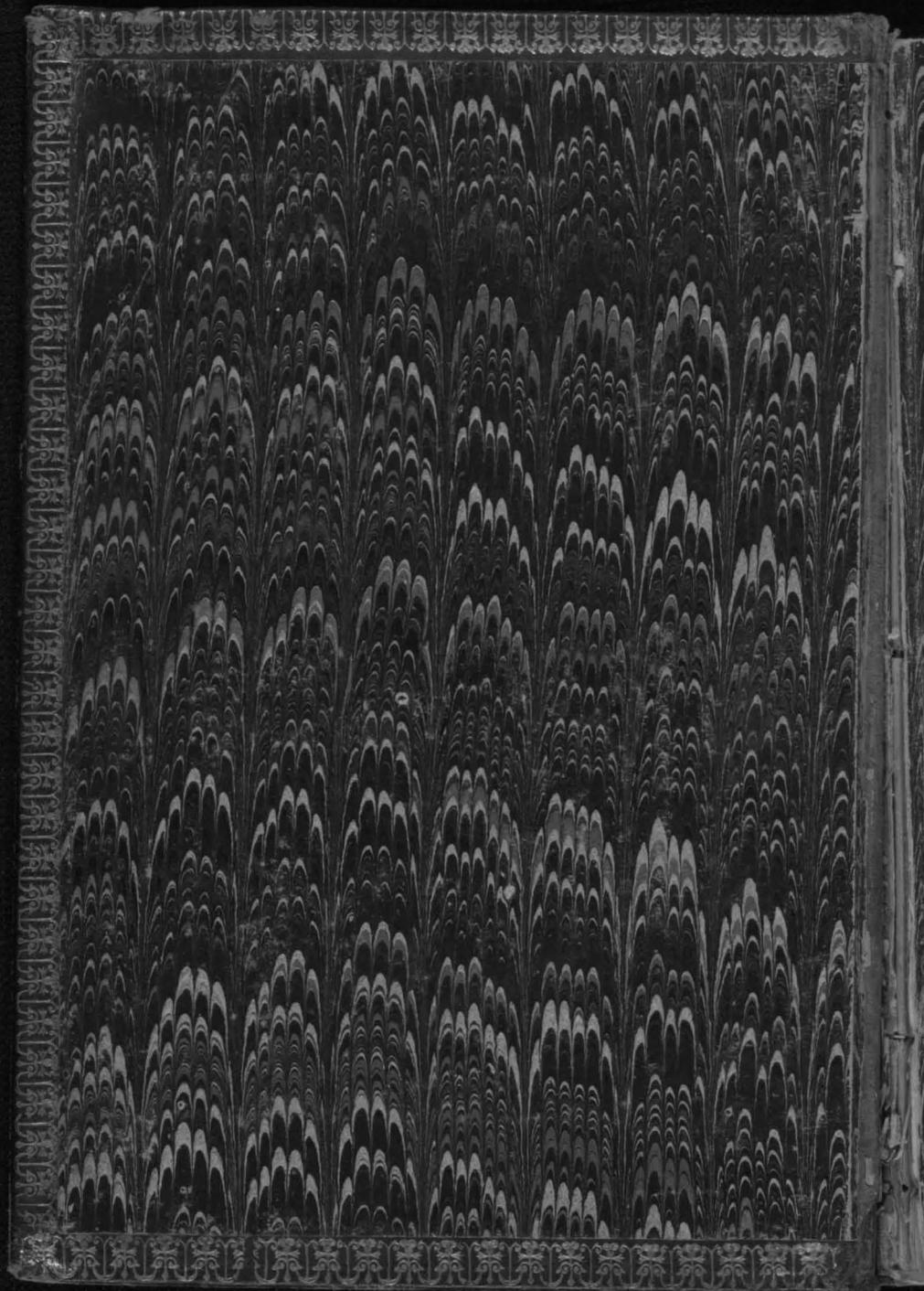
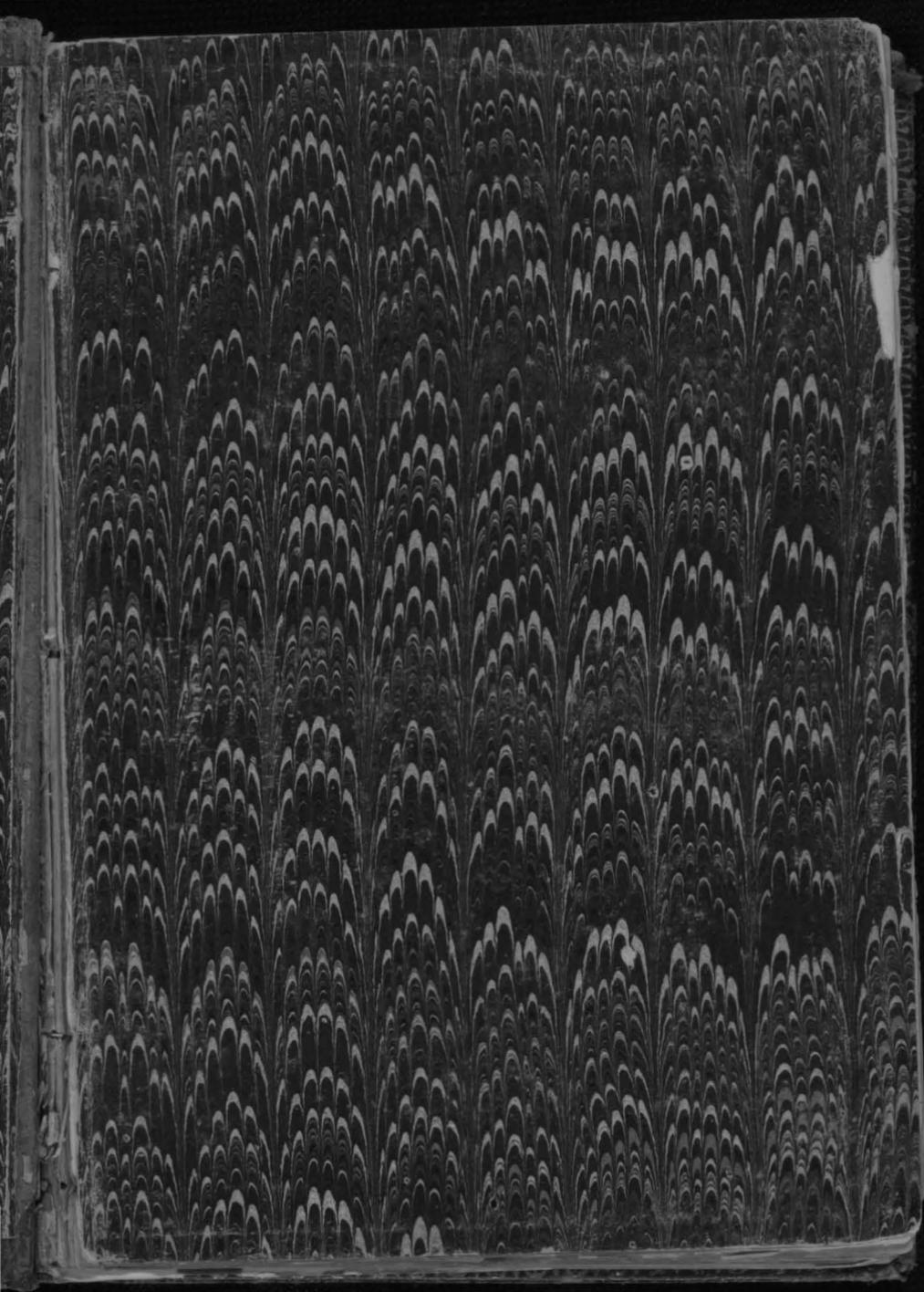


M. LILIAN WRIGHT.







See Bap. Quarterly Review, Jan. 1889.

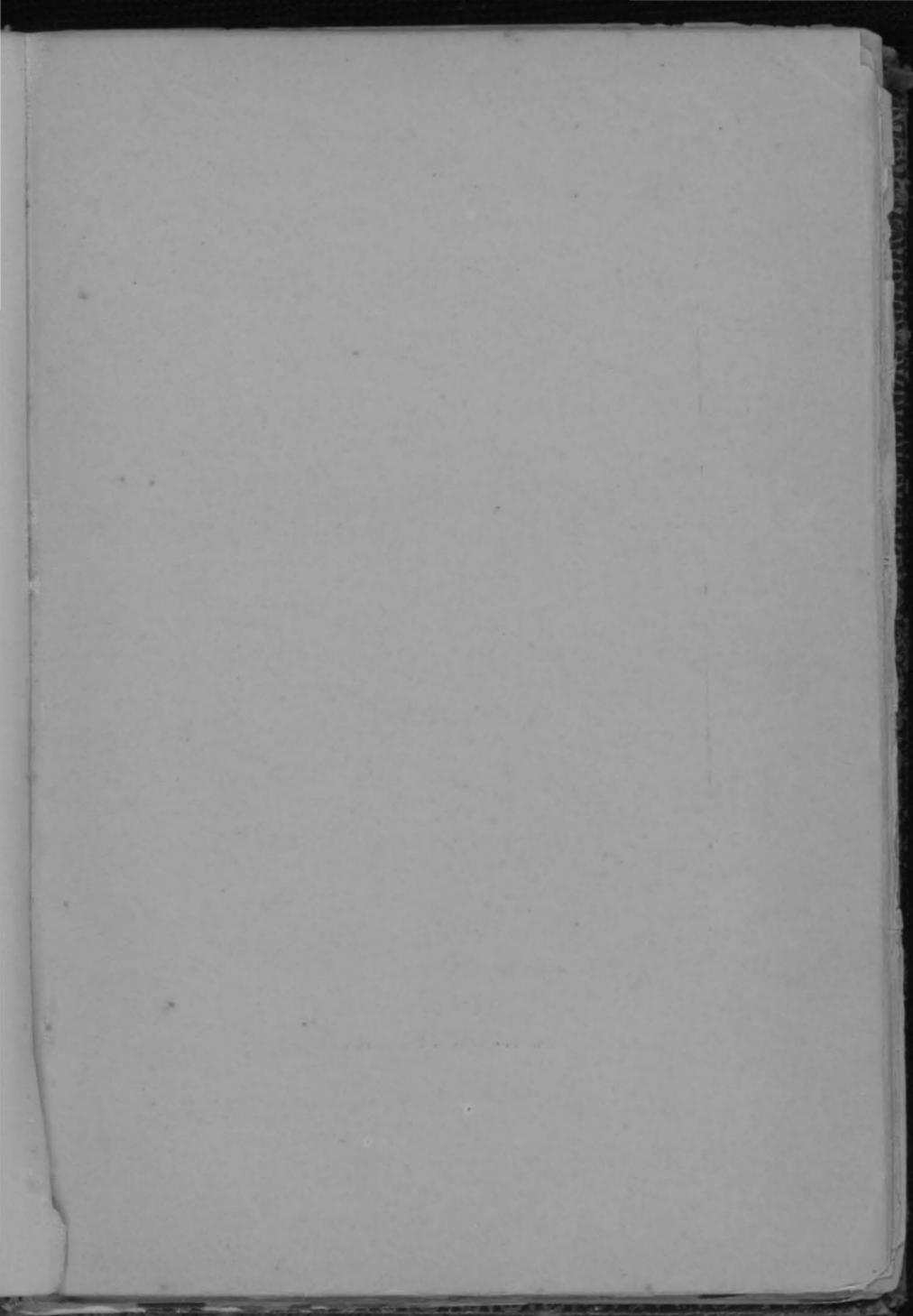
From

Leanne —

---

Souvenir of  
Christmas, 1879.

Journal of  
William  
B. Brewster  
1877





ALDWORTH.  
MR. TENNYSON'S RESIDENCE.

THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

WALTER DE GRAYSON

BY

ILLUSTRATED BY

PHILADELPHIA:

J. R. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

1873



ALDWORTH  
MR. TRIVETT'S RESIDENCE

THE  
COMPLETE WORKS

OF  
**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**

ALFRED TENNYSON  
POET LAUREATE.

*ILLUSTRATED EDITION.*

PHILADELPHIA:  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.  
1878.

Library of Congress



2010

680875

Trow's  
PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY,  
205-213 East 12th St.,  
NEW YORK.





## CONTENTS.

|  | PAGE. |   | PAGE. |
|--|-------|---|-------|
| To the Queen.....                          | vii   | Song: "You ask me, why tho' ill<br>at ease,".....     | 36    |
| Claribel.....                              | 1     | " "Of old sat freedom on the<br>heights,".....        | 37    |
| Lillian.....                               | 1     | " "Love thou thy land, with<br>love far-brought"..... | 37    |
| Isabel.....                                | 1     | The Goose.....  | 38    |
| Mariana.....                               | 2     | The Epic.....   | 38    |
| To —.....                                  | 2     | Morte d'Arthur.....                                   | 39    |
| Madaline.....                              | 3     | The Gardener's Daughter; or the<br>Pictures.....      | 43    |
| Song—The Owl.....                          | 3     | Dora.....   | 47    |
| Second Song.....                           | 3     | Audley Court.....                                     | 49    |
| Recollection of the Arabian<br>Nights..... | 4     | Walking to the Mail.....                              | 50    |
| Ode to Memory.....                         | 5     | Edwin Morris; or the Lake.....                        | 52    |
| Song.....                                  | 6     | St. Simeon Stylites.....                              | 54    |
| Adeline.....                               | 6     | The Talking Oak.....                                  | 56    |
| A Character.....                           | 7     | Love and Duty.....                                    | 59    |
| The Poet.....                              | 7     | The Golden Year.....                                  | 69    |
| The Poet's Mind.....                       | 8     | Ulysses.....  | 61    |
| The Sea-fairies.....                       | 8     | Locksley Hall.....                                    | 62    |
| The Deserted House.....                    | 9     | Godiva.....   | 66    |
| The Dying Swan.....                        | 9     | The Two Voices.....                                   | 67    |
| A Dirge.....                               | 9     | The Daydream:—  |       |
| Love and Death.....                        | 10    | Prologue.....   | 71    |
| The Ballad of Oriana.....                  | 10    | The Sleeping Palace.....                              | 71    |
| Circumstance.....                          | 11    | The Sleeping Beauty.....                              | 72    |
| The Merman.....                            | 11    | The Arrival.....                                      | 72    |
| The Mermaid.....                           | 11    | The Revival.....                                      | 72    |
| Sonnet to J. M. K.....                     | 12    | The Departure.....                                    | 72    |
| The Lady of Shalott.....                   | 12    | Moral.....  | 73    |
| Mariana in the South.....                  | 14    | L'Envoy.....  | 73    |
| Eleánore.....                              | 15    | Epilogue.....   | 73    |
| The Miller's Daughter.....                 | 16    | Amphion.....  | 74    |
| Fatima.....                                | 18    | St. Agnes Eve.....                                    | 74    |
| Enone.....                                 | 18    | Sir Galahad.....                                      | 75    |
| The Sisters.....                           | 22    | Edward Gray.....                                      | 75    |
| To —.....                                  | 22    | Will Waterproof's Lyrical Mono-<br>logue.....         | 76    |
| The Palace of Art.....                     | 22    | To —, after reading a Life and<br>Letters.....        | 78    |
| Lady Clara Vere de Vere.....               | 26    | To E. L., on his travels in Greece.....               | 78    |
| The May Queen.....                         | 26    | Lady Clare.....                                       | 78    |
| New-year's Eve.....                        | 27    | The Lord of Burleigh.....                             | 79    |
| Conclusion.....                            | 28    | Sir Lancelot and Queen Guine-<br>vere.....            | 80    |
| The Lotos-Eaters.....                      | 29    | A Farewell.....                                       | 80    |
| Choric Song.....                           | 29    |   |       |
| A Dream of Fair Women.....                 | 31    |   |       |
| Margaret.....                              | 34    |   |       |
| The Blackbird.....                         | 35    |   |       |
| The Death of the Old Year.....             | 35    |   |       |
| To J. S.....                               | 36    |   |       |

|  | PAGE. |   | PAGE. |
|--|-------|---|-------|
| The Deggar Maid .....  | 81    | Lucretius .....   | 217   |
| The Vision of Sin .....  | 81    | Song: "My life is full of weary<br>days." .....           | 221   |
| Song: "Come not when I am dead," .....                         | 83    | The Captain .....   | 221   |
| The Eagle .....  | 83    | Three Sonnets to a Coquette .....                         | 221   |
| Ode.—International Exhibition .....                            | 84    | Song: "Lady, let the rolling<br>drums." .....             | 222   |
| Maud .....   | 99    | Song: "Home they brought him<br>slain with spears," ..... | 222   |
| The Brook: an Idyl .....                                       | 102   | Song: "Move eastward, happy<br>earth, and leave" .....    | 222   |
| The Letters .....  | 102   | Song: "Break, break, break," .....                        | 222   |
| The Daisy .....  | 105   | The Poet's Song .....                                     | 223   |
| To the Rev. F. D. Maurice .....                                | 106   | On a Mourner .....  | 223   |
| Will .....   | 107   | Northern Farmer, New style .....                          | 223   |
| The Charge of the Light Brigade .....                          | 107   | The Golden Supper .....                                   | 224   |
| In Memoriam .....  | 108   | Wages .....   | 229   |
| The Princess: a Medley .....                                   | 135   | The Higher Pantheism .....                                | 229   |
| Enoch Arden .....  | 179   | Song: "Flower in the crannied<br>wall," .....             | 230   |
| Aylmer's Field .....   | 191   | Literary Squabbles .....                                  | 230   |
| Sea Dreams .....   | 202   | Idyls of the King .....                                   |       |
| The Grandmother .....  | 206   | Dedication .....  | 230   |
| Northern Farmer, Old style .....                               | 208   | The Coming of Arthur .....                                | 231   |
| Tithonus .....   | 209   | Gareth and Lynette .....                                  | 237   |
| The Voyage .....   | 210   | Geraint and Enid .....                                    | 256   |
| In the Valley of Caunteretz .....                              | 211   | Merlin and Vivien .....                                   | 280   |
| The Flower .....   | 211   | Lancelot and Elaine .....                                 | 291   |
| Requiescat .....   | 212   | The Holy Grail .....                                      | 310   |
| The Sailor Boy .....   | 212   | Pelleas and Ettarre .....                                 | 323   |
| The Islet .....  | 212   | The Last Tournament .....                                 | 331   |
| The Ringlet .....  | 212   | Guinevere .....   | 341   |
| A Welcome to Alexandra .....                                   | 213   | The Passing of Arthur .....                               | 350   |
| A Dedication .....   | 213   | In the Garden at Swainston .....                          | 356   |
| Experiments .....  |       | The Voice and the Peak .....                              | 356   |
| Boadicea .....   | 213   | To the Queen .....  | 357   |
| In Quantity .....  | 215   | A Welcome to the Duke and<br>Duchess of Edinburgh .....   | 358   |
| Specimen of a Translation of<br>the Iliad in blank verse ..... | 215   | Queen Mary .....  | 359   |
| 1865—1866 .....  | 216   | Harold .....  | 408   |
| The Old Seat .....   | 216   |   |       |
| The Victim .....   | 216   |   |       |

TO THE QUEEN.

---

REVERED, beloved — O you that hold  
A nobler office upon earth  
Than arms, or power of brain, or birth  
Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria, — since your Royal grace  
To one of less desert allows  
This laurel greener from the brows  
Of him that utter'd nothing base ;

And should your greatness, and the care  
That yokes with empire, yield you time  
To make demand of modern rhyme  
If aught of ancient worth be there ;

Then — while a sweeter music wakes,  
And thro' wild March the throstle calls,  
Where all about your palace-walls  
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes —

Take, Madam, this poor book of song ;  
For tho' the faults were thick as dust  
In vacant chambers, I could trust  
Your kindness. May you rule us long,

## TO THE QUEEN.

And leave us rulers of your blood  
As noble till the latest day !  
May children of our children say,  
'She wrought her people lasting good,

'Her court was pure ; her life serene ;  
God gave her peace ; her land reposed ;  
A thousand claims to reverence closed  
In her as Mother, Wife and Queen ;

'And statesmen at her council met  
Who knew the seasons when to take  
Occasion by the hand, and make  
The bounds of freedom wider yet

'By shaping some august decree,  
Which kept her throne unshaken still,  
Broad-based upon her people's will ;  
And compass'd by the inviolate sea.'

---

## POEMS.

### CLARIBEL.

#### A MELODY.

##### I.

WHERE Claribel low-lieth  
The breezes pause and die,  
Letting the rose-leaves fall :  
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,  
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,  
With an ancient melody  
Of an inward agony,  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

##### II.

At eve the beetle boometh  
Athwart the thicket lone :  
At noon the wild bee hummeth  
About the moss'd headstone :  
At midnight the moon cometh,  
And looketh down alone.  
Her song the lute-white swelleth,  
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,  
The callow throble isleth,  
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,  
The babbling rannel crispeth,  
The hollow grot replieth  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

### LILIAN.

##### I.

AIRY, fairy Lilian,  
Flitting, fairy Lilian,  
When I ask her if she love me,  
Claps her tiny hands above me,  
Laughing all she can ;  
She'll not tell me if she love me,  
Cruel little Lilian.

##### II.

When my passion seeks  
Pleasance in love-sighs,  
She, looking thro' and thro' me  
Thoroughly to undo me,  
Smiling, never speaks :  
So innocent-arch, so cunning-simple,  
From beneath her gather'd wimple  
Glancing with black-beaded eyes,  
Till the lightning laughters dimple  
The baby-roses in her cheeks ;  
Then away she flies.

##### III.

Prythee weep, May Lilian !  
Gayety without eclipse  
Wearieth me, May Lilian :  
Thro' my very heart it thrilleth  
When from crimson-threaded lips  
Silver-treble laughter trilleth :  
Prythee weep, May Lilian.

##### IV.

Praying all I can,  
If prayers will not lush thee,  
Airy Lilian,  
Like a rose-leaf I will crush thee,  
Fairy Lilian.

### ISABEL.

##### I.

EYES not down-dropt nor over bright,  
but fed  
With the clear-pointed flame of  
chastity,  
Clear, without heat, undying,  
tended by  
Pure vestal thoughts in the  
translucent fane  
Of her still spirit ; locks not wide-  
dispread,  
Madonna-wise on either side her  
head ;  
Sweet lips whereon perpetually  
did reign  
The summer calm of golden charity,  
Were fixed shadows of thy fixed mood,  
Revered Isabel, the crown and  
head,  
The stately flower of female fortitude,  
Of perfect wifehood and pure low-  
lihead.

##### II.

The intuitive decision of a bright  
And thorough-edged intellect to part  
Error from crime ; a prudence to  
withhold ;  
The laws of marriage character'd  
in gold  
Upon the blanch'd tablets of her  
heart ;  
A love still burning upward, giving  
light  
To read those laws ; an accent very  
low  
In blandishment, but a most silver  
flow  
Of subtle-paced counsel in dis-  
tress,  
Right to the heart and brain, tho'  
undescried,  
Winning its way with extreme  
gentleness  
Thro' all the outworks of suspicious  
pride ;  
A courage to endure and to obey ;  
A hate of gossip parlance, and of  
sway,

Crown'd Isabel, thro' all her placid  
life,  
The queen of marriage, a most perfect  
wife.

## III.

The mellow'd reflex of a winter moon ;  
A clear stream flowing with a muddy  
one,  
Till in its onward current it absorbs  
With swifter movement and in  
purer light  
The vexed eddies of its wayward  
brother :  
A leaning and upbearing parasite,  
Clothing the stem, which else had  
fallen quite,  
With cluster'd flower-bells and am-  
brostial orbs  
Of rich fruit-bunches leaning on  
each other—  
Shadow forth thee :—the world  
hath not another  
(Tho' all her fairest forms are types of  
thee,  
And thou of God in thy great charity)  
Of such a finish'd chasten'd purity.

## MARIANA.

*"Mariana in the moated grange,"*  
*Measure for Measure.*

With blackest moss the flower-plots  
Were thickly crusted, one and all :  
The rusted nails fell from the knots  
That held the pear to the gable-wall.  
The broken sheds look'd sad and  
strange :  
Unlifted was the clinking latch ;  
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch  
Upon the lonely moated grange.  
She only said, " My life is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;  
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"  
Her tears fell with the dews at even ;  
Her tears fell ere the dews were  
dried ;  
She could not look on the sweet heaven,  
Either at morn or eventide.  
After the flitting of the bats,  
When thickest dark did trance the  
sky,  
She drew her casement-curtain by,  
And glanced athwart the glooming  
flats.  
She only said, " The night is  
dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;  
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead."  
Upon the middle of the night,  
Waking she heard the night-fowl  
crow :  
The cock sung out an hour ere light :  
From the dark fen the oxen's low  
Came to her : without hope of change,  
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,

Till cold winds woke the grey-eyed  
morn  
About the lonely moated grange.  
She only said, " The day is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;  
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

About a stone-cast from the wall  
A sluice with blackened waters  
slept,  
And o'er it many, round and small,  
The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.  
Hard by a poplar shook alway,  
All silver-green with gnarled bark :  
For leagues no other tree did mark  
The level waste, the rounding gray.  
She only said, " My life is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;  
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

And ever when the moon was low,  
And the shrill winds were up and away,  
In the white curtain, to and fro,  
She saw the gusty shadow sway.  
But when the moon was very low,  
And wild winds bound within their  
cell,

The shadow of the poplar fell  
Upon her bed, across her brow.  
She only said, " The night is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;  
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

All day within the dreary house,  
The doors upon their hinges creak'd ;  
The blue fly sung in the pane ; the  
mouse

Behind the mouldering wainscot  
shriek'd,  
Or from the crevice peer'd about.  
Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,  
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,  
Old voices called her from without.  
She only said, " My life is dreary,  
He cometh not," she said ;  
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead !"

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,  
The slow clock ticking, and the  
sound

Which to the wooing wind aloof  
The poplar made, did all confound  
Her sense ; but most she loathed the  
hour

When the thick-moted sunbeam lay  
Athwart the chambers, and the day  
Was sloping toward his western bower.  
Then, said she, " I am very dreary,  
He will not come," she said ;  
She wept, " I am aweary, aweary,  
O God, that I were dead !"

## TO —

## I.

CLEAR-HEADED friend, whose joyful  
scorn,  
Edged with sharp laughter, cuts  
atwain

The knots that tangle human creeds,  
The wounding cords that bind and strain  
The heart until it bleeds,  
Ray-fringed eyelids of the morn  
Roof not a glance so keen as thine :  
If aught of prophecy be mine,  
Thou wilt not live in vain.

## II.

Low-cowering shall the Sophist sit ;  
Falschood shall bare her plaited brow :  
Fair-fronted Truth shall droop not now  
With shrilling shafts of subtle wit.  
Nor martyr-flames, nor trenchant swords  
Can do away that ancient lie ;  
A gentler death shall Falschood die,  
Shot thro' and thro' with cunning words.

## III.

Weak Truth a-leaning on her crutch,  
Wan, wasted Truth in her utmost need,  
Thy kingly intellect shall feed,  
Until she be an athlete bold,  
And weary with a finger's touch  
Those writhed limbs of lightning speed ;  
Like that strange angel which of old,  
Until the breaking of the light,  
Wrestled with wandering Israel,  
Past Yabok brook the livelong night,  
And heaven's mazed signs stood still  
In the dim tract of Pennel.

## MADELINE

## I.

THOU art not steep'd in golden languors,  
No tranced summer calm is thine,  
Ever varying Madeline.  
Thro' light and shadow thou dost range,  
Sudden glances, sweet and strange,  
Delicious spites and darling angors,  
And airy forms of fitting change.

## II.

Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
Thou art perfect in love-lore.  
Revealings deep and clear are thine  
Of wealthy smiles : but who may know  
Whether smile or frown be fletcher ?  
Whether smile or frown be sweeter,  
Who may know ?  
Frowns perfect-sweet along the brow  
Light-glooming over eyes divine,  
Like little clouds sun-fringed, are  
thine,  
Ever varying Madeline.  
Thy smile and frown are not aloof  
From one another,  
Each to each is dearest brother ;  
Hues of the silken sheeny woof  
Momently shot into each other.

All the mystery is thine ;  
Smiling, frowning, evermore,  
Thou art perfect in love-lore,  
Ever varying Madeline.

## III.

A subtle, sudden-flame,  
By veering passion fann'd,  
About thee breaks and dances ;  
When I would kiss thy hand,  
The flush of anger'd shame  
O'erflows thy calmer glances,  
And o'er black brows drops down  
A sudden-curved frown :  
But when I turn away,  
Thou, willing me to stay,  
Wooest not, nor vainly wranglest ;  
But, looking fixedly the while,  
All my bounding heart entanglest  
In a golden-netted smile ;  
Then in madness and in bliss,  
If my lips should dare to kiss  
Thy taper fingers amorously,  
Again thou blushest angerly ;  
And o'er black brows drops down  
A sudden-curved frown.

## SONG.—THE OWL.

## I.

WHEN cats run home and light is come,  
And dew is cold upon the ground,  
And the far-off stream is dumb,  
And the whirring sail goes round ;  
And the whirring sail goes round ;  
Alone and warming his five wits,  
The white owl in the belfry sits.

## II.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,  
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,  
And the cock hath sung beneath the thatch  
Twice or thrice his roundelay,  
Twice or thrice his roundelay ;  
Alone and warming his five wits,  
The white owl in the belfry sits.

## SECOND SONG.

## TO THE SAME.

## I.

THY tuwhits are lull'd, I wot,  
Thy tuwhoos of yesternight,  
Which upon the dark afloat,  
So took echo with delight,  
So took echo with delight,  
That her voice untuneful grown,  
Wears all day a fainter tone.

## II.

I would mock thy chant anew ;  
But I cannot mimic it ;  
Not a whit of thy tuwhoo,  
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
Thee to woo to thy tuwhit,  
With a lengthen'd loud halloo,  
Tuwhoo, tuwhit, tuwhit, tu-  
whoo-o-o.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE  
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn  
blew free

In the silken sail of infancy,  
The tide of time flow'd back with me,  
The forward-flowing tide of time;  
And many a sheeny summer-morn,  
Adown the Tigris I was borne,  
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,  
High-walled gardens green and old;  
True Mussulman was I and sworn,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'  
The low and bloomed foliage, drove  
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and  
clove

The citron-shadows in the blue:  
By garden porches on the brim,  
The costly doors flung open wide,  
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,  
And broider'd sofas on each side:  
In sooth it was a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans  
guard

The outlet, did I turn away  
The boat-head down a broad canal  
From the main river sluiced, where all  
The sloping of the moon-lit sward  
Was damask-work, and deep inlay  
Of braided blooms unnown, which  
crept

Adown to where the water slept.  
A goodly place, a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won  
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on  
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,  
Until another night in night  
I enter'd, from the clearer light,  
Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,  
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they  
clomb  
Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the  
dome

Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward; and the clear canal  
Is rounded to as clear a lake.  
From the green rivage many a fall  
Of diamond rillet musical,  
Thro' little crystal arches low  
Down from the central fountain's flow  
Fall'n silver-chiming, seem'd to shake  
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.  
A goodly place, a goodly time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Above thro' many a bowery turn  
A walk with vary-color'd shells

Wander'd engrain'd. On either side  
All round about the fragrant marge  
From fluted vase, and brazen urn  
In order, eastern flowers large,  
Some dropping low their crimson bells  
Half-closed, and others studded wide  
With disks and tiars, fed the time  
With odor in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove  
In closest coverture upspring,  
The living airs of middle night  
Died round the bulb as he sung;  
Not he: but something which pos-  
sess'd

The darkness of the world, delight,  
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,  
Ceasing not, mingled, unpress'd.  
Apart from place, withholding time,  
But flattering the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grots  
Slumber'd: the solemn palms were  
ranged

Above, unwoo'd of summer wind:  
A sudden splendor from behind  
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-  
green,

And, flowing rapidly between  
Their interspaces, counterchanged  
The level lake with diamond-plots  
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,  
For it was in the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,  
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,  
Grew darker from that under-flame:  
So, leaping lightly from the boat,  
With silver anchor left afloat,  
In marvel whence that glory came  
Upon me, as in sleep I sank  
In cool soft turf upon the bank,  
Entranced with that place and time,  
So worthy of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—  
A realm of pleasance, many a mound,  
And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn  
Full of the city's stilly sound,  
And deep myrrh-thickets blowing  
round

The stately cedar, tamarisks,  
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,  
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks  
Graven with emblems of the time,  
In honor of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed vision unawares  
From the long alley's latticed shade  
Emerged, I came upon the great  
Pavilion of the Caliphate.  
Right to the carven cedarn doors,  
Flung inward over spangled floors,  
Broad-based flights of marble stairs  
Ran up with golden balustrade,  
After the fashion of the time,  
And humor of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The fourscore windows all alight  
As with the quintessence of flame,  
A million tapers flaring bright  
From twisted silvers look'd to shame  
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd  
Upon the mooned domes aloof  
In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd  
Hundreds of crescents on the roof  
Of night new-risen, that marvellous  
time  
To celebrate the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly  
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,  
Serene with argent-lidded eyes  
Amorous, and lashes like to rays  
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl  
Tressed with redolent ebony,  
In many a dark delicious curl,  
Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone;  
The sweetest lady of the time,  
Well worthy of the golden prime  
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,  
Pure silver, underpropt a rich  
Throne of the massive ore, from which  
Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,  
Engarlanded and diaper'd  
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of  
gold.

Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd  
With merriment of kingly pride,  
Sole star of all that place and time,  
I saw him—in his golden prime,  
THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID!

## ODE TO MEMORY.

## I.

THOU who stealest fire,  
From the fountains of the past,  
To glorify the present; O, haste,  
Visit my low desire!  
Strengthen me, enlighten me!  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

## II.

Come not as thou camest of late,  
Flinging the gloom of yesternight  
On the white day; but robed in soft-  
en'd light

Of orient state.  
Whilome thou camest with the morn-  
ing mist,

Even as a maid, whose stately brow  
The dew-impearled winds of dawn have  
kiss'd,

When she, as thou,  
Stays on her floating locks the lovely  
freight

Of overflowing blooms, and earliest  
shoots

Of orient green, giving safe pledge of  
fruits,

Which in wintertide shall star  
The black earth with brilliance rare.

## III.

Whilome thou camest with the morn-  
ing mist,  
And with the evening cloud,  
Showering thy gleamed wealth into my  
open breast  
(Those peerless flowers which in the  
rudest wind

Never grow sere,  
When rooted in the garden of the  
mind,  
Because they are the earliest of the  
year).

Nor was the night thy shroud.  
In sweet dreams softer than unbroken  
rest

Thou leddest by the hand thine infant  
Hope.

The eddying of her garments caught  
from thee

The light of thy great presence; and  
the cope

Of the half-attain'd futurity,  
Tho' deep not fathomless,

Was cloven with the million stars  
which tremble

O'er the deep mind of dauntless in-  
fancy.

Small thought was there of life's dis-  
tress;

For sure she deem'd no mist of earth  
could dull

Those spirit-thrilling eyes so keen and  
beautiful:

Sure she was nigher to heaven's  
spheres,

Listening the lordly music flowing  
from

The illimitable year.  
O strengthen me, enlighten me!  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

## IV.

Come forth, I charge thee, arise,  
Thou of the many tongues, the myriad  
eyes!

Thou comest not with shows of flaunt-  
ing vines

Unto mine inner eye,  
Divinest Memory!

Thou wert not nursed by the water-  
fall

Which ever sounds and shines  
A pillar of white light upon the wall

Of purple cliffs, aloof deserted:  
Come from the woods that belt the

gray hillside,  
The seven elms, the poplars four

That stand beside my father's door,  
And chiefly from the brook that loves

To purl o'er matted cress and ribbed  
sand,

Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves,  
Drawing into his narrow earthen urn,

In every elbow and turn,  
The filter'd tribute of the rough wood-  
land.

O! hither lead thy feet!

Four round mine ears the livelong  
bleat  
Of the thick-fleeced sheep from watted  
folds,  
Upon the ridged wolds,  
When the first matin-song hath wak-  
en'd loud  
Over the dark dewy earth forlorn,  
What time the amber morn  
Forth gushes from beneath a low-hung  
cloud.

## V.

Large dowries doth the raptured eye  
To the young spirit present  
When first she is wed ;  
And like a bride of old  
In triumph led,  
With music and sweet showers  
Of festal flowers,  
Unto the dwelling she must sway.  
Well hast thou done, great artist Mem-  
ory,  
In setting round thy first experiment  
With royal frame-work of wrought  
gold ;  
Needs must thou dearly love thy first  
essay,  
And foremost in thy various gallery  
Place it, where sweetest sunlight  
falls  
Upon the storied walls ;  
For the discovery  
And newness of thine art so pleased  
thee,  
That all which thou hast drawn of  
fairest  
Or boldest since, but lightly weighs  
With thee unto the love thou bearest  
The first-born of thy genius. Artist-  
like,  
Ever retiring thou dost gaze  
On the prime labor of thine early  
days ;  
No matter what the sketch might be ;  
Whether the high field on the bush-  
less Pike,  
Or even a sand-built ridge  
Of heaped hills that mound the sea,  
Overblown with murmurs harsh,  
Or even a lowly cottage whence we see  
Stretch'd wide and wild the waste  
enormous marsh,  
Where from the frequent bridge,  
Like emblems of infinity,  
The trenched waters run from sky to  
sky ;  
Or a garden bower'd close  
With plaited alleys of the trailing rose,  
Long alleys falling down to twilight  
grots,  
Or opening upon level plots  
Of crowned lilies, standing near  
Purple-spiked lavender :  
Whither in after life retired  
From brawling storms,  
From weary wind,  
With youthful fancy reinspired,  
We may hold converse with all forms  
Of the many-sided mind,

And those whom passion hath not  
blinded,  
Subtle-thoughted, myriad-minded.  
My friend, with you to live alone,  
Were how much better than to own  
A crown, a sceptre, and a throne !  
O strengthen me, enlighten me !  
I faint in this obscurity,  
Thou dewy dawn of memory.

## SONG.

## I.

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours  
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers:  
To himself he talks ;  
For at eventide, listening earnestly,  
At his work you may hear him sob and  
sigh  
In the walks ;  
Earthward he boweth the heavy  
stalks  
Of the mouldering flowers :  
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
Over its grave if the earth so chilly ;  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

## II.

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,  
As a sick man's room when he taketh  
repose  
An hour before death ;  
My very heart faints and my whole  
soul grieves  
At the moist rich smell of the rotting  
leaves,  
And the breath  
Of the fading edges of box beneath,  
And the year's last rose.  
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower  
Over its grave if the earth so chilly ;  
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,  
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily.

## ADELINE.

## I.

MYSTERY of mysteries,  
Faintly smiling Adeline,  
Scarce of earth nor all divine,  
Nor unhappy, nor at rest,  
But beyond expression fair  
With thy floating flaxen hair ;  
Thy rose-lips and full blue eyes  
Take the heart from out my breast,  
Wherefore those dim looks of thine,  
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline ?

## II.

Whence that aery bloom of thine,  
Like a lily which the sun  
Looks thro' in his sad decline,  
And a rose-bush leans upon,  
Thou that faintly smilest still,  
As a Naiad in a well,  
Looking at the set of day,  
Or a phantom two hours old  
Of a maiden past away,  
Ere the placid lips be cold ?  
Wherefore those faint smiles of thine,  
Spiritual Adeline ?

## III.

What hope or fear or joy is thine?  
 Who talketh with thee, Adeline?  
 For sure thou art not all alone:  
 Do beating hearts of salient springs  
 Keep measure with thine own?  
 Hast thou heard the butterflies  
 What they say betwixt their wings?  
 Or in stillest evenings  
 With what voice the violet woos  
 To his heart the silver dew?  
 Or when little airs arise,  
 How the merry bluebell rings  
 To the mosses underneath?  
 Hast thou look'd upon the breath  
 Of the lilies at sunrise?  
 Wherefore that faint smile of thine,  
 Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?

## IV.

Some honey-converse feeds thy mind,  
 Some spirit of a crimson rose  
 In love with thee forgets to close  
 His curtains, wasting odorous sighs  
 All night long on darkness blind.  
 What alleth thee? whom waitest thou  
 With thy soften'd, shadow'd brow,  
 And those dew-lit eyes of thine,  
 Thou faint smiler, Adeline?

## V.

Lovest thou the doleful wind  
 When thou gazeest at the skies?  
 Doth the low-tongued Orient  
 Wander from the side of the morn,  
 Dripping with Sabeian spice  
 On thy pillow, lowly bent  
 With melodious airs lovelorn,  
 Breathing Light against thy face,  
 While his locks a-drooping twined  
 Round thy neck in subtle ring  
 Make a carcanet of rays,  
 And ye talk together still,  
 In the language wherewith Spring  
 Letters cowslips on the hill?  
 Hence that look and smile of thine,  
 Spiritual Adeline.

## A CHARACTER.

With a half-glance upon the sky  
 At night he said, "The wanderings  
 Of this most intricate Universe  
 Teach me the nothingness of things."  
 Yet could not all creation pierce  
 Beyond the bottom of his eye.  
 He spake of beauty: that the dull  
 Saw no divinity in grass,  
 Life in dead stones, or spirit in air;  
 Then looking as 'twere in a glass,  
 He smooth'd his chin and sleek'd his  
 hair,  
 And said the earth was beautiful.  
 He spake of virtue: not the gods  
 More purely, when they wish to charm  
 Pallas and Juno sitting by:  
 And with a sweeping of the arm,  
 And a lack-lustre dead-blue eye,  
 Devolved his rounded periods.

Most delicately hour by hour  
 He canvass'd human mysteries,  
 And trod on silk, as if the winds  
 Blew his own praises in his eyes,  
 And stood aloof from other minds  
 In impotence of fancied power.

With lips depress'd as he were meek,  
 Himself unto himself he sold:  
 Upon himself himself did feed:  
 Quiet, dispassionate, and cold,  
 And other than his form of creed,  
 With chisell'd features clear and  
 sleek.

## THE POET.

THE poet in a golden clime was born,  
 With golden stars above;  
 Dower'd with the hate of hate, the  
 scorn of scorn,  
 The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death; thro'  
 good and ill,  
 He saw thro' his own soul.  
 The marvel of the everlasting will,  
 An open scroll,

Before him lay: with echoing feet he  
 threaded

The secretest walks of fame:  
 The viewless arrows of his thoughts  
 were headed

And wing'd with flame,  
 Like Indian reeds blown from his sil-  
 ver tongue,  
 And of so fierce a flight,  
 From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,  
 Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which  
 bore

Them earthward till they lit:  
 Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field  
 flower,

The fruitful wit  
 Cleaving, took root, and springing  
 forth anew

Where'er they fell, behold,  
 Like to the mother plant in semblance,  
 grew

A flower all gold,  
 And bravely furnish'd all abroad to  
 fling

The winged shafts of truth,  
 To throng with stately blooms the  
 breathing spring  
 Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs  
 with beams,

Tho' one did fling the fire.  
 Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many  
 dreams  
 Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the  
 world

Like one great garden show'd,  
 And thro' the wreaths of floating dark  
 uppear'd,

Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august  
sunrise

Her beautiful bold brow,  
When rites and forms before his burn-  
ing eyes

Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden  
robes

Sunn'd by those orient skies ;  
But round about the circles of the  
globes

Of her keen eyes.

And in her raiment's hem was traced  
in flame

Wisdom, a name to shake  
All evil dreams of power—a sacred  
name.

And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they  
ran,

And as the lightning to the thun-  
der

Which follows it, riving the spirit of  
man,

Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No  
sword

Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,  
But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his*  
word

She shook the world.

#### THE POET'S MIND.

##### I.

VEX not thou the poet's mind

With thy shallow wit ;

Vex not thou the poet's mind ;

For thou canst not fathom it.

Clear and bright it should be ever,

Flowing like a crystal river ;

Bright as light, and clear as wind.

##### II.

Dark-brow'd sophist, come not anear ;

All the place is holy ground ;

Hollow smile and frozen sneer

Come not here.

Holy water will I pour

Into every spicy flower

Of the laurel-shrubs that hedge it

around.

The flowers would faint at your cruel

cheer.

In your eye there is death,

There is frost in your breath

Which would blight the plants.

Where you stand you cannot hear

From the groves within

The wild-bird's din.

In the heart of the garden the merry

bird chants,

It would fall to the ground if you came

in.

In the middle leaps a fountain

Like sheet lightning,

Ever brightening

With a low melodious thunder ;

All day and all night it is ever drawn,  
From the brain of the purple moun-  
tain

Which stands in the distance yonder :

It springs on a level of bowery lawn,

And the mountain draws it from

Heaven above,

And it sings a song of undying love ;

And yet, tho' its voice be so clear and

full,

You never would hear it ; your ears

are so dull ;

So keep where you are : you are foul

with sin ;

It would shrink to the earth if you

came in.

#### THE SEA-FAIRIES.

Slow sail'd the weary mariners and  
saw,

Betwixt the green brink and the run-  
ning foam,

Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms

prest

To little harps of gold ; and while they

mused,

Whispering to each other half in fear,

Shrill music reach'd them on the mid-  
dle sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither

away ? fly no more.

Whither away from the high green

field, and the happy blossoming

shore ?

Day and night to the billow the foun-  
tain calls ;

Down shower the gambolling water-  
falls

From wandering over the lea :

Out of the live-green heart of the dells

They freshen the silvery-crimson

shells,

And thick with white bells the clover-  
hill swells

High over the full-toned sea :

O hither, come hither and furl your

sails,

Come hither to me and to me :

Hither, come hither and frolic and

play ;

Here it is only the mew that walls ;

We will sing to you all the day :

Mariner, mariner, furl your sails,

For here are the blissful downs and

dales,

And merrily, merrily carol the gales,

And the spangle dances in light and

bay,

And the rainbow forms and flies on the

land

Over the islands free ;

And the rainbow lives in the curve of

the sand ;

Hither, come hither and see ;

And the rainbow hangs on the poising

wave,

And sweet is the color of cove and

cave,

And sweet shall your welcome be :  
 O hither, come hither, and be our lords,  
 For merry brides are we :  
 We will kiss sweet kisses, and speak  
 sweet words :

O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
 With pleasure and love and jubilee :  
 O listen, listen, your eyes shall glisten  
 When the sharp clear twang of the  
 golden chords

Runs up the ridged sea.  
 Who can light on as happy a shore  
 All the world o'er, all the world o'er ?  
 Whither away ? listen and stay : mar-  
 iner, mariner, fly no more.

## THE DESERTED HOUSE.

I.  
 LIFE and Thought have gone away  
 Side by side,  
 Leaving door and windows wide :  
 Careless tenants they !

II.  
 All within is dark as night :  
 In the windows is no light ;  
 And no murmur at the door,  
 So frequent on its hinge before.

III.  
 Close the door, the shutters close,  
 Or thro' the windows we shall see  
 The nakedness and vacancy  
 Of the dark deserted house.

IV.  
 Come away : no more of mirth  
 Is here or merry-making sound.  
 The house was builded of the earth,  
 And shall fall again to ground.

V.  
 Come away : for Life and Thought  
 Here no longer dwell ;  
 But in a city glorious—  
 A great and distant city—have bought  
 A mansion incorruptible.  
 Would they could have stayed with  
 us !

## THE DYING SWAN.

I.  
 THE plain was grassy, wild and bare,  
 Wide, wild, and open to the air,  
 Which had built up everywhere  
 An under-roof of doleful gray.  
 With an inner voice the river ran,  
 Adown it floated a dying swan,  
 And loudly did lament.  
 It was the middle of the day.  
 Ever the weary wind went on,  
 And took the reed-tops as it went.

II.  
 Some blue peaks in the distance rose,  
 And white against the cold-white sky,  
 Shone out their crowning snows,  
 One willow over the river wept,  
 And shook the wave as the wind did  
 sigh ;

Above in the wind was the swallow,  
 Chasing itself at its own wild will,  
 And far thro' the marish green and  
 still

The tangled water-courses slept,  
 Shot over with purple, and green, and  
 yellow.

## III

The wild swan's death-hymn took the  
 soul  
 Of that waste place with joy  
 Hidden in sorrow : at first to the ear  
 The warble was low, and full and clear ;  
 And floating about the under-sky,  
 Prevailing in weakness, the coronach  
 stole

Sometimes afar, and sometimes anear ;  
 But anon her awful jubilant voice,  
 With a music strange and manifold,  
 Flow'd forth on a carol free and bold ;  
 As when a mighty people rejoice  
 With shawms, and with cymbals, and  
 harps of gold,  
 And the tumult of their acclaim is  
 roll'd

Thro' the open gates of the city afar,  
 To the shepherd who watcheth the eve-  
 ning star.  
 And the creeping mosses and clamber-  
 ing weeds,

And the willow-branches hoar and  
 dank,  
 And the wavy swell of the sougling  
 reeds,  
 And the wave-worn horns of the echo-  
 ing bank,

And the silvery marish-flowers that  
 throng  
 The desolate creeks and pools among,  
 Were flooded over with eddying song.

## A DIRGE.

I.  
 Now is done thy long day's work ;  
 Fold thy palms across thy breast,  
 Fold thine arms, turn to thy rest.  
 Let them rave.  
 Shadows of the green that folds thy grave.  
 Sweep the green that folds thy grave.  
 Let them rave.

II.  
 Thee nor carketh care nor slander ;  
 Nothing but the small cold worm  
 Fretteth thine enshrouded form.  
 Let them rave.  
 Light and shadow ever wander  
 O'er the green that folds thy grave.  
 Let them rave.

III.  
 Thou wilt not turn upon thy bed ;  
 Chanteth not the brooding bee  
 Sweeter tones than calumny ?  
 Let them rave.  
 Thou wilt never raise thine head  
 From the green that folds thy grave.  
 Let them rave.

IV.  
 Crocodiles wept tears for thee ;  
 The woodbine and eglare  
 Drip sweeter dews than traitor's tear.  
 Let them rave.

Rain makes music in the tree  
O'er the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

Y  
Round thee blow, self-pleas'd deep,  
Bramble roses, faint and pale,  
And long purples of the dale.

Let them rave,  
These in every shower creep  
Thro' the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

VI.  
The gold-eyed kingcups fine ;  
The trail bluebell peerless over  
Rare broody of the purple clover.

Let them rave.  
Kings have no such couch as thine,  
As the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

VII.  
With words wander here and there ;  
God's great gift of speech abused  
Makes thy memory confused ;

But let them rave,  
The balm-creecher carols clear  
In the green that folds thy grave.  
Let them rave.

#### LOVE AND DEATH.

What time the mighty moon was  
gathering light  
Love paced the thymy plots of Para-  
dise,

And all about him roll'd his lustrous  
eyes ;  
When, turning round a cassa, full in  
view

Death, walking all alone beneath a  
yew,  
And talking to himself, first met his  
sight ;

"Yow must begone," said Death,  
"these walks are mine."  
Love wept and spread his cheery vans  
for flight ;

Yet ere he parted said, "This hour is  
thine ;  
Thou art the shadow of life, and as the  
tree  
Stands in the sun and shadows all  
beneath.

So in the light of great eternity  
Life eminent creates the shade of  
death ;  
The shadow passeth when the tree  
shall fall,  
But I shall reign for ever over all."

#### THE BALLAD OF ORIANA.

My heart is wasted with my woe,

Oriana.  
There is no rest for me below,

Oriana.  
When the long dun wolds are ribb'd  
with snow.

And loud the Norland whirwinds  
blow,  
Alone I wander to and fro,  
Oriana,  
Oriana.

Ere the light on dark was growing,  
Oriana,  
At midnight the cock was crowing,

Oriana ;  
We heard were blowing, waters flowing,  
Winds were blowing to battle going,

Oriana ;  
Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,  
Oriana.

In the yew-wood black as night,  
Oriana,  
Ere I rode into the fight,

Oriana,  
While blissful tears blinded my sight  
By star-shine and by moonlight,

Oriana,  
I to thee my troth did plight,  
Oriana.

She stood upon the castle wall,

Oriana ;  
She watch'd my crest among them all,  
Oriana ;

She saw me fight, she heard me call,  
When forth there stept a foeman tall,  
Oriana,

Atween me and the castle wall,  
Oriana.

The bitter arrow went aside,

Oriana ;  
The false, false arrow went aside,

Oriana ;  
The damned arrow glanced aside,  
And pierc'd thy heart, my love, my  
bride.

Oriana !  
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,  
Oriana !

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,

Oriana.  
Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,  
Oriana.

Oh ! deathly stabs were dealt apace  
The battle deepen'd in his place,  
Oriana ;  
But I was down upon my face,

Oriana.  
They should have stabb'd me where I  
lay,

Oriana !  
How could I rise and come away,

Oriana !  
How could I look upon the day ?  
They should have stabb'd me where I  
lay,

Oriana—  
They should have trod me into clay,  
Oriana.

O breaking heart that will not break,

Oriana !  
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,  
Oriana !

Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,  
And then the tears run down my cheek,

Oriana :  
What wastest thou ? whom dost thou  
seek,  
Oriana ?

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,  
Oriana.  
Thou comest atween me and the skies,  
Oriana.

I feel the tears of blood arise  
Up from my heart unto my eyes,  
Oriana.

Within thy heart my arrow lies,  
Oriana.

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !  
Oriana !

O happy thou that liest low,  
Oriana !  
All night the silence seems to flow  
Beside me in my utter woe,  
Oriana.

A weary, weary way I go,  
Oriana.  
When Norland winds pipe down the  
sea,

Oriana,  
I walk, I dare not think of thee,  
Oriana.

Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,  
I dare not die and come to thee,  
Oriana.

I hear the roaring of the sea,  
Oriana.

## CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbor villages  
Playing mad pranks along the heathy  
leas ;

Two strangers meeting at a festival ;  
Two lovers whispering by an orchard  
wall ;

Two lives bound fast in one with gold-  
en ease ;

Two graves grass-green beside a gray  
church-tower,

Wash'd with still rains and daisy-blos-  
somed ;

Two children in one hamlet born and  
bred ;

So runs the round of life from hour to  
hour.

## THE MERMAN.

## I.

Who would be,  
A merman bold,  
Sitting alone,  
Singing alone,  
Under the sea,  
With a crown of gold,  
On a throne ?

## II.

I would be a merman bold ;  
I would sit and sing the whole of the  
day ;

I would fill the sea-halls with a voice  
of power ;

But at night I would roam abroad and  
play

With the mermaids in and out of the  
rocks,

Dressing their hair with the white sea-  
flower ;

And holding them back by their flow-  
ing locks

I would kiss them often under the sea,  
And kiss them again till they kiss'd me

Laughingly, laughingly ;  
And then we would wander away, away

To the pale-green sea-groves straight  
and high,

Chasing each other merrily.

## III.

There would be neither moon nor star ;  
But the wave would make music  
above us afar—

Low thunder and light in the magic  
night—

Neither moon nor star.

We would call aloud in the dreamy  
dells,

Call to each other and whoop and cry  
All night, merrily, merrily ;

They would pelt me with stary span-  
gles and shells,

Laughing and clapping their hands  
between,

All night, merrily, merrily ;

But I would throw to them back in  
mine

Turkis and agate and almondine ;  
Then leaping out upon them unseen

I would kiss them often under the  
sea,

And kiss them again till they kiss'd  
me

Laughingly, laughingly.

O, what a happy life were mine  
Under the hollow-hung ocean green !

Soft are the moss-beds under the sea ;  
We would live merrily, merrily.

## THE MERMAID.

## I.

Who would be  
A mermaid fair,  
Singing alone,  
Combing her hair  
Under the sea,  
In a golden curl  
With a comb of pearl,  
On a throne ?

## II.

I would be a mermaid fair ;  
I would sing to myself the whole of the  
day ;

With a comb of pearl I would comb my  
hair ;

And still as I comb'd I would sing and  
say—

“Who is it loves me ? who loves not  
me ?”

I would comb my hair till my ringlets  
 would fall  
 Low adown, low adown,  
 From under my starry sea-bud crown  
 Low adown and around,  
 And I should look like a fountain of  
 gold  
 Springing alone  
 With a shrill inner sound,  
 Over the throne  
 In the midst of the hall ;  
 Till that great sea-snake under the sea  
 From his coiled sleeps in the central  
 deeps  
 Would slowly trail himself sevenfold  
 Round the hall where I sate, and look  
 in at the gate  
 With his large calm eyes for the love  
 of me.  
 And all the mermen under the sea  
 Would feel their immortality  
 Die in their hearts for the love of me.

## III.

But at night I would wander away,  
 away,  
 I would fling on each side my low-flow-  
 ing locks,  
 And lightly vault from the throne and  
 play  
 With the mermen in and out of the  
 rocks ;  
 We would run to and fro, and hide and  
 seek,  
 On the broad sea-wolds in the crimson  
 shells,  
 Whose silvery spikes are nighest the  
 sea.  
 But if any came near I would call, and  
 shriek,  
 And adown the steep like a wave I  
 would leap  
 From the diamond-ledges that jut from  
 the dells ;  
 For I would not be kiss'd by all who  
 would list,  
 Of the bold merry mermen under the  
 sea ;  
 They would sue me, and woo me, and  
 flatter me,  
 In the purple twilights under the sea ;  
 But the king of them all would carry  
 me,  
 Woo me, and win me, and marry me,  
 In the branching jaspers under the  
 sea ;  
 Then all the dry pied things that be  
 In the hueless mosses under the sea  
 Would curl round my silver feet  
 silently,  
 All looking up for the love of me.  
 And if I should carol aloud, from aloft  
 All things that are forked, and horned,  
 and soft  
 Would lean out from the hollow sphere  
 of the sea  
 All looking down for the love of me.

## SONNET TO J. M. K.

My hope and heart is with thee—thou  
 wilt be  
 A latter Luther, and a soldier-priest  
 To scare church-barpies from the mas-  
 ter's feast ;  
 Our dusted velvets have much need of  
 thee :  
 Thou art no sabbath-drawler of old  
 saws,  
 Distill'd from some worm-canker'd  
 homily ;  
 But spur'd at heart with fiercest en-  
 ergy  
 To embattall and to wall about thy  
 cause  
 With iron-worded proof, hating to bark  
 The humming of the drowsy pulpit-  
 drone  
 Half God's good sabbath, while the  
 worn-out clerk  
 Brow-beats his desk below. Thou from  
 a throne  
 Mounted in heaven wilt shoot into the  
 dark  
 Arrows of lightnings. I will stand and  
 mark.

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

## PART I.

On either side the river lie  
 Long fields of barley and of rye,  
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;  
 And thro' the field the road runs by  
 To many-tower'd Camelot ;  
 And up and down the people go,  
 Gazing where the lilies blow  
 Round an island there below  
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
 Little breezes dusk and shiver  
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
 By the island in the river  
 Flowing down to Camelot,  
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,  
 Overlook a space of flowers,  
 And the silent isle inbowers  
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
 By slow horses ; and unhall'd  
 The shallop fitteth silken-sail'd  
 Skimming down to Camelot :  
 But who hath seen her wave her hand ?  
 Or at the casement seen her stand ?  
 Or is she known in all the land,  
 The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early  
 In among the bearded barley,  
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
 From the river winding clearly,  
 Down to tower'd Camelot :  
 And by the moon the reaper weary,  
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
 Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy  
 Lady of Shalott."

## PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day  
A magic web with colors gay.  
She has heard a whisper say,  
A curse is on her if she stay

To look down to Camelot.  
She knows not what the curse may be,  
And so she weaveth steadily,  
And little other care hath she.  
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
That hangs before her all the year,  
Shadows of the world appear.  
There she sees the highway near

Winding down to Camelot :  
There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the surly village-churls,  
And the red cloaks of market-girls,  
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot on an ambling pad,  
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;  
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
The knights come riding two and two :  
She hath no loyal knight and true,  
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often thro' the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights,  
And music, went to Camelot :  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed ;  
" I am half sick of shadows," said  
The Lady of Shalott.

## PART III.

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-caves,  
He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
The sun came dazling thro' the leaves,  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
To a lady in his shield,  
That sparkled on the yellow field,  
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
Like to some branch of stars we see  
Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
The bridle bells rang merrily

As he rode down to Camelot  
And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
A mighty silver bugle hung,  
And as he rode his armor rung,  
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leath-  
er,  
The helmet and the helmet feather  
Burned like one burning flame to-  
gether.

As he rode down to Camelot,  
As often thro' the purple night,

Below the starry clusters bright,  
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight  
glow'd ;  
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse  
trode ;  
From underneath his helmet flow'd  
His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
From the bank and from the river  
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
" Tirra lirra," by the river  
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
She made three paces thro' the room,  
She saw the water-lily bloom,  
She saw the helmet and the plume,  
She look'd down to Camelot.  
Out flew the web and floated wide ;  
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;  
" The curse is come upon me," cried  
The Lady of Shalott.

## PART IV.

IN the stormy east-wind straining,  
The pale yellow woods were waning,  
The broad stream in his banks com-  
plaining,  
Heavily the low sky raining  
Over tower'd Camelot ;  
Down she came and found a boat  
Beneath a willow left afloat,  
And round about the prow she wrote  
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse—  
Like some bold seer in a trance,  
Seeing all his own mischance—  
With a glassy countenance  
Did she look to Camelot.  
And at the closing of the day  
She loosed the chain, and down she  
lay ;  
The broad stream bore her far away,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
That loosely flew to left and right—  
The leaves upon her falling light—  
Thro' the noises of the night  
She floated down to Camelot :  
And as the boat-head wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her singing her last song,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,  
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot ;  
For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,

A gleaming shape she floated by,  
Dead-pale between the houses high,  
Silent into Camelot.  
Out upon the wharfs they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
And round the prow they read her  
name,

*The Lady of Shalott.*

Who is this? and what is here?  
And in the lighted palace near  
Died the sound of royal cheer;  
And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
All the knights at Camelot;  
But Lancelot mused a little space;  
He said, "She has a lovely face;  
God in his mercy lend her grace,  
The Lady of Shalott."

#### MARIANA IN THE SOUTH.

WITH one black shadow at its feet,  
The house thro' all the level shines,  
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,  
And silent in its dusty vines;  
A faint-blue ridge upon the right,  
An empty river-bed before,  
And shallows on a distant shore,  
In glaring sand and inlets bright.

But "Ave Mary," made she moan,  
And "Ave Mary," night and  
morn,  
And "Ah," she sang, "to be all  
alone,  
To live forgotten, and love for-  
lorn."

She, as her carol sadder grew,  
From brow and bosom slowly down  
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew  
Her streaming curls of deepest  
brown  
To left and right, and made appear,  
Still-lighted in a secret shrine,  
Her melancholy eyes divine,  
The home of woe without a tear.

And "Ave Mary," was her moan,  
"Madonna, sad is night and  
morn;"  
And "Ah," she sang, "to be all  
alone,  
To live forgotten, and love for-  
lorn."

Till all the crimson changed, and past  
Into deep orange o'er the sea,  
Low on her knees herself she cast,  
Before Our Lady murmur'd she;  
Complaining, "Mother, give me grace  
To help me of my weary load,"  
And on the liquid mirror glow'd  
The clear perfection of her face.

"Is this the form," she made her  
moan,  
"That won his praises night and  
morn?"

And "Ah," she said, "but I  
wake alone,  
I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn."  
Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would  
beat,

Nor any cloud would cross the vault,  
But day increased from heat to heat,  
On stony drought and steaming salt;  
Till now at noon she slept again,  
And seem'd knee-deep in mountain  
grass,  
And heard her native breezes pass,  
And runlets babbling down the glen.  
She breathed in sleep a lower  
moan,  
And murmuring, as at night and  
morn,  
She thought, "My spirit is here  
alone,  
Walks forgotten, and is forlorn."

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream:  
She felt he was and was not there.  
She woke: the babble of the stream  
Fell, and, without, the steady glare  
Shrank one sick willow sere and small.  
The river-bed was dusty-white;  
And all the furnace of the light  
Struck up against the blinding wall.  
She whisper'd, with a stifled moan  
More inward than at night or  
morn,  
"Sweet Mother, let me not here  
alone  
Live forgotten and die forlorn."

And, rising, from her bosom drew  
Old letters, breathing of her worth,  
For "Love," they said, "must needs  
be true,  
To what is loveliest upon earth."  
An image seem'd to pass the door,  
To look at her with slight, and say,  
"But now thy beauty flows away,  
So be alone for evermore."  
"O cruel heart," she changed her  
tone,  
"And cruel love, whose end is  
scorn,  
Is this the end to be left alone,  
To live forgotten, and die for-  
lorn!"

But sometimes in the falling day  
An image seem'd to pass the door,  
To look into her eyes and say,  
"But thou shalt be alone no more."  
And flaming downward over all  
From heat to heat the day decreased,  
And slowly rounded to the east  
The one black shadow from the wall.  
"The day to-night," she made her  
moan,  
"The day to-night, the night to  
morn,  
And day and night I am left alone  
To live forgotten, and love for-  
lorn."

At eve a dry eicala sung,  
There came a sound as of the sea;  
Backward the lattice-blind she flung,  
And lean'd upon the balcony.  
There all in spaces rosy-bright  
Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,  
And deepening thro' the silent  
spheres,

Heaven over Heaven rose the night,  
 And weeping then she made her  
 moan,  
 "The night comes on that knows  
 not morn,  
 When I shall cease to be all alone,  
 To live forgotten, and love for-  
 lorn."

## ELEANORE.

## I.

THY dark eyes open'd not,  
 Nor first reveal'd themselves to Eng-  
 lish air,  
 For there is nothing here,  
 Which, from the outward to the inward  
 brought,  
 Moulded thy baby thought.  
 Far off from human neighborhood,  
 Thou wert born, on a summer morn,  
 A mile beneath the cedar-wood.  
 Thy bounteous forehead was not fam'd  
 With breezes from our oaken glades,  
 But thou wert nursed in some delicious  
 land  
 Of lavish lights, and floating shades:  
 And flattering thy childlike thought  
 The oriental fairy brought,  
 At the moment of thy birth,  
 From old well-heads of haunted rills,  
 And the hearts of purple hills,  
 And shadow'd coves on a sunny  
 shore,  
 The choicest wealth of all the  
 earth,  
 Jewel or shell, or starry ore,  
 To deck thy cradle, Eleånore.

## II.

Or the yellow-banded bees,  
 Thro' half-open lattices  
 Coming in the scented breeze,  
 Fed thee, a child, lying alone,  
 With whitest honey in fairy gardens  
 cull'd—  
 A glorious child, dreaming alone,  
 In silk-soft folds, upon yielding  
 down,  
 With the hum of swarming bees  
 Into dreamful slumber lull'd.

## III.

Who may minister to thee?  
 Summer herself should minister  
 To thee, with fruitage golden-  
 rinded  
 On golden salvers, or it may be,  
 Youngest Autumn, in a bower  
 Grape-thicken'd from the light, and  
 blinded  
 With many a deep-hued bell-like  
 flower  
 Of fragrant trailers, when the air  
 Sleepeth over all the heaven,  
 And the crag that fronts the Even,  
 All along the shadowy shore,  
 Crimsons over an inland mere,  
 Eleånore !

## IV.

How may full-sail'd verse express,  
 How may measured words adre-  
 The full-flowing harmony  
 Of thy swan-like stateliness,  
 Eleånore ?  
 The luxuriant symmetry  
 Of thy floating gracefulness,  
 Eleånore ?  
 Every turn and glance of thine,  
 Every lineament divine,  
 Eleånore,  
 And the steady sunset glow,  
 That stays upon thee? For in thee  
 Is nothing sudden, nothing single:  
 Like two streams of incense free:  
 From one censer, in one shrine,  
 Thought and motion mingle,  
 Mingle ever. Motions flow  
 To one another, even as tho'  
 They were modulated so  
 To an unheard melody,  
 Which lives about thee, and a sweep  
 Of richest pauses, evermore  
 Drawn from each other mellow-deep ;  
 Who may express thee, Eleånore ?

## V.

I stand before thee, Eleånore ;  
 I see thy beauty gradually unfold,  
 Daily and hourly, more and more.  
 I muse, as in a trance, the while  
 Slowly, as from a cloud of gold  
 Comes out thy deep ambrosial smile.  
 I muse, as in a trance, when'er  
 The languors of the love-deep eyes  
 Float on to me. I would I were  
 So tranced, so rapt in ecstasies,  
 To stand apart, and to adore,  
 Gazing on thee for evermore,  
 Serene, imperial Eleånore !

## VI.

Sometimes, with most intensity  
 Gazing, I seem to see  
 Thought folded over thought, smiling  
 asleep  
 Slowly awaken'd, grow so full and deep  
 In thy large eyes, that, overpower'd  
 quite,  
 I cannot veil, or droop my sight,  
 But am as nothing in its light :  
 As tho' a star, in inmost heaven set,  
 Ev'n while we gaze on it,  
 Should slowly round his orb, and slowly  
 grow  
 To a full face, there like a sun remain  
 Fix'd—then as slowly fade again,  
 And draw itself to what it was be-  
 fore ;  
 So full, so deep, so slow,  
 Thought seems to come and go  
 In thy large eyes, imperial Eleån-  
 ore.

## VII.

As thunder-clouds that, hung on high,  
 Roof'd the world with doubt and  
 fear,  
 Floating thro' an evening atmosphere,  
 Grow golden all about the sky ;

## THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

In thee all passion becomes passionless,  
 Touch'd by thy spirit's mellowness,  
 In a silent meditation,  
 Falling into a still delight,  
 And luxury of contemplation :  
 As waves that up a quiet cove  
 Rolling slide, and lying still  
 Shadow forth the banks at will :  
 Or sometimes they swell and move,  
 Pressing up against the land,  
 With motions of the outer sea :  
 And the self-same influence  
 Controlleth all the soul and sense  
 Of Passion gazing upon thee.  
 His bow-strings slacken'd, languid Love,  
 Leaning his cheek upon his hand,  
 Droops both his wings, regarding thee,  
 And so would languish evermore,  
 Serene, imperial Eleânore.

## VIII.

But when I see thee roam, with tresses  
 unconfined,  
 While the amorous, odorous wind  
 Breathes low between the sunset  
 and the moon  
 Or, in a shadowy saloon,  
 On silken cushions half reclined ;  
 I watch thy grace ; and in its place  
 My heart a charmed slumber keeps,  
 While I muse upon thy face ;  
 And a languid fire creeps  
 Thro' my veins to all my frame,  
 Dissolvingly and slowly : soon  
 From thy rose-red lips my name  
 Floveth : and then, as in a swoon,  
 With dinnng sound my ears are rife,  
 My tremulous tongue faltereth,  
 I lose my color, I lose my breath,  
 I drink the cup of a costly death,  
 Brimm'd with delirious draughts of  
 warmest life.  
 I die with my delight, before  
 I hear what I would hear from thee ;  
 Yet tell my name again to me,  
 I would be dying evermore,  
 So dying ever, Eleânore.

## THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER.

I SEE the wealthy miller yet,  
 His double chin, his portly size,  
 And who that knew him could forget  
 The busy wrinkles round his eyes ?  
 The slow wise smile that, round about  
 His dusty forehead dry curl'd,  
 Seem'd half-within and half-without,  
 And full of dealings with the world ?  
 In yonder chair I see him sit,  
 Three fingers round the old silver  
 cup—  
 I see his gray eyes twinkle yet  
 At his own jest—gray eyes lit up  
 With summer lightnings of a soul  
 So full of summer warmth, so glad,  
 So healthy, sound, and clear and whole,  
 His memory scarce can make me sad.  
 Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :  
 My own sweet Alice, we must die.

There's somewhat in this world amiss  
 Shall be unriddled by and by.  
 There's somewhat flows to us in life,  
 But more is taken quite away.  
 Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,  
 That we may die the self-same day.  
 Have I not found a happy earth ?  
 I least should breathe a thought of  
 pain.

Would God renew me from my birth  
 I'd almost live my life again.  
 So sweet it seems with thee to walk,  
 And once again to woo thee mine—  
 It seems in after-dinner talk  
 Across the walnuts and the wine—  
 To be the long and listless boy  
 I'd almost live my life again.  
 Late-left an orphan of the squire,  
 Where this old mansion mounted high  
 Looks down upon the village spire :  
 For even here, where I and you  
 Have lived and loved alone so long,  
 Each morn my sleep was broken thro'  
 By some wild skylark's matin song.  
 And oft I heard the tender dove  
 In firry woodlands making moan ;  
 But ere I saw your eyes, my love,  
 I had no motion of my own.  
 For scarce my life with fancy play'd  
 Before I dream'd that pleasant  
 dream—  
 Still hither thither idly sway'd  
 Like those long mosses in the stream.

Or from the bridge I leaned to hear  
 The milldam rushing down with  
 noise,  
 And see the minnows everywhere  
 In crystal eddies glance and poise,  
 The tall flag-flowers when they sprung  
 Below the range of stepping stones,  
 Or those three chestnuts near, that  
 hung  
 In masses thick with milky cones.

But, Alice, what an hour was that,  
 When after roving in the woods  
 ('Twas April then), I came and sat  
 Below the chestnuts, when their buds  
 Were glistening to the breezy blue ;  
 And on the slope, an absent fool,  
 I cast me down, nor thought of you,  
 But angled in the higher pool.

A love-song I had somewhere read,  
 An echo from a measured strain,  
 Beat time to nothing in my head  
 From some odd corner of the brain.  
 It haunted me, the morning long,  
 With weary sameness in the rhymes,  
 The phantom of a silent song,  
 That went and came a thousand  
 times.

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood  
 I watch'd the little circles die ;  
 They past into the level flood,  
 And there a vision caught my eye ;  
 The reflex of a beauteous form,  
 A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,  
 As when a sunbeam wavers warm  
 Within the dark and dimpled beck.

For you remember, you had set,  
That morning, on the casement-edge  
A long green box of mignonette,  
And you were leaning from the ledge:  
And when I raised my eyes, above  
They met with two so full and bright—  
Such eyes ! I swear to you, my love,  
That these have never lost their light.

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear  
That I should die an early death :  
For love possess'd the atmosphere,  
And fill'd the breast with purer breath.  
My mother thought, What ails the boy?  
For I was altered and began  
To move about the house with joy,  
And with the certain step of man.

I loved the brimming wave that swam  
"Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,  
The sleepy pool above the dam,  
The pool beneath it never still,  
The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,  
The dark round of the dripping wheel,  
The very air about the door  
Made misty with the floating meal.

And oft in ramblings on the wold,  
When April nights began to blow,  
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,  
I saw the village lights below ;  
I knew your taper far away,  
And full at heart of trembling hope,  
From off the wold I came, and lay  
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

The deep brook groan'd beneath the  
mill ;  
And "by that lamp," I thought, "she  
sits !"

The white chalk-quarry from the hill  
Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits.  
"O that I were beside her now !  
O, will she answer if I call ?  
O, would she give me vow for vow,  
Sweet Alice, if I told her all ?"

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin ;  
And, in the pauses of the wind,  
Sometimes I heard you sing within ;  
Sometimes your shadow cross'd the  
blind.

At last you rose and moved the light,  
And the long shadow of the chair  
Flitted across into the night,  
And all the casement darken'd there.

But when at last I dared to speak,  
The lanes, you know, were white  
with May,

Your ripe lips moved not, but your  
cheek  
Flush'd like the coming of the day ;  
And so it was—half-sly, half-shy.  
You would and would not, little one !  
Although I pleaded tenderly,  
And you and I were all alone.

And slowly was my mother brought  
To yield consent to my desire :  
She wish'd me happy, but she thought  
I might have look'd a little higher ;  
And I was young—too young to wed :

"Yet must I love her for your sake ;  
Go fetch your Alice here," she said :  
Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

And down I went to fetch my bride ;  
But, Alice, you were ill at ease ;  
This dress and that by turns you tried,  
Too fearful that you should not  
please.

I loved you better for your fears,  
I knew you could not look but well ;  
And dew, that would have fall'n in  
tears,  
I kiss'd away before they fell.

