rough and tumble,
 And from the dappled heap in which they stifle
 Here peeps a boot and spur and there a rifle.

But " Onward ! " roared the monarch undismayed,
 And waved them forward with his glittering blade.
 Like Durga's self upon his steed he towered,
 His face aflame with war, his two eyes glowered,
 Waved round his brows his long dishevelled hair,
 His gorgeous casque at once seemed everywhere ;

And after him the rear to storm the banyan's
Redoubt, sprang o'er the tufts of lapsed companions.

Now from the mighty figs' dense vegetation,
Like desolating hail from dark clouds whistles
'Mid the besiegers an unwelcome ration
Of purple fig grenades and flintstone missiles.
The army wavered: round-eyed, mad with pain,
Fled many an ape from that remorseless rain;
And "The King's wounded!" flew above the flying:
A well-aimed banyan fruit had burst in shivers
Upon that front of Mars, discharging rivers
Of blood-red juice, nose, cheek and eyeball dyeing.

Now all stream off like icicles in spring,
In panic flight past hope of rallying,
Till out of reach of these pain-dealing cobbles
The host discomforted together hobbles.

To serious counsel here in his pavilion
His band of generals Hanuman, vermilion
With fig juice and vexation ill-restrained,
Now summoned: "Had the ship brought ammunition,"
He cried, "our guns had blown them to perdition,
These chicken hearts, and not a shred remained:
But how with pikes and guns get at 'em—burk it!
That's the weak link in our strategic circuit."

"I know a way," said Bhandragura, turning:
"Let's doff our arms and cumbrous coats, and spurning
The load of boots which clog the foot's play, free it,
Then to the banyan: all at once assail it,
And swift as lightning o'er lianas scale it—
This aery fort. My head shall guarantee it,
Once our superior force has stormed the Babel,
Our teeth and fists will soon despatch the rabble."

The king heard out his speech, morose, unmoving,
 Then fixed on him a look of stern reproving.
 "Oh! Bhandragura, woe! that from thy lip
 I e'er should hear such counsel, to the shame of
 My cultured realm—for Europe to make game of:
 We're here to challenge nudeness; shall we strip
 And, nude ourselves, the recreants' nudeness chastise?
 For what, then, arms and uniforms? oh! cast eyes
 On History's page, and say if it appears
 That in the cultivated races' combats
 The Regulars, or even Volunteers—
 Oh horror! ever scratched and bit like wombats.
 That you escape your words' just penalty
 Is only due to your past loyalty."

Off to a mat crawled Bhandragura, moaning,
 And fear long sealed the lips like counsels owning,
 Until, at last, another chief, intrepid
 In all but arms, now warmed to counsels tepid:
 "The tree will ne'er be stormed, and yonder cattle
 Will scarce come down and match us in fair battle
 As modern war and precedent require:
 Diplomats, in such straits, take the threads up,
 Humanitarian heroes hold their heads up,
 And swords before the olive branch retire.
 I hold a bran new calmuck each would quiet
 The clowns at once and promptly quell the riot.
 And for a scarlet frock or so that dangles
 Within your clothes-room, all gold lace and spangles,
 E'en Vindragupta—I know that old Daniel—
 Would let himself be docked like any spaniel."

"Enough!" the king exclaimed, "fine counsels truly,
 So I must always yield to mob unruly;

A wardrobe poor enough already scatter
 'Midst rebels in fictitious destitution—
 Why, every day will have its revolution.
 The week's end find my shelves with scarce a tatter,
 No, I'll not vilely cringe, my power restrict or
 E'er issue from this war except as victor.

“ But victory's twofold, moral and material,
 The second's royal : but the first's imperial.
 I choose it : but before our every deed it
 Behoves us well to mark if now or ever
 In other cultured States the act had credit,
 Ne'er from the tracks of precedent to sever,
 Only do just what Europeans have erst,
 And shun the roads that others have not traversed.

Once Ziska, glorious chief, prepared to ravage
 Perfidious Prague, exacting vengeance savage,
 When, all but sacrificed to flail and gun,
 That queen of cities moved him to compassion,
 The blood of brothers curbed his wrath, and won
 His iron palm in reconciliation.

Like Ziska—to whose greatness I aspire—
 I, too, would curb the force of my just ire ;
 The fairest laurels o'er my brow shall waver :
 Those of self-conquest. Pity vengeance smothers :
 Those yonder, though misled, they are our brothers,
 And fratricide my sword shall sully never.”
 Trembled his voice, salt tears his cheek bedewed,
 Melt e'en the features of those warriors rude,
 So to announce his grace sublime he pushes,
 Crowned with his chieftains, through the tamarind bushes.

But Vindragupta greeted him with scorn :
 “ For a new peppering dost so soon return ?

Would'st test again how heavy our just wrath is,
 And what the strength of free, true, apish swarthies?
 Nay, bring such riff-raff countless as the sand,
 Rouse up in arms against me sea and land,
 Ay, the whole Universe" —

With horror livid

He paused, beyond the royal army vivid
 His eye perused the jungle : thither roaming
 Thousands of eyeballs focussed in distraction :
 Two awful stars were gleaming through the gloaming.
 How to pourtray the next two minutes' action ?

Who has not seen, in some autumnal glade,
 A sudden eddy smite the fallen leaves
 And fleecy shreds that heap the dewy shade :
 The dappled mass a dance demoniac weaves :
 The dust-cloud with it spins—a shaft of smoke,
 Now high in air the eddying spires have leapt,
 And now collapsed in yonder branching oak,
 And all below is like a meadow swept.
 Thus all that royal host of foot and mounted,
 A goodly throng, in uniforms uncounted,
 Jumbled at once in one wild, motley bustle,
 Seething, confused, with many a squeal and tussle,
 Flinging away its arms, o'er long boots falling,
 In panic flight o'er tips of scabbards sprawling,
 On toward the sheltering banyan, jostled, shambled ;
 Then, houp-la ! o'er the pendent vegetation
 The whole corps d'armée in a twinkling scrambled,
 Leaving below a lifeless desolation,
 Save for the various arms the brushwood harbours.
 Here flames a casque, there gleam two dreadful sabres ;
 The ground is black with boots ; French horns, cockades,

Flags, drums, and ribbons flaunt a hundred shades,
 But, to make up, the banyan tree-top ample
 All round with warrior forms is all a trample :
 Here grenadiers condense to wine dark clusters,
 Here bootless cuirassiers depend festoon-like,
 And with the fig-leaves' sheen metallic lustres
 Of epaulettes and topknots twinkle moon-like.
 While from all sides toward one fixt spot, like rockets,
 Eyes, glazed with fear, are starting from their sockets.

Thence now emerged the prince of th' Indian night world,
 A mighty tiger. Form of horrid beauty,
 With that lank grace of body, chest-nut bright, whorled
 With many a belted charm and marking sooty ;
 From topaz eyeballs lurid glances throwing,
 He paced the battlefield with lordly going,
 From side to side, in many a curve expanded
 Of supple grace his tail swept, darkly banded.
 Then stealing past the tree, the apes one single
 Disdainful glance he flung from grass-grown dingle,
 Then vanished in the dusk of bamboos sear,
 Scenting perchance some daintier quarry near.

But long by horror froze, with terror blind
 And hair on end, the apes the banyan lined :
 Not till a distant roar at last proclaimed
 That all was safe again, the curdling veins
 To their warm, mobile life-stream throbbed and flamed,
 And thought revisited the fear-struck brains.
 Then from the tree-top, where he sat astride
 A jutting knot, the king, in jubilation,
 Cried : " Lo ! the fortress stormed ! " " Hurrah ! " replied
 His regiments in joyous acclamation.
 Soon now the insurgents feel the victor's rancour ;

Their flint artillery's now a broken anchor :
 But briefly raged the combat 'mid the boughs, and
 Lo! on the ground lie trussed the rebel thousand.

Great was the exultation, as beseemed,
 For such a victory won ; but Glory's chalice
 The monarch's noble spirit had not dimmed ;
 Pardon awaited who disowned their malice.
 Mercy condoned e'en Vindragupta's hate,
 His sentence being to loss of tail commuted.
 Thus fell the last frail bridge to things embruted,
 The last faint shadow in that perfect State.

Too cold of hue is human speech to print
 The proud procession home in fitting tint :
 The royal entry to the civic bowers :
 How white-robed cat-apes strewed the way with flowers
 Before the royal palfrey : how, proud mortal,
 The Mayor, with speech laboriously studied,
 Before a palm-wove arch of triumph's portal,
 Put all on tenterhooks till he'd concluded :
 How clouds of onlookers obscured the gables :
 Guilds flanked the streets behind the buntinged cables.
 How at the shouts of rapture broad earth shivered,
 And tears of transport from each eyelid quivered
 As Hanuman rode in and bowed so blandly,
 With head and hand to all sides : wreaths of laurel
 Gigantic from his shoulder streaming grandly,
 Down to the very fetlocks of his sorrel,
 From which two watered satin ribbons, spangled
 With stars and plates of gold leaf, proudly dangled :
 On one, " Divine Flametta, thanks ! " was graved.
 On th' other, " Of thy little foot th' enslaved."

Behind the king the King's Own proudly paced,

With tender fronds of palm their helmets crested,
 And flowering orchid wreaths their pike tips graced,
 And threatening muskets on their shoulders rested ;
 And flags waved : midst them all, upon a pale,
 Reared high,—rare trophy !—Vindragupta's tail.

That day, too, fell on all, write the recorders,
 A copious deluge of cotillon orders.

Long time did patriot bands with harps untired
 Chaunt that thrice glorious war in strains inspired,
 And pedagogues, with loyal zeal o'erbrimming,
 The crême of what came out with judgment skimming
 Stuffed into reading books : there essays, odes,
 Praised " the great king," " the great war's " episodes.
 How heaved with patriotic pride the tender
 Child breast of infant apes of either gender
 To read how that exemplar to all ages,
 With his bold army, in a battle gory,
 That has no counterpart in History's pages,
 Covered his name with everlasting glory :
 How with a charge that shook earth's broad foundations,
 And frightened all the tigers of the grove,
 O'er Vindragupta's dread fortifications,
 He boldly raised his flag to heaven above !

VIII.

Thus in glory and contentment
 Flourished long the apish State,
 But on Hanuman the shadow
 Of a shadow often sate.
 That still woodland was oppressive,

Where the parrot unprogressive,
Mocked it all with empty prate.

“What avails it, ah! that here in
All we're just as human kind,”
Sighed he, “when to our advancement
Human eyes are ever blind,
And when he who formed the nation
Cultured Europe's admiration
Of his merits fails to find?”

So his apes he called in conclave
And harangued them from the throne:
“Heaven permitted this exalted
Rôle to me of apes alone,
And that apes, by my endeavour
Raised to human height, should ever
Art and science love and own.

“But 'tis meet to show to people
We're no more a savage horde,
And a dignified position
Claim at Europe's council board.
For State reasons, too, most meet 'tis
I should fortify by treaties
What I've won me by the sword.

“Therefore I have firmly settled
For the glory of our race,
A stupendous expedition
Unto Europe's shores to face;
There to show a world astounded
Apedom's State, on Progress founded,
Stands compact from crown to base.

" 'Tis a journey that will bring us
 Benefits in various ways,
 In its every finest nuance
 Culture we shall there appraise.
 We shall learn there to delight us
 In the beefsteak, nor affright us
 At the Briton's tea and trays.

" 'Neath the Seine's new tower of Babel
 We the demi-monde shall ken,
 Gauge their whimsies and caprices,
 And the price of public men :
 Sternly prune our robes' excesses,
 For oh ! dismal thought ! our dress is
 Of a date—the Lord knows when !

" But in Berlin town awaits us
 Other benefits as rare,
 For I shall engage officials,
 To instruct my army, there.
 Then the whole world in alliance,
 When mine ape troops hurl defiance,
 To confront us will not dare.

" And then, ah ! it irks me sorely
 On the throne alone to pine,
 Mine impulsive heart compels me
 To the wedded state divine.
 So at court I'll look about me,
 And ere six months, never doubt me,
 Some spruce princess shall be mine.

“ Kings and emperors will invite me
 To State banquets and reviews ;
 I shall give my name to sundry
 Regiments of Bays and Blues.
 All the papers will be savoured
 With what Hanuman most favoured
 Of their wine cups and ragoûts.

“ Only think what an ovation
 Europe gave that phantom thin
 Of my greatness, on his visit—
 That barbarian, Nasr-ed-din.
 Every brilliant claimed a column
 Daily, and discussions solemn
 Every wretched topaz pin.

“ Why my suite alone the whole world’s
 Utmost wonder will excite :
 Just get ready ! polish up your
 Choicest pearls and jewels bright ;
 Be the passports duly vized,
 Don’t forget your hair brush, frizéd
 Be each head of hair to-night.”

IX.

Hanuman put on his golden garments
 And adorned him with his crown and sceptre,
 Gathered all his ministers and trinkets
 And to far Calcutta took his way.

It was night when, after endless hardships,
 They descended to the mighty harbour,
 Where just ready to set sail to Europe,
 With its white wings spread, the vessel lay.

Here aboard the royal party hastened,
 After them the sailors raised the plank-way,
 With a smile the schooner's captain hailed them.

Cursed for aye, be that insidious snake !
 He shall be in Culture's golden pages
 Ever mentioned with revolt and horror,
 That black blemish on humanity,
 Wild beast dealer, German Hagenbeck.

By a wily trick that wretch arrested
 Hanuman, arrested, too, his escort,
 Then he locked them up in spacious cages

With a crowd of creatures wild and scared,
 Marabouts and tortoises and gavials,
 Antelopes and parrakeets and pythons,
 Which for zoological collections

Through the Indian forests had been snared.

Thus, ah ! thus that famous ape reformer,
 With his ministry by law elected,
 In a cage of rude uncultured monkeys,

Stuffed amid macaws and clacking rails,
 Thus ah ! thus on mouldy figs ill-nourished,
 Stung by lash of angry whip and curses,
 All of noblest birth in apedom's empire,
 To the world of western culture sails.

In the Hamburg dock the ship cast anchor,
 And the king and suite stepped on the main land
 Of that Europe which was both the cradle
 Of their gilded vision, and its tomb ;
 They were sold for Jewish pence to gardens
 Dilettanti, circuses and jugglers,
 Some as pets, and some to be the comrades
 Of the strolling fiddlers' wandering doom.

Such was the most lamentable ending
 Of a splendid enterprise that promised
 By some thousands more of worthy subjects
 To extend the world of culture's span ;
 Subjects every whit as apt and handy
 With their pantaloons, frock coats and gauntlets,
 As the nation that to culture's treadmill
 Now so lightly dooms its fair Japan.

Quenched for ever and for ever, may be,
 Is that lamp of progress that was kindled
 In the forest world of Hindustani
 By a hand of genius past away.
 O'er lianas, there, the apish nation
 Doubtless wreathes again its dances, naked,
 Mangoes eats, and birds' eggs sucks, forgetful
 That it ere was lit by culture's ray.

X.

Hark ! what barbarous strains, I thrust my
 Head out from the window sashes ;
 Lo ! a parti-colored couple
 In a laughing circle flashes ;

O'er his bagpipes bends an hazel
 Cheek, the son of southern lands,
 And the whirling cymbals dazzle
 In a black-eyed maiden's hands.

Dressed in cloak of blue the piper,
 On his hat are ribbands rosy,
 His companion's bust embellish
 Many a brightly broidered posy,
 Burn, allure with snaky lustre,
 Languish those seductive eyes,
 Stars Italian seem to cluster
 'Neath their black-fringed canopies.

But oh ! look ! an ape all hoary,
 Shows its teeth at the beholders
 Sitting in a ball upon the
 Blooming maiden's sunny shoulders :
 From his crouching body peeling
 Flames a once embroidered vest,
 From beneath his cap are stealing
 Dreamy looks of vague unrest.

And he strangely fixes on me
 Two mute ape-eyes interceding
 To the well of tears within me,
 Smites that glance so sickly pleading ;
 Hanuman, thy secret knowing,
 I can feel thy fallen state,
 And those tears so thickly flowing
 From thine eyes, compassionate.

Thou, whose intellect enlightened,
 Plied refinement's halls Elysian,
 And thine apes unwearied polished
 On the fine grained stone Parisian,
 Thou must add one more attraction
 To the gaudy colors' glare,
 Which, to cultured folks' distraction,
 Flaunts upon that savage pair.

Hanuman ! thy grief I share it,
 But give ear to what I'm saying,
 Times shall come we long have dreamed of,
 Chafing at their long delaying.
 When at last we'll leave behind us
 Strife of tongues and wars shall cease,
 And one common language bind us
 In the golden chains of peace.

All shall then be one in feeling,
 One in acting, one in thinking,
 From one single fount of wisdom
 Thirsty souls shall then be drinking ;
 Hanuman then e'en thine apes shall,
 Too, mature to freedom's ray,
 And no fable then, perhaps, shall
 Be my wild fantastic lay.

Tantum Religio;

OR,

SIR BLASIUS.

A mock-heroic Epic in three Cantos, showing forth in choicest doggrel how and by what means Providence protecteth its chosen ministers of grace: and how the Christian dispensation, in beauty, depth and tenderness, immeasurably surpasseth Paganism, Atheism, Scepticism, Humanitarianism, and all other such damnable heresies and superstitions whatsoever.

CANTO I.

To Sondrio, some years ago
('Twas '88, if I mistake not),
A worthy pastor, Blasio
Yclept, of Calvinistic fibre
Intrepid, and of faith so too,
So tried and true no rack nor screw
Borrommean could dissolve such a knot,
Could they be now applied, as when
The valley's patriot, Robustelli,
To fill with blood and brains his belly,
Made of the place a grim Macello;
Marched up the Robustellian Tibur
To take by rant, or storm, or bellow
That miniature of blood-stained Rome,
Marched from his Chiavennian home
With thunderbolts of close-writ parchment
Doctrinal, Popish skulls to enlarge meant;

His squibs determined to let off
 Howe'er the beast of Rome might scoff.

This famous town has a renown
 Well worthy of a place in history,
 Though little known to northern readers :
 Forgot its struggles, feuds and leaders :
 Now but the haunt of cattle breeders :
 Of all its various worthies, I
 Won't here attempt to give a list, or re-
 Capitulate its doughty deeds
 (Its chronicle's far too long-winded,
 And such a pendant little needs ;
 Nor could I if I were so minded.)
 Against the Austrian tyranny,
 Or earlier, how it drove the Gri-
 Gioni to their native valleys
 When they made buccaneering sallies
 For plunder and proselytizing,
 The latter being a sort of sizing
 To put upon the first, a sort of
 Religious gloss : all that I thought of
 In this concise parenthesis
 Was to point out the place about
 To be the theatre of this
 New and veracious epopee
 Was not unworthy to be chosen
 (As every reader, if he goes on
 To th' end will, I feel sure, agree.)
 For such a scope ; and now, I hope,
 The birthplace of Guicciardi and
 Large-hearted Beccaria being formally
 Presented to Italia's warm ally,

Trinacria's chillier twin, may stand
 Comparison with Arva Pharphar,
 Troy, Islington, Jerusalem,
 With th' Hiawathian Minnehaha
 Or Milton's other place—ahem !
 Choose any other fit comparative,
 For now I must set forth my narrative.

Arrived (no easy task), he chartered
 A room,—for though the town is squalid,
 Scarce lighted by petroleum dips,
 And with a cobbled pavement trips
 The churl from market late returning,
 Till his lop-sided goître skips
 Out of his baggy vest, his wallet's
 Much hungrier paunch and scantier earning
 To make acquaintance with—Most solid
 Is the true faith of its inhabitants
 In masses, popes and heavenly hopes
 And suchlike gear, so that like rabid ants
 Dragging their eggs this way and that,
 If you should squash their ant-hill flat,
 Its starving female wens swarm altar-wards,
 At holy Mary's shrine to falter words
 Of prayer, their neck balloons removed,
 May be ; prayers mixed with priest-approved
 Promises of fat capon-boons,
 Or in default of these cocoons
 And such brave knick-knacks slid down planes
 Of inclined deal, from th' iron screen
 Outside which Goître writhes and strains
 In pious ecstasy to where within
 The virgin puppet, dressed in green,

Star-spangled—most appropriate mordaunt—
 Smiles blandly on the rag-clad scene
 To think her dupes can be so verdant.
 For th' apparatus so constructed is
 That whatsoever there eructed is
 Shot down into that Holy of Holies
 Is irrecoverable, as coal is
 Shot from the truck into the cellar,
 Or stars that fall from regions stellar.
 In vain the twice-repentant sinner
 Repents her of her vanished dinner.
 Empty she crawls in tears away,
 Feeling her goitres sag and play
 About a neck no hair's breadth slenderer
 (Her throbbing prayers have made it tenderer).
 Curses and vows she breathes in vain,
 Pence Petrine don't return again ;
 Already, long ere set of sun,
 The capon and the priest are one.
 But to return : a cretin bartered
 Her services for some small pay,—
 But rendered punctual to the day,—
 Her juicy brain being just enlightened
 Enough to find her purse strings tightened
 In this world better than the burden
 Bound on her hump by priests, the guerdon
 Of their post-mortem paradise
 To equipoise by this world's sighs,
 And for her gross, material way
 Of thinking, had well nigh been martyred
 By others of the goitrous clay,
 Indignant she should thus aspire

An inch above the common mire ;
 Else had th' apostle of Geneva's
 Shrill creed, by Sondrio's pure believers
 Been doomed to boil his own tin kettle,
 And thus, with all his fire and mettle,
 Had little time to fan the schism
 'Twixt oil and water, font and chrism.
 I've said 'twas no light task, at first,
 A house to find or room to preach in ;
 For who would house a soul accurst
 Or hire out rooms for such to teach in ?
 'Twould draw down lightnings in the attic
 To isolate the lank schismatic ;
 And by Christ's blood no apostate fellow
 Should e'er lap must in Sondrian cellar :
 But when house-blessing day came round,
 If such as he should chance be found
 On the first floor, what priest were willing
 To asperge walls fouled by such a villain ;
 Or Holy Church not fail to impound,
 Outraged, the rent to the last shilling ?
 (For things like this occur, you know,
 In priest-rid towns like Sondrio.)

At last, a Judas soul, as dour
 As his of Jewry, did consent—
 Faithless to faith,—in evil hour,
 To let a small apart-a-ment
 In his own crumbling tenement
 Unto the Calvinistic Vandal,
 Indifferent to the public scandal.
 (For twenty jingling piastres
 A month he risked his lath and plaster's

Damnation in the world eternal
 To purgatorial flames infernal.)
 His godless avarice was, I think,
 Attributed by some to drink.
 The fact is, 'twas not due to toddy
 But the austere religious body,
 To whom was due his own poor rent,
 His savings being in masses spent.
 Not long, they'd threatened to distraint ;
 For Churchmen waste not threats in vain,
 But misery's last mite extract
 With the sleek gusto once they racked.
 But well he knew the legal screw
 Was in the fire, his fate was settled ;
 For Father Fuchs, the Capuchin,
 Owed him a grudge, and that's a sin
 Past shrift ; so, desperate and nettled,
 He turned an ear to Blasio's offer,
 Defied the Pope and housed the scoffer.

Great was the scandal : deputations
 Poured to the house, with execrations
 And protests 'gainst such desecrations
 Of Sondrian rookeries, yet unsullied ;
 Fat priests wheezed vague vaticinations
 Of famine, plague, dread expiations,
 And bull necks Tully's self out-tullied.
 Others rushed up with book and candle
 And boys, to exorcise the scandal.
 From wine-tubs some denounce the outrage,
 Others perambulate and spout rage ;
 Some quote Ezekiel, some the Pandects,
 All thump their fists, till every hand aches ;

Brief, every papist heart is full,
Like Phalaris roaring in his bull.

But unappalled and undismayed
The bold Sir Blasius rose, arrayed
In majesty, and two small bands
That flapped below his stubbly chin
Like Capricorn's two dewlaps thin,
And from the window his tirade
Roared forth, the Bible in his hands,
And orbs to ill-tiled roofs upraised,
And lips that burned and nose that blazed.
So moribund aquatic fowl
Raise piteous eyes from reed-bound lands
While levin smites and thunders growl,
And mangy sheep crowd cheek by jowl.

I'm well aware that here should follow
That saintly Calvinist's phillipic,
But recollect when papists holloa
Their logic method's mostly hippic,
And what finds favor in the stable
Or ring, they bawl while they are able ;
When lungs, as heads, are empty, whacks
Administer, or turn their backs.
On this occasion all the quarter
Was seething and bubbling like a water-
Spout, mud volcano or tornado,
Just as it doubles up the dado
And irons out the cat and kittens
As flat as granny's new silk mittens
The most intrepidest reporter
Had soon been doubled up as fans are
When hurricanes rage o'er Arkansa ;

Squashed flat among those wine-tubs burly,
 His shorthand deafened by the hurly.
 In fact, they kicked up such a shindy,
 That Blasio vanished from the windy.

Vanished, not vanquished: lo! intrepid
 Most strong in grace and just a gill
 Of something taken through a quill,
 He thunders down the stair decrepid,
 Close followed by a stalwart Rheatian
 Of six-foot-four and contours Grecian,
 And eighteen summers:—as from Troy
 Through flames Æneas bore his boy
 And old Anchises; on his shoulders
 Achates through the amazed beholders
 Bore, unperturbed by all their hubbub,
 Not infant Bacchus but a tub up:
 And swinging round the mighty vat
 Gave an involuntary scrubbing
 To many an umber jowl and hat
 That ne'er before had known a tubbing,
 For where by two or three the Pope is
 Adored, in general light nor soap is.
 As on they stalked, unmoved, gigantic,
 The mob at first lunged at them, frantic.
 So furious dogs at flying trains
 Till the swift wheels dash out their brains;
 Then with a howl half-disconcerted
 Recoiled—the well-plied vat staves hurt it,
 Papist with Papist 'gan to jostle
 And left a road for the Apostle
 Of Calvin to disport his bony
 Person along the street way stony:

Rawboned, he onward strode with grace
Behind, and reached the market place.

Thus by the grace of gin and vat, sir,
Lo ! Blasio master of the piazza :
Planted the tub evangelistic,
Sir Blasio-Cyclops-Calvinistic
High o'er the hoops upreared tremendous,
Ready to hell or heaven to send us,
And pouring forth, without palaver,
Doctrinal scoria, flames and lava,
Gape people, pavements, walls aghast
As Blasio's rhetoric round is cast.
Blasting and withering in Saharas
Of eloquence popes, priests, tiaras,
Hats, scarlet, tinsel, mariolatrics,
Indulgences, Antichrists, idolatrics,
Popes, pope's toes, tonsures, nuns, worm-eaten
Confessionals, with brass plates beaten
Fine and pierced large for whispered sins
To slip through easily from chins
In lace and powder, rouge and pins ;
In fact, his lightnings fulminated
All the frayed, tawdry properties
Of Popery's puppet-show theatrical ;
Laid bare its shams, exposed its lies,
Its frauds to a palanca rated,
Proving how Jesuits' and priests' fat tricks all
Who, haltered 'neath its crumbling gable,
Munch mouldy oats in popery's stable.
Far off, awhile, the folk in awe,
Spellbound at what they heard and saw,
Huddled together and, perplexed,

Scarce from far corners caught the text,
 So loud the beat of gathering feet
 From rearward trampling down the street
 And shuffling forward till, at last,
 No longer proof 'gainst these attacks
 The foremost line of arms and backs
 Gave way, and all, a torrent vast,
 Like swirling rookeries in a storm
 Eddying concentric round their elms,
 The dusky market overwhelms,
 As towards the centre drift and swarm
 The motley hosts to form a crater
 Round that erupting *prêtre* or prater.

Silent awhile at first they listen,
 Till slow, but surely, access gains
 To water-logged, thick-witted brains,
 Some inkling of the preacher's meaning.
 Then eyes began to gleam and glisten
 And hands to twitch, that overweening
 Blasphemous heretic to chastise :
 Some toward the rushing Mallero cast eyes
 Of longing, some for firewood hankered ;
 Some drowned their feelings in a tankard ;
 Those imprecate with words articulate,
 These hiccough oaths, and all gesticulate ;
 And one, a lank, long-fingered fellow,
 With hatchet face and cheek-bones yellow,
 And eyes cerulean, somewhat haggard,
 And rabbit-mouth and accents mellow,—
 A sort of spider-monkey blackguard,—
 Mounted a stall, and shrill and fast
 Piped out a Popish counterblast

That drew the mob ; for mild as were
 His tones, they urged to vengeance hellish :
 And Popery's groundlings always hear
 Of blood and fire with wondrous relish.

“ Brothers ! ” he cried, and o'er his head
 Raised a long, skinny hand to heaven ;
 “ Is memory of the past so dead,
 And of the patriotic leaven
 That once in Sondrio's vales was given
 To raise the theologic bread ;
 That none recal how Aryans bled
 When Val Fontana's streams ran red,
 And Teglio's patriots, in a ferment,
 Shot down the Calvinistic vermint,
 Trapped in its musty pews and chapels ?
 Oh ! glorious cunning thus to trap hell's
 Worst fiends, then through the casements slaughter
 With slugs and grape-shot—and no quarter ?
 To see the blood rush out like water
 Down the broad flight of steps, a cascade
 Most dear to Heaven ; to hear them ask aid
 Of God and Christ, with screams and tears
 And cries and groans and widows' prayers ;
 Then bounce against the well-barred door
 In vain attempts to force their shambles,
 Then plump down thud upon the floor,
 While the full tides of bubbling gore,
 Replenished at each volley, pour,
 Lapping the lintels, or run low
 After each surging overflow.
 Now, panic-struck, some lank youth scrambles
 Up to a lancet window, strains

His tow-pate through the rainbow panes
 Whack ! whack ! a stalwart musket brains
 That too precocious poppy head ;
 Its opiate seeds and milk juice scatters,
 The hollow capsule cleaves and shatters,
 Coating the walls a creamy red.
 Or, if some prattling infant, crying,
 Clung to your knees, its mother dying,
 Shot through the womb, the babe to seize,
 What joy ! the dimpling legs to squeeze,
 Then, grasping firmly by the heels,
 And gloating o'er its piteous squeals,
 To whirl it sling-like round your shoulders
 And dash its brains out on the boulders !
 What a hushed silence then succeeds
 As the smashed corpselet throbs and bleeds,
 A carrion man, a shattered nought,
 Once palpitating life and thought.

Oh ! Sixteen-twenty ! glorious flint-age !
 Faith's climacteric ! human vintage !
 Better than thine, O famed Grumello !
 Of purpling vines and clusters mellow,
 Now mantling o'er thy rock Tarpeian
 And castles' mouldering battlements,
 Screening its lizard-haunted rents !
 Then from thy crenelled fastness swung
 The purpling heretic, from lung
 Apostate tortured cries were rent
 And through the blood-damp air were spent,
 Wind-wafted to the empyrean.
 Then all thy splintered precipice
 Ran crude with human sacrifice,

Thou eyrey of the faith ! impaled
 On spears, their little lives exhaled.
 Above thy smooth rock-platform boys
 Of tenderest age, and infants flung
 From the sheer edge, in torments hung
 Wedged into clefts, or bleeding clung
 To splintered spires or round them coiled
 Convulsive, or like broken toys
 By their own childish fingers spoiled
 In days of sunny infancy,
 Lo ! broken on the ground they lie
 Beneath the glaring azure sky !
 Is memory of that glorious past
 In Sondrian hearts so wholly quenched
 That, dubious, now we stand aghast,
 By yonder crackpate's rhetoric drenched ?
 Where is the stern will nought requires
 To spur it to heroic deeds,
 The strong, just purpose of our sires
 To crush, ere sown, sedition's seeds ?
 O glorious butchery ! the names
 Of the great dead that fed thy flames
 Scarce linger in the halls they reared,
 Where once they rang beloved and feared.
 In Besta's home the rafter falls
 And goitrous squalor throngs the halls,
 And through the desecrated court
 The Cretin wails his vanished thought.
 In Tirano, no more thy name,
 O Robustelli ! heroes claim,
 That once tremendous sped the flood
 Of death to Adda running blood :

And shall we don the modern creed
 Of dull indifference and greed
 Where once, in hosts, the grey rats fell
 And thousands thronged the gates to hell?
 Nay! let Calabria's sturdy faith,
 Who burnt her heretics as late
 As the proud year of fifty-eight,
 Recal us to the stake and flame
 And paint our recreant cheeks with shame.
 On! brothers! on!" the haggard wraith
 Bounced from his stall, "to the attack!
 On! brothers! on! with fire and rack;
 And damned be he that first holds back."

As thus he spake, the throng, entranced,
 Deployed, and like a wall advanced,
 Or bellying surf, all arm and leg,
 Such as when o'er thy virgin scrub,
 O Michigan or Winnipeg!
 The proud red Indians whoop and dance,
 Blood-thirstier than thy weazels, France!
 And all converge upon the tub
 To sweep it, with the man of grace
 Upon it, off this planet's face,
 Or, if a star were goal too far,
 At least, from off the market-place.

In Spagna's happy lands, we know,
 Some century or more ago,
 A popish genius once contrived
 A cage for heretics, derived
 From his own vivid sense of hell.
 It was a toy to fill with joy
 The soul of every Jesuit shrived:

In brief, a small collapsing cell,
 Whose iron walls, that formed a square,
 Enclosed a space some ten feet wide,
 The iron plates being so applied
 They could at need be made recede,
 And then the room they formed expanded ;
 As they approached the space grew spare
 And could be made to disappear—
 If circumstances should demand it.
 Just in the middle of this cell
 Was sunk an awful shaft or well,
 To which the walls, contracting, swept
 As onward, inch by inch, they crept
 The wretch within 'em to the oubliette :
 Death's natural horror's not sufficient
 To punish folks, in faith deficient,
 So Church, a natural proficient
 In butchery, has not idly slept
 But done her utmost to quintuple it.
 (According to strict rules of grammar
 The " it " refers to faith instead of
 That final act we're all in dread of,
 And Church made thrice more awful, d—n her.)
 I trust the couplet thus amended
 Conveys the meaning here intended.
 Well, to return from this digression,
 These iron walls I've laid such stress on
 With frightful fiends were decorated,
 Such as your Christian's never sated
 With fancying and depicting where
 In keeping—say, his house of prayer.
 This cell being destined for religious

Performance of a kind prodigious,
 No pains, be sure, had been omitted
 To decorate it as befitted :—
 In fact, both in and out 'twas painted
 With the worst fiends saints e'er invented ;
 Fiends with saw teeth and fish-hook tails,
 Huge, gaping jaws and serpent's scales,
 Bat's wings and claws, eyes goggling red,
 Tridents, nets, flames and goblins dread,
 Some small and vicious, others bigger,
 All compounds of bat, goat and nigger.
 In fact, religion here surpassed
 Herself, as in a mirror glassed
 And emptied out ; for naught but hell
 Can be religion's parallel.
 To use this aid to pious thought
 A heretic must first be caught,
 The cell, red-heated by a flue,
 And then the saints had naught to do
 But drop the heretic inside.
 At first, from walls expanded wide,
 The painted fiends glower at a distance,
 And fan with fiery breath the wretch
 Who crouches, powerless of resistance ;
 Then crank and lever groan and stretch,
 And fiends and fiery walls rush nearer :
 Just staggering on the brink of death,
 With crackling brain and kindling breath,
 He ravishes each reverend hearer
 Who works, in turn, with pious fingering,
 So sensitive that to a pin
 It feels how much the wretch within

Can bear and not lose consciousness,
 The torture-trap's adjustments, lingering
 With fond, sweet, child-like tenderness,
 Upon the knobs and springs mechanic
 On which depend those joys Titanic ;
 " He's fainting ! Curse ! The springs reverse !"
 Back fly the walls : with starting eyes
 And lolling tongue, his agonies
 Prolonged, the shrivelling victim trails
 His blackening carcase from the pit,
 His smouldering raiment gashed and split.
 By the wild work of blistering nails ;
 Hark ! what a world of piteous wails,
 " Not husky, though. Oh ! he can bear !"
 Once more the sickening furnace flails,
 Fiends vomit fire and monsters glare.
 " Joy ! what a scream !" " He's gone." " No,
 slacken
 The walls, and let them cool and blacken
 An hour. He'll bear another bout."
 Now one by one again flash out
 The demons, inch by inch the sheet
 Of flame contracts ; his tabid feet
 Stick viscid to the flesh-strewn stones ;
 Glued to the fiery walls that eat
 Into his back and singe the bones
 And bubbling muscles—ah ! what moans
 As slowly thrust on toward the brink—
 He writhes upon the demon-claws.
 " He's almost in." " There : now, a pause
 That he may smell the sickening stink
 That steams up from th' obscene abyss.

Hark! still the sinews snap and hiss
 In the dread heat, and still he groans.
 But, curse the apostate! now how faintly,
 The game's up." Swift the fingers saintly
 A handle grasp. The walls clap tight.
 "A splash!" "He's quenched!" "Praise
 Heaven!" "Good night!"

Not otherwise the wall of noses
 And knees indignant scour the square,
 Converging furibond to where,
 Shorn of its eloquence and bare,
 Nor longer resonant, reposes
 The Calvinistic tub, for there
 No Boanerges smites the air
 With winged words, but like a hare
 Skips nimbly o'er the wine-dark cobbles,
 While slow behind the wine tub wobbles,
 Swung by his young Bregallian giant,
 Who stone by stone disputes defiant
 Each inch of ground, and dares the van.
 As swift, more swift, the holy man
 Skims like a scopperel down the wind,
 His broad bands fluttering far behind,
 And black robes bellying unconfined.
 Dodging and doubling left and right,
 Excogitating rapid flight,
 His twinkling feet, in swift retreat,
 E'en thus had scarcely gained the street
 Ere the gross mob the entrance blocked
 And past the lamp-post surged and rocked.
 Here Blasius, breathless, tripped and reeled,
 A moment more his fate had sealed;

Had not, with more than human courage
 And worthier Macedon than our age,
 His peerless rearguard, young Achates,
 Just saved the Anabaptist vates :
 O'er the loud tumult sings the vat,
 Three roundest of the foe lie flat.
 The frightened crowds recoil a pace
 Irresolute, a moment waver.
 That moment's grace, that ceded space,
 Have turned the scales in Blasio's favour.
 Helvetia's hero and her prophet
 Are half-way down the street, and off it
 Cut like two swallows kestrel-chivied.
 Flap! through an arch obscure, and, livid
 From throat to brow, each muscle straining,
 Hurl themselves at the oaken graining
 Of the huge cumbrous door, impassive
 As faith to reason; cobwebbed, massive,
 The scarp with grit, the hinge encumbered
 With scaly rust, rebellious lumbered,
 Dry, stiff and stark, through a small arc
 The panelled logs—then scraping grounded
 Blocked by the shingle: nerves a-tingle,
 Like caoutchouc balls the two saints bounded
 Back through the gloom; then, blinded by their
 Own sweat, with heads breast-high rebutted
 'Gainst the derisive woodwork, either
 To perish in the attempt or shut it.
 At last it yielded, slow, resentful,
 As if reluctant planks so orthodox
 Should shield such reprobates, then went full
 Tilt, crash! one valve 'gainst th' other half,

And like a nine-pin one, a slaughtered ox
 The other, Blasius and his acolyte
 Dropped right and left : a moment vivid
 Thro' closing cleft a narrowing crack o' light
 Flashed the wild spectrum of the crowd,
 With anger pale, with fury livid,
 Whose tangled swarms of heads and arms
 Shook menaces of vengeance, vowed
 With imprecations deep and loud.
 Then Blasius, scrambling to his feet,
 With one broad lurch shut out the street,
 Shot each thick bolt into its socket,
 Fixed the doors, bars, and props to block it,
 And clapped the huge key in his pocket.
 Then, stair and landing barricaded,
 The rescued pair, each in his chair
 Dropped like a billet, breathless, jaded,
 With scarce strength left to wipe his brow,
 And, simpering, breathe the mystic "Ciaù!"

We've had so much of thump and thunder
 I deem 'twere an artistic blunder
 Again minutely to depict
 The mob's wild rage as, foiled and tricked,
 It bubbled, frothed and seethed below
 Like boiling milk in overflow.
 Not that its temperament was lactine—
 But similes one can't be exact in—
 Nor were its rags or features pallid :
 The froth and fume's the part that's valid,
 As now it swirled, then, gathering, hurled
 A flight of stones, the windows smashing.
 Then, down the archway blindly dashing

In dark platoons, it flounced, bounced, ham-
 mered
 Against the stubborn planks, and stammered
 Vain imprecations as the portals
 Respinged that surge of clamouring mortals.
 So things unchanged awhile went on,
 And then, when all the panes were gone,
 The saints above put up the shutters,
 And as they did so, blandly bowed
 And smiled triumphant at the crowd
 (Much as grimalkin in the cherry-
 Tree safe ensconced at Trot makes merry).
 To hear the stones rebound upon
 The scalps below or line the gutters.
 No wonder, hampered thus and gagged,
 This flagstone conversation flagged,
 And steadier than that rain of knocks
 On craniums thick and orthodox,
 Moved by some instinct deep and subtle
 Flowing from soul to soul magnetic,
 A hush, a silence sympathetic
 Falls spell-like on th' impassioned tumult.
 Those battering in the gateway's gloom halt:
 The flights of stones from mid-street shatter
 The panes no more, but idly patter,
 Harmless, upon the kindred paving
 From slackening fists, as o'er the lists
 Lo! the same lanky leader waving
 His spidery arms like flails, and craving,
 In accents higher than Strasburg spire,
 Like a bat raving so shrilly, shaving,
 Brand, firewood, torch, to fill the porch,

Burn down the doors that very minute,
 And fire the house with Blasio in it!
 This bright suggestion without more question
 Is hailed with readiest acquiescence,
 And flying heels the fact reveals
 As down the slums and ghauts they scuttle
 To fetch combustibles and put all
 In instant practice, and thus the fact is
 After this sudden effervescence,
 The street is left as bare and emptied
 As was the soul the demons tempted,
 When all the seven fiends took to horse
 With seven as horsey, lewd, vicious, saucy,
 Their seven lewd selves to reinforce,
 Within its halls set up their stables,
 And on smug virtue turn the tables.

CANTO II.

BARDS of the Epic order high
 The ways of Heaven to men would try
 Like advocates to justify :
 Know all of this world and the other,
 Primed their defects, your doubts to smother,
 And bring you back to faith again.
 Mine being the mock heroic vein,
 Hoisted few feet o'er pig and plain,
 A humbler task affronts my pen
 That cautious gropes from line to line
 To prove divine as stars that shine
 The works of men to one another.
 And here a fine occasion offers

Itself, to show the sceptic scoffers
 Who mock humanity's weak sides
 How subtly interest divides
 The bands of hate ; what vice exacts
 Self-love or avarice counteracts ;
 How passions timely yield to reason's
 Mild influence or the change of seasons ;
 How nature's nail now this whim stopping,
 Now that, keeps all the cat-gut hopping,
 Expectant lifted high, now sinking
 Despairing, swearing, hoodwinking, drinking,
 Protesting, resting, declaiming, blaming,
 Now cutting short its own existence,
 Its neighbour's now, with the assistance
 Of slugs and seconds, swords and scandals ;
 How past and present turn the handles
 Of Time's harmonious organetta,
 Prelude to eternity's bright operetta ;
 Brief, how all's ordered for the best,
 And heaven this world's hid palimpsest.
 But hold, rash pen, that hast invaded,
 By too prolific fancy aided,
 Epic's untrod and sacred province !
 Have I not shewn me lavish of hints
 Thou art no goose-quill, nibbling mine,
 To soar, Lord bless us ! high o'er Parnassus ?
 No province thine sublime, divine,
 Thy sphere's provincial, wretched quillet
 Of wingless brass ; then sink—and fill it !
 Off with thee, to the land of Yankees,
 Lynching and long-bows, Mood' and Sankies ;
 All civilisation's latest hits

From Barnum to free petticoats ;
 Where perfect freedom naught permits
 To pantaloons and hats with votes
 But blindly to adore the cow
 As moonbeams slant from brow to brow ;
 For from that happy land of Cocaigne
 Where lords and land-leaguers go flocking,
 One strand of that intricate cable
 Cause and effect we call, when able
 To trace them, and mistake for links
 In a long chain that has no ending ;
 Though, to a mind that sees and thinks,
 A boundless net, through all things wending,
 Were a more apt similitude ;
 Our narrow, lancet minds perceiving
 One file of meshes, and believing
 That to be all, as eyes conclude,
 Because so moulded by our sight,
 In rays and pencils springs the light
 That rolls through all things infinite,—
 One strand, I say, of causes and
 Effects was twisted in the land
 Of Yankee, which I place my trust on
 To save Sir Blasius from combustion.
 If other strands contributed,
 Forth in due order shall be set.