I watch'd the litle flutterings,  
The doubt my mother would not see ;  
She spoke at large of many things,  
And at the last she spoke of me ;  
And turning look'd upon your face,  
As near this door you sat apart,  
And rose, and, with a silent grace  
Approaching, press'd you heart to  
heart.

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song  
I gave you, Alice, on the day  
When, arm in arm, we went along,  
A pensivo pair, and you were gay  
With bridal flowers—that I may seem,  
As in the nights of old, to lie  
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,  
While those full chestnuts whisper  
by.

It is the miller's daughter,  
And she is grown so dear, so dear,  
That I would be the jewel  
That trembles at her ear,  
For hid in ringlets day and night,  
I'd touch her neck so warm and  
white.

And I would be the girdle  
About her dainty dainty waist,  
And her heart would beat against  
me,

In sorrow and in rest,  
And I should know if it beat right,  
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,  
And all day long to fall and rise  
Upon her balmy bosom,  
With her laughter or her sighs,  
And I would lie so light, so light,  
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

A trifle, sweet ! which true love spells—  
True love interprets—right alone.  
His light upon the letter dwells,  
For all the spirit is his own.  
So if I waste words now, in truth  
You must blame Love. His early rage  
Had force to make me rhyme in youth  
And makes me talk too much in age.

And now those vivid hours are gone,  
Like my own life to me thou art,  
Where Past and Present, wound in one  
Do make a garland for the heart :  
So sing that other song I made,

Half-anger'd with my happy lot,  
The day, when in the chesnut shade  
I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that bath us in the net  
Can he pass, and we forget?  
Many suns arise and set.  
Many a chance the years beget.  
Love the gift is Love the debt.

Ever so.  
Love is hurt with jar and fret,  
Love is made a vague regret.  
Eyes with idle tears are wet.  
Idle habit links us yet.  
What is love? for we forget:  
Ah, no! no!

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True  
wife,  
Round my true heart thine arms  
entwine;

My other dearer life in life,  
Look thro' my very soul with thine!  
Untouch'd with any shade of years.  
May those kind eyes forever dwell!  
They have not shed a many tears,  
Dear eyes, since first I knew them  
well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their  
part  
Of sorrow: for when time was ripe,  
The still affection of the heart  
Became an outward breathing type,  
That into stillness past again.  
And left a want, unknown before:  
Although the loss that brought us pain,  
That loss but made us love the more.

With farther lookings on. The kiss,  
The woven arms, seem but to be  
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,  
The comfort, I have found in thee:  
But that God bless thee, dear—who  
wrought

Two spirits to one equal mind—  
With blessings beyond hope or thought,  
With blessings which no words can  
find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,  
To yon old mill across the wolds;  
For look, the sunset, south and north,  
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,  
And fires your narrow casement glass,  
Touching the sullen pool below:  
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass  
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.

## F A T I M A .

O LOVE, Love, Love! O withering  
night!  
O sun, that from thy noonday height  
Shudderest when I strain my sight,  
Throbbing thro' all thy heat and light,  
Lo, falling from my constant mind,  
Lo, parch'd and wither'd, deaf and  
blind,  
I whirl like leaves in roaring wind.

Last night I wasted hateful hours  
Below the city's eastern towers:  
I thirsted for the brooks, the showers:  
I roll'd among the tender flowers:  
I crush'd them on my breast, my  
mouth:

I look'd athwart the burning drouth  
Of that long desert to the south.

Last night when some one spoke his  
name,  
From my swift blood that went and  
came

A thousand little shafts of flame  
Were shiver'd in my narrow frames.  
O Love, O fire! once he drew  
With one long kiss my whole soul  
thro'  
My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

Before he mounts the hill, I know  
He cometh quickly: from below  
Sweet gales, as from deep gardens,  
blow

Before him, striking on my brow.  
In my dry brain my spirit soon,  
Down-deepening from swoon to  
swoon,

Faints like a dazzled morning moon.  
The wind sounds like a silver wire,  
And from beyond the noon a fire  
Is pour'd upon the hills, and nigher  
The skies stoop down in their desire,  
And, isled in sudden seas of light,  
My heart, pierced thro' with fierce  
delight,

Bursts into blossom in his sight  
My whole soul waiting silently,  
All naked in a sultry sky,  
Droops blinded with his shining eye:  
I will possess him or will die.

I will grow round him in his place,  
Grow, live, die looking on his face,  
Die, dying, clasp'd in his embrace.

## ÆNONE.

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
The swimming vapor slopes athwart  
the glen,

Puts forth an arm, and creeps from  
pine to pine,  
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either  
hand  
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway  
down

Hang rich in flowers, and far below  
them roars  
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n  
ravine

In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus  
Stands up and takes the morning: but  
in front

The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal  
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,  
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon  
Mournful Ænone, wandering forlorn

Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.  
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck  
Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.  
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,  
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade  
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill:  
The grasshopper is silent in the grass:  
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,  
Rests like a shadow, and the cicala sleeps.  
The purple flowers droop: the golden bee  
Is lily-cradled; I alone awake.  
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,  
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,  
And I am all aware of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves  
That house the cold crown'd snake! O mountain brooks,  
I am the daughter of a River-God,  
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all  
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls  
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,  
A cloud that gather'd shape: for it may be  
That, while I speak of it, a little while  
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
I waited underneath the dawning hills,  
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,  
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine:  
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,  
Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,  
white-hooved,  
Came up from reedy Simois all alone.  
"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft:  
Far up the solitary morning smote  
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes  
I sat alone: white-breasted like a star  
Fronting the dawn he moved: a leopard skin  
Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair

Cluster'd about his temples like a God's;  
And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens  
When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart  
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.  
"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm  
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold.  
That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd  
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of speech  
Came down upon my heart.

"My own Ænone,  
Beautiful-brow'd Ænone, my own soul,  
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingrav'n  
"For the most fair," would seem to award it thine,  
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt  
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace  
Of movement, and the charm of married brows."

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,  
And added, 'This was cast upon the board,  
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods  
Ranged in the halls of Peleus; where-upon  
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere due:  
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,  
Delivering, that to me, by common voice  
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,  
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each  
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave  
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,  
Mayst well behold them, unbeheld, unheard  
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.  
It was the deep midnoon; one silvery cloud  
Had lost his way between the piney sides  
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,  
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,  
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,  
Violet, amaranthus, and asphodel,  
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,  
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,

This way and that, in many a wild festoon  
 Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
 With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.  
 On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,  
 And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud,  
 and lean'd  
 Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew,

Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom  
 Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows  
 Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods

Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made

Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
 Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue  
 Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many a vale  
 And river-sunder'd champaign clothed with corn,

Or labor'd mines undrainable of ore.  
 Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,  
 From many an inland town and haven large,

Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing citadel.  
 In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, hearken ere I die.  
 Still she spake on and still she spake of power,

'Which in all action is the end of all;  
 Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred

And throned of wisdom—from all neighbor crowns  
 Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand  
 Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,

From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,  
 A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,

Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power,  
 Only, are likest gods, who have attain'd

Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss  
 In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.  
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit

Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power  
 Flatter'd his spirit; but Pallas where she stood

Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs  
 O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear

Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,  
 The while, above, her full and earnest eye

Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek

Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,

These three alone lead life to sovereign power.

Yet not for power, (power of herself Would come uncall'd for) but to live by law,

Acting the law we live by without fear;

And, because right is right, to follow right

Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

"Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.  
 Again she said: 'I woo thee not with gifts.

Sequel of guerdon could not alter me  
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,

So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,  
 If gazing on divinity disrobed  
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of

fair,  
 Unbiass'd by self-profit, oh! rest thee

sure  
 That I shall love thee well and cleave

to thee,  
 So that my vigor, wedded to thy

blood,  
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a

God's,  
 To push thee forward thro' a life of

shocks,  
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance

grow  
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will.

Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,  
 Commensure perfect freedom.'

And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O Paris,

Give it to Pallas,' but he heard me not,  
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is

me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, hearken ere I die.

Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,  
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in

Paphian wells,  
 With rosy slender fingers backward

drew  
 From her warm brows and bosom her

deep hair  
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid

throat  
 And shoulder: from the violet's her

light foot  
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her round-

ed form

Between the shadows of the vine-  
bunches  
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she  
moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
She with a subtle smile in her mild  
eyes,  
The herald of her triumph, drawing  
nigh  
Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise  
thee  
The fairest and most loving wife in  
Greece.'  
She spoke and laugh'd: I shut my  
sight for fear:  
But when I look'd, Paris had raised  
his arm  
And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,  
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,  
And I was left alone within the bower;  
And from that time to this I am alone,  
And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Fairest — why fairest wife? am I not  
fair?  
My love hath told me so a thousand  
times.  
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,  
When I past by, a wild and wanton  
pard,  
Eyed like the evening star, with play-  
ful tail  
Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most  
loving is she?  
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that  
my arms  
Were wound about thee, and my hot  
lips prest  
Close, close to thine in that quick-fall-  
ing dew  
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn  
rains  
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
They came, they cut away my tallest  
pines,  
My dark tall pines, that plumed the  
craggy ledge.  
High over the blue gorge, and all be-  
tween  
The snowy peak and snow-white cata-  
ract  
Foster'd the callow eaglet — from be-  
neath  
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the  
dark morn  
The panther's roar came muffled, while  
I sat  
Low in the valley. Never, never more  
Shall lone Enone see the morning  
mist  
Sweep thro' them; never see them  
overlaid  
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver  
cloud,  
Between the loud stream and the trem-  
bling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd  
folds,  
Among the fragments tumbled from  
the glens,  
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with  
her,  
The Abominable, that uninvited came  
Into the fair Peleñan banquet-hall,  
And cast the golden fruit upon the  
board,  
And bred this change; that I might  
speak my mind,  
And tell her to her face how much I  
hate  
Her presence, hated both of Gods and  
men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand  
times,  
In this green valley, under this green  
hill,  
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this  
stone?  
Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with  
tears?  
O happy tears, and how unlike to  
these!  
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see  
my face?  
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my  
weight?  
O death, death, death, thou ever float-  
ing cloud,  
There are enough unhappy on this  
earth,  
Pass by the happy souls, that love to  
live:  
I pray thee, pass before my light of  
life,  
And shadow all my soul, that I may  
die.  
Thou weighest heavy on the heart  
within,  
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me  
die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts  
Do shape themselves within me, more  
and more,  
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
Dead sounds at night come from the  
inmost hills,  
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see  
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a  
mother  
Conjectures of the features of her  
child  
Ere it is born: her child! — a shudder  
comes  
Across me: never child be born of me,  
Unblest, to vex me with his father's  
eyes!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,  
Lest their shrill happy laughter come  
to me  
Walking the cold and starless road of  
Death

Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
 With the Greek woman. I will rise  
 and go  
 Down into Troy, and ere the stars  
 come forth  
 Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she  
 says  
 A fire dances before her, and a sound  
 Rings ever in her ears of armed men.  
 What this may be I know not, but I  
 know  
 That, wheresoe'er I am by night and  
 day,  
 All earth and air seem only burning  
 fire."

## THE SISTERS.

We were two daughters of one race:  
 She was the fairest in the face:  
 The wind is blowing in turret and  
 tree.  
 They were together, and she fell:  
 Therefore revenge became me well.  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 She died: she went to burning flame:  
 She mix'd her ancient blood with  
 shame.  
 The wind is howling in turret and  
 tree.  
 Whole weeks and months, and early  
 and late,  
 To win his love I lay in wait:  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 I made a feast; I bade him come;  
 I won his love, I brought him home.  
 The wind is roaring in turret and  
 tree.  
 And after supper, on a bed,  
 Upon my lap he laid his head:  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 I kiss'd his eyelids into rest:  
 His ruddy cheek upon my breast.  
 The wind is raging in turret and  
 tree.  
 I hated him with the hate of hell,  
 But I loved his beauty passing well.  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 I rose up in the silent night:  
 I made my dagger sharp and bright.  
 The wind is raving in turret and  
 tree.  
 As half-asleep his breath he drew,  
 Three times I stabb'd him thro' and  
 thro'.  
 O the Earl was fair to see!  
 I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,  
 He look'd so grand when he was dead.  
 The wind is blowing in turret and  
 tree.  
 I wrapt his body in the sheet,  
 And laid him at his mother's feet.  
 O the Earl was fair to see!

## TO

WITH THE FOLLOWING POEM.

I SEND you here a sort of allegory,  
 (For you will understand it) of a soul,

A sinful soul possess'd of many gifts,  
 A spacious garden full of flowering  
 weeds,  
 A glorious Devil, large in heart and  
 brain,  
 That did love Beauty only, (Beauty  
 seen  
 In all varieties of mould and mind)  
 And Knowledge for its beauty; or if  
 Good,  
 Good only for its beauty, seeing not  
 That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge,  
 are three sisters  
 That doat upon each other, friends to  
 man,  
 Living together under the same roof,  
 And never can be sunder'd without  
 tears.  
 And he that shuts Love out, in turn  
 shall be  
 Shut out from Love, and on her thresh-  
 old lie  
 Howling in outer darkness. Not for  
 this  
 Was common clay ta'en from the com-  
 mon earth,  
 Moulded by God, and temper'd with  
 the tears  
 Of angels to the perfect shape of man.

## THE PALACE OF ART.

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-  
 house,  
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.  
 I said, "O Soul, make merry and ca-  
 rouse,  
 Dear soul, for all is well."  
 A huge crag-platform, smooth as bur-  
 nish'd brass,  
 I chose. The ranged ramparts bright  
 From level meadow-bates of deep grass  
 Suddenly scaled the light.  
 Thereon I built it firm. Of ledgo or  
 shelf  
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair.  
 My soul would live alone unto herself  
 In her high palace there.  
 And "while the world runs round and  
 round," I said,  
 "Reign thou apart, a quiet king,  
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his sted-  
 fast shade  
 Sleeps on his luminous ring."  
 To which my soul made answer read-  
 ily:  
 "Trust me, in bliss I shall abide  
 In this great mansion, that is built for  
 me,  
 So royal-rich and wide."

\* \* \* \* \*

Four courts I made, East, West and  
 South and North,  
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom  
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted  
 forth  
 A flood of fountain foam.

- And round the cool green courts there  
 ran a row  
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty  
 woods,  
 Echoing all night to that sonorous  
 flow  
 Of spouted fountain-floods.
- And round the roofs a gilded gallery  
 That lent broad verge to distant  
 lands,  
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where  
 the sky  
 Dipt down to sea and sands.
- From those four jets four currents in  
 one well  
 Across the mountain stream'd below  
 In misty folds, that floating as they  
 fell  
 Lit up a torrent-bow.
- And high on every peak a statue seem'd  
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up  
 A cloud of incense of all odor steam'd  
 From out a golden cup.  
 So that she thought, "And who shall  
 gaze upon  
 My palace with unblinded eyes,  
 While this great bow will waver in the  
 sun,  
 And that sweet incense rise?"
- For that sweet incense rose and never  
 fail'd,  
 And, while day sank or mounted  
 higher,  
 The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,  
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.
- Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd  
 and traced,  
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson  
 fires
- From shadow'd frosts of arches inter-  
 laced,  
 And tipt with groat-like spires.
- \* \* \* \*
- Full of long-sounding corridors it was,  
 That over-vaulted grateful gloom,  
 Thro' which the livelong day my soul  
 did pass,  
 Well-pleas'd, from room to room.
- Full of great rooms and small the pal-  
 ace stood,  
 All various, each a perfect whole  
 From living Nature, fit for every mood  
 And change of my still soul.
- For some were hung with arras green  
 and blue,  
 Showing a gaudy summer-morn.  
 Where with puff'd cheek the belted  
 hunter blew  
 His wretched bugle-horn.
- One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of  
 sand,  
 And some one pacing there alone,  
 Who paced for ever in a glimmering  
 land,  
 Lit with a low large moon.
- One show'd an iron coast and angry  
 waves.  
 You seem'd to hear them climb and  
 fall  
 And roar rock-thwarted under bellow-  
 ing caves,  
 Beneath the windy wall.
- And one, a full-fed river winding slow  
 By herds upon an endless plain,  
 The ragged rims of thunder brooding  
 low,  
 With shadow-streaks of rain.
- And one, the reapers at their sultry  
 toil.  
 In front they bound the sheaves.  
 Behind  
 Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,  
 And hoary to the wind.
- And one, a foreground black with  
 stones and slags,  
 Beyond, a line of heights, and higher  
 All barr'd with long white cloud the  
 scornful crags,  
 And highest, snow and fr.
- And one, an English home—gray twi-  
 light pour'd  
 On dewy pastures, dewy trees,  
 Softer than sleep—all things in order  
 stored,  
 A haunt of ancient Peace.
- Nor these alone, but every landscape  
 fair  
 As fit for every mood of mind,  
 Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was  
 there  
 Not less than truth design'd,
- \* \* \* \*
- Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,  
 In tracts of pasture sunny warm,  
 Beneath branch-work of costly sar-  
 donyx  
 Sat smiling, babe in arm.
- Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,  
 Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair  
 Wound with white roses, slept St.  
 Cecily:  
 An angel look'd at her.
- Or thronging all one porch of Paradise,  
 A group of Houris bow'd to see  
 The dying Islamite, with hands and  
 eyes  
 That said, We wait for thee.
- Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son  
 In some fair space of sloping greens  
 Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,  
 And watch'd by weeping queens.
- Or hollowing one hand against his ear,  
 To list a foot-fall, ere he saw  
 The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian  
 king to hear  
 Of wisdom and of law.
- Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,  
 And many a tract of palm and rice,  
 The throne of Indian Cama slowly  
 sail'd  
 A summer fann'd with spiee.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew un-  
clasp'd,  
From off her shoulder backward  
borne :

From one hand droop'd a crocus : one  
hand grasp'd  
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flushed Ganymede, his roy  
thigh

Half-buried in the Eagle's down,  
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky  
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone : but every legend fair  
Which the supreme Caucasian mind  
Carved out of Nature for itself, was  
there,

Not less than life, design'd.

\* \* \* \* \*

Then in the towers I placed great bells  
that swung,

Moved of themselves, with silver  
sound :

And with choice paintings of wise men  
I hung

The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph  
strong,

Beside him Shakespeare bland and  
mild :

And there the world-worn Dante  
grasp'd his song,  
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest;  
A million wrinkles carved his skin,  
A hundred winters snow'd upon his  
breast

From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set  
Many an arch high up did lift,

And angels rising and descending met  
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd  
With cycles of the human tale

Of this wide world, the times of every  
land

So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,  
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads  
and stings ;

Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro  
The heads and crowns of kings ;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break  
or bind

All force in bonds that might endure,  
And here once more like some sick  
man declined,  
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod : and those  
great bells

Began to chime. She took her throne:  
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,  
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' colored  
flame

Two godlike faces gazed below ;  
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Ver-  
ulam,  
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their  
motion were  
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,  
Betwixt the slender shafts were blaz-  
on'd fair

In diverse raiment strange :

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber,  
emerald, blue,

Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,  
And from her lips, as morn from Mem-  
non, drew  
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong  
Her low preamble all alone,  
More than my soul to hear her echo'd  
song

Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful  
mirth,

Joying to feel herself alive,  
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible  
earth,

Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself : " All these  
are mine,

And let the world have peace or wars,  
'T is one to me." She—when young  
night divine

Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious  
toils—

Lit light in wreaths and anadems,  
And pure quintessences of precious oils  
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her hands  
and cried,

" I marvel if my still delight

In this great house so royal-rich, and  
wide,

Be flatter'd to the height.

" O all things fair to sate my various  
eyes !

O shapes and hues that please me  
well !

O silent faces of the Great and Wise,  
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

" O God-like isolation which art mine,  
I can but count thee perfect gain,  
What time I watch the darkening  
droves of swine

That range on yonder plain.

In filthy sloughs they roll a purulent  
skin,

They graze and wallow, breed and  
sleep ;

And oft some brainless devil enters in,  
And drives them to the deep."

Then of the moral instinct would she  
prate,

And of the rising from the dead,

As hers by right of full-accomplish'd  
Fate ;  
And at the last she said :

" I take possession of man's mind and deed.

I care not what the sects may brawl,  
I sit as God holding no form of creed,  
But contemplating all."

\* \* \* \*

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth  
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,  
Yet not the less held she her solemn  
mirth,  
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd : so  
three years  
She prosper'd : on the fourth she fell  
Like Herod, when the shout was in his  
ears,  
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,  
God, before whom ever lie bare  
The abyssal deeps of Personality,  
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she  
turn'd her sight,  
The airy hand confusion wrought,  
Wrote " Mene, mene," and divided  
quite  
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her soli-  
tude  
Fell on her, from which mood was  
born

Scorn of herself ; again, from out that  
mood  
Laughter at her self-scorn.

" What ! is not this my place of  
strength ?" she said.

" My spacious mansion built for me,  
Whereof the strong foundation-stones  
were laid

Since my first memory ?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood  
Uncertain shapes : and unawares  
On white-eyed phantasms weeping  
tears of blood,  
And horrible nightmares.

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of  
flame,

And, with dim fretted foreheads all,  
On corpses three-months-old at noon  
she came,

That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without  
light

Or power of movement, seem'd my  
soul,

Mid onward-sloping motions infinite  
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of  
sand ;

Left on the shore ; that hears all  
night

The plunging seas draw backward from  
the land  
Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance  
Join'd not, but stood, and standing  
saw

The hollow orb of moving Circumstance  
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had  
curl'd.

" No voice," she shriek'd in that lone  
hall,

" No voice breaks thro' the stillness of  
this world :  
One deep, deep silence all !"

She, mouldering with the dull earth's  
mouldering sod,

Inwraught tenfold in slothful shame.  
Lay there exiled from eternal God,  
Lost to her place and name ;

And death and life she hated equally,  
And nothing saw, for her despair,  
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,  
No comfort anywhere.

Remaining utterly confused with fears,  
And ever worse with growing time,  
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,  
And all alone in crime :

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt  
round

With blackness as a solid wall,  
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully  
sound  
Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking  
slow,

In doubt and great perplexity,  
A little before moon-rise hears the low  
Moan of an unknown sea ;

And knows not if it be thunder or  
a sound

Of rocks thrown down, or one deep  
cry

Of great wild beasts ; then thinketh,  
" I have found  
A new land, but I die."

She howl'd aloud, " I am on fire within.  
There comes no murmur of reply.  
What is it that will take away my sin,  
And save me lest I die ?"

So when four years were wholly fin-  
ished,

She threw her royal robes away,  
" Make me a cottage in the vale," she  
said,

" Where I may mourn and pray."

" Yet pull not down my palace towers,  
that are

So lightly, beautifully built :

Perchance I may return with others  
there

When I have purged my guilt."

## LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

LADY Clara Vere de Vere,  
Of me you shall not win renown :  
You thought to break a country heart  
For pastime, ere you went to town.  
At me you smiled, but unbegulled  
I saw the snare, and I retired :  
The daughter of a hundred Earls,  
You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
I know you proud to bear your name,  
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,  
Too proud to care from whence I  
came.

Nor would I break for your sweet sake  
A heart that doats on truer charms.  
A simple maiden in her flower  
Is worth a hundred coats-of-arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
Some meeker pupil you must find,  
For were you queen of all that is,  
I could not stoop to such a mind.  
You sought to prove how I could love,  
And my disdain is my reply.  
The lion on your old stone gates  
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
You put strange memories in my  
head.

Not thrice your branching limes have  
blown

Since I beheld young Laurence dead.  
O, your sweet eyes, your low replies :  
A great enchantress you may be ;  
But there was that across his throat  
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
When thus he met his mother's view,  
She had the passions of her kind,  
She spake some certain truths of you.  
Indeed I heard one bitter word  
That scarce is fit for you to hear ;  
Her manners had not that repose  
Which stamps the caste of Vere de  
Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
There stands a spectre in your hall :  
The guilt of blood is at your door :  
You changed a wholesome heart to  
gall.

You held your course without remorse.  
To make him trust his modest worth,  
And, last, you fix'd a vacant stare,  
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,  
From yon blue heavens above us bent,  
The gardener Adam and his wife  
Smile at the claims of long descent.  
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,  
'Tis only noble to be good.

Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
And simple faith than Norman blood.  
I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,  
You pine among your halls and  
towers :

The languid light of your proud eyes

Is wearied of the rolling hours.  
In glowing health, with boundless  
wealth,  
But sickening of a vague disease,  
You know so ill to deal with time,  
You needs must play such pranks as  
these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,  
If Time be heavy on your hands,  
Are there no beggars at your gate,  
Nor any poor about your lands ?  
Oh ! teach the orphan-boy to read,  
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,  
Pray Heaven for a human heart,  
And let the foolish yeoman go.

## THE MAY QUEEN.

You must wake and call me early, call  
me early, mother dear,  
To-morrow 'll be the happiest time of  
all the glad New-year ;  
Of all the glad New-year, mother, the  
maddest, merriest day ;  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

There's many a black, black eye, they  
say, but none so bright as mine ;  
There's Margaret and Mary, there's  
Kate and Caroline :  
But none so fair as little Alice in all  
the land they say,  
So I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that  
I shall never wake,  
If you do not call me loud when the  
day begins to break :  
But I must gather knots of flowers, and  
buds and garlands gay,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May,  
mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

As I came up the valley whom think  
ye should I see,  
But Robin leaning on the bridge be-  
neath the hazel-tree ?  
He thought of that sharp look, mother,  
I gave him yesterday,—

But I'm to be Queen o' the May,  
mother, I'm to be Queen o' the May.

He thought I was a ghost, mother, for  
I was all in white,  
And I ran by him without speaking,  
like a flash of light.

They call me cruel-hearted, but I care  
not what they say,  
For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

They say he's dying all for love, but  
that can never be :  
They say his heart is breaking, mother,  
—what is that to me ?  
There's many a bolder lad 'll woo me  
any summer day,  
And I'm to be Queen o' the May,  
mother I'm to be Queen o' the May.

Little Effie shall go with me to-morrow  
to the green,

And you'll be there, too, mother, to see  
me made the Queen :

For the shepherd lads on every side 'll  
come from far away,

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The honeysuckle round the porch has  
wov'n its wavy bowers,

And by the meadow-trenches blow the  
faint sweet cuckoo-flowers ;

And the wild marsh-marigold shines  
like fire in swamps and hollows  
gray,

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

The night-winds come and go, mother,  
upon the meadow grass ;

And the happy stars above them seem  
to brighten as they pass,

There will not be a drop of rain the  
whole of the livelong day.

And I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

All the valley, mother, 'll be fresh and  
green and still,

And the cowslip and the crowfoot are  
over all the hill,

And the rivulet in the flowery dale 'll  
merrily glance and play.

For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

So you must wake and call me early,  
call me early, mother dear,

To-morrow 'll be the happiest time of  
all the glad New-year :

To-morrow 'll be of all the year the  
maddest merriest day,

For I'm to be Queen o' the May, mother,  
I'm to be Queen o' the May.

#### NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

If you're waking call me early, call me  
early, mother dear.

For I would see the sun rise upon the  
glad New-year.

It is the last New-year that I shall ever  
see,

Then you may lay me low i' the mould  
and think no more of me.

To-night I saw the sun set : he set and  
left behind

The good old year, the dear old time,  
and all my peace of mind ;

And the New-year's coming up, mother,  
but I shall never see

The blossom on the blackthorn, the  
leaf upon the tree.

Last May we made a crown of flowers ;  
we had a merry day ;

Beneath the hawthorn on the green  
they made me Queen of May :

And we danced about the may-pole  
and in the hazel copse,

Till Charles's Wain came out above the  
tall white chimney tops.

There's not a flower on all the hills :  
the frost is on the pane :

I only wish to live till the snowdrops  
come again :

I wish the snow would melt and the  
sun come out on high :

I long to see a flower so before the day  
I die.

The building rook 'll caw from the  
windy tall elm-tree,

And the tufted plover pipe along the  
fallow lea,

And the swallow 'll come back again  
with summer o'er the wave,

But I shall lie alone, mother, within  
the mouldering grave.

Upon the chancel-casement, and upon  
that grave of mine,

In the early early morning the summer  
sun 'll shine,

Before the red cock crows from the  
farm upon the hill,

When you are warm-asleep, mother,  
and all the world is still.

When the flowers come again, mother,  
beneath the waning light,

You'll never see me more in the long  
gray fields at night ;

When from the dry dark wold the  
summer airs blow cool

On the oat-grass and the sword-grass,  
and the bulrush in the pool.

You'll bury me, my mother, just  
beneath the hawthorn shade,

And you'll come sometimes and see me  
where I am lowly laid.

I shall not forget you, mother, I shall  
hear you when you pass,

With your feet above my head in the  
long and pleasant grass.

I have been wild and wayward, but  
you'll forgive me now ;

You'll kiss me, my own mother, and  
forgive me ere I go ;

Nay, nay, you must not weep, nor let  
your grief be wild,

You should not fret for me, mother,  
you have another child.

If I can I'll come again, mother, from  
out my resting-place ;

Tho' you'll not see me, mother, I shall  
look upon your face ;

Tho' I cannot speak a word, I shall  
harken what you say,

And be often, often with you when  
you think I'm far away.

Good-night, good-night, when I have  
said good-night for ever more,

And you see me carried out from the  
threshold of the door ;

Don't let Effie come to see me till my  
grave be growing green ;

She'll be a better child to you than  
ever I have been.

She'll find my garden-tools upon the  
granary floor :  
Let her take 'em : they are hers : I  
shall never garden more :  
But tell her, when I'm gone, to train  
the rose-bush that I set  
About the parlor-window and the box  
of mignonette.

Good-night, sweet mother : call me  
before the day is born.  
All night I lie awake, but I fall asleep  
at morn ;  
But I would see the sun rise upon the  
glad New-year,  
So, if you're waking, call me, call me  
early, mother dear.

## CONCLUSION.

I THOUGHT to pass away before, and  
yet alive I am ;  
And in the fields all round I hear the  
bleating of the lamb.  
How sadly, I remember, rose the morn-  
ing of the year !  
To die before the snowdrop came, and  
now the violet's here.

O sweet is the new violet, that comes  
beneath the skies,  
And sweeter is the young lamb's voice  
to me that cannot rise,  
And sweet is all the land about, and  
all the flowers that blow,  
And sweeter far is death than life to  
me that long to go.

It seem'd so hard at first, mother, to  
leave the blessed sun,  
And now it seems as hard to stay, and  
yet His will be done !  
But still I think it can't be long before  
I find release,  
And that good man, the clergyman,  
has told me words of peace.

O blessings on his kindly voice and on  
his silver hair !  
And blessings on his whole life long,  
until he meet me there !  
O blessings on his kindly heart and on  
his silver head !  
A thousand times I blest him, as he  
knelt beside my bed.

He taught me all the mercy, for he  
show'd me all the sin.  
Now, tho' my lamp was lighted late,  
there's One will let me in :  
Nor would I now be well, mother,  
again, if that could be,  
For my desire is but to pass to Him  
that died for me.

I did not hear the dog howl, mother, or  
the death-watch beat,  
There came a sweeter token when the  
night and morning meet :  
But sit beside my bed, mother, and put  
your hand in mine,  
And Effie on the other side, and I will  
tell the sign.

All in the wild March-morning I heard  
the angels call,  
It was when the moon was setting, and  
the dark was over all ;  
The trees began to whisper, and the  
wind began to roll,  
And in the wild March-morning I  
heard them call my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you  
and Effie dear ;  
I saw you sitting in the house, and I  
no longer here ;  
With all my strength I pray'd for both  
and so I felt resign'd  
And up the valley came a swell of  
music on the wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and I lis-  
ten'd in my bed,  
And then did something speak to me  
—I know not what was said ;  
For great delight and sluddering took  
hold of all my mind,  
And up the valley came again the  
music on the wind.

But you were sleeping and I said, " It's  
not for them : it's mine."  
And if it comes three times, I thought,  
I take it for a sign.  
And once again it came, and close  
beside the window-bars,  
Then seem'd to go right up to Heaven  
and die among the stars.

So now I think my time is near. I trust  
it is. I know  
The blessed music went that way my  
soul will have to go.  
And for myself, indeed, I care not if I  
go to-day.

But, Effie, you must comfort her when  
I am past away.

And say to Robin a kind word, and tell  
him not to fret ;  
There's many a worthier than I, would  
make him happy yet.

If I had lived—I cannot tell—I might  
have been his wife ;  
But all these things have ceased to be,  
with my desire of life.

O look ! the sun begins to rise, the  
heavens are in a glow ;  
He shines upon a hundred fields, and  
all of them I know.

And there I move no longer now, and  
there his light may shine—  
Wild flowers in the valley for other  
hands than mine.

O sweet and strange it seems to me,  
that ere this day is done,  
The voice, that now is speaking, may  
be beyond the sun—  
For ever and for ever with those just  
souls and true—  
And what is life, that we should moan ?  
why make we such ado ?  
For ever and for ever, all in a blessed  
home—

And there to wait a little while till you  
and Effie come—  
To lie within the light of God, as I lie  
upon your breast—  
And the wicked cease from troubling,  
and the weary are at rest.

*Sotophagi*  
THE LOTOSEATERS.

"COURAGE! he said, and pointed to-  
ward the land,  
"This mounting wave will roll us  
shoreward soon."  
In the afternoon they came unto a land,  
In which it seemed always afternoon,  
All round the coast the languid air did  
swoon,  
Breathing like one that hath a weary  
dream.  
Full-faced above the valley stood the  
moon;  
And like a downward smoke, the slender  
stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and  
fall did seem,

A land of streams! some like a down-  
ward smoke.  
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn,  
did go;  
And some thro' wavering lights and  
shadows broke,  
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam  
below.  
They saw the gleaming river seaward  
flow  
From the inner land: far off, three  
mountain-tops,  
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flash'd: and, dew'd with  
showery drops,  
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the  
woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown  
In the red West: thro' mountain clefts  
the dale  
Was seen far inland, and the yellow  
down  
Border'd with palm, and many a wind-  
ing vale  
And meadow, set with slender galin-  
gale;  
A land where all things always seem'd  
the same!  
And round about the keel with faces  
pale,  
Dark faces pale against that rosy  
flame,  
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eat-  
ers came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted  
stem,  
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof  
they gave  
To each, but whose did receive of them,  
And taste, to him the gushing of the  
wave  
Far far away did seem to mourn and  
rave,

On alien shores; and if his fellow  
spake,  
His voice was thin, as voices from the  
grave;  
And deep-asleep he seem'd yet all  
awake,  
And music in his ears his beating  
heart did make.  
They sat them down upon the yellow  
sand  
Between the sun and moon upon the  
shore;  
And sweet it was to dream of Father-  
land,  
Of child, and wife, and slave: but  
evermore  
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the  
oar,  
Weary the wandering fields of barren  
foam.  
Then some one said, "We will return  
no more;"  
And all at once they sang, "Our island  
home  
Is far beyond the wave; we will no  
longer roam."

CHORIC SONG.

I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer  
falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the  
grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between  
walls  
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming  
pass;  
Music that gentler on the spirit lies,  
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;  
Music that brings sweet sleep down  
from the blissful skies.  
Here are cool mosses deep,  
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,  
And in the stream the long-leaved  
flowers weep,  
And from the craggy ledge the poppy  
hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heavi-  
ness,  
And utterly consumed with sharp dis-  
tress,  
While all things else have rest from  
weariness?  
All things have rest: why should we  
toil alone,  
We only toil, who are the first of  
things,  
And make perpetual moan,  
Still from one sorrow to another  
thrown;  
Nor ever fold our wings,  
And cease from wanderings,  
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy  
balm;  
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
"There is no joy but calm!"  
Why should we only toil, the roof and  
crown of things?

## III.

Lo! in the middle of the wood,  
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the  
bud

With winds upon the branch, and there  
Grows green and broad, and takes no  
care,

Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow  
Falls, and floats adown the air.

Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-  
mellow,

Drops in a silent autumn night.

All its allotted length of days,  
The flower ripens in its place,  
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath  
no toil,

Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,

Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.

Death is the end of life; ah, why

Should life all labor be?

Let us alone. Time driveth onward  
fast,

And in a little while our lips are dumb,  
Let us alone. What is it that will last?

All things are taken from us, and be-  
come

Portions and parcels of the dreadful  
Past.

Let us alone. What pleasure can we  
have

To war with evil? Is there any peace  
In ever climbing up the climbing  
wave?

All things have rest, and ripen toward  
the grave

In silence; ripen, fall and cease;

Give us long rest or death, dark death,  
or dreamful ease.

## V.

How sweet it were, hearing the down-  
ward stream,

With half-shut eyes ever to seem

Falling asleep in a half dream!

To dream and dream, like yonder am-  
ber light,

Which will not leave the myrrh-bush  
on the height;

To hear each other's whisper'd speech;

Eating the Lotos day by day,

To watch the crisping ripples on the  
beach,

And tender curving lines of creamy  
spray;

To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded melan-  
choly;

To muse and brood and live again in  
memory,

With those old faces of our Infancy  
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,

Two handfuls of white dust, shut in  
an urn of brass!

## VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded  
lives,

And dear the last embraces of our  
wives

And their warm tears: but all hath  
suffer'd change,

For surely now our household hearths  
are cold:

Our sons inherit us: our looks are  
strange;

And we should come like ghosts to  
trouble joy.

Or else the island princes over-bold  
Have eat our substance, and the min-  
strel sings

Before them of the ten years' war in  
Troy,

And our great deeds, as half-forgotten  
things,

Is there confusion in the little isle?

Let what is broken so remain.

The Gods are hard to reconcile:

'Tis hard to settle order once again.

There is confusion worse than death,

Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,

Long labor unto aged breath,

Sore task to hearts worn out with many  
wars

And eyes grown dim with gazing on  
the pilot-stars.

## VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and  
moly,

How sweet (while warm airs lull us,  
blowing lowly)

With half-dropt eyelids still,

Beneath a heaven dark and holy,

To watch the long bright river draw-  
ing slowly

His waters from the purple hill—

To hear the dewy echoes calling

From cave to cave thro' the thick-  
twined vine—

To watch the emerald-color'd water  
falling

Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath  
divine!

Only to hear and see the far-off spark-  
ling brine,

Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out  
beneath the pine.

## VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren  
peak:

The Lotos blows by every winding  
creek:

All day the wind breathes low with  
mellow tone:

Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
Round and round the spicy downs the  
yellow Lotos-dust is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of  
motion we,

Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,  
when the surge was seething free,

Where the wallowing monster spouted  
his foam-fountains in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with  
an equal mind,

In the hollow Lotos-land to live and  
lie reclined

On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.  
 For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd  
 Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curl'd  
 Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world:  
 Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,  
 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,  
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.  
 But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song  
 Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,  
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong;  
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,  
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,  
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;  
 Till they perish and they suffer—some 'tis whisper'd—down in hell  
 Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,  
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.  
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore  
 Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;  
 O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

## A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN.

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,  
 "The Legend of Good Women," long ago  
 Sung by the morning star of song, who made  
 His music heard below;  
 Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath  
 Proluded those melodious bursts, that fill  
 The spacious times of great Elizabeth  
 With sounds that echo still.  
 And, for a while, the knowledge of his art  
 Held me above the subject, as strong gales  
 Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho' my heart,  
 Brimful of those wild tales,  
 Charged both mine eyes with tears. In every land  
 I saw, wherever light illumineth,  
 Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand  
 The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient song  
 Peopled the hollow dark, like burning stars,  
 And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,  
 And trumpets blown for wars;  
 And clattering flints batter'd with clanging hoofs:  
 And I saw crowds in column'd sanctuaries;  
 And forms that pass'd at windows and on roofs  
 Of marble palaces;  
 Corpses across the threshold; heroes tall  
 Dislodging pinnacle and parapet  
 Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall;  
 Lances in ambush set;  
 And high shrine-doors burst thro' with heated blasts  
 That run before the fluttering tongues of fire;  
 White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and masts,  
 And ever climbing higher;  
 Squadrons and squares of men in brazen plates;  
 Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers woes,  
 Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,  
 And hush'd seraglios.  
 So shape chased shape as swift as when to land  
 Bluster the winds and tides the self same way,  
 Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,  
 Torn from the fringe of spray.  
 I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,  
 Resolved on noble things, and strove to speak,  
 As when a great thought strikes along the brain,  
 And flushes all the cheek.  
 And once my arm was lifted to hew down  
 A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,  
 That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town;  
 And then, I know not how,  
 All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing thought  
 Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and did creep  
 Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd, and brought  
 Into the gulfs of sleep.  
 At last methought that I had wander'd far  
 In an old wood: fresh-wash'd in coolest dew,  
 The maiden splendors of the morning star  
 Shook in the steadfast blue.

Enormous eumtree-boles did stoop and lean  
Upon the dusky brushwood underneath  
Their broad curved branches, fledged  
with clearest green,  
New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey done,  
And with dead lips smiled at the twilight plain,  
Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,  
Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,  
Not any song of bird or sound of rill;  
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre  
Is not so deadly still.

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine turn'd  
Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,  
And at the root thro' lush green grasses burn'd  
The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves,  
I knew  
The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn  
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks drench'd in dew,  
Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,  
Pour'd back into my empty soul and frame  
The times when I remember to have been  
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear undertone  
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unblissful clime,  
"Pass freely thro' : the wood is all thine own.  
Until the end of time."

At length I saw a lady within call,  
Stillier than chisell'd marble, standing there;  
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with surprise  
Froze my swift speech : she turning on my face  
The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,  
Spoke slowly in her place.

"I had great beauty : ask thou not my name :  
No one can be more wise than destiny.  
Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came  
I brought calamity."

"No marvel, sovereign lady : in fair field,  
Myself for such a face had boldly died,"

I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd  
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks averse,  
To her full height her stately stature draws;  
"My youth," she said, "was blasted with a curse :  
This woman was the cause.

I was cut off from hope in that sad place,  
Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears :  
My father held his hand upon his face ;  
I, blinded with my tears,

"Still strove to speak : my voice was thick with sighs  
As in a dream. Dimly I could descry  
The stern black-bearded kings with wolfish eyes,  
Waiting to see me die.

"The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat ;  
The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and the shore ;  
The bright death quiver'd at the victim's throat,  
Touched ; and I knew no more."

Whereto the other with a downward brow :  
"I would the white cold heavy-plunging foam,  
Whirl'd by the wind, had roll'd me deep below,  
Then when I left my home."

Her slow full words sank thro' the silence drear,  
As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea ;  
Sudden I heard a voice that cried,  
"Come here,  
That I may look on thee."

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,  
One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll'd :  
A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes,  
Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began :  
"I govern'd men by change, and so I sway'd  
All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen a man.  
Once, like the moon, I made

"The ever-shifting currents of the blood  
According to my humor ebb and flow.  
I have no men to govern in this wood :  
That makes my only woe.

"Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not bend

One will; nor tame and tutor with mine eye  
That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Pry-thee, friend,  
Where is Mark Antony?

"The man, my lover, with whom I rode sublime  
On fortune's neck; we sat as God by God:

The Nilus would have risen before his time  
And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep, and lit  
Lamps which outburn'd Canopus. O my life

In Egypt! O the dalliance and the wit,  
The flattery and the strife,

And the wild kiss, when fresh from war's alarms,  
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,  
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,  
Contented there to die!

And there he died: and when I heard my name  
Sigh'd forth with life I would not brook my fear

Of the other: with a worm I balk'd his fame.  
What else was left? look here!"

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half  
The polish'd argent of her breast to sight

Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a laugh,  
Showing the aspick's bite.)

"I died a Queen. The Roman soldier found  
Me lying dead, my crown about my brows,

A name for ever!—lying robed and crown'd,  
Worthy a Roman spouse."

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range  
Struck by all passion, did fall down and glance

From tone to tone, and glided thro' all change  
Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for delight;  
Because with sudden motion from the ground

She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd with light  
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest darts:

As once they drew into two burning rings

All beams of Love, melting the mighty hearts  
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard  
A noise of some one coming thro' the lawn,  
And singing clearer than the crested bird,  
That claps his wings at dawn.

"The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel  
From craggy hollows pouring, late and soon,  
Sound all night long, in falling thro' the dell,  
Far-heard beneath the moon.

"The balmy moon of blessed Israel  
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with beams divine:  
All night the splinter'd crags that wall the dell  
With spires of silver shine."

As one that museth where broad sunshine laves  
The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the door  
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves  
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd and tied  
To where he stands,—so stood I, when that flow  
Of music left the lips of her that died  
To save her father's vow;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,  
A maiden pure; as when she went along  
From Mizpeh's tower'd gate with welcome light,  
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth: "Heaven heads the count of crimes  
With that wild oath." She render'd answer high:

"Not so, nor once alone: a thousand times  
I would be born and die.

"Single I grew, like some green plant, whose root  
Creeps to the garden water-pipes beneath,  
Feeding the flower; but ere my flower to fruit  
Changed, I was ripe for death.

"My God, my land, my father—these did move  
Me from my bliss of life, that Nature gave,  
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of love  
Down to a silent grave.

"And I went mourning, 'No fair Hebrew boy

Shall smile away my maiden blame  
among  
The Hebrew mothers—emptied of all  
joy,  
Leaving the dance and song.

“Leaving the olive-gardens far below,  
Leaving the promise of my bridal  
bower,  
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that  
glow  
Beneath the battled tower.

“The light white cloud swam over us.  
Above  
We heard the lion roaring from his  
den ;  
We saw the large white stars rise one  
by one,

Or, from the darken'd glen,  
“Saw God divide the night with flying  
flame,  
And thunder on the everlasting hills.  
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief  
became  
A solemn scorn of ills.

“When the next moon was roll'd into  
the sky,  
Strength came to me that equal'd  
my desire.

How beautiful a thing it was to die  
For God and for my sire !

“It comforts me in this one thought  
to dwell,  
That I subdued me to my father's  
will ;  
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell  
Sweetens the spirit still.

Moreover, it is written that my race,  
Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from  
Aroer  
On Arnon unto Minneth.” Here her  
face  
Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips : she left me where  
I stood :

“Glory to God,” she sang, and past  
afar,  
Thridding the sombre boskage of the  
wood,  
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,  
As one that from a casement leans  
his head,  
When midnight bells cease ringing  
suddenly,  
And the old year is dead.

“Alas ! alas !” a low voice, full of care,  
Murmur'd beside me : “Turn and  
look on me :

I am that Rosamond, whom men call  
fair,  
If what I was I be.

“Would I had been some maiden  
coarse and poor !  
O me, that I should ever see the  
light !

Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor  
Do hunt me, day and night.”

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope  
and trust :

To whom the Egyptian : “O, you  
tamefully died !  
You should have clung to Fulvia's  
waist, and thrust  
The dagger thro' her side.”

With that sharp sound the white  
dawn's creeping beams,  
Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the  
mystery

Of folded sleep. The captain of my  
dreams  
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the  
dark,

Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her  
last trance  
Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of  
Arc.

A light of ancient France ;  
Or her, who knew that Love can van-  
quish Death,

Who kneeling, with one arm about  
her king,  
Drew forth the poison with her balmy  
breath.

Sweet as new buds in Spring.  
No memory labors longer from the  
deep

Gold-mines of thought to lift the  
hidden ore  
That glimpses, moving up, than I from  
sleep

To gather and tell o'er  
Each little sound and sight. With  
what dull pain

Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to  
strike  
Into that wondrous track of dreams  
again !

But no two dreams are like.  
As when a soul laments, which hath  
been blest,

Desiring what is mingled with past  
years,

In yearnings that can never be express'd  
By signs or groans or tears ;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with  
choicest art,  
Failing to give the bitter of the  
sweet,

Wither beneath the palate, and the  
heart

Faints, faded by its heat.

## MARGARET.

## I.

O SWEET pale Margaret,  
O rare pale Margaret,  
What lit your eyes with tearful power,  
Like moonlight on a falling shower?  
Who lent you, love, your mortal dower  
Of pensive thought and aspect pale,

Your melancholy sweet and frail  
As perfume of the cuckoo-flower?  
From the westward-winding flood,  
From the evening-lighted wood,  
From all things outward you have  
won

A tearful grace, as tho' you stood  
Between the rainbow and the sun.  
The very smile before you speak,  
That dimples your transparent cheek,  
Encircles all the heart, and feedeth  
The senses with a still delight  
Of dainty sorrow without sound,  
Like the tender amber round,  
Which the moon about her spread-  
eth,

Moving thro' a fleecy night.

## II.

You love, remaining peacefully,  
To hear the murmur of the strife  
But enter not the toil of life.  
Your spirit is the calmed sea,  
Laid by the tumult of the fight.  
You are the evening star, always  
Remaining betwixt dark and bright :  
Lull'd echoes of laborious day  
Come to you, gleams of mellow light  
Float by you on the verge of night.

## III.

What can it matter, Margaret,  
What songs below the waning stars ;  
The lion-heart, Plantagenet,  
Sang looking thro' his prison bars?  
Exquisite Margaret, who can tell  
The last wild thought of Chatelet,  
Just ere the falling axe did part  
The burning brain from the true  
heart,  
Even in her sight he loved so well ?

## IV.

A fairy shield your Genius made  
And gave you on your natal day.  
Your sorrow, only sorrow's shade,  
Keeps real sorrow far away,  
You move not in such solitudes,  
You are not less divine,  
But more human in your moods,  
Than your twin-sister, Adeline.  
Your hair is darker, and your eyes  
Touch'd with a somewhat darker  
hue,  
And less aërially blue,  
But ever trembling thro' the dew  
Of dainty-woful sympathies.

## V.

O sweet pale Margaret,  
O rare pale Margaret,  
Come down, come down, and hear me  
speak :  
Tie up the ringlets on your cheek :  
The sun is just about to set,  
The arching limes are tall and shady,  
And faint, rainy lights are seen,  
Moving in the leavy beech.  
Rise from the feast of sorrow, lady,  
Where all day long you sit between  
Joy and woe, and whisper each,  
Or only look across the lawn,  
Look out below your bower-eaves,

Look down, and let your blue eyes  
dawn  
Upon me thro' the jasmine-leaves.

## THE BLACKBIRD.

O BLACKBIRD! sing me something  
well:  
While all the neighbors shoot thee  
round,  
I keep smooth plats of fruitful  
ground,  
Where thou may'st warble, eat and  
dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all  
Are thine; the range of lawn and  
park:  
The unnetted black-hearts ripen  
dark,

All thine, against the garden wall.  
Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,  
Thy sole delight is, sitting still,  
With that cold dagger of thy bill,  
To fret the summer jerneting.

A golden lill! the silver tongue,  
Cold February loved, is dry:  
Plenty corrupts the melody  
That made thee famous once, when  
young:

And in the sultry garden-squares,  
Now thy flute-notes are changed to  
coarse,

I hear thee not at all, or hoarse  
As when a hawk hawks his wares.  
Take warning! he that will not sing  
While you sun prospers in the blue,  
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are  
new,

Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

## THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,  
And the winter winds are wearily  
sighing:

Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,  
And tread softly and speak low  
For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die;  
You came to us so readily,  
You lived with us so steadily,  
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still: he doth not move:  
He will not see the dawn of day.  
He hath no other life above.  
He gave me a friend, and a true true  
love.

And the New-year will take 'em away.  
Old year, you must not go:  
So long as you have been with us,  
Such joy as you have seen with us,  
Old year, you shall not go.

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim;  
A jollier year we shall not see.  
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,  
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,  
He was a friend to me.

Old year, you shall not die;

We did so laugh and cry with you,  
I've half a mind to die with you,  
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,  
But all his merry quips are o'er.  
To see him die, across the waste  
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,  
But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.  
The night is starry and cold, my  
friend,  
And the New-year blithe and bold,  
my friend,  
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes! over the snow  
I heard just now the crowing cock.  
The shadows flicker to and fro:  
The cricket chirps: the light burns  
low:

'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.  
Shake hands, before you die.  
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you:  
What is it we can do for you?  
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.  
Alack! our friend is gone.  
Close up his eyes: tie up his chin:  
Step from the corpse, and let him in  
That standeth there alone,  
And waiteth at the door.  
There's a new foot on the floor, my  
friend,  
And a new face at the door, my  
friend,  
A new face at the door.

---

TO J. S.

THE wind, that beats the mountain,  
blows  
More softly round the open wold,  
And gently comes the world to those  
That are cast in gentle mould,

And me this knowledge bolder made,  
Or else I had not dared to flow  
In these words toward you, and invade  
Even with a verse your holy woe,

'Tis strange that those we lean on most,  
Those in whose laps our limbs are  
nursed,

Fall into shadow, soonest lost:  
Those we love first are taken first,  
God gives us love. Something to love  
He lends us; but, when love is grown  
To ripeness, that on which it thrives  
Falls off, and love is left alone.

This is the curse of time. Alas!  
In grief I am not all unlearn'd;  
Once thro' mine own doors Death did  
pass;

One went, who never hath return'd.  
He will not smile—not speak to me  
Once more. Two years his chair is  
seen  
Empty before us. That was he  
Without whose life I had not been.

Your loss is rarer; for this star  
Rose with you thro' a little arc  
Of heaven, nor having wander'd far  
Shot on the sudden into dark.

I knew your brother: his mute dust  
I honor and his living worth:  
A man more pure and bold and just  
Was never born into the earth.

I have not look'd upon you nigh,  
Since that dear soul hath fall'n  
asleep.

Great Nature is more wise than I:  
I will not tell you not to weep.

And tho' mine own eyes fill with dew,  
Drawn from the spirit thro' the brain,  
I will not even preach to you,  
"Weep, weeping dulls the inward  
pain."

Let Grief be her own mistress still.  
She loveth her own anguish deep  
More than much pleasure. Let her will  
Be done—to weep or not to weep.

I will not say, "God's ordinance  
Of Death is blown in every wind;"  
For that is not a common chance  
That takes away a noble mind.

His memory long will live alone  
In all our hearts, as mournful light  
That broods above the fallen sun,  
And dwells in heaven half the night.

Vain solace! Memory standing near  
Cast down her eyes, and in her throat  
Her voice seem'd distant, and a tear  
Dropt on the letters as I wrote.

I wrote I know not what. In truth,  
How *should* I soothe you anyway,  
Who miss the brother of your youth?  
Yet something I did wish to say:

For he too was a friend to me:  
Both are my friends, and my true  
breast

Bleedeth for both; yet it may be  
That only silence suiteth best.

Words weaker than your grief would  
make  
Grief more. 'Twere better I should  
cease

Although myself could almost take  
The place of him that sleeps in peace.

Sleep sweetly, tender heart, in peace:  
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,  
While the stars burn, the moons in-  
crease.

And the great ages onward roll.  
Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet.  
Nothing comes to thee new or strange.  
Sleep full of rest from head to feet;  
Lie still, dry dust, secure of change.

---

Yor ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,  
Within this region I subsist,  
Whose spirits falter in the mist,  
And languish for the purple seas?

It is the land that freemen till,  
That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
The land, where gift with friends or foes

A man may speak the thing he will ;  
A land of settled government,  
A land of just and old renown.  
Where Freedom broadens slowly down

From precedent to precedent :  
Where faction seldom gathers head,  
But by degrees to fulness wrought,  
The strength of some diffusive thought [spread.  
Hath time and space to work and  
Should banded unions persecute  
Opinion, and induce a time  
When single thought is civil crime,  
And individual freedom mute ;

Tho' Power should make from land to land

The name of Britain trebly great—  
Tho' every channel of the State  
Should almost choke with golden sand—  
Yet waff me from the harbor-mouth,  
Wild wind ! I seek a warmer sky,  
And I will see before I die  
The palms and temples of the South.

Or old sat Freedom on the heights,  
The thunders breaking at her feet :  
Above her shook the starry lights :  
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,  
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,  
But fragments of her mighty voice  
Came rolling on the wind.

Then steep she down thro' town and field

To mingle with the human race,  
And part by part to men reveal'd  
The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,  
From her isle-altar gazing down,  
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,  
And King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth.

The wisdom of a thousand years  
Is in them. May perpetual youth  
Keep dry their light from tears ;

That her fair form may stand and shine,  
Make bright our days and light our dreams,

Turning to scorn with lips divine  
The falsehood of extremes !

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought

From out the storied Past, and used  
Within the Present, but transfused.  
Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,  
Love, that endures not sordid ends,  
For English natures, freemen, friends  
Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,  
Nor feed with crude imaginings  
The herd, wild hearts and feeble wings,  
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might  
To weakness, neither hide the ray  
From those, not blind, who wait for day,  
Tho' sitting girl with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds ;  
But let her herald, Reverence, fly  
Before her to whatever sky  
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years :  
Cut Prejudice against the grain :  
But gentle words are always gain :  
Regard the weakness of thy peers :

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
Of pension, neither count on praise :  
It grows to guerdon after-days :  
Nor deal in watch-words over much :

Not clinging to some ancient saw ;  
Not master'd by some modern term ;  
Not swift nor slow to change, but firm :  
And in its season bring the law ;

That from Discussion's lip may fall  
With Life, that, working strongly,  
binds—  
Set in all lights by many minds,  
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
And moist and dry, devising long,  
Thro' many agents making strong,  
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control  
Our being, lest we rust in ease,  
We all are changed by still degrees,  
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
To ingroove itself with that, which flies,

And work, a joint of state, that plies  
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act ;  
For all the past of Time reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife—  
A motion toiling in the gloom—  
The Spirit of the years to come  
Yearning to mix himself with Life

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
Completion in a painful school  
Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,  
But vague in vapor, hard to mark ;  
And round them sea and air are dark  
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
Is bodied forth the second whole.  
Regard gradation, lest the soul  
Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
And heap their ashes on the head ;  
To shame the boast so often made,  
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star  
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
To follow flying steps of Truth  
Across the brazen bridge of war —

If New and Old, disastrous feud,  
Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
And this be true, till Time shall  
close,  
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
To hold his hope thro' shame and  
gull,  
But with his hand against the hilt,  
Would pace the troubled laud, like  
Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,  
Would serve his kind in deed and  
word,  
Certain, if knowledge bring the  
sword,  
That knowledge takes the sword  
away—

Would love the gleams of good that  
broke  
From either side, nor veil his eyes :  
And if some dreadful need should  
rise  
Would strike, and firmly, and one  
stroke :

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
As we bear blossoms of the dead ;  
Earn well the thrifty months, nor  
wed  
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

#### THE GOOSE.

I KNEW an old wife lean and poor,  
Her rags scarce held together ;  
There strode a stranger to the door,  
And it was windy weather.

He held a goose upon his arm,  
He utter'd rhyme and reason,  
"Here, take the goose, and keep you  
warm,  
It is a stormy season."

She caught the white goose by the leg,  
A goose—'twas no great matter.  
The goose let fall a golden egg  
With cackle and with clatter.

She dropt the goose, and caught the  
pelf,  
And ran to tell her neighbors ;  
And bless'd herself, and cursed herself  
And rested from her labors.

And feeding high, and living soft,  
Grew plump and able-bodied ;  
Until the grave churchwarden doff'd,  
The parson smirk'd and nodded.

So sitting, served by man and maid,  
She felt her heart grow prouder :  
But ah ! the more the white goose laid  
It cack'd and cackled louder.

It clutter'd here, it chuckled there ;  
It stirr'd the old wife's mettle :  
She shifted in her elbow-chair,  
And hurl'd the pan and kettle.

"A quinsy chokes thy cursed note !"  
Then wax'd her anger stronger.  
"Go, take the goose, and wring her  
throat,  
I will not bear it longer."

Then yelp'd the cur, and yawl'd the  
cat ;  
Ran Gaffer, stumbled Gammer.  
The goose flew this way and flew that,  
And fill'd the house with clamor.

As head and heels upon the floor  
They flounder'd all together,  
There strode a stranger to the door,  
And it was windy weather :

He took the goose upon his arm,  
He utter'd words of scolding ;  
"So keep you cold, or keep you warm,  
It is a stormy morning."

The wild wind rang from park and  
plain,  
And round the attics rumbled,  
Till all the tables danced again,  
And half the chimneys tumbled.

The glass blew in, the fire blew out,  
The blast was hard and harder.  
Her cap blew off, her gown blew up,  
And a whirlwind clear'd the larder :

And while on all sides breaking loose  
Her household fled the danger,  
Quoth she, "The Devil take the goose  
And God forget the stranger !"

#### THE EPIC.

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-  
eve,—

The rans of forfeits done—the girls  
all kiss'd  
Beneath the sacred bush and past  
away—

The parson Holmes, the poet Everard  
Hall,  
The host, and I sat round the wassail-  
bowl,

Then half-way ebb'd : and there we  
held a talk,  
How all the old honor had from  
Christmas gone,

Or gone, or dwindled down to some  
odd games  
In some old nooks like this ; till I,  
tired out

With cutting eights that day upon the  
pond,

Where, three times slipping from the  
outer edge.  
I bump'd the ice into three several  
stars,  
Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard  
The parson taking wide and wider  
sweeps,  
Now harping on the church-commis-  
sioners,  
Now hawking at Geology and schism;  
Until I woke, and found him settled  
down  
Upon the general decay of faith  
Right thro' the world, "at home was  
little left,  
And none abroad: there was no an-  
chor, none,  
To hold by." Francis, laughing, clapt  
his hand  
On Everard's shoulder, with, "I hold  
by him."  
"And I," quoth Everard, "by the was-  
sail-bowl."  
"Why yes," I said, "we knew your  
gift that way  
At college: but another which you  
had,  
I mean of verse (for so we held it  
then.)  
What came of that?" "You know,"  
said Frank, "he burnt  
His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve  
books"—  
And then to me demanding why? "Oh,  
sir,  
He thought that nothing new was said,  
or else  
Something so said 'twas nothing—  
that a truth  
Looks freshest in the fashion of the  
day:  
God knows: he has a mint of reasons:  
ask.  
It pleased me well enough." "Nay,  
nay," said Hall,  
"Why take the style of those heroic  
times?  
For nature brings not back the Masto-  
don,  
Nor we those times; and why should  
any man  
Remodel models? these twelve books  
of mine  
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-  
worth,  
Mere chaff and druff, much better  
burnt." "But I,"  
Said Francis, "pick'd the eleventh  
from this hearth,  
And have it: keep a thing, its use will  
come.  
I heard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes,"  
He laugh'd, and I, though sleepy, like  
a horse  
That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd  
my ears;  
For I remember'd Everard's college  
fame  
When we were Freshmen: then at my  
request

He brought it; and the poet little  
urged,  
But with some prelude of disparage-  
ment,  
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and  
oes,  
Deep-chested music, and to this re-  
sult.

## MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle  
roll'd  
Among the mountains by the winter  
sea;  
Until King Arthur's table, man by  
man,  
Had fall'n in Lyonness about their  
Lord,  
King Arthur: then, because his wound  
was deep,  
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,  
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,  
A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
That stood on a dark strait of barren  
land.  
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one  
Lay a great water, and the moon was  
full.  
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
vere:  
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
The goodliest fellowship of famous  
knights  
Whereof this world holds record. Such  
a sleep  
They sleep—the men I loved. I think  
that we  
Shall never more, at any future time,  
Delight our souls with talk of knightly  
deeds,  
Walking about the gardens and the  
halls  
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
I perish by this people which I made,—  
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come  
again  
To rule once more—but let what will  
be, be,  
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm  
That without help I cannot last till  
morn.  
Thou therefore take my brand Excal-  
bur,  
Which was my pride: for thou remem-  
berest how  
In those old days, one summer noon,  
an arm  
Rose up from out the bosom of the  
lake,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful,  
Holding the sword—and how I row'd  
across  
And took it, and have worn it, like a  
king:  
And, whosoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known:  
But now delay not: take Excalbur,

And fling him far into the middle  
 mere:  
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly  
 bring me word."  
 To him replied the bold Sir Bedi-  
 vere:  
 "It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee  
 thus,  
 Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the  
 helm.  
 A little thing may harm a wounded  
 man.  
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at  
 full,  
 Watch what I see, and lightly bring  
 thee word."  
 So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he  
 stept  
 And in the moon athwart the place of  
 tombs,  
 Where lay the mighty bones of ancient  
 men,  
 Old knights, and over them the sea-  
 wind sang  
 Shril, chill, with flakes of foam. He,  
 stepping down  
 By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed  
 rock,  
 Came on the shining levels of the  
 lake.  
 There drew he forth the brand  
 Excalibur,  
 And o'er him, drawing it, the winter  
 moon,  
 Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,  
 ran forth  
 And sparkled keen with frost against  
 the hilt:  
 For all the haft twinkled with dia-  
 mond sparks,  
 Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-  
 work  
 Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so  
 long  
 That both his eyes were dazzled, as he  
 stood,  
 This way and that dividing the swift  
 mind,  
 In act to throw but at the last it  
 seem'd  
 Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd  
 There in the many-knotted waterflags,  
 That whistled stiff and dry about the  
 marge.  
 So strode he back slow to the wounded  
 King.  
 Then spake King Arthur to Sir  
 Bedivere:  
 "Hast thou perform'd my mission  
 which I gave?  
 What is it thou hast seen? or what  
 hast heard?"  
 And answer made the bold Sir  
 Bedivere:  
 "I heard the ripple washing in the  
 reeds,  
 And the wild water lapping on the  
 crag."  
 To whom replied King Arthur, faint  
 and pale.

"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and  
 thy name,  
 Not rendering true answer, as beseeem'd  
 Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:  
 For surer sign had follow'd, either  
 hand,  
 Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.  
 This is a shameful thing for men to lie.  
 Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go  
 again  
 As thou art lief and dear, and do the  
 thing  
 I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring  
 me word."  
 Then went Sir Bedivere the second  
 time  
 Across the ridge, and paced beside the  
 mere;  
 Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in  
 thought;  
 But when he saw the wonder of the  
 hilt.  
 How curiously and strangely chased,  
 he smote  
 His palms together, and he cried  
 aloud.  
 "And if indeed I cast the brand  
 away,  
 Surely a precious thing, one worthy  
 note,  
 Should thus be lost forever from the  
 earth,  
 Which might have pleased the eyes of  
 many men.  
 What good should follow this, if this  
 were done?  
 What harm, undone? deep harm to  
 disobey,  
 Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.  
 Were it well to obey then, if a king  
 demand  
 An act unprofitable, against himself?  
 The King is sick, and knows not what  
 he does.  
 What record, or what relie of my lord  
 Should be to aftertime, but empty  
 breath  
 And rumors of a doubt? but were  
 this kept,  
 Stored in some treasure-house of  
 mighty kings,  
 Some one might show it at a joust of  
 arms,  
 Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excali-  
 bur,  
 Wrought by the lonely maiden of the  
 Lake,  
 Nine years she wrought it, sitting in  
 the deeps  
 Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'  
 So might some old man speak in the  
 aftertime  
 To all the people, winning reverence.  
 But now much honor and much fame  
 were lost."  
 So spake he, clouded with his own  
 conceit,  
 And hid Excalbur the second time,  
 And so strode back slow to the wound-  
 ed King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :

"What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

"I heard the water lapping on the crag, And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue, Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me !

Authority forgets a dying king, Laid widow'd of the power in his eye That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all, Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice, And the third time may prosper, get thee hence :

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur, I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.

So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur : But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the mere,

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.

Speak out : what is it thou hast heard or seen ?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,

So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him ;

Three times, and drew him under in the mere."

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :

"My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear

My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,

And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found not words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,

Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed

When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die."

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,

Larger than human on the frozen hills. He heard the deep behind him, and a cry

Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves And barren chasms, and all to left and right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he bas'd

His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang

Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—

And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter  
moon.

Then saw they how there hove a  
dusky barge,  
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to  
stern,  
Beneath them ; and descending they  
were ware

That all the decks were dense with  
stately forms

Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a  
dream—by these

Three Queens with crowns of gold—  
and from them rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
And, as it were one voice, an agony  
Of lamentation, like a wind, that  
shrills

All night in a waste land, where no  
one comes,

Or hath come, since the making of the  
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, " Place me  
in the barge."

And to the barge they came. There  
those three Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the  
King, and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them  
all

And fairest, laid his head upon her  
lap,

And loosed the shatter'd casque, and  
chaf'd his hands,

And call'd him by his name, complain-  
ing loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his  
brow

Striped with dark blood: for all his  
face was white

And colorless, and like the wither'd  
moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the  
springing east

And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd  
with drops

Of onset ; and the light and lustrous  
curls—

That made his forehead like a rising  
sun

High from the dais-throne—were  
parch'd with dust ;

Or, clotted into points and hanging  
loose,

Mix'd with the knightly growth that  
fringed his lips.

So like a chatter'd column lay the  
King ;

Not like that Arthur who, with lance  
in rest,

From spur to plume a star of tourna-  
ment,

Eshot thro' the lists at Camelot, and  
charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.  
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bed-  
ivere,

" Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I  
go ?

Where shall I hide my forehead and  
my eyes ?

For now I see the true old times are  
dead,

When every morning brought a noble  
chance,

And every chance brought out a noble  
knight.

Such times have been not since the  
light that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is

dissolved  
Which was an image of the mighty  
world ;

And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me, and

the years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other

minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from  
barge :

" The older order changeth, yielding  
place to new,

And God fulfils himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt

the world.  
Comfort thyself : what comfort is in

me ?  
I have lived my life, and that which I

have done  
May He within himself make pure !

but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face

again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are

wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,

let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and

day.  
For what are men better than sheep or

goats  
That nourish a blind life within the

brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands

of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who

call them friend ?  
For so the whole round earth is every

way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of

God.  
But now farewell. I am going a long

way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I

go—  
(For all my mind is clouded with a

doubt)  
To the island-valley of Avilion ;

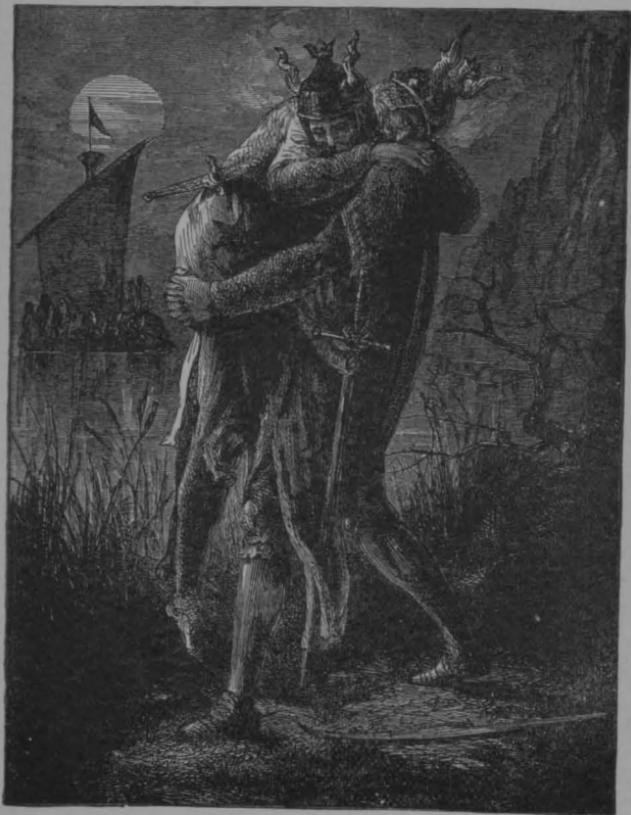
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any  
snow,

Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it  
lies

Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with or-  
chard-lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with  
summer sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous  
wound."





So said he, and the barge with oar  
and sail  
Moved from the brink, like some full-  
breasted swan  
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes  
the flood  
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir  
Bedivere  
Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Look'd one black dot against the verge  
of dawn,  
And on the mere the wailing died away  
Here ended Hall, and our last light,  
that long  
Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness,  
flared and fell :  
At which the Parson, sent to sleep  
with sound,  
And waked with silence, grunted  
" Good ! " but we  
Sat rapt : it was the tone with which  
he read—  
Perhaps some modern touches here  
and there  
Redeem'd it from the charge of noth-  
ingness—  
Or else we loved the man, and prized  
his work ;  
I know not : but we sitting, as I said,  
The cock crew loud ; as at that time  
of year  
The lusty bird takes every hour for  
dawn :  
Then Francis, muttering, like a man  
ill-used,  
" There now—that's nothing ! " drew a  
little back,  
And drove his heel into the smoulder'd  
log,  
That sent a blast of sparkles up the  
flue :  
And so to bed ; where yet in sleep I  
seem'd  
To sail with Arthur under looming  
shores,  
Point after point ; till on to dawn,  
when dreams  
Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,  
To me, mought, who waited with a  
crowd,  
There came a bark that, blowing for-  
ward, bore  
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman  
Of stateliest port ; and all the people  
cried,  
" Arthur is come again : he cannot  
die."  
Then those that stood upon the hills  
behind  
Repeated—" Come again, and thrice as  
fair ;"  
And, further inland, voices echoed—  
" Come  
With all good things, and war shall be  
no more."  
At this a hundred bells began to peal,  
That with the sound I woke, and heard  
indeed

The clear church-bells ring in the  
Christmas morn.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER ;  
OR, THE PICTURES.

THIS morning is the morning of the  
day,  
When I and Eustace from the city went  
To see the Gardener's Daughter ; I and  
he,  
Brothers in Art : a friendship so com-  
plete  
Portion'd in halves between us, that  
we grew  
The fable of the city where we dwelt.  
My Eustace might have sat for Her-  
cules ;  
So muscular he spread, so broad of  
breast.  
He, by some law that holds in love,  
and draws  
The greater to the lesser, long desired  
A certain miracle of symmetry,  
A miniature of loveliness, all grace  
Summ'd up and closed in little ;—Julie-  
et, she  
So light of foot, so light of spirit,—O,  
she  
To me myself, for some three careless  
moons,  
The summer pilot of an empty heart  
Unto the shores of nothing ! Know you  
not  
Such touches are but embassies of love,  
To tamper with the feelings, ere he  
found  
Empire for life ? but Eustace painted  
her,  
And said to me, she sitting with us  
then,  
" When will *you* paint like this ? " and  
I replied,  
(My words were half in earnest, half  
in jest.)  
" 'Tis not your work, but Love's. Love,  
unperceived,  
A more ideal Artist he than all,  
Came, drew your pencil from you,  
made those eyes  
Darker than darkest pansies, and that  
hair  
More black than ashbuds in the front  
of March."  
And Juliet answer'd laughing, " Go  
and see  
The Gardener's daughter : trust me,  
after that,  
You scarce can fail to match his mas-  
terpiece."  
And up we rose, and on the spur we  
went.  
Not wholly in the busy world, nor  
quite  
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I  
love.  
News from the humming city comes  
to it

In sound of funeral or of marriage  
bells ;  
And, sitting muffled in dark leaves,  
you hear  
The windy clanging of the minster  
clock ;  
Although between it and the garden  
lies  
A league of grass, wash'd by a slow  
broad stream,  
That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the  
oar,  
Waves all its lazy lilies, and creeps on,  
Barge-laden, to three arches of a bridge  
Crown'd with the minster-towers.

The fields between  
Are dewy-fresh, browsed by deep-ud-  
der'd kine,  
And all about the large lime feathers  
low,  
The lime a summer home of murmur-  
ous wings.

In that still place she, hoarded in  
herself,  
Grew, seldom seen : not less among us  
lived  
Her fame from lip to lip. Who had  
not heard

Of Rose, the Gardener's daughter ?  
Where was he,  
So blunt in memory, so old at heart,  
At such a distance from his youth in  
grief,

That, having seen, forgot ? The com-  
mon mouth,  
So gross to express delight, in praise of  
her

Grew oratory. Such a lord is Love,  
And Beauty such a mistress of the  
world.

And if I said that Fancy, led by Love,  
Would play with flying forms and im-  
ages,

Yet this is also true, that, long before  
I look'd upon her, when I heard her  
name

My heart was like a prophet to my  
heart,

And told me I should love. A crowd  
of hopes,

That sought to sow themselves like  
winged seeds,

Born out of everything I heard and  
saw,

Flutter'd about my senses and my  
soul ;

And vague desires, like fitful blasts of  
balm

To one that travels quickly, made the  
air

Of Life delicious, and all kinds of  
thought,

That verged upon them, sweeter than  
the dream

Dream'd by a happy man, when the  
dark East,

Unseen, is brightening to his bridal  
morn.