First, then, a President, profound
 In states-craft, and but newly chosen,
 Had placed protection dues all round,
 Machinery, victuals, crockery, clothes, on ;
 Whereby, you'll see without much trouble,
 The price of all things rose to double ;

And labour hugged its chain contented,
 Wages being also cent-per-cented;
 At least, it should have, but th' unlettered,
 Always a thankless sort of sinners,
 Now paying doubly for their dinners,
 Refused to find their status bettered :
 As though the paying more were not
 Itself the pleasure to be sought
 By civilised and liberal nations,
 Not the mere bulk of beer and rations,—
 A gross detail of second-rate
 Importance in a perfect state.
 Howe'er this be, if nerve and muscle
 Could hold their heads up in the tussle
 And live content with what they got so,
 With many a one, alas ! 'twas not so.
 The feebler, sacked and shewn the door,
 Were twice more wretched than before.
 Now, of these most unlucky devils
 Who sank to subter-social levels,
 The bulk were of that gifted race
 Which always takes the highest place
 As its of right ; then, unaccountably,
 While drudging Scots and Teutons mount ably,
 Display through depths of brawl and drinking
 Their mastery in the art of sinking :
 In fact,— a fact that really sad is,—
 These geniuses were mostly Paddies,
 And, to the honour of their nation,
 All of the Catholic persuasion.
 Thus if, by chance, they got a job, all
 Their money went to swell the obol :

They did not hoard it up or save it,
 But generous Pat to Peter gave it ;
 And Peter spent it, part in Rome's
 High jinks, snug dinners, shows, at homes,
 Part in promoting village wakes
 And trips to shrines, where pious rakes
 Combined hard drinking with devotions,
 And brought home complicated notions
 Of heaven and hell together muddled,
 And oft a pate in cere-cloths huddled,
 As though by toothache bulged ; for daggers
 Ne'er lag where Superstition swaggers.
 But surrogate with kindly play
 The village doctor's scanty pay.
 You gaze aghast the well-known faces
 A field of turnips now replaces,
 Wagging at doors, a spectral crop,
 Or, circling round the village shop
 With nips of " grappa " to compose
 Its doddering limbs and purpling nose.
 But of Pat's hard-won earnings far the
 Most bulky part went off in rather
 A curious way—in squibs and crackers,
 Rockets and Roman candles, whackers !
 And Catherine wheels or showery spangles,
 Mortars, cascades of fiery tangles,
 Phosphoric snakes of wavering fire,
 Balloons that rose and, bursting higher,
 Peopled the nights with dazzling flights
 Of radiant stars and Iris lights ;
 Set pieces,—frameworks, overloaded
 With every sort of squib, exploded

In one vast, roaring broadside, just as,
 Thus welcomed by devotion's busters
 The host or lowly Nazarene—
 A wooden effigy, bedecked
 With star-flecked robes of blue and green,
 Striped red, the climax of the scene
 Swept, staggering o'er the crowd, erect
 On four well-padded cruppers sturdy,
 Preceded by a hurdy-gurdy
 Grinding out waltzes from Waldteufel.
 Next came the village band, a trifle
 In drink, and a superb costume,
 But struggling bravely—boum ! boum ! boum !
 With Sullivan's *Mikado* blended
 With reminiscences of Verdi.
 More in the middle tramp in sight
 A file of priests in blue and white-
 Lace tippets and red skull-caps tight,
 Decanting forth from lungs stentorian
 A chant, half-Afric, half-Gregorian,
 By a long line of choir-boys followed
 In crimson cassocks and white collared
 Who, with shrill trebles, intertwined
 A tarantella, while behind
 The street boys crossed themselves and hollo'd
 In different keys, and every angle
 Rang with applause and crowned the jangle—
 A mode of doing one's devotions
 Not consonant with northern notions ;
 Most efficacious, though, to tether
 The flock of Church in southern weather
 And keep its rambling sheep together :

But like all true religion, costly :
 Whence it befel, religion's coffers
 (To the delight of Atheist scoffers)
 Grew lean and empty, and were mostly
 Now tenanted by shekels ghostly
 Instead of those of parts more sensible
 For pious needs, propagating creeds,
 And filling friars quite indispensable.
 This state anæmic—they would here
 Denominate it Carestia—
 Was partly due to Pat's profusion
 Ere the new tariff-law's diffusion
 To his finances brought confusion,
 And dragged him down with empty pockets
 To misery and a four-cent. lodging :
 Pat, Romeward every dollar sending,
 Fanned with his faith the rage for spending,
 Till heaven was fairly stormed by rockets,
 And cherubs spent their time in dodging
 The missiles shot from earth to show
 The heavenly road to clods below.
 In part the crash of Rome's finances—
 Rather its general undoing—
 Was due to Popish ways of viewing
 Expenses and the law of chances.
 "If what we spend," 'twas urged, "enhances
 The obol's flow from rustic purses
 To more than cost of stimulus
 The future gain 'tis clear reverses
 Our present loss : or put it thus,
 If every squib we let off fill
 The gaping peasant with a zeal

That yields us twice the squib's net price,
 We save, if we are not mistaken,
 Both the churl's soul and our own bacon.
 His faith flares up to heaven a tow-ball,
 Our gains roll downward like a snowball,
 At every revolution doubling,
 And win both worlds without more troubling.
 Such outlays for the Church's glory
 Place, then, in special category :
 Like new wine on the cellar shelves
 Because they more than pay themselves."

Delightful system surely this is !
 Perpetual fireworks for the sheep,
 And for the shepherds endless fleeces,
 Rolling themselves up heap on heap,
 Perfect in theory, alack ! 'tis
 Not quite so workable in practice
 Nor for poor grovelling human clay meant,
 For when the husbandmen ran dry,
 With not a sou fresh seed to buy,
 In pawn the pig and winter's raiment,
 Their faith dried too, and they stopped pay-
 ment.

Fobs empty may by faith be tempted
 But not the fobs that faith has emptied.
 And lastly to the aforesaid causes
 Which emptied Popery's money vases :
 To wit, the lavish waste engendered
 By Pat's too liberally tendered
 Reserves, when trade and toil were flourishing
 And Rome's ingenuous mode of nourishing
 Her sweating bags on poor men's earnings

From fustian hose enticed by burnings
 Of Bengal lights—no more, alas !
 Of Lutheran lime and Arian gas,
 But still with powder, bang and blaze,
 A pale reflex of other days :
 A third and last was now appended
 Which with the other twain contended
 In cutting short the firework mission
 And bringing Popery to derision :
 Most fatal third, the rise of prices
 Out west, had brought things to a crisis
 By pumping dry th' Hibernian sluice
 That once was like the widow's cruse
 (The good old soul lived near Mount Carmel)
 A never-failing source of palm-oil !
 Not that the sudden running dry
 Of Patrick's well can be ascri-
 bed, if truth be told, quite altogether
 To the tariff—two other forces
 Were acting with it,—one, the sources
 Themselves to choke and one to ti-
 ce, those healing waters otherwhither.
 Rome's harpies teach, though, to be sure,
 Themselves—but that's a sine cure—
 Rifle the pockets of the poor
 Without compunction, of the seven
 Most deadly sins which forfeit heaven :
 The worst of all is to defraud
 The poor man of his toil's reward,
 " His labours' fruits " the Church's phrase is
 (The penalty's the usual blazes)
 Which, perhaps, but means, with due reserves,

Hands off! don't poach on our preserves!
 Howe'er this be, the Irish-cranium
 Whose logic method's somewhat flighty,
 Translated thus the dictum weighty:
 "If landlords raise your rent a mite, ye
 Must pay th' excess in lead or brain 'em."
 A simple truth—so very simple—
 Like all great truths of true religion:
 Lords and caretakers are all widgeon
 Created for your shot to dimple—
 That's their sole end of being, to act as
 The target of the meek and holy.
 Then take your rifles and go practice,
 Ye disinherited and lowly!
 That it took root and quite invaded
 That neural rudiment or plexus
 Th' Iberian brain and slums pervaded
 From Colorado's swamps to Texas,
 But such a gospel truth exacting
 Much shot and powder guns and training,
 'Gainst its own preachers now reacting
 Drained off the dimes once Romeward raining
 Into the depths of Land-league pockets,
 Who the same give and take game playing
 With shot and daggers that with rockets
 The firework preachers found so paying,
 Took all the wind out of the lateen-
 Rigged sails, and left the sharks who sat in
 The Petrine Skiff, becalmed and hollow,
 Upon the weltering brine to wallow,
 A Nemesis not quite unmerited
 For eating up the disinherited!

Rome thus was left to fawn and wheedle
 Cut-throat sedition—now her rival
 With cringing promises to shrive all
 The bloodiest knives for just a little
 Of the blood-money, just a trifle,
 She even hinted at conniving
 Besides the mere official shriving :
 A great come-down for men of soul,
 Who held the knife to hold the bowl.
 Still not a wholly uncongenial
 Position, if a trifle menial
 For the descendants of the chosen
 Who fried apostates in their hosen :
 Indeed peat hovels in a blaze
 With roasting caretakers inside 'em,
 And carded pigs a-squeal beside 'em,
 With other tender patriot ways,
 Sweetly though sadly (see Moore's lays)
 Recalled the light of other days,
 And reconciled red hats and capes
 To being red ruin's Jack-a-napes.
 But e'en this servile dagger licking
 To catch the drops that from them trickled
 Could not with here and there a picking
 Fill up the gap they scarcely tickled.
 It was not moonlighting that solely
 Drew tight the purse-strings of the lowly
 To Rome's imperious needs. Th' Iberian
 Is not averse to fob or fibbing
 Himself, but proves a deuced leary 'un
 To any who'd his wiles be cribbing.
 Nothing so much provokes high-flying

As the being duped by others' lying.
 But halt! that last word's out of place:
 In dealing with such ticklish matter
 As revelation is and grace,
 Bards should be careful how they chatter,
 If they must risk it, taste bids hedge and
 For certain words put "myth" or "legend."
 The bagmen, then, of Rome's bottega

Who tooted the Hibernian shanty,
 Finding a clientèla eager
 To swallow bait, however scanty,
 Formed it a myth, the wily dupers;—
 In fact, they "legended" like troopers
 Of how their holy father lay

A prisoner in the Vatican,
 And scarcely saw the light of day
 Within his dungeon's narrow span;

Of how he slept upon a pallet
 Of mouldy straw, and had no valet.
 And how, in spite of this, he prayed

For those vile tyrants who afflicted him,
 When, for their wickedness, instead,

He might have banned and interdicted 'em;
 A course which would have had for certain
 Such dire results I drop the curtain.

Now if some reader with a temper
 Not formed for treating questions moral

Protest, I merely note, "*Sic semper*
Erat, sic est, sic erit,"—quarrel

With fact: 'tis vain; religion's cradle
 Has always been a legend-ladle.

Why were these modern "legend" spinners

Worse than the venerable cocoons
 Spun by the more primæval sinners,
 And held inestimable boons
 By those who go to church and masses?
 What! silent all? Respond, ye asses!
 They did but use the method ages,
 So-called of faith, had found so useful.
 To put it thus, the herb called sage is
 Never amiss to stuff your goose full.
 They but repristinated chimes
 First sung in far far earlier times;
 But in these days when nothing's sacred
 To press and Argus-eyed reporters,
 And pious frauds are dipped in acrid
 Reagents and corrosive waters
 To extract the gold of truth—if any,
 And coin it, faith fades from the many.
 And to attempt to re-instate it
 By setting those old bells a chiming,
 In other words reintegrate it
 By miracles or legend rhyming
 With doubt and instantaneous lenses
 At every angle fairly frenzies.
 In this case 'twas a penny paper's
 Gross indiscretion broke the spell
 And showed the theologic capers
 Of fiction round the fabled well:
 'Twas a mere oversight, the *Arrow*
 Being ultramontane to the marrow.
 But quite forgetful of the mythus,
 To magnify the power of Rome,
 It issued various chromo lithos

Showing his Holiness at home
 In such pomp, pageantry and splendour
 As lithographs alone can render.
 There was his park so vast and stately,
 With immemorial trees embellished,
 A gilded litter, where sedately
 He lounged and Nature's beauties relished,
 And to escort him to his palace
 Troops of retainers, pages, valets.
 As many more their lord awaited
 Upon the dazzling marble scala,
 And bowing lowly reinstated
 His godhead in his dining sala,
 And brought an ewer of alabaster
 To wash the fingers of their master.
 He dined off plates of solid gold,
 Quaffed choicest wines from cups of amber,
 And when the silver doors unfold,
 Lo! to escort him to his chamber,
 Are other pages, other valets,
 With crystal lamps and opal chalice,
 And in the chamber 'tis no shock
 Of moulded straw on which he tosses,
 But whitest fleeces of the flock
 And snowiest lawn and silken flosses
 Fine as the diadem the spider
 Of autumn weaves, and quilts of eider.
 Such grave discrepancies, no wonder
 Pat's dark, suspicious nature puzzled.
 It brooded o'er his brows in thunder
 To think perhaps he had been chuzzled,
 And every day brought fresh conviction

The straw and truckle bed were fiction.
 Rome's priests indeed vowed vows inflated,
 Three straws were mixed up with the swans'-
 down,
 But legends won't be reinstated
 By quibblings such as these when once down.
 In vain: the myth to mockery yielded
 Two years since when truth first revealed it.
 And with it those perennial fountains
 Of credulous and verdant coppers
 That nourished once the sacred mountains
 Of seven-fold Rome, like meal from hoppers,
 By some malignant sorcery banished
 Now sank into the ground and vanished.
 From all these causes acting slowly,
 But surely with convergent forces
 It came to pass one day the Holy-
 Father awoke without resources.
 The plough of faith that once the lowly
 Had kided so well, now stuck sans horses;
 Its cash-boxes were vacuums void
 As father Denza's aneroid.
 The only thing that had not dwindled
 Was Rome's imperious need of spending,
 That, whether swindling or swindled,
 From age to age ran on unending.
 'Twas an insatiate fire that kindled
 Faith's noblest deeds, though sometimes
 blending,
 It must be owned, in breasts seraphic,
 A taste for haggling, greed, and traffic.
 Now it convoked, to solve the crisis,

A rapid gathering of the fathers
 Conscripti, to discourse of prices

And victualling, perhaps sans scrip-ti
 rather's

The fitter term for whom devices

For floating loans and filling larders,
 Adjusting deities' and digestions'

Claims and the like are now the questions
 Sans scrip or scrap to pay the bakers'

And butchers' monthly tendered bills ;
 Th' apothecary medicine-makers'

If e'er his Holiness took pills ;
 Those heavier ones to undertakers

When Cardinals, from this world's ills,
 And debts unpaid, in hats and pink hose,
 Float up to heaven's gate like flamingoes.

Some would accept the project Pat Egan,

The New York stock jobber, suggested :—
 To form a company : " The Vatican

And Pope Co., Limited." If blessed, it
 Should tap the faithful. " I'll do what I can,'

He cried, " and when their gold's invested,
 Make me sole Trustee and I'll chance it,
 For Church and faith's sake and finance it."

Some who were disinclined to swallow

The baits of dividends and bonuses
 Would purge the Petrine ark, now hollow,

By throwing overboard the Jonases.
 Their personal foes, and some the Apollo

Would sacrifice to these new onuses,
 And smuggle into France the Parian

Chef-d'œuvre world-famed as Belviderian.

At last it was agreed to clear up
 The situation by electing
 A board to reckon each arrear up,
 And then a pilot sure selecting
 The cranky craft of Church to steer up
 The straits it foundered in ;—reflecting,
 They chose Monsignor Card'nal Foca,
 Notorious for his luck at poker,
 With full authority to transact
 The operations he deemed needful.
 Fail—and he would be disrobed and sacked,
 With other penalties as dreadful :
 Succeed—the means would not be ransacked
 By eyes too critical and heedful :
 Such was the compact *subter velum*.
Væ victis ! vincitori cælum.
 I cannot here pursue this prelate
 Through all the tortuous ways his gambles
 Constrained the obol through to swell it ;
 His borsine victories, losses, scrambles ;
 How by express shot like a pellet
 To Paris :—now its Bourse he rambles ;
 Now sea-sick braves it o'er the Channel,
 His sea-green face wrapped up in flannel ;
 How from each Bourse he thrusts his nose in
 He draws it out a palm the longer,
 Because he sells when markets closing
 Are weak, and buys when they are stronger :
 How slily smiles, a claw reposing
 On parrot beak each Jewish sponger
 When Monsignore Poker-Foca
 Is sold up by his private broker.

All that concerns me here to mention's

The net result, which filled the tills
In Peter's store with good intentions

In shape of promissory bills
And I.O.U.'s—the accursed inventions

Of Jewdom's hell,—and little else :
The loaves were gone ; gone, too, the fishes,
But left their scales upon the meshes.

And Popery, gathering up the broken

And addling eggs that should be chickens
Into her bosom, pores, some token

Of life to find, but nothing quickens
Save the grey mould that flings a cloak on

The festering yolk that rots and sickens
All hope's expansiveness in gloom
Of withering nights and gathering doom.

CANTO III.

Thus then the Papal deficit

In strongly marked relief is set

By these last lines : not less the factors,

Among the scattered simian actors

In Europe and the busy sphere o'

The western world, that summed, divided,

Squared and the like, in th' end provided

A revenue of minus zero

For Popery's pontifex and clero.

And wrinkled fingers now unclasped

The huge worm-eaten cash-box hasped,

And bound with iron rough and rusty,

And raised the lid and trembling grasped

The mouldering rim, and gazed aghast,
 With breaking eyes ensphered, and sighs,
 Into that vacuous cavern vast
 That yawned beneath them like the last
 Dark home of all, as dead and dusty
 With scurf and mould and all things musty
 Impregnated, it seemed to kill
 The very breath of life and will :
 Then to their pens and desks they wandered
 Unsteady, tried the nibs and pondered,
 Or dashed off bulls to confraternities
 Of whom they knew some secret scandal
 With covert menace to disband all
 The brotherhood ; by all th' eternities
 Conjuring them to dub up handsome
 Their spiritual sire to ransom :
 One such, enough to make you rap your chins,
 Had reached the leader of the Capuchins
 In Sondrio, the aforesaid Fulks
 Or Fuchs, and put him in the sulks,
 The which encyclical has whirled us
 Too once more 'mid brave Sondrio's elders.

The Capucini form a body,
 Or corporation, dressed in shoddy
 Of coarse brown colour, and a hood,
 A girdle and a small calotta
 Or skull cap : they've a bowl for food
 The which they beg while doing good :
 Complexion mostly terra cotta,
 But sometimes ruddy, round and burnished,
 In which case with a paunch they're furnished
 Rough as a chestnut's trunk and bulky,

But generally they're thin and sulky,
 With wiry black beard—fino—fino—
 Manzoni's term is mingherlino.
 In theory—and this is funny—
 They must not ask or beg for coin :
 But only bread, cheese, pork, sirloin,
 Chestnuts, fat capons, fish, fruit, wine,
 Etcetera.

In practice if you offer bread
 They curl their noses, and, instead,
 With truculence demand your money,
 Etcetera.

The rule of being paid in kind
 Amongst a people agricultural
 Was not invented by the blind,
 Witness the monuments of sculptural
 Art in the convents and certosas
 Where fattened these celestial boozers
 For heaven's last fair, mid altars rare
 Ablaze with gold and costliest gems
 Flaming from frosted diadems
 And pyxes—miracles Fontana
 And Benvenuto wrought to garner
 The bread of life—and walls mosaic
 Bade blossom into wonders laic
 Imagination ne'er conceived,
 With wreaths of agate interleaved
 And flowers of lapis-lazuli,
 Sprinkled with dewdrops casually
 Of pearls and topazes and moonstones :
 Here, roused by clarions' and bassoons' tones
 To costliest viands, costliest vice,

Beyond the dreams of avarice,
 They lived their earthly Paradise,
 Fawned on by flattery and servility—
 These Christian preachers of humility!
 Their Buddhist bowls for humble doles
 And scourge of knotted thongs upon vent,
 Being—for the outside of the convent.

Alas! in these lewd days of doubters
 The inner walls are like the outers;
 Stripped of their arras and intaglios,
 The convents are no more seraglios,
 And Fuchs by Papal spendthrifts dunned
 Had scarce a kreutzer to refund:
 No wonder, then, these "mingherlin" ants
 Sell up, rack-rent and milk their tenants:
 Sir Blasio's landlord, we have seen,

Was one of those they squeezed most tightly,
 Else had his lodgings never been

Let out to heretics so lightly;
 And now, for harbouring two such tenants
 He's doubly dunned and pinched for penance.
 Now if he'd happened to be in

When that sage worthy ran to earth,
 He, doubtless, had condoned his sin

By casting the apostate forth.
 'Tis always sweet to see a blazer rent,
 Like Blazius, if he first prepays your rent.
 Besides, he thus would curry favour

With those harsh landlords of the cowl.
 Then, when that lank, fanatic shaver
 Egged on the mob with voice and scowl:
 "Burn down the house! Smoke out the
 stranger:"

There was his furniture in danger ;
 But thanks to Providence or fortune,
 He had been barred out with the crowd.
 'Twas all in vain for him to importune
 With threat or curse, however loud ;
 The wily Chiavennian fox
 Was deaf to all his shouts and knocks :
 He should have been at home by rights,
 But—and *that* “ but ” was the salvation
 Of the two Calvinists—his nights
 And noons, with others of his station,
 Now oft were spent in drowning thought
 Of debts and duns in Trani port.
 This liquor was a god-send truly
 To those who groaned beneath the ferule
 Of that ecclesiastic bully,
 Fuchs, of the Capuchins, and their rule.
 A litre, costing six palancas,
 Wiped clean from thought those rusty cankers.
 Then Japhet, so the loon was christened,
 Astride a barrel would denounce 'em,
 With flaming cheeks and eyes that glistened
 Down at the “ Bœucc ” and roar : I
 counts 'em
 No better nor a gang of fakers,
 The linsey-woolsey undertakers !
 And much more to the same effect,
 The Trani wines being strong and heady ;
 Then, when indignant and erect
 He rose, protesting and unsteady,
 It was a sight to see him peg off
 Like a green cricket with one leg off.

It needed just that other strand of
 Coincidence—a vintage season
 Unrivalled in the fabled land of
 Brigands and knives and popish treason
 And Policastrian pirates coasting—
 To save Sir Blasio from his roasting.
 In fact, o'er far Calabria's hovels,
 Where pigs and Christians share the bowl
 And priests parade with coal-black shovels
 On inch-thick skulls, and bless the whole ;
 Where blear-eyed brats o'er muck heaps
 clamber,
 And sows lie farrowing in the chamber,
 Had burst a perfect vinous deluge
 And turned the vats and casks to sluices,
 In fact, in all the land no well huge
 Enough to hold the surplus juices
 Was found, they rushed down over-brimming
 Troughs—dykes—the very fields were swim-
 ming.
 The folk there with that want of sense,
 Which is the note of priest-rid regions,
 Had never had the providence
 To cooper casks for these occasions,
 So that a vintage to excess in
 These lands was more a curse than blessing.
 The roads were bad, the means of transit
 Far worse, and buyers next to nil,
 Folk could not all the autumn dance it
 And drink—the very pigs took ill :
 Excess of good cheer turned to loathing
 And then the wine went off for nothing.

And thus it happened that hard drinking

Became the rage in northern valleys
Where heretofore cool sober thinking

Had put a rein upon the chalice :

When two sous sees you half-seas over,
Philosophy bids reap your clover.

Thus many a half-fed, half-clad blackguard

Would shut this sorry world's dim woes out
And glorious home at even staggered

With ill-botched boots in holes, and toes out,
As Japhet now, his hose unmended,

In spirals down the bare street wended,
But not so drunk as not to seize

The salient points of the position :

His fellow townsmen, if they please,

May suffocate the Calvin mission :

Be all Geneva purged with fire !

But not his household gods the pyre.

One way alone he saw to save 'em

Blocked out among the common herd :—

To warn the Capuchins—and brave 'em—

Dread thought!—a slender chance, he feared.

Yet who can tell which scale of fate

Prevail shall, avarice or hate ?

So sobered now, with heel to shoulder,

He clattered down the cobbly causeway

To where the Capucini moulder

Behind their rusty bars where bore sway

Huge spinners slung on hammocks clothly

Of dusty felts and colours brothy,

And, happily, he found it open—

That convent door with huge nails studded,

And 'mid the brothers, some with cope on,
 Some half unlaced, some girthed and hooded,
 He rushed in, nose and eyeballs burning,
 Priests, flagons, possets overturning,
 And stammered out his fatal message.

Ah! who but Arno's primal poet
 Could paint those brown saints' rage—to pre-
 sage

The Calvin roast—and then forego it
 'Twas maddening—to neglect the warning,
 Some shrieked, popes, bulls, bills, ruin, scorn-
 ing,

Some, rent 'twixt avarice and hatred,
 Slouched blubbering on the wine-splashed
 table,

With epileptic eyes and pate red

While others swift unloosed the cable
 That girthed their palpitating paunches :
 Some sat bolt upright on their haunches
 With stony eyes inanely staring :

One roared out Psalms, a firebrand waving,
 And one, his scanty tonsure tearing,

Fell flat face downward on the paving,
 While one drawled out, the bursar Florian,
 Their butchers' bills to tunes Gregorian.

But Fuchs, who knew, and knowing, grieved
 How thin the plank 'twixt them and ruin,
 With one wild yell his soul relieved,

And then such storms of frenzy flew in
 That every monk's hood-cowlèd ear rings

And tonsures blaze like backwood clearings,
 Each hair erect, as through them whistled,

Like slug or grape shot: "Hark! ye, dumb-
 heads,
 Swift call the fire-brigade!" or bristled
 As "flay their mangy hides for drum-heads!"
 He roared:—then down the staircase jumps
 In flights, ejaculating: "Pumps:"
 Now, "whirra! whirra! hammer! hammer!"
 Hose, engine, firemen headlong gallop,
 Cleaving the mobs that chafe and clamour
 Like surfs behind a racing shalop.
 Pouff! whizz! flies on the painted dragon,
 Fuchs foremost brandishing a flagon.
 Just, only just in time they reach it—
 The fated house, its portal glaring
 With the red bonfires piled to breach it,
 Where on the ground like cherubs blaring
 The faithful lie, their puffed cheeks beaming
 Like gourds a-roast or pumpkins steaming.
 And all along the façade, by the
 Ground-storey window bars deflected,
 From juniper and larch branch fly the
 Bright swarm of sparks, in spires ejected:
 And men, with Alpine rhododendron
 Flaring like tow, from end to end run.
 Close packed behind, like fields in fallow,
 The dense mob heaves in breathless rapture,
 When pizz! whizz! splash from bald pate
 sallow
 Off flies a hat, the hat to capture
 The owner with scant back hair dripping
 Among the crowd goes dipping, dipping.
 And now another splash, bang, fizzle,

Two water rockets cannonading
 Bear off two wigs that spurt and frizzle
 Screwed fast upon the palisading
 That fronts the house, some inches higher
 Than the long flickering tongues of fire.
 And faster now those watery rockets
 Go spluttering all among the masses,
 Now sousing heads, now emptying pockets,
 Till all begin to bray like asses
 And then stampede diramifying
 As rays through clouds when suns are dying.
 This simile, I hold's, Miltonic,
 And greatly dignifies the matter,
 Being both appropriate and euphonic,
 Clouds are but firemen, suns to spatter,
 And 'tis a rule to shun the bathos
 By likening limpets to Mount Athos.
 Howe'er this be, the crowd stampeded
 With better halves at home to shelter,
 Such and what household words succeeded
 This unheroic helter-skelter
 For fustians spoiled :—'twere as irrelevant
 To introduce here as an elephant.
 Now fizzles out the last faint sparkle
 From the drenched logs and firewood humid
 And glimmering twilight 'gins to darkle
 And lampless streets, in mire and gloom hid,
 The fire is spent : the saints are dozing
 Indoors, below the day is closing.
 Far down the mist-dank roadway dwindle
 Hose, firemen, engine, Fuchs and flagon,
 And lurid clouds to westward kindle,

Or ashen grey, moor, scar and crag on,
 Pale in the low moon's shuddering beam,
 Like the wan spectres of a dream.

So Blasius won the day, at least, he

 Appeared to win, but soon his outlines
 And his Achates, too, grow misty

 Far down stream, and the night of doubt
 lines

The hollow vale, and hangs its pall

O'er mountain shrine, o'er echoing hall,

O'er whited kirk, o'er fretted altar,

 O'er chanted rhymes, o'er periods rounded,
 O'er creeds that fail, o'er faiths that falter,

 All mouldering, in one white ring bounded,
 Dim as the shadowy streams that pen

The pale, wan ghosts that once were men ;

But Fuchs much fame and praise acquired

 For charity and magnanimity.

True, had he dared, he would have fired

 With his own hands the Calvin dimity :

History, though, must not note intentions,

Or fame were scarce as well-earned pensions.

And this same late-won reputation

 Of charity towards foes heretical

He used, with persons high in station,

 To get sealed up with seals hermetical

That fount of eloquence artesian

Had soused them with its periods Rhetian.

Next, to expunge it from their walls,

 With mayor and judge he interceded :

Surely the Chiavennian Pauls

 Their Blasio's ministrations needed ;

Thus came, one day, to Blasio's wicket
 Some strong hints and a railway ticket ;
 And, sick at last of screeching dogma
 To empty walls, he took the first
 And last, and left the Sondrian quagmire,
 First shaking off its mire accurst ;
 And therewith learned two truths at least,—
 That deep of ignorance is the thirst ;
 And that, while earth spins west to east,
 Rome remains Rome, and priest a priest.



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Lyrics

By

Alys Grant Stearns.

TK



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THE PASSING SHOWER.

HERE'S to fairest April
 Clad in blossoms gay :
 Hark! the joyous song birds
 Holding matinée;
 Bright the glad sun shineth
 In this happy hour,
 All the wide world smileth
 At the passing shower.

Kissed by sun at dawning
 Budlets rosy blush :
 Creeps the snowy woodruff,
 Sings the dappled thrush :
 Vanish weeping cloudlets,
 When the sun in power
 Flashes forth in splendour
 At the passing shower.

Peep the happy swallows
 'Neath the sheltering eaves ;
 Earth more earthy savours,
 Flash the dripping leaves ;
 Sweeter far and stronger
 Blows the gillyflower ;
 Through the lattice glinteth
 Sun at passing shower.

Here's to sweetest April
 Weeping gentle rain ;
 Winsome sun in glory
 Breaking forth again :
 Skies of blue and silver,
 Skies that darkly lower,
 Love gifts from the Giver,
 Merry sun and shower.

THE MADONNA LILY.

To me the fairest blossom
 That in my garden blows,
 Is the Madonna lily,
 Next door the damask rose :
 She lifts her head at dawning
 God's sunshine to imbue,
 Holds up her pearly chalice,
 To catch the sparkling dew.

And when the day is ended
 She bends her lovely head,
 And on the evening stillness
 Her fragrancy is shed :
 'Tis then at dusk of even,
 When droops her waxen bell,
 I think on our pure Lady
 And angel Gabriel.

When sent to greet the Maiden,
 How in his hand he brought
 A sheaf of snow white lilies,
 With every sweetness fraught :
 Then bowed our Lily lowly,
 "So be it unto me"
 Oh! ever will this blossom
 For us mean sanctity.



MAY MORN.

Where cherry blooms
 An awning make,
 All tinged with rosy dawn ;
 'Midst hawthorn bowers
 The nightingale
 Sings heralding May Morn.

In greenwood trees
 Where peeps the blue,
 He floods the woodland glade :
 He trills of May,
 'Tis merry May !
 His melting serenade.

The wood is pied
 With primrose pale,
 And clover-amethyst :
 Their incense blends
 With songs of birds
 A May morn Eucharist.

Ah ! soon, too soon
 Will swallows flash
 Through sunlit blue, on high :
 And shout adieu !
 Sweet merry May
 For lovely June is nigh.

AN OLD GARDEN.

WITHIN a garden old at eve
I wandered midst the treasures fair,
And each a sweet quaint story told
To those who could perceive.
'Twas leafy June—above the sky
Widespread in azure canopy :
Long shadows fell aslant the green,
Glad swallows whirled on high.

A little robin warbled low
In satin coat of russet green :
A legend sweet gives reason why
His breast did ruddy glow.
'Tis said in pity from the knot
Of cruel thorns on Sacred Brow,
He pluckt a spine, and on his breast
There fell a crimson blot.

Beneath the lacey fern's cool shade,
The lily of the valley peeps ;
Than Solomon in all his pride
More beauteously arrayed.
If Heaven one day my home should be
I'd wish for sun and azure sky,
Glad song of bird and emerald tree
And God for all eternity.

A SUMMER EVENING.

WILD birds homing
 Through the gloaming
 Stray, benighted bee :
 Wee bats flitting,
 Sleepy twitting
 Birds in greenwood tree.

Peace enthralling,
 Shadows falling,
 Sunset's dying rays ;
 Dew descending,
 Sweet flowers blending
 Vesper Hymn of Praise.

Owlets hooting,
 Night birds fluting
 Thrill the woodland glade :
 God—safe keeping
 Loved ones sleeping
 Through the deep'ning shade.

Sweet moon sailing,
 Gold dust trailing
 In the starry way :
 Evening ended,
 Night descended,
 Peace till dawn of day.

A WEST INDIAN NIGHT.

Sinks the sun to resting rosy
 Drenching all in sunset blaze ;
 Humming birds are sleepy twitting,
 Evening falls with grateful haze.
 Mammy's little babe is sleeping,
 Mammy crooned the lullaby,
 Distant are the niggers sweetly
 Singing songs of melody.

Glow-worms in the darkness glimmer,
 Gentle moon is rising bright :
 Oh ! the sweetness and the glamour
 Of the still West Indian night.
 Tropic scents and sounds alluring,
 Bewild'ring odours senses charm,
 Magic shades the moon is weaving
 O'er the evening still and calm.

Moths and fireflies swiftly flitting
 Through the night's ambrosia :
 Sigh the gentle zephyrs wafting
 Scent of sweet magnolia.
 'Cross the blue lagoon is trailing
 Silver path where shadows dance,
 High the midnight moon is sailing
 Tinging all in quaint romance.

THE COT ON THE CLIFF.

ON the cliff side where the gulls ride
Over sea of sapphire blue :
There's a wee cot, such a snug cot,
Built to hold—well say—just two !

There my dear lad all in blue clad
Browned by sun and salt sea wind :
Loves me ever, and he never
Has a thought or word unkind.

But my song's dumb, and I'm lonesome,
For my lad has gone to sea :
I'm aye hoping, loving, praying,
Though my heart so sore must dree.

When my darling comes a sailing,
Sailing home to our snug nest :
In my plaidie will my laddie
Find a little stranger guest.

Then I wonder if my lover
Will agree right glad with me,
That our snug cot, though a wee cot,
Is enough for say—just three !

MOLLY.

SWEET Molly is my colleen
So nate an' coy is she,
Yet—though I love her greatly,
Bedad! she'll none o'me:
Och! I wish I were the wind,
The soft wind from the South,
Indade I'd not ax lave but kiss—
Her little rosy mouth.

What if she drooped her blue eyes,
An' turned away in pique,
My faith! its not surprisin' if
I kiss'd her blushin' cheek:
Och! I wish I were the sun
So warm to shine abroad,
I'd melt the heart o' Molly till—
She vowed her bhoy—adored.

SWALLOWS.

CONSTANT returning
Blithesome and gay,
Come the dear swallows
Each merry May.

Up in the azure
Sunshiny sky,
Silvery flashing
Dashing they fly.

Twirling and hurling
Cries of delight,
Like happy children
From morn till night.

Ah! we shall miss them
Fall of the year,
When they are winging
To sunnier sphere.

ORCHARD LAND.

IN the happy Orchard-land
 All is passing fair :
 Strand of pearly white and pink
 Blossoms everywhere :
 Softly ! Softly ! down they light
 On the carpet green :
 Such a fairy pleasaunce sweet
 Ne'er before was seen.

Leaflets bathe in morning dew,
 Blush the budlets red,
 Shafts of sunlight glint between
 Quivering boughs o'erhead
 Brown and mustard velvet bee,
 Butterfly of blue,
 Swift in sportive glee they flit,
 Seeking honey dew.

Still to us the orchard gives
 Pleasure, wealth untold,
 When the lovely blossoms waive
 Place to leaves of gold :
 Bramble berries shining black,
 Apples rosy red,
 Russet leaves, and purple fruit,
 Luscious, over head

DAWN.

A thousand songs break forth
From trees with dew drops pearled :
When from the East a blush
Spreads o'er the drowsy world.

And high o'er flowery leas,
And waving yellow corn,
The skylark trembling sings
His greeting to the dawn.

Could he not flood the world
With joyous trill Awake !,
His stifled song of praise
His tiny heart would break.

Awake ! the stars have waned,
On high the pale moon fades :
The sun is up ! Now songs
Are hushed within the glades.

TO A ROSE.

WHEN I must fade away sweet rose
I fain would be like thee :
To leave behind in one loved heart
A fragrant memory.

Thou oft hast marked a lover's book
With sweetest mem'ries fraught :
So too, may I remembered be
By one with loving thought.

And when at last I die, sweet rose,
On my still bosom lay :
That when my love weeps sore, thou wilt
My message sweet convey.

FRIENDSHIP.

THY worth is more than much fine gold,
The whole world needs thy kindly light ;
Thou neither canst be bought, nor sold,
Thy power doth make the sad heart bright.

O rarest gem of countless price,
Much sought by all, yet owned by few ;
Thy love and sweetness doth suffice
To lull all pain, O Friendship true !

NIGHT.

O Holy night !
Hour that my heart loves best :
 When children sleep
And birds are safe in nest ;
 When moonbeams glint
The sleeping world all o'er,
 And tiny stars
Keep watch from Heaven's floor.

When all my loved
Within God's arms I place,
 Knowing how safe
Are they in that embrace ;
 O witching hour
When we in dreamland meet,
 How could I else
But love thee, night so sweet !

LOVE'S TOKEN.

A rose once drooped her head
 And sighed a sad lament—
 “Soon will my petals scattered be,
 My fragrance all be spent.

Soon will the sobbing winds
 Build high with leaves my pyre.”
 And from her heart a dewdrop flashed
 Like to a tear of fire.

Two lovers sadly met
 To part while yet 'twas dawn :
 They paused beside the glowing rose
 That seemed for them to mourn.

“Dear Heart! a token give
 Before I cross the sea :
 Why not this fragrant crimson rose
 As a sweet legacy?”

When kiss'd by man and maid,
 Oh! joy the red rose knew :
 She nestled sweet against his heart,
 To be love's token true.

OCTOBER.

SWEET Summer's past—October comes
In Autumn's royal gown :
Luxuriant her beauty roams
O'er hedgerow, vale, and down ;
Blue is her robe—a mystery
With scarlet berries grouped :
Soft purpling skies her canopy
With crimson cloudlets looped :
Her glowing train, the blood-red vine,
Her crown the golden leaves,
Her veil a filagree design
The spider magic weaves :
Her jewels—diamonds dropt from God—
The dew drops on the emerald sod.

A FANCY.

Oh! could I choose a resting place
Wherein at last to bide,
'Twould be the soft sweet heather bank
Out on the moor-side wide.

If lone I was—for company
Would come the velvet bee,
And nectar seek in heather bells
Humming a lullaby.

The golden gorse would cover me
The sky—a canopy,
All star bespangled through the night,
A wondrous galaxy.

What time it was from sleep to wake
And pass to scenes anew,
Sweet music would the soft winds make
Stirring the hare-bells blue.

THEE AND ME.

In darkness dread, in gladsome light,
 My prayers of love, on wings take flight
 To Heaven for thee—
 Pray then for me.

Be faithful to thy God above,
 Thy duty be a task of love
 From sorrow free—
 My earnest plea.

I must not ask thy love dear heart,
 Life must be lived from thee apart,
 'Tis Heaven's decree :
 Oh! pray for me.

Yet—should Heaven grant our heart's desire,
 'Twould be that we should never tire
 But aye agree
 My love, and me.

SLUMBER SONG

Sleep! Baby Sleep!
The little wild birds homeward fly;
The daisy—when soft shadows creep
Shuts drowsy eye.

Sleep! Baby Sleep!
To rest hath gone the great red sun,
The pale moon gleams—stars watch will keep
Now day is done.

Sleep! Baby Sleep!
For God will fold night's curtains blue
Around my babe: then slumber deep
The darkness through.

Sleep! Baby Sleep!
And gently rest till God hath drawn
His curtains pink—and wee birds cheep
In rosy dawn.

CAROL.

THE LEGEND OF THE GLOW-WORM.

When Christ was born in Bethlehem,
 Loved Mary wrapp'd her child
 In soft sweet hay,
 Warmth to convey,
 Because the night was wild.

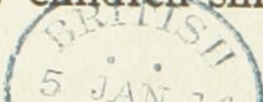
The ox and ass then closely drew
 To keep out cold and storm :
 From rafters high
 Did white doves fly
 Spread wings to nest Him warm.

An insect small then creeping came
 To help it longéd to :
 But grieved right sore
 That nothing more
 Seemed left for it to do.

At last it did with effort great
 Drag—adding to the hay,
 A dried up flower ;
 And in that hour
 A blessing on it lay.

The moon's soft gleam fell on the worm
 The Child a touch bestowed :
 And from that night
 With gentle light,
 The lowly worm hath glowed.

A lovely act by lowly one
 This Legend doth enshrine ;
 By deeds of love
 To God above,
 So too may children shine.



Post
Meridian
Verse

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POST MERIDIAN VERSE



Post Meridian Verse

By W. H. HOULDEN

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NOTE.

With small exceptions, I did not begin to write verse till the sun of life had passed the zenith. Hence, the title.

W. H. H.

TO FRED H. HART.

*My spirit-worth is thine,
Distilled from sordid years,
The better part divine,
Enshrined, appears.*

*A brief balm for time's toll,
I dedicate to thee
These blossoms of the soul,
Culled reverently.*

*Our life's best years have sped,
Since, 'neath Old Sherwood's spell,
By thee and wood-love led,
I, charmed, fell.*

*Still love and service blend,
Old-time but more endears
My most inspiring friend
Of forty years.*

*O may Time gently breathe
On thy remaining days,
While grateful hearts still wreath
Thy crown of praise.*

January, 1914.

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PREFACE

READERS of this little volume of poems will doubtless be glad to know something of the author. My friend was born in a Lincolnshire hamlet in 1851. He commenced to walk the one and a quarter miles to the nearest village school, when four and a half years old. He was fond of school, and if his memory is faithful, never played truant for even half a day. At eight and a half years, he commenced to carry off bricks from the moulder, work which was both back-aching and heart-breaking for one so young. This in the summer, and school in the winter, alternated for four years, when schooling ceased. The foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds was but three or four miles from his home, but the near country was flat, though green and flowery. It was somewhat redeemed by the passage of the Louth Canal, and some long worn-out brick ponds which were full of fish and water-fowl. But he has always regretted the absence of hills and brooks, and their charm of variety.