And sure this orbit of the memory  
folds

For ever in itself the day we went  
To see her. All the land in flowery  
squares,

Beneath a broad and equal-blowing  
wind,

Smelt of the coming summer, as one  
large cloud

Drew downward : but all else of  
Heaven was pure

Up to the Sun, and May from verge to  
verge.

And May with me from head to heel.  
And now,

As tho' 'twere yesterday, as tho' it  
were

The hour just flown, that morn with all  
its sound,

(For those old Mays had thrice the life  
of these,)

Rings in mine ears. The steer forgot  
to graze,

And, where the hedge-row cuts the  
pathway, stood,

Leaning his horns into the neighbor  
field,

And lowing to his fellows. From the  
woods

Came voices of the well-contented  
doves.

The lark could scarce get out his notes  
for joy,

But shook his song together as he  
near'd

His happy home, the ground. To left  
and right,

The cuckoo told his name to all the  
hills ;

The mellow ouzel fluted in the elm ;  
The redcap whistled ; and the nightin-  
gale

Sang loud, as tho' he were the bird of  
day.

And Eustace turn'd, and smiling said  
to me,

"Hear how the bushes echo! by my life,  
These birds have joyful thoughts.

Think you they sing  
Like poets, from the vanity of song ?

Or have they any sense of why they  
sing ?

And would they praise the heavens for  
what they have ? "

And I made answer. "Were there noth-  
ing else

For which to praise the heavens but  
only love,

That only love were cause enough for  
praise,"

Lightly he laugh'd, as one that read  
my thought,

And on we went ; but ere an hour had  
pass'd,

We reach'd a meadow slanting to the  
North ;

Down which a well-worn pathway  
courted us

To one green wicket in a privet hedge ;  
This, yielding, gave into a grassy walk

Thro' crowded lilac-ambush trimly  
pruned ;

And one warm gust, full-fed with perfume, blew  
 Beyond us, as we enter'd in the cool.  
 The garden stretches southward. In the midst  
 A cedar spread his dark-green layers of shade.  
 The garden-glasses shone, and momentarily  
 The twinkling laurel scatter'd silver lights.  
 "Eustace," I said, "this wonder keeps the house."  
 He nodded, but a moment afterwards  
 He cried, "Look! look!" Before he ceased I turn'd,  
 And, ere a star can wink, beheld her there.  
 For up the porch there grew an Eastern rose,  
 That, flowering high, the last night's gale had caught,  
 And blown across the walk. One arm aloft—  
 Gown'd in pure white, that fitted to the shape—  
 Holding the bush, to fix it back, she stood.  
 A single stream of all her soft brown hair  
 Pour'd on one side: the shadow of the flowers  
 Stole all the golden gloss, and, wavering  
 Lovingly lower, trembled on her waist—  
 Ah, happy shade—and still went wavering down,  
 But, ere it touch'd a foot, that might have danced  
 The greensward into greener circles, dipt,  
 And mix'd with shadows of the common ground!  
 But the full day dwelt on her brows, and sunn'd  
 Her violet eyes, and all her Hebe bloom,  
 And doubled his own warmth against her lips,  
 And on the bounteous wave of such a breast  
 As never pencil drew. Half light, half shade,  
 She stood, a sight to make an old man young.  
 So rapt, we near'd the house; but she, a Rose  
 In roses, mingled with her fragrant toil,  
 Nor heard us come, nor from her tendance turn'd  
 Into the world without; till close at hand,  
 And almost ere I knew mine own intent,  
 This murmur broke the stillness of that air  
 Which brooded round about her:  
 "Ah, one rose,  
 One rose, but one, by thosè fair fingers cull'd,

Were worth a hundred kisses press'd on lips  
 Less exquisite than thine."  
 She look'd: but all  
 Suffused with blushes—neither self-possess'd  
 Nor startled, but betwixt this mood and that,  
 Divided in a graceful quiet—paused,  
 And dropt the branch she held, and turning, wound  
 Her looser hair in braid, and stirr'd her lips  
 For some sweet answer, tho' no answer came,  
 Not yet refused the rose, but granted it,  
 And moved away, and left me, statue-like,  
 In act to render thanks.  
 I, that whole day,  
 Saw her no more, altho' I linger'd there  
 Till every daisy slept, and Love's white star  
 Beam'd thro' the thicken'd cedar in the dusk.  
 So home we went, and all the live-long way  
 With solemn gibe did Eustace banter me,  
 "Now," said he, "will you climb the top of Art.  
 You cannot fail but work in hues to dim  
 The Titianic Flora. Will you match My Juliet? you, not you,—the Master, Love,  
 A more ideal Artist he than all."  
 So home I went, but could not sleep for joy,  
 Reading her perfect features in the gloom,  
 Kissing the rose she gave me o'er and o'er,  
 And shaping faithful record of the glance  
 That graced the giving—such a noise of life  
 Swarm'd in the golden present, such a voice  
 Call'd to me from the years to come, and such  
 A length of bright horizon rim'd the dark,  
 And all that night I heard the watchman peal  
 The sliding season: all that night I heard  
 The heavy clocks knolling the drowsy hours.  
 The drowsy hours, dispensers of all good,  
 O'er the mute city stole with folded wings,  
 Distilling odors on me as they went  
 To greet their fairer sisters of the East.  
 Love at first sight, first-born, and heir to all,

Made this night thus. Henceforward  
 squall nor storm  
 Could keep me from that Eden where  
 she dwelt.  
 Light pretexes drew me: sometimes a  
 Dutch love  
 For tulips; then for roses, moss or  
 musk,  
 To grace my city-rooms; or fruits and  
 cream  
 Served in the weeping elm; and more  
 and more  
 A word could bring the color to my  
 cheek;  
 A thought would fill my eyes with hap-  
 py dew;  
 Love trebled life within me, and with  
 each  
 The year increased.  
 The daughters of the year,  
 One after one, thro' that still garden  
 pass'd:  
 Each garlanded with her peculiar  
 flower  
 Danced into light, and died into the  
 shade;  
 And each in passing touch'd with some  
 new grace  
 Or seem'd to touch her, so that day by  
 day,  
 Like one that never can be wholly  
 known,  
 Her beauty grew; till Autumn brought  
 an hour  
 For Eustace, when I heard his deep  
 "I will,"  
 Breathed, like the covenant of a God,  
 to hold  
 From thence thro' all the worlds: but  
 I rose up  
 Full of his bliss, and following her  
 dark eyes  
 Felt earth as air beneath me, till I  
 reach'd  
 The wicket-gate, and found her stand-  
 ing there.  
 There sat we down upon a garden  
 mound,  
 Two mutually enfolded; Love, the  
 third,  
 Between us, in the circle of his arms  
 Enwound us both; and over many a  
 range  
 Of waning lime the gray cathedral  
 towers,  
 Across a hazy glimmer of the west,  
 Revea'd their shining windows: from  
 them clash'd  
 The bells; we listen'd; with the time  
 we play'd;  
 We spoke of other things; we coursed  
 about  
 The subject most at heart, more near  
 and near,  
 Like doves about a dove-cote, wheeling  
 round  
 The central wish, until we settled  
 there.  
 Then, in that time and place, I spoke  
 to her,

Requiring, tho' I knew it was mine own  
 Yet for the pleasure that I took to hear,  
 Requiring at her hand the greatest gift,  
 A woman's heart, the heart of her I  
 loved;  
 And in that time and place she an-  
 swer'd me,  
 And in the compass of three little  
 words,  
 More musical than ever came in one,  
 The silver fragments of a broken voice,  
 Made me most happy, faltering, "I am  
 thine."  
 Shall I cease here? Is this enough  
 to say  
 That my desire, like all strongest  
 hopes,  
 By its own energy-fulfill'd itself,  
 Merged in completion? Would you  
 learn at full  
 How passion rose thro' circumstantial  
 grades  
 Beyond all grades develop'd? and in-  
 deed  
 I had not stayed so long to tell you all,  
 But while I mused came Memory with  
 sad eyes,  
 Holding the folded annals of my youth;  
 And while I mused, Love with knit  
 brows went by,  
 And with a flying finger swept my lips,  
 And spake, "Be wise: not easily for-  
 given  
 Are those, who, setting wide the doors  
 that bar  
 The secret bridal chambers of the  
 heart,  
 Let in the day." Here, then, my words  
 have end.  
 Yet might I tell of meetings, of fare-  
 wells—  
 Of that which came between, more  
 sweet than each,  
 In whispers, like the whispers of the  
 leaves  
 That tremble round a nightingale—in  
 sighs  
 Which perfect Joy, perplex'd for utter-  
 ance,  
 Stole from her sister Sorrow. Might I  
 not tell  
 Of difference, reconciliation, pledges  
 given,  
 And vows, where there was never need  
 of vows,  
 And kisses, where the heart on one  
 wild leap  
 Hung tranced from all pulsation, as  
 above  
 The heavens between their fairy fleeces  
 pale  
 Sow'd all their mystic gulfs with fleet-  
 ing stars;  
 Or while the balmy glooming, cres-  
 cent-lit,  
 Spread the light haze along the river-  
 shores,  
 And in the hollows; or as once we met  
 Unheeded, tho' beneath a whispering  
 rain

Night slid down one long stream of  
sighing wind,  
And in her bosom bore the baby, Sleep.  
But this whole hour your eyes have  
been intent  
On that veil'd picture—veil'd, for what  
it holds  
May not be dwelt on by the common  
day.  
This prelude has prepared thee. Raise  
thy soul;  
Make thine heart ready with thine  
eyes : the time  
Is come to raise the veil.  
Behold her there,  
As I beheld her ere she knew my  
heart,  
My first, last love; the idol of my  
youth,  
The darling of my manhood, and, alas!  
Now the most blessed memory of mine  
age.

## D O R A .

With farmer Allan at the farm abode  
William and Dora. William was his  
son,  
And she his niece. He often look'd  
at them,  
And often thought, "I'll make them  
man and wife."  
Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,  
And yearn'd towards William; but  
the youth, because  
He had been always with her in the  
house,  
Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day  
When Allan call'd his son, and said,  
"My son:  
I married late, but I would wish to see  
My grandchild on my knees before I  
die:  
And I have set my heart upon a match.  
Now therefore look to Dora: she is  
well  
To look to: thrifty too beyond her  
age.  
She is my brother's daughter: he and I  
Had once hard words, and parted, and  
he died  
In foreign lands; but for his sake I  
bred  
His daughter Dora: take her for your  
wife;  
For I have wish'd this marriage, night  
and day,  
For many years." But William an-  
swer'd short:  
"I cannot marry Dora; by my life,  
I will not marry Dora." Then the old  
man  
Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,  
and said:  
"You will not, boy! you dare to an-  
swer thus!  
But in my time a father's word was  
law,

And so it shall be now for me. Look  
to it;  
Consider, William: take a month to  
think,  
And let me have an answer to my  
wish  
Or, by the Lord that made me, you  
shall pack,  
And never more darken my doors  
again."  
But William answer'd madly; bit his  
lips,  
And broke away. The more he look'd  
at her  
The less he liked her; and his ways  
were harsh;  
But Dora bore them meekly. Then  
before  
The month was out he left his father's  
house,  
And hired himself to work within the  
fields:  
And half in love, half spite, he woo'd  
and wed  
A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.  
Then, when the bells were ringing,  
Allan call'd  
His niece and said: "My girl, I love  
you well;  
But if you speak with him that was  
my son,  
Or change a word with her he calls  
his wife,  
My home is none of yours. My will is  
law."  
And Dora promised, being meek. She  
thought,  
"It cannot be: my uncle's mind will  
change!"  
And days went on, and there was  
born a boy  
To William; then distresses came on  
him  
And day by day he pass'd his father's  
gate,  
Heart-broken, and his father help'd  
him not.  
But Dora stored what little she could  
save,  
And sent it them by stealth, nor did  
they know  
Who sent it; till at last a fever seized  
On William, and in harvest time he  
died.  
Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat  
And look'd with tears upon her boy,  
and thought  
Hard things of Dora. Dora came and  
said:  
"I have obey'd my uncle until now,  
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro'  
me  
This evil came on William at the  
first.  
But, Mary, for the sake of him that's  
gone,  
And for your sake, the woman that he  
chose,  
And for this orphan, I am come to  
you:

You know there has not been for these  
 five years  
 So full a harvest: let me take the  
 boy,  
 And I will set him in my uncle's eye  
 Among the wheat; that when his  
 heart is glad  
 Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,  
 And bless him for the sake of him  
 that's gone."  
 And Dora took the child, and went  
 her way  
 Across the wheat, and sat upon a  
 mound  
 That was unsown, where many pop-  
 pies grew.  
 Far off the farmer came into the field  
 And spied her not; for none of all his  
 men  
 Dare tell him Dora waited with the  
 child;  
 And Dora would have risen and gone  
 to him,  
 But her heart fail'd her; and the reap-  
 ers reap'd,  
 And the sun fell, and all the land was  
 dark.  
 But when the morrow came she rose  
 and took  
 The child once more, and sat upon  
 the mound;  
 And made a little wreath of all the  
 flowers  
 That grew about, and tied it round his  
 hat  
 To make him pleasing in her uncle's  
 eye.  
 Then when the farmer pass'd into the  
 field  
 Hespied her, and he left his men at  
 work,  
 And came and said: "Where were  
 you yesterday?"  
 Whose child is that? What are you  
 doing here?"  
 So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,  
 And answer'd softly, "This is Wil-  
 liam's child!"  
 "And did I not," said Allan, "did I  
 not  
 Forbid you, Dora?" Dora said again:  
 "Do with me as you will, but take the  
 child  
 And bless him for the sake of him  
 that's gone!"  
 And Allan said, "I see it is a trick  
 Got up betwixt you and the woman  
 there.  
 I must be taught my duty, and by  
 you!  
 You knew my word was law, and yet  
 you dared  
 To slight it. Well—for I will take the  
 boy;  
 But go you hence, and never see me  
 more."  
 So saying, he took the boy, that cried  
 aloud  
 And struggled hard. The wreath of  
 flowers fell

At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her  
 hands,  
 And the boy's cry came to her from  
 the field,  
 More and more distant. She bow'd  
 down her head,  
 Remembering the day when first she  
 came,  
 And all the things that had been. She  
 bow'd down  
 And wept in secret; and the reapers  
 reap'd,  
 And the sun fell, and all the land was  
 dark.  
 Then Dora went to Mary's house,  
 and stood  
 Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy  
 Was not with Dora. She broke out in  
 praise  
 To God, that help'd her in her widow-  
 hood.  
 And Dora said, "My uncle took the  
 boy;  
 But, Mary, let me live and work with  
 you:  
 He says that he will never see me  
 more."  
 Then answer'd Mary, "This shall  
 never be,  
 That thou shouldst take my trouble on  
 thyself;  
 And, now I think, he shall not have  
 the boy,  
 For he will teach him hardness, and to  
 slight  
 His mother; therefore thou and I will  
 go,  
 And I will have my boy, and bring him  
 home;  
 And I will beg of him to take thee  
 back:  
 But if he will not take thee back again,  
 Then thou and I will live within one  
 house,  
 And work for William's child, until he  
 grows  
 Of age to help us." So the women kiss'd  
 Each other, and set out, and reach'd  
 the farm.  
 The door was off the latch: they peep'd,  
 and saw  
 The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's  
 knees,  
 Who thrust him in the hollows of his  
 arm,  
 And clapt him on the hands and on  
 the cheeks,  
 Like one that loved him: and the lad  
 stretch'd out  
 And babbled for the golden seal, that  
 hung  
 From Allan's watch, and sparkled by  
 the fire.  
 Then they came in: but when the boy  
 beheld  
 His mother, he cried out to come to  
 her:  
 And Allan set him down, and Mary  
 said:

"O Father!—if you let me call you so—  
I never came a-begging for myself,  
Or William, or this child; but now I come  
For Dora: take her back; she loves you well.  
O Sir, when William died, he died at peace  
With all men; for I ask'd him, and he said,  
He could not ever rue his marrying me—  
I had been a patient wife: but, Sir, he said  
That he was wrong to cross his father thus:  
'God bless him!' he said, 'and may he never know  
The troubles I have gone thro'!' Then he turn'd  
His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am!  
But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you  
Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight  
His father's memory; and take Dora back,  
And let all this be as it was before."  
So Mary said, and Dora hid her face  
By Mary. There was silence in the room;  
And all at once the old man burst in sobs:—  
"I have been to blame—to blame. I have kill'd my son.  
I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my dear son.  
May God forgive me!—I have been to blame.  
Kiss me, my children."  
Then they clung about the old man's neck, and kiss'd him many times.  
And all the man was broken with remorse;  
And all his love came back a hundred fold;  
And for three hours he sobb'd o'er William's child,  
Thinking of William.  
So those four abode  
Within one house together; and as years  
Went forward, Mary took another mate;  
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

## AUDLEY COURT.

"THE Bull, the Fleece are cram'd,  
and not a room  
For love or money. Let us picnic  
there  
At Audley Court."  
I spoke, while Audley feast

Humm'd like a hive all round the narrow quay,  
To Francis, with a basket on his arm,  
To Francis just alighted from the boat,  
And breathing of the sea. "With all my heart,"  
Said Francis, "Then we shoulder'd thro' the swarm,  
And rounded by the stillness of the beach  
To where the bay runs up its latest horn.

We left the dying ebb that faintly lipp'd  
The flat red granite; so by many a sweep  
Of meadow smooth from aftermath we reach'd  
The griffin-guarded gates, and pass'd thro' all  
The pillar'd dusk of sounding sycamores,  
And cross'd the garden to the garden-er's lodge,  
With all its casements bedded, and its walls  
And chimneys muffled in the leafy vine.

There, on a slope of orchard, Francis laid  
A damask napkin wrought with horse and hound,  
Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of home,  
And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly made,  
Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret lay,  
Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolks  
Imbedded and injellied; last, with these,  
A flask of cider from his father's vats,  
Prime, which I knew; and so we sat and eat  
And talk'd old matters over; who was dead,  
Who married, who was like to be, and how  
The races went, and who would rent the hall:  
Then touch'd upon the game, how scarce it was  
This season: glancing thence, discuss'd the farm,  
The fourfield system, and the price of grain;  
And struck upon the corn-laws, where we split,  
And came again together on the king  
With heated faces; till he laugh'd aloud;  
And, while the blackbird on the pipin hung  
To hear him, clapt his hand in mine and sang—  
"Oh! who would fight and march and countermarch,  
Be shot for sixpence in a battle-field,  
And shovell'd up into a bloody trench

Where no one knows? but let me live  
my life.

"Oh! who would cast and balance at  
a desk,  
Perch'd like a crow upon a three-legg'd  
stool,  
Till all his juice is dried, and all his  
joints  
Are full of chalk? but let me live my  
life.

"Who'd serve the state? for if I  
carved my name  
Upon the cliffs that guard my native  
land,  
I might as well have traced it in the  
sands;  
The sea wastes all: but let me live my  
life.

"Oh! who would love? I woo'd a  
woman once,  
But she was sharper than an eastern  
wind,  
And all my heart turn'd from her, as a  
thorn  
Turns from the sea; but let me live my  
life."

He sang his song, and I replied with  
mine:

I found it in a volume, all of songs,  
Knock'd down to me, when old Sir  
Robert's pride,  
His books — the more the pity, so I  
said —

Came to the hammer here in March —  
and this —  
I set the words, and added names I  
knew.

"Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, sleep, and  
dream of me:  
Sleep, Ellen, folded in thy sister's  
arm,  
And sleeping, haply dream her arm is  
mine.

"Sleep, Ellen, folded in Emilia's  
arm;  
Emilia, fairer than all else but thou,  
For thou art fairer than all else that  
is.

"Sleep, breathing health and peace  
upon her breast;  
Sleep, breathing love and trust against  
her lip:

I go to-night: I come to-morrow morn.  
"I go, but I return: I would I  
were  
The pilot of the darkness and the  
dream.

Sleep, Ellen Aubrey, love, and dream  
of me."

So sang we each to either, Francis  
Hale,  
The farmer's son, who lived across the  
bay,  
My friend: and I, that having where-  
withal,

And in the fallow leisure of my life  
A rolling stone of here and every-  
where,  
Did what I would; but ere the night  
we rose

And saunter'd home beneath a moon,  
that, just

In crescent, dimly rain'd about the leaf  
Twilights of airy silver, till we reach'd  
The limit of the hills; and as we sank  
From rock to rock, upon the blooming  
quay,

The town was hush'd beneath us:  
lower down

The bay was oily calm; the harbor-  
buoy,

Sole star of phosphorescence in the  
calm,

With one green sparkle ever and  
anon

Dipt by itself, and we were glad at  
heart.

#### WALKING TO THE MAIL.

*John.* I'm glad I walk'd. How  
fresh the meadows look  
Above the river, and, but a month ago,  
The whole hill-side was redder than a  
fox.

Is yon plantation where this byway  
joins

The turnpike?

*James.* Yes.

*John.* And when does this come  
by?

*James.* The mail? At one o'clock.

*John.* What is it now?

*James.* A quarter to.

*John.* Whose house is that I see?  
No, not the County Member's with the  
vane:  
Up higher with the yewtree by it, and  
half

A score of gables.

*James.* That? Sir Edward Head's:  
But he's abroad: the place is to be  
sold.

*John.* O, his. He was not broken.  
*James.* No, sir, he,  
Vex'd with a morbid devil in his  
blood

That veil'd the world with jaundice,  
hid his face

From all men, and commercing with  
himself,

He lost the sense that handles daily  
life —

That keeps us all in order more or  
less —

And sick of home went overseas for  
change.

*John.* And whither?

*James.* Nay, who knows? he's here  
and there.

But let him go; his devil goes with  
him,

As well as with his tenant, Jocky  
Dawes.

*John.* What's that?

*James.* You saw the man — on  
Monday, was it? —

There by the humpback'd willow; half  
stands up

And bristles; half has fall'n and made  
a bridge;

And there he caught the younker tick-  
ling trout —

Caught in *flagrante* — what's the Latin  
word?

*Delicto*: but his house, for so they say,  
Was haunted with a jolly ghost, that  
shook

The curtains, whined in lobbies, tapt  
at doors,

And rummaged like a rat: no servant  
stay'd:

The farmer vext packs up his beds and  
chairs,

And all his household stuff; and with  
his boy

Betwixt his knees, his wife upon the  
tilt,

Sets out, and meets a friend who hails  
him. "What!

You're flitting!" "Yes, we're fit-  
ting," says the ghost,

(For they had pack'd the thing among  
the beds.)

"O well," says he, "you fitting with  
us too—

Jack, turn the horses' heads and home  
again."

*John*. He left his wife behind; for so  
I heard.

*James*. He left her, yes. I met my  
lady once;

A woman like a butt, and harsh as  
crabs.

*John*. O yet but I remember, ten  
years back—

'Tis now at least ten years—and then  
she was—

You could not light upon a sweeter  
thing:

A body slight and round, and like a  
pear

In growing, modest eyes, a hand, a  
foot

Lessening in perfect cadence, and a  
skin

As clean and white as privet when it  
flowers.

*James*. Ay, ay, the blossom fades,  
and they that loved

At first like dove and dove were cat  
and dog.

She was the daughter of a cottager,  
Out of her sphere. What betwixt

shame and pride,

New things and old, himself and her,  
she sour'd

To what she is: a nature never kind!

Like men, like manners: like breeds  
like, they say,

Kind nature is the best: those man-  
ners next

That fit us like a nature second-hand;

Which are indeed the manners of the  
great.

*John*. But I had heard it was this  
bill that past,

And fear of change at home, that  
drove him hence.

*James*. That was the last drop in the  
cup of gall.

I once was near him, when his bailiff  
brought

A Chartist pike. You should have  
seen him wince

As from a venomous thing: he thought  
himself

A mark for all, and shudder'd, lest a er  
Should break his sleep by night, and  
his nice eyes

Should see the raw mechanic's bloody  
thumbs

Sweat on his blazon'd chairs; but, sir  
you know

That these two parties still divide the  
world—

Of those that want, and those that  
have; and still

The same old sore breaks out from age  
to age

With much the same result. Now I  
myself,

A Tory to the quick, was as a boy  
Destructive, when I had not what I

would.

I was at school—a college in the  
South:

There lived a flyflint near; we stole  
his fruit,

His hens, his eggs; but there was law  
for us;

We paid in person. He had a sow, sir.  
She,

With meditative grunts of much con-  
tent,

Lay great with pig, wallowing in sun  
and mud.

By night we dragg'd her to the college  
tower

From her warm bed, and up the cork-  
screw stair

With hand and rope we haled the  
groaning sow,

And on the leads we kept her till she  
pigg'd.

Large range of prospect had the mother  
sow,

And but for daily loss of one she  
loved,

As one by one we took them—but for  
this—

As never sow was higher in this  
world—

Might have been happy: but what lot  
is pure?

We took them all, till she was left  
alone

Upon her tower, the Niobe of swine,  
And so return'd unfarrow'd to her sty.

*John*. They found you out?

*James*. Not they.

*John*. Well—after all—  
What know we of the secret of a man?

His nerves were wrong. What ails us,  
who are sound,

That we should mimic this raw fool  
the world,

Which charts us all in its coarse blacks  
or whites,

As ruthless as a baby with a worm,  
As cruel as a schoolboy ere he grows  
To Pity—more from ignorance than  
will.

But put your best foot forward, or I  
fear  
That we shall miss the mail: and here  
it comes  
With five at top: as quaint a four-in-  
hand  
As you shall see—three pycbalds and  
a roan.

## EDWIN MORRIS; OR, THE LAKE.

O ME, my pleasant rambles by the  
lake,  
My sweet, wild, fresh three quarters of  
a year,  
My one Oasis in the dust and drouth  
Of city life! I was a sketcher then:  
See here, my doing: curves of moun-  
tain, bridge,  
Boat, island, ruins of a castle, built  
When men knew how to build, upon a  
rock,  
With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock:  
And here, new-comers in an ancient  
hold,  
New-comers from the Mersey, million-  
aires,  
Here lived the Hills—a Tudor-chim-  
nied bulk  
Of mellow brickwork on an isle of  
bowers.

O me, my pleasant rambles by the  
lake

With Edwin Morris and with Edward  
Bull  
The curate; he was fatter than his  
cure.

But Edwin Morris, he that knew the  
names,  
Long learned names of agaric, moss  
and fern,  
Who forged a thousand theories of the  
rocks,  
Who taught me how to skate, to row,  
to swim,  
Who read me rhymes elaborately  
good,  
His own—I call'd him Crichton, for he  
seem'd

All-perfect, finish'd to the finger nail.  
And once I ask'd him of his early  
life,  
And his first passion; and he answer'd  
me;  
And well his words became him: was  
he not  
A full-cell'd honeycomb of eloquence  
Stored from all flowers? Poet-like he  
spoke.

“My love for Nature is as old as I;  
But thirty moons, one honeymoon to  
that,  
And three rich sennights more, my  
love for her.

My love for Nature and my love for her,  
Of different ages, like twin-sisters  
grew,

Twin-sisters differently beautiful.  
To some full music rose and sank the  
sun,  
And some full music seem'd to move  
and change  
With all the varied changes of the  
dark,  
And either twilight and the day be-  
tween  
For daily hope fulfill'd, to rise again  
Revolving toward fulfilment, made it  
sweet  
To walk, to sit, to sleep, to wake, to  
breathe.”

Or this or something like to this he  
spoke.  
Then said the fat-faced curate, Ed-  
ward Bull,  
“I take it, God made the woman  
for the man,  
And for the good and increase of the  
world.

A pretty face is well, and this is well,  
To have a dame indoors, that trims us  
up,  
And keeps us tight; but these unreal  
ways  
Seem but the theme of writers, and in-  
deed  
Worn threadbare. Man is made of  
solid stuff.  
I say, God made the woman for the  
man,  
And for the good and increase of the  
world.”

“Parson,” said I, “you pitch the  
pipe too low:  
But I have sudden touches, and can  
run  
My faith beyond my practice into his:  
Tho' if, in dancing after Letty Hill,  
I do not hear the bells upon my cap,  
I scarce have other music: yet say on.  
What should one give to light on such  
a dream?”

I ask'd him half-sardonically. “Give?  
Give all thou art,” he answer'd, and a  
light  
Of laughter dimpled in his swarthy  
cheek;  
“I would have hid her needle in my  
heart,  
To save her little finger from a scratch  
No deeper than the skin: my ears  
could hear  
Her lightest breaths: her least remark  
was worth  
The experience of the wise. I went  
and came;  
Her voice fled always thro' the sum-  
mer land;  
I spoke her name alone. Thrice-happy  
days!  
The flower of each, those moments  
when we met,

The crown of all, we met to part no more."

Were not his words delicious, I a beast  
To take them as I did? but something jarr'd;

Whether he spoke too largely; that there seem'd

A touch of something false, some self-conceit,

Or over-smoothness: howso'er it was, He scarcely hit my humor, and I said:

"Friend Edwin, do not think yourself alone  
Of all men happy. Shall not Love to me,

As in the Latin song I learnt at school, Squeeze out a full God-bless-you right and left?

But you can talk: yours is a kindly vein:

I have, I think, — Heaven knows — as much within;

Have, or should have, but for a thought or two,

That like a purple beech among the greens

Looks out of place: 'tis from no want in her:

It is my shyness, or my self Or something of a wayward modern mind

Dissecting passion. Time will set me right."

So spoke I knowing not the things that were.

Then said the fat-faced curate, Edward Bull:

"God made the woman for the use of man,

And for the good and increase of the world."

And I and Edwin laugh'd; and now we paused

About the windings of the marge to hear

The soft wind blowing over meadowy holms

And alders, garden-isles; and now we left

The clerk behind us, I and he, and ran By ripply shallows of the lisping lake, Delighted with the freshness and the sound,

But, when the bracken rusted on their crags,

My suit had wither'd, nipt to death by him

That was a God, and is a lawyer's clerk, The rentroll Cupid of our rainy isles.

'Tis true, we met; one hour I had, no more:

She sent a note, the seal an *Elle vous suit*,

The close "Your Letty, only yours;" and this

Thrice underscored. The friendly mist of morn

Clung to the lake. I boated over, ran My craft aground, and heard with beating heart

The Sweet-Gale rustle round the shelving keel;

And out I stept, and up I crept: she moved,

Like Proserpine in Enna, gathering flowers:

Then low and sweet I whistled thrice; and she,

She turn'd, we closed, we kiss'd, swore faith, I breathed

In some new planet: a silent cousin stole

Upon us and departed: "Leave," she cried,

"O leave me!" "Never, dearest, never: here

I brave the worst:" and while we stood like fools

Embracing, all at once a score of pugs And poodles yell'd within, and out they came

Trustees and Aunts and Uncles.

"What, with him!

Go" (shrill'd the cotton-spinning chorus;) "him!"

I choked. Again they shriek'd the burden—"Him!"

Again with hands of wild rejection "Go!"

Girl, get you in!" She went—and in one month

They wedded her to sixty thousand pounds,

To lands in Kent and messuages in York,

And slight Sir Robert with his watery smile

And educated whisker. But for me, They set an ancient creditor to work:

It seems I broke a close with force and arms:

There came a mystic token from the king

To greet the sheriff, needless courtesy! I read, and fled by night, and flying turn'd:

Her taper glimmer'd in the lake below: I turn'd once more, close-button'd to the storm;

So left the place, left Edwin, nor have seen

Him since, nor heard of her, nor cared to hear.

Nor cared to hear? perhaps: yet long ago

I have pardon'd little Letty; not indeed,

It may be, for her own dear sake but She seems a part of those fresh days to me;

For in the dust and drouth of London life

She moves among my visions of the lake,

While the prime swallow dips his wing, or then

While the gold-lily blows, and over-  
head  
The light cloud smoulders on the sum-  
mer crag.

## ST. SIMEON STYLITES.

ALTHO' I be the basest of mankind,  
From scalp to sole one slough and  
crust of sin,  
Unfit for earth, unfit for heaven, scarce  
meet  
For troops of devils, mad with blas-  
phemy,  
I will not cease to grasp the hope I  
hold  
Of saintdom, and to clamor, mourn  
and sob,  
Battering the gates of heaven with  
storms of prayer,  
Have mercy, Lord, and take away my  
sin.  
Let this avail, just, dreadful, mighty  
God,  
This not be all in vain, that thrice ten  
years,  
Thrice multiplied by superhuman  
pangs,  
In hungers and in thirsts, fevers and  
cold,  
In coughs, aches, stitches, ulcerous  
throats and cramps,  
A sign betwixt the meadow and the  
cloud,  
Patient on this tall pillar I have borne  
Rain, wind, frost, heat, hail, damp, and  
sleet, and snow ;  
And I had hoped that ere this period  
closed  
Thou wouldst have caught me up into  
thy rest,  
Denying not these weather-beaten  
limbs  
The meed of saints, the white robe and  
the palm.  
O take the meaning, Lord : I do not  
breathe,  
Not whisper any murmur of complaint.  
Pain heap'd ten-hundred-fold, to this,  
were still  
Less burden, by ten-hundred-fold, to  
bear,  
Than were those lead-like tons of sin,  
that crush'd  
My spirit flat before thee.  
O Lord, Lord,  
Thou knowest I bore this better at the  
first,  
For I was strong and hale of body then ;  
And tho' my teeth, which now are  
dropt away,  
Would chatter with the cold, and all  
my beard  
Was tagg'd with icy fringes in the  
moon,  
I drown'd the whoopings of the owl  
with sound  
Of pious hymns and psalms, and some-  
times saw  
An angel stand and watch me, as I sang.

Now am I feeble grown ; my end  
draws nigh ;  
I hope my end draws nigh : half deaf I  
am,  
So that I scarce can hear the people  
hum  
About the column's base, and almost  
blind,  
And scarce can recognize the fields I  
know ;  
And both my thighs are rotted with  
the dew ;  
Yet cease I not to clamor and to cry,  
While my stiff spine can hold my  
weary head,  
Till all my limbs drop piecemeal from  
the stone,  
Have mercy, mercy : take away my  
sin.  
O Jesus, if thou wilt not save my  
soul,  
Who may be saved ? who is it may be  
saved ?  
Who may be made a saint, if I fail  
here ?  
Show me the man hath suffer'd more  
than I.  
For did not all thy martyrs die one  
death ?  
For either they were stoned, or cruci-  
fied,  
Or burn'd in fire, or boil'd in oil, or  
sawn  
In twain beneath the ribs ; but I die  
here  
To-day, and whole years long, a life of  
death.  
Bear witness, if I could have found a  
way  
(And heedfully I sifted all my thought)  
More slowly-painful to subdue this  
home  
Of sin, my flesh, which I despise and  
hate,  
I had not stinted practice, O my God.  
For not alone this pillar-punishment,  
Not this alone I bore : but while I lived  
in the white convent down the valley  
there,  
For many weeks about my loins I wore  
The rope that hal'd the buckets from  
the well,  
Twisted as tight as I could knot the  
noose ;  
And spake not of it to a single soul,  
Until the ulcer, eating thro' my skin,  
Betray'd my secret penance, so that  
all  
My brethren marvel'd greatly. More  
than this  
I bore, whereof, O God, thou knowest  
all.  
Three winters, that my soul might  
grow to thee,  
I lived up there on yonder mountain  
side.  
My right leg chain'd into the crag, I  
lay  
Peit in a roofless close of ragged  
stones ;

Inswathed sometimes in wandering  
mist, and twice  
Black'd with thy branding thunder,  
and sometimes  
Sucking the damps for drink, and eat-  
ing not,  
Except the spare chance-gift of those  
that came  
To touch my body and be heal'd, and  
live :

And they say then that I work'd  
miracles,  
Whereof my fame is loud amongst  
mankind,  
Cured lameness, palsies, cancers.  
Thou, O God,  
Knowest alone whether this was or  
no.

Have mercy, mercy ; cover all my sin.  
Then, that I might be more alone  
with thee,  
Three years I lived upon a pillar, high  
Six cubits, and three years on one of  
twelve ;

And twice three years I crouch'd on  
one that rose  
Twenty by measure ; last of all, I grew  
Twice ten long weary years to this,  
That numbers forty cubits from the  
soil.

I think that I have borne as much as  
this—  
Or else I dream—and for so long a time,  
If I may measure time by you slow  
light,  
And this high dial, which my sorrow  
crowns—  
So much—even so.

And yet I know not well,  
For that the evil ones come here, and  
say,  
" Fall down, O Simeon : thou hast  
suffer'd long  
For ages and for ages ! " then they  
prate  
Of penances I cannot have gone thro',  
Perplexing me with lies ; and oft I  
fall,  
Maybe for months, in such blind  
lethargies,  
That Heaven, and Earth, and Time  
are choked.

But yet  
Bethink thee, Lord, while thou and all  
the saints  
Enjoy themselves in heaven, and men  
on earth  
House in the shade of comfortable  
roofs,  
Sit with their wives by fires, eat whole-  
some food,  
And wear warm clothes, and even  
beasts have stalls,  
I, 'tween the spring and downfall of  
the light,  
Bow down one thousand and two  
hundred times,  
To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the  
Saints ;  
Or in the night, after a little sleep,

I wake : the chill stars sparkle ; I am  
wet

With drenching dews, or stiff with  
crackling frost,

I wear an undress'd goatskin on my  
back ;

A grazing iron collar grinds my neck ;  
And in my weak, lean arms I lift the  
cross,  
And strive and wrestle with thee till I  
die :

O mercy, mercy ! wash away my sin.  
O Lord, thou knowest what a man I  
am ;

A sinful man, conceived and born in  
sin :

'Tis their own doing ; this is none of  
mine ;

Lay it not to me. Am I to blame for  
this,

That here come those that worship  
me ? Ha ! ha !

They think that I am somewhat. What  
am I ?

The silly people take me for a saint,  
And bring me offerings of fruit and  
flowers :

And I, in truth (thou wilt bear witness  
here)

Have all in all endured as much, and  
more

Than many just and hoily men, whose  
names

Are register'd and calendar'd for  
saints.

Good people, you do ill to kneel to  
me.

What is it I can have done to merit  
this ?

I am a sinner viler than you all.  
It may be I have wrought some mira-  
cles,

And cured some halt and maim'd ; but  
what of that ?

It may be, no one, even among the  
saints.

May match his pains with mine ; but  
what of that ?

Yet do not rise ; for you may look on  
me,

And in your looking you may kneel to  
God.

Speak ! is there any of you halt or  
maim'd ?

I think you know I have some power  
with Heaven

From my long penance : let him speak  
his wish.

Yes, I can heal him. Power goes  
forth from me.

They say that they are heal'd. Ah,  
hark ! they shout

" St. Simeon Stylites." Why, if so,  
God reaps a harvest in me. O my soul,

God reaps a harvest in thee. If this be,  
Can I work miracles and not be saved ?

This is not told of any. They were  
saints.

It cannot be but that I shall be saved ;  
Yea, crown'd a saint. They shout,

"Behold a saint!"  
 And lower voices saint me from above.  
 Courage, St. Simeon! This dull chrysalis  
 Cracks into shining wings, and hope  
 ere death  
 Spreads more and more and more, that  
 God hath now  
 Sponged and made blank of crimeful  
 record all  
 My mortal archives.

O my sons, my sons,  
 I, Simeon of the pillar, by surname  
 Stylites, among men; I, Simeon,  
 The watcher on the column till the end;  
 I, Simeon, whose brain the sunshine  
 bakes;  
 I, whose bald brows in silent hours be-  
 come  
 Unnaturally hoar with rime, do now  
 From my high nest of penance here  
 proclaim  
 That Pontius and Iscariot by my side  
 Show'd like fair seraphs. On the coals  
 I lay,  
 A vessel full of sin: all hell beneath  
 Made me boil over. Devils pluck'd my  
 sleeve;  
 Abaddon and Asmodeus caught at me.  
 I smote them with the cross; they  
 swarm'd again.  
 In bed like monstrous apes they  
 crush'd my chest:  
 They flapp'd my light out as I read: I  
 saw  
 Their faces grow between me and my  
 book;  
 With colt-like whinny and with hog-  
 gish whine  
 They burst my prayer. Yet this way  
 was left,  
 And by this way I 'scaped them. Mor-  
 tify  
 Your flesh, like me, with scourges and  
 with thorns;  
 Smite, shrink not, spare not. If it  
 may be, fast  
 Whole Lents, and pray. I hardly,  
 with slow steps,  
 With slow, faint steps, and much ex-  
 ceeding pain,  
 Have scrambled past those pits of fire,  
 that still  
 Sing in mine ears. But yield not me  
 the praise:  
 God only thro' his bounty hath thought  
 fit,  
 Among the powers and princes of this  
 world,  
 To make me an example to mankind,  
 Which few can reach to. Yet I do not  
 say  
 But that a time may come—yea, even  
 now,  
 Now, now, his footsteps smite the  
 threshold stairs  
 Of life—I say, that time is at the doors  
 When you may worship me without  
 reproach;  
 For I will leave my relics in your land,

And you may carve a shrine about my  
 dust,  
 And burn a fragrant lamp before my  
 bones,  
 When I am gather'd to the glorious  
 saints.

While I spake then, a sting of  
 shrewdest pain  
 Ran shrivelling thro' me, and a cloud-  
 like change,  
 In passing, with a grosser film made  
 thick  
 These heavy, horny eyes. The end!  
 the end!  
 Surely the end! What's here? a shape,  
 a shade,  
 A flash of light. Is that the angel  
 there  
 That holds a crown? Come, blessed  
 brother, come.  
 I know thy glittering face. I waited  
 long;  
 My brows are ready. What! deny it  
 now?  
 Nay, draw, draw, draw nigh. So I  
 clutch it. Christ!  
 'Tis gone: 'tis here again; the crown!  
 the crown!  
 So now 'tis fitted on and grows to me,  
 And from it melt the dews of Paradise,  
 Sweet! sweet! spikenard, and balm,  
 and frankincense.  
 Ah! let me not be fool'd, sweet saints:  
 I trust  
 That I am whole, and clean, and meet  
 for Heaven.  
 Speak, if there be a priest, a man of  
 God,  
 Among you there, and let him pres-  
 ently  
 Approach, and lean a ladder on the  
 shaft,  
 And climbing up into my airy home,  
 Deliver me the blessed sacrament;  
 For by the warning of the Holy Ghost,  
 I prophesy that I shall die to night,  
 A quarter before twelve.

But thou, O Lord,  
 Aid all this foolish people; let them  
 take  
 Example, pattern: lead them to thy  
 light.

## THE TALKING OAK.

ONCE more the gate behind me falls;  
 Once more before my face  
 I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,  
 That stand within the chace.  
 Beyond the lodge the city lies,  
 Beneath its drift of smoke;  
 And ah! with what delighted eyes  
 I turn to yonder oak.  
 For when my passion first began,  
 Ere that, which in me burn'd  
 The love, that makes me thrice a man,  
 Could hope itself return'd;  
 To yonder oak within the field  
 I spoke without restraint.

And with a larger faith appeal'd  
Than Papist unto Saint.  
For oft I talk'd with him apart,  
And told him of my choice,  
Until he plagiariz'd a heart,  
And answer'd with a voice.  
Tho' what he whisper'd, under Heaven  
None else could understand;  
I found him garrulously given,  
A babbler in the land.  
But since I heard him make reply  
Is many a weary hour;  
'Twere well to question him, and try  
If yet he keeps the power.  
Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,  
Broad Oak of Summer-chace,  
Whose topmost branches can discern  
The roofs of Summer-place!  
Say thou, whereon I carved her name,  
If ever maid or spouse,  
As fair as my Olivia, came  
To rest beneath thy boughs.—  
"O Walter, I have shelter'd here  
Whatever maiden grace  
The good old Summers, year by year  
Made ripe in Summer-chace:  
"Old Summers, when the monk was  
fat,  
And, issuing shorn and sleek,  
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat  
The girls upon the cheek,  
"Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,  
And number'd bead, and shrift,  
Bluff Harry broke into the spence,  
And turn'd the cows adrift:  
"And I have seen some score of those  
Fresh faces, that would thrive  
When his man-minded offset rose  
To chase the deer at five;  
"And all that from the town would  
stroll,  
Till that wild wind made work  
In which the gloomy brewer's soul  
Went by me, like a stork:  
"The slight she-slips of loyal blood,  
And others, passing praise,  
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud  
For puritanic stays:  
"And I have shadow'd many a group  
Of beauties, that were born  
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,  
Or while the patch was worn;  
"And, leg and arm with love-knots  
gay,  
About me leap'd and laugh'd  
The modest Cupid of the day,  
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.  
"I swear (and else may insects prick  
Each leaf into a gall)  
This girl, for whom your heart is sick,  
Is three times worth them all;  
"For those and theirs, by Nature's law,  
Have faded long ago;  
But in these latter springs I saw  
Your own Olivia blow,

"From when she gamboll'd on the  
greens,  
A baby-germ, to when  
The maiden blossoms of her teal  
Could number five from ten.  
"I swear, by leaf, and wind, and  
(And hear me with thine ear:)  
That, tho' I circle in the grain  
Five hundred rings of years  
"Yet, since I first could cast  
Did never creature pass  
So slightly, musically made,  
So light upon the grass:  
"For as to fairies, that will it  
To make the greensward fish,  
I hold them exquisitely knit,  
But far too spare of flesh."  
O, hide thy knotted knees in fern,  
And overlook the chace;  
And from thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Summer-place.  
But thou, whereon I carved her name,  
That oft hast heard my vows,  
Declare when last Olivia came  
To sport beneath thy boughs.  
"O yesterday, you know, the fair  
Was holden at the town;  
His father left his good arm-chair,  
And rode his hunter down.  
"And with him Albert came on his,  
I look'd at him with joy:  
As cowslip unto oxlip is,  
So seems she to the boy.  
"An hour had past—and, sitting  
straight  
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,  
Her mother trundled to the gate  
Behind the dappled grays.  
"But, as for her, she stay'd at home,  
And on the roof she went,  
And down the way you used to come,  
She look'd with discontent.  
"She left the novel half-uncut  
Upon the rosewood shelf;  
She left the new piano shut:  
She could not please herself.  
"Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,  
And livelier than a lark  
She sent her voice thro' all theholt  
Before her, and the park.  
"A light wind chased her on the wing,  
And in the chase grew wild,  
As close as might be would he cling  
About the darling child:  
"But light as any wind that blows  
So fleetly did she stir,  
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and  
rose,  
And turn'd to look at her.  
"And here she came, and round me  
play'd,  
And sang to me the whole  
Of those three stanzas that you made  
About my 'giant bole':

" And in a fit of frolic mirth  
She strove to span my waist :  
Alas, I was so broad of girth,  
I could not be embraced.

" I wish'd myself the fair young beech  
That here beside me stands,  
That round me, clasping each in each,  
She might have lock'd her hands.

" Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as  
sweet  
As woodbine's fragile hold,  
Or when I feel about my feet  
The berried briony fold."

O muffle round thy knees with fern,  
And shadow Summer-chace !  
Long may thy topmost branch discern  
The roofs of Summer-place !

But tell me, did she read the name  
I carved with many vows  
When last with throbbing heart I came  
To rest beneath thy boughs ?

" O yes, she wander'd round and round  
These knotted knees of mine,  
And found, and kiss'd the name she  
found,

And sweetly murmur'd thine.

" A teardrop trembled from its source,  
And down my surface crept.  
My sense of touch is something coarse,  
But I believe she wept.

" Then flush'd her cheek with rosy light,  
She glanced across the plain ;  
But not a creature was in sight :  
She kiss'd me once again.

" Her kisses were so close and kind,  
That, trust me on my word,  
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,  
But yet my sap was stir'd :

" And even into my inmost ring  
A pleasure I discern'd,  
Like those blind motions of the Spring,  
That show the year is turn'd.

" Thrice-happy he that may caress  
The ringlet's waving balm—  
The cushions of whose touch may press  
The maiden's tender palm.

" I, rooted here among the groves,  
But languidly adjust  
My vapid vegetable loves  
With anthers and with dust :

" For ah ! my friend, the days were  
brief  
Whereof the poets talk,  
When that, which breathes within the  
leaf,  
Could slip its bark and walk.

" But could I, as in times foregone,  
From spray, and branch, and stem,  
Have suck'd and gather'd into one  
The life that spreads in them,

" She had not found me so remis ;  
But lightly issuing thro',  
I would have paid her kiss for kiss,  
With usury thereto."

O flourish high, with leafy towers,  
And overlook the lea,  
Pursue thy loves among the bowers,  
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,  
Old oak, I love thee well ;  
A thousand thanks for what I learn  
And what remains to tell.

" 'Tis little more : the day was warm ;  
At last, tired out with play,  
She sank her head upon her arm  
And at my feet she lay.

" Her eyelids dropp'd their silken  
eaves.

I breathed upon her eyes  
Thro' all the summer of my leaves  
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

" I took the swarming sound of life—  
The music from the town—  
The murmurs of the drum and life  
And lull'd them in my own.

" Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,  
To light her shaded eye ;  
A second flutter'd round her lip  
Like a golden butterfly ;

" A third would glimmer on her neck  
To make the necklace shine ;  
Another slid, a sunny fleck,  
From head to ankle fine.

" Then close and dark my arms  
spread,  
And shadow'd all her rest—  
Dropt dew upon her golden head,  
An acorn in her breast.

" But in a pet she started up,  
And pluck'd it out, and drew  
My little oakling from the cup,  
And flung him in the dew.

" And yet it was a graceful gift—  
I felt a pang within  
As when I see the woodman lift  
His axe to slay my kin.

" I shook him down because he was  
The finest on the tree.  
He lies beside thee on the grass,  
O kiss him once for me.

" O kiss him twice and thrice for me,  
That have no lips to kiss,  
For never yet was oak on lea  
Shall grow so fair as this."

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,  
Look further thro' the chace,  
Spread upward till thy boughs discern  
The front of Summer-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,  
That but a moment lay  
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest  
Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,  
The warmth it thence shall win  
To riper life may magnetize  
The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset  
Or lapse from hand to hand,

Thy leaf shall never fall, nor yet  
Thine acorn in the land.  
May never saw dismember thee,  
Nor wielded axe disjoint,  
That art the fairest-spoken tree  
From here to Lizard-point.  
O rock upon thy towery top  
All throats that gurgle sweet !  
All starry culmination drop  
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet !  
All grass of silky feather grow—  
And while he sinks or swells  
The full south breeze around thee blow  
The sound of minister bells.  
The fat earth feed thy branchy root,  
That under deeply strikes !  
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,  
High up, in silver spikes !  
Nor ever lightning char thy grain,  
But, rolling as in sleep,  
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,  
That makes thee broad and deep !  
And hear me swear a solemn oath,  
That only by thy side  
Will I to Olive plight my troth,  
And gain her for my bride.  
And when my marriage morn may fall,  
She, Dryad-like, shall wear  
Alternate leaf and acorn-ball  
In wreath about her hair.  
And I will work in prose and rhyme,  
And praise thee more in both  
Than bard has honor'd beech or lime,  
Or that Thessalian growth,  
In which the swarthy ringdove sat,  
And mystic sentence spoke ;  
And more than England honors that,  
Thy famous brother-oak,  
Wherein the younger Charles abode  
Till all the paths were dim,  
And far below the Roundhead rode,  
And humm'd a surly hymn.

## LOVE AND DUTY.

Of love that never found his earthly  
close,  
What sequel? Streaming eyes and  
breaking hearts?  
Or all the same as if he had not been?  
Not so. Shall Error in the round of  
time  
Still father Truth? O shall the brag-  
gart shout  
For some blind glimpse of freedom  
work itself  
Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to  
law  
System and empire? Sin itself be  
found  
The cloudy porch oft opening on the  
Sun?  
And only he, this wonder, dead, be-  
come  
Mere highway dust? or year by year  
alone

Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,  
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of  
himself?  
If this were thus, if this, indeed,  
were all,  
Better the narrow brain, the stony  
heart,  
The staring eye glazed o'er with sap-  
less days,  
The long mechanic pacings to and fro,  
The set gray life, and apathetic end.  
But am I not the nobler thro' thy love?  
O three times less unworthy! likewise  
thou  
Art more thro' Love, and greater than  
thy years.  
The Sun will run his orbit, and the  
Moon  
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself  
will bring  
The drooping flower of knowledge  
changed to fruit  
Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large  
in Time,  
And that which shapes it to some per-  
fect end.  
Will some one say, Then why not ill  
for good?  
Why took ye not your pastime? To  
that man  
My work shall answer, since I knew  
the right  
And did it; for a man is not as God,  
But then most Godlike being most a  
man.  
— So let me think 'tis well for thee  
and me—  
Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine  
Whose foresight preaches peace, my  
heart so slow  
To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to  
me,  
When eyes, love-languid thro' half-  
tears, would dwell  
One earnest, earnest moment upon  
mine,  
Then not to dare to see! when thy low  
voice,  
Faltering, would break its syllables, to  
keep  
My own full-tuned,—hold passion in a  
leash.  
And not leap forth and fall about thy  
neck,  
And on thy bosom, (deep-desired re-  
lief!)  
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that  
weigh'd  
Upon my brain, my senses and my  
soul!  
For love himself took part against  
himself  
To warn us off, and Duty loved of  
Love—  
O this world's curse,—beloved but  
hated—came  
Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace  
and mine,  
And crying, "Who is this? behold thy  
bride,"

She push'd me from thee.  
 If the sense is hard  
 To alien ears, I did not speak to these—  
 No, not to thee, but to thyself in me :  
 Hard is my doom and thine : thou  
 knowest it all.  
 Could Love part thus ? was it not  
 well to speak,  
 To have spoken once ? It could not  
 but be well.  
 The slow sweet hours that bring us all  
 things good,  
 The slow sad hours that bring us all  
 things ill,  
 And all good things from evil, brought  
 the night  
 In which we sat together and alone,  
 And to the want, that hollow'd all the  
 heart,  
 Gave utterance by the yearning of an  
 eye,  
 That burn'd upon its object thro' such  
 tears  
 As flow but once a life.  
 The trance gave way  
 To those caresses, when a hundred  
 times  
 In that last kiss, which never was the  
 last,  
 Farewell, like endless welcome, lived  
 and died.  
 Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and  
 the words  
 That make a man feel strong in speak-  
 ing truth ;  
 Till now the dark was worn, and over-  
 head  
 The lights of sunset and of sunrise  
 mix'd  
 In that brief night ; the summer night,  
 that paused  
 Among her stars to hear us ; stars that  
 hung  
 Love-charm'd to listen : all the wheels  
 of Time  
 Spun round in station, but the end  
 had come.  
 O then like those, who clench their  
 nerves to rush  
 Upon their dissolution, we two rose,  
 There—closing like an individual  
 life—  
 In one wild cry of passion and of pain,  
 Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,  
 Caught up the whole of love and  
 utter'd it,  
 And bade adieu for ever.  
 Live—yet live—  
 Shall sharpest pathos blight us, know-  
 ing all  
 Life needs for life is possible to will—  
 Live happy ; tend thy flowers ; be  
 tended by  
 My blessing ! Should my Shadow cross  
 thy thoughts  
 Too sadly for their peace, remand it  
 thou  
 For calmer hours to Memory's darkest  
 hold,  
 If not to be forgotten— not at once—

Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy  
 dreams,  
 O might it come like one that looks  
 content,  
 With quiet eyes unfaithful to the  
 truth,  
 And point thee forward to a distant  
 light,  
 Or seem to lift a burden from thy  
 heart  
 And leave thee freer, till thou wake re-  
 fresh'd,  
 Then when the first low matin-chirp  
 hath grown  
 Full quire, and morning driv'n her  
 plough of pearl  
 Far furrowing into light the mounded  
 rack,  
 Beyond the fair green field and eastern  
 sea.

## THE GOLDEN YEAR.

WELL, you shall have that song which  
 Leonard wrote :  
 It was last summer on a tour in Wales :  
 Old James was with me : we that day  
 had been  
 Up Snowdon ; and I wish'd for Leon-  
 ard there,  
 And found him in Llanberis : then we  
 crost  
 Between the lakes, and clamber'd half  
 way up  
 The counter side ; and that same song  
 of his  
 He told me ; for I banter'd him, and  
 swore  
 They said he lived shut up within him-  
 self,  
 A tongue-tied Poet in his feverous  
 days,  
 That, setting the *how much* before the  
*how*,  
 Cry, like the daughters of the horse-  
 leech. "Give,  
 Cram us with all," but count not me  
 the herd !  
 To which "They call me what they  
 will," he said :  
 "But I was born too late : the fair  
 new forms,  
 That float about the threshold of an  
 age,  
 Like truths of Science waiting to be  
 caught—  
 Catch me who can, and make the catch-  
 er crown'd—  
 Are taken by the forelock. Let it  
 be.  
 But if you care indeed to listen, hear  
 These measured words, my work of  
 yestermorn.  
 "We sleep and wake and sleep, but  
 all things move ;  
 The Sun flies forward to his brother  
 Sun ;  
 The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her  
 ellipse ;

*Ulysses - one of the Ionian Isles - 17th. of Greece - South of Sicily*

And human things returning on themselves  
Move onward, leading up the golden year.

" Ah, tho' the times, when some new thought can bud,  
Are but as poets' seasons when they flower,  
Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,  
Have ebb and flow conditioning their march,  
And slow and sure comes up the golden year.

" When wealth no more shall rest in mounded heaps,  
But smit with freer light shall slowly melt  
In many streams to fatten lower lands,  
And light shall spread, and man be liker man

Thro' all the season of the golden year.  
" Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens be wrens?

If all the world were falcons, what of that?

The wonder of the eagle were the less,  
But he not less the eagle. Happy days  
Roll onward, leading up the golden year.

" Fly, happy happy sails and bear the Press;

Fly happy with the mission of the Cross;

Knit land to land, and blowing havenward

With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear of toll,

Enrich the markets of the golden year.

" But we grow old. Ah! when shall all men's good

Be each man's rule, and universal Peace

Lie like a shaft of light across the land,

And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,

Thro' all the circle of the golden year?"

Thus far he flow'd, and ended; whereupon

" Ah, folly!" in mimic cadence answer'd James—

" Ah, folly! for it lies so far away,  
Not in our time, nor in our children's time,

'Tis like the second world to us that live;

"Twere all as one to fix our hopes on Heaven

As on this vision of the golden year."  
With that he struck his staff against the rocks

And broke it,—James,—you know him, —old, but full

Of force and choler, and firm upon his feet,

And like an oaken stock in winter woods,

O'erflourish'd with the hoary clematis:

Then added, all in heat:

" What stuff is this!  
Old writers push'd the happy season back,—

The more fools they,—we forward: dreamers both:

You most, that in an age, when every hour

Must sweat her sixty minutes to the death,

Live on, God love us, as if the seedsman, rapt

Upon the teeming harvest, should not plunge

His hand into the bag: but well I know  
That unto him who works, and feels

he works,  
This same grand year is ever at the doors."

He spoke: and, high above, I heard them blast

The steep slate-quarry, and the great echo flap

And buffet round the hills from bluff to bluff.

ULYSSES. *King of Ithaca*

It little profits that an idle king,  
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,

Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me

I cannot rest from travel: I will drink  
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd

Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those

That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades  
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;

For always roaming with a hungry heart

Much have I seen and known; cities of men

And manners, climates, councils, governments,

Myself not least, but honor'd of them all;

And drunk delight of battle with my peers,

Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.

I am a part of all that I have met;

Yet all experience is an arch where-thro'

Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move.

How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!

As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life

Were all too little, and of one to me  
 Little remains: but every hour is  
 saved  
 From that eternal silence, something  
 more,  
 A bringer of new things; and vile it  
 were  
 For some three suns to store and hoard  
 myself,  
 And this gray spirit yearning in de-  
 sire  
 To follow knowledge like a sinking  
 star,  
 Beyond the utmost bound of human  
 thought.  
 This is my son, mine own Tele-  
 machus,  
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the  
 isle—  
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
 This labor, by slow prudence to make  
 mild  
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
 Subdue them to the useful and the  
 good.  
 Most blameless is he, centred in the  
 sphere  
 Of common duties, decent not to fail  
 In offices of tenderness, and pay  
 Meet adoration to my household gods,  
 When I am gone. He works his work,  
 I mine.  
 There lies the port: the vessel puffs  
 her sail:  
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My  
 mariners,  
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought,  
 and thought with me—  
 That ever with a frolic welcome took  
 The thunder and the sunshine, and  
 opposed

Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I  
 are old;  
 Old age hath yet his honor and his  
 toil;  
 Death closes all: but something ere  
 the end,  
 Some work of noble note, may yet be  
 done,  
 Not unbecoming men that strove with  
 Gods.  
 The lights begin to twinkle from the  
 rocks:  
 The long day wanes: the slow moon  
 climbs: the deep  
 Moans round with many voices. Come,  
 my friends,  
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.  
 Push off, and sitting well in order  
 smite  
 The sounding furrows; for my pur-  
 pose holds  
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the  
 baths  
 Of all the western stars, until I die.  
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us  
 down:  
 It may be we shall touch the Happy  
 Isles,  
 And see the great Achilles, whom we  
 knew.  
 Tho' much is taken, much abides: and  
 tho'  
 We are not now that strength which in  
 old days  
 Moved earth and heaven; that which  
 we are, we are;  
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
 Made weak by time and fate, but  
 strong in will  
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to  
 yield.

## LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn:  
 Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn  
 'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,  
 Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;  
 Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,  
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.  
 Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,  
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.  
 Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,  
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.  
 Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime  
 With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time;  
 When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land closed;  
 When I clung to all the present for the promise that it posed:  
 When I dapt into the future far as human eye could see;  
 Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be—  
 In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;  
 In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove ;  
 In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.  
 Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one as young,  
 And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.  
 And I said, " My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,  
 Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."  
 On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,  
 As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern light.  
 And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—  
 All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—  
 Saying, " I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong ;"  
 Saying, " Dost thou love me, cousin ? " weeping, " I have loved thee long."  
 Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands ;  
 Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.  
 Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might ;  
 Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.  
 Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,  
 And her whisper throug'd my pulses with the fullness of the Spring.  
 Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,  
 And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.  
 O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine no more !  
 O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !  
 Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,  
 Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue !  
 Is it well to wish thee happy ? — having known me — to decline  
 On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine !  
 Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower to his level day by day,  
 What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.  
 As the husband is, the wife is : thou art mated with a clown,  
 And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.  
 He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,  
 Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.  
 What is this ? his eyes are heavy : think not they are glazed with wine,  
 Go to him : it is thy duty : kiss him : take his hand in thine.  
 It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought :  
 Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.  
 He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand —  
 Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand !  
 Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,  
 Rell'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.  
 Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth !  
 Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth !  
 Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule !  
 Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool !  
 Well — 'tis well that I should bluster ! — Hadst thou less unworthy proved —  
 Would to God — for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.  
 Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit ?  
 I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.  
 Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come  
 As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging rookery home.  
 Where is comfort ? in division of the records of the mind ?  
 Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind ?  
 I remember one that perish'd : sweetly did she speak and move :  
 Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.  
 Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore ?  
 No — she never loved me truly : love is love for evermore.  
 Comfort ? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this is truth the poet sings,  
 That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.  
 Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,  
 In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,  
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,  
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whisper'd by the phantom years  
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;  
And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.  
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.  
Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.  
'Tis a purer life than thine; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down: my latest rival brings thee rest.  
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.  
Half is thine and half is his: it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,  
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings — she herself was not exempt —  
Truly, she herself had suffer'd" — Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it — lower yet — be happy! wherefore should I care?  
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these?  
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.  
I have but an angry fancy: what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,  
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels,  
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness, I will turn that earlier page.  
Hide me from my deep emotion. O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,  
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,  
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,  
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,  
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:  
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dilt into the future, far as human eye could see,  
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails;  
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew  
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,  
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder-storm;

Till the war-drum throb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,  
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,  
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint:  
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point:

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,  
Glances at one that rods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,  
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,  
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,  
Full of sad experience, moving towards the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,  
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn :

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string?  
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain —  
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,  
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine —

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat  
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-star'd ; —  
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit — there to wander far away,  
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,  
Breathths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,  
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree —  
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,  
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing-space ;  
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race. —

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,  
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,  
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books —

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are wild,  
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,  
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

Mated with a squalid savage — what to me were sun or clime ?  
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time —

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,  
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range.  
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :  
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :  
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun -

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.  
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !  
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath andholt,  
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;  
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

## GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry,  
I hung with grooms and porters on the  
bridge,*

*To watch the three tall spires; and there  
I shaped*

*The city's ancient legend into this,—*

Not only we, the latest seed of time,  
New men, that in the flying of a wheel  
Cry down the past, not only we, that  
prate

Of rights and wrongs, have loved the  
people well,

And loathed to see them overtax'd;  
but she

Did more, and underwent, and over-  
came,

The woman of a thousand summers  
back,

Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who  
ruled

In Coventry: for when he laid a tax  
Upon his town, and all the mothers  
brought

Their children, clamoring, "If we  
pay, we starve!"

She sought her lord, and found him,  
where he strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,  
His beard a foot before him, and his  
hair

A yard behind. She told him of their  
tears,

And pray'd him, "If they pay this  
tax, they starve."

Whereat he stared, replying, half-  
amazed,

"You would not let your little finger  
ache

For such as *these*?"—"But I would  
die," said she.

He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by  
Paul:

Then flipp'd at the diamond in her  
ear;

"O ay, ay, ay, you talk!"—"Alas!"  
she said,

"But prove me what it is I would not  
do."

And from a heart as rough as Esau's  
hand,

He answer'd, "Ride you naked thro'  
the town,

And I repeat it;" and nodding, as in  
scorn,

He parted, with great strides among  
his dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her  
mind,

As winds from all the compass shift  
and blow,

Made war upon each other for an  
hour,

Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,  
And bade him cry, with sound of trum-  
pet, all

The hard condition; but that she  
would loose

The people: therefore, as they loved  
her well,

From then till noon no foot should  
pace the street,

No eye look down, she passing; but  
that all

Should keep within, door shut, and  
window barr'd.

Then fled she to her inmost bower,  
and there

Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her  
belt,

The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a  
breath

She linger'd, looking like a summer  
moon

Half-dipt in cloud; anon she shook  
her head,

And shower'd the rippled ringlets to  
her knee;

Unclad herself in haste; adown the  
stair

Stole on; and like a creeping sunbeam,  
slid

From pillar unto pillar, until she  
reach'd

The gateway: there she found her  
palfrey trapt

In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.  
Then she rode forth, clothed on with  
chastity:

The deep air listen'd round her as she  
rode,

And all the low wind hardly breathed  
for fear.

The little wide-mouth'd heads upon  
the spout

Had cunning eyes to see: the barking  
cur

Made her cheek flame: her palfrey's  
footfall shot

Light horrors thro' her pulses: the  
blind walls

Were full of chinks and holes; and  
overhead

Fantastic gables, crowding, stared:  
but she

Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she  
saw

The white-flower'd elder-thicket from  
the field

Gleam thro' the Gothic archways in  
the wall.

Then she rode back, clothed on with  
chastity:

And one low churl, compact of thank-  
less earth,

The fatal byword of all years to  
come,

Boring a little augur-hole in fear,  
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had  
their will,

Were shrivell'd into darkness in his  
head,

And dropt before him. So the Powers,  
who wait

On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense mis-  
used;

And she, that knew not, pass'd: and  
all at once,

With twelve great shocks of sound, the  
shameless noon

Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred towers.  
 One after one: but even then she gain'd  
 Her bow; whence reissuing, robed and crown'd,  
 To meet her lord, she took the tax away  
 And built herself an everlasting name.

## THE TWO VOICES.

A STILL small voice spake unto me,  
 "Thou art so full of misery,  
 Were it not better not to be?"

Then to the still small voice I said:  
 "Let me not cast in endless shade  
 What is so wonderfully made."

To which the voice did urge reply:  
 "To day I saw the dragon-fly  
 Come from the wells where he did lie.

"An inner impulse rent the veil  
 Of his old husk: from head to tail  
 Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

"He dried his wings: like gauze they grew:  
 Thro' crofts and pastures wet with dew  
 A living flash of light he flew."

I said, "When first the world began,  
 Young Nature thro' five cycles ran,  
 And in the sixth she moulded man.

"She gave him mind, the lordliest  
 Proportion, and, above the rest,  
 Dominion in the head and breast."

Thereto the silent voice replied:  
 "Self-blinded are you by your pride:  
 Look up thro' night: the world is wide.

"This truth within thy mind rehearse,  
 That in a boundless universe  
 Is boundless better, boundless worse.

"Think you this mould of hopes and fears  
 Could find no statelier than his peers  
 In yonder hundred million spheres?"

It spake, moreover, in my mind:  
 "Tho' thou were scatter'd to the wind,  
 Yet is there plenty of the kind."

Then did my response clearer fall:  
 "No compound of this earthly ball  
 Is like another, all in all."

To which he answer'd scoffingly:  
 "Good soul! suppose I grant it thee,  
 Who'll weep for thy deficiency?"

"Or will one beam be less intense,  
 When thy peculiar difference  
 Is cancell'd in the world of sense?"

I would have said, "Thou canst not know,"

But my full heart, that work'd below,  
 Rain'd thro' my sight its overflow.

Again the voice spake unto me:

"Thou art so steep'd in misery,  
 Surely 'twere better not to be.

"Thine anguish will not let thee sleep,  
 Nor any train of reason keep:

Thou canst not think, but thou wilt weep."

I said, "The years with change advance:

If I make dark my countenance,  
 I shut my life from happier chance.

"Some turn this sickness yet might take,

Ev'n yet." But he: "What drug can make"

A wither'd palsy cease to shake?"

I wept, "Tho' I should die, I know  
 That all about the thorn will blow  
 In tufts of rosy-tinted snow;

"And men, thro' novel spheres of thought

Still moving after truth long sought,  
 Will learn new things when I am not."

"Yet," said the secret voice, "some time,

Sooner or later, will gray prime  
 Make thy grass hour with early time.

"Not less swift souls that yearn for light,

Rapt after heaven's starry flight,  
 Would sweep the tracts of day and night.

"Not less the bee would range her cells,

The furzy prickles fire the dells,  
 The foxglove cluster dappled bells."

I said that "all the years invent;  
 Each month is various to present  
 The world with some development.

"Were this not well, to bide mine hour,

Tho' watching from a ruin'd tower  
 How grows the day of human power?"

"The highest-mounted mind," he said,  
 "Still sees the sacred morning spread  
 The silent summit o'ershading."

"Will thirty seasons render plain  
 Those lonely lights that still remain,  
 Just breaking over land and main?"

"Or make that morn, from his cold crown

And crystal silence creeping down,  
 Flood with full daylight glebe and town?"

"Forerun thy peers, thy time, and let  
 Thy feet, millenniums hence, be set  
 In midst of knowledge, dream'd not yet.

"Thou hast not gain'd a real height,  
 Nor art thou nearer to the light,  
 Because the scale is infinite.

"'Twere better not to breathe or speak,  
 Than cry for strength, remaining weak,  
 And seem to find, but still to seek.

"Moreover, but to seem to find  
 Asks what thou lackest, thought re-  
 sign'd,

A healthy frame, a quiet mind."

I said, "When I am gone away,  
 'He dared not tarry,' men will say,  
 Doing dishonour to my clay."  
 "This is more vile," he made reply,  
 "To breathe and loathe, to live and  
 sigh,  
 Than once from dread of pain to die.  
 "Sick art thou—a divided will  
 Still heaping on the fear of ill  
 The fear of men, a coward still.  
 "Do men love thee? Art thou so bound  
 To men, that how thy name may sound  
 Will vex thee lying underground?  
 "The memory of the wither'd leaf  
 In endless time is scarce more brief  
 Than of the garner'd Autumn-sheaf.  
 "Go, vexed Spirit, sleep in trust;  
 The right ear, that is filled with dust,  
 Hears little of the false or just."  
 "Hark task, to pluck resolve," I cried,  
 "From emptiness and the waste wide  
 Of that abyss, or scornful pride!  
 "Nay—rather yet that I could raise  
 One hope that warm'd me in the days  
 While still I yearn'd for human praise.  
 "When, wide in soul and bold of  
 tongue,  
 Among the tents I paused and sung,  
 The distant battle flash'd and rung.  
 "I sung the joyful Pæan clear,  
 And, sitting, burnish'd without fear  
 The brand, the buckler, and the spear—  
 "Waiting to strive a happy strife,  
 To war with falsehood to the knife,  
 And not to lose the good of life—  
 "Some hidden principle to move,  
 To put together, part and prove,  
 And mete the bounds of hate and love—  
 "As far as might be, to carve out  
 Free space for every human doubt,  
 That the whole mind might orb about—  
 "To search thro' all I felt or saw,  
 The springs of life, the depths of awe,  
 And reach the law within the law:  
 "At least, not rotting like a weed,  
 But, having sown some generous seed,  
 Fruitful of further thought and deed,  
 "To pass, when Life her light with-  
 draws,  
 Not void of righteous self-applause,  
 Nor in a merely selfish cause—  
 "In some good cause, not in mine own,  
 To perish, wept for, honor'd, known,  
 And like a warrior overthrown;  
 "Whose eyes are dim with glorious  
 tears,  
 When, soil'd with noble dust, he hears  
 His country's war-song thrill his ears:  
 "Then dying of a mortal stroke,  
 What time the foeman's line is broke,  
 And all the war is roll'd in smoke."  
 "Yea!" said the voice, "thy dream  
 was good,  
 While thou abodest in the bud.

It was the stirring of the blood.  
 "If nature put not forth her power  
 About the opening of the flower,  
 Who is it that could live an hour?  
 "Then comes the check, the change,  
 the fall,  
 Pain rises up, old pleasures pall,  
 There is one remedy for all.  
 "Yet hadst thou, thro' enduring pain,  
 Link'd month to month with such a  
 chain  
 Of knitted purport, all were vain.  
 "Thou hadst not between death and  
 birth  
 Dissolved the riddle of the earth.  
 So were thy labour little worth.  
 "That men with knowledge merely  
 play'd,  
 I told thee—hardly nigher made,  
 Tho' scaling slow from grade to grade;  
 "Much less this dreamer, deaf and  
 blind,  
 Named man, may hope some truth to  
 find,  
 That bears relation to the mind.  
 "For every worm beneath the moon  
 Draws different threads, and late and  
 soon  
 Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.  
 "Cry, faint not: either Truth is born  
 Beyond the polar gleam forlorn,  
 Or in the gateways of the morn  
 "Cry, faint not, climb: the summits  
 slope  
 Beyond the furthest flights of hope,  
 Wrapt in dense cloud from base to cope.  
 "Sometimes a little corner shines,  
 As over rainy mist inclines  
 A gleaming crag with belts of pines  
 "I will go forward, sayest thou,  
 I shall not fail to find her now.  
 Look up, the fold is on her brow.  
 "If straight thy track, or if oblique,  
 Thou know'st not. Shadows thou dost  
 strike,  
 Embracing cloud, Ixion-like;  
 "And owning but a little more  
 Than beasts, abidest lame and poor,  
 Calling thyself a little lower  
 "Than angels. Cease to wail and  
 brawl!  
 Why inch by inch to darkness crawl?  
 There is one remedy for all."  
 "O dull, one-sided voice," said I,  
 "Wilt thou make everything a lie,  
 To flatter me that I may die?  
 "I know that age to age succeeds,  
 Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,  
 A dust of systems and of creeds.  
 "I cannot hide that some have striven,  
 Achieving calm, to whom was given  
 The joy that mixes man with Heaven:

"Who, rowing hard against the stream,  
Saw distant gates of Eden gleam,  
And did not dream it was a dream ;

"But heard, by secret transport led,  
Ev'n in the charnels of the dead,  
The murmur of the fountain-head—

"Which did accomplish their desire,  
Bore and forebore, and did not tire,  
Like Stephen, an unquenched fire.

"He heeded not reviling tones,  
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,  
Tho' cursed and scorn'd, and bruised  
with stones :

"But looking upward, full of grace,  
He pray'd, and from a happy place  
God's glory smote him on the face."

The sullen answer slid betwixt :  
"Not that the grounds of hope were  
fix'd,

The elements were kindlier mix'd."