He remembers that a school trip to the Wolds above Louth, where the little river Lud winds sweetly among Hubbard's Hills, was like a peep into fairyland. A bow and arrow, with which he never killed anything; a fishing rod, bird-nesting, and re-setting the mole-catcher's traps, were his chief recreations. At thirteen his parents removed to Grimsby, and for a few years he was a crane-lad at the docks, a good education in the rough ways of the world. When nineteen, he went to Sheffield, and was a cleaner at the Neepsend engine shed in the hope of becoming a driver on the railway. Before his eighteen months

cleaning was done at fifteen shillings a week, he gave eight sovereigns for his one-life-watch, which is still a good timekeeper of forty-three years service.

At the end of two years firing, he became thoroughly dissatisfied with the work. Many a time, after twenty hours duty, he was roused again, from four or five hours sleep, and many a dish had he to pay for that dropped to the footplate as he fell asleep while eating. Passenger work was more regular, but he was never home till everybody had gone to bed, and worked two Sundays out of three. He gave in his notice and left. In February, 1874 he commenced where he still works, so that this present month is the fortieth anniversary. It was in that year, too, that I became acquainted with him, and from that time to this, we have remained good friends, helping and cheering one another. He married at thirty-four, and was very fortunate in the choice of a wife. Home and Heaven, he says, are synonyms, and I can well testify of its restful, unflinching charm.

He is fond of music and the theatre, and while single, indulged in opera, play or concert now and then, but after marriage, with limited pocket-money, preferred to spend his shillings in a book rather than a concert. More than once I have heard him say that with his bright home, his books, a fountain pen, thoughts, a little vein of poetry, and his cycle if those should pall, he never, no never, feels the need of any other entertainment.

Since 1897 each year has seen him on a cycling holiday, visiting the Yorkshire Dales ; Oxford and the Thames Valley ; Edinburgh and Lochs Lomond and Katrine ; the English Lakes ; Killarney ; Stratford-on-Avon, Worcester and Tintern Abbey ; Exeter and Round Dartmoor ; the Norfolk Broads ; Somerset and the Severn Sea, and other places. Of most of these he wrote a description, which posting round the country, gave considerable pleasure to his many friends.

Other recreations, which held sway for many years, were picture-framing, and I see daily, specimens, which after a quarter of a century, are still dust-tight and mitre-perfect,—and photography, by which he secured delightful pictures of many beautiful scenes. He wants no work at home, now, but home, books, the pen, the cycle and the fair face of Nature still possess all their old charm.

In these days when volumes of poetry issue from the press "Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brook in Vallambrosa" and almost as quickly fill the penny and twopenny boxes of the second-hand booksellers, it needs greater courage than I possess to counsel publication of a book of poems. I tried to discourage this printing venture, calling up visions of those graves of poets' hope, the multitudinous twopenny boxes of Charing Cross Road overflowing with the unsullied spoils of privately printed and subscription editions—the "privately printed" having doubtless drained an already slender purse, and the "subscription" having an ugly aspect of blackmail—but the ruling passion is strong, and the love of a poet for his precious offspring, unfathomable, passing the love of a mother. My friend has faith in his work ; is prepared to take all risks, making no appeal for "subscription," and determined, whatever the result, still to be happy. So I, believing that readers will find true poetry in this little book, am fain to sympathize as usual, and help as I may. In the words of the beloved R. L. S. "I have to make him happy—if I may."

Quorn,

FRED H. HART.

February, 1914.

Post Meridian Verse.

SHERWOOD FOREST.

A DEAR old shade, where Hart and I
Have rambled oft in days gone by ;
And though ten years since then are spent,
We hunger yet for the content
With which we roamed those glorious glades,
Or lingered in majestic shades,
Like nave of Minster, lofty and sublime,
The vista lost far back, like that of time,
Dim'd and subdued by deeper, grander glooms
Than storied light that falls on painted tombs.
And there we talked with pensive breath,
Of absent friends and love and death ;
Of all those dear souls of the Past
Who loved this forest to the last,
And left to us their record sweet
Of joyful days in this retreat,
Of tongues in trees, and sounds and sights
Dear to the soul of pure delights.

And then we tuned our hearts to sing
The leafy sweetness of the Spring,
Or coaxed those monarchs, old and hoary,
To tell us their romantic story
Of all the thousand years they've stood,
Graced by the Ladies of the Wood.
Anon, we heard soft whisperings,
Which might be rustling leaves, or wings
Of fairies fluttering round their rings ;

To us they breathed of monks and kings,
And yeomen bent on foragings,
Of comely damsels, outlaws gay,
And archers all in rich array.

Transfuséd thus our moral being
With all the influence of our seeing,
We took therefrom a cheering grace,
Which will, at times, shine through the face,
When Thought, her treasures to unfold,
“ Runs back to fetch the Age of Gold ” ;
And this will be, though Fortune spurn,
Till Memory’s lamp shall cease to burn.

Alas ! each year serves more to sever,
It seems that we again may never
With reverent feet press that soft turf,
The finest found on this fair earth ;
A thousand years of Summer-zest,
Of rain and sun, and Winter-rest,
By dainty, nibbling conies tended,
Have in this fair perfection ended.

O Sherwood, type of Nature’s best,
Thy loveliness pervades the breast,
As when the sun doth sink to rest
His glories kindling all the West.

And so ’twill be when we are gone,
Undim’d, Old Sherwood will shine on !

March, 1906.

ZEBERALLA.

MY one loved name, in her first bloom,
The name long graven on her tomb.

As morning-glory on the sea,
At eve is but a memory,

So that far sunrise now I'm old,
Though memory pales, is still pale gold.

“ Remembrest thou my Mother well ? ”
Her daughter said, with wistful spell,

And Love, o'er life's great hill of time,
Demands reply in winsome rhyme.

I know her face was fair,
And that I loved her well ;
But O I cannot tell
The colour of her hair.

I know her eyes were brown,
And rich and soft and clear,
And this, that they were dear,
No other proof can crown.

My eyes were oft won down
To the fa' of her fairy feet ;
I know the fa' was sweet,
But can't say black or brown.

I know we often walked
And scarcely felt the sod :
And though 'tis very odd,
I'm just as sure we talked

Until our souls both glowed,
Yet all within is still,
And puzzled is the will,
That Love so vainly sowed,

For not one word is given
Of all we must have said
That seared me like hot lead,
Or raised to highest heaven.

Dim is our love-lit way,
For aught that I remember,
It might have been December,
Or flower-bejewelled May :

Stay ! one bloom lights that path,
The prickly, unkind teazel,
If I had but an easel
I'd lymn this aftermath.

Some day I'll seek that shore,
And muse among those ways,
And dream of those old days,
And worship as of yore.

I'll supplicate her shade
In the heaven of a day in June ;
Perchance she will commune,
And render soulfelt aid.

O, then shall Memory rise
In the might of the quickened brain,
Restore the golden grain,
And the light of youthful eyes.

Then flowers of every hue,
Shall bloom by Love's old way,

And hearts be young and gay,
And words ring fond and true.

And I will always see
Her face and form, as fair
As when we wander'd there
In heavenly harmony ;

Enshrined in stainless truth,
Above all mortal care,
And loved beyond compare,
In her immortal youth.

This is the sequence caught,
The truth my story sings ;
That Love to Memory clings,
And action fades ere thought.

As the soul of the rose, the scent,
Outlives the lovely bloom,
So feeling, deep with doom,
Survives environment.

In the crannies of the brain
A myriad dead things rest ;
The heart remembers best,
And better joy than pain.

1907.

THE ELEGY.

How sweetly here, dear Zeberalla sleeps,
No troublous dreams disturb her peaceful breast ;
No cares of yesterday that will not rest,
Nor morrow-dread, the future's barrier leaps.

No more her faltering heart a beat shall miss,
To bring th'enervate frame a moment's death,
Nor shall she sigh again with fluttering breath,
" How I could welcome Death's releasing kiss

" But for my darling babes and husband dear,
Who bind me to the earth with love's sweet bands ;
How can I cease to press their helpless hands,
Or leave him lone, to struggle sadly here ? "

Heart-breaking problems ne'er perplex dull Death ;
He cut this knot of hearts with heartless haste ;
And shattered lives may end, or mend, or waste,
He heedeth not our anxious, painful breath.

Peace hath her dwelling in this hallowed place,
No mouldering heap here mars the ever-green ;
But all around are tender tokens seen,
That here, the dead are loved with reverent grace.

Within the shadow of the sacred fane,
Beneath the restful green enshrined she lies,
Heedless of winter snows, or summer skies,
While years roll on, nor bring her loss or gain.

But, evermore the earth shall bear more gold,
Than if she had not lived and loved and passed ;
Fine souls look forth from beauteous eyes, and cast
On kindred souls a spell, and next, behold

Their image, kindled, like a glimmering star,
In the pure deep of home's sweet sheltering fold,
These, but for her, had ne'er ta'en mortal mould,
But in chaotic darkness, lost afar,

Had found no waftage to our living shore.
And ages hence, hearts of these hearts shall glow,
And lives of these lives new impulses show,
To prove Death's venom vain, Life's Triumph, sure.

1907.

THE SUN OF HOPE.

My life is spoiled by slavish days ;
Oppressed by duty's galling chain,
I struggle in a cruel maze
Of crushing toil, and slow, dull pain.

I labour through the long, hard day,
Till mind and muscle both are spent ;
And the brief evening gloom away,
Resentful, sullen, malcontent.

Too worn and weary to enjoy
The sweetness and the charm of home,
Too languid after day's annoy,
Within my world of books to roam.

The gracious Sabbath yet remains,
To brace me for another week ;
The love of Nature still constrains,
Again the open fields I seek.

'Tis January, yet the sun
Is warm and bright with winter wiles,
The sleeping landscape, bare and dun,
Through sickly smoke-stain wanly smiles.

And though no flower beside me blooms,
And no bird sings in sky or tree,
No Tyrant-Duty o'er me glooms,
My freedom as immensity.

For high as heaven's pale-blue floor,
And clear as this sweet Sabbath-air,
My thought above my lot may soar,
And dares to paint the future fair :

And so I carol gaily on,
And emulate the vernal lark,
The sense of dread depression gone,
With fear of the recurring dark.

At length I come to woodland ways,
Which oft, long years ago, we trod ;
In happy Hymen's primal days
We lightly prest this springy sod.

I pause in gladness near each spot
Where memory gilds a treasured shrine
And crave again the cheerful lot,
Which in those far-off days was mine.

Here, 'neath the greenwood's grateful shade
We rambled, one in heart and mind,
Or in the cushion-grass we made
A couch, and there at ease reclined.

And here the Cuckoo's two old notes
Fell on our tranced hearts anew ;
And through the hyacinth incense-motes
We gazed on fields of heavenly blue.

And hence our wandering feet would fare
On dwindling pathway, green and dim,
To charming sylvan temple, where
We heard the woodland vesper hymn.

Then ! with our one ewe lamb so fair,
We picnic'd in this fairy ring,
Rejoiced she in her chaise and pair,
And we in dainty gipsying.

Upon the living greensward lay
A sun-flecked square of damask-light,

Which shone in prodigal array,
With cates and delicates bedight.

There's slicéd wheaten, white and brown,
With churned and curded dairy-gold,
Ambrosial cake with jewelled crown,
And ruby fruit, good to behold.

And when, like Homer's hungry Greeks,
We vanquished the desire to eat,
And drained the cup that Cowper seeks
To eulogise in accents meet ;

We sat or stretched at ease by turns
And saw the truant-sunbeams play
At hide and seek among the ferns,
Not so our lightsome, frolic May ;

With boundless glee she hailed each *f'ower*,
Or plucked the fox*dub's* glowing bell,
While we enhanced the gliding hour
With book or talk, till evening fell.

O vanished days of long ago !
Whate'er the coming years may bring,
Love knows no second summer-glow,
There comes to us no youth-borne spring ;

And though so heavenly fair the day,
Its light-of-love no shadow cast,
Alas ! Alas ! It would not stay ;
O ! soul-felt Pathos of the Past !

But see ! the sun behind yon knoll
Already dips into the west ;
And I must speed to that fair goal,
My sanctum, sweet with love and rest.

Ah, glorious sun, no more to-day
Shall I behold thy perfect sphere ;
Thou seemest like to my life's way,
All thy shorn glories in the rear.

I left the vale, and quickly won
The upland, glancing to the sky,
And turning there beheld the sun
In radiant beauty, clear and high,

Like to a god, whose gorgeous throne
Seemed rooted in the lowly earth,
Whose grace and bounty through me shone,
Whereby new joy had instant birth.

Oh Sun of Hope, thy fine surprise
Expands my heart and charms my sight,
My sun seemed set, but now I rise,
I mount again into the light !

1908.

AMONG THE LAKES.

In 1879 I made a holiday-walking-tour of the English Lakes. My companion was then no richer than myself, but he had high hopes and great ambitions which in the coming years were fully realized. He became rich and prosperous. But he was one of those "Whom the fates have mark'd to bear the extremity of dire mishap!" and his life went out in gloom. In 1909 I revisited the same scenes, alone; and finished a sketch of the holiday which I wrote, with the following summary of verse.

AND now, I, the remaining one, have come
To roam these sweet and hallowed scenes again,
Which oft, erstwhile, were misty, veiled and glum,
Or sadly marred or barred by dismal rain.

Day followed hope-flushed day, and still the sun
His glory wasted on the envious cloud;
Day after day his stedfast course was run
With scarce one gleam that pierced the sullen shroud.

Oftimes would deathless hope be overbold;
We doubted not the sun would show his face,
Would gild afresh all this rare, dull old-gold,
And reign benign again through time and space.

But evermore we hoped 'gainst vanished hope,
Old Sol disdained to bless us with his smile,
"There's youth and health and all this beauty's cope,
Enough, the hours I bring you, to beguile."

But *now*, my friend submerged, and greying grown,
Again I wander round this regal realm,
Review our haunts in silence, and alone,
The sun my pilot, smiling at the helm.

For on that very morn I sought this clime,
He cleared the sky of cloud, of murk and mist ;
Then the great crystal concave glowed sublime,
And each thing on the glad, green earth he kissed.

In majesty he held his glorious sway ;
Five times re-kindled the unstained morn ;
Five times sustained his highest, loveliest day,
From morn to eve, scarce one hour cloud-forlorn.

And I have gazed on winsome Windermere,
Her crystal waters, her enchanting isles
And mystic mountains ; circled high and clear
The fairy-bowl of Grasmere, wreathed in smiles.

The loveliness of Rydal, from the fell,
Three times I drank, and drank but could not sate,
Three times I paused, and felt the magic spell—
The spirit of the ancient Wishing Gate.

Fair Derwentwater's silvery mirror speaks
Rare riches in reflected isle and shore ;
Her near hills robed in light, her distant peaks
Through medium mist, into the clear blue soar.

Before the sun that day had touched the west,
I skim'd Ulleswater's lovely, tortuous course ;
Marked well her noble mountains, where they rest ;
And loved the rainbow-soul of Aira Force.

All these, the bounty of the generous sun
Lapped in aerial gold for my delight,
His ready, regal smiles were never done
Till shining day reposed on restful night.

Insatiate man ! for yet thou art not filled,
Great Past-Delight yearns day by day for more ;
Her pleasaunces doth Hope already build
On mountain brow, and lake's lone, lovely shore.

But the most wondrous of all wonders, is,
That having once drunk deep of that old wine,
I passed, untasted, thirty vintages,
Nor yielded to the spell of that rare vine.

The slow, insidious years are charged with fate,
And clog the veins with time's congesting lees ;
Alas ! not waking sense can compensate
The waste of youthful opportunities.

But up ! my heart, now to the heights again,
And end thy strain upon a note more gay ;
The sun, the mountains, lakes and vales remain,
Go revel in their glories when ye may.

October, 1909.

AIRA FORCE (ULLESWATER).

DOWN, ever down, with fateful force still falling,
Since the first day, not one pause o'er the steep ;
In everlasting thunder, soul-enthraling,
Thy plummet sounds the depth of thy dread deep.
The cloud hath passed, and that erst dim abyss,
Is now made glorious with prismatic spray,
The Soul of Beauty, born of the sun's kiss,
Joys tremulous on the foam, like tranced fay.
How like my life, long days of sunless toil,
Mid murk and din, with rocky hearts above,
Would sear the soul, but as the constant foil
To home and rest, and rainbow light of love.
For love, home, Nature, books, are prisms of the soul,
The Sabbath sun shines through, and glorifies the whole!

October, 1910.

SUMMER SOLACE.

O HOW I love—my working days being spent
About the smoke-wreathed, clanging, fiery mill—
To sit within my wood, and let the still,
Sweet Sabbath-hours float through my firmament.
A book for company, and for a tent
The trees that fret the blue with leafy frill,
And troops of wanton, fairy sunbeams spill
At random on the bracken, gold-besprent.
And when, at length, the sitting-tension tires,
Or when the speaking page seems less divine,
How exquisite the ebb of all desires,
As in the grass I restfully recline ;
See lovely cloudscapes, list to leafy lyres ;
Then close my eyes, in deep content supine

August, 1910.

REMINISCENCES OF KILLARNEY.

*The Mountains at the Head of the Upper Lake, seen
from the Foot.*

THEY stood aloof, a rare, exalting sight,
Betwixt green isles and skies of heavenly hue ;
The lofty peaks loomed on the lovely blue,
Transfigured in the glow of living light.
O could the soul attain so rapt a height,
Such grandeur, radiance, calm, each morn renew,
Then to Elysian Fields fall with the dew,
In leisure, love and sleep to charm the night :
For there must lie, beyond that glorious gate,
Realms of Romance, fair Mansions of the Blest,
Where, from the splendour of the gods in state,
Quiet souls find shade, in milder glory drest !
What wonder that poor mortals, sport of Fate,
Should hope in such a heaven, to roam and rest ?

THE SHAMROCK.

I.

IN far back youth, through one short, happy year,
With One I mingled each day's evening prime ;
A son of Erin, cultured, gentle, dear,
Whose fragrance still steals o'er this gulf of time.
He taught me rare Tom Moore's green Shamrock-song,
Love, Wit, and Valour wrote it on my heart ;
Thenceforth the love of triple-leaves grew strong,
Though I but knew the English counterpart.
At length, when fully forty years were told,
With eager joy I sought Killarney's shore,
And found and loved the Shamrock—green and gold,
And sang with lusty zest that song of Moore ;
O lovely plant, deep joys about thee move,
Sweet Nature, legend, art, A People's Love.

THE SHAMROCK.

II.

WHEN, after long delay, my face I set
To match Killarney with her old renown,
My May-girl said, "O please do not forget
That tuft of Shamrock, Erin's floral crown."
From Innisfallen's ancient, ruined shrine,
Deep-rooted heart of triple-leaves I bore,
And sent it posting unto daughter mine,
O'er land and ocean, wreathed in its life-lore.
She planted it with loving, tender care,
And watered it with patience, hope and grace ;
But when home drew again, I found it there,
Slow surely fading in that alien place.
" 'Neath old-romance-less skies, I pine," it said ;
" I leave your loves my children in my stead."

INNISFALLEN.

LOVE ! fervent, pure, non-penalising love,
And adulation, ever were thy dower :
Rare souls, whom Love and Beauty placed above,
Have hymned thy loveliness, thy gentle power.
Green undulations, winsome, winding ways,
Rare trees, and flower-fringed lawns that slow the
pace ;
Alluring vistas over fairy bays,
Perennial sweetness and transcendent grace ;
Thy ancient wealth of learning and of art,
Romance of ages hallowing every stone
Of thy rude abbey-walls, that lean and start,
Which Nature long since made her very own ;
All these prove real, that fabled Abbot old,
Who roamed thy lovely isle, life, three-times-told.

FAREWELL TO INNISFALLEN.

(*From Brickeen Bridge.*)

FAIR Innisfallen, here I stand alone,
And breathe, from this proud arch, a fond farewell !
How I do love thee, words may fail to tell,
And yet I fain would show how dear thou'rt grown.
Long years have passed since thy rare beauty shone
Through love-charmed eyes, on fond heart's glow and
 swell,
Dear hearts, that cast on me thy beauty's spell,
Dead hearts, whose praise of thee, doth Death disown.
Now have I pressed thy green with reverent feet,
Have strayed with youth and beauty through thy
 bowers,
Have seen how kindly Nature loves to greet
Thy ruined walls, and hallows them with flowers ;
O Innisfallen, more I may not tell,
One long, last look, my sweet, farewell, Farewell !

1910.

THE ABBOT.

(*A Legend of Innisfallen.*)

The Legend of Innisfallen is taken from Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall's fine book, "A Week at Killarney."

..... "Innisfallen became associated with our dreams of happiness. . . . Our guide, Sir Richard, conducted us up and down the tiny hillocks, and through the miniature vales of this delicious isle, and listened with evident pride and pleasure to our expressions of exceeding delight. And then he and Spillane took advantage of our disposition 'to sit awhile and rest,' for the day was very fair, and the sun was sinking 'with a pure light and a mellow,' to enlighten, and interest, and amuse us, by relating some of the legends of the lakes.

"They told us—How the blessed Abbot of Innisfallen walked for two hundred years about the little island that wasn't a mile round. And the way of it was this:—He was praying one morning early, before the sun was up; and he heard a little bird singing so sweetly out of a holly tree, that he rose from his knees and followed it, listening to the music it was making; and the little bird flew from bush to bush, singing all the while, and the holy father following; for so sweet and happy was the song of the little bird, that he thought he could listen to it for ever: so where it flew, he went, and when it changed its place, he was again after it; the little bird singing all the while, and the holy Father listening with his ears and his heart. At length the Abbot thought it was nearing vesper time; and he blessed the little bird, and left it. When he stepped back to his convent, what should he see and hear but strange faces and strange voices; the tongue of the Sassenach in lieu of the wholesome Irish. And the monks asked him what right had he to wear the habit of the holy Augustines. And so he told them his name, that he was their Abbot, and that he had been since daybreak following the music of the little bird that was singing sweetly among the branches of the holly tree. And they made answer that two hundred years ago the holy Abbot had left the convent, and was never heard of afterwards, and that now, the heretic and the stranger was ould Ireland's King. So the holy Father said 'Give me absolution, some of ye, for my time is come'; and they gave him absolution: and just as the breath was leaving him, they heard at the lattice window the sweetest song that ever bird sung; and they looked out and saw it, with the sun shining on its wings that were white as snow; and while they were watching it, there came another bird; and they sang together for a while out of the holly tree, and then both flew up into the sky; and they turned to the holy Father—and he was dead."

THE holy abbot prayed at early dawn,
The while night's bird sang from the sacred holly ;
" How softly sooth that strain ! " then light as fawn
He followed, more to ease his melancholy.

The shy, sweet bird led on from bush to tree,
And sang, at each remove, a deeper song ;
Through pleasure, joy, to rapture, ecstasy,
He drew the Abbot with seraphic tongue.

He stayed him on a lovely, flower-fringed lawn,
And lured him through a lofty, leafy glade ;
To fairy bower resistlessly withdrawn,
Or cooled within the strand's delightful shade.

By many a rare old tree he slowed his way,
And halted him in nooks of native charm ;
He could not feel enough, the live-long day,
Nor hunger, thirst, nor tire, nor time alarm.

At length, the Abbot, following still the bird,
Looked down a lovely vista to the west ;
A holy choir a-calling now he heard,
And saw the shining portal to the blest

Through pendulous boughs across the level lake,
A glorious track of slant sun-gold transfuse ;
And on the mountain's breast, that radiant wake
Led to rapt peaks, and lovely sunset hues.

Doubt not that had the music still held sway,
That final burst of clear, harmonic fire,
Had fined the last faint trace of dross away,
And left him light, and ready to aspire ;

To float along that path of living gold,
To rise, and pass beyond that glorious gate,
And viewing thence the long-sought heavenly fold,
Find there the longed-for everlasting state :

But earth still drew his feet, and clogged his will,
And sunset glory but suggested night ;
“ I bless thee, bless thee ! heavenly bird, but still
It must be nearing vesper-time, or quite ! ”

A stranger met him at the abbey door,
Demanding who was he, and by what right
The garb of holy Augustine he wore,
And many questions, asked in seeming slight.

“ I am your Abbot, but since early dawn,
A heavenly bird hath led me ever on ;
His seraph-song must surely have withdrawn
My whole soul through my ear, had I not gone.

“ But hitherward at vesper-time I fare,
To bless my flock, and fold them from the night,
Blend with sweet sleep the faithful shepherd's care,
And thankfully await the morning light.”

“ Nay father, nay ! thy words that seem so smooth,
Are wilder than the maniac’s wail of woe ;
The last to wear that sacred garb, in sooth,
Was lost in light two hundred years ago !

“ He wandered forth, around the isle to stray,
From many a fragrant flower to brush the dew,
To drink the energy of new-born day,
And meditate upon the good and true.

“ But never more his loved ones saw his face,
He straightway faded out of mortal ken,
Like Enoch, God, in his enfolding grace,
Withdrew him from the common haunts of men.

“ And now, our isle of isles hath lost its pride,
The stranger heretic is Erin’s King ;
The Sassenach our order doth deride,
His lingo ousts the speech to which we cling.

“ But prythee, brother, why so deadly pale ?
Art faint of hunger ? here recline and rest,
My faithlessness I ever shall bewail,
I feel thou’rt worthy our soul’s reverent best ! ”

“ My call I hear ! absolve me ere I go ;
My bird again sings from the sacred holly,
'Tis Innocence, with wings as white as snow
He comes once more to sooth my melancholy.”

And while they gazed and listened, from on high
Another song surprised th'enamoured air ;
Another bird fell singing through the sky,
And lit beside the white-robed songster there.

“ 'Tis Joy,” the Abbot murmured, “ that I know,
Come down from heaven to bless my latest breath ;
'Tis joy ! sweet friends, the joy to which I go,
He comes to lead me through the Vale of Death !

“ The gem-like splendour of his glorious wings,
He caught from heaven's gates in passing through ;
An earnest of the radiant, heavenly things,
Which, in good time, I pray to share with you.”

Meanwhile, those wingéd priests *half* claim their souls ;
But now that words fail, all, instinctive, turn,
And see the glinting glory of their stoles,
And feel the angel-music throb and yearn.

A down a vale, to some enchanted goal
The singing river ran with rippling glee,
A thrice-blest stream, wherein the earth-worn soul
Lay lapt in waves of happy harmony.

Thence, many a rise, on glad, exultant strain,
Led by aërial steps, to heights sublime,
Where Joy received her guests, in her high fane,
Above the mist of earth, and stain of time.

Her many domes are singly set apart
To the world-souls that everywhere inspire
Each faculty of heavenward human art,
Or each high source of impulse and desire.

The Soul of Music ever with her dwelt ;
And *those*, entranced by more than mortal sound,
A larger measure of her spirit felt,
And knew her subtle ways were holy ground.

She led them through her gardens, wondrous fair,
By paths of beauty, bright and sweet with flowers ;
And lulled them with her singing fountains there,
Or thrilled them with amazing cataract powers.

Attendant ever on sweet Music's train,
Th' ethereal, sylph-like Spirit of Romance
Allured them to her own immune domain,
With raptures that enjoyances enhance.

The earth-dulled instincts there found recompense ;
The world of Self, in her world has no part ;
The very air they breathed was innocence ;
Exalted in humility, each heart.

In tuneful groves and arbours where she led,
The Loves and Graces pure enchantment made ;
And on fair, fleeting visions, ever shed
Her rosy light, or pensive, pearly shade.

Then ! joyous notes careered from height to height,
And echoed from the deeps in distance veiled ;
And through each pause, pure crystallized light,
In radiant cloudlets, through the blue deep sailed.

Then rose a strain, grand, solemn, deep, remote,
That on full hearts, fell back a murmurous sigh ;
And on the cadence of that dying note,
They spread their wings and towered to the sky.

Awe strained a raptured, dwindling, baffled sight ;
“ O Angel-Souls ! are ye for ever fled ? ”
Then, in the deepening gloom of sunset light,
They turned them to the Abbot, He was dead !

December, 1910.

AT REST.

As forth to labour each new morn I go,
I gaze afar 'tween sunrise and near-noon ;
The hills of many miles dissolve, and Lo !
My Parents' shrines appear, 'neath sun or moon.
Though far away and far apart they lie,
And though the dark blot all from east to west,
The ebon void veils not Love's piercing eye,
I see each lowly temple where they rest.
They rest ; aye, each At Rest ; but rest for her
Is everlasting rest from age-long pain ;
He lightly rests, wakes, glad to be astir,
To eat, laugh, talk, and tread his tree-lined lane.
Moons many since, for me she ceased to pray ;
He, eighty-six, loves me anew each day.

November, 1911.

TO JUNE, MY WIFE.

(After 28 Years.)

I.

MORE as a lightning flash surprises Night,
Than as the gentle sunrise lights the morn,
Was that fair love that sweetly binds us, born.
With heart that pined for home's serene delight,
And soul that yearned for love's supernal height,
I marked through months thy many virtues, worn
With simple truth but neither rose nor thorn,
For Love feigned death, in modest worth's despite.
Then turned I to thy gayer life-long friend,
For there the artful god had hung his lamp ;
But her too-careful guardian strove to damp
My first essay to compass that fair end.
"Keep heart," thou saidst, "for I will storm that
camp,
And woo for thee, and win thee right to fend."

TO JUNE, MY WIFE.

II.

THEN Love ! who loves a bravely generous soul,
Stept forth that instant and applied his brand ;
And all thy garnered wealth at his command,
Was flushed with fervid flame, that through me stole,
And lit and warmed my heart, like glowing coal ;—
A sacred fire, fed by thy vestal hand,
And by thy tender, true-love-service fanned,
Burns not less brightly as we near the goal.
Thy skilful labour, tact, and saintly rays,
Make home rich with perennial treasure trove,
Whereby my prime ideal of home and love
Finds daily exaltation, to thy praise.
Thy heart of gold, and gentleness of dove,
Have gained a guerdon that gilds all our days.

January, 1912.

AT THE GRAVE OF CHARLES ATTWOOD
HARDY.

I.

FOR half a lifetime hath he lain asleep,
Not on the high, lone moor, as how he longed ;
Yet is the darkling silence not less deep
That other sleepers have around him thronged.
Beyond the vast Atlantic's pathless space,
Where noble Penn's Sylvania woos the skies,
His loved ones dwell in dignity and grace,
And eastward send fond thoughts through wistful
eyes.

Well worthy he of all their tender love,
His native chivalry,—O quenched too soon !—
Illumed his countenance, as high above,
The glory glows the full, unclouded moon :
Moons wax and wane, and wane and vanish quite,
And his first brightness waned to moonless night.

AT THE GRAVE OF CHARLES ATTWOOD
HARDY.

II.

His strong, yet gentle love, and cultured worth—
That like blest sunshine mellowed all around,
And gave fresh fragrance to the flowers of earth—
Should not soon fail, though he has fall'n to ground :
But, as the light from yon remotest star,
Were that star quenched, would still shine year on
year,
So should his virtue radiate afar,
To foster faith and hope and temper fear.
Yet, O it seemeth, seldom one now dwells
On the rare manly merit here inurned ;
Here, where his loved ones mingled last farewells,
And bore away sore hearts that throbbed and burned.
But while my strength remains, and memory's light,
One head will bow, one heart retrace the night !

February, 1912.

Charles Attwood Hardy came from America about 1870, and established "The Hardy Patent Pick Co." in Sheffield, which has grown to a large and important business. He died in Nov., 1878. He had an intense desire to take his last long rest out on the Moor ; and while ill, wrote, asking the Duke of Norfolk to sell him a bit of moorland for a resting place. After his death, a Canon of the Church called on Mrs Hardy with the Duke's apology for the apparent inattention. He was abroad at the time.

TO I. G. B. HARDY.

[Mrs. Hardy, with her three lovely girls, returned to Pennsylvania early in 1879. The following verses were sent to her on the back of a card of fruit and flowers.]

Now that our hearts glow with holiday gladness,
Which wreathes with a halo, and softens our sadness ;
Permit me to offer, of friendship, a token,
Sweet friendship, too soon to be ruthlessly broken.

In the land of thy maidenhood, boundless and free,
As boundless and free may life's joys be to thee ;
May friendships created, and loves re-united,
The freshness of Spring give to feelings here blighted.

May the flowers that gem this tribute so true,
Be an emblem of those which thy path shall bestrew,
And O, when this beams with the light of thine eyes,
May my heart's grateful perfume a moment arise.

Christmas, 1878.

TO MISS BRIGHT.

[MRS. HUKIN.]

Miss Bright, companion to Mrs. Hardy and governess to the girls, was not to cross the Atlantic with them, but was to follow, after. The last two verses were borrowed ; altered to suit, and the first two written to them.

Though clouds obscure thy sky,
Hope smiles serene above ;
Though evening dim thine eye,
The morrow becks with love.

The meeting bye and bye
Will move delights more keen
Than earth could e'er supply,
If parting had not been.

And though there steal a tear
Along its trembling way ;
The dewdrop sparkles clear
At ope of summer day :

So be that crystal gem,
A pledge of joyous hours,
When day by day with them,
Thy path is sweet with flowers.

Christmas, 1878.

FOREVER.

GONE, gone ! both gone, the sources of my being,
No more to walk the earth and bless my sight ;
Where, in my conscious sky they lived in light,
Now sunless, moonless, starless, blank unseeing.
O peaceful thought, that conscience brings no dreeing,
That Love and Duty smile in Death's despite ;
That their life-page is luminous and white,
No line there blurred, no shirking, shrinking, fleeing.
And now, how dear these relics, each a prize,
My happy gifts when life was at the crest ;
This jewel oft she claspt on her brave breast ;
This golden chain, long lovely in his eyes.
His love-touched gold on her gem'd palm I rest,
And Lo ! each hand in mine lockt-loving lies !

February, 1913.

[My Mother died on the 1st May, 1910, age 83. My Father died on the 16th November, 1912, in his 88th year.]

MY GEMS.

I.

WHEN, parchéd in the sultry summer-shine,
My mouth for "Water! water!!" maketh moan,
I oft, in mercy, yield it but a stone
Wherewith to sound its wells of ozone wine.
Then lures the sacred Past to her rich shrine,
Where Saint Association shares the throne,
And wafts wing'd messengers throughout her zone,
Bright Ariels, divergent as the vine.
Where Scotia's devious Devon foams and falls,
And Beauty dwells with Fear, this stone I won :
From lovely Aberystwyth, this recalls
The ocean-glory of the dying sun :
And this I cull'd where rapid Tamar brawls
By Ensleigh, fair beyond comparison.

MY GEMS.

II.

Lo ! here be stones with threefold love imbued,
Of time, 'twas holy-day, blest pause in toil ;
Of place, mid beauty native to the soil,
With wealth of heart and poesy indued.
Sweet Innisfallen's rare beatitude
And poet's love and praise lie in this spoil,
While this stone mingled Plym's sweet music-moil
With Carrington's impassion'd interlude.
The day declines, the conflict nears the close,
Dear life-companions vanquished in the fight ;
This white stone shared my Mother's last repose,
My Father gleaned this gem in pure delight ;
Still warm through heart and hand his last gift glows,
Though now inert he lies in endless night.

March, 1913.

SEEKER AND SOUGHT.

(To our Sheffield Poet, William Dowsing.)

“SEEK not, but wait till thou art duly sought,”
Said some wiseacre, prone to empty prate ;
For how, if all should meekly, mutely wait,
Could worth find worth, or love and joy be caught ?
For there be human violets, beauty-fraught,
That to the shade their sweetness consecrate,
Till some born-seeker, Minister of Fate,
Lifts the bowed head, and breathes the fragrant thought.
O high-born joy, the rapture lingers yet,
That caught The Seeker to his latest heaven ;
Mayhap The Sought will not too soon forget
The twice blest good, his best by each friend given ;
For Nature loves both rose and violet,
Rare souls still hide, the seeker must be shriven !

May, 1913.

HEARTS OF GOLD.

I.

AMONG " My Gems " there shines one cube of spar,
And from its breast of white and sparkle, peep
Bright flecks of gold, which their high lustre keep,
And pride of place they sprang to, when, afar,
The witching light first reached me from that star.
Devonian miner broke its age-long sleep,
But Who ? of all whose kindness there sank deep,
Gave me the gem ? Base Memory, unbar !
Sometimes, as down this sunset slope I pace,
A morning friendship gleams across the void,
A meteor-lighting, minus name or face,
And oft, Elysian scenes are re-enjoyed,
And paths of haunting, fascinating grace ;
O When ? O, Where ? They will not be decoyed !

HEARTS OF GOLD.

II.

O GLINT of gold ! thy shining facets stand
For all those common, primal things that make
Life sweet and fair, things that their high worth take
From strenuous toil, from strength of heart and hand.
That being, whom, of all the noble band,
Fate chose, my cheerless single-bond to break ;
These walls of holy shade ; asleep, awake,
My one home in this mural-desert-land.
As bright and stedfast as thy golden ray,
Shines my fair friend, mine 'gainst the world anear ;
Week-worn, how sweetly comes the golden day,
One golden week pervades the varying year ;
And these life-blessings light my chequered way
As thy rare spark illumes this sonnet-sphere.

HEARTS OF GOLD.

III.

(Under the Microscope.)

Lo ! Miser—Nature's hoard within a beam !
 Beneath the magic glass it lies, aglow
 In light the bounteous sun stored eons ago
That now it may reveal this fairy dream.
I gaze adown on hills of gold, that gleam
 Like sun-reflexes through gem'd boughs below,
 While paths of glory, luring to and fro,
Were traced by shining fairy feet, I deem.
O magic loveliness of form and hue,
 The richest sunset sky fined to a span ;
Towers hid in splendour, lakes of heavenly blue,
 And lovely lights of gold and gems, I scan :
O wealth untold, and beauty ever new,
 A Croesus, I ! Alas ! the Fairy-ban.

HEARTS OF GOLD.

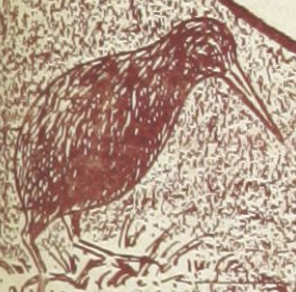
IV.

O HEART of Gold, what wondrous wealth of thought,
Imagination, with the poet's eye,
May in thy microscopic world descry,
Thou type of all things with life's essence fraught ;
The rose, which first the soul of beauty caught ;
The sun, resplendent in thy changeless sky ;
While from thy throne, the God of Gold, Most High,
His sceptre wields o'er all that may be bought.
My well-loved home, oäsis in the waste ;
Our wedded love, a sweet and precious balm ;
My other Heart of Gold, whose effluence chaste
Makes home a heaven of rest and zest and calm :
My nest of books, the wall with landscape graced,
All ! claim a strain in this thy golden psalm.

January, 1914.



THE
**Turret
Captain's
Toast**

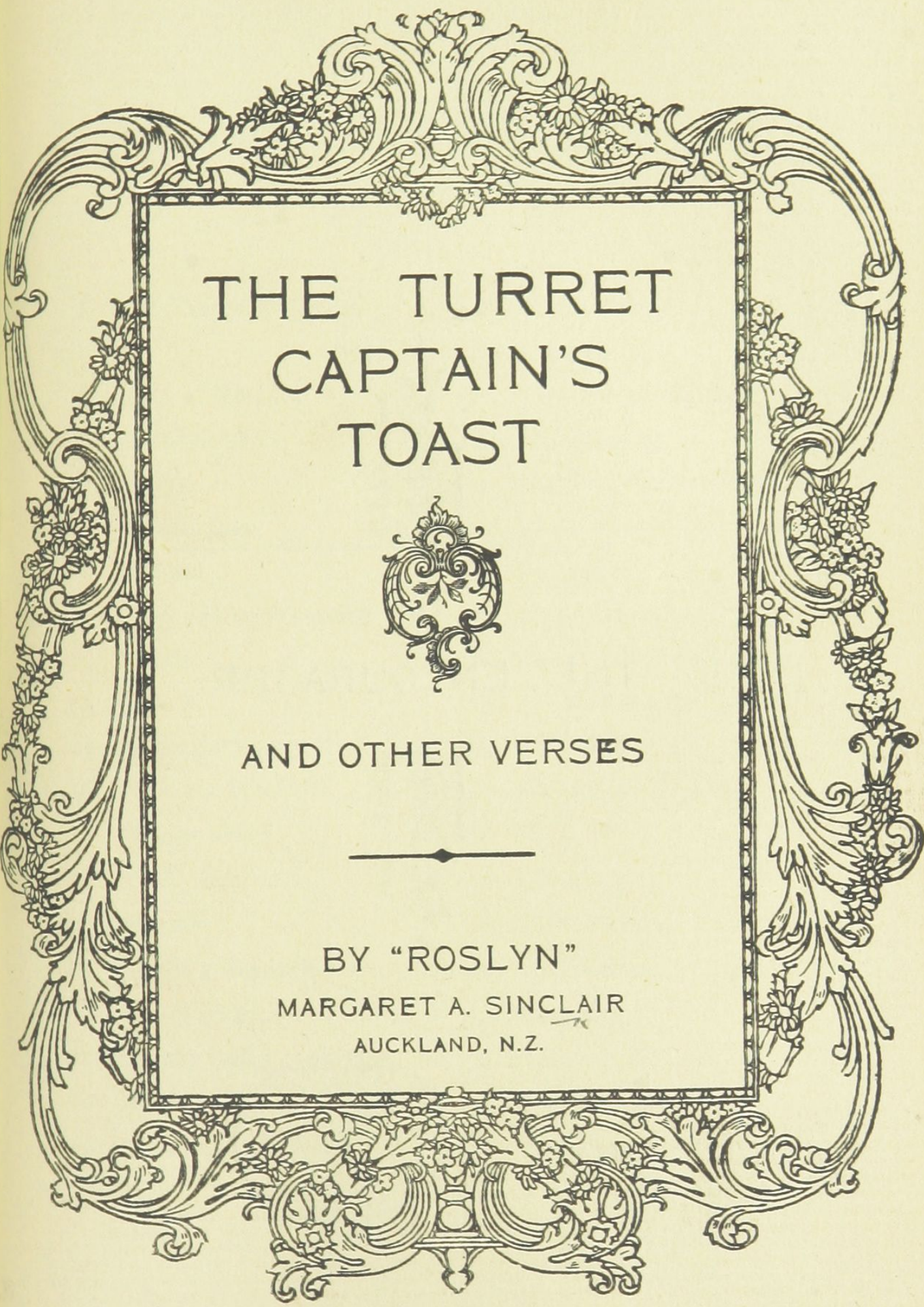


AND OTHER VERSES

—♦—
"By Roslyn"

MARGARET A. SINCLAIR
AUCKLAND, N.Z.

4

An intricate, symmetrical border of floral and scrollwork designs surrounds the central text. The border features large, stylized flowers and scrolling vines that frame the entire page.

THE TURRET
CAPTAIN'S
TOAST



AND OTHER VERSES

BY "ROSLYN"
MARGARET A. SINCLAIR
AUCKLAND, N.Z.