I said, "I toil beneath the curse,  
But, knowing not the universe,  
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

"And that, in seeking to undo  
One riddle, and to find the true,  
I knit a hundred others new :

"Or that this anguish fleeting hence,  
Unmanac'd from bonds of sense,  
Be fix'd and froz'n to permanence :

"For I go, weak from suffering here ;  
Naked I go, and void of cheer ;  
What is it that I may not fear ?"

"Consider well," the voice replied :  
"His face, that two hours since hath  
died ;

Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride ?

"Will he obey when one commands ?  
Or answer should one press his hands ?  
He answers not, nor understands.

"His palms are folded on his breast :  
There is no other thing express'd  
But long disquiet merged in rest.

"His lips are very mild and meek :  
Tho' one should smite him on the  
cheek,

And on the mouth, he will not speak.

"His little daughter, whose sweet face  
He kiss'd, taking his last embrace,  
Becomes dishonor to her race—

"His sons grow up that bear his name,  
Some grow to honor, some to shame,—  
But he is chill to praise or blame.

"He will not hear the north-wind rave,  
Nor, moaning, household shelter crave  
From winter rains that beat his grave.

"High up the vapors fold and swim :  
About him broods the twilight dim :  
The place he knew forgetteth him."

"If all be dark, vague voice," I said,  
"These things are wrapt in doubt and  
dread,  
Nor canst thou show the dead are dead.

"The sap dries up : the plant declines.  
A deeper tale my heart divines.  
Know I not Death? the outward  
signs ?

"I found him when my years were  
few ;

A shadow on the graves I knew,  
And darkness in the village yew.

"From grave to grave the shadow  
crept :

In her still place the morning wept :  
Touch'd by his feet the daisy slept.

"The simple senses crown'd his head :  
'Omega ! thou art Lord,' they said,  
'We find no motion in the dead.'

"Why, if man rot in dreamless ease,  
Should that plain fact, as taught by  
these,  
Not make him sure that he shall cease?

"Who forged that other influence,  
That heat of inward evidence,  
By which he doubts against the sense?

"He owns the fatal gift of eyes,  
That read his spirit blindly wise,  
Not simple as a thing that dies.

"Here sits he shaping wings to fly :  
His heart forebodes a mystery :  
He names the name Eternity.

"That type of Perfect in his mind  
In Nature can he nowhere find,  
He sows himself on every wind.

"He seems to hear a Heavenly Friend,  
And thro' thick veils to apprehend  
A labor working to an end.

"The end and the beginning vex  
His reason : many things perplex  
With motions, checks, and counter-  
checks.

"He knows a baseness in his blood  
At such strange war with something  
good,  
He may not do the thing he would.

"Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,  
Vast images in glimmering dawn,  
Half shown, are broken and with drawn.

"Ah ! sure within him and without,  
Could his dark wisdom find it out,  
There must be answer to his doubt.

"But thou canst answer not again.  
With thine own weapon art thou slain,  
Or thou wilt answer but in vain.

"The doubt would rest, I dare not  
solve.

In the same circle we revolve.  
Assurance only breeds resolve."

As when a billow, blown against,  
Falls back, the voice with which I  
fenced

A little ceased, but recommenced.

"Where wert thou when thy father  
play'd

In his free field, and pastime made,  
A merry boy in sun and shade ?

"A merry boy they called him then,  
He sat upon the knees of men  
In days that never come again.

"Before the little ducts began  
To feed thy bones with lime, and ran  
Their course, till thou wert also man :

"Who took a wife, who rear'd his race,  
Whose wrinkles gather'd on his face,  
Whose troubles number with his  
days :

"A life of nothings, nothing worth,  
From that first nothing ere his birth,  
To that last nothing under earth !"

"These words," I said, "are like the  
rest,  
No certain clearness, but at best  
A vague suspicion of the breast :

"But if I grant, thou might'st defend  
The thesis which thy words intend—  
That to begin implies to end ;

"Yet how should I for certain hold,  
Because my memory is so cold,  
That I first was in human mould ?

"I cannot make this matter plain,  
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,  
A random arrow from the brain.

"It may be that no life is found,  
Which only to one engine bound  
Falls off, but cycles always round.

"As old mythologies relate,  
Some draught of Lethe might await  
The slipping thro' from state to state.

"As here we find in trances, men  
Forget the dream that happens then,  
Until they fall in trance again.

"So might we, if our state were such  
As one before, remember much,  
For those two likes might meet and  
touch.

"But, if I lapsed from nobler place,  
Some legend of a fallen race  
Alone might hint of my disgrace ;

"Some vague emotion of delight  
In gazing up an Alpine height,  
Some yearning toward the lamps of  
night.

"Or if thro' lower lives I came—  
Tho' all experience past became  
Consolidate in mind and frame—

"I might forget my weaker lot ;  
For is not our first year forgot ?  
The haunts of memory echo not.

"And men, whose reason long was  
blind,  
From cells of madness unconfined,  
Oft lose whole years of darker mind.

"Much more, if first I floated free,  
As naked essence, must I be  
incompetent of memory :

"For memory dealing but with time,  
And he with matter, should she climb  
Beyond her own material prime ?

"Moreover, something is or seems,  
That touches me with mystic gleams,  
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—  
"Of something felt, like something  
here ;  
Of something done, I know not where ;  
Such as no language may declare."

The still voice laugh'd. "I talk," said  
he,  
"Not with thy dreams. Suffice it thee  
Thy pain is a reality."

"But thou," said I, "hast miss'd thy  
mark,  
Who sought'st to wreck my mortal ark,  
By making all the horizon dark.

"Why not set forth, if I should do  
This rashness, that which might ensue  
With this old soul in organs new ?

"Whatever crazy sorrow saith,  
No life that breathes with human  
breath  
Has ever truly long'd for death.

"'Tis life, whereof our nerves are  
scant,  
O life, not death, for which we pant ;  
More life, and fuller, that I want."

I ceased, and sat as one forlorn.  
Then said the voice, in quiet scorn,  
"Behold it is the Sabbath morn."

And I arose, and I released  
The casement, and the light increased  
With freshness in the dawning east.

Like soften'd airs that blowing steal,  
When meres begin to uncongcal,  
The sweet church bells began to peal.

On to God's house the people prest :  
Passing the place where each must  
rest,

Each enter'd like a welcome guest.  
One walk'd between his wife and child,  
With measured footfall firm and mild,  
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood  
Lean'd on him, faithful, gentle, good,  
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,  
The little maiden walk'd demure,  
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,  
My frozen heart began to beat,  
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wander'd on :  
I spoke, but answer came there none ;  
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,  
A little whisper silver-clear,  
A murmur, "Be of better cheer."

As from some blissful neighborhood,  
A notice faintly understood,  
"I see the end, and know the good."

A little hint to solace woe,  
A hint, a whisper breathing low,  
"I may not speak of what I know."  
Like an Æolian harp that wakes  
No certain air, but overtakes  
Far thought with music that it makes:  
Such seem'd the whisper at my side:  
"What is it thou knowest, sweet  
voice?" I cried.

"A hidden hope," the voice replied:  
So heavenly-toned, that in that hour  
From out my sullen heart a power  
Broke, like the rainbow from the  
shower,

To feel, altho' no tongue can prove,  
That every cloud, that spreads above  
And velleth love, itself is love.

And forth into the fields I went,  
And Nature's living motion lent  
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wonder'd at the bounteous hours,  
The slow result of winter showers:  
You scarce could see the grass for  
flowers.

I wonder'd, while I paced along:  
The woods were fill'd so full with song,  
There seem'd no room for sense of  
wrong.

So variously seem'd all things wrought,  
I marvel'd how the mind was brought  
To anchor by one gloomy thought;  
And wherefore rather I made choice  
To commune with that barren voice,  
Than him that said, "Rejoice! re-  
joice!"

## THE DAY DREAM.

## PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak:  
A pleasant hour has past away  
While, dreaming on your damask  
cheek,

The dewy sister-eyelids lay.  
As by the lattice you reclined,  
I went thro' many wayward moods  
To see you dreaming—and, behind,  
A summer crisp with shining woods.

And I too dream'd, until at last  
Across my fancy, brooding warm,  
The reflex of a legend past,  
And loosely settled into form.  
And would you have the thought I  
had,

And see the vision that I saw,  
Then take the broodery-frame, and add  
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,  
And I will tell it Turn your face,  
Nor look with that too-earnest eye—  
The rhymes are dazzled from their  
place,

And order'd words asunder fly.

## THE SLEEPING PALACE.

## I.

The varying year with blade and sheaf  
Clothes and reclothes the happy  
plains;

Here rests the sap within the leaf,  
Here stays the blood along the veins:  
Faint shadows, vapors lightly curl'd,  
Faint murmurs from the meadows  
come,  
Like hints and echoes of the world  
To spirits folded in the womb.

## II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns  
On every slanting terrace-lawn.  
The fountain to his place returns  
Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.  
Here droops the bamer on the tower,  
On the hall-hearths the festal fires,  
The peacock in his laurel bower,  
The parrot in his gilded wires.

## III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their  
eggs:  
In these, in those the life is stay'd.  
The mantles from the golden pegs  
Droop sleepily; no sound is made,  
Not even of a gnat that sings.  
More like a picture seemeth all  
Than those old portraits of old kings,  
That watch the sleepers from the  
wall.

## IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask  
Between his knees, half-drain'd; and  
there  
The wrinkled steward at his task,  
The maid-of-honor blooming fair;  
The page has caught her hand in his:  
Her lips are sever'd as to speak:  
His own are parted to a kiss:  
The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

## V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,  
The beams, that thro' the Oriel  
shine,  
Make prisms in every carven glass,  
And beaker brimm'd with noble  
wine.  
Each baron at the banquet sleeps,  
Grave faces gather'd in a ring.  
His state the king reposing keeps.  
He must have been a jovial king.

## VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows  
At distance like a little wood;  
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,  
And grapes with bunches red as  
blood;  
All creeping plants, a wall of green  
Close-matted, burr and brake and  
brier,  
And glimpsing over these, just seen,  
High up, the topmost palace-spire.

## VII.

When will the hundred summers die,  
And thought and time be born again,  
And never knowledge, drawing nigh,  
Bring truth that sways the soul of  
men?

Here all things in their place remain,  
As all were order'd, ages since.  
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and  
Pain,  
And bring the fated fairy Prince,

## THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

## I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,  
She lying on her couch alone,  
Across the purpled coverlet,  
The maiden's jet-black hair has  
grown,  
On either side her tranced form  
Forth streaming from a braid of  
pearl:  
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,  
And moves not on the rounded curl.

## II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid  
Unto her limbs itself doth mould  
Languidly ever; and, amid  
Her full black ringlets downward  
roll'd,  
Gloweth forth each softly-shadow'd arm  
With bracelets of the diamond bright;  
Her constant beauty doth inform  
Stillness with love, and day with  
light.

## III.

She sleeps: her breathings are not  
heard  
In palace chambers far apart.  
The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd  
That lie upon her charmed heart.  
She sleeps: on either hand upswells  
The gold-fringed pillow lightly  
prest:  
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells  
A perfect form in perfect rest.

## THE ARRIVAL.

## I.

ALL precious things, discover'd late,  
To those that seek them issue forth;  
For love in sequel works with fate,  
And draws the veil from hidden  
worth.  
He travels far from other skies—  
His mantle glitters on the rocks—  
A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,  
And lighter-footed than the fox,

## II.

The bodies and the bones of those  
That strove in other days to pass,  
Are wither'd in the thorny close,  
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.  
He gazes on the silent dead:  
"They perish'd in their daring  
deeds,"  
This proverb flashes thro' his head,  
"The many fail; the one succeeds."

## III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he  
seeks:  
He breaks the hedge: he enters  
there:

The color flies into his cheeks:  
He trusts to light on something fair;  
For all his life the charm did talk  
About his path, and hover near  
With words of promise in his walk,  
And whisper'd voices at his ear.

## IV.

More close and close his footsteps  
wind:  
The Magic Music in his heart  
Beats quick and quicker, till he find  
The quiet chamber far apart.  
His spirit flutters like a lark,  
He stoops—to kiss her—on his knee.  
"Love, if thy tresses be so dark,  
How dark those hidden eyes must  
be!"

## THE REVIVAL.

## I.

A TOUCH, a kiss! the charm was snapt.  
There rose a noise of striking clocks,  
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,  
And barking dogs, and crowing  
cocks:  
A fuller light illum'd all,  
A breeze thro' all the garden swept,  
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,  
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

## II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,  
The butler drank, the steward  
scrawl'd,  
The fire shot up, the martin flew,  
The parrot scream'd, the peacock  
squall'd,  
The maid and page renew'd their strife,  
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and  
clack't,  
And all the long-pent stream of life  
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

## III.

And last with these the king awoke,  
And in his chair himself uprear'd,  
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and  
spoke,  
"By holy rood, a royal beard!  
How say you? we have slept, my lords,  
My beard has grown into my lap."  
The baron swore, with many words,  
"Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

## IV.

"Pardy," returned the king, "but  
still  
My joints are somewhat stiff or so,  
My lord, and shall we pass the bill  
I mention'd half an hour ago?"  
The chancellor, sedate and vain,  
In courteous words return'd reply:  
But dallied with his golden chain,  
And, smiling, put the question by.

## THE DEPARTURE.

## I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,  
And round her waist she felt it fold,

And far across the hills they went  
In that new world which is the old :  
Across the hills, and far away  
Beyond their utmost purple rim,  
And deep into the dying day  
The happy princess follow'd him.

## II.

"I'd sleep another hundred years,  
O love, for such another kiss ;"  
"O wake for ever, love," she hears,  
"O love, 'twas such as this and this."  
And o'er them many a sliding star,  
And many a merry wind was borne,  
And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,  
The twilight melted into morn.

## III.

"O eyes long laid in happy sleep !"  
"O happy sleep, that lightly fled !"  
"O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep !"  
"O love, thy kiss would wake the  
dead !"  
And o'er them many a flowing range  
Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,  
And, rap'd thro' many a rosy change,  
The twilight died into the dark.

## IV.

"A hundred summers ! can it be ?  
And whither goest thou, tell me  
where ?"  
"O seek my father's court with me,  
For there are greater wonders there."  
And o'er the hills, and far away  
Beyond their utmost purple rim,  
Beyond the night, across the day,  
Thro' all the world she follow'd him.

## MORAL.

## I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,  
And if you find no moral there,  
Go, look in any glass and say,  
What moral is in being fair.  
O, to what uses shall we put  
The wildweed-flower that simply  
blows ?  
And is there any moral shut  
Within the bosom of the rose ?

## II.

But any man that walks the mead,  
In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,  
According as his humors lead,  
A meaning suited to his mind.  
And liberal applications lie  
In Art like Nature, dearest friend ;  
So 'twere to cramp its use, if I  
Should hook it to some useful end.

## L'ENVOI.

## I.

You shake your head. A random  
string  
Your finer female sense offends.  
Well—were it not a pleasant thing  
To fall asleep with all one's friends ;  
To pass with all our social ties  
To silence from the paths of men ;  
And every hundred years to rise

And learn the world, and sleep again,  
To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,  
And wake on science grown to more,  
On secrets of the brain, the stars,  
As wild as aught of fairy lore ;  
And all that else the years will show,  
The Poet-forms of stronger hours,  
The vast Republics that may grow,  
The Federations and the Powers ;  
Titanic forces taking birth  
In divers seasons, divers climes ;  
For we are Ancients of the earth,  
And in the morning of the times.

## II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep  
Thro' sunny decades new and strange,  
Or gay quinquennials would we reap  
The flower and quintessence of  
change.

## III.

Ah, yet would I—and would I might !  
So much your eyes my fancy take—  
Be still the first to leap to light  
That I might kiss those eyes awake !  
For, am I right, or am I wrong,  
To choose your own you did not care ;  
You'd have *my* moral from the song,  
And I will take my pleasure there :  
And, am I right or am I wrong,  
My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',  
To search a meaning for the song,  
Perforce will still revert to you ;  
Nor finds a closer truth than this  
All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,  
And evermore a costly kiss  
The prelude to some brighter world.

## IV.

For since the time when Adam first  
Embraced his Eve in happy hour,  
And every bird of Eden burst  
In carol, every bud to flower,  
What eyes, like thine, have waken'd  
hopes ?  
What lips, like thine, so sweetly  
job'd ?  
Where on the double rosebud droops  
The fulness of the pensive mind :  
Which all too dearly self-involved,  
Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me ;  
A sleep by kisses undissolved,  
That lets thee neither hear nor see :  
But break it. In the name of wife,  
And in the rights that name may  
give,  
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,  
And that for which I care to live.

## EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,  
And, if you find a meaning there,  
O whisper to your glass, and say,  
"What wonder, if he thinks me  
fair ?"  
What wonder I was all unwise,  
To shape the song for your delight  
Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise,  
That float thro' Heaven, and cannot  
light ?

Or old-world trains, upheld at court  
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue —  
But take it — earnest wed with sport,  
And either sacred unto you.

## AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,  
But it is wild and barren,  
A garden too with scarce a tree,  
And waster than a warren :  
Yet say the neighbors when they call,  
It is not bad but good land,  
And in it is the germ of all  
That grows within the woodland.  
O had I lived when song was great  
In days of old Amphion,  
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,  
Nor cared for seed or scion !  
And had I lived when song was great,  
And legs of trees were limber,  
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,  
And fiddled in the timber !  
'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,  
Such happy intonation,  
Wherever he sat down and sung  
He left a small plantation ;  
Wherever in a lonely grove  
He set up his forlorn pipes,  
The tree oaks began to move,  
And flounder into hornpipes  
The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,  
And, as tradition teaches,  
Young ashes pirouetted down  
Coquetting with young beeches ;  
And briony-vine and ivy-wreath  
Ran forward to his rhyming,  
And from the valleys underneath  
Came little copses climbing.  
The linden broke her ranks and rent  
The woodbine wreaths that bind her,  
And down the middle buzz ! she went  
With all her bees behind her ;  
The poplars, in long order due,  
With ypress promenaded,  
The shock-head willows two and two  
By rivers galloped.  
Came wet-shot alder from the wave,  
Came yews, a dismal coterie ;  
Each pluck'd his one foot from the  
grave,  
Poussetting with a sloe-tree:  
Old elms came breaking from the vine,  
The vine stream'd out to follow,  
And, sweating rosin, plump'd the pine  
From many a cloudy hollow.  
And wasn't it a sight to see,  
When, ere his song was ended,  
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,  
The country-side descended ;  
And shepherds from the mountain-  
eaves  
Look'd down, half-pleas'd, half-  
frighten'd,  
As dash'd about the drunken leaves  
The random sunshine lighten'd !  
Oh ! nature first was fresh to men,  
And wanton without measure ;

So youthful and so flexible then,  
You moved her at your pleasure.  
Twang out, my fiddle ! shake the  
twigs !  
And make her dance attendance,  
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set  
sprigs,  
And scirrhous roots and tendons.  
'Tis vain ! in such a brassy age  
I could not move a thistle ;  
The very sparrows in the hedge  
Scarce answer to my whistle ;  
Or at the most, when three-parts-sick  
With strumming and with scraping,  
A jackass heehaws from the rick,  
The passive oxen gaping.  
But what is that I hear ? a sound  
Like sleepy counsel pleading ;  
O Lord ! — 'tis in my neighbour's  
ground,  
The modern Muses reading.  
They read Botanic Treatises,  
And Works on Gardening thro'  
there,  
And Methods of transplanting trees,  
To look as if they grew there.  
The wither'd Misses ! how they proce  
O'er books of travell'd seamen,  
And show you slips of all that grows  
From England to Van Diemen.  
They read in arbors elipt and cut,  
And alleys, faded places,  
By squares of tropic summer shut  
And warm'd in crystal cases.  
But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,  
Are neither green nor sappy ;  
Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,  
The spindlings look unhappy.  
Better to me the meanest weed  
That blows upon its mountain,  
The vilest herb that runs to seed  
Beside its native fountain.  
And I must work thro' months of toil,  
And years of cultivation,  
Upon my proper patch of soil  
To grow my own plantation.  
I'll take the showers as they fall,  
I will not vex my bosom :  
Enough if at the end of all  
A little garden blossom.

## ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows  
Are sparkling to the moon:  
My breath to heaven like vapor goes:  
May my soul follow soon !  
The shadows of the convent-towers  
Slant down the snowy sward,  
Still creeping with the creeping hours  
That lead me to my Lord:  
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear  
As are the frosty skies,  
Or this first snowdrop of the year  
That in my bosom lies.  
As these white robes are soil'd and  
dark,

To yonder shining ground ;  
 As this pale taper's earthly spark,  
 To yonder argent round ;  
 So shows my soul before the Lamb,  
 My spirit before Thee ;  
 So in mine earthly hope I am,  
 To that I hope to be.  
 Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and  
 far,  
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,  
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,  
 In raiment white and clean.  
 He lifts me to the golden doors ;  
 The flashes come and go ;  
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,  
 And strews her lights below,  
 And deepens on and up ! the gates  
 Roll back, and far within  
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom  
 waits,  
 To make me pure of sin.  
 The sabbaths of Eternity,  
 One sabbath deep and wide  
 A light upon the shining sea —  
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

## SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of  
 men,  
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
 My strength is as the strength of ten,  
 Because my heart is pure.  
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,  
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and  
 fly,  
 The horse and rider reel :  
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
 And when the tide of combat stands,  
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,  
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.  
 How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
 On whom their favors fall !  
 For them I battle till the end,  
 To save from shame and thrall :  
 But all my heart is drawn above,  
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and  
 shrine :  
 I never felt the kiss of love,  
 Nor maiden's hand in mine.  
 More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
 Me mightier transports move and  
 thrill ;  
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer  
 A virgin heart in work and will.  
 When down the stormy crescent goes,  
 A light before me swims.  
 Between dark stems the forest glows,  
 I hear a noise of hymns :  
 Then by some secret shrine I ride ;  
 I hear a voice, but none are there ;  
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
 The tapers burning fair.  
 Fair gleams the snowy altar cloth,  
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,  
 And solemn chants resound be-  
 tween.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-mercs  
 I find a magic bark ;  
 I leap on board: no helmsman steers:  
 I float till all is dark.  
 A gentle sound, and awful light !  
 Three angels bear the holy Grail :  
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
 On sleeping wings they sail.  
 Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !  
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
 As down dark tides the glory slides,  
 And star-like mingles with the stars

When on my goodly charger borne  
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,  
 The cock crows ere the Christmas  
 morn,  
 The streets are dumb with snow.  
 The tempest crackles on the leads,  
 And, ringing, springs from brand and  
 mail ;  
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,  
 And gilds the driving hail.  
 I leave the plain, I climb the height ;  
 No branchy thicket shelter yields ;  
 But blessed forms in whistling storms  
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields

A maiden knight—to me is given  
 Such hope, I know not fear ;  
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
 That often meet me here.  
 I muse on you that will not cease,  
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams.  
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
 Whose odors haunt my dreams ;  
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
 This mortal armor that I wear,  
 This weight and size, this heart and  
 eyes,  
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
 And thro' the mountain-walls  
 A rolling organ-harmony  
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.  
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear :  
 " O just and faithful knight of God !  
 Hide on ! the prize is near."  
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;  
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,  
 All-arm'd I ride, white'er betide,  
 Until I find the holy Grail.

## EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder  
 town  
 Met me walking on yonder way,  
 " And have you lost your heart ?" she  
 said,  
 " And are you married yet, Edward  
 Gray ?"

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :  
 Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :  
 " Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more  
 Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

"Ellen Adair she loved me well,  
Against her father's and mother's  
will:

To-day I sat for an hour and wept,  
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

"Shy she was, and I thought her cold;  
Thought her proud, and fled over the  
sea;

Fill'd I was with folly and spite,  
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

"Cruel, cruel the words I said!  
Cruelly came they back to-day:  
'You're too slight and fickle,' I said,  
'To trouble the heart of Edward  
Gray.'

"There I put my face in the grass—  
Whisper'd, 'Listen to my despair:  
I repent me of all I did:  
Speak a little, Ellen Adair!'

"Then I took a pencil, and wrote  
On the mossy stone, as I lay,  
'Here lies the body of Ellen Adair;  
And here the heart of Edward Gray!'

"Love may come, and love may go,  
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree:  
But I will love no more, no more,  
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

"Bitterly wept I over the stone:  
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away:  
There lies the body of Ellen Adair!  
And there the heart of Edward  
Gray!"

#### WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head waiter at The Cock,  
To which I most resort,  
How goes the time? 'Tis five o'clock.  
Go fetch a pint of port:  
But let it not be such as that  
You set before chance-comers,  
But such whose father-grape grew fat  
On Lusitanian summers.

No vain libation to the Muse,  
But may she still be kind,  
And whisper lovely words, and use  
Her influence on the mind,  
To make me write my random rhymes,  
Ere they be half-forgotten;  
Nor add and alter, many times,  
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips  
Her laurel in the wine,  
And lays it thrice upon my lips,  
These favor'd lips of mine;  
Until the charm have power to make  
New lifeblood warm the bosom,  
And barren commonplaces break  
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board;  
Her gradual fingers steal  
And touch upon the master-chord  
Of all I felt and feel.

Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,  
And phantom hopes assemble;  
And that child's heart within the man's  
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,  
By many pleasant ways,  
Against its fountain upward runs  
The current of my days:  
I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd;  
The gas-light wavers dimmer.  
And softly, thro' a vinous mist,  
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,  
Unboding critic-pen,  
Or that eternal want of pence,  
Which vexes public men,  
Who hold their hands to all, and cry  
For that which all deny them—  
Who sweep the crossing, wet or dry,  
And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,  
Tho' fortune clip my wings,  
I will not cramp my heart, nor take  
Half-views of men and things.  
Let Whig and Tory stir their blood;  
There must be stormy weather;  
But for some true result of good  
All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes;  
If old things, there are new:  
Ten thousand broken lights and shapes  
Yet glimpses of the true.  
Let riffs be rife in prose and rhyme,  
We lack not rhymes and reasons,  
As on this whirligig of Time  
We circle with the seasons.

This earth is rich in man and maid;  
With fair horizons bound:  
This whole wide earth of light and  
shade  
Comes out, a perfect round.  
High over roaring Temple-bar,  
And, set in Heaven's third story,  
I look at all things as they are,  
But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honor'd by the guest  
Half-mused, or reeling ripe.  
The pint, you brought me, was the best  
That ever came from pipe.  
But tho' the port surpasses praise,  
My nerves have dealt with stiffer.  
Is there some magic in the place?  
Or do my peptics differ?

For since I came to live and learn,  
No pint of white or red  
Had ever half the power to turn  
This wheel within my head,  
Which bears a season'd brain about,  
Unsubject to confusion,  
Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,  
Thro' every convulsion.

For I am of a numerous house,  
With many kinsmen gay,  
Where long and largely we carouse  
As who shall say me nay:

Each month, a birth-day coming on,  
 We drink defying trouble,  
 Or sometimes two would meet in one,  
 And then we drank it double ;  
 Whether the vintage, yet unkept,  
 Had relish fiery-new,  
 Or, elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,  
 As old as Waterloo ;  
 Or stow'd (when classic Canning died)  
 In musty bins and chambers,  
 Had cast upon its crusty side  
 The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !  
 She answer'd to my call,  
 She changes with that mood or this,  
 Is all-in-all to all :  
 She lit the spark within my throat,  
 To make my blood run quicker,  
 Used all her fiery will, and smote  
 Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about  
 The waiter's hands, that reach  
 To each his perfect pint of stout,  
 His proper chop to each.  
 He looks not like the common breed  
 That with the napkin dally ;  
 I think he came like Ganymede,  
 From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg  
 Than modern poultry drop,  
 Stept forward on a firmer leg,  
 And cramm'd a plumper crop :  
 Upon an ampler dunghill trod,  
 Crow'd dustier late and early,  
 Sipt wine from silver, praising God,  
 And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,  
 Till in a court he saw  
 A something-pottle-bodied boy  
 That knuckled at the law :  
 He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and  
 good,  
 Flew over roof and casement :  
 His brothers of the weather stood  
 Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe and  
 spire,  
 And follow'd with acclaims,  
 A sign to many a staring shire  
 Came crowing over Thames,  
 Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,  
 Till, where the street grows straiter,  
 One fix'd for ever at the door,  
 And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?  
 How out of place she makes  
 The violet of a legend blow  
 Among the chops and steaks !  
 'Tis but a steward of the can,  
 One shade more plump than com-  
 mon ;  
 As just and mere a serving-man  
 As any, born of woman.

I ranged too high: what draws me down  
 Into the common day ?  
 Is it the weight of that half-crown,

Which I shall have to pay ?  
 For something duller than at first,  
 Nor wholly comfortable,  
 I sit (my empty glass reversed),  
 And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife  
 I take myself to task ;  
 Lost of the fulness of my life  
 I leave an empty flask :  
 For I had hope, by something rare,  
 To prove myself a poet :  
 But while I plan and plan, my hair  
 Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,  
 Till they be gather'd up ;  
 The truth, that flies the flowing-can,  
 Will haunt the vacant cup :  
 And others' follies teach us not,  
 Nor much their wisdom teaches ;  
 And most, of sterling worth, is what  
 Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !  
 We know not what we know.  
 But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone,  
 'Tis gone, and let it go.  
 'Tis gone : a thousand such have slipt  
 Away from my embraces,  
 And fall'n into the dusty crypt  
 Of darken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou! thy betters went  
 Long since, and came no more ;  
 With peals of genial clamor sent  
 From many a tavern-door ;  
 With twisted quirks and happy hits,  
 From misty men of letters ;  
 The tavern-hours of mighty wits—  
 Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and  
 looks  
 Had yet their native glow :  
 Nor yet the fear of little books  
 Had made him talk for show ;  
 But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,  
 He flash'd his random speeches ;  
 Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd  
 His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,  
 Like all good things on earth !  
 For should I prize thee, couldst thou  
 last,  
 At half thy real worth ?  
 I hold it good, good things should pass:  
 With time I will not quarrel ;  
 It is but yonder empty glass  
 That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,  
 To which I most resort,  
 I too must part : I hold thee dear  
 For this good pint of port.  
 For this, thou shalt from all things  
 suck  
 Marrow of mirth and laughter ;  
 And, whereso'er thou move, good luck  
 Shall fling her old shoe after.  
 But thou wilt never move from hence,

The sphere thy fate allots :  
Thy latter days increased with pence  
Go down among the pots :  
Thou battenest by the greasy gleam  
In haunts of hungry sinners,  
Old boxes, larded with the steam  
Of thirty thousand dinners.

We fret, we fume, would shift our  
skins,  
Would quarrel with our lot ;  
Thy care is, under polish'd tins,  
To serve the hot-and-hot ;  
To come and go, and come again,  
Returning like the pewit,  
And watch'd by silent gentlemen,  
That trifle with the cruet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head  
The thick-set hazel dies ;  
Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread  
The corners of thine eyes :  
Live long, nor feel in head or chest  
Our changeful equinoxes,  
Till mellow Death, like some late guest  
Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease  
To pace the gritted floor,  
And, laying down an unctuous lease  
Of life, shalt earn no more ;  
No carved cross-bones, the types of  
Death,  
Shall show thee past to Heaven :  
But carved cross-pipes, and, under-  
neath,  
A pint-pot neatly graven.

TO ——— .

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS.

"Cursed be he that moves my bones,"  
*Shakespeare's Epitaph.*

YOU might have won the Poet's name,  
If such be worth the winning now,  
And gain'd a laurel for your brow  
Of sounder leaf than I can claim ;  
But you have made the wiser choice,  
A life that moves to gracious ends  
Thro' troops of unrecording friends,  
A deedful life, a silent voice :

And you have miss'd the irreverent  
doom

Of those that wear the Poet's crown :  
Hereafter, neither knave nor clown  
Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die  
Nor leave his music as of old,  
But round him ere he scarce be cold  
Begins the scandal and the cry :

Proclaim the faults he would not  
show :

Break lock and seal: betray the trust:  
Keep nothing sacred : 'tis but just  
The many-headed beast should know."

Ah shameless ! for he did but sing  
A song that pleased us from its  
worth ;

No public life was his on earth,

No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.  
He gave the people of his best :  
His worst he kept, his best he gave.  
My Shakespeare's curse on clown  
and knave

Who will not let his ashes rest !

Who make it seem more sweet to be  
The little life of bank and brier,  
The bird that pipes his lone desire  
And dies unheard within his tree,  
Than he that warbles long and loud  
And drops at Glory's temple-gates,  
For whom the carrion vulture waits  
To tear his heart before the crowd !

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN  
GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls  
Of water, sheets of summer glass,  
The long divine Peneian pass,  
The vast Akroeraunian walls.

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,  
With such a pencil, such a pen,  
You shadow forth to distant men,  
I read and felt that I was there :

And trust me while I turn'd the page  
And track'd you still on classic  
ground,  
I grew in gladness till I found  
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd  
And glisten'd—here and there alone  
The broad-limb'd Gods at random  
thrown

By fountain-urns :—and Naiads oar'd.

A glimmering shoulder under gloom  
Of cavern pillars ; on the swell  
The silver lily heaved and fell ;  
And many a slope was rich in bloom.  
From him that on the mountain lea  
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks,  
To him who sat upon the rocks,  
And fluted to the morning sea.

LADY CLARE.

IT was the time when lilies blow,  
And clouds are highest up in air,  
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe  
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn :  
Lovers long-betroth'd were they :  
They too will wed the morrow morn :  
God's blessing on the day !

"He does not love me for my birth,  
Nor for my lands so broad and fair,  
He loves me for my own true worth,  
And that is well," said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,  
Said, "Who was this that went from  
thee ?"

"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare,  
"To-morrow he weds with me."

"O God be thank'd!" said Alice the nurse,  
"That all comes round so just and fair;

Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,  
And you are not the Lady Clare."

"Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?"  
Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"

"As God's above," said Alice the nurse,  
"I speak the truth: you are my child.

"The old Earl's daughter died at my breast;  
I speak the truth, as I live by bread!  
I buried her like my own sweet child,  
And put my child in her stead."

"Falsely, falsely have ye done,  
O mother," she said, "if this be true,  
To keep the best man under the sun  
So many years from his due."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,  
"But keep the secret for your life,  
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,  
When you are man and wife."

"If I'm a beggar born," she said,  
"I will speak out, for I dare not lie.  
Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,  
And fling the diamond necklace by."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,  
"But keep the secret all ye can."  
She said, "Not so: but I will know  
If there be any faith in man"

"Nay now, what faith?" said Alice the nurse,  
"The man will cleave unto his right."

"And he shall have it," the lady replied,  
"Tho' I should die to-night."

"Yet give one kiss to your mother dear!

Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee."  
"O mother, mother, mother," she said,

"So strange it seems to me.

"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,  
My mother dear, if this be so,  
And lay your hand upon my head,  
And bless me, mother, e'er I go."

She clad herself in a russet gown,  
She was no longer Lady Clare:  
She went by dale, and she went by down,

With a single rose in her hair.  
The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought

Leapt up from where she lay,  
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,  
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower;  
"O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!

Why come you drest like a village maid,  
That are the flower of the earth?"

"If I come drest like a village maid,  
I am but as my fortunes are:  
I am a beggar born," she said,  
"And not the Lady Clare."

"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,

"For I am yours in word and in deed.

Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,

"Your riddle is hard to read."

O and proudly stood she up!  
Her heart within her did not fail:  
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,  
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn;  
He turned and kiss'd her where she stood:

"If you you are not the heiress born,  
And I," said he, "the next in blood—

"If you are not the heiress born,  
And I," said he, "the lawful heir,  
We two will wed to-morrow morn,  
And you shall still be Lady Clare."

## THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

IN her ear he whispers gayly,  
"If my heart by signs can tell,

Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,  
And I think thou lov'st me well."

She replies, in accents fainter,  
"There is none I love like thee."

He is but a landscape painter,  
And a village maiden she.

He to lips, that fondly falter,  
Presses his without reproof:

Leads her to the village altar,  
And they leave her father's roof:

"I can make no marriage present:  
Little can I give my wife.

Love will make our cottage pleasant,  
And I love thee more than life."

They by parks and lodges going  
See the lordly castles stand:

Summer woods, about them blowing,  
Made a murmur in the land.

From deep thought himself he rousa,  
Says to her that loves him well,

"Let us see these handsome houses  
Where the wealthy nobles dwell."

So she goes by him attended,  
Hears him lovingly converse,

Sees whatever fair and splendid  
Lay betwixt his home and hers;

Parks with oak and chestnut shady,  
Parks and order'd gardens neat,

Ancient homes of lord and lady,  
Built for pleasure and for state,

All he shows her makes him dearer :  
Evermore she seems to gaze  
On that cottage growing nearer,  
Where they twain will spend their  
days.

O but she will love him truly !  
He shall have a cheerful home ;  
She will order all things duly,  
When beneath his roof they come.  
Thus her heart rejoices greatly,  
Till a gateway she discerns  
With armorial bearings stately,  
And beneath the gate she turns ;  
Sees a mansion more majestic  
Than all those she saw before ;  
Many a gallant gay domestic,  
Bows before him at the door.  
And they speak in gentle murmur,  
When they answer to his call,  
While he treads with footstep firmer,  
Leading on from hall to hall.  
And, while now she wonders blindly,  
Nor the meaning can divine,  
Proudly turns he round and kindly,  
" All of this is mine and thine,"  
Here he lives in state and bounty,  
Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,  
Not a lord in all the county  
Is so great a lord as he.

All at once the color flushes  
Her sweet face from brow to chin :  
As it were with shame she blushes,  
And her spirit changed within.  
Then her countenance all over  
Pale again as death did prove :  
But he clasp'd her like a lover,  
And he cheer'd her soul with love.  
So she strove against her weakness,  
Tho' at times her spirit sank :  
Shaped her heart with woman's meek-

ness  
To all duties of her rank :  
And a gentle consort made he,  
And her gentle mind was such  
That she grew a noble lady,  
And the people loved her much.  
But a trouble weigh'd upon her,  
And perplex'd her, night and morn,  
With the burden of an honor  
Unto which she was not born.  
Faint she grew and ever fainter,  
And she murmur'd, " O, that he  
Were once more that landscape-paint-

er,  
Which did win my heart from me !"  
So she droop'd and droop'd before  
him,

Fading slowly from his side :  
Three fair children first she bore him,  
Then before her time she died.  
Weeping, weeping late and early,  
Walking up and pacing down,  
Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,  
Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.  
And he came to look upon her,  
And he look'd at her and said,  
" Bring the dress and put it on her,  
That she wore when she was wed."  
Then her people, softly treading,  
Bore to earth her body, drest

In the dress that she was wed in,  
That her spirit might have rest.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN  
GUINEVERE.

A FRAGMENT.

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,  
With tears and smiles from heaven  
again

The maiden Spring upon the plain  
Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.

In crystal vapor everywhere,  
Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,  
And far, in forest-deeps unseen,  
The topmost elm-tree gather'd green  
From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song ;  
Sometimes the throistle whistled  
strong ;  
Sometimes the sparrowhawk, wheel'd  
along,  
Hush'd all the groves from fear of  
wrong :

By grassy capes with fuller sound  
In curves the yellowing river ran,  
And drooping chestnut-buds began  
To spread into the perfect fan,  
Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,  
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere  
Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,  
With blissful treble ringing clear,  
She seem'd a part of joyous  
Spring ;

A gown of grass-green silk she wore,  
Buckled with golden clasps before,  
A light-green tuft of plumes she bore  
Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,  
Now by some tinkling rivulet,  
In mosses mixt with violet  
Her cream-white mule his pastern set:  
And fleetly now she skimm'd the  
plains

Than she whose elfin prancer springs,  
By night to eery warblings,  
When all the glimmering moor and  
rings

With jingling bridle-reins.  
As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,  
The happy winds upon her play'd,  
Blowing the ringlet from the braid:  
She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd  
The rein with dainty finger-tips,  
A man had given all other bliss,  
And all his worldly worth for this,  
To waste his whole heart in one kiss  
Upon her perfect lips.

A FAREWELL.

FLOW down, cold rivulet, to the sea ;  
Thy tribute wave deliver:  
No more by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,  
A rivulet then a river:





No where by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever.  
But here will sigh thine alder tree,  
And here thine aspen shiver ;  
And here by thee will hum the bee,  
For ever and for ever.  
A thousand suns will stream on thee,  
A thousand moons will quiver :  
But not by thee my steps shall be,  
For ever and for ever.

## THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid ;  
She was more fair than words can  
say :  
Bare-footed came the beggar maid  
Before the king Cophetua.  
In robe and crown the king stepped  
down,  
To meet and greet her on her way ;  
"It is no wonder," said the lords,  
"She is more beautiful than day."  
As shines the moon in clouded skies,  
She in her poor attire was seen :  
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,  
One her dark hair and lovesome  
mien.  
So sweet a face, such angel grace,  
In all that land had never been :  
Cophetua swore a royal oath :  
"This beggar maid shall be my  
queen !"

## THE VISION OF SIN.

## I.

I HAD a vision when the night was  
late ;  
A youth came riding toward a palace-  
gate.  
He rode a horse with wings, that would  
have flown,  
But that his heavy rider kept him  
down.  
And from the palace came a child of  
sin,  
And took him by the curls and let him  
in,  
Where sat a company with heated  
eyes,  
Expecting when a fountain should  
arise :  
A sleepy light upon their brows and  
lips—  
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,  
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles  
and capes—  
Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid  
shapes,  
By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,  
and piles of grapes.

## II.

Then methought I heard a mellow  
sound,  
Gathering up from all the lower  
ground ;  
Narrowing in to where they sat as-  
sembled

Low voluptuous music winding trem-  
bled,  
Wov'n in circles : they that heard it  
sigh'd,  
Panted hand in hand with faces pale,  
Swung themselves, and in low tones  
replied ;  
Till the fountain spouted, showering  
wide  
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail ;  
Then the music touch'd the gates and  
died ;  
Rose again from where it seem'd to  
fall,  
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing  
gale ;  
Till thronging in and in, to where they  
waited,  
As 'twere a hundred-throated nightin-  
gale,  
The strong tempestuous treble  
throbb'd and palpitated ;  
Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,  
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,  
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid  
mazes,  
Flung the torrent rainbow round :  
Then they started from their places,  
Moved with violence, changed in hue,  
Caught each other with wild grim-  
aces,  
Half-invisible to the view,  
Wheeling with precipitate paces  
To the melody, till they flew,  
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,  
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,  
Like to Furies, like to Graces,  
Dash'd together in blinding dew :  
Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,  
The nerve-dissolving melody  
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

## III.

And then I look'd up toward a moun-  
tain-tract,  
That girt the region with high cliff and  
lawn :  
I saw that every morning, far with-  
drawn  
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,  
God made himself an awful rose of  
dawn,  
Unheeded : and detaching, fold by  
fold,  
From those still heights, and, slowly  
drawing near,  
A vapor heavy, hueless, formless,  
cold,  
Came floating on for many a month  
and year,  
Unheeded : and I thought I would  
have spoken,  
And warn'd that madman ere it grew  
too late :  
But, as in dreams, I could not. Mino  
was broken.  
When that cold vapor touch'd the  
palace gate,  
And link'd again, I saw within my  
head

A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as death,  
Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,  
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said:

## IV.

" Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !  
Here is custom come your way ;  
Take my brute, and lead him in,  
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

" Bitter barmaid, waning fast !  
See that sheets are on my bed ;  
What ! the flower of life is past ;  
It is long before you wed.

" Slipshod waiter, lank and sour,  
At the Dragon on the heath !  
Let us have a quiet hour,  
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

" I am old, but let me drink ;  
Bring me spices, bring me wine  
I remember, when I think,  
That my youth was half divine.

" Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,  
When a blanket wraps the day,  
When the rotten woodland drips,  
And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

" Sit thee down, and have no shame,  
Check by fowl, and knee by knee ;  
What care I for any name ?  
What for order or degree ?

" Let me screw thee up a peg :  
Let me loose thy tongue with wine :  
Callest thou that thing a leg ?  
Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ?

" Thou shalt not be saved by works ;  
Thou hast been a sinner too :  
Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,  
Empty scarecrows, I and you !

" Fill the cup, and fill the can :  
Have a rouse before the morn ;  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

" We are men of ruin'd blood ;  
Therefore comes it we are wise.  
Fish are we that love the mud,  
Rising to no fancy-flies.

" Name and fame ! to fly sublime  
Thro' the courts, the camps, the  
schools,

Is to be the ball of Time,  
Banded by the hands of fools.

" Friendship ! — to be two in one —  
Let the canting liar pack !  
Well I know, when I am gone,  
How she mouths behind my back.

" Virtue ! — to be good and just —  
Every heart, when sifted well,  
Is a clot of warmer dust,  
Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

" Oh ! we two as well can look  
Whited thought and cleanly life  
As the priest, above his book  
Leering at his neighbor's wife.

" Fill the cup, and fill the can :  
Have a rouse before the morn ;  
Every moment dies a man,  
Every moment one is born.

" Drink, and let the parties rave :  
They are fill'd with idle spleen ;  
Rising, falling, like a wave,  
For they know not what they mean.

" He that roars for liberty  
Faster binds a tyrant's power ;  
And the tyrant's cruel glee  
Forces on the freer hour.

" Fill the can, and fill the cup ;  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

" Greet her with applause breath,  
Freedom, gaily doth she tread ;  
In her right a civic wreath,  
In her left a human head.

" No, I love not what is new ;  
She is of an ancient house ;  
And I think we know the hue  
Of that cap upon her brows.

" Let her go ! her thirst she slakes  
Where the bloody conduit runs ;  
Then her sweetest meal she makes  
On the first-born of her sons.

" Drink to lofty hopes that cool —  
Visions of a perfect State :  
Drink we, last, the public fool,  
Frantic love and frantic hate.

" Chant me now some wicked stave,  
Till thy drooping courage rise,  
And the glow-worm of the grave  
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

" Fear not thou to loose thy tongue ;  
Set thy hoary fancies free ;  
What is loathsome to the young  
Savors well to thee and me.

" Change, reverting to the years,  
When thy nerves could understand  
What there is in loving tears,  
And the warmth of hand in hand.

" Tell me tales of thy first love —  
April hopes, the fools of chance ;  
Till the graves begin to move,  
And the dead begin to dance.

" Fill the can, and fill the cup :  
All the windy ways of men  
Are but dust that rises up,  
And is lightly laid again.

" Trooping from their mouldy dens  
The chap-fallen circle spreads :  
Welcome, fellow-citizens,  
Hollow hearts and empty heads !

" You are bones, and what of that ?  
Every face, however full,  
Padded round with flesh and fat,  
Is but modell'd on a skull.

" Death is king, and Vivat Rex !  
Tread a measure on the stones,

Madam—if I know your sex,  
From the fashion of your bones,

"No, I cannot praise the fire  
In your eye—nor yet your lip :  
All the more do I admire  
Joints of cunning workmanship.

"Lo ! God's likeness — the ground-  
plan—

Neither modell'd, glazed, or framed :  
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,  
Far too naked to be shamed !

"Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,  
While we keep a little breath !  
Drink to heavy Ignorance !  
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

"Thou art mazed, the night is long,  
And the longer night is near :  
What ! I am not all as wrong  
As a bitter jest is dear.

"Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,  
When the locks are crisp and curl'd ;  
Unto me my maudlin gall  
And my mockeries of the world.

"Fill the cup, and fill the can !  
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !  
Dregs of life, and lees of man :  
Yet we will not die forlorn !"

v.

The voice grew faint : there came a  
further change :

Once more uprose the mystic mountain-  
range :

Below were men and horses pierced  
with worms,

And slowly quickening into lower  
forms ;

By shards and scurf of salt, and scum  
of dross,

Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd  
with moss.

Then some one spake : "Behold ! it  
was a crime

Of sense avenged by sense that wore  
with time."

Another said : "The crime of sense be-  
came

The crime of malice, and is equal  
blame."

And one : "He had not wholly quench'd  
his power ;

A little grain of conscience made him  
sour."

At last I heard a voice upon the slope  
Cry to the summit, "Is there any  
hope ?"

To which an answer peal'd from that  
high land,

But in a tongue no man could under-  
stand ;

And on the glimmering limit far with-  
drawn

God made Himself an awful rose of  
dawn.

COME not, when I am dead,  
To drop thy foolish tears upon my  
grave,

To trample round my fallen head,  
And vex the unhappy dust thou  
wouldst not save.

There let the wind sweep and the  
plover cry ;  
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy  
crime

I care no longer, being all unblest :  
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of  
Time,

And I desire to rest.  
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me  
where I lie :

Go by, go by.

### THE EAGLE

#### FRAGMENT.

He clasps the crag with hooked hands ;  
Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;  
He watches from his mountain walls ;  
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Move eastward, happy earth, and leave  
Yon orange sunset waning slow :  
From fringes of the faded eve,  
O, happy planet, eastward go ;

Till over thy dark shoulder glow  
Thy silver sister-world, and rise  
To glass herself in dewy eyes  
That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,  
Dip forward under starry light,  
And move me to my marriage-morn,  
And round again to happy night.

### INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and sweet,  
In this wide hall with earth's invention  
stored,

And praise th' invisible universal Lord,  
Who lets once more in peace the nations  
meet,

Where Science, Art, and Labor have  
outpour'd  
Their myriad horns of plenty at our feet.

O silent father of our Kings to be  
Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,  
For this, for all, we weep our thanks to  
thee !

The world-compelling plan was thine,  
And lo ! the long laborious miles,  
Of Palace ; lo ! the giant aisles,  
Rich in model and design ;  
Harvest-tool and husbandry,  
Loom and wheel and engin'ry,  
Secrets of the sullen mine,  
Steel and gold, and corn and wine,  
Fabric rough, or Fairy fine,  
Sunny tokens of the Line,

Polar marvels, and a feast  
Of wonder out of West and East,  
And shapes and hues of Art divine!  
All of beauty, all of use,  
That one fair planet can produce,  
Brought from under every star,  
Blown from over every main,  
And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,  
The works of peace with works of war.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise who reign,  
From growing commerce loose her latest  
chain,

And let the fair white-winged peacemaker  
fly  
To happy havens under all the sky,  
And mix the seasons and the golden hours,  
Till each man finds his own in all men's  
good,  
And all men work in noble brotherhood,  
Breaking their mailed fleets and armed  
towers,  
And ruling by obeying Nature's powers.  
And gathering all the fruits of peace and  
crown'd with all her flowers.

## MAUD.

## I.

## I.

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,  
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red heath,  
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of blood,  
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers "Death."

## II.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was found,  
His who had given me life—O father! O God! was it well?—  
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinted into the ground:  
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he fell.

## III.

Did he fling himself down? who knows? for a vast speculation had fall'd,  
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair,  
And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken worldling wail'd,  
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.

## IV.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were stirr'd  
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a whisper'd fright,  
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on my heart as I heard  
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the shuddering night.

## V.

Villany somewhere! whose? One says, we are villains all.  
Not he: his honest fame should at least by me be maintained;  
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and the Hall,  
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us flaccid and drain'd.

## VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace? we have made them a curse,  
Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not its own;  
And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better or worse  
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his own hearthstone?

## VII.

But these are the days of advance, the works of the men of mind,  
When who but a fool would have faith in a tradesman's ware or his word?  
Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that of a kind  
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the sword.

## VIII.

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print  
Of the golden age—why not? I have neither hope nor trust;  
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as a flint,  
Cheat and be cheated, and die; who knows? we are ashes and dust.

## IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days gone by,  
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together, each sex, like swine,  
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all men lie;  
Peace in her vineyard—yes!—but a company forges the wine.

## X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's head,  
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled wife,  
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for bread,  
And the spirit of murder works in the very means of life.

## XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villanous centre-bits  
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moonless nights,  
While another is cheating the sick of a few last gasps, as he sits  
To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson lights.

## XII.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a burial fee,  
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's bones,  
Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and by sea,  
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred thrones.

## XIII.

For I trust if an enemy's fleet came yonder round by the hill,  
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-decker out of the foam,  
That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap from his counter and till,  
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating yardwand, home,—

## XIV.

What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his mood?  
Must I too creep to the hollow and dash myself down and die  
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore to brood  
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swindler's lie?

## XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me*? there was *love* in the passionate shriek,  
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste to the grave—  
Wrapt in a cloak, as I saw him, and thought he would rise and speak  
And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used to rave.

## XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the moor and the main.  
Why should I stay? can a sweeter chance ever come to me here?  
O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves of pain,  
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit and the fear?

## XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall!—they are coming back from abroad;  
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a millionaire:  
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular beauty of Maud;  
I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised then to be fair.

## XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles and childish escapes,  
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of the Hall,  
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father dangled the grapes,  
Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced darling of all,—

## XIX.

What is she now? My dreams are bad. She may bring me a curse.  
No, there is fatter game on the moor; she will let me alone.  
Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman or man be the worse.  
I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may pipe to his own.

## II.

LONG have I sigh'd for a calm: God grant I may find it at last!  
It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither savor nor salt,  
But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her carriage past,  
Perfectly beautiful: let it be granted her: where is the fault?  
All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to be seen)  
Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,  
Dead perfection, no more; nothing more, if it had not been  
For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect of the rose,  
Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too full,  
Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensitive nose,  
From what I escaped heart free, with the least little touch of spleen.

## III.

COLD and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly meek,  
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was drown'd,  
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on the cheek,  
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom profound;  
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient wrong  
Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as pale as before  
Growing and fading and growing upon me without a sound,  
Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the night long  
Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear it no more,

But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden ground,  
Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung shipwrecking roar.  
Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd down by the wave,  
Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and found  
The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.

## IV.

## I.

A MILLION emeralds break from the ruby-budded lime  
In the little grove where I sit—ah, wherefore cannot I be  
Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful season bland.  
When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a softer clime,  
Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of sea,  
The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the land?

## II.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet and small!  
And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite;  
And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies as a Czar;  
And here on the landward side, by a red rock, glimmers the Hall;  
And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like a light;  
But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading star!

## III.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled head of the race?  
I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her brother I bow'd;  
I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the moor;  
But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beautiful face.  
O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being so proud;  
Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am nameless and poor.

## IV.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander and steal;  
I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or like  
A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way;  
For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher can heal;  
The Mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow spear'd by the shrike,  
And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of plunder and prey.

## V.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair in her flower;  
Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen hand at a game?  
That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed?  
Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an hour;  
We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a brother's shame  
However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

## VI.

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,  
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,  
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.  
As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,  
So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man:  
He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?

## VII.

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and vain,  
An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded and poor;  
The passionate heart of the poet is whirl'd into folly and vice,  
I would not marvel at either, but keep a temperate brain;  
For not to desire or admire, if a man could learn it, were more  
Than to walk all day like the sultan of old in a garden of spice.

## VIII.

For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil,  
Who knows the ways of the world, how God will bring them about?  
Our planet is one, the suns are many, the world is wide.  
Shall I weep if a Poland fall? shall I shriek if a Hungary fail?  
Or an infant civilization be ruled with rod or with knout?  
I have not made the world, and He that made it will guide.

## IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland ways,  
 Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be my lot,  
 Far-off from the clamor of liars belied in the hubbub of lies;  
 From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are ever hissing dispraise  
 Because their natures are little, and, whether he heed it or not,  
 Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of poisonous flies.

## X.

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness of love,  
 The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless ill.  
 Ah Maud, you milkwhite fawn, you are all unmeet for a wife.  
 Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in marble above;  
 Your father is ever in London, you wander about at your will;  
 You have but fed on the roses, and lain in the lilies of life.

## V.

## I.

A VOICE by the cedar tree,  
 In the meadow under the Hall!  
 She is singing an air that is known to  
 me,  
 A passionate ballad gallant and gay,  
 A martial song like a trumpet's call!  
 Singing alone in the morning of life,  
 In the happy morning of life and of  
 May,  
 Singing of men that in battle array,  
 Ready in heart and ready in hand,  
 March with banner and bugle and fife  
 To the death, for their native laud.

## II.

Maud with her exquisite face,  
 And wild voice pealing up to the sun-  
 ny sky,  
 And feet like sunny gems on an Eng-  
 lish green,  
 Maud in the light of her youth and her  
 grace,  
 Singing of Death, and of Honor that  
 cannot die,  
 Till I well could weep for a time so  
 sordid and mean,  
 And myself so languid and base.

## III.

Silence, beautiful voice  
 Be still, for you only trouble the mind  
 With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,  
 A glory I shall not find.  
 Still! I will hear you no more,  
 For your sweetness hardly leaves me a  
 choice  
 But to move to the meadow and fall  
 before  
 Her feet on the meadow grass, and  
 adore,  
 Not her, who is neither courtly nor  
 kind,  
 Not her, not her, but a voice.

## VI.

## I.

MORNING arises stormy and pale,  
 No sun, but a wannish glare  
 In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,

And the budded peaks of the wood are  
 bow'd  
 Caught and cuff'd by the gale:  
 I had fancied it would be fair.

## II.

Whom but Maud should I meet  
 Last night, when the sunset burn'd  
 On the blossom'd gable-ends  
 At the head of the village street,  
 Whom but Maud should I meet?  
 And she touch'd my hand with a smile  
 so sweet  
 She made me divine amends  
 For a courtesy not return'd.

## III.

And thus a delicate spark  
 Of glowing and growing light  
 Thro' the livelong hours of the dark  
 Kept itself warm in the heart of my  
 dreams,  
 Ready to burst in a color'd flame;  
 Till at last when the morning came  
 In a cloud, it faded, and seems  
 But an ashen-gray delight.

## IV.

What if with her sunny hair,  
 And smile as sunny as cold,  
 She meant to weave me a snare  
 Of some coquettish deceit,  
 Cleopatra-like as of old  
 To entangle me when we met,  
 To have her lion roll in a silken net  
 And fawn at a victor's feet.

## V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty  
 Should Nature keep me alive,  
 If I find the world so bitter  
 When I am but twenty-five?  
 Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
 If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
 And her smile were all that I dream'd,  
 Then the world were not so bitter  
 But a smile could make it sweet.

## VI.

What if tho' her eye seem'd full  
 Of a kind intent to me.  
 What if that dandy-despot, he,  
 That jewel'd mass of millinery,  
 That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull  
 Smelling of musk and of insolence,

Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,  
 Who wants the finer politic sense  
 To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,  
 With a glassy smile his brutal scorn—  
 What if he had told her yesternorn  
 How prettily for his own sweet sake  
 A face of tenderness might be feign'd,  
 And a moist mirage in desert eyes,  
 That so, when the rotten hustings  
 shake,  
 In another month to his brazen lies,  
 A wretched vote may be gain'd.

## VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,  
 Keep watch and ward, keep watch and  
 ward,  
 Or thou wilt prove their tool.  
 Yea too, myself from myself I guard,  
 For often a man's own angry pride  
 Is cap and bells for a fool.

## VIII.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone  
 Came out of her pitying womanhood,  
 For am I not, am I not, here alone  
 So many a summer since she died,  
 My mother, who was so gentle and  
 good?  
 Living alone in an empty house,  
 Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,  
 Where I hear the dead at midday moan,  
 And the shrieking rush of the wainscot  
 mouse,  
 And my own sad name in corners cried,  
 When the shiver of dancing leaves is  
 thrown  
 About its echoing chambers wide,  
 Till a morbid hate and horror have  
 grown  
 Of a world in which I have hardly  
 mixt,  
 And a morbid eating lichen fixt,  
 On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

## IX.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and  
 caught  
 By that you swore to withstand?  
 For what was it else within me wrought  
 But, I fear, the new strong wine of  
 love,  
 That made my tongue so stammer and  
 trip  
 When I saw the treasured splendor,  
 her land,  
 Come sliding out of her sacred glove,  
 And the sunlight broke from her lip?

## X.

I have play'd with her when a child,  
 She remembers it now we meet.  
 Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled  
 By some coquetish deceit.  
 Yet, if she were not a cheat,  
 If Maud were all that she seem'd,  
 And her smile had all that I dream'd,  
 Then the world were not so bitter  
 But a smile could make it sweet.

## VII.

## I.

DID I hear it half in a doze,  
 Long since, I know not where?  
 Did I dream it an hour ago,  
 When asleep in this arm-chair?

## II.

Men were drinking together,  
 Drinking and talking of me;  
 "Well, if it prove a girl, the boy  
 Will have plenty: so let it be."

## III.

Is it an echo of something  
 Read with a boy's delight,  
 Viziers nodding together  
 In some Arabian night?

## IV.

Strange, that I hear two men,  
 Somewhere, talking of me;  
 "Well, if it prove a girl, my boy  
 Will have plenty: so let it be."

## VIII.

## I.

SHE came to the village church,  
 And sat by a pillar alone;  
 An angel watching an urn  
 Wept over her, carved in stone;  
 And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,  
 And suddenly, sweetly, strangely  
 blush'd  
 To find they were met by my own;  
 And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat  
 stronger  
 And thicker, until I heard no longer  
 The snowy-banded, dilettaute,  
 Delicate-handed priest intone;  
 And thought, is it pride, and mused  
 and sigh'd  
 "No surely, now it cannot be pride."

## IX.

I WAS walking a mile,  
 More than a mile from the shore,  
 The sun look'd out with a smile  
 Betwixt the cloud and the moor,  
 And riding at set of day  
 Over the dark moor land,  
 Rapidly riding far away,  
 She waved to me with her hand.  
 There were two at her side,  
 Something flash'd in the sun,  
 Down by the hill I saw them ride,  
 In a moment they were gone:  
 Like a sudden spark  
 Struck vainly in the night,  
 Then returns the dark  
 With no more hope of light.

## X.

## I.

SICK, am I sick of a jealous dread?  
 Was not one of the two at her side  
 This new-made lord, whose splendor  
 plucks  
 The slavish hat from the villager's  
 head?

Whose old grandfather has lately died,  
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom  
Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks  
And laying his trams in a poison'd gloom

Wrought, till he crept from a gutted mine  
Master of half a servile shire,  
And left his coal all turn'd into gold  
To a grandson, first of his noble line,  
Rich in the grace all women desire,  
Strong in the power that all men adore,  
And simper and set their voices lower,  
And soften as if to a girl, and hold  
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,  
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,  
New as his title, built last year,  
There amid perky larches and pine,  
And over the sullen-purple moor  
(Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.

## II.

What, has he found my jewel out?  
For one of the two that rode at her side  
Bound for the Hall, I am sure was he:  
Bound for the Hall, and I think for a  
bride.  
Blithe would her brother's acceptance  
be.

Maud could be gracious too, no doubt,  
To a lord, a captain, a padded shape,  
A bought commission, a waxen face,  
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—  
Bought? what is it he cannot buy?  
And therefore splenetic, personal, base,  
A wounded thing with a raucous cry,  
At war with myself and a wretched  
race,  
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

## III.

Last week came one to the county town,  
To preach our poor little army down,  
And play the game of the despot kings,  
Tho' the state has done it and thrice as  
well:

This broad-brim'd hawker of holy  
things,  
Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton,  
and rings  
Even in dreams to the chink of his  
pence,  
This huckster put down war! can he  
tell  
Whether war be a cause or a conse-  
quence?

Put down the passions that make earth  
Hell!  
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,  
Jealousy, down! cut off from the mind  
The bitter springs of anger and fear;  
Down too, down at your own fireside,  
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,  
For each is at war with mankind.

## IV.

I wish I could hear again  
The chivalrous battle-song  
That she warbled alone in her joy!

I might persuade myself then  
She would not do herself this great  
wrong,  
To take a wanton dissolute boy  
For a man and leader of men.

## V.

Ah God, for a man with heart, head,  
hand,  
Like some of the simple great ones  
gone  
For ever and ever by.  
One still strong man in a blatant land,  
Whatever they call him, what care I,  
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat,—one  
Who can rule and dare not lie.

## VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,  
That the man I am may cease to be!

## XI.

## I.

O LET the solid ground  
Not fail beneath my feet  
Before my life has found  
What some have found so sweet;  
Then let come what come may,  
What matter if I go mad,  
I shall have had my day.

## II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,  
Not close and darken above me  
Before I am quite quite sure  
That there is one to love me;  
Then let come what come may  
To a life that has been so sad,  
I shall have had my day.

## XII.

## I.

BIRDS in the high Hall-garden  
When twilight was falling,  
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,  
They were crying and calling.

## II.

Where was Maud? in our wood;  
And I, who else, was with her,  
Gathering woodland lilies,  
Myriads blow together.

## III.

Birds in our wood sang  
Ringing thro' the valleys,  
Maud is here, here, here  
In among the lilies.

## IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,  
She took the kiss sedately;  
Maud is not seventeen,  
But she is tall and stately.

## V.

I to cry out on pride  
Who have won her favor!  
O Maud were sure of Heaven  
If lowliness could save her.

## VI.

I know the way she went  
Home with her maiden pony,

For her feet have touch'd the meadows  
And left the daisies rosy.

## VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden  
Were crying and calling to her,  
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud,  
One is come to woo her.

## VIII.

Look, a horse at the door,  
And little King Charley snarling.  
Go back, my lord, across the moor,  
You are not her darling.

## XIII.

## I.

SCORN'D, to be scorn'd by one that I  
scorn,  
Is that a matter to make me fret?  
That a calamity hard to be borne?  
Well, he may live to hate me yet.  
Fool that I am to be vext with his  
pride!  
I past him, I was crossing his lands;  
He stood on the path a little aside;  
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,  
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red  
and white,  
And six feet two, as I think, he stands;  
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,  
And barbarous opulence jewel-thick  
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his  
hands.

## II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,  
I long'd so heartily then and there  
To give him the grasp of fellowship;  
But while I past he was humming an  
air,  
Stopt, and then with a riding whip  
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,  
And curving a contumelious lip,  
Gorgonized me from head to foot  
With a stony British stare.

## III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair?  
That old man never comes to his place;  
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen?  
For only once, in the village street,  
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his  
face,  
A gray old wolf and a lean.  
Scarcely, now, would I call him a  
cheat;  
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,  
She might by a true descent be un-  
true;  
And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet;  
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due  
To the sweeter blood by the other side;  
Her mother has been a thing complete,  
However she came to be so allied.  
And fair without, faithful within,  
Maud to him is nothing akin:  
Some peculiar mystic grace  
Made her only the child of her mother,  
And heap'd the whole inherited sin  
On that huge scapegoat of the race,  
All, all upon the brother.

## IV.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be!  
Has not his sister smiled on me?

## XIV.

## I.

MAUD has a garden of roses  
And lilies fair on a lawn;  
There she walks in her state  
And tends upon bed and bower,  
And thither I climb'd at dawn  
And stood by her garden-gate;  
A lion ramps at the top,  
He is claspt by a passion-flower.

## II.

Maud's own little oak-room  
(Which Maud, like a precious stone  
Set in the heart of the carved gloom,  
Lights with herself, when alone  
She sits by her music and books,  
And her brother lingers late  
With a roystering company) looks  
Upon Maud's own garden-gate:  
And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as  
white  
As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid  
On the hasp of the window, and my  
Delight  
Had a sudden desire, like a glorious  
ghost, to glide.  
Like a beam of the seventh Heaven,  
down to my side,  
There were but a step to be made.

## III.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,  
And again seem'd overbold;  
Now I thought that she cared for me,  
Now I thought she was kind  
Only because she was cold.

## IV.

I heard no sound where I stood  
But the rivulet on from the lawn  
Running down to my own dark wood;  
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it  
swell'd  
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn;  
But I look'd, and round, all round the  
house I beheld  
The death-white curtain drawn;  
Felt a horror over me creep,  
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,  
Knew that the death-white curtain  
meant but sleep,  
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a  
fool of the sleep of death.

## XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,  
And I make myself such evil cheer,  
That if I be dear to some one else,  
Then some one else may have much  
to fear;  
But if I be dear to some one else,  
Then I should be to myself more  
dear.  
Shall I not take care of all that I  
think,

Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,  
If I be dear,  
If I be dear to some one else ?

## XVI.

## I.

This lump of earth has left his estate  
The lighter by the loss of his weight ;  
And so that he find what he went to  
seek,  
And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and  
drown  
His heart in the gross mud-honey of  
town,  
He may stay for a year who has gone  
for a week ;  
But this is the day when I must speak,  
And I see my Oread coming down,  
O this is the day !  
O beautiful creature, what am I  
That I dare to look her way ;  
Think I may hold dominion sweet,  
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her  
breast,  
And dream of her beauty with tender  
dread,  
From the delicate Arab arch of her  
feet  
To the grace that, bright and light as  
the crest  
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,  
And she knows it not : O, if she knew  
it,  
To know her beauty might half undo it.  
I know it the one bright thing to save  
My yet young life in the wilds of Time,  
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from  
crime,  
Perhaps from a selfish grave.

## II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool  
lord,  
Dare I bid her abide by her word ?  
Should I love her so well if she  
Had given her word to a thing so low ?  
Shall I love her as well if she  
Can break her word were it even for  
me ?  
I trust that it is not so.

## III.

Catch not my breath, O clamorous  
heart,  
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my  
eye,  
For I must tell her before we part,  
I must tell her, or die.

## XVII.

Go not, happy day,  
From the shining fields,  
Go not, happy day,  
Till the maiden yields.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.  
When the happy Yes  
Falters from her lips,  
Pass and blush the news

O'er the blowing ships,  
Over blowing seas,  
Over seas at rest,  
Pass the happy news,  
Blush it thro' the West ;  
Till the red man dance  
By his red cedar tree,  
And the red man's babe  
Leap, beyond the sea.  
Blush from West to East,  
Blush from East to West,  
Till the West is East,  
Blush it thro' the West.  
Rosy is the West,  
Rosy is the South,  
Roses are her cheeks,  
And a rose her mouth.

## XVIII.

## I.

I have led her home, my love, my only  
friend.  
There is none like her, none.  
And never yet so warmly ran my blood  
And sweetly, on and on  
Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for  
end,  
Full to the banks, close on the prom-  
ised good.

## II.

None like her, none.  
Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pat-  
tering talk  
Seem'd her light foot along the garden  
walk,  
And shook my heart to think she  
comes once more ;  
But even then I heard her close the  
door,  
The gates of Heaven are closed, and  
she is gone.

## III.

There is none like her, none.  
Nor will be when our summers have  
deceased.  
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon  
In the long breeze that streams to thy  
delicious East,  
Sighing for Lebanon,  
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here  
increased,  
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,  
And looking to the South, and fed  
With honey'd rain and delicate air,  
And haunted by the starry head  
Of her whose gentle will has changed  
my fate,  
And made my life a perfumed altar-  
flame ;  
And over whom thy darkness must  
have spread  
With such daylight as theirs of old,  
thy great  
Forefathers of the thornless garden,  
there  
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from  
whom she came.

## IV.

Here will I lie, while these long  
branches away,  
And you fair stars that crown a happy  
day  
Go in and out as if at merry play,  
Who am no more so all forlorn,  
As when it seem'd far better to be born  
To labor and the mattock-harden'd  
hand,  
Than nursed at ease and brought to  
understand  
A sad astrology, the boundless plan  
That makes you tyrants in your iron  
skies,  
Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,  
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and  
brand  
His nothingness into man.

## V.

But now shine on, and what care I,  
Who in this stormy gulf have found a  
pearl  
The countercharm of space and hollow  
sky,  
And do accept my madness, and would  
die  
To save from some slight shame one  
simple girl.

## VI.

Would die ; for sullen-seeming Death  
may give  
More life to Love than is or ever was  
In our low world, where yet 't is sweet  
to live.  
Let no one ask me how it came to pass ;  
It seems that I am happy, that to me  
A livelier emerald twinkles in the  
grass,  
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

## VII.

Not die; but live a life of truest breath,  
And teach true life to fight with mortal  
wrongs.  
O, why should Love, like men in drink-  
ing songs,  
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of  
death ?  
Make answer, Maud my bliss,  
Maud made my Maud by that long  
lover's kiss,  
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer  
this ?  
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven  
here  
With dear Love's tie, makes Love him-  
self more dear."

## VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell  
Of the long waves that roll in yonder  
bay ?  
And hark the clock within, the silver  
knell  
Of twelve sweet hours that past in  
bridal white,  
And died to live, long as my pulses  
play ;

But now by this my love has closed  
her sight  
And given false death her hand, and  
stol'n away  
To dreamful wastes where footless  
fancies dwell  
Among the fragments of the golden  
day.  
May nothing there her maiden grace  
affright !  
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy  
spell.  
My bride to be, my evermore delight,  
My own heart's heart and ownest own  
farewell ;  
It is but for a little space I go :  
And ye meanwhile far over moor and  
fell  
Beat to the noiseless music of the  
night !  
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the  
glow  
Of your soft splendors that you look so  
bright ?  
I have climb'd nearer out of lonely  
Hell.  
Beat, happy stars, timing with things  
below,  
Beat with my heart more blest than  
heart can tell,  
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent  
woe  
That seems to draw—but it shall not  
be so :  
Let all be well, be well.

## XIX.

## I.

HER brother is coming back to-night,  
Breaking up my dream of delight.

## II.

My dream ? do I dream of bliss ?  
I have walk'd awake with Truth.  
O when did a morning shine  
So rich in atonement as this  
For my dark-dawning youth,  
Darken'd watching a mother decline  
And that dead man at her heart and  
mine :  
For who was left to watch her but I ?  
Yet so did I let my freshness die.

## III.

I trust that I did not talk  
To gentle Maud in our walk  
(For often in lonely wanderings  
I have cursed him even to lifeless  
things)  
But I trust that I did not talk,  
Not touch on her father's sin :  
I am sure I did but speak  
Of my mother's faded cheek  
When it slowly grew so thin,  
That I felt she was slowly dying  
Vext with lawyers and harass'd with  
debt :  
For how often I caught her with eyes  
all wet,

Shaking her head at her son and sigh-  
ing  
A world of trouble within !

## IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved  
To speak of the mother she loved  
As one scarce less forlorn,  
Dying abroad and it seems apart  
From him who had ceased to share her  
heart,  
And ever mourning over the feud,  
The household Fury sprinkled with  
blood  
By which our houses are torn :  
How strange was what she said,  
When only Maud and the brother  
Hung over her dying bed—  
That Maud's dark father and mine  
Had bound us one to the other,  
Betrothed us over their wine,  
On the day when Maud was born ;  
Seal'd her mine from her first sweet  
breath.  
Mine, mine by a right, from birth till  
death,  
Mine, mine—our fathers have sworn.

## V.

But the true blood spilt had in it a  
heat  
To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,  
That, if left uncancell'd, had been so  
sweet :  
And none of us thought of a something  
beyond,  
A desire that awoke in the heart of the  
child,  
As it were a duty done to the tomb,  
To be friends for her sake, to be recon-  
ciled ;  
And I was cursing them and my doom,  
And letting a dangerous thought run  
wild  
While often abroad in the fragrant  
gloom  
Of foreign churches—I see her there,  
Bright English lily, breathing a prayer  
To be friends, to be reconciled !

## VI.

But then what a flint is he !  
Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,  
I find whenever she touch'd on me  
This brother had laugh'd her down,  
And at last, when each came home,  
He had darken'd into a frown,  
Child her, and forbid her to speak  
To me, her friend of the years before ;  
And this was what had redd'n'd her  
check  
When I bow'd to her on the moor.

## VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind  
To the faults of his heart and mind  
I see she cannot but love him,  
And says he is rough but kind,  
And wishes me to approve him,  
And tells me, when she lay  
Sick once, with a fear of worse,

That he left his wine and horses and  
play,  
Sat with her, read to her, night and day,  
And tended her like a nurse.

## VIII.

Kind ? but the deathbed desire  
Spurn'd by this heir of the liar—  
Rough but kind ? yet I know  
He has plotted against me in this,  
That he plots against me still.  
Kind to Maud ? that were not amiss.  
Well, rough but kind ; why let it be so :  
For shall not Maud have her will ?

## IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true,  
As long as my life endures  
I feel I shall owe you a debt,  
That I never can hope to pay ;  
And if ever I should forget  
That I owe this debt to you  
And for your sweet sake to yours ;  
O then, what then shall I say ?—  
If ever I should forget,  
May God make me more wretched  
Than ever I have been yet !

## X.

So now I have sworn to bury  
All this dead body of hate,  
I feel so free and so clear  
By the loss of that dead weight,  
That I should grow light-headed, I fear  
Fantastically merry ;  
But that her brother comes, like a  
blight  
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

## XX.

## I.

STRANGE, that I felt so gay,  
Strange, that I tried to-day  
To beguile her melancholy ;  
The Sultan, as we name him,—  
She did not wish to blame him—  
But he vexed her and perplexed her  
With his worldly talk and folly :  
Was it gentle to reprove her  
For stealing out of view  
From a little lazy lover  
Who but claims her as his due ?  
Or for chilling his caresses  
By the coldness of her manners,  
Nay, the plainness of her dresses ?  
Now I know her but in two,  
Nor can pronounce upon it  
If one should ask me whether  
The habit, hat, and feather,  
Or the frock and gypsy bonnet  
Be the neater and completer ;  
For nothing can be sweeter  
Than maiden Maud in either.

## II.

But to-morrow, if we live,  
Our ponderous squire will give  
A grand political dinner  
To half the squirelins near ;  
And Maud will wear her jewels,

And the bird of prey will hover,  
And the titmouse hope to win her  
With his chirrup at her ear.

## III.

A grand political dinner  
To the men of many acres,  
A gathering of the Tory,  
A dinner and then a dance  
For the maids and marriage-makers,  
And every eye but mine will glance  
At Maud in all her glory.

## IV.

For I am not invited,  
But, with the Sultan's pardon,  
I am all as well delighted,  
For I know her own rose garden,  
And mean to linger in it  
Till the dancing will be over ;  
And then, O then, come out to me  
For a minute, but for a minute,  
Come out to your own true lover  
That your true lover may see  
Your glory also, and render  
All homage to his own darling,  
Queen Maud in all her splendor.

## XXI.

RIVULET crossing my ground,  
And bringing me down from the Hall  
This garden-rose that I found,  
Forgetful of Maud and me,  
And lost in trouble and moving round  
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,  
And trying to pass to the sea ;  
O Rivulet, born at the Hall,  
My Maud has sent it by thee  
(If I read her sweet will right)  
On a blushing mission to me,  
Saying in odor and color, " Ah, be  
Among the roses to-night."

## XXII.

## I.

COME into the garden, Maud,  
For the black bat, night, has flown,  
Come into the garden, Maud,  
I am here at the gate alone ;  
And the woodbine spices are wafted  
abroad,  
And the musk of the roses blown

## II.

For a breeze of morning moves,  
And the planet of Love is on high,  
Beginning to faint in the light that she  
loves  
On a bed of daffodil sky,  
To faint in the light of the sun she  
loves,  
To faint in his light, and to die.

## III.

All night have the roses heard  
The flute, violin, bassoon ;  
All night has the casement jessamine  
stirr'd  
To the dancers dancing in tune :  
Till a silence fell with the waking  
bird,  
And a hush with the setting moon.

## IV.

I said to the lily, " There is but one  
With whom she has heart to be gay.  
When will the dancers leave her alone ?  
She is weary of dance and play."  
Now half to the setting moon are gone,  
And half to the rising day ;  
Low on the sand and loud on the stone  
The last wheel echoes away.

## V.

I said to the rose, " The brief night  
goes  
In babble and revel and wine.  
O young lord-lover, what sighs are  
those,  
For one that will never be thine ?  
But mine, but mine," so I swear to the  
rose,  
" For ever and ever, mine."

## VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my  
blood,  
As the music clash'd in the hall ;  
And long by the garden lake I stood,  
For I heard your rivulet fall  
From the lake to the meadow and on to  
the wood,  
Our wood, that is dearer than all ;

## VII.

From the meadow your walks have left  
so sweet  
That whenever a March-wind sighs  
He sets the jewel-print of your feet  
In violets blue as your eyes,  
To the woody hollows in which we  
meet  
And the valleys of Paradise.

## VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake  
One long milk-bloom on the tree ;  
The white lake-blossom fell into the  
lake  
As the pimpernel dozed on the sea ;  
But the rose was awake all night for  
your sake,  
Knowing your promise to me ;  
The lilies and roses were all awake,  
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

## IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of  
girls,  
Come hither, the dances are done,  
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,  
Queen lily and rose in one ;  
Shine out, little head, sunning over  
with curls,  
To the flowers, and be their sun.

## X.

There has fallen a splendid tear  
From the passion-flower at the gate.  
She is coming, my dove, my dear ;  
She is coming, my life, my fate ;  
The red rose cries, " She is near, she is  
near ;"  
And the white rose weeps, " She is  
late ;"

The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"  
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

## XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet;  
Were it ever so airy a tread,  
My heart would hear her and beat,  
Were it earth in an earthy bed;  
My dust would hear her and beat;  
Had I lain for a century dead;  
Would start and tremble under her  
feet,  
And blossom in purple and red.

## XXIII.

## I.

"The fault was mine, the fault was  
mine" —

Why am I sitting here so stum'd and  
still,

Plucking the harmless wild-flower on  
the hill? —

It is this guilty hand! —  
And there rises ever a passionate cry  
From underneath in the darkening  
land —

What is it, that has been done?  
O dawn of Eden bright over earth and  
sky,

The fires of Hell brake out of thy ris-  
ing sun,

The fires of Hell and of Hate;  
For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken  
a word,

When her brother ran in his rage to  
the gate,

He came with the babe-faced lord;  
Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,  
And while she wept, and I strove to be  
cool,

He fiercely gave me the lie,  
Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,  
And he struck me, madman, over the  
face,

Struck me before the languid fool,  
Who was gaping an grinning by:  
Struck for himself an evil stroke;  
Wrought for his house an irredeemable  
woe;

For front to front in an hour we stood,  
And a million horrible bellowing  
echoes broke

From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the  
wood,

And thunder'd up into Heaven the  
Christless code,

That must have life for a blow.  
Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to  
grow.

Was it he lay there with a fading eye?  
"The fault was mine," he whisper'd,  
"fly!"

Then glided out of the joyous wood  
The ghastly Wraith of one that I  
know;

And there rang on a sudden a passion-  
ate cry,

A cry for a brother's blood:  
It will ring in my heart and my ears,  
till I die, till I die.

## II.

Is it gone? my pulses beat—  
What was it? a lying trick of the  
brain?

Yet I thought I saw her stand,  
A shadow there at my feet,  
High over the shadowy land.

It is gone; and the heavens fall in a  
gentle rain,

When they should burst and drown  
with deluging storms

The feeble vassals of wine and anger  
and lust,

The little hearts that know not how to  
forgive:

Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold  
Thee just,

Strike dead the whole weak race of  
venomous worms,

That sting each other here in the dust;  
We are not worthy to live.

## XXIV.

## I.

SEE what a lovely shell,  
Small and pure as a pearl,  
Lying close to my foot,  
Frail, but a work divine,  
Made so fairly well  
With delicate spire and whorl,  
How exquisitely minute,  
A miracle of design!

## II.

What is it? a learned man  
Could give it a clumsy name.  
Let him name it who can,  
The beauty would be the same.

## III.

The tiny cell is forlorn,  
Void of the little living will  
That made it stir on the shore.  
Did he stand at the diamond door  
Of his house in a rainbow frill?  
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd  
A golden foot or a fairy horn  
Thro' his dim water-world?

## IV.

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap  
Of my finger-nail on the sand,  
Small, but a work divine,  
Frail, but of force to withstand,  
Year upon year, the shock  
Of cataract seas that snap  
The three decker's oaken spine  
Athwart the ledges of rock,  
Here on the Breton strand!

## V.

Breton, not Briton; here  
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast  
Of ancient fable and fear—  
Plagued with a flitting and fro,  
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost  
That never came from on high  
Nor ever arose from below,  
But only moves with the moving eye.

Flying along the land and the main—  
Why should it look like Maud?  
Am I to be overawed  
By what I cannot but know  
Is a juggle born of the brain?

## VI.

Back from the Breton coast,  
Sick of a nameless fear,  
Back to the dark sea-line  
Looking, thinking of all I have lost;  
An old song vexes my ear;  
But that of Lamech is mine.

## VII.

For years, a measureless ill,  
For years, for ever, to part—  
But she, she would love me still;  
And as long, O God, as she  
Have a grain of love for me,  
So long, no doubt, no doubt,  
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,  
However weary, a spark of will  
Not to be trampled out.

## VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught  
With a passion so intense  
One would think that it well  
Might drown all life in the eye,—  
That it should, by being so over-  
wrought,  
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense  
For a shell, or a flower, little things  
Which else would have been past by!  
And now I remember, I,  
When he lay dying there,  
I noticed one of his many rings  
(For he had many, poor worm) and  
thought  
It is his mother's hair.

## IX.

Who knows if he be dead?  
Whether I need have died?  
Am I guilty of blood?  
However this may be,  
Comfort her, comfort her, all things  
good,  
While I am over the sea!  
Let me and my passionate love go by.  
But speak to her all things holy and  
high,  
Whatever happen to me!  
Me and my harmful love go by;  
But come to her waking, and her  
asleep,  
Powers of the height, Powers of the  
deep,  
And comfort her tho' I die.

## XXV.

COURAGE, poor heart of stone!  
I will not ask thee why  
Thou canst not understand  
That thou art left for ever alone:  
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—  
Or if I ask thee why,  
Care not thou to reply:

She is but dead, and the time is at hand  
When thou shalt more than die.

## XXVI.

## I.

O THAT 'twere possible  
After long grief and pain  
To find the arms of my true love  
Round me once again!

## II.

When I was wont to meet her  
In the silent woody places  
By the home that gave me birth,  
We stood tranced in long embraces  
Mixt with kisses sweeter, sweeter  
Than anything on earth.

## III.

A shadow flits before me,  
Not thou, but like to thee;  
Ah Christ, that it were possible  
For one short hour to see  
The souls we loved, that they might  
tell us  
What and where they be.

## IV.

It leads me forth at evening,  
It lightly winds and steals  
In a cold white robe before me,  
When all my spirit reels  
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,  
And the roaring of the wheels.

## V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,  
Half in dreams I sorrow after  
The delight of early skies;  
In a wakeful doze I sorrow  
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,  
For the meeting of the morrow,  
The delight of happy laughter,  
The delight of low replies.

## VI.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And a dewy splendor falls  
On the little flower that clings  
To the turrets and the walls:  
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,  
And the light and shadow fleet;  
She is walking in the meadow,  
And the woodland echo rings;  
In a moment we shall meet;  
She is singing in the meadow,  
And the rivulet at her feet  
Ripples on in light and shadow  
To the ballad that she sings.

## VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,  
My bird with the shining head,  
My own dove with the tender eye?  
But there rings on a sudden a passion-  
ate cry,  
There is some one dying or dead,  
And a sullen thunder is roll'd;  
For a tumult shakes the city,

And I wake, my dream is fled ;  
In the shuddering dawn, behold,  
Without knowledge, without pity,  
By the curtains of my bed  
That abiding phantom cold.

## VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,  
Mix not memory with doubt,  
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,  
Pass and cease to move about !  
'Tis the blot upon the brain  
That will show itself without.

## IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,  
And the yellow vapors choke  
The great city sounding wide ;  
The day comes, a dull red ball  
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke  
On the misty river-tide.

## X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market  
I steal, a wasted frame,  
It crosses here, it crosses there,  
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,  
The shadow still the same ;  
And on my heavy eyelids  
My anguish hangs like shame.

## XI.

Alas for her that met me,  
That heard me softly call,  
Came glimmering thro' the laurels  
At the quiet evenfall,  
In the garden by the turrets  
Of the old manorial hall.

## XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,  
From the realms of light and song,  
In the chamber or the street,  
As she looks among the blest,  
Should I fear to greet my friend  
Or to say "forgive the wrong,"  
Or to ask her, "take me, sweet,  
To the regions of thy rest?"

## XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,  
And the shadow flits and fleets  
And will not let me be ;  
And I loathe the squares and streets,  
And the faces that one meets,  
Hearts with no love for me :  
Always I long to creep  
Into some still cavern deep,  
There to weep, and weep, and weep  
My whole soul out to thee.

## XXVII.

## I.

DEAD, long dead,  
Long dead !  
And my heart is a handful of dust,  
And the wheels go over my head,  
And my bones are shaken with pain,  
For into a shallow grave they are  
thrust,

Only a yard beneath the street,  
And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,  
The hoofs of the horses beat,  
Beat into my scalp and my brain,  
With never an end to the stream of  
passing feet,  
Driving, hurrying ; marrying, burying,  
Clamor and rumble, and ringing and  
clatter.

And here beneath it is all as bad,  
For I thought the dead had peace, but  
it is not so ;  
To have no peace in the grave, is that  
not sad ?

But up and down and to and fro,  
Ever about me the dead men go ;  
And then to hear a dead man chatter  
is enough to drive one mad.

## II.

Wretchedest age, since Time began,  
They cannot even bury a man ;  
And tho' we paid our tithes in the days  
that are gone,  
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was  
read ;

It is that which makes us loud in the  
world of the dead ;

There is none that does his work, not  
one ;

A touch of their office might have suf-  
ficed,

But the churchmen fain would kill  
their church,

As the churches have kill'd their  
Christ.

## III.

See, there is one of us sobbing,  
No limit to his distress ;  
And another, a lord of all things, pray-  
ing

To his own great self, as I guess ;  
And another, a statesman there, be-  
traying

His party-secret, fool, to the press ;  
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing

The case of his patient—all for what ?  
To tickle the maggot born in an empty

head,  
And wheedle a world that loves him

not,  
For it is but a world of the dead.

## IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble !  
For the prophecy given of o'd  
And then not understood,  
Has come to pass as foretold ;

Not let any man think for the public  
good,

But babble, merely for babble.  
For I never whisper'd a private affair

Within the hearing of cat or mouse,  
No, not to myself in the closet alone,

But I heard it shouted at once from  
the top of the house ;

Everything came to be known :  
Who told *him* we were there ?

## v.

Not that gray old wolf, for he came not  
back  
From the wilderness, full of wolves,  
where he used to lie ;  
He has gather'd the bones for his o'er-  
grown whelp to crack ;  
Crack them now for yourself, and howl,  
and die.

## vi.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,  
And curse me the British vermin, the  
rat ;  
I know not whether he came in the  
Hanover ship,  
But I know that he lies and listens  
mute  
In an ancient mansion's crannies and  
holes :  
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,  
Except that now we poison our babes,  
poor souls !  
It is all used up for that.

## vii.

Tell him now : she is standing here at  
my head ;  
Not beautiful now, not even kind ;  
He may take her now ; for she never  
speaks her mind,  
But is ever the one thing silent here.  
She is not of us, as I divine ;  
She comes from another stiller world  
of the dead,  
Stiller, not fairer than mine.

## viii.

But I know where a garden grows,  
Fairer than aught in the world beside,  
All made up of the lily and rose  
That blow by night, when the season is  
good,  
To the sound of dancing music and  
flutes :  
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,  
And I almost fear they are not roses,  
but blood ;  
For the keeper was one, so full of pride,  
He linkt a dead man there to a spectral  
bride ;  
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of  
brutes,  
Would he have that hole in his side ?

## ix.

But what will the old man say ?  
He laid a cruel snare in a pit  
To catch a friend of mine one stormy  
day ;  
Yet now I could even weep to think of  
it ;  
For what will the old man say  
When he comes to the second corpse  
in the pit ?

## x.

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,  
Then to strike him and lay him low,  
That were a public merit, far,  
Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin ;

But the red life spilt for a private  
blow—  
I swear to you, lawful and lawless war  
Are scarcely even akin.

## xi.

O me, why have they not buried me  
deep enough ?  
Is it kind to have made me a grave so  
rough,  
Me, that was never a quiet sleeper ?  
Maybe still I am but half-dead ;  
Then I cannot be wholly dumb ;  
I will cry to the steps above my head  
And somebody, surely, some kind heart  
will come  
To bury me, bury me  
Deeper, ever so little deeper.

## xxviii.

## i.

My life has crept so long on a broken  
wing  
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of hor-  
ror and fear,  
That I come to be grateful at last for a  
little thing :  
My mood is changed, for it fell at a  
time of year  
When the face of night is fair on the  
dewy dawns,  
And the shining daffodil dies, and the  
Charioteer  
And starry Gemini hang like glorious  
crowns  
Over Orion's grave low down in the  
west,  
That like a silent lightning under the  
stars  
She seem'd to divide in a dream from  
a band of the blest,  
And spoke of a hope for the world in  
the coming wars—  
"And in that hope, dear soul, let  
trouble have rest,  
Knowing I tarry for thee," and pointed  
to Mars  
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the  
Lion's breast.

## ii.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded  
a dear delight  
To have look'd, tho' but in a dream,  
upon eyes so fair,  
That had been in a weary world my one  
thing bright ;  
And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd  
my despair  
When I thought that a war would arise  
in defence of the right,  
That an iron tyranny now should bend  
or cease,  
The glory of manhood stand on his  
ancient height,  
Nor Britain's one sole God be the mil-  
lionnaire :  
No more shall commerce be all in all  
and Peace

Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid  
note,  
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd  
increase,  
Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a sloth-  
ful shore,  
And the cobweb woven across the can-  
non's throat  
Shall shake its threaded tears in the  
wind no more.

## III.

And as months ran on and rumor of  
battle grew,  
"It is time, it is time, O passionate  
heart," said I  
(For I cleave to a cause that I felt to be  
pure and true),  
"It is time, O passionate heart and  
morbid eye,  
That old hysterical mock-disease  
should die."  
And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd  
my breath  
With a loyal people shouting a battle  
cry,  
Till I saw the dreary phantom arise  
and fly  
Far into the North, and battle, and  
seas of death.

## IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the  
higher aims  
Of a land that has lost for a little her  
lust of gold,  
And love of a peace that was full of  
wrongs and shames,  
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to  
be told;  
And hail once more to the banner of  
battle unroll'd!  
Tho' many a light shall darken, and  
many shall weep  
For those that are crush'd in the clash  
of jarring claims,  
Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd  
on a giant lar;  
And many a darkness into the light  
shall leap,  
And shine in the sudden making of  
splendid names,  
And noble thought be freer under the  
sun,  
And the heart of a people beat with  
one desire;  
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace,  
is over and done,  
And now by the side of the Black and  
the Baltic deep,  
And deathful-grinning mouths of the  
fortress, flames  
The blood-red blossom of war with a  
heart of fire.

## V.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll  
down like a wind,  
We have proved we have hearts in a  
cause, we are noble still,

And myself have awaked, as it seems,  
to the better mind;  
It is better to fight for the good, than  
to rail at the ill;  
I have felt with my native land, I am  
one with my kind,  
I embrace the purpose of God, and the  
doom assign'd.

## THE BROOK;

## AN IDYL.

"HERE, by this brook, we parted; I to  
the East  
And he for Italy—too late—too late;  
One whom the strong sons of the world  
despise;  
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip  
and share,  
And mellow metres more than cent for  
cent;  
Nor could he understand how money  
breeds,  
Thought it a dead thing; yet himself  
could make  
The thing that is not as the thing that  
is.  
O had he lived! In our schoolbooks  
we say,  
Of those that held their heads above  
the crowd,  
They flourish'd then or then; but life  
in him  
Could scarce be said to flourish, only  
touch'd  
On such a time as goes before the leaf,  
When all the wood stands in a mist of  
green,  
And nothing perfect: yet the brook he  
loved,  
For which, in branding summers of  
Bengal,  
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neil-  
gherry air  
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,  
Prattling the primrose fancies of the  
boy,  
To me that loved him; for 'O Brook,'  
he says,  
'O babbling brook,' says Edmund in  
his rhyme,  
'Whence come you?' and the brook,  
why not? replies:  
I come from haunts of coot and hern,  
I make a sudden sally,  
And sparkle out among the fern,  
To bicker down a valley.  
By thirty hills I hurry down,  
Or slip between the ridges,  
By twenty thorns, a little town,  
And half a hundred bridges.  
Till last by Philip's farm I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go  
But I go on for ever.  
'Poor lad, he died at Florence  
quite worn out,

Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,  
It has more ivy; there the river; and there  
Stands Philip's farm where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,  
In little sharps and trebles,  
I bubble into eddying bays,  
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret,  
By many a field and fallow,  
And many a fairy foreland set  
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

"But Philip chattered more than  
brook or bird;  
Old Philip; all about the fields you  
caught  
His weary daylong chirping, like the  
dry  
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer  
grass.

I wind about, and in and out,  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a lusty trout,  
And here and there a grayling.

And here and there a foamy flake  
Upon me, as I travel  
With many a silvery waterbreak  
Above the golden gravel.

And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

"O darling Katie Willows, his one  
child!

A maiden of our century, yet most  
meek;

A daughter of our meadow, yet not  
coarse,  
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel  
wand;

Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair  
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when  
the shell

Divides threefold to show the fruit  
within.

"Sweet Katie, once I did her a good  
turn,

Her and her far-off cousin and be-  
trothed,  
James Willows, of one name and heart  
with her.

For here I came, twenty years back—  
the week

Before I parted with poor Edmund;  
erost

By that old bridge which, half in ruins  
then,

Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the  
gleam

Beyond it, where the waters marry—  
erost,

Whistling a random bar of Bonny  
Doon,  
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate.  
The gate,

Half-parted from a weak and scolding  
hinge,

Stuck; and he clamor'd from a case-  
ment 'run'

To Katie somewhere in the walks be-  
low,

'Run, Katie!' Katie never ran: she  
moved

To meet me, winding under woodbine  
bowers,

A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,  
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a  
boon.

"What was it? less of sentiment than  
sense

Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of those  
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive  
tears,

And nursed by mealy-mouthed philan-  
thropies,

Divorce the Feeling from her mate the  
Deed.

"She told me. She and James had  
quarrell'd. Why?

What cause of quarrel? None, she  
said, no cause;

James had no cause: but when I prest  
the cause,

I learnt that James had flickering  
jealousies

Which anger'd her. Who anger'd  
James? I said.

But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once  
from mine,

And sketching with her slender-pointed  
foot

Some figure like a wizard's pentagram  
On garden gravel, let my query pass

Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I  
ask'd

If James were coming. 'Coming  
every day.'

She answer'd, 'ever longing to ex-  
plain,

But evermore her father came across  
With some long-winded tale, and broke  
him short;

And James departed vext with him  
and her.'

How could I help her? 'Would I—was  
it wrong?'

(Claspt hands and that petitionary  
grace

Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere  
she spoke)

'O would I take her father for one  
hour,

For one half-hour, and let him talk to  
me!'

And even while she spoke, I saw where  
James

Made toward us, like a wader in the  
surf,

Beyond the brook, waist-deep in  
meadow-sweet.

O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!

For in I went, and call'd old Philip  
 out  
 To show the farm: full willingly he  
 rose:  
 He led me thro' the short sweet-smell-  
 ing lanes  
 Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he  
 went.  
 He praised his land, his horses, his  
 machines;  
 He praised his ploughs, his cows, his  
 hogs, his dogs;  
 He praised his hens, his geese, his  
 guinea-hens;  
 His pigeons, who in session on their  
 roofs  
 Approved him, bowing at their own  
 deserts:  
 Then from the plaintive mother's teat  
 he took  
 Her blind and shuddering puppies,  
 naming each,  
 And naming those, his friends, for  
 whom they were:  
 Then crost the common into Darnley  
 chase  
 To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse  
 and fern  
 Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.  
 Then, seated on a serpent-rooted  
 beech,  
 He pointed out a pasturing colt, and  
 said:  
 'That was the four year-old I sold the  
 Squire.'  
 And there he told a long long-winded  
 tale  
 Of how the Squire had seen the colt at  
 grass,  
 And how it was the thing his daughter  
 wish'd,  
 And how he sent the bailiff to the farm  
 To learn the price, and what the price  
 he ask'd,  
 And how the bailiff swore that he was  
 mad,  
 But he stood firm and so the matter  
 hung;  
 He gave them line: and five days after  
 that  
 He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,  
 Who then and there had offer'd some-  
 thing more,  
 But he stood firm, and so the matter  
 hung;  
 He knew the man; the colt would fetch  
 its price;  
 He gave them line: and how by chance  
 at last  
 (It might be May or April, he forgot,  
 The last of April or the first of May)  
 He found the bailiff riding by the farm,  
 And, talking from the point he drew  
 him in,  
 And there he mellow'd all his heart  
 with ale,  
 Until they closed a bargain, hand in  
 hand.  
 'Then, while I breathed in sight of  
 haven, he,

Poor fellow, could he help it? recom-  
 menced,  
 And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,  
 Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tal-  
 lyho,  
 Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the  
 Jilt,  
 Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the  
 rest,  
 Till, not to die a listener, I arose,  
 And with me Philip, talking still; and  
 so  
 We turn'd our foreheads from the fall-  
 ing sun,  
 And following our own shadows thrice  
 as long  
 As when they follow'd us from Philip's  
 door,  
 Arrived, and found the sun of sweet  
 content  
 Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things  
 well.  
 I steal by lawns and grassy plots,  
 I slide by hazel covers;  
 I move the sweet forget-me-nots  
 That grow for happy lovers.  
 I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,  
 Among my skimming swallows;  
 I make the netted sunbeam dance  
 Against my sandy shallows.  
 I murmur under moon and stars  
 In brambly wildernesses;  
 I linger by my shingly bars;  
 I loiter round my cresses;  
 And out again I curve and flow  
 To join the brimming river,  
 For men may come and men may go,  
 But I go on for ever.  
 Yes, men may come and go; and these  
 are gone,  
 All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund  
 sleeps,  
 Not by the well-known stream and  
 rustic spire,  
 But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome  
 Of Brunelleschi, sleeps in peace: and  
 he,  
 Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of  
 words  
 Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:  
 I scraped the lichen from it: Katie  
 walks  
 By the long wash of Australasian seas  
 Far off, and holds her head to other  
 stars,  
 And breathes in converse seasons. All  
 are gone."  
 So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a  
 style  
 In the long hedge, and rolling in his  
 mind  
 Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er  
 the brook  
 A tonsured head in middle age forlorn,  
 Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a  
 low breath  
 Of tender air made tremble in the  
 hedge

Travell  
ley  
It has n  
ther  
Stands  
rive

I chatte  
In lit  
I bubb  
I babl

With r  
By m  
And m  
With

I chatte  
To jo  
For me  
But I

"Bu  
b  
Old Pl  
cau

His we  
dry  
High-e  
me

I wind  
With  
And h  
And

And h  
Upo  
With  
Abo

And d  
To jo  
For m  
But

"O  
A ma  
m  
A dau  
ed

Straig  
wi  
Her ej  
In gl  
th

Divid  
w  
"S

Her  
tr  
Jame  
w

For l  
th  
Befor  
e

By th  
th  
Still

g  
Beyo  
e

The fragile bindweed-bells and briony  
rings;

And he look'd up. There stood a  
maiden near,

Waiting to pass. In much amaze he  
stared

On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair  
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when  
the shell

Divides threefold to show the fruit  
within :

Then, wondering, ask'd her "Are you  
from the farm?"

"Yes" answer'd she. Pray stay a lit-  
tle: pardon me;

What do they call you?" "Katie."

"That were strange.  
What surname?" "Willows." "No!"

"That is my name."

"Indeed!" and here he look'd so self-  
perplex'd,

That Katie laugh'd, and laughing  
blush'd, till he

Laugh'd also, but as one before he  
wakes,

Who feels a glimmering strangeness in  
his dream.

Then looking at her; "Too happy,  
fresh and fair,

Too fresh and fair in our sad world's  
best bloom,

To be the ghost of one who bore your  
name

About these meadows, twenty years  
ago."

"Have you not heard?" said Katie,  
"we came back.

We bought the farm we tenanted be-  
fore.

Am I so like her? so they said on  
board.

Sir, if you knew her in her English  
days,

My mother, as it seems you did, the  
days

That most she loves to talk of, come  
with me.

My brother James is in the harvest  
field;

But she—you will be welcome—O,  
come in!"

## THE LETTERS.

## I.

STILL on the tower stood the vane,  
A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,

I peer'd athwart the chancel pane  
And saw the altar cold and bare.

A clog of lead was round my feet,  
A band of pain across my brow;

"Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall  
meet

Before you hear my marriage vow."

## II.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song  
That mock'd the wholesome human

heart,

And then we met in wrath and wrong,  
We met, but only meant to part.

Full cold my greeting was and dry;  
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved;

I saw with half-unconscious eye  
She wore the colors I approved.

## III.

She took the little ivory chest,  
With half a sign she turn'd the key,

Then raised her head with lips com-  
prest,

And gave my letters back to me.  
And gave the trinkets and the rings,

My gifts, when gifts of mine could  
please,

As looks a father on the things  
Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

## IV.

She told me all her friends had said;  
I raged against the public liar;

She talk'd as if her love were dead,  
But in my words were seeds of fire.

"No more of love; your sex is known:  
I never will be twice deceived.

Henceforth I trust the man alone,  
The woman cannot be believed.

## V.

"Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell  
(And women's slander is the worst),

And you, whom once I loved so well,  
Thro' you, my life will be accurst."

I spoke with heart, and heat and force,  
I shook her breast with vague

alarms—  
Like torrents from a mountain source

We rush'd into each other's arms.

## VI.

We parted: sweetly gleam'd the stars,  
And sweet the vapor-braided blue,

Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars,  
As homeward by the church I drew.

The very graves appear'd to smile,  
So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells!

"Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,  
There comes a sound of marriage

bells."

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE  
DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

## I.

Bury the Great Duke  
With an empire's lamentation,

Let us bury the Great Duke  
To the noise of the mourning of a

mighty nation,  
Mourning when their leaders fall,

Warriors carry the warrior's pall,  
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

## II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we  
deplore?

Here, in streaming London's central  
road.

wrong,  
rt.  
ry ;  
moved

key,  
com-

ld ;  
l,  
ire.  
own :

Hell  
st),  
ill,  
t,"  
ree,  
ague

ars,  
e,  
r.

ills;  
e la,  
ago

E



A  
E  
L  
R  
A  
U  
Th  
Th  
An  
Let  
An  
The  
Brig  
Dar  
Let  
And  
And  
t

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

103

Let the sound of those he wrought for,  
And the feet of those he fought for,  
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant; sad and slow,  
As fits an universal woe,  
Let the long long procession go,  
And let the sorrowing crowd about it  
grow.  
And let the mournful martial music  
blow;  
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,  
Remembering all his greatness in the  
Past.  
No more in soldier fashion will he  
greet  
With lifted hand the gazer in the  
street.  
O friends, our chief state-oracle is  
mute;  
Mourn for the man of long enduring  
blood,  
The statesman-warrior, moderate, res-  
olute,

Whole in himself, a common good.  
Mourn for the man of amplest in-  
fluence,

Yet clearest of ambitious crime,  
Our greatest yet with least pretence,  
Great in council and great in war,  
Foremost captain of his time,  
Rich in saving common-sense,  
And, as the greatest only are,  
In his simplicity sublime.  
O good gray head which all men knew,  
O voice from which their omens all  
men drew,

O iron nerve to true occasion true,  
O fallen at length that tower of strength  
Which stood four-square to all the  
winds that blew!

Such was he whom we deplore.  
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.  
The great World-victor's victor will be  
seen no more.

V.

All is over and done;  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
England, for thy son.  
Let the bell be toll'd.  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
And render him to the mould.  
Under the cross of gold  
That shines over city and river,  
There he shall rest for ever  
Among the wise and the bold.  
Let the bell be toll'd;  
And a reverent people behold  
The towering car, the sable steeds;  
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,  
Dark in its funeral fold.  
Let the bell be toll'd:  
And a deeper knell in the heart be  
knoll'd;  
And the sound of the sorrowing an-  
them roll'd

Thro' the dome of the golden cross;  
And the volleying cannon thunder his  
loss;

He knew their voices of old,  
For many a time in many a clime  
His captain's-ear has heard them boom  
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom;  
When he with those deep voices  
wrought,

Guarding realms and kings from  
shame;

With those deep voices our dead cap-  
tain taught

The tyrant, and asserts his claim  
In that dread sound to the great name,  
Which he has worn so pure of blame,

In praise and in dispraise the same,  
A man of well-attenu'd frame,  
O civic muse, to such a name,  
To such a name for ages long,  
To such a name,

Preserve a broad approach of fame,  
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an hon-  
or'd guest,

With banner and with music, with  
soldier and with priest,  
With a nation weeping, and breaking  
on my rest?

Mighty Seaman, this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea.  
Thine island loves thee well, thou fam-  
ous man,

The greatest sailor since our world be-  
gan,

Now, to the roll of muffled drums,  
To thee the greatest soldier comes;  
For this is he

Was great by land as thou by sea;  
His foes were thine; he kept us free;  
O give him welcome, this is he

Worthy of our gorgeous rites,  
And worthy to be laid by thee;  
For this is England's greatest son  
He that gain'd a hundred fights.  
Nor ever lost an English gun;  
This is he that far away

Against the myriads of Assaye  
Clash'd with his fiery few and won;  
And underneath another sun,  
Warring on a later day,

Round affrighted Lisbon drew  
The treble works; the vast designs  
Of his labor'd rampart-lines,  
Where he greatly stood at bay,

Whence he issued forth anew,  
And ever great and greater grew,  
Beating from the wasted vines  
Back to France her banded swarms,  
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew

Beyond the Pyrenean pines,  
Follow'd up in valley and glen  
With blare of bugle, clamor of men,  
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,  
And England pouring on her foes.

Such a war had such a close,  
Again their ravening eagle rose

In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings ;  
 And barking for the thrones of kings ;  
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown  
 On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down ;  
 A day of onsets of despair !  
 Dash'd on every rocky square,  
 Their surging charges foam'd themselves away ;  
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew ;  
 Thro' the long-tormented air  
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,  
 And down we swept and charged and overthrew.  
 So great a soldier taught us there,  
 What long-enduring hearts could do  
 In that world's-earthquake, Waterloo !  
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,  
 And pure as he from taint of craven gulle,  
 O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,  
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,  
 If aught of things that here befall  
 Touch a spirit among things divine,  
 If love of country move thee there at all,  
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine !  
 And thro' the centuries let a people's voice  
 In full acclaim,  
 A people's voice,  
 The proof and echo of all human fame,  
 A people's voice, when they rejoice  
 At civic revel and pomp and game,  
 Attest their great commander's claim  
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,  
 Eternal honor to his name.

## VII.

A people's voice ! we are a people yet,  
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,  
 Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers ;  
 Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set  
 His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,  
 We have a voice, with which to pay the debt  
 Of boundless love and reverence and regret  
 To those great men who fought, and kept it ours,  
 And keep it ours, O God, from brute control ;  
 O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul  
 Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,  
 And save the one true seed of freedom sown ;  
 Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,  
 That sober freedom out of which there springs

Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ;  
 For, saving that, ye help to save mankind  
 Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,  
 And drill the raw world for the march of mind,  
 Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.  
 But wink no more in slothful over-trust.  
 Remember him who led your hosts ;  
 He bade you guard the sacred coasts.  
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall ;  
 His voice is silent in your council-hall  
 For ever ; and whatever tempests lower  
 For ever silent ; even if they broke  
 In thunder, silent ; yet remember all  
 He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke ;  
 Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,  
 Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power ;  
 Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow  
 Thro' either babbling world of high and low ;  
 Whose life was work, whose language rife  
 With rugged maxims hewn from life ;  
 Who never spoke against a foe ;  
 Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke  
 All great self-seekers trampling on the right ;  
 Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named ;  
 Truth-lover was our English Duke ;  
 Whatever record leap to light  
 He never shall be shamed.

## VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars  
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,  
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,  
 He, on whom from both her open hands  
 Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,  
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.  
 Yea, let all good things await  
 Him who cares not to be great,  
 But as he saves or serves the state.  
 Not once or twice in our rough island-story,  
 The path of duty was the way to glory ;  
 He that walks it, only thirsting  
 For the right, and learns to deaden  
 Love of self, before his journey closes,  
 He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting  
 Into glossy purples, which outredded  
 All voluptuous garden-roses.  
 Not once or twice in our fair island-story,  
 The path of duty was the way to glory :

He, that ever following her commands,  
On with toil of heart and knees and  
hands.

Thro' the long gorge to the far light  
has won

His path upward, and prevail'd,  
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty  
scaled

Are close upon the shining table-lands  
To which our God Himself is moon  
and sun.

Such was he : his work is done,  
But while the races of mankind en-  
dure,

Let his great example stand  
Colossal, seen of every land,  
And keep the soldier firm, the states-  
man pure :

Till in all lands and thro' all human  
story

The path of duty be the way to glory:  
And let the land whose hearths he  
saved from shame

For many and many an age proclaim  
At civic revel and pomp and game  
And when the long-illumined cities  
flame,

Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,  
With honor, honor, honor, honor to  
him,

Eternal honor to his name.

## IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung  
By some yet un moulded tongue  
Far on in summers that we shall not  
see :

Peace, it is a day of pain  
For one about whose patriarchal knee  
Late the little children clung :  
O peace, it is a day of pain

For one, upon whose hand and heart  
and brain

Once the weight and fate of Europe  
hung.

Ours the pain, be his the gain !

More than is of man's degree  
Must be with us, watching here  
At this, our great solemnity.

Whom we see not we revere,

We revere, and we refrain

From talk of battles loud and vain,

And brawling memories all too free

For such a wise humility

As befits a solemn fame :

We revere, and while we hear

The tides of Music's golden sea

Setting toward eternity,

Uplifted high in heart and hope are

we,

Until we doubt not that for one so true

There must be other nobler work to do

Than when he fought at Waterloo,

And Victor he must ever be.

For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill

And break the shore, and evermore

Make and break, and work their will ;

Tho' world on world in myriad myriads

roll

Round us, each with different powers,

And other forms of life than ours,  
What know we greater than the soul ?  
On God and Godlike men we build our  
trust.

Hush, the Dead March wails in the  
people's ears :

The dark crowd moves, and there are  
sobs and tears :

The black earth yawns : the morta'  
disappears ;

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;

He is gone who seem'd so great.—

Gone ; but nothing can bereave him

Of the force he made his own

Being here, and we believe him

Something far advanced in State,

And that he wears a truer crown

Than any wreath that man can weave

him.

Speak no more of his renown,

Lay your earthly fancies down,

And in the vast cathedral leave him.

God accept him, Christ receive him.

1852.

## THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O Love, what hours were thine and  
mine

In lands of palm and southern pine

In lands of palm, of orange blossom,

Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd

In ruin, by the mountain road ;

How like a gem, beneath, the city

Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell

The torrent vineyard streaming fell

To meet the sun and sunny waters.

That only heaved with a summerswell.

What slender campanili grey

By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;

Where, here and there, on sandy

beaches

A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,

Yet present in his natal grove,

Now watching high on mountain

cornice,

And steering, now, from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim

Till, in a narrow street and dim,

I stay'd the wheels at Cogoleto,

And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us

most,

Not the elipt palm of which they

boast ;

But distant color, happy hamlet,

A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen

A light amid its olives green ;

Or olive-hoary cape in ocean ;

Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed

Of silent torrents, gravel-spread :

And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten  
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and  
cold,

Those niched shapes of noble mould,  
A princely people's awful princes,  
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,  
In those long galleries, were ours ;  
What drives about the fresh Cascine,  
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,  
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,

Or palace, how the city glitter'd,  
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we cross the Lombard plain  
Remember what a plague of rain.

Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma ;  
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles  
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles ;

Porch-pillars on the lion resting,  
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,  
The giant window's blazon'd fires,

The height, the space, the gloom, the  
glory !

A mount of marble a hundred spires !  
I climb'd the roofs at break of day ;

Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.

I stood among the silent statues,  
And stunted pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,  
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there

A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys  
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last  
To Como ; shower and storm and blast

Had blown the lake beyond his limit  
And all was flooded ; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,  
And in my head, for half the day,

The rich Virgilian rustic measure  
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burden music, kept,  
As on The Lariano crept.

To that fair port below the castle  
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept ;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake  
A cypress in the moonlight shake,

The moonlight touching o'er a ter-  
race

One tall Agave above the lake.

What more ? we took our last adieu,  
And up the snowy Splugen drew,

But ere we reach'd the highest sum-  
mit

I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,  
And now it tells of Italy.

O love, we two shall go no longer  
To lands of summer across the sea ;

So dear a life your arms enfold  
Whose crying is a cry for gold :

Yet here to-night in this dark city,  
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,  
This nursing of another sky

Still in the little book you lent me,  
And where you tenderly laid it by :

And I forgot the clouded Forth,  
The gloom that saddens Heaven and  
Earth,

The bitter east, the misty summer  
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,  
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,

Perchance, to dream you still beside  
me,

My fancy fled to the South again.

TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

COME, when no graver cares employ,  
God-father, come and see your boy :

Your presence will be sun in winter,  
Making the little one leap for joy ;

For, being of that honest few,  
Who give the Fiend himself his due,

Should eighty-thousand college coun-  
cils

Thunder "Anathema," friend, at you ;  
Should all our churchmen foam in  
spite

At you, so careful of the right,  
Yet one lay-hearth would give you  
welcome

(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight ;  
Where, far from noise and smoke of  
town,

I watch the twilight falling brown  
All round a careless-order'd garden  
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you dine,  
But honest talk and wholesome wine,

And only hear the magpie gossip  
Garrulous under a roof of pine :

For groves of pine on either hand,  
To break the blast of winter, stan'd ;

And further on, the hoary Channel  
Tumbles a breaker on chalk and sand ;

Where, if below the milky steep  
Some ship of battle slowly creep,

And on thro' zones of light and  
shadow

Glimmer away to the lonely deep,  
We might discuss the Northern sin  
Which made a selfish war begin ;

Dispute the claims, arrange the  
chances ;

Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win :

Or whether war's avenging rod  
Shall lash all Europe into blood ;

Till you should turn to dearer mt-  
ters,

Dear to the man that is dear to God ;  
How best to help the slender store,  
How mend the dwellings, of the poor ;

How gain in life, as life advances ;  
Valor and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come : the lawn as yet  
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet ;

But when the wreath of March has  
blossom'd,

Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,

For those are few we hold as dear ;

Nor pay but one, but come for many,  
Many and many a happy year.

January, 1854.

## W I L L.

## I.

O WELL for him whose will is strong !  
He suffers, but he will not suffer long ;  
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong :  
For him nor moves the loud world's  
random mock,

Nor all Calamity's hugest waves con-  
found,

Who seems a promontory rock,  
That, compass'd round with turbalent  
sound,

In middle ocean meets the surging  
slock,

Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

## II.

But ill for him who, bettering not with  
time,

Corrupts the strength of heaven-de-  
scended Will,

And ever weaker grows thro' acted  
crime,

Or seeming-genial venial fault,  
Recurring and suggesting still !

He seems as one whose footsteps halt,  
Toiling in immesurable sand.

And o'er a weary, sultry land,  
Far beneath a blazing vault,

Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous  
hill,

The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT  
BRIGADE.

## I.

HALF a league, half a league,

Half a league onward,

All in the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

" Forward, the Light Brigade !

Charge for the guns ! " he said :

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

## II.

" Forward, the Light Brigade ! "

Was there a man dismay'd ?

No tho' the soldier knew

Some one had blunder'd :

Theirs not to make reply,

Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs but to do and die  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

## III.

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon in front of them  
Volley'd and thunder'd ;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well,  
Into the jaws of Death,  
Into the mouth of Hell  
Rode the six hundred.

## IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,  
Flash'd as they turn'd in air  
Sabring the gunners there,  
Charging an army, while  
All the world wonder'd :  
Plunged in the battery-smoke ;  
Right thro' the line they broke ;  
Cossack and Russian  
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke  
Shatter'd and sunder'd.  
Then they rode back, but not  
Not the six hundred.

## V.

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon behind them  
Volley'd and thunder'd ;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
While horse and hero fell,  
They that had fought so well  
Came thro' the jaws of Death,  
Back from the mouth of Hell,  
All that was left of them,  
Left of six hundred.

## VI.

When can their glory fade ?  
O the wild charge they made !  
All the world wonder'd.  
Honor the charge they made !  
Honor the Light Brigade,  
Noble six hundred !

## IN MEMORIAM.

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen thy  
face,

By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove ;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade ;

Thou madest Life in man and brute ;

Thou madest Death ; and lo, thy  
foot

Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :

Thou madest man, he knows not  
why ;

He thinks he was not made to die ;

And thou hast made him : thou art  
just.

Thou seemest human and divine,

The highest, holiest manhood, thou :

Our wills are ours, we know not  
how;  
Our wills are ours, to make them  
thine.  
Our little systems have their day;  
They have their day and cease to be:  
They are but broken lights of thee,  
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.  
We have but faith : we cannot know :  
For knowledge is of things we see ;  
And yet we trust it comes from thee,  
A beam in darkness : let it grow.  
Let knowledge grow from more to  
more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell ;  
That mind and soul, according well,  
May make one music as before,  
But vaster. We are fools and slight ;  
We mock thee when we do not fear :  
But help thy foolish ones to bear ;  
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.  
Forgive what seem'd my sin in me ;  
What seem'd my worth since I be-  
gan ;  
For merit lives from man to man,  
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.  
Forgive my grief for one removed,  
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.  
I trust he lives in thee, and there  
I find him worthier to be loved.  
Forgive these wild and wandering  
cries,  
Confusions of a wasted youth ;  
Forgive them where they fail in  
truth,  
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

1849.

## IN MEMORIAM.

A. H. H.

OBITU MDCCCXXXIII.

## I.

I HELD it truth, with him who sings  
To one clear harp in divers tones,  
That men may rise on stepping-  
stones  
Of their dead selves to higher things.  
But who shall so forecast the years  
And find in loss a gain to match ?  
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch  
The far-off interest of tears ?  
Let Love clasp Grief lest both be  
drown'd,  
Let darkness keep her raven gloss :  
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss.  
To dance with death, to beat the  
ground,  
Than that the victor Hours should  
scorn  
The long result of love, and boast,  
' Behold the man that loved and  
lost,  
But all he was is overworn."

## II.

OLD Yew, which graspest at the stones  
That name the under-lying dead,  
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,  
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.  
The seasons bring the flower again,  
And bring the firstling to the flock ;  
And in the dusk of thee, the clock  
Beats out the little lives of men.  
O not for thee the glow, the bloom,  
Who changest not in any gale,  
Nor branding summer suns avail  
To touch thy thousand years of gloom :  
And gazing on thee, sullen tree,  
Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,  
I seem to fall from out my blood  
And grow incorporate into thee.

## III.

O SORROW, cruel fellowship,  
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,  
O sweet and bitter in a breath,  
What whispers from thy lying lip ?  
"The stars," she whispers, "blindly  
run ;  
A web is wov'n across the sky ;  
From out waste places comes a cry,  
And murmurs from the dying sun :  
"And all the phantom, Nature  
stands—  
With all the music in her tone,  
A hollow echo of my own,—  
A hollow form with empty hands."  
And shall I take a thing so blind,  
Embrace her as my natural good ;  
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,  
Upon the threshold of the mind ?

## IV.

To Sleep I give my powers away ;  
My will is bondsman to the dark ;  
I sit within a helmless bark,  
And with my heart I muse and say :  
O heart, how fares it with thee now,  
That thou shouldst fail from thy de-  
sire,  
Who scarcely darest to inquire,  
"What is it makes me beat so low ?"  
Something it is which thou hast lost,  
Some pleasure from thine early  
years.  
Break, thou deep vase of chilling  
tears,  
That grief hath shaken into frost !  
Such clouds of nameless trouble cross  
All night below the darken'd eyes :  
With morning wakes the will, and  
cries,  
"Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."

## V.

I SOMETIMES hold it half a sin  
To put in words the grief I feel ;  
For words, like Nature, half reveal  
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,  
A use in measured language lies;  
The sad mechanic exercise,  
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me  
o'er,  
Like coarsest clothes against the  
cold;  
But that large grief which these en-  
fold  
It given in outline and no more.

## VI.

ONE writes, that "Other friends re-  
main,"

That "Loss is common to the race,"—  
And common is the commonplace,  
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make  
My own less bitter, rather more:  
Too common! Never morning wore  
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,  
Who pledgedst now thy gallant son;  
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,  
Hath still'd the life that beat from  
thee,

O mother, praying God will save  
Thy sailor,— while thy head is  
bow'd,  
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud,  
Drops in his vast and wandering  
grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought  
At that last hour to please him well;  
Who mused on all I had to tell,  
And something written, something  
thought;

Expecting still his advent home;  
And ever met him on his way  
With wishes, thinking, here to-day,  
Or here to-morrow will he come.

O somewhere, meek unconscious dove,  
That sittest ranging golden hair;  
And glad to find thyself so fair,  
Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows  
In expectation of a guest;  
And thinking "this will please him  
best,"

She takes a ribbon or a rose;  
For he will see them on to-night;  
And with the thought her color  
burns;  
And, having left the glass, she turns  
Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turn'd, the curse  
Had fallen, and her future Lord  
Was drown'd in passing thro' the  
ford,

Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O what to her shall be the end?  
And what to me remains of good?  
To her, perpetual maidenhood,  
And unto me no second friend.

## VII.

DARK house, by which once more I  
stand

Here in the long unlovely street,  
Doors, where my heart was used to  
beat

So quickly, waiting for a hand,  
A hand that can be clasp'd no more,—  
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,  
And like a guilty thing I creep  
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away  
The noise of life begins again,  
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain  
On the bald street breaks the blank  
day.

## VIII.

A HAPPY lover who has come  
To look on her that loves him well,  
Who 'lights and rings the gateway  
bell,  
And learns her gone and far from  
home;

He saddens, all the magic light  
Dies off at once from bower and hall,  
And all the place is dark, and all  
The chambers emptied of delight:

So find I every pleasant spot  
In which we two were wont to meet,  
The field, the chamber, and the  
street,  
For all is dark where thou art not.

Yet as that other, wandering there  
In those deserted walks, may find  
A flower beat with rain and wind,  
Which once she foster'd up with care;

So seems it in my deep regret,  
O my forsaken heart, with thee  
And this poor flower of poesy  
Which little cared for fades not yet.

But since it pleased a vanish'd eye,  
I go to plant it on his tomb,  
That if it can it there may bloom,  
Or dying, there at least may die.

## IX.

FAIR ship, that from the Italian shore  
Sallest the placid ocean-plains  
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,  
Spread thy full wings, and waft him  
o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn  
In vain; a favorable speed  
Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead  
Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex  
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor,  
bright

As our pure love thro' early light  
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above;  
Sleep, gentle heavens, before the  
prow;

Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps  
now,

My friend, the brother of my love:

My Arthur, whom I shall not see  
Till all my widow'd race be run ;  
Dear as the mother to the son,  
More than my brothers are to me.

## X.

I HEAR the noise about thy keel ;  
I hear the bell struck in the night ;  
I see the cabin-window bright ;  
I see the sailor at the wheel.  
Thou bringest the sailor to his wife,  
And travell'd men from foreign  
lands ;  
And letters unto trembling hands ;  
And, thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.  
So bring him : we have idle dreams :  
This look of quiet flatters thus  
Our home-bred fancies : O to us,  
The fools of habit, sweeter seems  
To rest beneath the clover sod,  
That takes the sunshine and the  
rains,  
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains  
The chalice of the grapes of God ;  
Than if with thee the roaring wells  
Should gulf him fathom-deep in  
brine ;  
And hands so often clasp'd in mine,  
Should toss with tangle and with  
shells.

## XI.

CALM is the morn without a sound,  
Calm as to suit a calmer grief,  
And only thro' the faded leaf  
The chestnut pattering to the ground :  
Calm and deep peace on this high  
wold,  
And on these dews that drench the  
furze,  
And all the silvery gossamers  
That twinkle into green and gold :  
Calm and still light on yon great plain  
That sweeps with all its autumn  
bowers,  
And crowded farms and lessening  
towers,  
To mingle with the bounding main :  
Calm and deep peace in this wide air,  
These leaves that redden to the fall ;  
And in my heart, if calm at all,  
If any calm, a calm despair :  
Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,  
And waves that sway themselves in  
rest,  
And dead calm in that noble breast  
Which heaves but with the heaving  
deep.

## XII.

Lo, as a dove when up she springs  
To bear thro' Heaven a tale of woe,  
Some dolorous message knit below  
The wild pulsation of her wings ;  
Like her I go ; I cannot stay ;  
I leave this mortal ark behind,  
A weight of nerves without a mind,  
And leave the cliffs, and haste away

O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large,  
And reach the glow of southern skies,  
And see the sails at distance rise,  
And linger weeping on the marge,  
And saying : " Comes he thus, my  
friend ?"  
Is this the end of all my care ?"  
And circle moaning in the air :  
' Is this the end ? Is this the end ?"  
And forward dart again, and play  
About the prow, and back return  
To where the body sits, and learn,  
That I have been an hour away.

## XIII.

TEARS of the widower, when he sees  
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,  
And moves his doubtful arms, and  
feels  
Her place is empty, fall like these ;  
Which weep a loss for ever new,  
A void where heart on heart reposed ;  
And, where warm hands have prest  
and closed,  
Silence, till I be silent too.  
Which weep the comrade of my choice,  
An awful thought, a life removed,  
The human-hearted man I loved,  
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.  
Come Time, and teach me, many years,  
I do not suffer in a dream ;  
For now so strange do these things  
seem,  
Mine eyes have leisure for their tears ;  
My fancies time to rise on wing,  
And glance about the approaching  
sails,  
As tho' they brought but merchant's  
bales,  
And not the burden that they bring

## XIV.

If one should bring me this report,  
That thou hadst touch'd the land to-  
day,  
And I went down unto the quay,  
And found thee lying in the port ;  
And standing, muffled round with woe,  
Should see thy passengers in rank  
Come stepping lightly down the  
plank,  
And beckoning unto those they know ;  
And if along with these should come  
The man I held as half-divine ;  
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,  
And ask a thousand things of home ;  
And I should tell him all my pain,  
And how my life had droop'd of late  
And he should sorrow o'er my state  
And marvel what possess'd my brain ;  
And I perceived no touch of change,  
No hint of death in all his fame,  
But found him all in all the same,  
I should not feel it to be strange.

## XV.

To-NIGHT the winds begin to rise  
And roar from yonder dropping day:

The last red leaf is whirl'd away,  
The rooks are blown about the skies;  
The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,  
The cattle huddled on the lea;  
And wildly dash'd on tower and tree  
The sunbeam strikes along the world:  
And but for fancies, which aver  
That all thy motions gently pass  
Althwart a plane of molten glass,  
I scarce could brook the strain and stir

That makes the barren branches loud;  
And but for fear it is not so,  
The wild unrest that lives in woe  
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud  
That rises upward always higher,  
And onward drags a laboring breast,  
And topples round the dreary west,  
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

## XVI.

WHAT words are these have fall'n  
from me?  
Calm calm despair and wild unrest  
Be tenants of a single breast,  
Or sorrow such a changeling be?  
Or doth she only seem to take  
The touch of change in calm or  
storm;  
But knows no more of transient form  
In her deep self, than some dead lake  
That holds the shadow of a lark  
Hung in the shadow of a heaven?  
Or has the shock, so harshly given,  
Confused me like the unhappy bark  
That strikes by night a craggy shelf,  
And staggers blindly ere she sink?  
And stunn'd me from my power to  
think  
And all my knowledge of myself;  
And made me that delirious man  
Whose fancy fuses old and new,  
And flashes into false and true,  
And mingles all without a plan?

## XVII.

THOU comest, much wept for: such a  
breeze  
Compell'd thy canvas, and my  
prayer  
Was as the whisper of an air  
To breathe thee over lonely seas.  
For I in spirit saw thee move  
Thro' circles of the bounding sky,  
Week after week: the days go by:  
Come quick, thou bringest all I love.  
Henceforth, wherever thou may'st  
roam,  
My blessing, like a line of light,  
Is on the waters day and night,  
And like a beacon guards thee home.  
So may whatever tempest mars  
Mid ocean, spare thee, sacred bark;  
And balmy drops in summer dark  
Slide from the bosom of the stars.  
So kind an office hath been done,  
Such precious relics brought by thee;

The dust of him I shall not see  
Till all my widow'd race be run.

## XVIII.

'Tis well; 'tis something; we may  
stand  
Where he in English earth is laid,  
And from his ashes may be made  
The violet of his native land.  
'Tis little; but it looks in truth  
As if the quiet bones were blest  
Among familiar names to rest  
And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the  
head  
That sleeps or wears the mask of  
sleep,  
And come, whatever loves to weep,  
And hear the ritual of the dead.  
Ah yet, ev'n yet, if this might be,  
I, falling on his faithful heart,  
Would breathing thro' his lips im-  
part  
The life that almost dies in me;  
That dies not, but endures with pain,  
And slowly forms the firmer mind,  
Treasuring the look it cannot find,  
The words that are not heard again.

## XIX.

THE Danube to the Severn gave  
The darken'd heart that beat no  
more;  
They laid him by the pleasant shore,  
And in the hearing of the wave.  
There twice a day the Severn fills;  
The salt sea-water passes by,  
And hushes half the babbling Wye,  
And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along  
And hush'd my deepest grief of all,  
When fill'd with tears that cannot  
fall,  
I brim with sorrow drowning song,  
The tide flows down, the wave again  
Is vocal in its wooded walls;  
My deeper anguish also falls,  
And I can speak a little then.

## XX.

THE lesser griefs that may be said,  
That breathe a thousand tender  
vows,  
And but as servants in a house  
Where lies the master newly dead;  
Who speak their feeling as it is,  
And weep the fullness from the mind:  
"It will be hard," they say, "to find  
Another service such as this."  
My lighter moods are like to these,  
That out of words a comfort win;  
But there are other griefs within,  
And tears that at their fountain freeze;  
For by the hearth the children sit  
Cold in that atmosphere of Death,

And scarce endure to draw the  
breath,  
Or like to noiseless phantoms flit:

But open converse is there none,  
So much the vital spirits sink  
To see the vacant chair, and think,  
"How good! how kind! and he is  
gone."

## XXI.

I SING to him that rests below,  
And, since the grasses round me  
wave,  
I take the grasses of the grave,  
And make them pipes whereon to blow.  
The traveller hears me now and then,  
And sometimes harshly will he  
speak;

"This fellow would make weakness  
weak,  
And melt the waxen hearts of men."

Another answers, "Let him be,  
He loves to make parade of pain,  
That with his piping he may gain  
The praise that comes to constancy."

A third is wroth, "Is this an hour  
For private sorrow's barren song,  
When more and more the people  
through  
The chairs and thrones of civil power?

"A time to sicken and to swoon,  
When Science reaches forth her arms  
To feel from world to world, and  
charms  
Her secret from the latest moon?"

Behold, ye speak an idle thing:  
Ye never knew the sacred dust:  
I do but sing because I must,  
And pipe but as the linnets sing:

And one is glad; her note is gay,  
For now her little ones have ranged;  
And one is sad; her note is changed,  
Because her brood is stol'n away.

## XXII.

THE path by which we twain did go,  
Which led by tracts that pleased us  
well,

Thro' four sweet years arose and fell,  
From flower to flower, from snow to  
snow:

And we with singing cheer'd the way,  
And, crown'd with all the season leut,  
From April on to April went,  
And glad at heart from May to May:

But where the path we walk'd began  
To slant the fifth autumnal slope,  
As we descended following Hope,  
There sat the Shadow fear'd of man;

Who broke our fair companionship,  
And spread his mantle dark and cold,  
And wrapt thee formless in the fold,  
And dull'd the murmur on thy lip,

And bore thee where I could not see  
Nor follow, tho' I walk in haste,

And think, that somewhere in the  
waste  
The Shadow sits and waits for me.

## XXIII.

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,  
Or breaking into song by fits,  
Alone, alone, to where he sits,  
The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,  
Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,  
I wander, often falling lame,  
And looking back to whence I came,  
Or on to where the pathway leads;

And crying. How changed from where  
it ran  
Thro' lands where not a leaf was  
dumb:

But all the lavish hills would hum  
The murmur of a happy Pan:

When each by turns was guide to each,  
And Fancy light from Fancy caught,  
And Thought leapt out to wed with  
Thought

Ere Thought could wed itself with  
Speech;

And all we met was fair and good,  
And all was good that Time could  
bring,

And all the secret of the Spring  
Moved in the chambers of the blood;

And many an old philosophy  
On Argive heights divinely sang,  
And round us all the thicket rang  
To many a flute of Arceady.

## XXIV.

AND was the day of my delight  
As pure and perfect as I say?  
The very source and fount of Day  
Is dash'd with wandering isles of night.

If all was good and fair we met,  
This earth had been the Paradise  
It never look'd to human eyes  
Since Adam left his garden yet.

And is it that the haze of grief  
Makes former gladness loom so  
great?

To lowness of the present state,  
That sets the past in this relief?

Or that the past will always win  
A glory from its being far;  
And orb into the perfect star

We saw not, when we moved therein?

## XXV.

I KNOW that this was Life, the track  
Whereon with equal feet we fared;  
And then, as now, the day prepared  
The daily burden for the back.

But this it was that made me move  
As light as carrier-birds in air;

I loved the weight I had to bear,  
Because it needed help of Love:

Nor could I weary, heart or limb,  
When mighty Love would cleave in  
twain

The lading of a single pain,  
And part it, giving half to him.

## XXVI.

STILL onwards winds the dreary way ;  
I with it ; for I long to prove  
No lapse of moons can canker Love,  
Whatever fickle tongues may say.

And if that eye which watches guilt  
And goodness, and had power to see  
Within the green the moulder'd tree,  
And towers fall'n as soon as built—

Of, if indeed that eye foresee  
Or see (in Him is no before)  
In more of life true life no more  
And Love the indifference to be,

Then might I find, ere yet the morn  
Breaks hither over Indian seas,  
That Shadow waiting with the keys,  
To shroud me from my proper scorn.

## XXVII.

I ENVY not in any moods  
The captive void of noble rage,  
The linnet born within the cage,  
That never knew the summer woods :

I envy not the beast that takes  
His license in the field of time,  
Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,  
To whom a conscience never wakes ;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,  
The heart that never plighted troth,  
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth ;  
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall ;  
I feel it, when I sorrow most ;  
'Tis better to have loved and lost  
Than never to have loved at all.

## XXVIII.

THE time draws near the birth of  
Christ :

The moon is hid ; the night is still ;  
The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,  
From far and near, on mead and  
moor,

Swell out and fall, as if a door  
Were shut between me and the sound :

Each voice four changes on the wind,  
That now dilate, and now decrease,  
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and  
peace,

Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.  
This year I slept and woke with pain,  
I almost wish'd no more to wake,

And that my hold on life would break  
Before I heard those bells again :

But they my troubled spirit rule,  
For they controll'd me when a boy ;  
They bring me sorrow touch'd with  
joy,

The merry merry bells of Yule.

## XXIX.

WITH such compelling cause to grieve  
As dally vexes household peace,

And chains regret to his decease,  
How dare we keep our Christmas-eve ;  
Which brings no more a welcome guest  
To enrich the threshold of the night

With shower'd largess of delight,  
In dance and song and game and jest.

Yet go, and while the holly boughs  
Entwine the cold baptismal font,  
Make one wreath more for Use and  
Wont,

That guard the portals of the house ;  
Old sisters of a day gone by,  
Gray nurses, loving nothing new ;

Why should they miss their early due  
Before their time ? They too will die.

## XXX.

WITH trembling fingers did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas  
hearth ;

A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,  
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall  
We gambol'd, making vain pretence  
Of gladness, with an awful sense  
Of one mute shadow watching all.

We paused, the winds were in the  
beech :

We heard them sweep the winter  
land ;

And in a circle hand-in-hand  
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang ;  
We sung, tho' every eye was dim,  
A merry song we sang with him  
Last year : impetuously we sang :

We ceased : a gentler feeling crept  
Upon us : surely rest is meet :  
" They rest," we said, " their sleep is  
sweet,"

And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range ;  
Once more we sang : " They do not  
die

Nor lose their mortal sympathy,  
Nor change to us, although they  
change ;

Rapt from the fickle and the frail  
With gather'd power, yet the same,  
Pierces the keen seraphic flame  
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,  
Draw forth the cheerful day from  
night :

O Father, touch the east, and light  
The light that shone when Hope was  
born.

## XXXI.

WHEN Lazarus left his charnel-cave,  
And home to Mary's house return'd,  
Was this demanded—if he yearn'd  
To hear her weeping by his grave ?

" Where wert thou, brother, those four  
days ?"

There lives no record of reply.

Which telling what it is to die  
 Had surely added praise to praise.  
 From every house the neighbors met,  
 The streets were fill'd with joyful  
 sound,  
 A solemn gladness even crown'd  
 The purple brows of Olivet.  
 Behold a man raised up by Christ !  
 The rest remaineth unreveal'd ;  
 He told it not ; or something seal'd  
 The lips of that Evangelist.

## XXXII.

HER eyes are homes of silent prayer,  
 Nor other thought her mind admits  
 But, he was dead, and there he sits,  
 And he that brought him back is there.  
 Then one deep love doth supersede  
 All other, when her ardent gaze  
 Roves from the living brother's face,  
 And rests upon the Life indeed.  
 All subtle thought, all curious fears,  
 Borne down by gladness so complete,  
 She bows, she bathes the Saviour's  
 feet  
 With costly spikenard and with tears.  
 Thrice blest whose lives are faithful  
 prayers,  
 Whose loves in higher love endure ;  
 What souls possess themselves so  
 pure,  
 Or is there blessedness like theirs ?

## XXXIII.

O THOU that after toil and storm  
 Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer  
 air,  
 Whose faith has centre everywhere,  
 Nor cares to fix itself to form,  
 Leave thou thy sister when she prays,  
 Her early Heaven, her happy views ;  
 Nor thou with shadow'd hint con-  
 fuse  
 A life that leads melodious days.  
 Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,  
 Her hands are quicker unto good :  
 Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood  
 To which she links a truth divine !  
 See thou, that countest reason ripe  
 In holding by the law within,  
 Thou fail not in a world of sin,  
 And ev'n for want of such a type.

## XXXIV.

My own dim life should teach me this,  
 That life shall live for evermore,  
 Else earth is darkness at the core,  
 And dust and ashes all that is ;  
 This round of green, this orb of flame,  
 Fantastic beauty ; such as lures  
 In some wild Poet, when he works  
 Without a conscience or an aim.  
 What then were God to such as I ?  
 'Twere hardly worth my while to  
 choose  
 Of things all mortal, or to use  
 A little patience ere I die ;

'Twere best at once to sink to peace,  
 Like birds the charming serpent  
 draws,  
 To drop head-foremost in the jaws  
 Of vacant darkness and to cease.

## XXXV.

YET if some voice that man could  
 trust  
 Should murmur from the narrow  
 house,  
 " The cheeks drop in ; the body  
 bows ;  
 Man dies ; nor is there hope in dust ; "  
 Might I not say ? " yet even here,  
 But for one hour, O Love, I strive  
 To keep so sweet a thing alive : "  
 But I should turn mine ears and hear  
 The moanings of the homeless sea,  
 The sound of streams that swift or  
 slow  
 Draw down Æonian hills, and sow  
 The dust of continents to be ;  
 And Love would answer with a sigh,  
 " The sound of that forgetful shore  
 Will change my sweetness more and  
 more,  
 Half-dead to know that I shall die."   
 O me, what profits it to put  
 An idle case ? If Death were seen  
 At first as Death, Love had not been,  
 Or been in narrowest working shut,  
 Mere fellowship of sluggish moods,  
 Or in his coarsest Satyr-shape  
 Had bruised the herb and crush'd  
 the grape,  
 And bask'd and batten'd in the woods.

## XXXVI.

TWO truths in manhood darkly join,  
 Deep-seated in our mystic frame,  
 We yield all blessing to the name  
 Of Him that made them current coin ;  
 For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers  
 Where truth in closest words shall  
 fail,  
 Where truth embodied in a tale  
 Shall enter in at lowly doors.  
 And so the Word had breath, and  
 wrought  
 With human hands the creed of  
 creeds  
 In loveliness of perfect deeds,  
 More strong than all poetic thought ;  
 Which he may read that binds the  
 sheaf,  
 Or builds the house, or digs the  
 grave,  
 And those wild eyes that watch the  
 wave  
 In roarings round the coral reef.

## XXXVII.

URANIA speaks with darken'd brow.  
 " Thou pratest here where thou art  
 least ;  
 This faith has many a purer priest,  
 And many an abler voice than thou.

Go down beside thy native rill,  
On thy Parnassus set thy feet,  
And hear thy laurel whisper sweet  
About the ledges of the hill."

And my Melpomene replies,  
A touch of shame upon her cheek ;  
" I am not worthy ev'n to speak  
Of thy prevailing mysteries ;  
For I am but an earthly Muse,  
And owning but a little art  
To lull with song an aching heart,  
And render human love his dues ;  
But brooding on the dear one dead,  
And all he said of things divine,  
(And dear to me as sacred wine,  
To dying lips is all he said),

I murmur'd, as I came along,  
Of comfort clasp'd in truth reveal'd ;  
And loiter'd in the master's field,  
And darken'd sanctities with song."

## XXXVIII.

With weary steps I loiter on,  
Tho' always under alter'd skies  
The purple from the distance dies,  
My prospect and horizon gone.

No joy the blowing season gives,  
The herald melodies of spring,  
But in the songs I love to sing  
A doubtful gleam of solace lives.

If any care for what is here  
Survive in spirits render'd free,  
Then are these songs I sing of thee  
Not all ungrateful to thine ear.

## XXXIX.

Old warder of these buried bones,  
And answering now my random  
stroke

With fruitful cloud and living  
smoke,

Dark yew, that graspest at the stones  
And dippest toward the dreamless  
head,

To thee too comes the golden hour  
When flower is feeling after flower ;  
But Sorrow fixt upon the dead,  
And darkening the dark graves of  
men,

What whisper'd from her lying lips?  
Thy gloom is kindled at the tips,  
And passes into gloom again.

## XL.

Could we forget the widow'd hour  
And look on Spirits breathed away,  
As on a maiden in the day  
When first she wears her orange-  
flower!

When crown'd with blessing she doth  
rise  
To take her latest leave of home,  
And hopes and light regrets that  
come

Make April of her tender eyes ;  
And doubtful joys the father move,  
And tears are on the mother's face,

As parting with a long embrace  
She enters other realms of love ;

Her office there to rear, to teach,  
Becoming as is meet and fit

A link among the days, to knit  
The generations each with each ;

And doubtless, unto thee is given  
A life that bears immortal fruit  
In such great offices as suit  
The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern !  
How often shall her old fireside  
Be cheer'd with tidings of the bride,  
How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have  
told,  
And bring her babe, and make her  
boast,

Till even those that miss'd her most,  
Shall count new things as dear as old :

But thou and I have shaken hands,  
Till growing winters lay me low ;  
My paths are in the fields I know,  
And thine in undiscover'd lands.

## XLI.

Thy spirit ere our fatal loss  
Did ever rise from high to higher ;  
As mounts the heavenward altar  
fire,

As flies the lighter thro' the gross.

But thou art turn'd to something  
strange,

And I have lost the links that bound  
Thy changes, here upon the ground,  
No more partaker of thy change.

Deep folly! yet that this could be —  
That I could wing my will with  
might

To leap the grades of life and light,  
And flash at once, my friend, to thee :

For tho' my nature rarely yields  
To that vague fear implied in death ;  
Nor shudders at the gulfs beneath,  
The howlings from forgotten fields ;

Yet oft when sundown skirts the moor  
An inner trouble I behold,  
A spectral doubt which makes me  
cold,

That I shall be thy mate no more,

Tho' following with an upward mind  
The wonders that have come to thee,  
Thro' all the secular to-be,  
But evermore a life behind.

## XLII.

I VEX my heart with fancies dim :  
He still outstrip me in the race ;  
It was but unity of place  
That made me dream I rank'd with  
him.

And so may Place retain us still,  
And he the much-beloved again,  
A lord of large experience, train  
To ripper growth the mind and will ;

And what delights can equal those  
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,  
When one that loves but knows not,  
reaps  
A truth from one that loves and  
knows?

## XLIII.

If Sleep and Death be truly one,  
And every spirit's folded bloom  
Thro' all its interval gloom  
In some lone trance should slumber on;  
Unconscious of the sliding hour,  
Bare of the body, might it last,  
And silent traces of the past  
Be all the color of the flower:  
So then were nothing lost to man,  
So that still garden of the souls  
In many a figured leaf enrolls  
The total world since life began;  
And love will last as pure and whole  
As when he loved me here in Time,  
And at the spiritual prime  
Rewaken with the dawning soul.

## XLIV.

How fares it with the happy dead?  
For here the man is more and more;  
But he forgets the days before  
God shut the doorways of his head.  
The days have vanish'd, tone and tint,  
And yet perhaps the hoarding sense  
Gives out at times (he knows not  
whence)  
A little flash, a mystic hint;  
And in the long harmonious years  
(If Death so taste Lethæan springs)  
May some dim touch of earthly things  
Surprise the ranging with thy peers.  
If such a dreamy touch should fall,  
O turn thee round, resolve the doubt;  
My guardian angel will speak out  
In that high place, and tell thee all.

## XLV.

THE baby new to earth and sky,  
What time his tender palm is prest  
Against the circle of the breast,  
Has never thought that "this is I."  
But as he grows he gathers much,  
And learns the muse of "I" and "me,"  
And finds "I am not what I see,  
And other than the things I touch."

So rounds he to a separate mind  
From whence clear memory may begin,  
As thro' the frame that binds him in  
His isolation grows defined.

This use may lie in blood and breath,  
Which else were fruitless of their due,  
Had man to learn himself a new  
Beyond the second birth of Death

## XLVI.

WE ranging down this lower track,  
The path we came by, thorn and  
flower,

Is shadow'd by the growing hour;  
Lest life should fail in looking back.  
So be it: there no shade can last  
In that deep dawn behind the tomb.  
But clear from marge to marge shall  
bloom  
The eternal landscape of the past;  
A lifelong tract of time reveal'd;  
The fruitful hours of still increase;  
Days order'd in a wealthy peace,  
And those five years its richest field.  
O love, thy province were not large,  
A bounded field, nor stretching far;  
Look also, Love, a brooding star,  
A rosy warmth from marge to marge.

## XLVII.

THAT each, who seems a separate  
whole,  
Should move his rounds, and fusing  
all  
The skirts of self again, should fall  
Remerging in the general Soul,  
Is faith as vague as all unsweet:  
Eternal form shall still divide  
The eternal soul from all beside;  
And I shall know him when we meet:

And we shall sit at endless feast,  
Enjoying each the other's good:  
What vaster dream can hit the mood  
Of Love on earth? He seeks at least  
Upon the last and sharpest height,  
Before the spirits fade away,  
Some landing place, to clasp and say,  
"Farewell! We lose ourselves in light."

## XLVIII.

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,  
Were taken to be such as closed  
Grave doubts and answers here pro-  
posed,  
Then these were such as men might  
scorn:

Her care is not to part and prove;  
She takes, when harsher moods remit,  
What slender shade of doubt may lit,  
And makes it vassal unto love:  
And hence, indeed, she sports with  
words,  
But better serves a wholesome law,  
And holds it sin and shame to draw  
The deepest measure from the chords:  
Nor dare she trust a larger lay,  
But rather loosens from the lip  
Short swallow-flights of song, that  
dip  
Their wings in tears, and skim away.

## XLIX.

FROM art, from nature, from the  
schools,  
Let random influences glance,  
Like light in many a shiver'd lance  
That breaks about the dappled pools:  
The lightest wave of thought shall lisp,  
The fancy's tenderest eddy wreath,

The slightest air of song shall breathe  
To make the sullen surface crisp.

And look thy look, and go thy way,  
But blame not thou the winds that  
make

The seeming-wanton ripple break,  
The tender-pencil'd shadow play.

Beneath all fancied hopes and fears  
Ay me, the sorrow deepens down,  
Whose muffled motions blindly drown  
The bases of my life in tears.