To
THE ENCOURAGER



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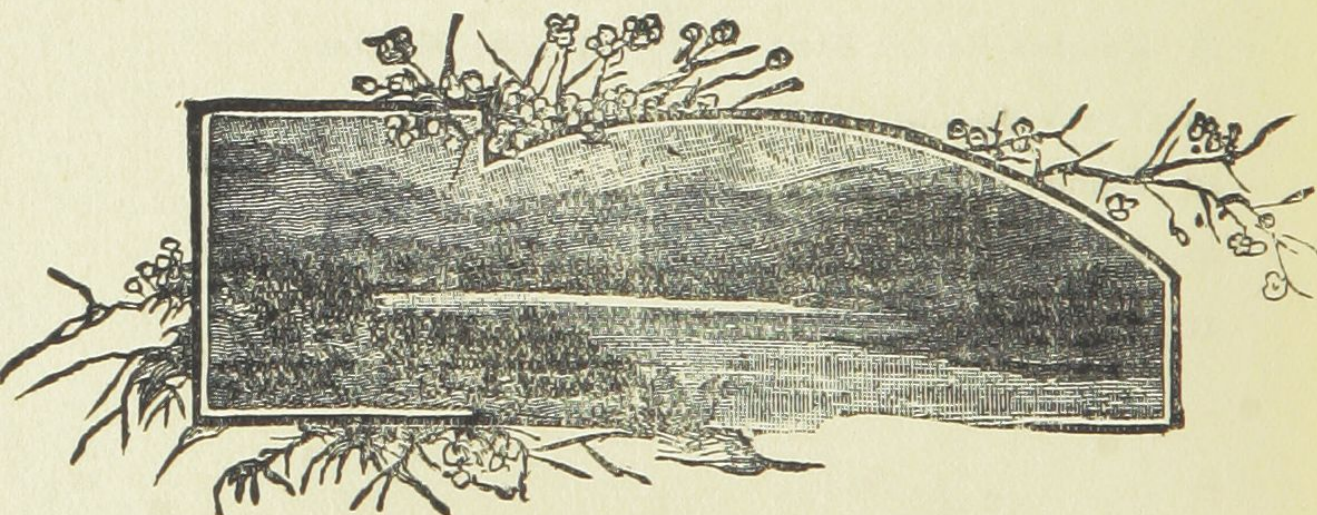
Outlook, Dunedin

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THE TURRET CAPTAIN'S TOAST.

An Incident in the Visit of the U.S. Battleships to
Auckland, N.Z., August, 1908.

The neglected moon was shining on the Waitemata's
tide,
Where the White Fleet lay at anchor by the laughing
city's side,
Where ten thousand flags were waving, where ten
thousand lamps made day;
Hearts and homes alike set open to the lads from
far away.

Some had gathered at the banquet, loyal toasts went
swiftly round;
Gaily clinked the brimming glasses, lightly rolled the
laughter sound;
They were leal and they were loving, witty men and
gallant tars,
In the shadow of Old Glory and Ao-tea-roa's stars.

Said the turret captain, rising, "I will give another
toast;
On our list you will not find it, but you'll honour it
the most,"
As he looked adown the table, with the frank eyes
of a brother,
Glass in hand he called them standing with the
tender cadence—"Mother."

In a sudden silence thrilling, with a furtive sob and
tear—
How it sensed them with the image of the distant
and the dear;
And a wave of longing swept them for the dear old
folk at home
In Kentucky, Alabama, and by Mississippi's foam.

There are mem'ries that must linger of Columbia's
gallant men,
Wider, deeper, graver, gladder, than the measure of
the pen;
But uncounted hearts will witness that the word
which knit them most
To the fortunes of the White Fleet was the Turret
Captain's toast.

SONG OF EMPIRE.

Plenty outpours her horn
On Britain's happy shores,
Of oil, and wine, and corn,
And jewels she hath stores:
No fabled realm that lit the past had richer treasure
or most vast.

Like angel bright and dread,
With foot on land and sea,
Her royal will hath sped
Her august empery.
No tyrant, but a sovereign true o'er islands green
and waters blue.

'Gainst vice she draws her sword:
Cries to oppression "Cease."
O'er rancour and discord
Extends her wand of peace.
Where ignorance outspreads its night her trumpet
peals "Let there be light."

She may not sit at ease—
The world is growing old;
Her glory is to seize
Each day and write in gold
That shall outlast the judgment fire, eternal records
of Empire.

Mother! we sing of thee—
Young as the ageless sea
That every moment bears
To thee most precious wares.
An argosy of wealth untold, for every wave is tipped
with gold.

Thy bands are round the brow
Of moons that draw each prow
In thy victorious fleet;
Or barges, brimming sweet
With balms from some far musky isle, or relics from
the hoary Nile.

From Ethiop's ebon breast
The diamonds for thy crest,
And thus thou hast the light
About thy pathway bright,
That fell from heaven in ancient days to glorify thy
modern ways.

Forests world-wide have grown:
Blossoms by millions strewn
Around thy spacious girth
That zones the tropic earth.
Built from these forests rise thy walls,
Decked with these blossoms smile thy halls.

Trophies of Tibet's goats:
Pearls from warm Ceylon's boats:
With Austral fleeces hoar
Cosmos brings to thy door.
That thy white feet may softly tread; that these may
glimmer round thy head.

The cotton patch about
With many a merry shout
The darkies singing go
With shovel and with hoe;
And o'er the fields, and o'er the foam, the fleecy
spoils to thee come home.

On far New Zealand fields
Rich ore the quartz vein yields;
Where never sun doth shine
Like trolls within the mine.
The digger's basso rings out true his loyal lay,
"Red, white, and blue."

Where resin odours rare
Breathe incense through the air
From giant firs that hedge
The giddy canyon's edge;
And up the steeps that strike the stars, adventure the
audacious cars.

The magic reapers speed
Across the yellow mead,
In pursuit of that wealth,
With its sure pledge of health.
And then away cross the main, let Britain's garnerers
fold the grain.

Thy schools bulk evermore
More precious than of yore;
Where priests and princes learn
Horizons to discern,
Reprove, rebuke, nor yet offend. Where heroes first
must fence and fend.

With careless footsteps tread
Above the mighty dead,
Thrice honoured thus to be
In such rare company.
Mother of men, all hail to thee, like these shades be
thy progeny.

The children leave their play
In their most sweet heyday,
Upon white-daisied lands,
With daisies in their hands;
And like a choir of cherubs sing their innocent "God
save the King."

Surely the most High God to thee hath lent
 A measure of His might omnipotent.
 Surely from His thou hast thy golden dower
 O'er land and sea, of glad and gracious power.
 Hath not the Almighty taught thee how to weigh
 The hills in scales—to chain the lightning's play?
 To yoke the winds as coursers to thy car,
 And trace the path of His remotest star.
 Hath He not led thine armies in their sweep
 Across the abysses of the awful deep?
 Thy cords He lengthened out to many a land:
 Thy stakes He strengthened whereso'er they stand.
 Thou hold'st the isles in royal fee for Him—
 Thrice radiant isles! so long eclipsed, and dim.
 Yea, still He keeps for thee, white as the foam,
 The holy charities of home, sweet home.
 Is He not crying daily through thy mouth
 To East and West, as to the North and South—
 "Ho! bring my sons from far, my daughters near,
 And sound the jubilee in every ear."
 Because that thou art precious in His sight,
 He mirrors in thee all this glory bright.
 O land beloved! greatly blessed art thou
 To bear the seal divine upon thy brow.
 What doth the Lord require of thee?
 To right the wrongs that thou dost see—
 To freely give, as He hath given—
 And speed the righteous reign of heaven:
 To deal thy bread unto the poor,
 And clothe the naked at thy door:
 To check the lonely widow's sigh,
 And bid the orphan's tear be dry.
 To guard the crystal waters' flow
 In wisdom's founts of long ago;
 To hedge with flowers in many a bed
 Smooth paths where infant feet may tread:
 To show the mercy God hath shown,
 Yet make thy bond with justice known:
 Until thy fame be borne abroad
 The ward of the Almighty God.
 For else—there is no oath thine Empire shall remain,
 Although to dazzling empires it may attain.
 We call to witness empires of the past—
 Mighty in all save that they did not last.
 Queen of the Seven Hills—Imperial Rome?
 A vague and beckoning ghost by Tiber's foam.
 Palmyra? Ninevah? The echoes bring
 Like Noah's messenger on wearied wing,
 Again the words that find nor hint nor trace
 Of that once known as their illustrious place.
 Oh! Britain, greatly blessed, thou owest a debt
 That must be paid before the thrones are set—
 The thrones of judgment—that tribunal dread:
 Rivers of blood for all thy rights were shed,

So that thy stones cemented fast should stand
Like living rock against the destroyer's hand.
The martyrs of the dawn are watching now
The noontide aureole about thy brow;
The cloud of witnesses beyond the marge
Will reckon with thee for thy precious charge;
Confirm their trust; perpetuate thy fame—
Defy insidious Time's devouring flame;
So shalt thou be while earth her orbit rolls,
Immortal empire of enfranchised souls.

POHUTUKAWA.

'Tis not the holly red I sing,
'Neath Albion's snowy skies;
Nor yet the rose that blushes sweet
For lustrous Persian eyes;
Nor yet the stately palm that waves
O'er Asiatic dome:
But the dear old native Christmas flower
Of my New Zealand home.

O'er-arched with blue in golden days
On many a cliff and bight,
With gnarled branches far outspread,
Bedecked with tassels bright.
I love thee well, I love thee well,
Pohutukawa tree;
From infancy a subtle spell
Thy blossom cast o'er me.

Is it because I love the sea?
The sea thou lovest so,
Oft bending o'er until the depths
Reflect thy crimson glow;
Or mad and merry little waves
Veil thee with silver spray,
Dancing in gayest elfin sport
On some fair Christmas Day?

If thou hadst bloomed on classic soil
Where Sappho stirred the soul;
Or by the lone, wild Orcades
Where Ossian's echoes roll;
Or even in the gold old land
When Royal Alfred sang,
And baron's hall and lady's bower
With merry music rang.

Thy fame had reached to other shores
And men had talked of thee,
Our own Pohutukawa,
Beside the summer sea.
For worthy art thou need of praise
As myrtle tree or lime,
As olive-tree or sandalwood
Of cloudless Orient clime.

But far amid the ocean wide,
And far adown the days,
Where shall we find the voice, the harp,
To sound abroad thy praise?
And yet right well we love to see
Thy plummy, rich array,
O tree of sunny memories,
And Southern Christmas Day.

FANCY.

Beautiful witch of the distant hills,
If to visit you man should dare,
What shall he find in your magic cave?
"All that is bright and all that is fair—
Ivory thrones, bejewelled crowns,
Mantles of ermine rare;
His mortal feet shall mount on the treads
Of the terrible crystal stair.
He shall dwell in a palace of foam-white pearl;
On a couch of sunset clouds,
He shall dream the dreams that are only given
To babes in their spotless shrouds."

"Wonderful witch of the distant hills,
What is the price to pay,
If one should visit your magic cave?"
"A red drop wrung from him day by day:
Only a drop from the beating heart,
There most, where I seem most kind,
I filch from the gloss of the locks that lie
Thick-set; from the gleam of the sparkling eye,
And the little grey cells of the mind."

"A robber! A robber, O wicked witch!"
"It recks me little, I trow."
"Nathless to that cave in the distant hills,
I am fain, most fain, to go."

BONNIE JEAN.

When the twilight hovers on land and lea,
There cometh a memory sweet to me—
A woman sits in careless grace,
With closed eyes and a passionless face,
Lost in a gloaming reverie.

“Ha! I have caught you napping, Jean!”
“Havers! Laddie! Hainin’ my een!”

When the twilight hovers on lea and land,
Once again in the dear old room I stand
To see her, aye, in the old arm chair,
The glow of the firelight upon her hair,
Lost in a tranquil reverie.

“Napping, surely, sweet sister Jean!”
“Havers! Laddie! Hainin’ my een!”

Shadow visions in the dim twilight,
Voices and faces lost to ear and sight,
Through a mellow haze from the golden shore
Of a love-lit Past, come to us once more,
Playful as this quaint reverie—

“Napping, napping, my bonnie Jean!”
“Havers! Laddie! Hainin’ my een!”

TAMAKI.

From olden days none may forget
The crown upon thy beauty set,
*Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau.

When golden suns a glittering train
To dwell upon thy charms were fain,
Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau.

Or night came up on noiseless feet,
And sighed, “She is asleep, my sweet
Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau.”

†Tawhiri turned him from the South
Won by the kisses of thy mouth,
Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau.

Great ‡Tane reared thee many a bower,
Ornate with berry, bud, and flower,
Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau.

While §Tangaroa, from afar,
Wooded thee o’er Manukau’s rough bar,
Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau.

* Tamaki, O Tamaki! Tamaki of a hundred lovers.

† God of the wind.

‡ God of the forest.

§ God of the sea.

Yea, Waitemata robbed the sky,
Of royal blue to gain thine eye,
Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau.

The Moriori's heart was thine;
Hawaiki's exile shouted "Mine
Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau."

From Rewi's lips like music fell,
As clear as Makomako's bell,
"Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau."

It stirred the pakeha's keen mind,
And now his cry rings down the wind,
"Tamaki, e Tamaki! Tamaki makau rau."

THE SONG OF THE WINDMILL.

- "Ask of me if you would know
Stories of the long ago:
I, the watcher on the hill,"
Softly sighs the old windmill.
- "I have heard the ringing cheer
From the coign of Wynyard pier,
When the good ships o'er the foam,
Made the port from home, sweet home."
- "I have heard the night winds yearn
For their hunting ground of fern,
Where they sported wild and free,
From the mountain to the sea.
I have seen the settlers' hopes,
Planted on the ti-tree slopes,
Push their sturdy British way,
Hour by hour and day by day."
- "I that heard the tui sing,
Have seen dual cities spring,
Lying now beneath me spread,
Of the living and the dead;
Words are weak to point and change,
Far and near within my range,
Countless spires and chiming bells,
House roofs over hills and dells."
- "Ye may wake, and ye may sleep,
Ye may laugh and ye may weep,
In the present work your will,
I, the watcher on the hill,
Lose these noises, for behind
Ever whispers on the wind;
Music from the echoing vast,
Where my youth lies in the past."

THE CICADA.

Hark! the elfin reveller,
So persistent thrumming—
“February! February!
Autumn days are coming.”
'Tis the fairy fiddler,
Tho' you cannot see him.
In the fir tree, or the pine—
Everywhere you hear him—
“February! February!”
Airily he's thrumming,
“Follow me and merry be,
Autumn days are coming.”

Hist, the elfin reveller,
While the heat waves quiver
On the eucalyptus green,
On the blue-grey river:
“Leave your lessons, leave your books,
Leave your “Three-four” strumming.
February! February!
Duller days are coming.”

O, the elfin reveller!
Summer's restless darling,
Shrilling, when in dim, green woods,
Hide the dove and starling.
“February! February!”
Evermore he's thrumming.
“Follow me and happy be,
Cloudy days are coming!”

With the breath of new-mown hay,
With the odour thrilling
Of the pine and gum-tree grey—
If your heart be willing—
Fast, when Winter rains afall,
Red, when glows the ember,
When the Fairy Fiddler's call,
Then shall you remember.
“February! February!”
(Thro' your brain still humming),
“Follow me and happy be,
Autumn days are coming.”

R.J.S.

Obit. June 10, 1906.

Life said: "I am Time's mightiest one,
Like its unresting, glorious sun,
My tiresome task is never done.

From this all-radiant torch of mine
Along an ever-lengthening line,
These trillion tapers trembling shine."

Death sneered: "Who is the mightier, pray?
You, kindler through the night and day,
The World unheeding spins away.

When, with my chilling, icy breath,
I quench this light, at pause It saith
with anguish in the world, "'Tis Death!"

You lit the flame that I put out,
Yet at your deed was raised no shout:
That I am mightier who will doubt!"

THE ETRUSCAN LAMP.

Strange that my sentient hand should hold
This little lamp of antique mould,
For centuries have rolled away
Since it was patterned in the clay,
With many a sparkling, kindred glance,
A lover fashioned it, perchance,
That, filled with oil, its tiny spark
Might cheer his lady in the dark;
In fervid dreams he'd press his suit
While limning out this shapely foot,
And on the toe for amulet
His signet ring with kisses set.
O, little lamp, if speech were thine
To-day would house thee in a shrine,
The palmer-world with smiles and tears
Would seek thee for thy tale of years;
How, fair as heaven, or black as hell,
Race after race from empire fell:

Until the palmer-world would cry.
 "And how didst thou stern Fate defy,
 Insensate, hand-made, freakish toy,
 What magic art didst thou employ,
 That from the maelstrom of the Past
 Like Schiller's goblet thou art cast?
 While centuries of perfect flowers,
 And centuries of dancing hours
 With treasures past the finite mind
 Are all as wingbeats on the wind?
 Art thou the work of demi-god
 That once the slopes of Ida trod,
 Yet burned for some Etruscan maid,
 Beneath the oleander's shade,
 And with a more than mortal skill
 Compelled dead matter to his will,
 So working that his craft should be
 Still conqueror of each Century?"
 O, little lamp, a riddle thou
 As Sphinx with wide unruffled brow,
 Rare trophy from the classic lands,
 Trimmed, and re-trimmed by hundred hands;
 One day in sport a laughing boy
 His sensuous mother's pride and joy,
 With cruel pointed instrument,
 Made in this tiny sole a dent,
 Yet deftly mended, and once more
 Its little light shone as of yore,
 When all the fireflies lit the grove
 For nightingales that sang of love.
 A world has lived, a world has died
 Since to the copersmith they hied;
 Mountains have risen, islands fled,
 And rivers left their ancient bed,
 Man like a god walks on the sea
 And all but death before him flee;
 But then the sweet years slipped away
 In wine and roses by the bay,
 And dolce, dolce, was the strain
 O'er myrtle mountain, viney plain;
 The hill of Venus wreathed in flowers
 For loves that kept no count of hours,
 Till Fate transformed like crack of doom
 Each bower and hovel to a tomb,
 For peerless beauty, burning gave,
 For music, stillness of the grave;
 For viol, and the harp were gone,
 Unmated Ruin slept alone,
 While centuries Transformed the earth,
 And all was changed save death and birth;
 Till late thy resurrection came
 Survivor of decay and flame;
 In vain they cried, "New lamps for old,"
 Tho' in their hands were Afric's gold.

A WEXFORD WOMAN.

Her garden's on the hillside,
That greets the warm, north breeze—
A garden bright and golden,
All innocent of trees.
Its violet and primrose
Will waft her thoughts away
To the glens of happy childhood
'Neath Wexford skies of grey.

Its marigolds are homely
Beneath the sheugh o' May;
But, sure, 'tis a far, far countree
Where blooms that kowhai gay.
Let white clouds veil the wide sky,
Or sunshine flood it free,
Her heart is fain for the sough of winds
With the tang of the Irish Sea.

THE WINTER BRIDE.

Like some great queen whose whim is law,
Who hath for cost no care,
Nature decrees the Almond trees
In August white shall wear.

When skies are grey, and winds are keen,
And gulls scream o'er the bight,
Then rath and clear as gossamer,
She veils her virgin white.

Late from the east bold Phœbus comes
A suitor scorning nay,
In royal pride to claim the bride
Of Winter's dazzled day.

I WILL RESTORE.

Here's a hint of buds and leaves,
Here's a glint of golden sheaves,
Here's a ghost of throstle song,
Echoes of a light-foot throng—
Hush the sobs and dry the tears—
"I will restore to you the years
That the locust hath eaten."

On the verge of an abyss,
Shorn of love and lorn of kiss,
Has His army left you so?
Taken joy and given woe?
Hush the sobs and dry the tears—
"I will restore to you the years
That the locust hath eaten."

"Is it near, or is it far?
Here, or in some nameless star?"
Faint not, since the word is sure;
Hold it fast by faith endure;
Hush the sobs and dry the tears—
"I will restore to you the years
That the locust hath eaten."

WINTER.

O visitor austere,
Brief be thy heavy stay,
My heart goes out to one more dear—
Queen of the longest day.

Give me her wealth of flowers,
Not this scant miser dole;
The filtered light of leafy bowers
For the ready-glowing coal.

The mystic dome of blue,
For low, pent, needy roof,
And foam-flecked feet of shy curlew,
For the horse with its iron hoof.

Thy breath congeals the blood,
Hers, odorous as old wine,
Sets all the tide of life at flood,
And wakens dreams divine.

Would that thy parting hour
Had chimed, unwelcome guest,
Would that the watcher on the tower,
Proclaimed thee passing west.

RUSSIA'S EASTER SONG.

Dare, dare they ring the famous bells,
And rock mine ancient towers
With joyous echoing clang that tells
Of Easter hours.

Above the squares whence never art
Shall wipe the blood away—
The mother of the piercé heart
Am I to-day.

Light all the tapers of the world;
And let the skies be dun
With wreathing incense-smoke up-curved,
That blots the sun.

Yea, crowd the shrine, and raise the chant
Before the eikon high;
Shout "Christ is risen!"—far too scant
Of breath am I.

The mother of the pierced hearth;—
No joy mine eyes can see,
Since evermore these tears that smart
Are blinding me.

My sons lie slain upon the field,
And slain within the square,
Their cowering widows have no shield,
Their babes no share.

And some are pining 'mid the snow,
Shut in a dreary prison—
How should they shout, how can they know
That Christ is risen?

Not colder is the Neva's tide
'Neath winter's icy breath—
Not crueller the snows that hide
The sleep of death,

Than smug hypocrisies that creep
Beneath this Christian garb—
Since Christ is risen—now soul deep
God strike this barb!

The bells may ring, the incense reek;
The candles mock the stars;
This Nazarene, thorn-crowned and meek,
With fadeless scars,

Has risen as a conquering king;
A Judge of equity;
His judgment tarries, yet shall bring
A just decree.

The mother of the piercé heart,
Aloof from this loud throng,
My cry goes up—a cry apart—
"Lord! Lord! how long?"

THE VOYAGEUR.

In a golden boat down a silver stream,
On a couch of blood-red roses,
While Phœbus urges his fiery team,
The little blind god reposes.

For a year and a day they float away
On the dearest, clearest river
Of youth and joy; and the little blind boy
Still draws on the magic quiver.

For pass they castle or pass they town,
Grim fort, or the prim bleached alley,
The briny port or the thymy down,
Or echoing mountain valley—

By the doves of Venus! all's the same—
A mark for the urchin's cunning.
He boasts of a license for any game,
A sportsman there is no shunning.

It's never too early, and never too late,
It's never protected season
For the stile, the bower, or the garden gate,
'Tis a fact for rhyme, not reason.

For ever and aye the mischievous boy,
A despot of despots haughty,
By a random shaft, or a shot full coy,
Gives proof of his prowess naughty.

Let me whisper low, let me whisper soft,
My blue-eyed, cherry-lipped maiden!
Beware of the beautiful golden boat
With the blood-red roses laden.