## L.

BE near me when my light is low,  
When the blood creeps, and the  
nerves prick  
And tingle; and the heart is sick,  
And all the wheels of Being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame  
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer  
trust;  
And Time, a maniac scattering dust,  
And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,  
And men the flies of latter spring,  
That lay their eggs, and sting and  
sing,  
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,  
To point the term of human strife,  
And on the low dark verge of life  
The twilight of eternal day.

## Ll.

Do we indeed desire the dead  
Should still be near us at our side?  
Is there no baseness we would hide?  
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,  
I had such reverence for his blame,  
See with clear eye some hidden shame  
And I be lessen'd in his love?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue:  
Shall love be blamed for want of  
faith?

There must be wisdom with great  
Death:

The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall:  
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours  
With larger other eyes than ours,  
To make allowance for us all.

## LII.

I CANNOT love thee as I ought,  
For love reflects the things beloved;  
My words are only words, and moved  
Upon the topmost froth of thought.

"Yet blame not thou thy plaintive  
song."

The spirit of true love replied:  
"Thou canst not move me from thy  
side,

Nor human frailty do me wrong.

"What keeps a spirit wholly true  
To that ideal which he bears?

What record? not the sinless years  
That breathes beneath the Syrian blue:

"So fret not, like an idle girl,  
That life is dash'd with flecks of sin.  
Abide: thy wealth is gather'd in,  
When Time hath sunder'd shell from  
pearl."

## LIII.

How many a father have I seen,  
A sober man, among his boys,  
Whose youth was full of foolish noise,  
Who wears his manhood hale and green:

And dare we to this fancy give,  
That had the wild oat not been sown,  
The soil, left barren, scarce had  
grown

The grain by which a man may live?

Oh, if we held the doctrine sound  
For life outliving heats of youth,  
Yet who would preach it as a truth  
To those that eddy round and round?

Hold thou thy good: define it well:  
For fear divine Philosophy  
Should push beyond her mark, and  
be  
Procress to the Lords of Hell.

## LIV.

OH yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;  
That no one life shall be destroy'd,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void.  
When God hath made the pile com-  
plete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;  
That not a moth with vain desire  
Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,  
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything:  
I can but trust that good shall fall  
At last—far off—at last, to all,  
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?  
An infant crying in the night:  
An infant crying for the light:  
And with no language but a cry.

## LV.

THE wish, that of the living whole  
No life may fail beyond the grave,  
Derives it not from what we have  
The likeliest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,  
That Nature lends such evil dreams?  
So careful of the type she seems,  
So careless of the single life;

That I, considering everywhere  
Her secret meaning in her deeds,  
And finding that of fifty seeds  
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,  
And falling with my weight of care

Upon the great world's altar-stairs  
That slope thro' darkness up to God,  
I stretch lame hands of faith, and  
grope,  
And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope.

## LVI.

"So careful of the type?" but no.  
From scarp'd cliff and quarried  
stone  
She cries "a thousand types are  
gone :

I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me :  
I bring to life, I bring to death :  
The spirit does but mean the breath :  
I know no more." And he, shall he,  
Man, her last work, who seem'd so  
fair,

Such splendid purpose in his eyes,  
Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,  
Who built him fanes of fruitless  
prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed  
And love Creation's final law—  
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw  
With ravine, shriek'd against his  
creed—

Who loved, who suffer'd countless  
ills.

Who battled for the True, the Just,  
Be blown about the desert dust,  
Or seal'd within the iron hills ?

No more? A monster then, a dream,  
A discord. Dragons of the prime,  
That tear each other in their slime,  
Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail !  
O for thy voice to soothe and bless !  
What hope of answer, or redress ?  
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

## LVII.

PEACE ; come away : the song of woe  
Is after all an earthly song :

Peace ; come away : we do him  
wrong  
To sing so wildly : let us go.

Come let us go : your cheeks are pale ;  
But half my life I leave behind :  
Methinks my friend is richly shrin-  
ed ;

But I shall pass, my work will fail.  
Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,  
One set slow bell will seem to toll  
The passing of the sweetest soul  
That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,  
Eternal greetings to the dead,  
And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,  
"Adieu, adieu," for evermore.

## LVIII.

In those sad words I took farewell :  
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,

As drop by drop the water falls  
In vaults and catacombs, they fell ;  
And, falling, idly broke the peace  
Of hearts that beat from day to day,  
Half-conscious of their dying clay,  
And those cold crypts where they shall  
cease.

The high Muse answer'd : "Where-  
fore grieve  
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear ?  
Abide a little longer here,  
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

## LIX.

O SORROW, wilt thou live with me,  
No casual mistress, but a wife,  
My bosom-friend and half of life ;  
As I confess it needs must be ;

O Sorrow, wilt thou rule my blood,  
Be sometimes lovely like a bride,  
And put thy harsher moods aside,  
If thou wilt have me wise and good.

My centred passion cannot move,  
Nor will it lessen from to-day ;  
But I'll have leave at times to play  
As with the creature of my love ;  
And set thee forth, for thou art mine,  
With so much hope for years to  
come,  
That, howsoever I know thee, some  
Could hardly tell what name were  
thine.

## LX.

HE past : a soul of nobler tone :  
My spirit loved and loves him yet,  
Like some poor girl whose heart is  
set

On one whose rank exceeds her own.  
He mixing with his proper sphere,  
She finds the baseness of her lot,  
Half jealous of she knows not what,  
And envying all that meet him there  
The little village looks forlorn ;  
She sighs amid her narrow days,  
Moving about the household ways,  
In that dark house where she was  
born.

The foolish neighbors come and go,  
And tease her till the day draws by :  
At night she weeps, "How vain am  
I !  
How should he love a thing so low ?"

## LXI.

IF, in thy second state sublime,  
Thy ransom'd reason change replies  
With all the circle of the wise,  
The perfect flower of human time ;  
And if thou cast thine eyes below,  
How dimly character'd and slight,  
How dwarf'd a growth of cold and  
night,  
How blanch'd with darkness must I  
grow !

Yet turn to the doubtful shore,  
Where thy first form was made a  
man ;

I loved thee, Spirit and love, nor  
can  
The soul of Shakespeare love thee  
more.

## LXII.

Tho' if an eye that's downward cast  
Could make thee somewhat blench  
or fall,

Then be my love an idle tale,  
And fading legend of the past ;  
And thou, as one that once declined,  
When he was little more than boy,  
On some unworthy heart with joy,  
But lives to wed an equal mind ;  
And breathes a novel world, the while  
His other passion wholly dies,  
Or in the light of deeper eyes  
Is matter for a flying smile.

## LXIII.

YET pity for a horse o'er-driven,  
And love in which my hound has  
part,

Can hang no weight upon my heart  
In its assumptions up to heaven ;  
And I am so much more than these,  
As thou, perchance art more than I,  
And yet I spare them sympathy  
And I would set their pains at ease.

So may'st thou watch me where I  
weep,  
As, unto vaster motions bound,  
The circuits of thine orbit round  
A higher height, a deeper deep.

## LXIV.

Dost thou look back on what hath  
been,

As some divinely gifted man,  
Whose life in low estate began  
And on a simple village green ;  
Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,  
And grasps the skirts of happy  
chance,

And breaths the blows of circum-  
stance,  
And grapples with his evil star ;

Who makes by force his merit known  
And lives to clutch the golden keys,  
To mould a mighty state's decrees,  
And shape the whisper of the throne ;  
And moving up from high to higher,  
Becomes on Fortune's crowning  
slope

The pillar of a people's hope,  
The centre of a world's desire ;  
Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,  
When all his active powers are still,  
A distant dearness in the hill,  
A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,  
While yet beside its vocal springs  
He play'd at counsellors and kings,  
With one that was his earliest mate ;  
Who ploughs with pain his native lea  
And reaps the labor of his hands,

Or in the furrow musing stands :  
" Does my old friend remember me ? "

## LXV.

SWEET soul, do with me as thou wilt ;  
I lull a fancy trouble-tost  
With " Love's too precious to be  
lost,  
A little grain shall not be spilt."

And in that solace can I sing,  
Till out of painful phases wrought  
There flutters up a happy thought,  
Self-balanced on a lightsome wing :

Since we deserved the name of friends,  
And thine effect so lives in me,  
A part of mine may live in thee  
And move thee on to noble ends.

## LXVI.

You thought my heart too far dis-  
eased :

You wonder when my fancies play  
To find me gay among the gay,  
Like one with any trifle pleased.

The shade by which my life was crost  
Which makes a desert in the mind,  
Has made me kindly with my kind,  
And like to him whose sight is lost ;

Whose feet are guided thro' the land,  
Whose jest among his friends is free  
Who takes the children on his knee,  
And winds their curls about his hand :

He plays with threads, he beats his  
chair

For pastime, dreaming of the sky ;  
His inner day can never die,  
His night of loss is always there.

## LXVII.

WHEN on my bed the moonlight falls,  
I know that in thy place of rest,  
By that broad water of the west,  
There comes a glory on the walls :

Thy marble bright in dark appears,  
As slowly steals a silver flame  
Along the letters of thy name,  
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away ;  
From off my bed the moonlight dies ;  
And closing eaves of wearied eyes  
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray :

And then I know the mist is drawn  
A lucid veil from coast to coast,  
And in the dark church like a ghost  
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

## LXVIII.

WHEN in the down I sink my head,  
Sleep, Death's twin-brother, times  
my breath ;

Sleep, Death's twin-brother, knows  
not Death,  
Nor can I dream of thee as dead :

I walk as ere I walk'd forlorn,  
When all our path was fresh with  
dew,

And all the bugle breezes blew  
Reveillee to the breaking morn.

But what is this ? I turn about,  
I find a trouble in thine eye,  
Which makes me sad I know not  
why,  
Nor can my dream resolve the doubt :  
But ere the lark hath left the lea  
I wake, and I discern the truth ;  
It is the trouble of my youth  
That foolish sleep transfers to thee.

## LXIX.

I DREAM'd there would be Spring no  
more,  
That Nature's ancient power was  
lost :  
The streets were black with smoke  
and frost,  
They chatter'd trifles at the door  
I wander'd from the noisy town,  
I found a wood with thorny boughs :  
I took the thorns to bind my brows,  
I wore them like a civic crown :  
I met with scoffs, I met with scorns  
From youth and babe and hoary  
hairs :  
They call'd me in the public squares  
The fool that wears a crown of thorns :  
They call'd me fool, they call'd me  
child :  
I found an angel of the night :  
The voice was low, the look was  
bright ;  
He look'd upon my crown and smiled :  
He reach'd the glory of a hand,  
That seem'd to touch it into leaf :  
The voice was not the voice of grief,  
The words were hard to understand.

## LXX.

I CANNOT see the features right,  
When on the gloom I strive to paint  
The face I know ; the hues are faint  
And mix with hollow masks of night ;  
Cloud-towers by ghostly masons  
wrought,  
A gulf that ever shuts and gapes,  
A hand that points, and palled shapes  
In shadowy thoroughfares of thought ;  
And crowds that stream from yawning-  
doors,  
And shoals of pucker'd faces drive ;  
Dark bulks that tumble half alive,  
And lazy lengths on boundless shores ;  
Till all at once beyond the will  
I hear a wizard music roll,  
And thro' a lattice on the soul  
Looks thy fair face and makes it still.

## LXXI.

SLEEP, kinsman thou to death and  
trance  
And madness, thou hast forged at  
last  
A night-long Present of the Past

In which we went thro' summer  
France.

Hadst thou such credit with the soul ?  
Then bring an opiate trebly strong,  
Drug down the blindfold sense of  
wrong  
That so my pleasure may be whole ;  
While now we talk as once we talk'd  
Of men and minds, the dust of  
change,  
The days that grow to something  
strange,  
In walking as of old we walk'd  
Beside the river's wooded reach,  
The fortress, and the mountain ridge,  
The cataract flashing from the bridge,  
The breaker breaking on the beach.

## LXXII.

RISEST thou thus, dim dawn, again,  
And howlest, issuing out of night,  
With blasts that blow the poplar  
white,  
And lash with storm the streaming  
pane ?

Day when my crown'd estate begun  
To pine in that reverse of doom,  
Which sicken'd every living bloom,  
And blurr'd the splendor of the sun ;  
Who usherest in the dolorous hour  
With thy quick tears that make the  
rose  
Pull sideways, and the daisy close  
Her crimson fringes to the shower ;  
Who might'st have heaved a windless  
flame  
Up the deep East, or, whispering,  
play'd  
A chequer-work of beam and shade  
Along the hills, yet look'd the same,  
As wan, as chill, as wild as now :  
Day mark'd as with some hideous  
crime,  
When the dark hand struck down  
thro' time,  
And cancell'd nature's best : but thou,  
Lift as thou may'st thy butthen'd  
brows  
Thro' clouds that drench the morning  
star,  
And whirl the ungarner'd sheaf afar,  
And sow the sky with flying boughs,  
And up thy vault with roaring sound  
Climb thy thick noon, disastrous day ;  
Touch thy dull goal of joyless gray,  
And hide thy shame beneath the  
ground.

## LXXIII.

So many worlds, so much to do,  
So little done, such things to be,  
How know I what had need of thee,  
For thou wert strong as thou wert  
true ?

The fame is quench'd that I foresaw,  
The head hath miss'd an earthly  
wreath :

I curse not nature, no, nor death ;  
For nothing is that errs from law.

We pass : the path that each man trod  
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds :  
What fame is left for human deeds  
In endless age ? It rests with God.

O hollow wrath of dying fame,  
Fade wholly, while the soul exults,  
And self-unfolds the large results  
Of force that would have forged a name.

## LXXIV.

As sometimes in a dead man's face,  
To those that watch it more and more,  
A likeness, hardly seen before,  
Comes out—to some one of his race :

So dearest, now thy brows are cold,  
I see thee what thou art, and know  
Thy likeness to the wise below.  
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,  
And what I see I leave unsaid,  
Nor speak it, knowing Death has  
made  
His darkness beautiful with thee.

## LXXV.

I LEAVE thy praises unexpress'd  
In verse that brings myself relief,  
And by the measure of my grief  
I leave thy greatness to be guess'd ;

What practice howso'er expert  
In fitting aptest words to things,  
Or voice the richest-toned that sings,  
Hath power to give thee as thou wert ?

I care not in these fading days  
To raise a cry that lasts not long,  
And round thee with the breeze of  
song  
To stir a little dust of praise.

Thy leaf has perish'd in the green,  
And, while we breathe beneath the  
sun,  
The world which credits what is done  
Is cold to all that might have been.

So here shall silence guard thy fame ;  
But somewhere, out of human view,  
Whate'er thy hands are set to do  
Is wrought with tumult of acclaim.

## LXXVI.

TAKE wings of fancy, and ascend,  
And in a moment set thy face  
Where all the starry heavens of  
space  
Are sharpen'd to a needle's end ;

Take wings of foresight ; lighten thro'  
The secular abyss to come,  
And lo, thy deepest lays are dumb  
Before the mouldering of a yew ;

And if the matin songs, that woke  
The darkness of our planet, last,  
Thine own shall wither in the vast,  
Ere half the lifetime of an oak.

Ere these have clothed their branchy  
bowers

With fifty Mays, thy songs are vain;  
And what are they when these  
remain  
The ruin'd shells of hollow towers ?

## LXXVII.

WHAT hope is here for modern rhyme  
To him, who turns a musing eye  
On songs, and deeds, and lives, that  
lie

Foreshorten'd in the tract of time ?  
These mortal lullabies of pain  
May bind a book, may line a box,  
May serve to curl a maiden's locks ;  
Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,  
And passing, turn the page that tells  
A grief, then changed to something  
else,  
Sung by a long forgotten mind.

But what of that ? My darken'd ways  
Shall ring with music all the same :  
To breathe my loss is more than  
fame,  
To utter love more sweet than praise.

## LXXVIII.

AGAIN at Christmas did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas  
hearth ;

The silent snow possess'd the earth,  
And calmly fell our Christmas-eye ;  
The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,  
No wing of wind the region swept,  
But over all things brooding slept  
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,  
Again our ancient games had place,  
The mimic picture's breathing grace,  
And dance and song and hoodman-  
blind.

Who show'd a token of distress ?  
No single tear, no mark of pain :  
O sorrow, then can sorrow wane ?  
O grief, can grief be changed to less ?

O last regret, regret can die !  
No—mix with all this mystic frame,  
Her deep relations are the same,  
But with long use her tears are dry.

## LXXIX.

"MORE than my brothers are to me"—  
Let this not vex thee, noble heart !  
I know thee of what force thou art  
To hold the costliest love in fee.

But thou and I are one in kind,  
As moulded like in nature's mint,  
And hill and wood and field did print  
The same sweet forms in either mind.

For us the same cold streamlet curl'd  
Thro' all his eddying coves ; the  
same  
All winds that roam the twilight  
came

In whispers of the beauteous world.

At one dear knee we proffer'd vows,  
One lesson from one book we learn'd,  
Ere childhood's flaxen ringlet turn'd  
To black and brown on kindred brows.

And so my wealth resembles thine,  
But he was rich where I was poor,  
And he supplied my want the more  
As his unlikeness fitted mine.

## LXXX.

If any vague desire should rise,  
That holy Death ere Arthur died  
Had moved me kindly from his side,  
And dropt the dust on tearless eyes ;  
Then fancy shapes, as fancy can,  
The grief my loss in him had  
wrought,  
A grief as deep as life or thought,  
But stay'd in peace with God and man.  
I make a picture in the brain ;  
I hear the sentence that he speaks ;  
He bears the burden of the weeks ;  
But turns his burden into gain.

His credit thus shall set me free ;  
And, influence-rich to soothe and  
save,  
Unused example from the grave  
Reach out dead hands to comfort me.

## LXXXI.

COULD I have said while he was here  
" My love shall now no further range ;  
There cannot come a mellow  
change,  
For now is love mature in ear."  
Love, then, had hope of richer store ;  
What end is here to my complaint ?  
This haunting whisper makes me  
faint,  
" More years had made me love thee  
more."

But Death returns an answer sweet :  
" My sudden frost was sudden gain,  
And gave all ripeness to the grain,  
It might have drawn from after-heat."

## LXXXII.

I WAGE not any feud with Death  
For changes wrought on form and  
face ;  
No lower life that earth's embrace  
May breed with him, can fright my  
faith.

Eternal process moving on,  
From state to state the spirit walks :  
And these are but the shatter'd  
stalks,  
Or ruin'd chrysalis of one.

Nor blame I Death, because he bare  
The use of virtue out of earth :  
I know transplanted human worth  
Will bloom to profit, elsewhere.

For this alone on Death I wreak  
The wrath that garners in my heart ;  
He put our lives so far apart  
We cannot hear each other speak.

## LXXXIII.

DIP down upon the northern shore,  
O sweet new-year delaying long ;  
Thou doest expectant nature wrong ;  
Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded  
noons,  
Thy sweetness from its proper place ?  
Can trouble live with April days,  
Or sadness in the summer moons ?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,  
The little speedwell's darling blue,  
Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,  
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.  
O thou, new-year, delaying long,  
Delayest the sorrow in my blood,  
That longs to burst a frozen bud,  
And flood a fresher throat with song.

## LXXXIV.

WHEN I contemplate all alone  
The life that had been thine below,  
And fix my thoughts on all the glow  
To which thy crescent would have  
grown ;

I see thee sitting crown'd with good,  
A central warmth diffusing bliss  
In glance and smile, and clasp and  
kiss,

On all the branches of thy blood ;  
Thy blood, my friend, and partly mine ;  
For now the day was drawing on,  
When thou should'st link thy life  
with one

Of mine own house, and boys of thine  
Had babbled " Uncle " on my knee ;  
But that remorseless iron hour  
Made cypress of her orange flower,  
Despair of Hope, and earth of thee.

I seem to meet their least desire,  
To clap their cheeks, to call them  
mine.

I see their unborn faces shine  
Beside the never-lighted fire.

I see myself an honour'd guest,  
Thy partner in the flowery walk  
Of letters, genial table-talk,  
Or deep dispute, and graceful jest ;

While now thy prosperous labor fills  
The lips of men with honest praise,  
And sun by sun the happy days  
Descend below the golden hills

With promise of a morn as fair ;  
And all the train of bounteous hours  
Conduct by paths of glowing powers  
To reverence and the silver hair ;

Till slowly worn her earthly robe,  
Her lavish mission richly wrought,  
Leaving great legacies of thought,  
Thy spirit should fall from off the  
globe ;

What time mine own might also flee,  
As link'd with thine in love and fate,  
And, hovering o'er the dolorous  
strait

To the other shore, involved in thee,

Arrive at last the blessed goal,  
And He that died in Holy Land  
Would reach us out the shining hand,  
And take us as a single soul.

What reed was that on which I leant?  
A backward fancy, wherefore wake  
The old bitterness again, and break  
The low beginnings of content.

LXXXV.

This truth came borne with bier and  
pall,

I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,  
'Tis better to have loved and lost,  
That never to have loved at all—

O true in word, and tried in deed,  
Demanding, so to bring relief  
To this which is our common grief,  
What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether trust in things above  
Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd;  
And whether love for him have  
drain'd

My capabilities of love;

Your words have virtue such as draws  
A faithful answer from the breast,  
Thro' light reproaches, half exprest,  
And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,  
Till on mine ear this message falls,  
That in Vienna's fatal walls  
God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair  
That great above our mortal state,  
In circle round the blessed gate,  
Received and gave him welcome there;

And led him thro' the blissful climes,  
And show'd him in the fountain  
fresh

All knowledge that the sons of flesh  
Shall gather in the cycled times.

But I remain'd whose hopes were dim,  
Whose life, whose thoughts were  
little worth,  
To wander on a darken'd earth,  
Where all things round me breathed  
of him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,  
O heart, with kindest motion warm,  
O sacred essence, other form,  
O solemn ghost, O crowned soul!

Yet none could better know than I,  
How much of act at human hands  
The sense of human will demands  
By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,  
I felt and feel, tho' left alone,  
His being working in mine own,  
The footsteps of his life in mine;

A life that all the Muses deck'd  
With gifts of grace, that might ex-  
press

All comprehensive tenderness,  
All-subtilizing intellect:

And so my passion hath not swerved  
To works of weakness, but I find

An image comforting the mind,  
And in my grief a strength reserved,  
Likewise the imaginative woe,  
That loved to handle spiritual strife,  
Diffused the shock thro' all my life,  
But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again  
For other friends that once I met;  
Nor can it sult me to forget  
The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love: I count it crime  
To mourn for any overmuch;  
I, the divided half of such  
A friendship as had master'd Time;  
Which masters Time indeed, and is  
Eternal, separate from fears:  
The all-assuming months and years  
Can take no part away from this:

But Summer on the steaming floods,  
And Spring that swells the narrow  
brooks,

And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,  
That gather in the waning woods,  
And every pulse of wind and wave  
Recalls, in change of light or gloom,  
My old affection of the tomb,  
And my prime passion in the grave:

My old affection of the tomb,  
A part of stillness, years to speak:  
"Arise, and get thee forth and seek  
A friendship for the years to come.

I watch thee from the quiet shore:  
Thy spirit up to mine can reach;  
But in dear words of human speech  
We two communicate no more."

And I, "Can clouds of nature stain  
The starry clearness of the free?  
How is it? Canst thou feel for me  
Some painless sympathy with pain?"

And lightly does the whisper fall;  
'Tis hard for thee to fathom this;  
I triumph in conclusive bliss,  
And that serene result of all."

So hold I commerce with the dead;  
Or so methinks the dead would say;  
Or so shall grief with symbols play,  
And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,  
That these things pass, and I shall  
prove

A meeting somewhere, love with  
love,

I crave your pardon, O my friend;  
If not so fresh, with love as true,  
I, clasping brother-hands, aver  
I could not, if I would, transfer  
The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart  
The promise of the golden hours?  
First love, first friendship, equal  
powers,

That marry with the virgin heart.  
Still mine, that cannot but deplore,  
That beats within a lonely place,

That yet remembers his embrace,  
 But at his footstep leaps no more,  
 My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest  
 Quite in the love of what is gone,  
 But seeks to beat in time with one  
 That warms another living breast.  
 Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,  
 Knowing the primrose yet is dear,  
 The primrose of the later year,  
 As not unlike to that of Spring.

## LXXXVI.

SWEET after showers, ambrosial air,  
 That rollest from the gorgeous  
 gloom  
 Of evening over brake and bloom  
 And meadow, slowly breathing bare  
 The round of space, and rapt below  
 Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd wood,  
 And shadowing down the horned  
 flood  
 In ripples, fan my brows and blow  
 The fever from my cheek, and sigh  
 The full new life that feeds thy  
 breath  
 Throughout my frame, till Doubt  
 and Death,  
 Ill brethren, let the fancy fly  
 From belt to belt of crimson seas  
 On leagues of odor streaming far,  
 To where in yonder orient star  
 A hundred spirits whisper "Peace."

## LXXXVII.

I PAST beside the reverend walls  
 In which of old I wore the gown ;  
 I roved at random thro' the town,  
 And saw the tumult of the halls ;  
 And heard once more in college fames  
 The storm their high-built organs  
 make,  
 And thunder-music, rolling, shake  
 The prophets blazon'd on the panes ;  
 And caught once more the distant  
 shout,  
 The measured pulse of racing oars  
 Among the willows ; paced the shores  
 And many a bridge, and all about  
 The same gray flats again, and felt  
 The same, but not the same ; and  
 last  
 Up that long walk of limes I past  
 To see the rooms in which he dwelt.  
 Another name was on the door :  
 I linger'd ; all within was noise  
 Of song, and clapping hands, and  
 boys  
 That crash'd the glass and beat the  
 floor ;  
 Where once we held debate, a band  
 Of youthful friends, on mind and  
 art ;  
 And labor, and the changing mart,  
 And all the framework of the land ;  
 When one would aim an arrow fair,  
 But send it slackly from the string ;

And one would pierce an outer ring  
 And one an inner, here and there ;

And last the master-bowman, he,  
 Would cleave the mark. A willing  
 ear

We lent him. Who, but hung to  
 hear

The rapt oration flowing free  
 From point to point, with power and  
 grace

And music in the bounds of law,  
 To those conclusions when we saw  
 The God within him light his face.

And seem to lift the form, and glow  
 In azure orbits heavenly-wise ;  
 And over those ethereal eyes  
 The bar of Michael Angelo.

## LXXXVIII.

WILD bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,  
 Rings Eden thro' the budded quicks,  
 O tell me where the senses mix,  
 O tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate : fierce extremes en-  
 ploy

Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,  
 And in the midmost heart of grief  
 Thy passion clasps a secret joy :

And I — my harp would prelude woe,  
 I cannot all command the strings ;  
 The glory of the sun of things  
 Will flash along the chords and go

## LXXXIX.

WITCH-ELMS that counterchange the  
 floor  
 Of this flat lawn with dusk and  
 bright :

And thou, with all thy breadth and  
 height  
 Of foliage, towering sycamore ;

How often, hither wandering down,  
 My Arthur found your shadows fair,  
 And shook to all the liberal air  
 The dust and din and steam of town :

He brought an eye for all he saw ;  
 He mixt in all our simple sports ;  
 They pleased him, fresh from brawl-  
 ing courts

And dusty purlieus of the law.

O joy to him in this retreat,  
 Immantled in ambrosial dark,  
 To drink the cooler air, and mark  
 The landscape winking thro' the heat :

O sound to rout the brood of cares,  
 The sweep of scythe in morning dew,  
 The gust that round the garden flew,  
 And tumbled half the mellowing  
 pears !

O bliss, when all in circle drawn  
 About him, heart and ear were fed  
 To hear him, as he lay and read  
 The Tuscan poets on the lawn :

Or in the all-golden afternoon  
 A guest, or happy sister, sung,

Or here she brought the harp and  
flung  
A ballad to the brightening moon :  
Nor less it pleased in livelier moods,  
Beyond the bounding hill to stray,  
And break the livelong summer day  
With banquet in the distant woods ;  
Whereat we glanced from theme to  
theme,  
Discuss'd the books to love or hate,  
Or touch'd the changes of the state,  
Or threaded some Socratic dream ;  
But if I praised the busy town,  
He loved to rail against it still,  
For "ground in yonder social mill  
We rub each other's angles down,  
"And merge" he said, "in form and  
gloss  
The picturesque of man and man."  
We talk'd : the stream beneath us  
ran,  
The wine-flask lying couch'd in moss,  
Or cool'd within the glooming wave ;  
And last, returning from afar,  
Before the crimson-circled star  
Had fall'n into her father's grave,  
And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,  
We heard behind the woodbine veil  
The milk that bubbled in the pail,  
And buzzings of the honied hours.

## Xc.

HE tasted love with half his mind,  
Nor ever drank the inviolate spring  
Where highest heaven, who first  
could fling  
This bitter seed among mankind ;  
That could the dead, whose dying eyes  
Were closed with wail, resume their  
life,  
They would but find in child and  
wife  
An iron welcome when they rise :  
'Twas well, indeed, when warm with  
wine,  
To pledge them with a kindly tear,  
To talk them o'er, to wish them here,  
To count their memories half divine ;  
But if they came who past away,  
Behold their brides in other lands ;  
The hard heir strides about their  
lands,  
And will not yield them for a day.  
Yea, tho' their sons were none of  
these,  
Not less the yet-loved sire would  
make  
Confusion worse than death, and  
shake  
The pillars of domestic peace.  
Ah dear but come thou back to me :  
Whatever change the years have  
wrought,  
I find not yet one lonely thought  
That cries against my wish for thee.

## XCI.

WHEN rosy plumelets tuft the larch,  
And rarely pipes the mounted  
thrush ;  
Or underneath the barren bush  
Flits by the sea blue bird of March ;  
Come, wear the form by which I know  
Thy spirit in time among thy peers,  
The hope of unaccomplish'd years  
Be large and lucid round thy brow.  
When summer's hourly-mellowing  
change  
May breathe, with many roses sweet,  
Upon the thousand waves of wheat,  
That ripple round the lonely grange ;  
Come : not in watches of the night,  
But when the sunbeam broodeth  
warm,  
Come, beauteous in thine after form,  
And like a finer light in light.

## XCII.

If any vision should reveal  
Thy likeness, I might count it vain  
As but the causer of the brain :  
Yea, tho' it spake and made appeal  
To chances where our lots were cast  
Together in the days behind,  
I might but say, I hear a wind  
Of memory murmuring the past.  
Yea, tho' it spake and bared to view  
A fact within the coming year ;  
And tho' the months, revolving near,  
Should prove the phantom-warning  
true,  
They might not seem thy prophecies,  
But spiritual presentiments,  
And such refraction of events  
As often rises ere they rise.

## XCIII.

I SHALL not see thee. Dare I say  
No spirit ever brake the band  
That stays him from the native land,  
Where first he walk'd when clasp'd in  
clay ?  
No visual shade of some one lost,  
But he, the Spirit himself, may  
come  
Where all the nerve of sense is  
numb ;  
Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost.  
O, therefore, from thy sightless range  
With gods in unconjectured bliss,  
O, from the distance of the abyss  
Of tenfold-complicated change,  
Descend, and touch, and enter ; hear  
The wish too strong for words to  
name ;  
That in this blindness of the frame  
My Ghost may feel that thine is near.  
XCIV.

How pure at heart and sound in head,  
With what divine affections bold

Should be the man whose thought  
would hold  
An hour's communion with the dead.  
In vain shalt thou, or any, call  
The spirits from their golden day,  
Except, like them, thou too canst  
say,  
My spirit is at peace with all.  
They haunt the silence of the breast,  
Imaginations calm and fair,  
The memory like a cloudless air,  
The conscience as a sea at rest :  
But when the heart is full of din,  
And doubt beside the portal waits,  
They can but listen at the gates,  
And hear the household jar within.

## xcv.

By night we linger'd on the lawn,  
For underfoot the herb was dry ;  
And genial warmth ; and o'er the  
sky  
The silvery haze of summer drawn ;  
And calm that let the tapers burn  
Unwavering : not a cricket chirr'd :  
The brook alone far-off was heard.  
And on the board the fluttering urn :  
And bats went round in fragrant skies,  
And wheel'd or lit the filmy shapes  
That haunt the dusk, with ermine  
capes  
And woolly breasts and beaded eyes ;  
While now we sang old songs that  
peal'd  
From knoll to knoll, where, couch'd  
at ease,  
The white kine glimmer'd, and the  
trees  
Laid their dark arms about the field.  
But when those others, one by one,  
Withdrew themselves from me and  
night,  
And in the house light after light  
Went out, and I was all alone,  
A hunger seized my heart ; I read  
Of that glad year which once had  
been,  
In those fall'n leaves which kept  
their green,  
The noble letters of the dead :  
And strangely on the silence broke  
The silent-speaking words, and  
strange  
Was love's dumb cry defying change  
To test his worth ; and strangely spoke  
The faith, the vigor, bold to dwell  
On doubts that drive the coward  
back,  
And keen thro' wordy snares to track  
Suggestion to her inmost cell.  
So word by word, and line by line,  
The dead man touch'd me from the  
past,  
And all at once it seem'd at last  
His living soul was flash'd on mine,

And mine in his was wound, and  
whirl'd  
About empyreal heights of thought,  
And came on that which is, and  
caught  
The deep pulsations of the world,  
Æonian music measuring out  
The steps of Time—the shocks of  
Chance—  
The blows of Death. At length my  
trance  
Was cancell'd, stricken thro' with  
doubt.

Vague words ! but ah, how hard to  
frame  
In matter-moulded forms of speech,  
Or ev'n for intellect to reach  
Thro' memory that which I became :  
Till now the doubtful dusk reveal'd  
The knolls once more where, couch'd  
at ease,  
The white kine glimmer'd, and the  
trees  
Laid their dark arms about the field :  
And suck'd from out the distant gloom  
A breeze began to tremble o'er  
The large leaves of the sycamore,  
And fluctuate all the still perfume,  
And gathering freshlier overhead,  
Rock'd the full-foliaged elms, and  
swung  
The heavy-folded rose, and flung  
The lilies to and fro, and said  
“The dawn, the dawn,” and died  
away ;  
And East and West, without a  
breath,  
Mixt their dim lights, like life and  
death,  
To broaden into boundless day.

## xcvi.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,  
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light blue  
eyes  
Are tender over drowning flies,  
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.  
I know not : one indeed I knew  
In many a subtle question versed,  
Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,  
But ever strove to make it true :  
Perplex'd in faith, but pure in deeds,  
At last he beat his music out,  
There lives more faith in honest  
doubt,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.  
He fought his doubts and gather'd  
strength,  
He would not make his judgment  
blind,  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them : thus he came at  
length  
To find a stronger faith his own ;  
And power was with him in the  
night,

Which makes the darkness and the  
light.  
And dwells not in the light alone,  
But in the darkness and the cloud,  
As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
While Israel made their gods of gold,  
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

## XCVII.

My love has talk'd with rocks and  
trees;  
He finds on misty mountain-ground  
His own vast shadow glory-crown'd;  
He sees himself in all he sees.  
Two partners of a married life—  
I look'd on these and thought of  
thee  
In vastness and in mystery,  
And of my spirit as of a wife.  
These two—they dwelt with eye on  
eye,  
Their hearts of old have beat in  
tune,  
Their meetings made December  
June,  
Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away;  
The days she never can forget  
Are earnest that he loves her yet,  
Whate'er the faithless people say.  
Her life is lone, he sits apart,  
He loves her yet, she will not weep,  
Tho' rapt in matters dark and deep  
He seems to slight her simple heart.  
He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,  
He reads the secret of the star,  
He seems so near and yet so far,  
He looks so cold: she thinks him kind.  
She keeps the gift of years before,  
A wither'd violet is her bliss;  
She knows not what his greatness is:  
For that, for all, she loves him more.  
For him she plays, to him she sings;  
Of early faith and plighted vows;  
She knows but matters of the house,  
And he, he knows a thousand things.  
Her faith is fixt and cannot move,  
She darkly feels him great and wise,  
She dwells on him with faithful  
eyes,  
"I cannot understand: I love."

## XCVIII.

You leave us: you will see the Rhine,  
And those fair hills I sail'd below,  
When I was there with him; and go  
By summer belts of wheat and vine  
To where he breathed his latest breath  
That City. All her splendor seems  
No livelier than the wisp that gleams  
On Lethe in the eyes of Death.  
Let her great Danube rolling fair  
Enwind her isles, unmark'd of me:  
I have not seen, I will not see  
Vienna; rather dream that there,

A treble darkness, Evil haunts  
The birth, the bridal; friend from  
friend  
Is oftener parted, fathers bend  
Above more graves, a thousand wants  
Gnarr at the heels of men, and prey  
By each cold hearth, and sadiers  
flings  
Her shadow on the blaze of kings:  
And yet myself have heard him say,  
That not in any mother town  
With statelier progress to and fro  
The double tides of chariots flow  
By park and suburb under brown  
Of lustier leaves: no more content,  
He told me, lives in any crowd,  
When all is gay with lamps, and loud  
With sport and song, in booth and  
tent,  
Imperial halls, or open plain;  
And wheels the circled dance, and  
breaks  
The rocket molten into flakes  
Of crimson or in emerald rain.

## XCIX.

RISEST thou thus, dim dawn, again,  
So loud with voices of the birds,  
So thick with loving of the herds,  
Day, when I lost the flower of men;  
Who tremblest thro' thy darkling red  
On yon swell'n brook that bubbles  
fast  
By meadows breathing of the past,  
And woodlands holy to the dead;  
Who murmurest in the foliaged eaves  
A song that slights the coming care,  
And Autumn laying here and there  
A fiery finger on the leaves;  
Who wakenest with thy balmy breath  
To myriads on the genial earth,  
Memories of bridal, or, of birth,  
And unto myriads more, of death.  
O wheresoever those may be,  
Betwixt the slumber of the poles,  
To-day they count as kindred souls;  
They know me not, but mourn with  
me.

## C.

I CLIMB the hill: from end to end  
Of all the landscape underneath,  
I find no place that does not breathe  
Some gracious memory of my friend;  
No gray old grange, or lonely fold,  
Or low morass and whispering reed,  
Or simple stile from mead to mead,  
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold;  
Nor hoary knoll of ash and haw  
That hears the latest linnet trill,  
Nor quarry trench'd along the hill,  
And haunted by the wrangling daw;  
Nor runlet tinkling from the rock;  
Nor pastoral rivulet that swerves

To left and right thro' meadowy  
curves,  
That feed the mothers of the flock ;  
But each has pleased a kindred eye,  
And each reflects a kindlier day ;  
And, leaving these, to pass away,  
I think once more he seems to di

## CI.

UNWATCH'D, the garden bough shall  
sway,  
The tender blossom flutter down,  
Unloved, that beech will gather  
brown,  
This maple burn itself away  
Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair,  
Ray round with flames her disk of  
seed,  
And many a rose-carnation feed  
With summer spice the humming air ;  
Unloved, by many a sandy bar,  
The brook shall babble down the  
plain,  
At noon or when the lesser wain  
Is twisting round the polar star ;  
Uncared for, gird the windy grove,  
And flood the haunts of fern and  
crake ;  
Or into silver arrows break  
The sailing moon in creek and cove ;  
Till from the garden and the wild  
A fresh association blow,  
And year by year the landscape grow  
Familiar to the stranger's child ;  
As year by year the laborer tills  
His wonted glebe, or lops the glades ;  
And year by year our memory fades  
From all the circle of the hills.

## CII.

We leave the well-beloved place  
Where first we gazed upon the sky ;  
The roofs, that heard our earliest  
cry,  
Will shelter one of stranger race.  
We go, but ere we go from home.  
As down the garden-walks I move,  
Two spirits of a diverse love  
Contend for loving masterdom.  
One whispers, here thy boyhood sung  
Long since its matin song, and heard  
The low love-language of the bird  
In native hazels tassel-hung.  
The other answers, " Yea, but here  
Thy feet have stray'd in after hours  
With thy lost friend among the  
bowers,  
And this bath made them trebly dear."  
These two have striven half the day,  
And each prefers his separate claim,  
Poor rivals in a losing game,  
That will not yield each other way.  
I turn to go ; my feet are set  
To leave the pleasant fields and  
farms ;

They mix in one another's arms  
To one pure image of regret.

## CIII.

ON that last night before we went  
From out the doors where I was  
bred,  
I dream'd a vision of the dead,  
Which left my after-morn content.  
Methought I dwelt within a hall,  
And maidens with me : distant hills  
From hidden summits fed with rills  
A river sliding by the wall.  
The hall with harp and carol rang.  
They sang of what is wise and good  
And graceful. In the centre stood  
A statue veil'd, to which they sang ;  
And which, tho' veil'd, was known to  
me,  
The shape of him I loved, and love  
For ever : then flew in a dove  
And brought a summons from the sea :  
And when they learnt that I must go  
They wept and wall'd, but led the  
way  
To where a little shallop lay  
At anchor in the flood below ;  
And on by many a level mead,  
And shadowing bluff that made the  
banks,  
We glided winding under ranks  
Of iris, and the golden reed ;  
And still as vaster grew the shore,  
And roll'd the floods in grander  
space,  
The maidens gather'd strength and  
grace  
And presence, lordlier than before ;  
And I myself, who sat apart  
And watch'd them, wax'd in every  
limb ;  
I felt the thews of Anakim,  
The pulses of a Titan's heart ;  
As one would sing the death of war,  
And one would chant the history  
Of that great race, which is to be,  
And one the shaping of a star ;  
Until the forward-creeping tides  
Began to foam, and we to draw  
From deep to deep, to where we saw  
A great ship lift her shining sides.  
The man we loved was there on deck,  
But thrice as large as man he bent  
To greet us. Up the side I went,  
And fell in silence on his neck :  
Whereat those maidens with one mind  
Bewail'd their lot ; I did them wrong :  
" We served thee here," they said,  
" so long,  
And wilt thou leave us now behind ?"  
So rapt I was, they could not win  
An answer from my lips, but he  
Replying " Enter likewise ye  
And go with us : " they enter'd in.

And while the wind began to sweep  
A music out of sheet and shroud,  
We steer'd her toward a crimson  
cloud  
That landlike slept along the deep.

## CIV.

THE time draws near the birth of  
Christ ;  
The moon is hid, the night is still ;  
A single church below the hill  
Is pealing, folded in the mist.  
A single peal of bells below,  
That wakens at this hour of rest  
A single murmur in the breast,  
That these are not the bells I know.  
Like stranger's voices here they sound,  
In lands where not a memory strays,  
Nor landmark breathes of other days,  
But all is new unhallow'd ground.

## CV.

TO-NIGHT ungather'd let us leave  
This laurel, let this holly stand :  
We live within the stranger's land,  
And strangely falls our Christmas eve.  
Our father's dust is left alone  
And silent under other snows :  
There in due time the wood-bine  
blows,  
The violet comes, but we are gone.  
No more shall wayward grief abuse  
The genial hour with mask and mime ;  
For chance of place, like growth of  
time,  
Has broke the bond of dying use.  
Let cares that petty shadows cast,  
By which our lives are chiefly proved,  
A little spare the night I loved,  
And hold it solemn to the past.  
But let no footsteps beat the floor,  
Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm ;  
For who would keep an ancient form  
Thro' which the spirit breathes no  
more ?  
Be neither song, nor game, nor feast ;  
Nor harp be touch'd, nor flute be  
blown ;  
No dance, no motion, save alone  
What lightens in the lucid east  
Of rising worlds by yonder wood.  
Long sleeps the summer in the seed ;  
Run out your measured ares, and  
lead  
The closing cycle rich in good.

## CVI.

RING out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light :  
The year is dying in the night :  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.  
Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow :  
The year is going, let him go ;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more ;  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife ;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer life.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times ;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite ;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

## CVII.

IT is the day when he was born,  
A bitter day that early sank  
Behind a purple-frosty bank  
Of vapor, leaving night forlorn.  
The time admits not flowers or leaves  
To deck the banquet. Fiercely flies  
The blast of North and East, and ice  
Makes daggers at the sharpen'd eaves,  
And bristles all the brakes and thorns  
To yon hard crescent, as she hangs  
About the wood which grides and  
clangs  
Its leafless ribs and iron horns  
Together in the drifts that pass  
To darken on the rolling brine  
That breaks the coast. But fetch the  
wine,  
Arrange the board and brim the glass ;  
Bring in great logs and let them lie,  
To make a solid core of heat ;  
Be cheerful-minded, talk and treat  
Of all things ev'n as he were by ;  
We keep the day. With festal cheer,  
With books and music, surely we  
Will drink to him, whate'er he be,  
And sing the songs he loved to hear.

## CVIII.

I WILL not shut me from my kind,  
And, lest I stiffen into stone,  
I will not eat my heart alone,  
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind :  
What profit lies in barren faith,  
And vacant yearning, tho' with  
might  
To scale the heaven's highest height,  
Or dive below the wells of Death ?

What find I in the highest place,  
 But mine own phantom chanting  
 hymus?  
 And on the depths of death there  
 — swims  
 The reflex of a human face.  
 I'll rather take what fruit may be  
 Of sorrow under human skies:  
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise,  
 Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

## CIX.

HEART-AFFLUENCE in discursive talk  
 From household fountains never dry;  
 The critic clearness of an eye,  
 That saw thro' all the Muses' walk;  
 Seraphic intellect and force  
 To seize and throw the doubts of  
 man;  
 Impassion'd logic, which outran  
 The hearer in its fiery course;  
 High nature amorous of the good,  
 But touch'd with no ascetic gloom;  
 And passion pure in snowy bloom  
 Thro' all the years of April bloom;  
 A love of freedom rarely felt,  
 Of freedom in her regal seat  
 Of England; not the schoolboy heat,  
 The blind hysterics of the Celt;  
 And manhood fused with female grace  
 In such a sort, the child would twine  
 A trustful hand, unask'd, in thine,  
 And find his comfort in thy face;  
 All these have been, and thee mine  
 eyes  
 Have look'd on: if they look'd in  
 vain,  
 My shame is greater who remain,  
 Nor let thy wisdom make me wise.

## CX.

Thy converse drew us with delight,  
 The men of rath and riper years:  
 The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,  
 Forgot his weakness in thy sight.  
 On thee the loyal-hearted hung,  
 The proud was half disarm'd of  
 pride,  
 Nor cared the serpent at thy side  
 To flicker with his double tongue.  
 The stern were mild when thou wert by,  
 The flippant put himself to school  
 And heard thee, and the brazen fool  
 Was soften'd, and he knew not why;  
 While I, thy dearest, sat apart,  
 And felt thy triumph was as mine;  
 And loved them more, that they were  
 thine,  
 The graceful tact, the Christian art;  
 Not mine the sweetness of the skill,  
 But mine the love, that will not tire,  
 And, born of love, the vague desire  
 That spurs an imitative will.

## CXI.

THE churl in spirit, up or down  
 Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,

To him who grasps a golden ball,  
 By blood a king, at heart a clown;  
 The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil  
 His want in forms for fashion's sake,  
 Will let his coltish nature break  
 At seasons thro' the gilded pale:  
 For who can always act? but he,  
 To whom a thousand memories call,  
 Not being less but more than all  
 The gentleness he seem'd to be,  
 Best seem'd the thing he was, and  
 join'd  
 Each office of the social hour  
 To noble manners, as the flower  
 And native growth of noble mind;  
 Nor ever narrowness or spite,  
 Or villain fancy fleeting by,  
 Drew in the expression of an eye,  
 Where God and Nature met in light;  
 And thus he bore without abuse  
 The grand old name of gentleman,  
 Defamed by every charlatan,  
 And sold with all ignoble use.

## CXII.

HIGH wisdom holds my wisdom less,  
 That I, who gaze with temperate eye  
 On glorious insufficiencies,  
 Set light by narrow perfectness.  
 But thou, that fillest all the room  
 Of all my love, art reason why  
 I seem to cast a careless eye  
 On souls, the lesser lords of doom.  
 For what wert thou? some nova  
 power  
 Sprang up for ever at a touch,  
 And hope could never hope too  
 much,  
 In watching thee from hour to hour,  
 Large elements in order brought,  
 And tracts of calm from tempest  
 made,  
 And world-wide fluctuation sway'd,  
 In vassal tides that follow'd thought.

## CXII.

'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise;  
 Yet how much wisdom sleeps with  
 thee  
 Which not alone had guided me,  
 But served the seasons that may rise:  
 For can I doubt, who knew the keen  
 In intellect, with force and skill  
 To strive, to fashion, to fulfil—  
 I doubt not what thou wouldst have  
 been:  
 A life in civic action warm,  
 A soul on highest mission sent,  
 A potent voice of Parliament,  
 A pillar steadfast in the storm,  
 Should licensed boldness gather force,  
 Becoming, when the time has birth,  
 A lever to uplift the earth  
 And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and  
 go,  
 With agonies, with energies,  
 With overthrowings, and with cries,  
 And undulations to and fro.

## CXIV.

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall  
 rail

Against her beauty? May she mix  
 With men and prosper! Who shall  
 fix

Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire;  
 She sets her forward countenance  
 And leaps into the future chance,  
 Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain—  
 She cannot fight the fear of death.  
 What is she, cut from love and faith,  
 But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of Demons? fiery-hot to burst  
 All barriers in her onward race  
 For power. Let her know her place;  
 She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,  
 If all be not in vain; and guide  
 Her footsteps, moving side by side  
 With wisdom, like the younger child:

For she is earthly of the mind,  
 But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.  
 O, friend, who earnest to thy goal  
 So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee,  
 Who grest not alone in power  
 And knowledge, but by year and hour  
 In reverence and in charity.

## CXV.

Now fades the last long streak of snow,  
 Now burgeons every maze of quick  
 About the flowering squares, and  
 thick

By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,  
 The distance takes a lovelier hue,  
 And drown'd in yonder living blue  
 The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,  
 The flocks are whiter down the vale,  
 And milkier every milky sail  
 On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives  
 In yonder greening gleam, and fly  
 The happy birds, that change their  
 sky

To build and brood; that live their  
 lives

From land to land; and in my breast  
 Spring wakens too; and my regret  
 Becomes an April violet,  
 And buds and blossoms like the rest.

## CXVI.

Is it, then, regret for buried time  
 That keener in sweet April wakes,

And meets the year, and gives and  
 takes  
 The colours of the crescent prime?

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,  
 The life re-orient out of dust,  
 Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust  
 In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret; the face will shine  
 Upon me, while I muse alone;  
 And that dear voice, I once have  
 known,

Still speak to me of me and mine:

Yet less of sorrow lives in me  
 For days of happy commune dead;  
 Less yearning for the friendship fled,  
 Than some strong bond which is to be.

## CXVII.

O DAYS and hours, your work is this,  
 To hold me from my proper place,  
 A little while from his embrace,  
 For fuller gain of after bliss:

That out of distance might ensue  
 Desire of nearness doubly sweet;  
 And unto meeting when we meet,  
 Delight a hundredfold accrues,

For every grain of sand that runs,  
 And every span of shade that steals,  
 And every kiss of toothed wheels,  
 And all the courses of the suns.

## CXVIII.

CONTEMPLATE all this work of Time,  
 The giant laboring in his youth;  
 Nor dream of human love and truth,  
 As dying nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead  
 Are breathers of an ampler day  
 For ever nobler ends. They say,  
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,  
 And grew to seeming-random forms,  
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,  
 Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branch'd from climate  
 to clime,  
 The herald of a higher race,  
 And of himself in higher place  
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;  
 Or, crown'd with attributes of woe  
 Like glories, move his course and  
 show

That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,  
 And heated hot with burning fears,  
 And dipt in baths of hissing tears,  
 And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly  
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;  
 Move upward, working out the beast,  
 And let the ape and tiger die.

## CXIX.

Doors, where my heart was used to  
beat  
So quickly, not as one that weeps  
I come once more ; the city sleeps ;  
I smell the meadow in the street ;  
I hear a chirp of birds ; I see  
Betwixt the black fronts long-with-  
drawn  
A light-blue lane of early dawn,  
And think of early days and thee,  
And bless thee, for thy lips are bland  
And bright the friendship of thine  
eye ;  
And in my thoughts with scarce a  
sigh  
I take the pressure of thine hand.

## CXX.

I TRUST I have not wasted breath :  
I think we are not wholly brain,  
Magnetic mockeries ; not in vain,  
Like Paul with beasts, I fought with  
Death ;  
Not only cunning casts in clay :  
Let Science prove we are, and then  
What matters Science unto men,  
At least to me ? I would not stay.  
Let him, the wiser man who springs  
Hereafter, up from childhood shape  
His action like the greater ape,  
But I was born to other things.

## CXXI.

SAD Hesper o'er the buried sun  
And ready, thou, to die with him,  
Thou watchest all things ever dim  
And dimmer, and a glory done ;  
The team is loosen'd from the wain,  
The boat is drawn upon the shore ;  
Thou listenest to the closing door,  
And life is darken'd in the brain.  
Bright Phosphor, fresher for the night,  
By thee the world's great work is  
heard  
Beginning, and the wakeful bird ;  
Behind thee comes the greater light :  
The market boat is on the stream,  
And voices hail it from the brink ;  
Thou hear'st the village hammer  
clink,  
And see'st the moving of the team.  
Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name  
For what is one, the first, the last,  
Thou, like my present and my past,  
Thy place is changed ; thou art the  
same.

## CXXII.

O, WAST thou with me, dearest then,  
While I rose up against my doom,  
And yearn'd to burst the folded  
gloom,  
To bare the eternal Heavens again,  
To feel once more, in placid awe,  
The strong imagination roll

A sphere of stars about my soul,  
In all her motion one with law ;  
If thou wert with me, and the grave  
Divide us not, be with me now,  
And enter in at breast and brow,  
Till all my blood, a fuller wave,  
Be quicken'd with a livelier breath,  
--And like an inconsiderate boy,  
As in the former flash of joy,  
I slip the thoughts of life and death ;  
And all the breeze of Fancy blows,  
And every dew-drop paints a bow,  
The wizard lightnings deeply glow,  
And every thought breaks out a rose.

## CXXIII.

THERE rolls the deep where grew the  
tree.  
O earth, what changes hast thou  
seen !  
There where the long street roars,  
hath been  
The stillness of the central sea.  
The hills are shadows, and they flow  
From form to form, and nothing  
stands ;  
They melt like mist, the solid lands,  
Like clouds they shape themselves and  
go.  
But in my spirit will I dwell,  
And dream my dream, and hold it  
true ;  
For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,  
I cannot think the thing farewell.

## CXXIV.

THAT which we dare invoke to bless ;  
Our dearest faith ; our ghastliest  
doubt ;  
He, They, One, All ; within, without ;  
The Power in darkness whom we  
guess ;  
I found Him not in world or sun,  
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye ;  
Nor thro' the questions men may try,  
The petty cobwebs we have spun :  
If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,  
I heard a voice " believe no more "  
And heard an ever breaking shore  
That tumbled in the Godless deep ;  
A warmth within the breast would  
melt  
The freezing reason's colder part,  
And like a man in wrath the heart  
Stood up and answer'd " I have felt."  
No, like a child in doubt and fear :  
But that blind clamor made me wise ;  
Then was I as a child that cries,  
But, crying, knows his father near ;  
And what I am beheld again  
What is, and no man understands ;  
And out of darkness came the hands  
That reach thro' nature, moulding  
men.

## CXXV.

WHATEVER I have said or sung,  
Some bitter notes my harp would  
give,  
Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live  
A contradiction on the tongue,  
Yet Hope had never lost her youth ;  
She did but look through dimmer  
eyes ;  
Or Love but play'd with gracious  
lies,  
Because he felt so fix'd in truth ;  
And if the song were full of care,  
He breathed the spirit of the song ;  
And if the words were sweet and  
strong,  
He set his royal signet there ;  
Abiding with me till I sail  
To seek thee on the mystic deeps,  
And this electric force, that keeps  
A thousand pulses dancing, fall.

## CXXVI.

LOVE is and was my Lord and King,  
And in his presence I attend  
To hear the tidings of my friend,  
Which every hour his couriers bring.  
Love is and was my King and Lord.  
And will be, tho' as yet I keep  
Within his court on earth, and  
sleep  
Encompass'd by his faithful guard,  
And hear at times a sentinel  
Who moves about from place to  
place,  
And whispers to the worlds of space,  
In the deep night, that all is well.

## CXXVII.

AND all is well, tho' faith and form  
Be sunder'd in the night of fear ;  
Well roars the storm to those that  
hear  
A deeper voice across the storm,  
Proclaiming social truth shall spread,  
And justice, ev'n tho' thrice again  
The red fool-fury of the Seine  
Should pile her barricades with dead.  
But ill for him that wears a crown,  
And him, the lazar, in his rags ;  
They tremble, the sustaining crags ;  
The spires of ice are toppled down,  
And molten up, and roar in flood ;  
The fortress crashes from on high,  
The brute earth lightens to the sky,  
And the great Æon sinks in blood,  
And compass'd by the fires of Hell ;  
While thou, dear spirit, happy star,  
O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,  
And smilest, knowing all is well.

## CXXVIII.

The love that rose on stronger wings,  
Unpalsied when he met with Death,  
Is comrade of the lesser faith  
That sees the course of human things.

No doubt vast eddies in the flood  
Of onward time shall yet be made,  
And thrond races may degrade ;  
Yet, O ye mysteries of good,  
Wild Hours that fly with Hope and  
Fear,  
If all your office had to do  
With old results that look like new ;  
If this were all your mission here,  
To draw, to sheathe a useless sword,  
To fool the crowd with glorious lies,  
To cleave a creed in sects and cries,  
To change the bearing of a word,  
To shift an arbitrary power,  
To cramp the student at his desk,  
To make old bareness picturesque  
And tuft with grass a feudal tower ;  
Why then my scorn might well de-  
scend  
On you and yours. I see in part  
That all, as in some piece of art,  
Is toil coöperant to an end.

## CXXIX.

DEAR friend, far off, my lost desire,  
So far, so near in woe and weal ;  
O loved the most, when most I feel  
There is a lower and a higher ;  
Known and unknown ; human, divine ;  
Sweet human hand and lips and eye ;  
Dear heavenly friend that canst not  
die,  
Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine ;  
Strange friend, past, present, and to  
be ;  
Love deeper, darker understood ;  
Behold, I dream a dream of good,  
And mingle all the world with thee.

## CXXX.

THY voice is on the rolling air ;  
I hear thee where the waters run ;  
Thou standest in the rising sun,  
And in the setting thou art fair.  
What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;  
But tho' I seem in star and flower  
To feel thee some diffusive power,  
I do not therefore love thee less ;  
My love involves the love before ;  
My love is vaster passion now ;  
Tho' mix'd with God and Nature  
thou,  
I seem to love thee more and more.  
Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;  
I have thee still, and I rejoice ;  
I prosper, circled with thy voice ;  
I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

## CXXXI.

O LIVING will that shalt endure  
When all that seems shall suffer  
shock,  
Rise in the spiritual rock,  
Flow thro' our deeds and make them  
pure,

That we may lift from out of dust  
 A voice as unto him that hears,  
 A cry above the conquer'd years  
 To one that with us works, and trust,  
 With faith that comes of self-control,  
 The truths that never can be proved  
 Until we close with all we loved,  
 And all we flow from, soul in soul.

O TRUE and tried, so well and long,  
 Demand not thou a marriage lay ;  
 In that it is thy marriage day  
 Is music more than any song.

Nor have I felt so much of bliss  
 Since first he told me that he loved  
 A daughter of our house ; nor proved  
 Since that dark day a day like this ;

Tho' I since then have number'd o'er  
 Some thrice three years : they went  
 and came,

Remade the blood and changed the  
 frame,

And yet is love not less, but more ;

No longer caring to embalm  
 In dying songs a dead regret,  
 But like a statue solid-set,  
 And moulded in colossal calm.

Regret is dead, but love is more  
 Than in the summers that are flown,  
 For I myself with these have grown  
 To something greater than before ;

Which makes appear the songs I made  
 As echoes out of weaker times,  
 As half but idle brawling rhymes,  
 The sport of random sun and shade.

But where is she, the bridal flower,  
 That must be made a wife ere noon ?

She enters, glowing like the moon  
 Of Eden on its bridal bower :

On me she bends her blissful eyes  
 And then on thee ; they meet thy  
 look

And brighten like the star that shook  
 Betwixt the palms of paradise.

O when her life was yet in bud,  
 He too foretold the perfect rose.

For thee she grew, for thee she  
 grows

For ever, and as fair as good.

And thou art worthy : full of power ;  
 As gentle ; liberal-minded, great,  
 Consistent ; wearing all that weight  
 Of learning lightly like a flower.

But now set out : the noon is near,  
 And I must give away the bride ;  
 She fears not, or with thee beside  
 And me behind her, will not fear :

For I that danced her on my knee,  
 That watch'd her on her nurse's arm,  
 That shielded all her life from harm,  
 At last must part with her to thee ;

Now waiting to be made a wife,  
 Her feet, my darling, on the dead ;

Their pensive tablets round her head,  
 And the most living words of life

Breathed in her ear. The ring is on,  
 The " wilt thou " answer'd, and  
 again

The " wilt thou " ask'd, till out of  
 twain

Her sweet " I will " has made ye one.  
 Now sign your names, which shall be  
 read,

Mute symbols of a joyful morn,  
 By village eyes as yet unborn ;  
 The names are sign'd, and overhead

Begins the clash and clang that tells  
 The joy to every wandering breeze ;  
 The blind wall rocks, and on the  
 trees

The dead leaf trembles to the bells.

O happy hour, and happier hours  
 Await them. Many a merry face  
 Salutes them—maidens of the place,  
 That pelt us in the porch with flowers.

O happy hour, behold the bride  
 With him to whom her hand I gave.

They leave the porch, they pass the  
 grave

That has to-day its sunny side.

To-day the grave is bright for me,  
 For them the light of life increased,  
 Who stay to share the morning feast,  
 Who rest to-night beside the sea.

Let all my genial spirits advance  
 To meet and greet a whiter sun ;  
 My drooping memory will not shun  
 The foaming grape of eastern France.

It circles round, and fancy plays,  
 And hearts are warm'd, and faces  
 bloom,

As drinking health to bride and  
 groom

We wish them store of happy days.

Nor count me all to blame if I  
 Conjecture of a stiller guest,  
 Perchance, perchance, among the  
 rest,

And, tho' in silence, wishing joy.

But they must go, the time draws on,  
 And those white-favor'd horses wait ;  
 They rise, but linger ; it is late ;  
 Farewell, we kiss, and they are gone.

A shade falls on us like the dark  
 From little cloudlets on the grass,  
 But sweeps away as out we pass  
 To range the woods, to roam the park,

Discussing how their courtship grew,  
 And talk of others that are wed,  
 And how she look'd, and what he  
 said,

And back we come at fall of dew.

Again the feast, the speech, the glee,  
 The shade of passing thought, the  
 wealth

Of words and wit, the double health,  
 The crowning cup, the three-times-  
 three,

THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

135

And last the dance;—till I retire;  
Dumb is that tower which spake so  
    loud,  
And high in heaven the streaming  
    cloud,  
And on the downs a rising fire;  
And rise, O moon, from yonder down  
Till over down and over dale  
All night the shining vapor sail  
And pass the silent-lighted town,  
The white-faced halls, the glancing  
    rills,  
And catch at every mountain head,  
And o'er the friths that branch and  
    spread  
Their sleeping silver thro' the hills;  
And touch with shade the bridal doors,  
With tender gloom the roof, the  
    wall;  
And breaking let the splendor fall  
To spangle all the happy shores  
By which they rest, and ocean sounds,  
And, star and system rolling past,  
A soul shall draw from out the vast  
And strike his being into bounds,  
And, moved thro' life of lower phase,  
Result in man, be born and think,  
And act and love, a closer link  
Betwixt us and the crowning race  
Of those that, eye to eye, shall look  
On knowledge; under whose com-  
    mand  
Is Earth and Earth's, and in their  
    hand  
Is Nature like an open book;  
No longer half-akin to brute,  
For all we thought and loved and  
    did,  
And hoped, and suffer'd, is but seed  
Of what in them is flower and fruit;  
Whereof the man, that with me trod  
This planet, was a noble type  
Appearing ere the times were ripe,  
That friend of mine who lives in God,  
That God, which ever lives and loves,  
One God, one law, one element,  
And one far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves.

THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

PROLOGUE.

SIR WALTER VIVIAN all a summer's  
    day  
Gave his broad lawns until the set of  
    sun  
Up to the people: thither flock'd at  
    noon  
His tenants, wife and child, and thith-  
    er half  
The neighboring borough with their  
    Institute  
Of which he was the patron, I was  
    there

From college, visiting the son,—the  
    son  
A Walter too,—with others of our set,  
Five others: we were seven at Vivian-  
    place.  
And me that morning Walter show'd  
    the house,  
Greek, set with busts: from vases in  
    the hall  
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier  
    than their names,  
Grew side by side; and on the pave-  
    ment lay  
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the  
    park,  
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones  
    of Time:  
And on the tables every clime and age  
Jumbled together; celts and calumets,  
Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava,  
    fans  
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,  
Laborious orient ivory sphere in  
    sphere,  
The cursed Malayan crease, and bat-  
    tle-clubs  
From the isles of palm: and higher on  
    the walls,  
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk  
    and deer,  
His own forefathers' arms and armor  
    hung.  
And "this" he said "was Hugh's at  
    Agincourt:  
And that was old Sir Ralph's at Asca-  
    lon:  
A good knight he! we keep a chronicle  
With all about him"—which he  
    brought, and I  
Dived in a hoard of tales that dealt  
    with knights  
Half-legend, half-historic, counts and  
    kings  
Who laid about them at their wills and  
    died;  
And mixt with these, a lady, one that  
    arm'd  
Her own fair head, and sallying thro'  
    the gate,  
Had beat her foes with slaughter from  
    her walls.  
"O miracle of women," said the  
    book,  
"O noble heart who, being strait-be-  
    sieged  
By this wild king to force her to his  
    wish,  
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a  
    soldier's death,  
But now when all was lost or seem'd  
    as lost—  
Her stature more than mortal in the  
    burst  
Of sunrise, her arm lifted, eyes on  
    fire—  
Brake with a blast of trumpets from  
    the gate,

And, falling on them like a thunder-bolt,  
 She trampled some beneath her horses' heels,  
 And some were whelm'd with missiles of the wall,  
 And some were push'd with lances from the rock,  
 And part were drown'd within the whirling brook:  
 O miracle of noble womanhood!"

So sang the gallant glorious chronicle;  
 And, I all rapt in this, "Come out," he said,  
 "To the Abbey: there is Aunt Elizabeth  
 And sister Lilia with the rest." We went  
 (I kept the book and had my finger in it)  
 Down thro' the park: strange was the sight to me;  
 For all the sloping pasture murmur'd, sown  
 With happy faces and with holiday.  
 There moved the multitude, a thousand heads:  
 The patient leaders of their Institute  
 Taught them with facts. One rear'd a font of stone  
 And drew, from butts of water on the slope,  
 The fountain of the moment, playing now  
 A twisted snake, and now a rain of pearls,  
 Or steep-up spout whereon the gilded ball  
 Danced like a wisp: and somewhat lower down  
 A man with knobs and wires and vials fired  
 A cannon: Echo answer'd in her sleep  
 From hollow fields: and here were telescopes  
 For azure views; and there a group of girls  
 In circle waited, whom the electric shock  
 Dislink'd with shrieks and laughter: round the lake  
 A little clock-work steamer paddling plied  
 And shook the lilies: perch'd about the knolls  
 A dozen angry models jetted steam:  
 A petty railway ran; a fire-balloon  
 Rose gem-like up before the dusky groves  
 And dropt a fairy parachute and past:  
 And there thro' twenty posts of telegraph  
 They flash'd a saucy message to and fro  
 Between the mimic stations; so that sport  
 Went hand in hand with Science; elsewhere

Pure sport: a herd of boys with clamor bowl'd  
 And stump'd the wicket; babies roll'd about  
 Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maids  
 Arranged a country dance, and flew thro' light  
 And shadow, while the twangling violin  
 Struck up with Soldier-laddie, and overhead  
 The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime  
 Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end.

Strange was the sight and smacking of the time;  
 And long we gazed, but satiated at length  
 Came to the ruins. High-arch'd and ivy-claspt,  
 Of finest Gothic lighter than a fire,  
 Thro' one wide chasm of time and frost they gave  
 The park, the crowd, the house; but all within  
 The sward was trim as any garden lawn;  
 And here we lit on Aunt Elizabeth,  
 And Lilia with the rest, and lady friends  
 From neighbor seats: and there was Ralph himself,  
 A broken statue propt against the wall,  
 As gay as any. Lilia, wild with sport,  
 Half child half woman as she was, had wound  
 A scarf of orange round the stony helm,  
 And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,  
 That made the old warrior from his ivied nook  
 Glow like a sunbeam: near his tomb a feast  
 Shone, silver-set; about it lay the guests,  
 And there we join'd them: then the maiden Aunt  
 Took this fair day for text, and from it preach'd  
 An universal culture for the crowd,  
 And all things great; but we, unwor-thier, told  
 Of college: he had climb'd across the spikes,  
 And he had squeezed himself betwixt the bars,  
 And he had breath'd the Proctor's dogs; and one  
 Discuss'd his tutor, rough to common men,  
 But honeying at the whisper of a lord;  
 And one the Master, as a rogue in grain  
 Veneer'd with sanctimonious theory.  
 But while they talk'd, above their heads I saw  
 The feudal warrior lady-clad; which brought

My book to mind: and opening this I  
 read  
 Of old Sir Ralph a page or two that  
 rang  
 With tilt and tourney; then the tale  
 of her  
 That drove her foes with slaughter  
 from her walls,  
 And much I praised her nobleness, and  
 "Where."  
 Ask'd Walter, patting Lilia's head (she  
 lay  
 Beside him) "lives there such a woman  
 now?"

Quick answer'd Lilia "There are  
 thousands now  
 Such women, but convention beats  
 them down:

It is but bringing up; no more than  
 that:

You men have done it: how I hate you  
 all!

Ah, were I something great! I wish I  
 were

Some mighty poetess, I would shame  
 you then,

That love to keep us children! O I  
 wish

That I were some great princess, I  
 would build

Far off from men a college like a  
 man's,

And I would teach them all that men  
 are taught;

We are twice as quick!" And here  
 she shook aside

The hand that play'd the patron with  
 her curls.

And one said smiling "Pretty were  
 the sight

If our old halls could change their sex,  
 and flaunt

With prudes for proctors, dowagers  
 for deans,

And sweet girl-graduates in their gold-  
 en hair.

I think they should not wear our rusty  
 gowns,

But move as rich as Emperor-moths,  
 or Ralph

Who shines so in the corner; yet I  
 fear,

If there were many Lilies in the brood,  
 However deep you might embower the  
 nest,

Some boy would spy it."

At this upon the sword  
 She tapt her tiny silken-sandal'd foot:

"That's your light way; but I would  
 make it death

For any male thing but to peep at us."

Petulant she spoke, and at herself  
 she laugh'd:

A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,  
 And sweet as English air could make  
 her, she:

But Walter hall'd a score of names  
 upon her,

And "petty Ogress," and "ungrateful  
 Puss,"

And swore he long'd at college, only  
 long'd,

All else was well, for she-society,  
 They boated and they cricketed; they  
 talk'd

At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics:  
 They lost their weeks; they vex't the  
 souls of deans;

They rode; they betted; made a hun-  
 dred friends,

And caught the blossom of the flying  
 terms,

But miss'd the mignonette of Vivian-  
 place,

The little hearth-flower Lilia. Thus  
 he spoke,

Part banter, part affection.

"True," she said,  
 "We doubt not that. O yes, you miss'd  
 us much.

I'll stake my ruby ring upon it you  
 did."

She held it out; and as a parrot  
 turns

Up thro' gilt wires a crafty loving eye,  
 And takes a lady's finger with all care,  
 And bites it for true heart and not for  
 harm,

So he with Lilia's. Daintily she  
 shriek'd

And wrung it. "Doubt my word  
 again!" he said.

"Come, listen! here is proof that you  
 were miss'd!

We seven stay'd at Christmas up to  
 read;

And there we took one tutor as to read;  
 The hard-grain'd Muses of the cube  
 and square

Were out of season: never man, I  
 think,

So moulder'd in a sinecure as he:  
 For while our cloisters echo'd frosty  
 feet,

And our long walks were stript as bare  
 as brooms,

We did but talk you over, pledge you  
 all

In wassail; often, like as many girls—  
 Sick for the hollies and the yews of  
 home—

As many little trifling Lilies—play'd  
 Charades and riddles as at Christmas  
 here,

And *what's my thought* and *when* and  
*where* and *how*,

And often told a tale from mouth to  
 mouth

As here at Christmas."

She remember'd that:  
 A pleasant game, she thought: she  
 liked it more

Than magic music, forfeits, all the  
 rest.

But these—what kind of tales did men  
 tell men,

She wonder'd, by themselves?

A half-disdain  
Perch'd on the pouted blossom of her  
lips:  
And Walter nodded at me; "He be-  
gan,  
The rest would follow, each in turn;  
and so  
We forged a sevenfold story. Kind?  
what kind?  
Chimeras, crotchets, Christmas sole-  
cisms,  
Seven-headed monsters only made to  
kill

Time by the fire in winter."  
"Kill him now,  
The tyrant! kill him in the summer  
too,"  
Said Lilla; "Why not now," the maid-  
en Aunt,  
"Why not a summer's as a winter's  
tale?"

A tale for summer as befits the time,  
And something it should be to suit the  
place  
Heroic, for a hero lies beneath,  
Grave, solemn!"

Walter warp'd his mouth at this  
To something so mock-solemn, that I  
laugh'd,  
And Lilla woke with sudden-shrilling  
mirth

An echo like a ghostly woodpecker,  
Hid in the ruins; till the maiden  
Aunt  
(A little sense of wrong had touch'd  
her face  
With color) turn'd to me with "As  
you will;  
Heroic if you will, or what you will,  
Or be yourself your hero if you will."

"Take Lilla, then, for heroine"  
clamor'd he,  
"And make her some great Princess,  
six feet high;  
Grand, epic, homicidal; and be you  
The Prince to win her!"

"Then follow me, the Prince,"  
I answer'd, "each be hero in his turn!  
Seven and yet one, like shadows in a  
dream.—

Heroic seems our Princess as re-  
quired—  
But something made to suit with Time  
and place,

A Gothic ruin and a Grecian house,  
A talk of college and of ladies' rights,  
A feudal knight in silken masquerade,  
And, yonder, shrieks and strange ex-  
periments  
For which the good Sir Ralph had  
burnt them all—

This ~~were~~ a medley! we should have  
him back  
Who told the 'Winter's tale' to do it  
for us.

No matter: we will say whatever  
comes.  
And let the ladies sing us, if they  
will,

From time to time, some ballad or a  
song  
To give us breathing-space."

So I began,  
And the rest follow'd: and the women  
sang  
Between the rougher voices of the  
men,  
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind:  
And here I give the story and the  
songs.

## I.

A PRINCE I was, blue-eyed, and fair  
in face,  
Of temper amorous, as the first of  
May,  
With lengths of yellow ringlets, like a  
girl,  
For on my cradle shone the Northern  
star.

There lived an ancient legend in our  
house,  
Some sorcerer, whom a far-off grand-  
sire burnt

Because he cast no shadow, had fore-  
told,  
Dying, that none of all our blood  
should know

The shadow from the substance, and  
that one  
Should come to fight with shadows and  
to fall.

For so, my mother said, the story ran.  
And, truly, waking dreams were, more  
or less,

An old and strange affection of the  
house,  
Myself too had weird seizures, Heaven  
knows what:

On a sudden in the midst of men and  
day.

And while I walk'd and talk'd as here-  
tofore,  
I seem'd to move among a world of  
ghosts,

And feel myself the shadow of a  
dream.

Our great court-Galen poised his gilt-  
head cane,  
And paw'd his beard, and mutter'd  
"catalepsy."