Beware, fond youth, of the tender doves;
Avert thine ears from their cooing;
Like mother, like son; and the Queen of Loves
Will glory in thine undoing.

But the men laugh loud, and the maids laugh long,
Right gaily, con amore;
For the boat is nigh, and the arrows fly!
And this is the old, old story.

THE CANARY SONG.

Sweet! Sweet! Sweet! the caged bird must be
merry,—

Singing, ever singing, behind the gilded bars,
Sweet! Sweet! Sweet! for groundsel or a cherry;
Swallows have fair meadows, nightingales have
stars.

All the glad birds winging through the gladsome out-
world

Sing in summer madness carols of the free:—
In a garret window, or a golden chamber,
Listen to our music—captive melody.

Sweet! Sweet! Sweet! we pour our daily praises
In the early glory, and gladness of the sun,
Round the empty lark-nest—wide-eyed bend the
daisies;

While the godwit's seaflight tells the summer done.
All the glad birds winging thro' the sunny outworld,
Sing for very joyance carols of the free:—
In a dusty garret, or a golden chamber,
Listen to our music—captive melody.

Sweet! Sweet! Sweet! we fill the house with singing;
All the flowers are chiming their elfin bells for glee;
In the Blesséd Islands, humming birds are swing-
ing,

Rocked by dancing zephyrs on some happy tree.
All the glad birds winging thro' the fairy outworld,
Sing for summer madness carols of the free:—
In a dusty garret, caged in golden chamber,
We are trilling, trilling—captive melody.

HALCYON DAYS.

We have our halcyon days,
When all the sky is blue;
Nor gleam of gold nor ruby blaze,
Brings them to me, to you.

Is it a word, a look,
The tracing of a pen?
The spirit tryst some well-loved book
Hath brought within our ken?

Is it the clasp of hands,
Or Passion's yearning kiss?
(Love's patent in a hundred lands—
One of the hundred—this).

There is no need to say,
In house, or street, or mart;
But eye, or voice, or step betray
The secret of the heart.

THE DRYAD SONG.

The tall trees wave and beckon;
"Come hither from the heat,
For we have lulling pleasant tales
Of dim ravines, and daisied dales,
That we would fain repeat.

"The wandering winds have taught us--
They could not wait for you;
We could not stay them in their flight
Through golden day and silver night,
Of stars, and dreams, and dew."

"The wandering winds have left us
A mystic, magic spell
To fill your ears with murmurs sweet,
That ripple through the ripening wheat,
And die adown the dell.

"Or waken thrilling echoes,
In floods of melody,
That wound the heart, and make it whole,
In paeon, sigh, or thunder roll;
The music of the sea.

The waving tall trees beckon;
"Come, you shall dream a dream
Of regions ravished by the sun,
With phantom streams that never run,
From nymphs within the stream.

"Come hither! O, come hither;
Right royal dreams we lend.
Such happy dreams of what might be,
For we will set fond fancy free,
As over you we bend.

O SILVER LYRE!

Waken, O silver lyre!
Waken the heart to thrill;
Waiteth for thee the restless sea,
And the star above the hill.

Waken, O silver lyre!
So far thy strains shall roll;
The laurel leaf's meed, is thine indeed
And the charm of Circe's bowl.

Waken, O silver lyre!
Pause not, since life is brief;
With thrilling perfume, bid roses bloom
In a rioting past belief.

Waken, O silver lyre!
Let discord die away
In a wordless calm, and spirit balm,
And dreams like the dawn o' day.

Waken, O silver lyre!
The star above the hill
Waiteth for thee; the restless sea,
And the heart that thou canst thrill.

THE JEW.

Hark! at the midnight hour,
For a spectral host sweeps by,
While the moan of a nation's wounded heart
Is borne to the listening sky.

With never a ringing hoof,
And never a throb of drum,
And never that cry from a coign, or roof,
Of the crowd's acclaim—"They come!"

When the world is wrapped in sleep
The myriad host goes by,
In the length of its long milleniums
Unseen by a mortal eye.

But the winds have caught their wail,
And the clouds that hide the stars
Have wept for the famine, the plague, and sword,
And the crucifixion scars.

From the solemn cedar's shade
Above the Jordan's tide:
From the blinding waste of the frozen steppe;
From Grenada's summer pride:—

To the army ranks they come,
And their uniform is Pain;
Forever the cry, "O Lord, how long?"
Goes up from the martyred train.

With a golden past behind—
And a dazzling hope before,
The Maccabean is marching on
To the desert's farther shore.

ONE SWEET MORNING.

The hand was tasked in the early hours,
When the dew pearls lay on the summer flowers;
But the wandering thoughts were far away
In the dim, green dales where we used to stray,
 When, white as milk,
 And soft as silk,
And sweet as a kiss without warning,
 My heart was thrilled,
 My hands were filled,
With roses one sweet morning.

My heart had been far in the good green glades,
Where never a mossbell at noontide fades;
That exquisite bower where the ocean bride
Lies veiled by her tresses in zoneless pride:
 Perhaps she sent
 For my content,
My fealty never scorning,
 By this small page,
 Her royal gage,
These roses that sweet morning.

With never a hat on the thick-set crown,
With never a shoe on the feet so brown,
A lisp on the lip, but the eyes gave true
"Amen," as he held out the sprays, "For you."
 Oh, white as milk,
 And soft as silk,
And sweet as a kiss without warning;
 My heart was thrilled,
 My hands were filled
With roses one sweet morning.

THE WOOING.

A lover's words are on the wind,
None fonder this side heaven.
A path more green you shall not find;
A may more fair, a fate more blind;
Two hearts more sadly riven.

Green go the ways by which he came,
Heart-whole, from merry hawking;
High rose the tower, his hawk flew tame
To perch upon her window frame,
Drawn by her bower-maid's talking.

Up to that bower the bravest hied
(The hawk hath snared his master!)
A matchless maiden deftly drew
The broidery threads her canvas thro'
'Mid maids who chattered faster.

He brought the errant hawk away;
But left his heart unwitting—
And moody went adown the day
Distraught, till Alswid dared to say,
Half friendly and half twitting:

“O Sigurd! Why so bare of bliss,
Thy friends by sadness grieving;
Wot well thy gleesome ways we miss,
Lo! Grani droops; thy hawks, I wis,
No morning clouds are cleaving.”

“But yester-eve, far up the tower,
My hawk went boldly flying;
I climbed the stair, and found a bower,
Where sat of womankind the flower,
Her broidery needle plying.”

“She wrought the deeds that I have done
In colours of the morning:
With victories that are not won,
So that my heart to her did run,
All other service scorning.

“She’ll give back love for mine—my gold
Ring twixt us shall be token.”
Cried Alswid, “Be not over bold,
O fair the shied may, fair, and cold,
And deaf to love words spoken.

“Ay! will she bid thee to her side,
Or fill for thee the beaker?
Or, laying low her unbent pride,
Yield thee the charms her tresses hide,
As maid less fair and meeker?”

“We do not know,” the bravest said,
“If she will grant us hearing.”
And yet next morn, by Alswid led,
The stairway knew a lover’s tread—
A lover hoping, fearing.

Outside the bower young Alswid stayed,
While shaft and bow he fingered.
But Sigurd durst approach the maid,
Whose glance was like an accolade
As on the man it lingered.

He greeted her, she greeted him:
He sat by her securely.
Then golden beakers all abrim
With wine that made the fine gold dim
Four damsels brought demurely.

"O be thou welcome here," said she,
Like maid less fair and meeker,
Then laying by her majesty
She rose, and served him fair and free:
He took both hand and beaker.

(A lover's words are on the wind.)
Quoth he: "Thou art the fairest
Of woman born;" in fond arms twined,
And kissed Brynhild, for love designed
A may of may's the rarest.

THE RED HORSE RIDES.

Over the snowy plains,
Over the frozen tides,
Printing his hoof-marks in gory stains,
Lo! the red horse rides.

The frightened dove has flown:
Her spotless plumes she hides
Afar, afar from the stricken land
Where the red horse rides.

The heaven that cannot flee,
In thunder his going chides;
'Neath the demon spur of grim anarchy
Still the red horse rides.

He tramples earth's fairest flowers
And its lily bloom derides;
The wayside fountains are turned to blood
Where the red horse rides.

Peace from the land he takes;
And the life of love besides;
A great sword gleams, and a woman screams
Where the red horse rides.

Onward he plunges, on
Tho' his hoof, red-dripping grides
On a virgin breast, or an infant's nest—
Still the red horse rides.

Bursting with brutal force
Where the crownèd head presides,
The kings of a day grow pale and wan
When the red horse rides.

And ever a spectral steed,
With a shadowy horseman, glides
In the desolate track of run and wrack
Where the red horse rides.

I FAIN WOULD SING.

I fain would sing
Of Flora and her rainbow treasures;
Of Flora, from whose rosy finger-tips
The tinted daisies drop;

Since she hath sent
To me such token of her tenderness,
That fragrant memories link the summer days
Of her right royal gifts.

So royally
The queen her gracious favours hath bestowed,
That wonder wakes if she hath not despoiled
The beauteous sevenfold bow:

Such royal gifts,
That only high-born phrases should convey
The image of their passing loveliness—
As queens ride forth in state.

If I should say
Of her sweet roses I have lost all count—
And her carnations, piercing sweet, might serve
The day-god for a couch:

What of the rest?
The million, million priceless hearts of gold?
The million, million threads of heaven's blue?
The foam of Eden tides?

Uncancelled debt:
I have no fitting words. These should be sweet
As breath of morn, and light as moonbeams' fall
Upon the fountain's spray.

Find me a scribe
Who boasts a quill once darwn from Venus' doves,
Thrice dipt in starbeams filtered rose leaves thro'
And he shall write the song.

COMRADES.

Was it when dewes were wet?
When summer suns were set?
When stars' sky-spaces fret,
That first we met?

You know that we have stood
In dryad-haunted wood,
Each with the other's mood
And found it good.

You know that we have heard
The charmèd silence stirred
By zephyr and by bird,
Yet not a word.

Alike the starry bower,
The hillsides' ambient dower,
The ferns beneath the shower,
The kauri tower.

We marked sunbeams that fell—
Like arrows in the dell,
And shared the sylvan spell
Speech may not tell.

Till now, the flower and tree
In loyal wizardry,
Set thought-waves rolling free
'Twixt you and me.

THE CHATELAINE.

I have built one, so have you;
Paved with marble, domed with blue,
Battlement and ladies' bower,
Donjon keep and watchman's tower.
I have climbed as you have done,
To the tower at set of sun—
Crying from its parlous height,
"Watchman, tell us of the night."

I have stolen at midnight bell,
Like you, to the secret cell,
Shuddering at its charnel breath—
Left lockfast the spectre, Death.
I have used your lure to call
Choice quests to my golden hall:
Rarely welcome, rarely free
To my hospitality.

In a glow of rosy light
Hours, like minutes, take their flight—
As from you they fled away,
When, like you, I bade them stay:
Ah, the pretty flow of wit,
And the good hearts under it;
While the wheels of life go round
With a most melodious sound.

Not a vestige anywhere
Of our grim familiar, Care—
Roses, from the trees of yore
Blooming by the rivers four.
Not a jar, and not a fret;
Ecstasy and longing met.
But why should I thus define—
Is not your chateau like mine?

Scarcely were it strange to meet
In that magic realm so sweet.
So! I'll take this dreamland train
Bound for my chateau in Spain.

THE OLD TOWN'S CALLING.

The old town's calling, calling,
The old town by the sea,
Where of yore I lightly sped,
By caprice or duty led,
Over rough, uneven ways,
In the dear old days.

The old town's calling, calling,
The hills I loved to see,
With their changeful woodland screen,
Now a grey, and then a green,
As it used to greet my gaze
In the dear old days.

The old town's calling, calling,
For I never can forget
All the springtime pink and white,
In its gardens of delight,
Like a fairy dream-lit haze,
In the dear old days.

The old town's calling, calling,
By many a memory
Of the glen and grove, and hill,
Of the river and the mill,
All her lure, this magic phrase,
In the dear old days.

THERE WAS A CRY.

From the sounding bass of a prophet's tone—
A treble of grief is leaping;
Mangled, her dying children moan—
'Tis the voice of Rachel weeping.

Under the stars in the listening night
An old-world voice is crying.
Weird echoes still replying
From caves in Carmel's mountains.
"O! that mine eyes were fountains
That I might weep for those that sleep
Out cast about the city:
The Bear has torn the folk forlorn,
And there is none to pity.
The snow, once white, is foul to tread,
Dyed with a life-tide gory;
The sun is dark, the moon blood-red,
And 'Ichabod' our story."

From the moving bass of a prophet's tone
A note of woe is leaping,
Old griefs to bitter mourning grown—
'Tis the voice of Rachel weeping.

Under the stars in the listening night
An old-world voice is crying,
The Syrian oaks are sighing,
The grass of Ramah shivers:
"Oh! that mine eyes were rivers
That I might weep while others sleep,
When dawn gilds spire and steeple—
Weep for the slain on the Russian Plain,
The daughters of my people."

From the deepening bass of a prophet's tone
As a sword from the scabbard leaping—
A cry, of cries most poignant known,
'Tis the voice of Rachel weeping.

THE GOLDEN KEYS.

Once on a time there lived a Queen,
In palace fair lived she;
But none might come within its walls
Who lacked a golden key.

Bright from her glittering girdle hung,
Against her robe of green,
The priceless keys so often sung,
And very seldom seen.

At times to fingers soft and fine,
She'd trust the key of gold;
At times to hands that bore the stains
Of toil in sevenfold.

It was her royal choice and will
To make her palace free,
Out of earth's millions, to the hand
That held the golden key.

And some she bound about her throne,
As courtiers smiling stood;
While some with wistful gaze beheld
Her hourly changing mood.

Now, ever as these chosen ones
To praise her would accord,
They sang of Nature, and she called
Them poets for reward.

SEPTEMBER FASHIONS.

"Come see my frocks! come see my gowns!"
said La Belle Spring. "In all the towns
You will not find a sweeter thing
In reseda—just see the cling!
Perhaps you'd choose this eau de nil, or willow
wan?"

Beside the whitest-plumaged swan
I would not fear in this to launch—
My cherry plum would keep its blanch
(Why, there's the blackbirds, what a batch!)
But see, my suits you cannot match;
For shade and fit they still defy,
Tho' all the barrack towns you try.
(Hark, there's the lark, he haunts me still.)
I think my wattle has a thrill
Of gladness in it. (In your ear—
Sol is an old admirer, dear;
I have two lovers, and I find
I cannot quite make up my mind,
And so I keep them both, you see,
I cannot bear monotony!)
Sol worships me in pink and white—

Alas, next day his peace I blight—
Boreas loves me as his queen,
And exquisite am I in green!
With grace and skill he acts the page,
Would try the lists and fling the gage
If so I willed. My train he'll bear.
And coyly lifts my tressed hair,
Then whispers me that wise ones say
For grace the palm is mine alway.
My sisters three are queens, but I
Am first and fairest—so he'll sigh.
But see my gowns? Which do you think
Becomes me best—white, green, or pink?

“ M.L.”

Two of the letters twenty-six,
That all day long, like juggler's balls,
Flash up and down, and intermix,
In these enchanted cosmic halls.
This pretty pair I toss aloft,
And follow with admiring eyes—
Lo! under clouded skies and soft,
Three lonely ocean islands rise.
Most cold, and pure the glistening snows
That shroud Aorangi's regal height,
As golden glad the sunbeam glows
In calm Waikare's mirror bright.
Full many a cliff above the blue
Hath decked itself in crimson bloom,
Where noontide sips the morning dew,
Clematis stars the deeps illumine,
About a thousand fairy forms,
All clad in green, like Sherwood men,
Despite the centenary storm,
Where kauri guards still hold the glen.
'Tis hush of eve when one espies
The Kotuku, that lone outpost;
From raupo swamps the kiwi cries;
The geyser rises like a ghost.
So! thus I toss the pretty pair,
Like juggler's balls; 'tis wizardry—
And in their stead see visions rare
Of lake and plateau, dell and lea.
See silver stream and emerald vales,
Wide rolling plains and sulphur cones,
Young teeming towns and pastoral dales,
Deep flashing fiords and forest zones.

LISTENING.

I had listened for a song,
Nor in vain:
From his green nest in the park
Skyward rose an unseen lark,
Sweet the strain.

I had listened for a song—
And the roll
Of the ocean's Titan march
Underneath the starry arch,
Stirred my soul.

I had listened for a song
On the bridge.
But the pines, in contrite mood,
Moaned in sighing sisterhood
On the ridge.

Still, I listen for a song—
But I fear:
There's a din about the door—
There's a rough wind on the moor—
Can I hear?

WILD THYME.

Shall I ever, shall I never
At the sunset chime,
Know the bliss revealed
By that seaside field,
Of the rich, wild thyme?

Shall I ever, shall I never
Take that purple way,
Where the foot oft prest
On the lark's hid nest,
At the shut of day?

Shall I ever, shall I never
See the shadows change,
'Neath the sun's red car,
Or the one lone star,
Over Western range?

Shall I ever, shall I never
Never more behold
All the gulf deep-dyed,
All the mystic tide,
Rolling rose and gold?

Shall I ever, shall I never
Find her stair, and climb
High as Phantasy?
Once it rose for me
From the sweet wild thyme.

THE WAIHOU.

Peacefully, tranquilly, on to the sea—
Flow, river, flow;
Music, thy soft dreamy murmur shall be—
Flow, river, flow.
Once on thy green banks I stood not alone;
Once here I listened to friendship's sweet tone;
Pleasure and sorrow since then I have known—
Flow, river, flow.

Time, like thy current, rolls ceaselessly on—
Flow, river, flow;
Mournful or happy, the days soon are gone—
Flow, river, flow.
Sometimes how radiant is life's azure sky,
Sometimes across it how sullen clouds fly!
Onward, like thee, through all change we must hie—
Flow, river, flow.

On to thy rest in the ocean of blue—
Flow, river, flow;
Gliding so swiftly away beyond view—
Flow, river, flow.
Will every riple keep sparkling and bright,
Glancing and flashing in golden sunlight?
Nay, for soon cometh the shadowing night—
Flow, river, flow.

SUMMER.

Golden time, with its scent of hay,
And winds that wake the clover;
Pale blue sky with its fringe of grey
Haze o' pearl on the far-away,
Sunshine all things over.

Sunlight flashing on mountain stream,
Gilding the noisome alley,
Shining where river-lilies dream,
Where weary city toilers teem,
And o'er the lone Bush valley.

Under the weeping willow's shade,
Frolic the children merry;
Daringly down the brooklet wade,
Gather the flower, then leave it to fade,
To grasp the brighter berry.

Faint from the farm beyond the sea
The chanticleer's shrill crowing;
In waving grasses to the knee,
Beside the creek, the cattle see;
Hark to the lazy lowing!

List! from the upland tinkling bells,
Now loud, and then more faintly;
Moon-daisies smile on fair, free fells;
Ferns gravely bow in lowly dells,
Where stony brooks sing quaintly.

In broad veranda's cool retreat,
The air fragrance laden,
Where trailing vine and woodbine sweet
Hide cosy nook for lovers meet,
Dream youth and winsome maiden.

Oh, golden time! Sweet-scented hay
And wind that stirs the clover;
The pale blue sky just tinted grey,
The pearly haze far, far away,
And sunshine all things over!

Horizon hills all purple dark,
The nearer Bush still dewy;
The watchful collie's well-known bark,
His struggling flock alert to mark,
A brief note from the Tui.

Adown the dusty road the wain
With groaning wheels toils slowly;
For poor must work, for needful gain,
Though rich may at their ease remain,
And scorn the toiler lowly.

Yet dear to all this Golden time,
The scent of hay and clover,
The church bells and the wedding chime,
The landward breath of ocean rime,
The sunshine all things over.

BURIED AT SEA.

Lover of ocean waves,
In ocean's coral caves,
Sleep thy last sleep.
Far in these stormless bowers,
Whilst through life's changeful hours,
'Midst earth's fast-fading flowers,
We smile and weep,
Sleep, lady, sleep.

Swiftly the good ships go,
Winged by the winds that blow
From east to west;
But thou wilt hear no more
Surges that speak the shore,
Thrilling in days of yore,
Thy gentle breast;
Rest, lady, rest.

Spirit attuned to bliss,
As gem to sunbeam's kiss,
Light as sea-foam;
Freed now from mortal mould,
Raptured, heaven's scenes behold.
Pure, bright as pearl and gold;
Thou hast reached home,
No more to roam.

THE RIVER OF TEARS.

The fathomless river's at flood to-day,
Nor ever its course can leave,
Since its briny fountains in paradise
O'erbrimmed from the eyes of Eve.

It steals through the sands of the burning East,
Round rocks of the West so grey—
Alike through the ice of the North and South,
Free, fetterless, floweth alway.

The river is up to its banks, I trow,
The sword to the hilt is red,
And Rizpah is keeping her vigil lone
In Ethiop o'er her dead.

O, terrible tide, with a fall as deep
As the gulf of mortal woe;
In the land of Sinim the martyrs sleep,
And thy waters are at flow.

But a day is coming, most mournful stream,
When thy channels shall run dry;
In the triumph of love, the tears of grief
Shall be wiped from every eye.

Thou drearist river—thy doom is sped,
Strong buttress of storm-pressed years,
For the God of love from his people's eyes
Shall wipe away all the tears.

TE RAUPO.

Down in a valley,
Hemmed in by mountains,
Ripples a river
Vivid and verdant.
Foot may not ford it,
Craft may not stem it;
Which way the wind blows,
So sets its current.

Home of the old witch,
Fain she would lure thee
Down to destruction,
Whispering softly:
"Come, tread my raupo,
Safe it will bear thee
Over the morass."
Deaf to her charming,
Deaf to her wooing,
Pauses the wise man;
Aye, tho' each raupo
Bends in obeisance
Whispering "Try us."

Down in the valley,
Hemmed in by mountains,
Vivid and verdant,
Over the morass.
Bends the East wind,
Bows to the West wind,
Wooing the stranger
To his undoing,
Raupo kakino.