My mother pitying made a thousand  
prayers;

My mother was as mild as any saint,  
Half-canonized by all that look'd on  
her,

So gracious was her tact and tender-  
ness:

But my good father thought a king a  
king:

He cared not for the affection of the  
house;

He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand  
To lash offence, and with long arms  
and hands

Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from  
the mass

For judgment,

Now it chanced that I had been,  
While life was yet in bud and blade,  
betroth'd  
To one, a neighboring Princess: she  
to me  
Was proxy - wedded with a bootless  
calf  
At eight years old; and still from time  
to time  
Came murmurs of her beauty from the  
South,  
And of her brethren, youths of puis-  
sance;  
And still I wore her picture by my  
heart,  
And one dark tress; and all around  
them both  
Sweet thoughts would swarm as bees  
about their queen.

But when the days drew nigh that I  
should wed,  
My father sent ambassadors with furs  
And jewels, gifts, to fetch her: these  
brought back  
A present, a great labor of the loom;  
And therewithal an answer vague as  
wind:  
Besides, they saw the king; he took  
the gifts;  
He said there was a compact; that was  
true:  
But then she had a will; was he to  
blame?  
And maiden fancies; loved to live  
alone  
Among her women; certain, would  
not wed.

That morning in the presence room  
I stood  
With Cyril and with Florian, my two  
friends:  
The first, a gentleman of broken  
means  
(His father's fault!) but given to starts  
and bursts  
Of revel; and the last, my other heart,  
And almost my half-self, for still we  
moved  
Together, twinn'd as horse's ear and  
eye.

Now, while they spake, I saw my  
father's face  
Grow long and troubled like a rising  
moon,  
Inflamed with wrath; he started on  
his feet,  
Tore the king's letter, snow'd it down,  
and rent  
The wonder of the loom thro' warp  
and woof  
From skirt to skirt; and at the last he  
swore  
That he would send a hundred thou-  
sand men,  
And bring her in a whirlwind: then  
he chew'd  
The thrice-turn'd end of wrath, and  
cook'd his spleen,

Communing with his captains of the  
war.

At last I spoke. "My father, let me  
go.  
It cannot be but some gross error lies  
In this report, this answer of a king,  
Whom all men rate as kind and hospi-  
table:  
Or, maybe, I myself, my bride once  
seen,  
Whate'er my grief to find her less than  
fame,  
May rue the bargain made." And Flo-  
rian said:  
"I have a sister at the foreign court,  
Who moves about the Princess; she,  
you know,  
Who wedded with a nobleman from  
thence:  
He, dying lately, left her, as I hear,  
The lady of three castles in that land:  
Thro' her this matter might be sifted  
clean."  
And Cyril whisper'd: "Take me with  
you too."  
Then laughing "what, if these weird  
seizures come  
Upon you in those lands, and no one  
near  
To point you out the shadow from the  
truth!  
Take me: I'll serve you better in a  
strait;  
I grate on rusty hinges here:" but  
"No!"  
Roar'd the rough king, "you shall not;  
we ourself  
Will crush her pretty maiden fancies  
dead  
In iron gauntlets: break the council  
up."

But when the council broke, I rose  
and past  
Thro' the wild woods that hung about  
the town;  
Found a still place, and pluck'd her  
likeness out;  
Laid it on flowers, and watch'd it lying  
bathed  
In the green gleam of dewy-tassell'd  
trees:  
What were those fancies? wherefore  
break her truth?  
Proud look'd the lips: but while I  
meditated  
A wind arose and rush'd upon the  
South,  
And shook the songs, the whis'pers,  
and the shrieks  
Of the wild woods together; and a  
Voice  
Went with it, "Follow, follow, thou  
shalt win."

Then, ere the silver sickle of that  
month  
Became her golden shield, I stole from  
court

With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived,  
 Cat-footed thro' the town and half in  
 dread  
 To hear my father's clamor at our  
 backs  
 With Ho! from some bay-window  
 shake the night;  
 But all was quiet: from the bastion'd  
 walls  
 Like threaded spiders, one by one, we  
 dropt,  
 And flying reach'd the frontier: then  
 we crost  
 To a livelier land; and so by tilth and  
 grange,  
 And vines, and blowing bosks of wil-  
 derness,  
 We gain'd the mother-city thick with  
 towers,  
 And in the imperial palace found the  
 king.

His name was Gama; crack'd and  
 small his voice,  
 But bland the smile that like a wrin-  
 kling wind  
 On glassy water drove his cheek in  
 lines;  
 A little dry old man, without a star,  
 Not like a king: three days he feasted  
 us,  
 And on the fourth I spake of why we  
 came,  
 And my betroth'd. "You do us,  
 Prince," he said,  
 Airing a snowy hand and signet gem,  
 "All honor. We remember love our-  
 selves  
 In our sweet youth: there did a com-  
 pact pass  
 Long summers back, a kind of cere-  
 mony—  
 I think the year in which our olives  
 fall'd.  
 I would you had her, Prince, with all  
 my heart,  
 With my full heart: but there were  
 widows here,  
 Two widows, Lady Psyche, Lady  
 Blanche;  
 They fed her theories, in and out of  
 place  
 Maintaining that with equal husban-  
 dry  
 The woman were an equal to the man.  
 They harp'd on this; with this our ban-  
 quets rang;  
 Our dances broke and buzz'd in knots  
 of talk;  
 Nothing but this; my very ears were  
 hot  
 To hear them: knowledge, so my  
 daughter held,  
 Was all in all: they had but been, she  
 thought,  
 As children; they most lose the child,  
 assume  
 The woman: then, Sir, awful odes she  
 wrote,

Too awful, sure, for what they treated  
 of,  
 But all she is and does is awful; odes  
 About this losing of the child; and  
 rhymes  
 And dismal lyrics, prophesying change  
 Beyond all reason: these the women  
 sang;  
 And they that know such things—I  
 sought but peace;  
 No critic I—would call them master-  
 pieces:  
 They master'd me. At last she begg'd  
 a boon  
 A certain summer-palace which I have  
 Hard by your father's frontier: I said  
 no,  
 Yet being an easy man, gave it: and  
 there,  
 All wild to found an University  
 For maidens, on the spur she fled; and  
 more  
 We know not,—only this: they see no  
 men,  
 Not ev'n her brother Arac, nor the  
 twins  
 Her brethren, tho' they love her, look  
 upon her  
 As on a kind of paragon; and I  
 (Pardon me saying it) were much loath  
 to breed  
 Dispute betwixt myself and mine; but  
 since  
 (And I confess with right) you think  
 me bound  
 In some sort, I can give you letters to  
 her;  
 And yet, to speak the truth, I rate your  
 chance  
 Almost at naked nothing."  
 Thus the king:  
 And I, tho' nettled that he seem'd to  
 slur  
 With garrulous ease and oily courtesies  
 Our formal compact, yet, not less (all  
 frets  
 But chafing me on fire to find my  
 bride)  
 Went forth again with both my friends.  
 We rode  
 Many a long league back to the North.  
 At last  
 From hills, that look'd across a land of  
 hope,  
 We dropt with evening on a rustic  
 town  
 Set in a gleaming river's crescent-  
 curve,  
 Close at the boundary of the liberties:  
 There, enter'd an old hostel, call'd  
 mine host  
 To council, plied him with his richest  
 wines  
 And show'd the late-writ letters of the  
 king.

He with a long low sibilant, stared  
 As blank as death in marble; then ex-  
 claim'd  
 Averring it was clear against all rules

For any man to go : but as his brain  
 Began to mellow, " If the king," he  
 said,  
 " Had given us letters, was he bound  
 to speak ?  
 The king would bear him out ; " and at  
 the last —  
 The summer of the vine in all his  
 veins —  
 " No doubt that we might make it  
 worth his while.  
 She once had past that way ; he heard  
 her speak ;  
 She scared him ; life ! he never saw  
 the like ;  
 She look'd as grand as doomsday and  
 as grave :  
 And he, he revered his liege-lady  
 there ;  
 He always made a point to post with  
 mares ;  
 His daughter and his housemaid were  
 the boys :  
 The land, he understood, for miles  
 about  
 Was till'd by women ; all the swine  
 were sows, —  
 And all the dogs " —  
 But while he jested thus,  
 A thought flash'd thro' me which I  
 clothed in act,  
 Remembering how we three presented  
 Maid  
 Or Nymph, or Goddess, at high tide of  
 feast,  
 In masque or pageant at my father's  
 court.  
 We sent mine host to purchase female  
 gear :  
 He brought it, and himself, a sight to  
 shake  
 The midriff of despair with laughter,  
 help  
 To lace us up, till, each, in maiden  
 plumes  
 We rustled : him we gave a costly bribe  
 To guerdon silence, mounted our good  
 steeds,  
 And boldly ventured on the liberties.

We follow'd up the river as we rode,  
 And rode till midnight when the col-  
 lege lights  
 Began to glitter firefly-like in copse  
 And hidden alley : then we past an  
 arch,  
 Whereon a woman-statue rose with  
 wings  
 From four wing'd horses dark against  
 the stars ;  
 And some inscription ran along the  
 front,  
 But deep in shadow : further on we  
 gain'd  
 A little street half garden and half  
 house ;  
 But scarce could hear each other speak  
 for noise  
 Of clock and chimes, like silver ham-  
 mers falling

On silver anvils, and the splash and  
 stir  
 Of fountains spouted up and showering  
 down  
 In meshes of the jasmine and the rose:  
 And all about us peal'd the nightin-  
 gale,  
 Rapt in her song, and careless of the  
 snare.

There stood a bust of Pallas for a  
 sign,  
 By two sphere lamps blazon'd like  
 Heaven and Earth  
 With constellation and with continent,  
 Above an entry : riding in, we call'd ;  
 A plump-arm'd Ostleress and a stable  
 vench  
 Came running at the call, and help'd  
 us down.  
 Then stopt a buxom hostess forth, and  
 sail'd,  
 Full-blown, before us into rooms  
 which gave  
 Upon a pillar'd porch, the bases lost  
 In laurel : her we ask'd of that and  
 this,  
 And who were tutors. " Lady Blanche"  
 she said,  
 " And Lady Psyche." " Which was  
 prettiest,  
 Best-natured ? " " Lady Psyche."  
 " Hers are we,"  
 One voice, we cried ; and I sat down  
 and wrote,  
 In such a hand as when a field of corn  
 Bows all its ears before the roaring  
 East ;

" Three ladies of the Northern em-  
 pire pray  
 Your Highness would enroll them with  
 your own,  
 As Lady Psyche's pupils."

This I seal'd :  
 The seal was Cupid bent above a  
 scroll,  
 And o'er his head Uranian Venus  
 hung,  
 And raised the blinding bandage from  
 his eyes :  
 I gave the letter to be sent with dawn ;  
 And then to bed, where half in doze I  
 seem'd  
 To float about a glimmering night, and  
 watch  
 A full sea glazed with muffled moon-  
 light, swell  
 On some dark shore just seen that it  
 was rich.

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
 And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
 We fell out, my wife and I.  
 O we fell out I know not why,  
 And kiss'd again with tears,  
 And blessings on the falling out  
 That all the more endears,  
 When we fall out with those we love

And kiss again with tears !  
 For when we came where lies the child  
 We lost in other years,  
 There above the little grave,  
 O there above the little grave,  
 We kiss'd again with tears.

## II.

At break of day the College Portress  
 came :  
 She brought us Academic silks, in hue  
 The lilac, with a silken hood to each,  
 And zoned with gold; and now when  
 these were on,  
 And we as rich as moths from dusk  
 cocoons,  
 She, curtsying her obeisance, let us  
 know  
 The Princess Ida waited: out we paced,  
 I first, and following thro' the porch  
 that sang  
 All round with laurel, issued in a court  
 Compact with lucid marbles, boss'd  
 with lengths  
 Of classic frieze, with ample awnings  
 gay  
 Betwixt the pillars, and with great  
 urns of flowers.  
 The Muses and the Graces, group'd in  
 threes,  
 Enring'd a billowing fountain in the  
 midst ;  
 And here and there on lattice edges  
 lay  
 Or book or lute ; but hastily we past,  
 And up a flight of stairs into the hall.

There at a board by tome and paper  
 sat,  
 With two tame leopards couch'd beside  
 her throne  
 All beauty compass'd in a female form,  
 The Princess ; liker to the inhabitant  
 Of some clear planet close upon the  
 Sun,  
 Than our man's earth ; such eyes were  
 in her head,  
 And so much grace and power, breath-  
 ing down  
 From over her arch'd brows, with  
 every turn  
 Lived thro' her to the tips of her long  
 hands,  
 And to her feet. She rose her height,  
 and said :

" We give you welcome: not without  
 redound  
 Of use and glory to yourselves ye  
 come,  
 The first-fruits of the stranger : after-  
 time,  
 And that full voice which circles round  
 the grave,  
 Will rank you nobly, mingled up with  
 me.  
 What ! are the ladies of your land so  
 tall ?"  
 " We of the court " said Cyril. " From  
 the court "

She answer'd, " then ye know the  
 Prince ? " and he :  
 " The climax of his age ! as tho' there  
 were  
 One rose in all the world, your High-  
 ness that,  
 He worships your ideal " : she replied:  
 " We scarcely thought in our own hall  
 to hear  
 This barren verbiage, current among  
 men,  
 Light coin, the tinsel clink of compli-  
 ment.  
 Your flight from out your bookless  
 wilds would seem  
 As arguing love of knowledge and of  
 power ;  
 Your language proves you still the  
 child. Indeed,  
 We dream not of him ; when we set  
 our hand  
 To this great work, we purposed with  
 ourself  
 Never to wed. You likewise will do  
 well,  
 Ladies, in entering here, to cast and  
 fling  
 The tricks, which make us toys of men,  
 that so,  
 Some future time, if so indeed you  
 will,  
 You may with those self-styled our  
 lords ally  
 Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale  
 with scale."

At those high words, we conscious of  
 ourselves,  
 Perused the matting ; then an officer  
 Rose up, and read the statutes, such as  
 these :  
 Not for three years to correspond with  
 home ;  
 Not for three years to cross the liber-  
 ties ;  
 Not for three years to speak with any  
 men ;  
 And many more, which hastily sub-  
 scribed,  
 We enter'd on the boards : and " Now "  
 she cried  
 " Ye are green wood, see ye warp not.  
 Look, our hall !  
 Our statues !—not of those that men  
 desire,  
 Sleek Odaliskes, or oracles of mode,  
 Nor stunted squaws of West or East ;  
 but she  
 That taught the Sabine how to rule,  
 and she  
 The foundress of the Babylonian wall,  
 The Carian Artemisia strong in war,  
 The Rhodope, that built the pyramid,  
 Clelia, Cornelia, with the Palmyrene  
 That fought Aurelian, and the Roman  
 brows  
 Of Agrippina. Dwell with these, and  
 lose  
 Convention, since to look on noble  
 forms

Makes noble thro' the sensuous organ-  
ism  
That which is higher. O lift your na-  
tures up:  
Embrace our aims: work out your  
freedom. Girls,  
Knowledge is now no more a fountain  
seal'd:  
Drink deep, until the habits of the  
slave,  
The sins of emptiness, gossip and spite  
And slander, die. Better not be at all  
Than not be noble. Leave us: you  
may go:  
To-day the Lady Psyche will harangue  
The fresh arrivals of the week before;  
For they press in from all the prov-  
inces,  
And fill the hive."  
She spoke, and bowing waded  
Dismissal: back again we crossed the  
court  
To Lady Psyche's: as we enter'd in,  
There sat along the forms, like morn-  
ing doves  
That sun their milky bosoms on the  
thatch,  
A patient range of pupils; she herself  
Erect behind a desk of satin-wood,  
A quick brunette, well-moulded, fal-  
con-eyed,  
And on the hither side, or so she  
look'd,  
Of twenty summers. At her left, a  
child,  
In shining draperies, headed like a star,  
Her maiden babe, a double April old,  
Aglaisa slept. We sat: the Lady  
glanced:  
Then Florian; but no livelier than the  
dame  
That whisper'd "Asses' ears" among  
the sedge,  
"My sister," "Comely too by all that's  
fair"  
Said Cyril. "O hush, hush!" and she  
began.  
"This world was once a fluid haze  
of light,  
Till toward the centre set the starry  
tides,  
And eddied into suns, that wheeling  
cast  
The planets: then the monster, then  
the man;  
Tattoo'd or woaded, winter-clad in  
skins,  
Raw from the prime, and crushing  
down his mate;  
As yet we find in barbarous isles, and  
here  
Among the lowest."  
Thereupon she took  
A bird's-eye-view of all the ungracious  
past;  
Glanced at the legendary Amazon  
As emblematic of a nobler age;  
Appraised the Lycian custom, spoke  
of those

That lay at wine with Lar and Lucumo;  
Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Ro-  
man lines  
Of empire, and the woman's state in  
each,  
How far from just; till warning with  
her theme  
She fulmin'd out her scorn of law  
Salique  
And little-footed China, touch'd on  
Mahomet  
With much contempt, and came to  
chivalry:  
When some respect, however slight,  
was paid  
To woman, superstition all awry:  
However then commenced the dawn:  
a beam  
Had slanted forward, falling in a leap  
Of promise; fruit would follow. Deep,  
indeed,  
Their debt of thanks to her who first  
had dared  
To leap the rotten pales of prejudice,  
Disyoke their necks from custom, and  
assert  
None lordlier than themselves but that  
which made  
Woman and man. She had founded;  
they must build.  
Here might they learn whatever men  
were taught:  
Let them not fear: some said their  
heads were less:  
Some men's were small; not they the  
least of men;  
For often fineness compensated size:  
Besides the brain was like the hand,  
and grew  
With using; thence the man's, if more  
was more;  
He took advantage of his strength to  
be  
First in the field: some ages had beer-  
lost:  
But woman ripen'd earlier, and her life  
Was longer; and albeit their glorious  
names  
Were fewer, scatter'd stars, yet since  
in truth  
The highest is the measure of the man,  
And not the Kafir, Hottentot, Malay,  
Nor those horn-handed breakers of the  
glebe,  
But Homer, Plato, Verulam; even so  
With woman; and in arts of govern-  
ment  
Elizabeth and others; arts of war  
The peasant Joan and others; arts of  
grace  
Sappho and others vied with any man;  
And, last not least, she who had left  
her place,  
And bow'd her state to them, that they  
might grow  
To use and power on this Oasis, lapt  
In the arms of leisure, sacred from the  
blight  
Of ancient influence and scorn.  
At last

She rose upon a wind of prophecy  
 Dilating on the future; "everywhere  
 Two heads in council, two beside the  
 hearth,  
 Two in the tangled business of the  
 world,  
 Two in the liberal offices of life,  
 Two plummetts dropt for one to sound  
 the abyss  
 Of science, and the secrets of the  
 mind:  
 Musician, painter, sculptor, critic,  
 more:  
 And everywhere the broad and boun-  
 teous Earth  
 Should bear a double growth of those  
 rare souls,  
 Poets, whose thoughts enrich the blood  
 of the world."

She ended here, and beckon'd us:  
 Parted; and, glowing full-faced wel-  
 come she  
 Began to address us, and was moving on  
 In gratulation, till as when a boat  
 Tacks, and the slacken'd sail flaps, all  
 her voice  
 Faltering and fluttering in her throat,  
 she cried  
 "My brother!" "Well, my sister."  
 "O" she said  
 "What do you here? and in this dress?  
 and these?  
 Why who are these? a wolf within the  
 fold!  
 A pack of wolves! the Lord be gra-  
 cious to me!  
 A plot, a plot, a plot, to ruin all!"  
 "No plot, no plot," he answer'd.  
 "Wretched boy,  
 How saw you not the inscription on  
 the gate,  
 LET NO MAN ENTER IN ON PAIN OF  
 DEATH?"  
 "And if I had" he answer'd "who  
 could think  
 The softer Adams of your Academe,  
 O sister, Sirens tho' they be, were such  
 As chanted on the blanching bones of  
 men?"  
 "But you will find it otherwise" she  
 said.  
 "You jest: ill jesting with edge-tools!  
 my vow  
 Binds me to speak, and O that iron  
 will,  
 That axelike edge unturnable, our  
 Head,  
 The Princess," "Well then, Psyche,  
 take my life,  
 And nail me like a weasel on a grange  
 For warning: bury me beside the gate,  
 And cut this epitaph above my bones;  
 Here lies a brother by a sister slain,  
 All for the common good of womankind."  
 "Let me die too" said Cyril "having  
 seen  
 And heard the Lady Psyche."

I struck in:

"Albeit so mask'd, Madam, I love the  
 truth;  
 Receive it; and in me behold the  
 Prince  
 Your countryman, affianced years ago  
 To the Lady Ida: here, for here she  
 was,  
 And thus (what other way was left) I  
 came."  
 "O Sir, O Prince, I have no country;  
 none;  
 If any, this; but none. Whate'er I  
 was  
 Disrooted, what I am is grafted here.  
 Affianced, Sir? love-whispers may not  
 breathe  
 Within this vestal limit, and how  
 should I,  
 Who am not mine, say, live: the thun-  
 derbolt  
 Hangs silent; but prepare: I speak;  
 it falls."  
 "Yet pause," I said: "for that in-  
 scription there,  
 I think no more of deadly lurks  
 therein,  
 Than in a clapper clapping in a garth,  
 To scare the fowl from fruit: if more  
 there be,  
 If more and acted on, what follows?  
 war;  
 Your own work marr'd: for this your  
 Academe,  
 Whichever side be Victor, in the halloo  
 Will topple to the trumpet down, and  
 pass  
 With all fair theories only made to  
 gild  
 A stormless summer." "Let the Prin-  
 cess judge  
 Of that" she said: "farewell Sir—and  
 to you.  
 I shudder at the sequel, but I go."

"Are you that Lady Psyche" I  
 rejoin'd,  
 "The fifth in line from that old  
 Florian,  
 Yet hangs his portrait in my father's  
 hall  
 (The gaunt old Baron with his beetle  
 brow  
 Sun-shaded in the heat of dusty fights)  
 As he bestrode my Grandsire, when he  
 fell,  
 And all else fled: we point to it, and  
 we say,  
 The loyal warmth of Florian is not cold,  
 But branches current yet in kindred  
 veins."  
 "Are you that Psyche" Florian added  
 "she  
 With whom I sang about the morning  
 hills,  
 Flung ball, flew kite, and raced the  
 purple fly,  
 And snared the squirrel of the glen?  
 are you  
 That Psyche, wont to bind my throbb-  
 ing brow,

To smooth my pillow, mix the foaming draught  
 Of fever, tell me pleasant tales, and read  
 My sickness down to happy dreams?  
 are you  
 That brother-sister Psyche, both in one?  
 You were that Psyche, but what are you now?"  
 "You are that Psyche," Cyril said,  
 "for whom  
 I would be that for ever which I seem,  
 Woman, if I might sit beside your feet,  
 And glean your scatter'd sapience."  
 Then once more,  
 "Are you that Lady Psyche" I began,  
 "That on her bridal morn before she  
 past  
 From all her old companions, when  
 the king  
 Kiss'd her pale cheek, declared that  
 ancient ties  
 Would still be dear beyond the southern hills;  
 That were there any of our people there  
 In want or peril, there was one to hear  
 And help them: look! for such are  
 these and I."  
 "Are you that Psyche" Florian ask'd  
 "to whom,  
 In gentler days, your arrow-wounded  
 fawn  
 Came flying while you sat beside the  
 well?  
 The creature laid his muzzle on your  
 lap,  
 And sobb'd, and you sobb'd with it,  
 and the blood  
 Was sprinkled on your kirtle, and you  
 wept.  
 That was fawn's blood, not brother's,  
 yet you wept.  
 O by the bright head of my little niece,  
 You were that Psyche, and what are  
 you now?"  
 "You are that Psyche" Cyril said  
 again,  
 "The mother of the sweetest little  
 maid,  
 That ever crowd'd for kisses."  
 "Out upon it!"  
 She answer'd, "peace! and why should  
 I not play  
 The Spartan Mother with emotion, be  
 The Lucius Junius Brutus of my kind?  
 Him you call great: he for the common weal,  
 The fading politics of mortal Rome,  
 As I might slay this child, if good need  
 were,  
 Slew both his sons: and I, shall I, on  
 whom  
 The secular emancipation turns  
 Of half this world, be swerved from  
 right to save  
 A prince, a brother? a little will I  
 yield.  
 Best so, perchance, for us, and well  
 for you.

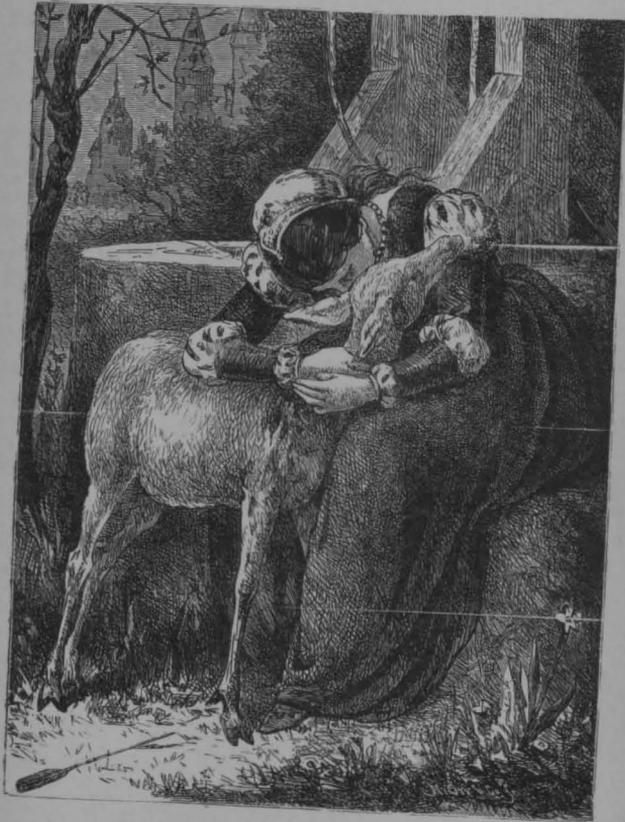
O hard, when love and duty clash! I  
 fear  
 My conscience will not count me fleck-  
 less; yet—  
 Hear my conditions: promise (other-  
 wise  
 You perish) as you came, to slip away,  
 To-day, to-morrow, soon: it shall be  
 said,  
 These women were too barbarous,  
 would not learn;  
 They fled, who might have shamed us:  
 promise, all."

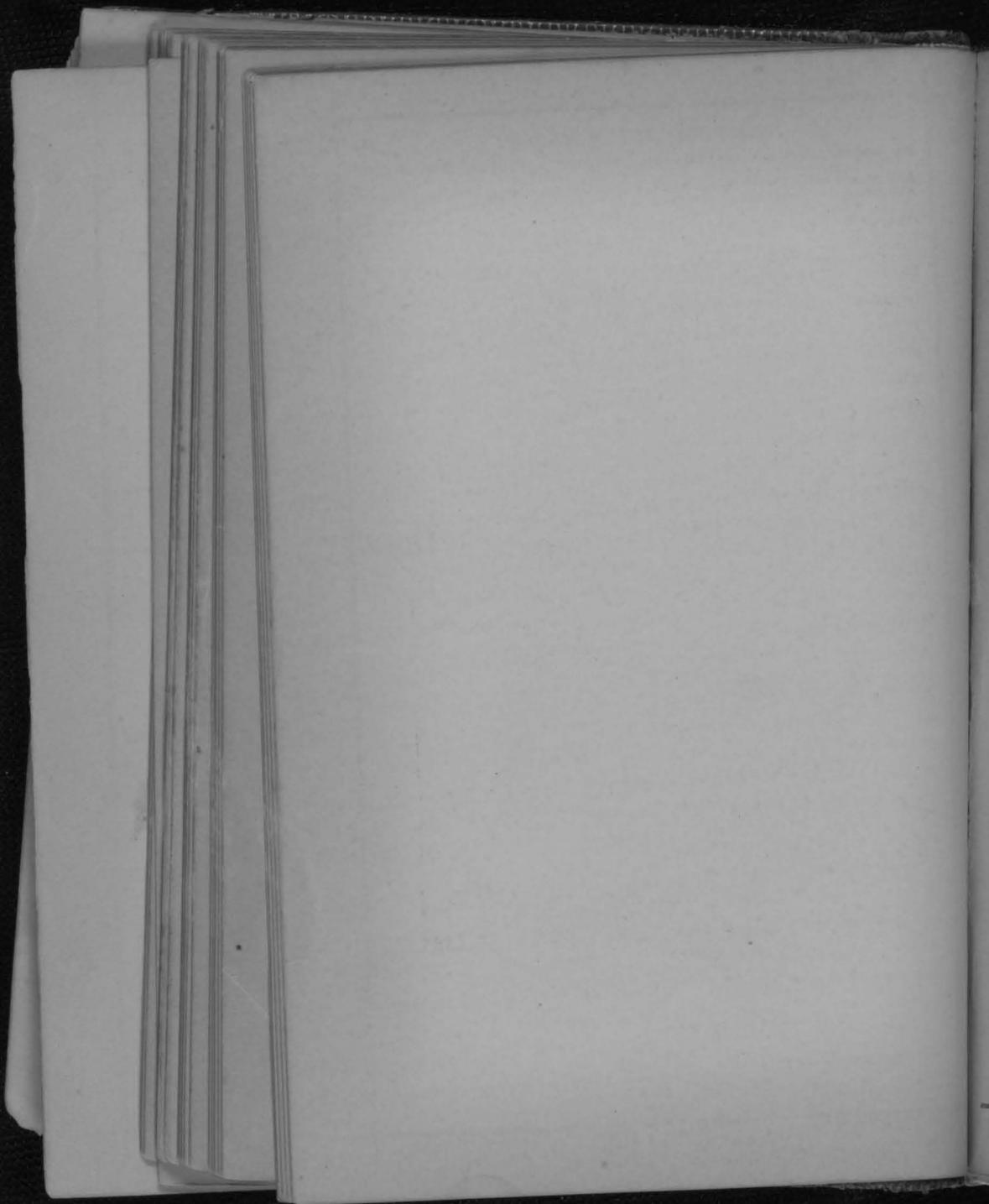
What could we else, we promised  
 each; and she,  
 Like some wild creature newly-caged,  
 commenced  
 At to-and-fro, so pacing till she paused  
 By Florian; holding out her lily arms  
 Took both his hands, and smiling faint  
 ly said:  
 "I knew you at the first: tho' you have  
 grown  
 You scarce have alter'd: I am sad and  
 glad  
 To see you, Florian. I give thee to  
 death  
 My brother! it was duty spoke, not I.  
 My needful seeming harshness, pardon  
 it.  
 Our mother, is she well?"  
 With that she kiss'd  
 His forehead, then, a moment after,  
 clung  
 About him, and betwixt them blos-  
 som'd up  
 From out a common vein of memory  
 Sweet household talk, and phrases of  
 the hearth.  
 And far allusion, till the gracious dews  
 Began to glisten and to fall: and while  
 They stood, so rapt, we gazing, came a  
 voice,  
 "I brought a message here from Lady  
 Blanche."  
 Back started she, and turning round  
 we saw  
 The Lady Blanche's daughter where  
 she stood,  
 Melissa, with her hand upon the lock,  
 A rosy blonde, and in a college gown,  
 That clad her like an April daffodilly  
 (Her mother's color) with her lips apart,  
 And all her thoughts as fair within her  
 eyes,  
 As bottom agates seen to wave and  
 float  
 In crystal currents of clear morning  
 seas.  
 So stood that same fair creature at  
 the door.  
 Then Lady Psyche "Ah—Melissa—  
 you!  
 You heard us?" and Melissa, "O par-  
 don me;  
 I heard, I could not help it, did not  
 wish:  
 But, dearest Lady, pray you fear me  
 not,

Nor think I bear that heart within my  
breast,  
To give three gallant gentlemen to  
death."  
"I trust you" said the other "for we  
two  
Were always friends, none closer, elm  
and vine :  
But yet your mother's jealous temper-  
ament—  
Let not your prudence, dearest, drowse,  
or prove  
The Danaïd of a leaky vase, for fear  
This whole foundation ruin, and I lose  
My honor, these their lives." "Ah,  
fear me not"  
Replied Melissa "no—I would not tell,  
No, not for all Aspasia's cleverness,  
No, not to answer, Madam, all those  
hard things  
That Sheba came to ask of Solomon."  
"Be it so" the other "that we still  
may lead  
The new light up, and culminate in  
peace,  
For Solomon may come to Sheba yet."  
Said Cyril "Madam, he the wisest man  
Feasted the woman wisest then, in  
halls  
Of Lebanonian cedar: nor should you  
(Tho' madam you should answer, we  
would ask)  
Less welcome find among us, if you  
came  
Among us, debtors for our lives to you,  
Myself for something more." He said  
not what,  
But "Thanks," she answer'd "go: we  
have been too long  
Together: keep your hoods about the  
face ;  
They do so that affect abstraction here,  
Speak little; mix not with the rest ;  
and hold  
Your promise: all, I trust, may yet be  
well."

We turn'd to go, but Cyril took the  
child,  
And held her round the knees against  
his waist, [peter,  
And blew the swoll'n cheek of a trum-  
While Psyche watch'd them, smiling,  
and the child  
Push'd her flat hand against his face  
and laugh'd ;  
And thus our conference closed.  
And then we stroll'd  
For half the day thro' stately theatres  
Bench'd crescent-wise. In each we sat,  
we heard  
The grave Professor. On the lecture  
slate  
The circle rounded under female hands  
With flawless demonstration: follow'd  
then  
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,  
With scraps of thundrous Epic lilted  
out  
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies

And quoted odes, and jewels five-  
words-long  
That on the stretch'd forefinger of all  
Time  
Sparkle for ever: then we dipt in all  
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,  
The total chronicles of man, the mind,  
The morals, something of the frame,  
the rock,  
The star, the bird, the fish, the shell,  
the flower,  
Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,  
And whatsoever can be taught and  
known ;  
Till like three horses that have broken  
fence,  
And glutted all night long breast-deep  
in corn,  
We issued gorged with knowledge, and  
I spoke :  
"Why, Sirs, they do all this as well as  
we."  
"They hunt old trails" said Cyril  
"very well ;  
But when did woman ever yet invent?"  
"Ungracious!" answer'd Florian,  
"have you learnt  
No more from Psyche's lecture, you  
that talk'd  
The trash that made me sick, and  
almost sad?"  
"O trash!" he said "but with a kernel  
in it.  
Should I not call her wise, who made  
me wise ?  
And learnt? I learnt more from her  
in a flash,  
Than if my brainpan were an empty  
hull,  
And every Muse tumbled a science in.  
A thousand hearts lie fallow in these  
halls,  
And round these halls a thousand baby  
loves  
Fly twanging headless arrows at the  
hearts,  
Whence follows many a vacant pang ;  
but O  
With me, Sir, enter'd in the bigger boy,  
The Head of all the golden-shafted firm,  
The long-limb'd lad that had a Psyche  
too ;  
He cleft me thro' the stomacher; and  
now  
What think you of it, Florian? do I  
chase  
The substance or the shadow? will it  
hold?  
I have no sorcerer's malison on me,  
No ghostly huntings like his High-  
ness. I  
Flatter myself that always everywhere  
I know the substance when I see it.  
Well,  
Are castles shadows? Three of them?  
Is she  
The sweet proprietress a shadow? If  
not,  
Shall those three castles patch my tat-  
ter'd coat?





For dear are those three castles to my  
wants,  
And dear is sister Psyche to my heart,  
And two dear things are one of double  
worth,  
And much I might have said, but that  
my zone  
Unmann'd me: then the Doctors! O  
to hear  
The Doctors! O to watch the thirsty  
plants  
Imbibing! once or twice I thought to  
roar,  
To break my chain, to shake my mane:  
but thou,  
Modulate me, Soul of mincing mim-  
icry!  
Make liquid tremble of that bassoon,  
my throat;  
Abase those eyes that ever loved to  
meet  
Star-sisters answering under crescent  
brows;  
Abate the stride, which speaks of man,  
and loose  
A flying charm of blushes o'er this  
cheek,  
Where they like swallows coming out  
of time  
Will wonder why they came; but hark  
the bell  
For dinner, let us go!"  
And in we stream'd  
Among the columns, pacing staid and  
still  
By twos and threes, till all from end  
to end  
With beauties every shade of brown  
and fair  
In colors gayer than the morning mist,  
The long hall glitter'd like a bed of  
flowers.  
How might a man not wander from  
his wits  
Pierced thro' with eyes, but that I  
kept mine own  
Intent on her, who rapt in glorious  
dreams,  
The second-sight of some Astrean age,  
Sat compass'd with professors: they,  
the while,  
Discuss'd a doubt and tost it to and  
fro:  
A clamor thicken'd, mixt with inmost  
terms  
Of art and science: Lady Blanche  
alone  
Of faded form and haughtiest linea-  
ments,  
With all her autumn tresses falsely  
brown,  
Shot sidelong daggers at us, a tiger-  
cat  
In act to spring.  
At last a solemn grace  
Concluded, and we sought the gardens:  
there  
One walk'd reciting by herself, and  
one  
In this hand held a volume as to read,

And smoothed a petted peacock down  
with that:  
Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by,  
Or under arches of the marble bridge  
Hung, shadow'd from the heat: some  
hid and sought  
In the orange thickets: others tost a  
ball  
Above the fountain-jets, and back  
again  
With laughter: others lay about the  
lawns,  
Of the older sort, and murmur'd that  
their May  
Was passing: what was learning unto  
them?  
They wish'd to marry; they could rule  
a house;  
Men hated learned women: but we  
three  
Sat muffled like the Fates; and often  
came  
Melissa hitting all we saw with shafts  
Of gentle satire, kin to charity,  
That harm'd not: then day droopt;  
the chapel bells  
Call'd us: we left the walks; we mixt  
with those  
Six hundred maidens clad in purest  
white  
Before two streams of light from wall  
to wall,  
While the great organ almost burst his  
pipes,  
Groaning for power, and rolling thro'  
the court  
A long melodious thunder to the sound  
Of solemn psalms, and silver litanies,  
The work of Ida, to call down from  
Heaven  
A blessing on her labors for the world.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me;  
While my little one, while my pretty  
one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Father will come to his babe in the  
nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon:  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty  
one, sleep.

III.

MORN in the white wake of the morn-  
ing star  
Came furrowing all the orient into  
gold.

We rose, and each by other drest with  
care  
Descended to the courts that lay three  
parts  
In shadow, but the Muses' heads were  
touch'd  
Above the darkness from their native  
East.

There while we stood beside the  
fount, and watch'd  
Or seem'd to watch the dancing bubble,  
approach'd  
Melissa, tinged with wan from lack of  
sleep,  
Or grief, and glowing round her dewy  
eyes

The circled Iris of a night of tears ;  
"And fly" she cried, "O fly, while yet  
you may !  
My mother knows : " and when I ask'd  
her "how"  
"My fault" she wept "my fault ! and  
yet not mine ;  
Yet mine in part. O hear me, pardon  
me.

My mother, 't is her wont from night to  
night  
To rail at Lady Psyche and her side.  
She says the Princess should have been  
the Head,  
Herself and Lady Psyche the two arms ;  
And so it was agreed when first they  
came ;  
But Lady Psyche was the right hand  
now,

And she the left, or not, or seldom used ;  
Hers more than half the students, all  
the love.

And so last night she fell to canvass  
you :  
Her countrywomen ! she did not envy  
her.

'Who ever saw such wild barbarians ?  
Girls ?— more like men !' and at these  
words the snake,

My secret, seem'd to stir within my  
breast ;  
And oh, Sirs, could I help it, but my  
cheek

Began to burn and burn, and her lynx  
eye  
To fix and make me hotter, till she  
laugh'd :

'O marvellously modest maiden, you !  
Men ! girls, like men ! why, if they  
had been men

You need not set your thoughts in ru-  
bric thus  
For wholesale comment.' Pardon, I  
am shamed

That I must needs repeat, for my ex-  
cuse  
What looks so little graceful : 'men'  
(for still

My mother went revolving on the word)  
'And so they are,—very like men in-  
deed—

And with that woman closeted for  
hours !'

Then came these dreadful words out  
one by one,

'Why—these—*are*—men !' I shud-  
der'd : 'and you know it.'

'O ask me nothing,' I said : 'And she  
knows too,

And she conceals it.' So my mother  
clutch'd

The truth at once, but with no word  
from me ;

And now thus early risen she goes to  
inform

The Princess : Lady Psyche will be  
crush'd ;

But you may yet be sav'd, and there-  
fore fly :

But heal me with your pardon ere you  
go."

"What pardon, sweet Melissa, for a  
blush ?"

Said Cyril : "Pale one, blush again :  
than wear

Those lilies, better blush our lives  
away.

Yet let us breathe for one hour more  
in Heaven"

He added, "lest some classic Angel  
speak

In scorn of us, 'they mounted, Gany-  
medes,

To tumble, Vulcans, on the second  
morn.'

But I will melt this marble into wax  
To yield us farther furlough : " and he  
went.

Melissa shook her doubtful curls,  
and thought

He scarce would prosper. "Tell us,"  
Florian ask'd,

"How grew this feud betwixt the right  
and left."

"O long ago," she said, "betwixt these  
two

Division smoulders hidden ; 't is my  
mother,

Too jealous, often fretful as the wind  
Pent in a crevice : much I bear with  
her :

I never knew my father, but she says  
(God help her) she was wedded to a  
fool ;

And still she rail'd against the state of  
things.

She had the care of Lady Ida's youth,  
And from the Queen's decease she  
brought her up.

But when your sister came she won the  
heart

Of Ida : they were still together, grew  
(For so they said themselves) inoscu-  
lated ;

Consonant chords that shiver to one  
note ;

One mind in all things : yet my mother  
still

Affirms your Psyche thieved her the-  
ories,

And angled with' them for her pupil's  
love:  
She calls her plagiarist; I know not  
what:  
But I must go: I dare not tarry" and  
light,  
As flies the shadow of a bird, she fled.

Then murmur'd Florian gazing after  
her.  
"An open-hearted maiden, true and  
pure.

If I could love, why this were she:  
how pretty  
Her blushing was, and how she blush'd  
again,

As if to close with Cyril's random wish:  
Not like your Princess cramm'd with  
erring pride,  
Nor like poor Psyche whom she drags  
in tow."

"The crane," I said, "may chatter  
of the crane,  
The dove may murmur of the dove,  
but I

An eagle clang an eagle to the sphere.  
My princess, O my princess! true she  
errs,

But in her own grand way: being her-  
self

Three times more noble than three-  
score of men,

She sees herself in every woman else,  
And so she wears her error like a crown  
To blind the truth and me: for her,  
and her,

Hebes are they to hand ambrosia, mix  
The nectar; but — ah she — whene'er  
she moves

The Samian Herè rises and she speaks  
A Memnon smitten with the morning  
Sun."

So saying from the court we paced,  
and gain'd

The terrace ranged along the Northern  
front,

And leaning there on those balusters,  
high

Above the empurpled champaign,  
drank the gale

That blown about the foliage under-  
neath.

And sated with the innumerable rose,  
Beat balm upon our eyelids. Hither  
came

Cyril, and yawning "O hard task," he  
cried;

"No fighting shadows here! I forced  
a way

Thro' solid opposition crabb'd and  
gnarl'd.

Better to clear prime forests, heave  
and thump

A league of street in summer solstice  
down,

Than hammer at this reverend gentle-  
woman.

I knock'd and, bidden, enter'd; found  
her there

At point to move, and settled in her  
eyes

The green malignant light of coming  
storm.

Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-  
oil'd,

As man's could be; yet maiden-meek  
I pray'd

Concealment: she demanded who we  
were,

And why we came? I fabled nothing  
fair,

But, your example pilot, told her all.  
Up went the hush'd amaze of hand and  
eye.

But when I dwelt upon your old affi-  
ance,

She answer'd sharply that I talk'd  
astray.

I urged the fierce inscription on the  
gate,

And our three lives. True—we had  
limed ourselves

With open eyes, and we must take the  
chance.

But such extremes, I told her, well  
might harm

The woman's cause, 'Not more than  
now,' she said,

'So puzzled as it is with favoritism.'  
I tried the mother's heart. Shame

might befall

Melissa, knowing, saying not she knew:  
Her answer was 'Leave me to deal  
with that.'

I spoke of war to come and many  
deaths,

And she replied, her duty was to speak,  
And duty duty, clear of consequences.

I grew discouraged, Sir; but since I  
knew

No rock so hard but that a little wave  
May beat admission in a thousand  
years,

I recommenced; 'Decide not ere you  
pause.

I find you here but in the second place,  
Some say the third—the authentic  
foundress you.

I offer boldly: we will seat you highest:  
Wink at our advent: help my prince  
to gain

His rightful bride, and here I promise  
you

Some palace in our land, where you  
shall reign

The head and heart of all our fair she-  
world,

And your great name flow on with  
broadening time

For ever.' Well, she balanced this a  
little,

And told me she would answer us to-  
day,

Meantime be mute: thus much, not  
more I gain'd."

He ceasing, came a message from the  
Head.

"That afternoon the Princess rode to  
take  
The dip of certain strata to the North.  
Would we go with her? we should find  
the land  
Worth seeing; and the river made a  
fall  
Out yonder;" then she pointed on to  
where  
A double hill ran up his furrowy forks  
Beyond the thick-leaved platans of the  
vale.

Agreed to, this, the day fled on thro'  
all  
Its range of duties to the appointed  
hour.  
Then summon'd to the porch we went.  
She stood  
Among her maidens, higher by the  
head,  
Her back against a pillar, her foot on  
one  
Of those tame leopards. Kittenlike he  
roll'd  
And paw'd about her sandal. I drew  
near;  
I gazed. On a sudden my strange seiz-  
ure came  
Upon me, the weird vision of our house:  
The Princess Ida seem'd a hollow show,  
Her gay-furr'd cats a painted fantasy,  
Her college and her maidens, empty  
masks,  
And I myself the shadow of a dream,  
For all things were and were not. Yet  
I felt  
My heart beat thick with passion and  
with awe;  
Then from my breast the involuntary  
sigh  
Broke, as she smote me with the light  
of eyes  
That lent my knee desire to kneel, and  
shook  
My pulses, till to horse we got, and so  
Went forth in long retinue following  
up  
The river as it narrow'd to the hills.

I rode beside her and to me she said:  
"O friend, we trust that you esteem'd  
us not  
Too harsh to your companion yester-  
morn;  
Unwillingly we spake." "No—not to  
her,"  
I answer'd, "but to one of whom we  
spake  
Your Highness might have seem'd the  
thing you say."  
"Again?" she cried, "are you ambas-  
saddresses  
From him to me? we give you, being  
strange,  
A license; speak, and let the topic  
die."

I stammer'd that I knew him—could  
have wish'd—

"Our king expects—was there no pre-  
contract?  
There is no truer-hearted—ah, you  
seem  
All he prefigured, and he could not  
see  
The bird of passage flying south but  
long'd  
To follow: surely, if your Highness  
keep  
Your purport, you will shock him ev'n  
to death,  
Or baser courses, children of despair."

"Poor boy" she said "can he not  
read—no books?  
Quoit, tennis, ball—no games? nor  
deals in that  
Which men delight in, martial exer-  
cise?  
To nurse a blind ideal like a girl,  
Methinks he seems no better than a  
girl;  
As girls were once, as we ourself  
have been:  
We had our dreams; perhaps he mixt  
with them:  
We touch on our dead self, nor shun  
to do it,  
Being other—since we learnt our mean-  
ing here,  
To lift the woman's fall'n divinity  
Upon an even pedestal with man."

She paused, and added with a haugh-  
tier smile  
"And as to precontracts, we move, my  
friend,  
At no man's beck, but know ourself  
and thee,  
O Vashti, noble Vashti! Summon'd out  
She kept her state, and left the drunk-  
en king  
To brawl at Shushan underneath the  
palms."

"Alas your Highness breathes full  
East," I said,  
"On that which leans to you. I know  
the Prince,  
I prize his truth: and then how vast a  
work  
To assail this gray pre-eminence of  
man!  
You grant me license; might I use it?  
think;  
Ere half be done perchance your life  
may fall;  
Then comes the feebler heiress of your  
plan,  
And takes and ruins all; and thus your  
pains  
May only make that footprint upon  
sand  
Which old recurring waves of preju-  
dice  
Resmooth to nothing: might I dread  
that you,  
With only Fame for spouse and your  
great deeds

For issue, yet may live in vain, and  
 miss,  
 Meanwhile, what every woman counts  
 her due,  
 Love, children, happiness?"

And she exclaim'd,  
 "Peace, you young savage of the  
 Northern wild!  
 What! tho' your Prince's love were  
 like a God's,  
 Have we not made ourself the sacri-  
 fice?  
 You are bold indeed: we are not talk'd  
 to thus:  
 Yet will we say for children, would  
 they grew  
 Like field-flowers everywhere! we like  
 them well:  
 But children die; and let me tell you,  
 girl,  
 Howe'er you babble, great deeds can-  
 not die;  
 They with the sun and moon renew  
 their light  
 Forever, blessing those that look on  
 them.  
 Children—that men may pluck them  
 from our hearts,  
 Kill us with pity, break us with our-  
 selves—  
 O—children—there is nothing upon  
 earth  
 More miserably than she that has a son  
 And sees him err: nor would we work  
 for fame;  
 Tho' she perhaps might reap the ap-  
 plause of Great,  
 Who learns the one *POU STO* whence  
 after-hands  
 May move the world, tho' she herself  
 effect  
 But little: wherefore up and act, nor  
 shrink  
 For fear our solid aim be dissipated  
 By frail successors. Would, indeed,  
 we had been,  
 In lieu of many mortal flies, a race  
 Of giants living, each, a thousand  
 years,  
 That we might see our own work out,  
 and watch  
 The sandy footprint harden into  
 stone."

I answer'd nothing, doubtful in my-  
 self  
 If that strange Poet-princess with her  
 grand  
 Imaginations might at all be won.  
 And she broke out interpreting my  
 thoughts:

"No doubt we seem a kind of mon-  
 ster to you;  
 We are used to that: for women, up  
 till this  
 Cramp'd under worse than South-sea-  
 isle taboo,  
 Dwarfs of the gynæceum, fail so far  
 In high desire, they know not, cannot  
 guess

How much their welfare is a passion  
 to us.  
 If we could give them surer, quicker  
 proof—  
 Oh if our end were less achievable  
 By slow approaches, than by single act  
 Of immolation, any phase of death,  
 We were as prompt to spring against  
 the pikes,  
 Or down the fiery gulf as talk of it,  
 To compass our dear sisters' liberties."

She bow'd as if to veil a noble tear;  
 And up we came to where the river  
 sloped  
 To plunge in cataract, shattering on  
 black blocks  
 A breadth of thunder. O'er it shook  
 the woods,  
 And danced the color, and, below,  
 stuck out  
 The bones of some vast bulk that lived  
 and roar'd  
 Before man was. She gazed awhile  
 and said,  
 "As these rude bones to us, are we to her  
 That will be." "Dare we dream of  
 that," I ask'd,  
 "Which wrought us, as the workman  
 and his work,  
 That practice betters?" "How," she  
 cried, "you love  
 The metaphysics! read and earn our  
 prize,  
 A golden brooch: beneath an emerald  
 plane  
 Sits Diotima, teaching him that died  
 Of hemlock; our device; wrought to  
 the life;  
 She rapt upon her subject, he on her:  
 For there are schools for all." "And  
 yet" I said  
 "Methinks I have not found among  
 them all  
 One anatomic." "Nay, we thought of  
 that,"  
 She answer'd, "but it pleased us not:  
 in truth  
 We shudder but to dream our maids  
 should ape  
 Those monstrous males that carve the  
 living hound,  
 And cram him with the fragments of  
 the grave,  
 Or in the dark dissolving human heart,  
 And holy secrets of this microcosm,  
 Dabbling a shameless hand with  
 shameful jest,  
 Encarnalize their spirits: yet we know  
 Knowledge is knowledge, and this mat-  
 ter hangs:  
 Howbeit ourself, foreseeing casualty,  
 Nor willing men should come among  
 us, learnt,  
 For many weary moons before we  
 came,  
 This craft of healing Were you sick,  
 ourself  
 Would tend upon you. To your ques-  
 tion now,

Which touches on the workman and  
his work.

Let there be light and there was light :  
't is so :

For was, and is, and will be, are but is ;  
And all creation is one act at once,  
The birth of light : but we that are not  
all,

As parts, can see but parts, now this,  
now that,

And live, perforce, from thought to  
thought, and make

One act a phantom of succession : thus  
Our weakness somehow shapes the  
shadow, Time ;

But in the shadow will we work, and  
mould

The woman to the fuller day."

She spake  
With kindled eyes : we rode a league  
beyond,

And, o'er a bridge of pinewood cross-  
ing, came

On flowery levels underneath the crag,  
Full of all beauty. "O how sweet" I  
said

(For I was half-oblivious of my mask)  
"To linger here with one that loved  
us," "Yea"

She answer'd "or with fair philo-  
sophies

That lift the fancy ; for indeed these  
fields

Are lovely, lovelier not the Elysian  
lawns,

Where paced the Demigods of old, and  
saw

The soft white vapor streak the crown-  
ed towers

Built to the Sun : " then, turning to  
her maids,

"Pitch our pavilion here upon the  
sward ;

Lay out the viands." At the word,  
they raised

A tent of satin, elaborately wrought  
With fair Coriuna's triumph ; here she  
stood,

Engirt with many a florid maiden-  
check,

The woman - conqueror ; woman - con-  
quer'd there

The bearded Victor of ten-thousand  
hymns,

And all the men mourn'd at his side :  
but we

Set forth to climb ; then, climbing,  
Cyril kept

With Psyche, with Melissa Florian, I  
With mine affianced. Many a little  
hand

Glanced like a touch of sunshine on  
the rocks,

Many a light foot shone like a jewel set  
in the dark crag : and then we turn'd,  
we wound

About the cliffs, the copses, out and in,  
Hammering and clinking, chattering  
stony names

Of shale and hornblende, rag and trap  
and tuff,

Amygdaloid and trachyte, till the Sun  
Grew broader toward his death and  
fell, and all

The rosy heights came out above the  
lawns.

The splendor falls on castle walls

And snowy summits old in story :  
The long light shakes across the lakes,

And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes  
flying,

Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying,  
dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going !

O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfdand faintly blow-  
ing !

Blow, let us hear the purple glens re-  
plying :

Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying,  
dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,

They faint on hill or field or river :  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,

And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes  
flying,

And answer, echoes, answer, dying,  
dying, dying.

## IV.

"THERE sinks the nebulous star we  
call the Sun,

If that hypothesis of theirs be sound"  
Said Ida ; "let us down and rest ;"  
and we

Down from the lean and wrinkled pre-  
cipices,

By every coppice-feather'd chasm and  
cleft,

Dropt thro' the ambrosial gloom to  
where below

No bigger than a glow-worm shone the  
tent

Lamp-lit from the inner. Once she  
lean'd on me,

Descending ; once or twice she lent her  
hand,

And blissful palpitations in the blood,  
Stirring a sudden transport rose and  
fell.

But when we planted level feet and  
dipt

Beneath the satin dome and enter'd in,  
There leaning deep in broider'd down  
we sank

Our elbows : on a tripod in the midst  
A fragrant flame rose, and before us  
glow'd

Fruit, blossom, viand, amber wine, and  
gold.

Then she "Let some one sing to us ;  
lightlier move

The minutes fledged with music :” and  
a maid,  
Of those beside her, smote her harp,  
and sang.

“Tears, idle tears, I know not what  
they mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine  
despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the  
eyes,  
In looking on the happy Autumn-  
fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no  
more.

“Fresh as the first beam glittering  
on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the  
underworld,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the  
verge ;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no  
more.

“Ah, sad and strange as in dark sum-  
mer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken’d  
birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmer-  
ing square ;  
So sad, so strange, the days that are  
no more.

“Dear as remember’d kisses after  
death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy  
feign’d  
On lips that are for others ; deep as  
love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all  
regret ;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no  
more.”

She ended with such passion that the  
tear,  
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring  
pearl  
Lost in her bosom : but with some dis-  
dain  
Answer’d the Princess “If indeed  
there haunt  
About the moulder’d lodges of the Past  
So sweet a voice and vague, fatal to  
men,  
Well needs it we should cram our ears  
with wool  
And so pace by : but thine are fancies  
hatch’d  
In silken-folded idleness ; nor is it  
Wiser to weep a true occasion lost,  
But trim our sails, and let old by-gones  
be,  
While down the streams that float us  
each and all  
To the issue, goes, like glittering bergs  
of ice,

Throne after throne, and molten on  
the waste  
Becomes a cloud : for all things serve  
their time  
Toward that great year of equal might  
and rights,  
Nor would I fight with iron laws, in  
the end  
Found golden : let the past be past ;  
let be  
Their cancell’d Babels : tho’ the rough  
kex break  
The starr’d mosaic, and the beard-  
blown goat  
Hang on the shaft, and the wild fig-  
tree split  
Their monstrous idols, care not while  
we hear  
A trumpet in the distance pealing  
news  
Of better, and Hope, a poisoning eagle,  
burns  
Above the unrisen morrow :” then to  
me ;  
“Know you no song of your own land,”  
she said,  
“Not such as moans about the retro-  
spect,  
But deals with the other distance and  
the hues  
Of promise ; not a death’s-head at the  
wine.”

Then I remember’d one myself had  
made,  
What time I watch’d the swallow  
winging south  
From mine own land, part made long  
since, and part  
Now while I sang, and maidenlike as  
far  
As I could ape their treble, did I sing.

“O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying  
South,  
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded  
eaves,  
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to  
thee.

“O tell her, Swallow, thou that  
knowest each,  
That bright and fierce and fickle is the  
South,  
And dark and true and tender is the  
North.

“O Swallow, Swallow, if I could  
follow, and light  
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and  
till,  
And cheep and twitter twenty million  
loves.

“O were I thou that she might take  
me in,  
And lay me on her bosom, and her  
heart  
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

“Why lingereth she to clothe her  
heart with love,

Delaying as the tender ash delays  
To clothe herself, when all the woods  
are green?

"O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood  
is flown:  
Say to her, I do but wanton in the  
South,  
But in the North long since my nest is  
made.

"O tell her, brief is life but love is  
long,  
And brief the sun of summer in the  
North,  
And brief the moon of beauty in the  
South.

"O Swallow, flying from the golden  
woods,  
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and  
make her mine,  
And tell her, tell her, that I follow  
thee."

I ceased, and all the ladies, each at  
each,  
Like the Ithacensian suitors in old  
time,  
Stared with great eyes, and laugh'd  
with alien lips,  
And knew not what they meant; for  
still my voice

Rang false: but smiling "Not for  
thee," she said,  
"O Bulbul, any rose of Gulistan  
Shall burst her veil: marsh-divers,  
rather, maid,  
Shall croak thee sister, or the meadow-  
crake

Grate her harsh kindred in the grass:  
and this  
A mere love-poem! O for such, my  
friend,  
We hold them slight: they mind us of  
the time

When we made bricks in Egypt.  
Knaves are men,  
That lute and flute fantastic tender-  
ness,

And dress the victim to the offering up.  
And paint the gates of Hell with Par-  
adise,  
And play the slave to gain the tyranny.  
Poor soul! I had a maid of honor once;  
She wept her true eyes blind for such  
a one.

A rogue of canzonets and serenades.  
I loved her. Peace be with her. She  
is dead.

So they blasphem'd the muse! but  
great is song  
Used to great ends: ourself have often  
tried

Valkyrian hymns, or into rhythm have  
dash'd  
The passion of the prophetess; for  
song

Is duer unto freedom, force and growth  
Of spirit than to junketing and love.  
Love is it? Would this same mock-  
love, and this

Mock-Hymen were laid up like winter  
bats,  
Till all men grew to rate us at our  
worth,  
Not vassals to be beat, nor petty babes  
To be dandled, no, but living wills,  
and spher'd  
Whole in ourselves and owed to none.  
Enough!  
But not to heaven play with profit,  
you,  
Know you no song, the true growth of  
your soil,  
That gives the manners of your coun-  
trywomen?"

She spoke and turn'd her sumptuous  
head with eyes  
Of shining expectation fixt on mine.  
Then while I dragg'd my brains for  
such a song,  
Cyril, with whom the bell-mouth'd  
glass had wrought,  
Or master'd by the sense of sport, be-  
gan  
To troll a careless, careless tavern-  
catch

Of Moll and Meg, and strange experi-  
ences  
Unmeet for ladies. Florian nodded at  
him,  
I frowning: Psyche flush'd and wann'd  
and shook:

The lilylike Melissa droop'd her brows;  
"Forbear" the Princess cried; "For-  
bear, Sir" I;  
And heated thro' and thro' with wrath  
and love,

I smote him on the breast; he started  
up;

There rose a shriek as of a city sack'd;  
Melissa clamor'd "Flee the death;"

"To horse"  
Said Ida; "home! to horse!" and  
fled, as flies

A troop of snowy doves athwart the  
dusk,

When some one batters at the dove-  
cote doors,

Disorderly the women. Alone I stood  
With Florian, cursing Cyril, vext at  
heart,

In the pavilion: there like parting  
hopes

I heard them passing from me: hoof  
by hoof,

And every hoof a knell to my desires,  
Clang'd on the bridge; and then an-  
other shriek,

"The Head, the Head, the Princess, O  
the Head!"

For blind with rage she miss'd the  
plank, and roll'd

In the river. Out I sprang from glow  
to gloom:

There whirl'd her white robe like a  
blossom'd branch

Rapt to the horrible fall: a glance I  
gave,

No more; but woman-vested as I was

Plunged; and the flood drew; yet I  
 caught her; then  
 Oaring one arm, and bearing in my left  
 The weight of all the hopes of half the  
 world,  
 Strove to buffet to land in vain. A  
 tree  
 Was half-disrooted from his place and  
 stoop'd  
 To drench his dark locks in the gurg-  
 ling wave  
 Mid-channel. Right on this we drove  
 and caught,  
 And grasping down the boughs I gain'd  
 the shore.

There stood her maidens glimmer-  
 ingly group'd  
 In the hollow bank. One reaching for-  
 ward drew  
 My burden from mine arms; they cried  
 "she lives:"  
 They bore her back into the tent: but I,  
 So much a kind of shame within me  
 wrought,  
 Not yet endured to meet her opening  
 eyes  
 Nor found my friends; but push'd  
 alone on foot  
 (For since her horse was lost I left her  
 mine)  
 Across the woods, and less from In-  
 dian craft  
 Than beelike instinct hiveward, found  
 at length  
 The garden portals. Two great statues,  
 Art  
 And Science, Caryatids, lifted up  
 A weight of emblem, and betwixt were  
 valves  
 Of open-work in which the hunter rued  
 His rash intrusion, manlike, but his  
 brows  
 Had sprouted, and the branches there-  
 upon  
 Spread out at top, and grimly spiked  
 the gates.

A little space was left between the  
 horns,  
 Thro' which I clamber'd o'er at top  
 with pain,  
 Dropt on the sward, and up the linden  
 walks,  
 And, tost on thoughts that changed  
 from hue to hue,  
 Now poring on the glowworm, now the  
 star,  
 I paced the terrace, till the Bear had  
 wheel'd  
 Thro' a great arc his seven slow suns. A step  
 Of lightest echo, then a loftier form  
 Than female, moving thro' the uncer-  
 tain gloom,  
 Disturb'd me with the doubt "if this  
 were she"  
 But it was Florian. "Hist O Hist," he  
 said,

"They seek us: out so late is out of  
 routes.

Moreover 'seize the strangers' is the  
 cry.

How came you here?" I told him:  
 "I" said he,

"Last of the train, a moral leper, I,  
 To whom none spake, half-sick at  
 heart, return'd.

Arriving all confused among the rest  
 With hooded brows I crept into the  
 hall,

And, couch'd behind a Judith, under-  
 neath

The head of Holofernes peep'd and saw.  
 Girl after girl was call'd to trial: each  
 Disclaim'd all knowledge of us: last  
 of all,

Melissa: trust me, Sir, I pitied her.  
 She, question'd if she knew us men,  
 at first

Was silent; closer prest, denied it not:  
 And then, demanded if her mother  
 knew,

Or Psyche, she affirm'd not, or denied:  
 From whence the Royal mind, familiar  
 with her,

Easily gather'd either guilt. She sent  
 For Psyche, but she was not there; she  
 call'd

For Psyche's child to cast it from the  
 doors;

She sent for Blanche to accuse her  
 face to face;

And I slipt out: but whither will you  
 now?

And where are Psyche, Cyril? both are  
 fled:

What, if together? that were not so  
 well.

Would rather we had never come! I  
 dread

His wildness, and the chances of the  
 dark."

"And yet," I said, "you wrong him  
 more than I

That struck him: this is proper to the  
 clown,

Tho' smock'd, or furr'd and purpled,  
 still the clown.

To harm the thing that trusts him, and  
 to shame

That which he says he loves: for Cyril,  
 how'er

He deal in frolic, as to-night—the song  
 Might have been worse and sinn'd in  
 grosser lips

Beyond all pardon—as it is, I hold  
 These flashes on the surface are not he.

He has a solid base of temperament:  
 But as the waterlily starts and slides

Upon the level in little puffs of wind  
 Tho' anchor'd to the bottom, such is  
 he."

Scarce had I ceased when from a  
 tamarisk near

Two Proctors leapt upon us, crying,  
 "Names:"

He, standing still, was clutch'd; but I  
 began  
 To thril the musky-circled mazes,  
 wind  
 And double in and out the boles, and  
 race  
 By all the fountains: fleet I was of  
 foot:  
 Before me shower'd the rose in flakes;  
 behind  
 I heard the puff'd pursuer; at mine  
 ear  
 Bubbled the nightingale and heeded  
 not,  
 And secret laughter tickled all my soul.  
 At last I hook'd my ankle in a vine,  
 That clasp'd the feet of a Mnemosyne,  
 And falling on my face was caught and  
 known.

They haled us to the Princess where  
 she sat  
 High in the hall; above her droop'd a  
 lamp,  
 And made the single jewel on her brow  
 Burn like the mystic fire on a mast-  
 head,  
 Prophet of storm: a handmaid on each  
 side  
 Bow'd toward her, combing out her  
 long black hair  
 Damp from the river; and close be-  
 hind her stood  
 Eight daughters of the plough, stronger  
 than men,  
 Huge women blow'd with health, and  
 wind, and rain,  
 And labor. Each was like a Druid  
 rock;  
 Or like a spire of land that stands apart  
 Cleft from the main, and wall'd about  
 with mews.

Then, as we came, the crowd divid-  
 ing clove  
 An advent to the throne: and there  
 beside,  
 Half-naked as if caught at once from  
 bed  
 And tumbled on the purple footcloth,  
 lay  
 The lily-shining child; and on the left,  
 Bow'd on her palms and folded up  
 from wrong,  
 Her round white shoulder shaken with  
 her sobs,  
 Melissa knelt; but Lady Blanche erect  
 Stood up and spake, an affluent orator.

"It was not thus, O Princess, in old  
 days:  
 You prized my counsel, lived upon my  
 lips:  
 I led you then to all the Castalies;  
 I fed you with the milk of every Muse;  
 I loved you like this kneeler, and you  
 me  
 Your second mother: those were gra-  
 cious times.  
 Then came your new friend: you be-  
 gan to change—

I saw it and grieved—to slacken and to  
 cool:  
 Till taken with her seeming openness  
 You turn'd your warmer currents all  
 to her,  
 To me you froze: this was my need  
 for all.  
 Yet I bore up in part from ancient love,  
 And partly that I hoped to win you  
 back,  
 And partly conscious of my own deserts,  
 And partly that you were my civil head,  
 And chiefly you were born for some-  
 thing great,  
 In which I might your fellow-worker  
 be,  
 When time should serve; and thus a  
 noble scheme  
 Grew up from seed we two long since  
 had sown;  
 In us true growth, in her a Jonah's  
 gourd,  
 Up in one night and due to sudden sun:  
 We took this palace; but even from  
 the first  
 You stood in your own light and dark-  
 en'd mine.  
 What student came but that you planed  
 her path  
 To Lady Psyche, younger, not so wise,  
 A foreigner, and I your countrywoman,  
 I your old friend and tried, she new in  
 all?  
 But still her lists were swell'd and mine  
 were lean;  
 Yet I bore up in hope she would be  
 known:  
 Then came these wolves: they knew  
 her: they endured,  
 Long-closeted with her the yestermorn,  
 To tell her what they were, and she to  
 hear:  
 And me none told: not less to an eye  
 like mine,  
 A lidless watcher of the public weal,  
 Last night, their mask was patent, and  
 my foot  
 Was to you: but I thought again: I  
 fear'd  
 To meet a cold 'We thank you, we shall  
 hear of it  
 From Lady Psyche:' you had gone to  
 her,  
 She told, perforce; and winning easy  
 grace,  
 No doubt, for slight delay, remain'd  
 among us  
 In our young nursery still unknown,  
 the stem  
 Less grain than touchwood, while my  
 honest heat  
 Were all miscounted as malignant  
 haste  
 To push my rival out of piace and  
 power.  
 But public use required she should be  
 known;  
 And since my oath was ta'en for public  
 use,  
 I broke the letter of it to keep the sense.

I spoke not then at first, but watch'd  
 them well,  
 Saw that they kept apart, no mischief  
 done;  
 And yet this day (tho' you should hate  
 me for it)  
 I came to tell you; found that you had  
 gone,  
 Ridd'n to the hills, she likewise: now,  
 I thought,  
 That surely she will speak; if not,  
 then I:  
 Did she? These monsters blazon'd  
 what they were.  
 According to the coarseness of their  
 kind,  
 For thus I hear; and known at last  
 (my work)  
 And full of cowardice and guilty  
 shame,  
 I grant in her some sense of shame,  
 she flies;  
 And I remain on whom to wreak your  
 rage,  
 I, that have lent my life to build up  
 yours,  
 I that have wasted here health, wealth,  
 and time,  
 And talents, I—you know it—I will  
 not boast:  
 Dismiss me, and I prophesy your plan,  
 Divorced from my experience, will be  
 chaff  
 For every gust of chance, and men will  
 say  
 We did not know the real light, but  
 chased  
 The wisp that flickers where no foot  
 can tread."

She ceased: the Princess answer'd  
 coldly "Good:  
 Your oath is broken: we dismiss you:  
 go.  
 For this lost lamb (she pointed to the  
 child)  
 Our mind is changed: we take it to  
 ourself."

Thereat the Lady stretch'd a vulture  
 throat,  
 And shot from crooked lips a haggard  
 smile.  
 "The plan was mine. I built the nest!"  
 she said  
 "To hatch the cuckoo. Rise!" and  
 stoop'd to updrag  
 Melissa: she, half on her mother  
 propt,  
 Half-drooping from her, turn'd her  
 face, and cast  
 A liquid look on Ida, full of prayer,  
 Which melted Florian's fancy as she  
 hung,  
 A Niobean daughter, one arm out,  
 Appealing to the bolts of Heaven; and  
 while  
 We gazed upon her came a little stir  
 About the doors, and on a sudden  
 rush'd

Among us, out of breath, as one pur-  
 sued,  
 A woman-post in flying raiment. Fear  
 Stared in her eyes, and chalk'd her  
 face, and wing'd  
 Her transit to the throne, whereby she  
 fell  
 Delivering seal'd despatches which the  
 Head  
 Took half-amazed, and in her lion's  
 mood  
 Tore open, silent we with blind sur-  
 mise  
 Regarding, while she read, till over  
 brow  
 And cheek and bosom brake the wrath-  
 ful bloom  
 As of some fire against a stormy cloud,  
 When the wild peasant rights himself,  
 the rick  
 Flames, and his anger reddens in the  
 heavens;  
 For anger most it seem'd, while now  
 her breast,  
 Beaten with some great passion at her  
 heart,  
 Palpitated, her hand shook, and we  
 heard  
 In the dead hush the papers that she  
 held  
 Rustle: at once the lost lamb at her  
 feet  
 Sent out a bitter bleating for its dam;  
 The plaintive cry jarr'd on her ire;  
 she crush'd  
 The scrolls together, made a sudden  
 turn  
 As if to speak, but, utterance failing  
 her,  
 She whirl'd them on to me, as who  
 should say  
 "Read," and I read—two letters—one  
 her sire's.

"Fair daughter, when we sent the  
 Prince your way  
 We knew not your ungracious laws,  
 which learnt,  
 We, conscious of what temper you are  
 built,  
 Came all in haste to hinder wrong, but  
 fell  
 Into his father's hands, who has this  
 night,  
 You lying close upon his territory,  
 Slept round and in the dark invested  
 you,  
 And here he keeps me hostage for his  
 son."

The second was my father's running  
 thus:  
 "You have our son: touch not a hair  
 of his head:  
 Render him up unscathed: give him  
 your hand:  
 Cleave to your contract: tho' indeed  
 we hear  
 You hold the woman is the better man;  
 A rampant heresy, such as if it spread

Would make all women kick against  
 their Lords  
 Thro' all the world, and which might  
 well deserve  
 That we this night should pluck your  
 palace down;  
 And we will do it, unless you send us  
 back  
 Our son, on the instant, whole."  
 So far I read;  
 And then stood up and spoke impet-  
 uously.

"O not to pry and peer on your re-  
 serve,  
 But led by golden wishes, and a hope  
 The child of regal compact, did I break  
 Your precinct; not a scorner of your  
 sex  
 But venerator, zealous it should be  
 All that it might be: hear me, for I  
 bear,  
 Tho' man, yet human, whatsoe'er your  
 wrongs,  
 From the flaxen curl to the gray lock a  
 life  
 Less mine than yours: my nurse would  
 tell me of you;  
 I babbled for you, as babies for the  
 moon,  
 Vague brightness; when a boy, you  
 stoop'd to me  
 From all high places, lived in all fair  
 lights,  
 Came in long breezes rapt from inmost  
 south  
 And blown to inmost north; at eve and  
 dawn  
 With Ida, Ida, Ida, rang the woods;  
 The leader wildswan in among the  
 stars  
 Would clang it, and lapt in wreaths of  
 glowworm light  
 The mellow breaker murmur'd Ida.  
 Now,  
 Because I would have reach'd you,  
 had you been  
 Sphered up with Cassiopæia, or the en-  
 throned  
 Persephone in Hades, now at length,  
 Those winters of abeyance all worn  
 out,  
 A man I came to see you: but, indeed,  
 Not in this frequency can I lend full  
 tongue,  
 O noble Ida, to those thoughts that  
 wait  
 On you, their centre: let me say but  
 this,  
 That many a famous man and woman,  
 town  
 And landskip, have I heard of, after  
 seen  
 The dwarfs of presage; tho' when  
 known, there grew  
 Another kind of beauty in detail  
 Made them worth knowing: but in you  
 I found  
 My boyish dream involved and dazzled  
 down

And master'd, while that after-beauty  
 makes  
 Such head from act to act, from hour  
 to hour,  
 Within me, that except you slay me  
 here,  
 According to your bitter statute-book,  
 I cannot cease to follow you, as they  
 say  
 Tho' seal does music; who desire you  
 more  
 Than growing boys their manhood;  
 dying lips,  
 With many thousand matters left to  
 do,  
 The breath of life; O more than poor  
 men wealth,  
 Than sick men health—yours, yours,  
 not mine—but half  
 Without you; with you, whole; and of  
 those halves  
 You worthiest; and howe'er you block  
 and bar  
 Your heart with system out from mine,  
 I hold  
 That it becomes no man to nurse de-  
 spair,  
 But in the teeth of clench'd antagon-  
 isms  
 To follow up the worthiest till he die.  
 Yet that I came not all unauthorized  
 Behold your father's letter."  
 On one knee  
 Kneeling, I gave it, which she caught,  
 and dash'd  
 Unopen'd at her feet: a tide of fierce  
 Invective seem'd to wait behind her  
 lips,  
 As waits a river level with the dam  
 Ready to burst and flood the world  
 with foam:  
 And so she would have spoken, but  
 there rose  
 A hubbub in the court of half the  
 maids  
 Gather'd together: from the illumined  
 hall  
 Long lanes of splendor slanted o'er a  
 press  
 Of snowy shoulders, thick as herded  
 ewes,  
 And rainbow robes, and gems and gem-  
 like eyes,  
 And gold and golden heads; they to  
 and fro  
 Fluctuated, as flowers in storm, some  
 red, some pale,  
 All open-mouth'd, all gazing to the  
 light,  
 Some crying there was an army in the  
 land,  
 And some that men were in the very  
 walls,  
 And some they cared not; till a clamor  
 grew  
 As of a new-world Babel, woman-built,  
 And worse-confounded: high above  
 them stood  
 The placid marble Muses, looking  
 peace.

Not peace she look'd, the Head: but  
 rising up  
 Robed in the long night of her deep  
 hair, so  
 To the open window moved, remaining  
 there  
 Fixt like a beacon-tower above the  
 waves  
 Of tempest, when the crimson-rolling  
 eye  
 Glares ruin, and the wild birds on the  
 light  
 Dash themselves dead. She stretch'd  
 her arms and call'd  
 across the tumult and the tumult fell.

"What fear ye brawlers? am not I  
 your Head?  
 On me, me, me, the storm first breaks:  
 I dare  
 All these male thunderbolts: what is  
 it ye fear?  
 Peace! there are those to avenge us  
 and they come:  
 If not,—myself were like enough, O  
 girls,  
 To unfurl the maiden banner of our  
 rights,  
 And clad in iron burst the ranks of  
 war,  
 Or, falling, protomartyr of our cause,  
 Die: yet I blame you not so much for  
 fear;  
 Six thousand years of fear have made  
 you that  
 From which I would redeem you; but  
 for those  
 That stir this hubbub—you and you—I  
 know  
 Your faces there in the crowd— to-  
 morrow morn  
 We hold a great convention: then shall  
 they  
 That love their voices more than duty,  
 learn  
 With whom they deal, dismiss'd in  
 shame to live  
 No wiser than their mothers, house-  
 hold stuff,  
 Live chattels, mincers of each other's  
 fame,  
 Full of weak poison, turnspits for the  
 clown,  
 The drunkard's football, laughing-  
 stocks of Time,  
 Whose brains are in their hands and  
 in their heels,  
 But fit to flout, to dress, to dance, to  
 thrum,  
 To tramp, to scream, to burnish, and  
 to scour,  
 For ever slaves at home and fools  
 abroad."

She, ending, waved her hands: there-  
 at the crowd  
 Muttering, dissolved: then with a  
 smile, that look'd  
 A stroke of cruel sunshine on the cliff,

When all the glens are drown'd in  
 azure gloom  
 Of thunder-shower, she floated to us  
 and said:

"You have done well and like a  
 gentleman,  
 And like a prince: you have our  
 thanks for all:  
 And you look well too in your woman's  
 dress:  
 Well have you done and like a gentle-  
 man.  
 You saved our life: we owe you bitter  
 thanks:  
 Better have died and spilt our bones in  
 the flood—  
 Then men had said—but now—What  
 hinders me  
 To take such bloody vengeance on you  
 both?—  
 Yet since our father—Wasps in our  
 good hive,  
 You would-be quenchers of the light  
 to be,  
 Barbarians, grosser than your native  
 bears—  
 O would I had his sceptre for one  
 hour!  
 You that have dared to break our  
 bound, and gull'd  
 Our servants, wrong'd and lied and  
 thwarted us—  
 I wed with thee! I bound by precon-  
 tract  
 Your bride, your bonds-lave! not tho'  
 all the gold  
 That veins the world were pack'd to  
 make your crown,  
 And every spoken tongue should lord  
 you, Sir,  
 Your falsehood and yourself are hate-  
 ful to us:  
 I trample on your offers and on you:  
 Begone: we will not look upon you  
 more.  
 Here, push them out at gates."  
 In wrath she spake.  
 Then those eight mighty daughters of  
 the plough  
 Bent their broad faces toward us and  
 address'd  
 Their motion: twice I sought to plead  
 my cause,  
 But on my shoulder hung their heavy  
 hands,  
 The weight of destiny: so from her face  
 They push'd us, down the steps, and  
 thro' the court,  
 And with grim laughter thrust us out  
 at gates.

We cross'd the street and gain'd a  
 petty mound  
 Beyond it, whence we saw the lights  
 and heard  
 The voices murmuring. While I list-  
 en'd, came  
 On a sudden the weird seizure and the  
 doubt:

I seem'd to move among a world of  
ghosts ;  
The Princess with her monstrous wo-  
man-guard,  
The jest and earnest working side by  
side,  
The cataract and the tumult and the  
kings  
Were shadows ; and the long fantastic  
night  
With all its doings had and had not  
been,  
And all things were and were not.  
This went by  
As strangely as it came, and on my  
spirits  
Settled a gentle cloud of melancholy ;  
Not long ; I shook it off ; for spite of  
doubts  
And sudden ghostly shadowings I was  
one  
To whom the touch of all mischance  
but came  
As night to him that sitting on a hill  
Sees the midsummer, midnight, Nor-  
way sun  
Set into sunrise : then we moved away.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,  
That beat to battle where he stands ;  
Thy face across his fancy comes,  
And gives the battle to his hands :  
A moment, while the trumpets blow,  
He sees his brood about thy knee ;  
The next, like fire he meets the foe,  
And strikes him dead for thine and  
thee.

So Lilia sang : we thought her half-  
possess'd,  
She struck such warbling fury thro' the  
words ;  
And, after, feigning pique at what she  
call'd  
The raillery, or grotesque, or false sub-  
blime—  
Like one that wishes at a dance to  
change  
The music—clapt her hands and cried  
for war,  
Or some grand fight to kill and make  
an end :  
And he that next inherited the tale  
Half turning to the broken statue, said,  
" Sir Ralph has got your colors : if I  
prove  
Your knight, and fight your battle  
what for me ?"  
It chanced, her empty glove upon the  
tomb  
Lay by her like a model of her hand.  
She took it and she flung it. " Fight"  
she said,  
" And make us all we would be, great  
and good."  
He knighthlike in his cap instead of  
casque,  
A cap of Tyrol borrow'd from the hall,

Arranged the favor, and assumed the  
Prince.

v.

Now, scarce three paces measured from  
the mound,  
We stumbled on a stationary voice,  
And " Stand, who goes ?" " Two from  
the palace" I  
" The second two : they wait," he said,  
" pass on ;  
His Highness wakes : " and one, that  
clash'd in arms,  
By glimmering lanes and walls of cau-  
vas, led  
Threading the soldier-city, till we  
heard  
The drowsy folds of our great ensign  
shake  
From blazon'd lions o'er the imperial  
tent  
Whispers of war.

Entering, the sudden light  
Dazed me half-blind : I stood and  
seem'd to hear,  
As in a poplar grove when a light wind  
wakes  
A lisping of the innumerable leaf and  
dies,  
Each hissing in his neighbor's ears ;  
and then  
A strangled titter, out of which there  
brake  
On all sides, clamoring etiquette to  
death,  
Unmeasured mirth ; while now the two  
old kings  
Began to wag their baldness up and  
down,  
The fresh young captains flash'd their  
glittering teeth,  
The huge bush-bearded Barons heaved  
and blew,  
And slain with laughter roll'd the  
gilded Squire.

At length my Sire, his rough cheek  
wet with tears,  
Panted from weary sides " King, you  
are free !  
We did but keep you surety for our  
son,  
If this be he,—or a draggled mawkin,  
thou,  
'That tends her bristled granters in the  
sludge : "  
For I was drench'd with ooze, and torn  
with briars,  
More crumpled than a poppy from the  
sheath,  
And all one rag, disprinc'd from head  
to heel.  
Then some one sent beneath his vault-  
ed palm  
A whisper'd jest from some one near  
him " Look,  
He has been among his shadows." " Sa-  
tan take  
The old women and their shadows ! "  
(thus the King

Roar'd "make yourself a man to fight  
with men.  
Go: Cyril told us all."  
As boys that slink  
From ferule and the trespass-chiding  
eye,  
Away we stole, and transient in a trice  
From what was left of faded woman-  
slough  
To sheathing splendors and the golden  
scale  
Of harness, issued in the sun, that now  
Leapt from the dewy shoulders of the  
Earth,  
And hit the Northern hills. Here Cyril  
met us,  
A little shy at first, but by and by  
We twain with mutual pardon ask'd  
and given  
For stroke and song, resolder'd peace,  
whereon  
Follow'd his tale. Amazed he flew away  
Thro' the dark land, and later in the  
night  
Had come on Psyche weeping: "then  
we fell  
Into your father's hand, and there she  
lies,  
But will not speak, nor stir."  
He show'd a tent  
A stone-shot off: we enter'd in, and  
there  
Among piled arms and rough accoutre-  
ments,  
Pitiful sight, wrapp'd in a soldier's  
cloak,  
Like some sweet sculpture draped from  
head to foot,  
And push'd by rude hands from its  
pedestal,  
All her fair length upon the ground  
she lay:  
And at her head a follower of the camp,  
A charr'd and wrinkled piece of wo-  
manhood,  
Sat watching like a watcher by the  
dead.

Then Florian knelt, and "Come" he  
whisper'd to her,  
"Lift up your head, sweet sister: lie  
not thus.  
What have you done but right? you  
could not slay  
Me, nor your prince. look up: be com-  
forted:  
Sweet is it to have done the thing one  
ought,  
When fall'n in darker ways." And  
likewise I:  
"Be comforted: have I not lost her  
too,  
In whose least act abides the nameless  
charm  
That none has else for me?" She  
heard, she moved,  
She moan'd, a folded voice; and up  
she sat,  
And raised the cloak from brows as  
pale and smooth

As those that mourn half-shrouded  
over death  
In deathless marble. "Her" she said  
"my friend—  
Parted from her—betray'd her cause  
and mine—  
Where shall I breathe? why kept ye  
not your faith?  
O base and bad! what comfort? none  
for me!"  
To whom remorseful Cyril "Yet I pray  
Take comfort: live, dear lady, for your  
child!"  
At which she lifted up her voice and  
cried,  
"Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah  
my child,  
My one sweet child, whom I shall see  
no more!  
For now will cruel Ida keep her back;  
And either she will die from want of  
care,  
Or sicken with ill-usage, when they  
say  
The child is hers—for every little  
fault,  
The child is hers; and they will beat  
my girl  
Remembering her mother: O my flow-  
er!  
Or they will take her, they will make  
her hard,  
And she will pass me by in after-life  
With some cold reverence worse than  
were she dead.  
Ill mother that I was to leave her  
there,  
To lag behind, scared by the cry they  
made,  
The horror of the shame among them  
all:  
But I will go and sit beside the doors,  
And make a wild petition night and  
day,  
Until they hate to hear me like a wind  
Wailing for ever, till they open to me,  
And lay my little blossom at my feet,  
My babe, my sweet Aglaia, my one  
child:  
And I will take her up and go my way,  
And satisfy my soul with kissing her:  
Ah! what might that man not deserve  
of me,  
Who gave me back my child?" "Be  
comforted"  
Said Cyril "you shall have it:" but  
again  
She veil'd her brows, and prone she  
sank, and so  
Like tender things that being caught  
feign death,  
Spoke not, nor stir'd.  
By this a murmur ran  
Thro' all the camp and inward raced  
the scouts  
With rumor of Prince Arac hard at  
hand.  
We left her by the woman, and with-  
out

Found the gray kings at parle: and  
 "Look you" cried  
 My father "that our compact be full-  
 fill'd:  
 You have spoilt this child; she laughs  
 at you and man:  
 She wrongs herself, her sex, and me  
 and him:  
 But red-faced war has rods of steel and  
 fire;  
 She yields, or war."  
 Then Gama turn'd to me:  
 "We fear, indeed, you spent a stormy  
 time  
 With our strange girl: and yet they  
 say that still  
 You love her. Give us, then, your  
 mind at large:  
 How say you, war or not?"  
 O king," I said, "Not war, if possible,  
 of war,  
 The desecrated shrine, the trampled  
 year,  
 The smouldering homestead, and the  
 household flower  
 Torn from the lintel—all the common  
 wrong—  
 A smoke go up thro' which I loom to  
 her  
 Three times a monster: now she light-  
 ens scorn  
 At him that mars her plan, but then  
 would hate  
 (And every voice she talk'd with ratify  
 it,  
 And every face she look'd on justify it)  
 The general foe. More soluble is this  
 knot,  
 By gentleness than war. I want her  
 love.  
 What were I nigher this altho' we  
 dash'd  
 Your cities into shards with catapults,  
 She would not love;—or brought her  
 chain'd, a slave,  
 The lifting of whose eyelash is my lord,  
 Not ever would she love; but brood-  
 ing turn  
 The book of scorn, till all my fitting  
 chance  
 Were caught within the record of her  
 wrongs,  
 And crush'd to death: and rather, Sire,  
 than this  
 I would the old God of war himself  
 were dead,  
 Forgotten, rusting on his iron hills,  
 Rotting on some wild shore with ribs  
 of wreck,  
 Or like an old-world mammoth bulk'd  
 in ice,  
 Not to be molten out."  
 And roughly spake  
 My father, "Tut, you know them not,  
 the girls.  
 Boy, when I hear you prate I almost  
 think  
 That idiot legend credible. Look you,  
 Sir!

Man is the hunter; woman is his game:  
 The sleek and shining creatures of the  
 chase,  
 We hunt them for the beauty of their  
 skins;  
 They love us for it, and we ride them  
 down.  
 Wheedling and siding with them! Out!  
 for shame!  
 Boy, there's no rose that's half so dear  
 to them  
 As he that does the thing they dare  
 not do,  
 Breathing and sounding beauteous bat-  
 tle, comes  
 With the air of the trumpet round him,  
 and leaps in  
 Among the women, snares them by the  
 score  
 Flatter'd and fluster'd, wins, tho'  
 dash'd with death  
 He reddens what he kisses: thus I won  
 Your mother, a good mother, a good  
 wife,  
 Worth winning; but this firebrand—  
 gentleness  
 To such as her! if Cyril spake her true,  
 To catch a dragon in a cherry net,  
 To trip a tigress with a gossamer,  
 Were wisdom to it."  
 "Yea but Sire," I cried,  
 "Wild natures need wise curbs. The  
 soldier? No:  
 What dares not Ida do that she should  
 prize  
 The soldier? I beheld her when she rose  
 The yesternight, and storming in ex-  
 tremes  
 Stood for her cause, and flung defiance  
 down  
 Gagelike to man, and had not shunn'd  
 the death,  
 No, not the soldier's: yet I hold her,  
 king,  
 True woman: but you clash them all  
 in one,  
 That have as many differences as we.  
 The violet varies from the lily as far  
 As oak from elm: one loves the sol-  
 dier, one  
 The silken priest of peace, one this,  
 one that,  
 And some unworthily; their sinless  
 faith,  
 A maiden moon that sparkles on a sty,  
 Glorifying clown and satyr; whence  
 they need  
 More breadth of culture: is not Ida  
 right?  
 They worth it? truer to the law with-  
 in?  
 Severer in the logic of a life?  
 Twice as magnetic to sweet influences  
 Of earth and heaven? and she of whom  
 you speak,  
 My mother, looks as whole as some  
 serene  
 Creation minted in the golden moods  
 Of sovereign artists; not a thought, a  
 touch,

THE PRINCESS: A MEDLEY.

163

But pure as lines of green that streak  
the white  
Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves ;  
I say,  
Not like the piebald miscellany, man,  
Bursts of great heart and slips in sen-  
sual mire,  
But whole and one : and take them all-  
in-all,  
Were we ourselves but half as good, as  
kind,  
As truthful, much that Ida claims as  
right  
Had ne'er been mooted, but as frankly  
theirs  
As dues of Nature. To our point : not  
war :  
Lest I lose all."  
"Nay, nay, you spake but sense,"  
Said Gama. "We remember love our-  
self  
In our sweet youth ; we did not rate  
him then  
This red-hot iron to be shaped with  
blows.  
You talk almost like Ida : she can talk ;  
And there is something in it as you say :  
But you talk kindlier : we esteem you  
for it.—  
He seems a gracious and a gallant  
Prince,  
I would he had our daughter : for the  
rest,  
Our own detention, why, the causes  
weigh'd,  
Fatherly fears—you used us courte-  
ously—  
We would do much to gratify your  
Prince—  
We pardon it ; and for your ingress  
here  
Upon the skirt and fringe of our fair  
land,  
You did but come as goblins in the  
night,  
Nor in the furrow broke the plough-  
man's head,  
Nor burnt the grange, nor buss'd the  
milking-maid,  
Nor robb'd the farmer of his bowl of  
cream :  
But let your Prince (our royal word  
upon it,  
He comes back safe) ride with us to  
our lines,  
And speak with Arac : Arac's word is  
thrice <sup>done—</sup>  
As ours with Ida : something may be  
I know not what—and ours shall see  
us friends.  
You, likewise, our late guests, if so  
you will,  
Follow us : who knows ? we four may  
build some plan  
Foursquare to opposition."  
Here he reach'd  
White hands of farewell to my sire,  
who growl'd  
An answer which, half-muffled in his  
beard,

Let so much out as gave us leave to  
go.  
Then rode we with the old king  
across the lawns  
Beneath huge trees, a thousand rings  
of Spring  
In every bole, a song on every spray  
Of birds (that piped their Valentines,  
and woke  
Desire in me to infuse my tale of love  
In the old king's ears, who promised  
help, and oozed  
All o'er with honey'd answer as we  
rode ;  
And blossom-fragrant slept the heavy  
dews  
Gather'd by night and peace, with each  
light air  
On our mall'd heads : but other  
thoughts than Peace  
Burnt in us, when we saw the embat-  
tled squares,  
And squadrons of the Prince, tramp-  
ling the flowers  
With clamor : for among them rose a cry  
As if to greet the king ; they made a  
halt ;  
The horses yell'd ; they clash'd their  
arms ; the drum  
Beat ; merrily-blowing shrill'd the  
martial fife ;  
And in the blast and bray of the long  
horn  
And serpent-throated bugle, undulated  
The banner : anon to meet us lightly  
pranced  
Three captains out ; nor ever had I seen  
Such thews of men : the midmost and  
the highest  
Was Arac : all about his motion clung  
The shadow of his sister, as the beam  
Of the East, that play'd upon them,  
made them glance  
Like those three stars of the airy  
Giant's zone,  
That glitter burnish'd by the frosty  
dark ;  
And as the fiery Sirius alters hue,  
And bickers into red and emerald,  
shone  
Their morions, wash'd with morning,  
as they came.  
And I that prated peace, when first I  
heard  
War-music, felt the blind wildbeast of  
force,  
Whose home is in the sinews of a man,  
Stir in me as to strike : then took the  
king  
His three broad sons ; with now a wan-  
dering hand  
And now a pointed finger, told them all.  
A common light of smiles at our dis-  
guise  
Broke from their lips, and, ere the  
windy jest  
Had labor'd down within his ampli-  
lungs,

The genial giant, Arac, roll'd himself  
Thrice in the saddle, then burst out in  
words.

"Our land invaded, 'sdeath! and he  
himself

Your captive, yet my father will not  
war:

And, 'sdeath! myself, what care I, war  
or no?"

But then this question of your troth re-  
mains:

And there's a downright honest mean-  
ing in her:

She flies too high, she flies too high!  
and yet

She ask'd but space and fairplay for her  
scheme;

She prest and prest it on me—I my-  
self,

What know I of these things? but,  
life and soul!

I thought her half-right talking of her  
wrongs;

I say she flies too high, 'sdeath! what  
of that?"

I take her for the flower of woman-  
kind,

And so I often told her, right or wrong,  
And, Prince, she can be sweet to those  
she loves,

And, right or wrong, I care not: this is  
all,

I stand upon her side: she made me  
swear it—

'Sdeath—and with solemn rites by  
candle-light—

Swear by St. something—I forget her  
name—

Her that talked down the fifty wisest  
men;

She was a princess too; and so I swore.  
Come, this is all; she will not: waive  
your claim:

If not, the foughten field, what else, at  
once

Decides it, 'sdeath! against my father's  
will."

I lagg'd in answer loath to render up  
My precontract, and loath by brainless  
war

To cleave the rift of difference deeper  
yet;

Till one of those two brothers, half  
aside

And fingering at the hair about his lip,  
To prick us on to combat "Like to  
like!

The woman's garment hid the woman's  
heart."

A taunt that clench'd his purpose like  
a blow!

For fiery-short was Cyril's counter-  
scoff,

And sharp I answer'd, touch'd upon  
the point

Where idle boys are cowards to their  
shame,

"Decide it here: why not? we are  
three to three."

Then spake the third, "But three to  
three? no more?"

No more, and in our noble sister's  
cause?"

More, more, for honor: every captain  
waits

Hungry for honor, angry for his king.  
More, more, some fifty on a side, that  
each

May breathe himself, and quick! by  
overthrow

Of these or those, the question settled  
die."

"Yea" answered I "for this wild  
wreath of air,

This flake of rainbow flying on the  
highest

Foam of men's deeds—this honor, if  
ye will.

It needs must be for honor if at all:  
Since, what decision? if we fail, we fail,  
And if we win, we fail: she would not  
keep.

Her compact," "Sdeath! but we will  
send to her,"

Said Arac, "worthy reasons why she  
should

Bide by this issue: let our missive  
thru,"

And you shall have her answer by the  
word."

"Boys!" shrieked the old king, but  
vainlier than a hen

To her false daughters in the pool; for  
none

Regarded; neither seem'd there more  
to say:

Back rode we to my father's camp, and  
found

He thrice had sent a herald to the gates,  
To learn if Ida yet would cede our  
claim,

Or by denial flush her babbling wells  
With her own people's life: three times  
he went:

The first, he blew and blew, but none  
appear'd:

He batter'd at the doors; none came:  
the next,

An awful voice within had warn'd him  
thence:

The third, and those eight daughters  
of the plough

Came sallying thro' the gates, and  
caught his hair,

And so belabor'd him on rib and cheek  
They made him wild: not less one  
glance he caught

Thro' open doors of Ida station'd  
there

Unshaken, clinging to her purpose,  
firm

Tho' compass'd by two armies and the  
noise

Of arms; and standing like a stately  
Pine

Set in a cataract on an island-crag,

When storm is on the heights, and  
 right and left  
 Suck'd from the dark heart of the long  
 hills roll  
 The torrents, dash'd to the vale : and  
 yet her will  
 Bred will in me to overcome it or fall.  
 But when I told the king that I was  
 pledged  
 To fight in tourney for my bride, he  
 clash'd  
 His iron palms together with a cry ;  
 Himself would tilt it out among the  
 lads :  
 But overborne by all his bearded lords  
 With reasons drawn from age and  
 With state, perforce  
 He yielded, wroth and red, with fierce  
 demur :  
 And many a bold knight started up in  
 heat,  
 And swore to combat for my claim till  
 death.  
 All on this side the palace ran the  
 field  
 Flat to the garden-wall : and likewise  
 here,  
 Above the garden's glowing blossom-  
 belts,  
 A column'd entry shone and marble  
 stairs,  
 And great bronze valves, emboss'd  
 with Tomyris  
 And what she did to Cyrus after fight,  
 But now fast barr'd : so here upon the  
 flat  
 All that long morn the lists were ham-  
 mer'd up,  
 And all that morn the heralds to and  
 fro,  
 With message and defiance, went and  
 came ;  
 Last, Ida's answer, in a royal hand,  
 But shaken here and there, and roll-  
 ing words  
 Oration-like. I kiss'd it and I read.  
 " O brother, you have known the  
 pangs we felt,  
 What heats of indignation when we  
 heard  
 Of those that iron-cramp'd their wo-  
 men's feet :  
 Of lands in which at the altar the poor  
 bride  
 Gives her harsh groom for bridal-gift  
 a scourge ;  
 Of living hearts that crack within the  
 fire  
 Where smoulder their dead despots ;  
 and of those,—  
 Mothers,—that, all prophetic pity,  
 fling  
 Their pretty maids in the running  
 flood, and swoops  
 The vulture, beak and talon, at the  
 heart  
 Made for all noble motion : and I saw  
 That equal baseness lived in sleeker  
 times  
 With smoother men : the old leaven  
 leaven'd all :  
 Millions of throats would bawl for civil  
 rights,  
 No woman named : therefore I set my  
 face  
 Against all men, and lived but for  
 mine own.  
 Far off from men I built a fold for  
 them :  
 I stored it full of rich memorial :  
 I fenced it round with gallant insti-  
 tutes,  
 And biting laws to scare the beasts of  
 prey,  
 And prosper'd ; till a rout of saucy  
 boys  
 Brake on us at our books, and marr'd  
 our peace,  
 Mask'd like our maids, blustering I  
 know not what  
 Of insolence and love, some pretext  
 held  
 Of baby troth, invalid, since my will  
 Seal'd not the bond—the striplings !—  
 for their sport !—  
 I tamed my leopards : shall I not tame  
 these ?  
 Or you ? or I ? for since you think me  
 touch'd  
 In honor—what, I would not aught of  
 false—  
 Is not our cause pure ? and whereas I  
 know  
 Your prowess, Arac, and what mother's  
 blood  
 You draw from, fight ; you failing, I  
 abide  
 What end soever : fail you will not.  
 Still  
 Take not his life : he risk'd it for my  
 own ;  
 His mother lives : yet whatsoever you  
 do,  
 Fight and fight well ; strike and strike  
 home. O dear  
 Brothers, the woman's Angel guards  
 you, you  
 The sole men to be mingled with our  
 cause,  
 The sole men we shall prize in the  
 aftertime,  
 Your very armor hallow'd, and your  
 statues  
 Rear'd, sung to, when, this gad-fly  
 brush'd aside,  
 We plant a solid foot into the Time,  
 And mould a generation strong to move  
 With claim on claim from right to  
 right, till she  
 Whose name is yoked with children's,  
 know herself ;  
 And Knowledge in our own land make  
 her free,  
 And, ever following those two crowned  
 twins,  
 Commerce and conquest, shower the  
 fiery grain

Of freedom broadcast over all that  
orbs  
Between the Northern and the South-  
ern morn."

Then came a postscript dash'd across  
the rest.

"See that there be no traitors in your  
camp:

We seem a nest of traitors—none to  
trust

Since our arms fall'd—this Egypt-  
plague of men!

Almost our maids were better at their  
homes,

Than thus man-girdled here; indeed I  
think

Our chiefest comfort is the little child  
Of one unworthy mother; which she  
left:

She shall not have it back: the child  
shall grow

To prize the authentic mother of her  
mind.

I took it for an hour in mine own bed  
This morning: there the tender orphan  
hands

Felt at my heart, and seem'd to charm  
from thence

The wrath I nursed against the world:  
farewell."

I ceased; he said: "Stubborn, but  
she may sit

Upon a king's right hand in thunder-  
storms,

And breed up warriors! See now, tho'  
yourself

Be dazzled by the wildfire Love to  
sloughs

That swallow common sense, the spind-  
ling king,

This Gama swamp'd in lazy tolerance.  
When the man wants weight, the wo-  
man takes it up,

And topples down the scales; but this  
is fixt

As are the roots of earth and base of all;  
Man for the field and woman for the  
hearth:

Man for the sword and for the needle  
she:

Man with the head and woman with  
the heart:

Man to command and woman to obey;  
All else confusion. Look you! the gray  
mare

Is ill to live with, when her whinny  
shrills

From tile to scullery, and her small  
goodman

Shrinks in his arm-chair while the fires  
of Hell

Mix with his hearth: but you—she's  
yet a colt—

Take, break her: strongly groom'd and  
straitly curb'd

She might not rank with those detest-  
able

That let the bantling scald at home,  
and brawl

Their rights or wrongs like pothebs  
in the street.

They say she's comely; there's the  
fairer chance:

I like her none the less for rating at  
her!

Besides, the woman wed is not as we,  
But suffers change of frame. A lusty  
brace

Of twins may weed her of her folly.  
Boy,

The bearing and the training of a child  
is woman's wisdom."

Thus the hard old king:

I took my leave, for it was nearly noon:  
I peered upon her letter which I held,  
And on the little clause "take not his  
life:"

I mused on that wild morning in the  
woods,

And on the "Follow, follow, thou shalt  
win:"

I thought on all the wrathful king had  
said,

And how the strange betrothment was  
to end:

Then I remember'd that burnt sorcer-  
er's curse

That one should fight with shadow  
and should fall;

And like a flash the weird affection  
came:

King, camp, and college turn'd to hol-  
low shows;

I seem'd to move in old memorial tilts,  
And doing battle with forbidden  
ghosts,

To dream myself the shadow of a  
dream:

And ere I woke it was the point of  
noon,

The lists were ready. Empanopled  
and plumed

We enter'd in, and waited, fifty there  
Opposed to fifty, till the trumpet blared  
At the barrier like a wild horn in a  
land

Of echoes, and a moment, and once  
more

The trumpet, and again: at which the  
storm

Of galloping hoofs bare on the ridge of  
spears

And riders front to front, until they  
closed

In conflict with the crash of shivering  
points,

And thunder. Yet it seem'd a dream,  
I dream'd

Of fighting. On his haunches rose the  
steed,

And into fiery splinters leapt the lance,  
And out of stricken helmets sprang  
the fire.

Part sat like rocks: part reel'd but  
kept their seats:

Part roll'd on the earth and rose again  
and drew:





Part stumbled mixt with floundering  
horses. Down  
From those two bulks at Arac's side,  
and down  
From Arac's arm, as from a giant's flail,  
The large blows rain'd, as here and  
everywhere  
He rode the mellay, lord of the ringing  
lists,  
And all the plain,—brand, mace, and  
shaft, and shield—  
Shock'd, like an iron-clanging anvil  
bang'd  
With hammers; till I thought, can this  
be he  
From Gama's dwarfish loins? if this be  
so,  
The mother makes us most—and in my  
dream  
I glanced aside, and saw the palace-  
front  
Alive with fluttering scarfs and ladies'  
eyes,  
And highest, among the statues, statue-  
like,  
Between a cymbal'd Miriam and a Jael,  
With Psyche's babe, was Ida watching  
us,  
A single band of gold about her hair,  
Like a Saint's glory up in heaven: but  
she  
No saint—inexorable—no tenderness—  
Too hard, too cruel: yet she sees me  
fight,  
Yea, let her see me fall! with that I  
drave  
Among the thickest and bore down a  
Prince,  
And Cyril, one. Yea, let me make my  
dream  
All that I would, But that large-mould-  
ed man,  
His visage all agrin as at a wake,  
Made at me thro' the press, and stag-  
gering back  
With stroke on stroke the horse and  
horseman, came  
As comes a pillar of electric cloud,  
Flaying the roofs and sucking up the  
drains,  
And shadowing down the champaign  
till it strikes  
On a wood, and takes, and breaks, and  
cracks, and splits,  
And twists the grain with such a roar  
that Earth  
Reels, and the herdsmen cry; for  
everything  
Gave way before him: only Florian,  
he  
That loved me closer than his own  
right eye,  
Thrust in between; but Arac rode him  
down:  
And Cyril seeing it, push'd against the  
Prince,  
With Psyche's color round his helmet,  
tough,  
Strong, supple, sinew-corded, apt at  
arms;

But tougher, heavier, stronger, he that  
smote  
And threw him: last I spurr'd; I felt  
my veins  
Stretch with fierce heat; a moment  
hand to hand,  
And sword to sword, and horse to  
horse we hung,  
Till I struck out and shouted; the  
blade glanced;  
I did but shear a feather, and dream  
and truth  
Flow'd from me; darkness closed me;  
and I fell.

Home they brought her warrior dead—  
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stept,  
Took the face-cloth from the face;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee—  
Like summer tempest came her tears—  
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

## VI.

My dream had never died or lived  
again.  
As in some mystic middle state I lay;  
Seeing I saw not, hearing not I heard:  
Tho', if I saw not, yet they told me all  
So often that I speak as having seen.

For so it seem'd, or so they said to  
me,  
That all things grew more tragic and  
more strange;  
That when our side was vanquish'd  
and my cause  
For ever lost, there went up a great  
cry,  
The Prince is slain. My father heard  
and ran  
In on the lists, and there unlaced my  
casque  
And grovell'd on my body, and after  
him  
Came Psyche, sorrowing for Aglaia.

But high upon the palace Ida stood  
With Psyche's babe in arm: there on  
the roofs  
Like that great dame of Lapidoth she  
sang.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have  
fall'n: the seed,  
The little seed they laughed at in the  
dark,

Has risen and cleft the soil, and  
grown a bulk  
Of spanless girth, that lays on every  
side  
A thousand arms and rushes to the  
Sun.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have  
fall'n : they came ;  
The leaves were wet with women's  
tears : they heard  
A noise of songs they would not un-  
derstand :  
They mark'd it with the red cross to the  
fall,  
And would have strown it, and are  
fall'n themselves.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have  
fall'n : they came,  
The woodmen with their axes : lo the  
tree !  
But we will make it fagots for the  
hearth,  
And shape it plank and beam for roof  
and floor,  
And boats and bridges for the use of  
men.

"Our enemies have fall'n, have  
fall'n : they struck ;  
With their own blows they hurt them-  
selves, nor knew  
There dwelt an iron nature in the  
grain :  
The glittering axe was broken in their  
arms,  
Their arms were shatter'd to the shoul-  
der blade.

"Our enemies have fall'n, but this  
shall grow  
A night of Summer from the heat, a  
breadth  
Of Autumn, dropping fruits of power ;  
and roll'd  
With music in the growing breeze of  
Time,  
The tops shall strike from star to star,  
the fangs  
Shall move the stony bases of the  
world.

"And now, O maids, behold our sanctu-  
ary  
Is violate, our laws broken : fear we  
not  
To break them more in their behoof,  
whose arms  
Champion'd our cause and won it with  
a day  
Blanch'd in our annals, and perpetual  
feast,  
When dames and heroines of the gold-  
en year  
Shall strip a hundred hollows bare of  
Spring,  
To rain an April of ovation round  
Their statues, borne aloft, the three :  
but come,

We will be liberal, since our rights are  
won.  
Let them not lie in the tents with  
coarse mankind,  
Ill nurses ; but descend, and proffer  
these  
The brethren of our blood and cause,  
that there  
Lie bruised and maim'd, the tender  
ministries  
Of female hands and hospitality."

She spoke, and with the babe yet in  
her arms,  
Descending, burst the great bronzo  
valves, and led  
A hundred maids in train across the  
Park.  
Some cowl'd, and some bare-headed,  
on they came,  
Their feet in flowers, her loveliest : by  
them went  
The enamor'd air sighing, and on their  
curls  
From the high tree the blossom waver-  
ing fell,  
And over them the tremulous isles of  
light  
Slided, they moving under shade : but  
Blanche  
At distance follow'd : so they came :  
anon  
Thro' open field into the lists they  
wound  
Timorously ; and as the leader of the  
herd  
That holds a stately fretwork to the  
Sun,  
And follow'd up by a hundred airy  
does,  
Steps with a tender foot, light as on  
air,  
The lovely, lordly creature floated on  
To where her wounded brethren lay ;  
there stay'd ;  
Knelt on one knee,—the child on one,  
—and prest  
Their hands, and call'd them dear de-  
liverers,  
And happy warriors, and immortal  
names,  
And said "You shall not lie in the  
tents but here,  
And nursed by those for whom you  
fought, and served  
With female hands and hospitality."

Then, whether moved by this, or was  
it chance,  
She past my way. Up started from my  
side  
The old lion, glaring with his whelp-  
less eye,  
Silent ; but when she saw me lying  
stark,  
Dishelm'd and mute, and motionlessly  
pale,  
Cold ev'n to her, she sigh'd ; and when  
she saw

The haggard father's face and rever-  
 end heard  
 Of grisly twine, all dabbled with the  
 blood  
 Of his own son, shudder'd, a twitch of  
 pain  
 Tortured her mouth, and o'er her fore-  
 head past  
 A shadow, and her hue changed, and  
 she said:  
 "He saved my life: my brother slew  
 him for it."  
 No more: at which the king in bitter  
 scorn  
 Drew from my neck the painting and  
 the tress,  
 And held them up: she saw them, and  
 a day  
 Rose from the distance on her memory,  
 When the good Queen, her mother,  
 shore the tress  
 With kisses, ere the days of Lady  
 Blanche:  
 And then once more she look'd at my  
 pale face:  
 Till understanding all the foolish work  
 Of Fancy, and the bitter close of all,  
 Her iron will was broken in her mind;  
 Her noble heart was molten in her  
 breast;  
 She bow'd, she set the child on the  
 earth; she laid  
 A feeling finger on my brows, and  
 presently  
 "O Sire," she said, "he lives: he is  
 not dead:  
 O let me have him with my brethren  
 here  
 In our own palace: we will tend on him  
 Like one of these; if so, by any means,  
 To lighten this great clog of thanks,  
 that make  
 Our progress falter to the woman's  
 godl."  
 She said: but at the happy word "he  
 lives"  
 My father stoop'd, re-father'd o'er my  
 wounds,  
 So those two foes above my fall'n life.  
 With brow to brow like night and even-  
 ing mixt  
 Their dark and gray, while Psyche ever  
 stole  
 A little nearer, till the babe that by us,  
 Half-lapt in glowing gauze and golden  
 brede,  
 Lay like a new-fall'n meteor on the  
 grass,  
 Uncared for, spied its mother and began  
 A blind and babbling laughter, and to  
 dance  
 Its body, and reach its failing innocent  
 arms  
 And lazy lingering fingers. She the ap-  
 peal  
 Brook'd not, but clamoring out, "Mine  
 —mine—not yours;  
 It is not yours, but mine; give me the  
 child"  
 Ceased all on tremble: piteous was the  
 cry:  
 So stood the unhappy mother open-  
 mouth'd,  
 And turn'd each face her way: wan  
 was her cheek  
 With hollow watch, her blooming man-  
 tle torn,  
 Red grief and mother's hunger in her  
 eye,  
 And down dead-heavy sank her curls,  
 and half  
 The sacred mother's bosom, panting,  
 burst  
 The laces toward her babe; but she  
 nor cared  
 Nor knew it, clamoring on, till Ida  
 heard,  
 Look'd up, and rising slowly from me,  
 stood  
 Erect and silent, striking with her  
 glance  
 The mother, me, the child; but he  
 that lay  
 Beside us, Cyril, battered as he was,  
 Trail'd himself up on one knee; then  
 he drew  
 Her robe to meet his lips, and down  
 she look'd  
 At the arm'd man sideways, pitying as  
 it seem'd,  
 Or self-involved; but when she learnt  
 his face,  
 Remembering his ill-omen'd song,  
 arose  
 Once more thro' all her height, and  
 o'er him grew  
 Tall as a figure lengthen'd on the sand  
 When the tide ebbs in sunshine, and  
 he said:  
 "O fair and strong and terrible!  
 Lioness  
 That with your long locks play the  
 Lion's mane!  
 But Love and Nature, these are two  
 more terrible  
 And stronger. See, your foot is on our  
 necks,  
 We vanquish'd, you the Victor of your  
 will.  
 What would you more? give her the  
 child! remain  
 Orb'd in your isolation: he is dead,  
 Or all as dead: henceforth we let you  
 be:  
 Win you the hearts of women; and be-  
 ware  
 Lest, where you seek the common love  
 of these,  
 The common hate with the revolving  
 wheel  
 Should drag you down, and some great  
 Nemesis  
 Break from a darken'd future, crown'd  
 with fire,  
 And tread you out for ever: but how-  
 see'er  
 Fix'd in yourself, never in your own  
 arms

To hold your own, deny not hers to her,  
 Give her the child! O if, I say, you  
 keep  
 One pulse that beats true woman, if  
 you loved  
 The breast that fed or arm that dan-  
 dled you,  
 Or own one part of sense not flint to  
 prayer,  
 Give her the child! or if you scorn to  
 lay it,  
 Yourself, in hands so lately claspt with  
 yours,  
 Or speak to her, your dearest, her one  
 fault  
 The tenderness, not yours, that could  
 not kill,  
 Give me it: I will give it her."  
 He said:  
 At first her eye with slow dilation roll'd  
 Dry flame, she listening; after sank  
 and sank  
 And, into mournful twilight mellow-  
 ing, dwelt  
 Full on the child; she took it: "Pretty  
 bud!  
 Lily of the vale! half open'd bell of the  
 woods!  
 Sole comfort of my dark hour, when a  
 world  
 Of traitorous friend and broken system  
 made  
 No purple in the distance, mystery,  
 Pledge of a love not to be mine, fare-  
 well;  
 These men are hard upon us as of  
 old,  
 We two must part: and yet how fair  
 was I  
 To dream thy cause embraced in mine,  
 to think  
 I might be something to thee, when I  
 felt  
 Thy helpless warmth about my barren  
 breast  
 In the dead prime: but may thy mo-  
 ther prove  
 As true to thee as false, false, false to  
 me!  
 And, if thou needs must bear the yoke,  
 I wish it  
 Gentle as freedom"—here she kiss'd it:  
 then—  
 "All good go with thee! take it Sir"  
 and so  
 Laid the soft babe in his hard-mailed  
 hands,  
 Who turn'd half-round to Psyche as she  
 sprang  
 To meet it, with an eye that swum in  
 thanks;  
 Then felt it sound and whole from head  
 to foot,  
 And hugg'd, and never hugg'd it close  
 enough,  
 And in her hunger mouth'd and mum-  
 bled it,  
 And hid her bosom with it; after that  
 Put on more calm and added suppli-  
 antly;

"We two were friends: I go to mine  
 own land  
 For ever: find some other: as for me  
 I scarce am fit for your great plans:  
 yet speak to me,  
 Say one soft word and let me part for-  
 given."

But Ida spoke not, rapt upon the  
 child.  
 Then Arac. "Ida—s'death! you  
 blame the man;  
 You wrong yourselves—the woman is  
 so hard  
 Upon the woman. Come, a grace to  
 me!  
 I am your warrior: I and mine have  
 fought  
 Your battle: kiss her; take her hand,  
 she weeps:  
 'Sdeath! I would sooner fight thrice  
 o'er than see it."

But Ida spoke not, gazing on the  
 ground,  
 And reddening in the furrows of his  
 chin,  
 And moved beyond his custom, Gama  
 said:

"I've heard that there is iron in the  
 blood,  
 And I believe it. Not one word? not  
 one?  
 Whence drew you this steel temper?  
 not from me,  
 Not from your mother now a saint with  
 saints.  
 She said you had a heart—I heard her  
 say it—  
 'Our Ida has a heart'—just ere she  
 died—  
 'But see that some one with authority  
 Be near her still'—and I—I sought  
 for one—  
 All people said she had authority—  
 The Lady Blanche: much profit! Not  
 one word;  
 No! tho' your father sues: see how  
 you stand  
 Stiff as Lot's wife, and all the good  
 knights maim'd,  
 I trust that there is no one hurt to  
 death,  
 For your wild whim: and was it then  
 for this,  
 Was it for this we gave our palace up,  
 Where we withdrew from summer heats  
 and state,  
 And had our wine and chess beneath  
 the planes,  
 And many a pleasant hour with her  
 that's gone,  
 Ere you were born to vex us? Is it  
 kind?  
 Speak to her I say: is this not she of  
 whom,  
 When first she came, all flush'd you  
 said to me

Now had you got a friend of your own  
age,  
Now could you share your thought ;  
now should men see  
Two women faster welded in one love  
Than pairs of wedlock; she you walk'd  
with, she  
You talk'd with, whole nights long, up  
in the tower,  
Of sine and arc, spheroid and azimuth,  
And right ascension, Heaven knows  
what ; and now  
A word, but one, one little kindly word,  
Not one to spare her : out upon you,  
hint !  
You love nor her, nor me, nor any ; nay,  
You shame your mother's judgment  
too. Not one ?  
You will not ? well — no heart have  
you, or such  
As fancies like the vermin in a nut  
Have fretted all to dust and bitter-  
ness."  
So said the small king moved beyond  
his wont.

But Ida stood nor spoke, drain'd of  
her force  
By many a varying influence and so  
long.  
Down thro' her limbs a drooping lan-  
guage went ;  
Her head a little bent ; and on her  
mouth  
A doubtful smile dwelt like a clouded  
moon  
In a still water : then brake out my sire  
Lifting his grim head from my wounds.  
" O you,  
Woman, whom we thought woman even  
now,  
And were half fool'd to let you tend  
our son,  
Because he might have wish'd it — but  
we see  
The accomplice of your madness unfor-  
given,  
And think that you might mix his  
draught with death,  
When your skies change again : the  
rougher hand  
Is safer : on to the tents : take up the  
Prince."

He rose, and while each ear was  
prick'd to attend  
A tempest, thro' the cloud that dimm'd  
her broke  
A genial warmth and light once more,  
and shone  
Thro' glittering drops on her sad friend.  
" Come hither,  
O Psyche," she cried out, " embrace  
me, come,  
Quick while I melt ; make reconcile-  
ment sure  
With one that cannot keep her mind  
an hour :  
Come to the hollow heart they slander  
so !

Kiss and be friends, like children being  
chid !  
I seem no more : I want forgiveness  
too :  
I should have had to do with none but  
maids,  
That have no links with men. Ah false  
but dear,  
Dear traitor, too much loved, why ? —  
why ? — Yet see,  
Before these kings we embrace you yet  
once more  
With all forgiveness, all oblivion,  
And trust, not love, you less.  
And now, O sire,  
Grant me your son, to nurse, to wait  
upon him,  
Like mine own brother. For my debt  
to him,  
This nightmare weight of gratitude, I  
know it ;  
Taunt me no more : yourself and yours  
shall have  
Free adit ; we will scatter all our maids  
Till happier times each to her proper  
hearth :  
What use to keep them here — now ?  
grant my prayer.  
Help, father, brother, help ; speak to  
the king :  
Thaw this male nature to some touch  
of that  
Which kills me with myself, and drags  
me down  
From my fixt height to mob me up with  
all  
The soft and milky rabble of woman-  
kind,  
Poor weakling ev'n as they are."  
Passionate tears  
Follow'd : the king replied not : Cyril  
said :  
Your brother, Lady, — Florian, — ask  
for him  
Of your great head — for he is wounded  
too —  
That you may tend upon him with the  
prince."  
" Ay so," said Ida with a bitter smile,  
" Our laws are broken : let him enter  
too."  
Then Violet, she that sang the mourn-  
ful song,  
And had a cousin tumbled on the plain,  
Petition'd too for him. " Ay so," she  
said,  
" I stagger in the stream : I cannot  
keep  
My heart an eddy from the brawling  
hour :  
We break our laws with ease, but let it  
be."  
" Ay so ?" said Blanche : " Amazed  
am I to hear  
Your Highness : but your Highness  
breaks with ease  
The law your Highness did not make :  
't was I.  
I had been wedded wife, I knew man-  
kind,

And block'd them out; but these men  
came to woo  
Your Highness—verily I think to  
win.<sup>b</sup>

So she, and turn'd askance a wintry  
eye:  
But Ida with a voice, that like a bell  
Toll'd by an earthquake in a trembling  
tower,  
Rang ruin, answer'd full of grief and  
scorn.

“Fling our doors wide! all, all, not  
one, but all,  
Not only he, but by my mother's soul,  
Whatever man lies wounded, friend or  
foe,  
Shall enter, if he will. Let our girls flit,  
Till the storm die! but had you stood  
by us,  
The roar that breaks the Pharos from  
his base  
Had left us rock. She fain would sting  
us too,  
But shall not. Pass, and mingle with  
your likes.  
We brook no further insult but are  
gone.”

She turn'd; the very nape of her  
white neck  
Was rosed with indignation: but the  
Prince  
Her brother came; the king her father  
charm'd  
Her wounded soul with words: nor did  
mine own  
Refuse her proffer, lastly gave his  
hand.

Then us they lifted up, dead weights,  
and bare  
Straight to the doors: to them the  
doors gave way  
Groaning, and in the Vestal entry  
shriek'd  
The virgin marble under iron heels:  
And on they moved and gain'd the hall,  
and there  
Rested: but great the crush was, and  
each base,  
To left and right, of those tall columns  
drown'd  
In silken fluctuation and the swarm  
Of female whisperers: at the further  
end  
Was Ida by the throne, the two great  
cats  
Close by her, like supporters on a  
shield,  
Bow-back'd with fear: but in the centre  
stood,  
The common men with rolling eyes;  
amazed  
They glared upon the women, and  
aghast  
The women stared at these, all silent,  
save  
When armor clash'd or jingled, while  
the day,

Descending, struck athwart the hall,  
and shot  
A flying splendor out of brass and steel,  
That o'er the statues leapt from head  
to head,  
Now fired an angry Pallas on the helm,  
Now set a wrathful Dian's moon on  
flame,  
And now and then an echo started up,  
And shuddering fled from room to  
room, and died  
Of fright in far apartments.

Then the voice  
Of Ida sounded, issuing ordinance:  
And me they bore up the broad stairs,  
and thro'  
The long-laid galleries past a hundred  
doors  
To one deep chamber shut from sound,  
and due  
To languid limbs and sickness; left  
me in it;  
And others elsewhere they laid; and  
all  
That afternoon a sound arose of hoof  
And chariot, many a maiden passing  
home  
Till happier times; but some were left  
of those  
Held sagest, and the great lords out  
and in,  
From those two hosts that lay beside  
the walls,  
Walk'd at their will, and everything  
was changed.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw  
the sea;  
The cloud may stoop from heaven  
and take the shape,  
With fold to fold, of mountain or of  
cape;  
But O too fond, when have I answer'd  
thee?

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should  
I give?  
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:  
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee  
die!  
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee  
live;  
Ask me no more,  
Ask me no more: thy fate and mine  
are seal'd:  
I strove against the stream and all in  
vain:  
Let the great river take me to the  
main:  
No more, dear love, for at a touch I  
yield;  
Ask me no more.

VII.

So was their sanctuary violated,  
So their fair college turn'd to hospital;  
At first with all confusion: by and by

Sweet order lived again with other laws:  
 A kindlier influence reign'd; and everywhere  
 Low voices with the ministering hand  
 Hung round the sick: the maidens came,  
 they talk'd,  
 They sang, they read: till she not fair,  
 began  
 To gather light, and she that was, became  
 Her former beauty treble; and to and fro  
 With books, with flowers, with Angel offices,  
 Like creatures native unto gracious act,  
 And in their own clear element they moved.

But sadness on the soul of Ida fell,  
 And hatred of her weakness, blent with shame.  
 Old studies fall'd; seldom she spoke; but oft  
 Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours  
 On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men  
 Darkening her female field: void was her use,  
 And she as one that climbs a peak to gaze  
 O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud  
 Drag inwards from the deeps, a wall of night,  
 Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,  
 And suck the blinding splendor from the sand,  
 And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn  
 Expunge the world: so fared she gazing there;  
 So blacken'd all her world in secret, blank  
 And waste it seem'd and vain; till down she came,  
 And found fair peace once more among the sick.

And twilight dawn'd; and morn by morn the lark  
 Shot up and shrill'd in flickering gyres, but I  
 Lay silent in the muffled cage of life:  
 And twilight gloom'd; and broader-grown the bowers  
 Drew the great night into themselves, and Heaven,  
 Star after star, arose and fell; but I,  
 Deeper than those weird doubts could reach me, lay  
 Quite sunder'd from the moving Universe,  
 Nor knew what eye was on me, nor the hand  
 That nursed me, more than infants in their sleep.

But Psyche tended Florian: with her oft,  
 Melissa came; for Blanche had gone, but left  
 Her child among us, willing she should keep  
 Court-favor: here and there the small bright head,  
 A light of healing, glanced about the couch,  
 Or thro' the parted silks the tender face  
 Peep'd, shining in upon the wounded man  
 With blush and smile, a medicine in themselves  
 To wile the length from languorous hours, and draw  
 The sting from pain; nor seem'd it strange that soon  
 He rose up whole, and those fair charities  
 Join'd at her side; nor stranger seem'd that hearts  
 So gentle, so employ'd, should close in love,  
 Than when two dew-drops on the petal shake  
 To the same sweet air, and tremble deeper down,  
 And slip at once all-fragrant into one.

Less prosperously the second suit obtain'd  
 At first with Psyche. Not tho' Blanche had sworn  
 That after that dark night among the fields,  
 She needs must wed him for her own good name;  
 Not tho' he built upon the babe restored;  
 Nor tho' she liked him, yielded she, but fear'd  
 To incense the Head once more; till on a day  
 When Cyril pleaded, Ida came behind  
 Seen but of Psyche: on her foot she hung  
 A moment, and she heard, at which her face  
 A little flush'd, and she past on; but each  
 Assumed from thence a half-consent involved  
 In stillness, plighted troth, and were at peace.

Nor only these: Love in the sacred halls  
 Held carnival at will, and flying struck  
 With showers of random sweet on maid and man.  
 Nor did her father cease to press my claim,  
 Nor did mine own now reconciled; nor yet  
 Did those twin brothers, risen again and whole;  
 Nor Arac, satiate with his victory.

But I lay still, and with me oft she  
 sat :  
 Then came a change ; for sometimes I  
 would catch  
 Her hand in wild delirium, gripe it  
 hard,  
 And fling it like a viper off, and shriek  
 " You are not Ida ; " clasp it once  
 again,  
 And call her Ida, tho' I knew her not,  
 And call her sweet, as if in irony,  
 And call her hard and cold which  
 seem'd a truth :  
 And still she fear'd that I should lose  
 my mind,  
 And often she believed that I should  
 die :  
 Till out of long frustration of her care,  
 And pensive tendance in the all-weary  
 noons,  
 And watches in the dead, the dark,  
 when clocks  
 Throbb'd thunder thro' the palace  
 floors, or call'd  
 On flying Time from all their silver  
 tongues—  
 And out of memories of her kindlier  
 days,  
 And sidelong glances at my father's  
 grief,  
 And at the happy lovers, heart in  
 heart—  
 And out of hauntings of my spoken  
 love,  
 And lonely listenings to my mutter'd  
 dream,  
 And often feeling of the helpless hands.  
 And wordless broodings on the wasted  
 cheek—  
 From all a closer interest flourish'd up,  
 Tenderness touch by touch, and last, to  
 these,  
 Love, lik' an Alpine harebell hung  
 with tears  
 By some cold morning glacier ; frail at  
 first  
 And feeble, all unconscious of itself,  
 But such as gather'd color day by day.

Last I woke sane, but wellnigh close  
 to death  
 For weakness : it was evening : silent  
 light  
 Slept on the painted walls, wherein  
 were wrought  
 Two grand designs ; for on one side  
 arose  
 The women up in wild revolt, and  
 storm'd  
 At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes,  
 they cramm'd  
 The forum, and half-crush'd among  
 the rest  
 A dwarf-like Cato cower'd. On the  
 other side  
 Hortensia spoke against the tax ; be-  
 hind,  
 A train of dames : by axe and eagle sat,  
 With all their foreheads drawn in Ro-  
 man crowls,

And half the wolf's-milk curdled in  
 their veins,  
 The fierce triumvirs ; and before them  
 paused  
 Hortensia, pleading : angry was her  
 face.

I saw the forms : I knew not where  
 I was :  
 They did but look like hollow shows ;  
 nor more  
 Sweet Ida : palm to palm she sat : the  
 dew  
 Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her  
 shape  
 And rounder seem'd : I moved : I  
 sigh'd : a touch  
 Came round my wrist, and tears upon  
 my hand :  
 Then all for languor and self-pity ran  
 Mine down my face, and with what life  
 I had,  
 And like a flower that cannot all un-  
 fold,  
 So drench'd it is with tempest, to the  
 sun,  
 Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on  
 her  
 Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whis-  
 peringly :

" If you be, what I think you, some  
 sweet dream,  
 I would but ask you to fulfil yourself :  
 But if you be that Ida whom I knew,  
 I ask you nothing : only, if a dream,  
 Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die  
 to-night.  
 Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I  
 die."

I could no more, but lay like one in  
 trance,  
 That hears his burial talk'd of by his  
 friends,  
 And cannot speak, nor move, nor make  
 one sign,  
 But lies and dreads his doom. She  
 turn'd ; she paus'd ;  
 She stoop'd ; and out of languor leapt  
 a cry ;  
 Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of  
 death ;  
 And I believed that in the living world  
 My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips ;  
 Till back I fell, and from mine arms  
 she rose  
 Glowing all over noble shame ; and all  
 Her falser self slipt from her like a  
 robe,  
 And left her woman, lovelier in her  
 mood  
 Than in her mould that other, when  
 she came  
 From barren deeps to conquer all with  
 love ;  
 And down the streaming crystal dropt ;  
 and she  
 Far-fleeted by the purple island-sides,  
 Naked, a double light in air and wave,

To meet her Graces, where they deck'd  
her out  
For worship without end; nor end of  
mine,  
Stateliest, for thee! but mute she  
glided forth,  
Nor glanced behind her, and I sank  
and slept,  
Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a  
happy sleep.

Deep in the night I woke: she, near  
me, held  
A volume of the Poets of her land:  
There to herself, all in low tones, she  
read.

"Now sleeps the crimson petal, now  
the white;  
Nor waves the cypress in the palace  
walk;  
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry  
font;  
The fire-fly wakens: waken thou with  
me.

"Now droops the milk-white pea-  
cock like a ghost,  
And like a ghost she glimmers on to  
me.

"Now lies the Earth all Danaë to  
the stars,  
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

"Now slides the silent meteor on,  
and leaves  
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in  
me.

"Now folds the lily all her sweetness  
up,  
And slips into the bosom of the lake:  
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and  
slip  
Into my bosom and be lost in me."

I heard her turn the page; she found  
a small  
Sweet Idyl, and once more, as low, she  
read:

"Come down, O maid, from yonder  
mountain height:  
What pleasure lives in height (the  
shepherd sang)  
In height and cold, the splendor of the  
hills?  
But cease to move so near the Hea-  
vens, and cease,  
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted  
Pine,  
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;  
And come, for Love is of the valley,  
come,  
For Love is of the valley, come thou  
down  
And find him; by the happy threshold,  
he,  
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the  
maize,

Or red with spirited purple of the vats,  
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to  
walk

With Death and Morning on the silver  
horns,

Nor wilt thou snare him in the white  
ravine,

Nor find him dropt upon the firths of  
ice,

That huddling slant in furrow-cloven  
falls

To roll the torrent out of dusky doors:  
But follow; let the torrent dance  
thee down

To find him in the valley; let the wild  
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and  
leave

The monstrous ledges there to slope,  
and spill

Their thousand wreaths of dangling  
water-smoke,

That like a broken purpose waste in  
air:

So waste not thou; but come; for all  
the vales

Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth  
Arise to thee; the children call, and I

Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every  
sound,

Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is  
sweet;

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the  
lawn,

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
And murmuring of innumerable bees."

So she low-toned; while with shut  
eyes I lay

Listening; then look'd. Pale was the  
perfect face;

The bosom with long sighs labor'd;  
and meek

Seem'd the full lips, and mild the lu-  
minous eyes,

And the voice trembled and the hand.  
She said

Brokenly, that she knew it, she had  
fail'd

In sweet humility; had fail'd in all;  
That all her labor was but as a block

Left in the quarry; but she still were  
loath,

She still were loath to yield herself to  
one,

That wholly scorn'd to help their equal  
rights

Against the sons of men, and barbarous  
laws.

She pray'd me not to judge their cause  
from her

That wrong'd it, sought far less for  
truth than power

In knowledge; something wild within  
her breast,

A greater than all knowledge, beat her  
down.

And she had nursed me there from  
week to week:

Much had she learnt in little time. In  
part

It was ill counsel had misled the girl  
 To vex true hearts : yet was she but a  
 girl—  
 " Ah fool, and made myself a Queen  
 of farce !  
 When comes another such ? never, I  
 think,  
 Till the Sun drop dead from the signs."  
 Her voice  
 Choked, and her forehead sank upon  
 her hands,  
 And her great heart thro' all the fault-  
 ful Past  
 Went sorrowing in a pause I dared not  
 break ;  
 Till notice of a change in the dark  
 world  
 Was lisped about the acacias, and a bird,  
 That early woke to feed her little ones,  
 Sent from a dewy breast a cry for light:  
 She moved, and at her feet the volume  
 fell.

" Blame not thyself too much," I  
 said, " nor blame  
 Too much the sons of men and barba-  
 rous laws ;  
 These were the rough ways of the  
 world till now.  
 Henceforth thou hast a helper, me,  
 that know  
 The woman's cause is man's : they rise  
 or sink  
 Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or  
 free :  
 For she that out of Lethe scales with  
 man  
 The shining steps of Nature, shares  
 with man  
 His nights, his days, moves with him  
 to one goal,  
 Stays all the fair young planet in her  
 hands—  
 If she be small, slight-natured, misera-  
 ble,  
 How shall men grow ? but work no  
 more alone !  
 Our place is much : as far as in us lies  
 We two will serve them both in aiding  
 her—  
 Will clear away the parasitic forms  
 That seem to keep her up but drag her  
 down—  
 Will leave her space to burgeon out of  
 all  
 Within her—let her make herself her  
 own  
 To give or keep, to live and learn and be  
 All that not harms distinctive woman-  
 hood.  
 For woman is not undevelop't man,  
 But diverse : could we make her as the  
 man,  
 Sweet Love were slain ; his dearest  
 bond is this,  
 Not like to like, but like in difference.  
 Yet in the long years liker must they  
 grow ;  
 The man be more of woman, she of  
 man ;

He gain in sweetness and in moral  
 height,  
 Nor lose the wrestling thews that  
 throw the world ;  
 She mental breadth, nor fail in child-  
 ward care,  
 Nor lose the childlike in the larger  
 mind ;  
 Till at the last she set herself to man,  
 Like perfect music unto noble words ;  
 And so these twain, upon the skirts of  
 Time,  
 Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all  
 their powers,  
 Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,  
 Self-reverent each and reverencing  
 each,  
 Distinct in individualities,  
 But like each other ev'n as those who  
 love.  
 Then comes the stater Eden back to  
 men :  
 Then reign the world's great bridal,  
 chaste and calm :  
 Then springs the crowning race of hu-  
 mankind.  
 May these things be !"  
 Sighing she spoke " I fear  
 They will not."  
 " Dear, but let us type them  
 now  
 In our own lives, and this proud  
 watchword rest  
 Of equal ; seeing either sex alone  
 Is half itself, and in true marriage lies  
 Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils  
 Defect in each, and always thought in  
 thought,  
 Purpose in purpose, will in will, they  
 grow,  
 The single pure and perfect animal,  
 The two-cell'd heart beating, with one  
 full stroke,  
 Life."  
 And again sighing she spoke : " A  
 dream  
 That once was mine ! what woman  
 taught you this ?"  
 " Alone " I said " from earlier than  
 I know,  
 Immersed in rich foreshadowings of  
 the world,  
 I loved the woman : he, that doth not,  
 lives  
 A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,  
 Or pines in sad experience worse than  
 death,  
 Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with  
 crime :  
 Yet was there one thro' whom I loved  
 her, one  
 Not learned, save in gracious house-  
 hold ways,  
 Not perfect, nay, but full of tender  
 wants,  
 No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt  
 In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,  
 Interpreter between the Gods and  
 men,

Who look'd all native to her place, and  
 yet  
 On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere  
 Too gross to tread, and all male minds  
 perforce  
 Sway'd to her from their orbits as they  
 moved,  
 And girdled her with music. Happy he  
 With such a mother! faith in woman-  
 kind  
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all  
 things high  
 Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip  
 and fall  
 He shall not blind his soul with clay."  
 "But I,"  
 Said Ida, tremulously, "so all unlike—  
 It seems you love to cheat yourself  
 with words:  
 This mother is your model. I have heard  
 Of your strange doubts: they well  
 might be: I seem  
 A mockery to my own self. Never,  
 Prince;  
 You cannot love me."  
 "Nay but thee" I said  
 "From yearlong poring on thy pictured  
 eyes,  
 Ere seen I loved, and loved thee seen,  
 and saw  
 Thee woman thro' the crust of iron  
 moods  
 That mask'd thee from men's reverence  
 up, and forced  
 Sweet love on pranks of saucy boyhood:  
 now,  
 Giv'n back to life, to life indeed, thro'  
 thee,  
 Indeed I love: the new day comes, the  
 light  
 Dearer for night, as dearer thou for  
 faults  
 Lived over: lift thine eyes; my doubts  
 are dead,  
 My haunting sense of hollow shows;  
 the change,  
 This truthful change in thee has kill'd  
 it. Dear,  
 Look up, and let thy nature strike on  
 mine,  
 Like yonder morning on the blind half-  
 world;  
 Approach and fear not; breathe upon  
 my brows;  
 In that fine air I tremble, all the past  
 Melts mist-like into this bright hour,  
 and this  
 Is morn to more, and all the rich to-  
 come  
 Reels, as the golden Autumn woodland  
 reels  
 Athwart the smoke of burning weeds.  
 Forgive me,  
 I waste my heart in signs: let be.  
 My bride,  
 My wife, my life. O we will walk this  
 world,  
 Yoked in all exercise of noble end,  
 And so thro' those dark gates across  
 the wild

That no man knows. Indeed I love  
 thee: come,  
 Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine  
 are one:  
 Accomplish thou my manhood and  
 thyself;  
 Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust  
 to me."

## CONCLUSION.

So closed our tale, of which I give you  
 all  
 The random scheme as wildly as it rose:  
 The words are mostly mine; for when  
 we ceased  
 There came a minute's pause, and  
 Walter said,  
 "I wish she had not yielded!" then  
 to me,  
 "What, if you drest it up poetically!"  
 So pray'd the men, the women: I gave  
 assent:  
 Yet how to bind the scattered scheme  
 of seven  
 Together in one sheaf? What style  
 could suit?  
 The men required that I should give  
 throughout  
 The sort of mock-heroic gigantesque,  
 With which we banter'd little Lilia first:  
 The women—and perhaps they felt  
 their power,  
 For something in the ballads which  
 they sang,  
 Or in their silent influence as they sat,  
 Had ever seem'd to wrestle with bur-  
 lesque,  
 And drove us, last, to quite a solemn  
 close—  
 They hated banter, wish'd for some-  
 thing real,  
 A gallant fight, a noble princess—why  
 Not make her true-heroic—true-sub-  
 lime?  
 Or all, they said, as earnest as the close?  
 Which yet with such a framework  
 scarce could be.  
 Then rose a little feud betwixt the two,  
 Betwixt the mockers and the realists:  
 And I, betwixt them both, to please  
 them both,  
 And yet to give the story as it rose,  
 I moved as in a strange diagonal,  
 And may be neither pleased myself nor  
 them.

But Lilia pleased me, for she took no  
 part  
 In our dispute: the sequel of the  
 tale  
 Had touch'd her; and she sat, she  
 pluck'd the grass,  
 She flung it from her, thinking: last,  
 she fixt  
 A showery glance upon her aunt, and  
 said,  
 "You—tell us what we are" who  
 might have told,

For she was cramm'd with theories out  
of books,  
But that there rose a shout: the gates  
were closed  
At sunset, and the crowd were swarming  
now.  
To take their leave, about the garden  
rails.

So I and some went out to these:  
we climb'd  
The slope to Vivian-place, and turning  
saw  
The happy valleys, half in light, and  
half  
Far-shadowing from the west, a land  
of peace;  
Gray halls alone among their massive  
groves;  
Trim hamlets; here and there a rustic  
tower  
Half-lost in belts of hop and breadths  
of wheat;  
The shimmering glimpses of a stream;  
the seas;  
A red sail, or a white; and far beyond,  
imagined more than seen, the skirts  
of France.

"Look there, a garden!" said my  
colleg's friend,  
The Tory member's elder son "and  
there!  
God bless the narrow sea which keeps  
her off,  
And keeps our Britain, whole within  
herself,  
A nation yet, the rulers and the ruled—  
Some sense of duty, something of a  
faith,  
Some reverence for the laws ourselves  
have made,  
Some patient force to change them  
when we will,  
Some civic manhood firm against the  
crowd—  
But yonder, whiff! there comes a  
sudden heat,  
The gravest citizen seems to lose his  
head,  
The king is scared, the soldier will not  
fight,  
The little boys begin to shoot and stab,  
A kingdom topples over with a shriek  
Like an old woman, and down rolls the  
world  
In mock heroic stranger than our own:  
Revolts, republics, revolutions, most  
No graver than a school boys' barring  
out;  
Too comic for the solemn things they  
are,  
Too solemn for the comic touches in  
them,  
Like our wild Princess with as wise a  
dream  
As some of theirs—God bless the nar-  
row seas!  
I wish they were a whole Atlantic  
broad."

"Have patience," I replied, "our-  
selves are full  
Of social wrong; and maybe wildest  
dreams  
Are but the needful preludes of the  
truth:  
For me, the genial day, the happy crowd,  
The sport half-science, fill me with a  
faith,  
This fine old world of ours is but a  
child  
Yet in the go-cart. Patience! Give it  
time  
To learn its limbs: there is a hand that  
guides."

In such discourse we gain'd the gar-  
den rails,  
And there we saw Sir Walter where he  
stood,  
Before a tower of crimson holly-oaks,  
Among six boys, head under head, and  
look'd  
No little lily-handed Baronet he,  
A great broad-shoulder'd genial Eng-  
lishman,  
A lord of fat prize-oxen and of sheep,  
A raiser of huge melons and of pine,  
A patron of some thirty charities,  
A pamphleteer on guano and on grain,  
A quarter-sessions chairman, abler  
none;  
Fair-hair'd and redder than a windy  
morn;  
Now shaking hands with him, now  
him, of those  
That stood the nearest—now address'd  
to speech—  
Who spoke few words and pithy, such  
as closed  
Welcome, farewell, and welcome for  
the year  
To follow: a shout rose again, and  
made  
The long line of the approaching rook-  
ery swerve  
From the elms, and shook the branches  
of the deer  
From slope to slope thro' distant ferns,  
and rang  
Beyond the bourn of sunset; O, a shout  
More joyful than the city-roar that hails  
Premier or king! Why should not these  
great Sirs  
Give up their parks some dozen times  
a year  
To let the people breathe? So thrice  
they cried,  
I likewise, and in groups they stream'd  
away.

But we went back to the Abbey, and  
sat on,  
So much the gathering darkness  
charm'd: we sat  
But spoke not, rapt in nameless reverie,  
Perhaps upon the future man: the  
walls  
Blacken'd about us, bats wheel'd, and  
owls whoop'd,

179  
1375  
1/4

ENOCH ARDEN.

173

And gradually the powers of the night,  
That range above the region of the  
wind,  
Deepening the courts of twilight broke  
them up  
Thro' all the silent spaces of the worlds,  
Beyond all thought into the Heaven of  
Heavens.

Last little Lilia, rising quietly,  
Disrobed the glimmering statue of Sir  
Ralph  
From those rich silks, and home well-  
pleased we went.

ENOCH ARDEN.

LONG lines of cliff breaking have left a  
chasm;  
And in the chasm are foam and yellow  
sands;  
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow  
wharf  
In cluster; then a moulder'd, church;  
and higher  
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd  
mill,  
And high in heaven behind it a gray  
down  
With Danish barrows; and a hazel wood,  
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes  
Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.

Here on this beach a hundred years ago,  
Three children of three houses, Annie  
Lee,  
The prettiest little damsel in the port,  
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,  
And Enoch Arden a rough sailor's lad  
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck,  
play'd  
Among the waste and lumber of the  
shore,  
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-  
nets,  
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats up-  
drawn;  
And built their castles of dissolving  
sand  
To watch them overflow'd, or following  
up  
And flying the white breaker, daily left  
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the  
cliff:  
In this the children play'd at keeping  
house,  
Enoch was host one day, Philip the  
next,  
While Annie still was mistress; but at  
times  
Enoch would hold possession for a  
week:  
"This is my house and this my little  
wife."

"Mine too" said Philip "turn and  
turn about."  
When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch strong-  
er-made  
Was master; then would Philip, his  
blue eyes  
All flooded with the helpless wrath of  
tears,  
Shriek out "I hate you, Enoch," and  
at this  
The little wife would weep for com-  
pany,  
And pray them not to quarrel for her  
sake,  
And say she would be little wife to  
both.

But when the dawn of rosy child-  
hood past,  
And the new warmth of life's ascend-  
ing sun  
Was felt by either, either fixt his heart  
On that one girl; and Enoch spoke his  
love,  
But Philip loved in silence; and the  
girl  
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to  
him;  
But she loved Enoch; tho' she knew it  
not,  
And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch set  
A purpose evermore before his eyes,  
To hoard all savings to the uttermost,  
To purchase his own boat, and make a  
home  
For Annie: and so prosper'd that at  
last  
A luckier or a bolder fisherman,  
A carefuller in peril, did not breathe  
For leagues along that breaker-beaten  
coast  
Than Enoch. Likewise had he served  
a year  
On board a merchantman, and made  
himself  
Full sailor; and he thrice had pluck'd a  
life  
From the dread sweep of the down-  
streaming seas:  
And all men look'd upon him favorably:  
And ere he touch'd his one-and-twen-  
tieth May  
He purchased his own boat, and made  
a home  
For Annie, neat and nestlike, halfway  
up  
The narrow street that clamber'd  
toward the mill.

Then, on a golden autumn eventide,  
The younger people making holiday,  
With bag and sack and basket, great  
and small,  
Went nutting to the hazels. Philip  
stay'd  
(His father lying sick and needing him)  
An hour behind; but as he climb'd the  
hill,  
Just where the prone edge of the wood  
began

To feather toward the hollow, saw the  
 pair,  
 Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,  
 His large grey eyes and weather-beaten  
 face  
 All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,  
 That burn'd as on an altar. Phillp  
 look'd,  
 And in their eyes and faces read his  
 doom ;  
 Then, as their faces drew together,  
 groan'd,  
 And slipt aside, and like a wounded life  
 Crept down into the hollows of the  
 wood ;  
 There, while the rest were loud in mer-  
 ry-making.  
 Had his dark hour unseen, and rose  
 and past  
 Bearing a lifelong hunger in his heart.

So these were wed, and merrily rang  
 the bells,  
 And merrily ran the years, seven happy  
 years,  
 Seven happy years of health and com-  
 petence,  
 And mutual love and honorable toll ;  
 With children ; first a daughter. In  
 him woke,  
 With his first babe's first cry, the noble  
 wish

To save all earnings to the uttermost,  
 And give his child a better bringing-up  
 Than his had been, or hers ; a wish re-  
 new'd,  
 When two years after came a boy to be  
 The rosy idol of her solitudes,  
 While Enoch was abroad on wrathful  
 seas,  
 Or often journeying landward ; for in  
 truth  
 Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's  
 ocean-spoil  
 In ocean-smelling oster, and his face,  
 Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter  
 gales,  
 Not only to the market-cross were  
 known,  
 But in the leafy lanes behind the down  
 Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,  
 And peacock-yewtree of the lonely  
 Hall,  
 Whose Friday fare was Enoch's minis-  
 tering.

Then came a change, as all things  
 human change.  
 Ten miles to northward of the narrow  
 port  
 Open'd a larger haven : thither used  
 Enoch at times to go by land or sea ;  
 And once when there, and clambering  
 on a mast  
 In harbor, by mischance he slipt and  
 fell :  
 A limb was broken when they lifted  
 him ;  
 And while he lay recovering there, his  
 wife

Bore him another son, a sickly one :  
 Another hand crept too across his trade  
 Taking her bread and theirs : and on  
 him fell,  
 Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing  
 man,  
 Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and  
 gloom.  
 He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the  
 night,  
 To see his children leading evermore  
 Low miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,  
 And her, he loved, a beggar : then he  
 pray'd  
 " Save them from this, whatever comes  
 to me."  
 And while he pray'd, the master of  
 that ship  
 Enoch had served in, hearing his mis-  
 chance,  
 Came, for he knew the man and valued  
 him,  
 Reporting of his vessel China bound,  
 And wanting yet a boatswain. Would  
 he go ?  
 There yet were many weeks before she  
 sail'd,  
 Sall'd from this port, Would Enoch  
 have the place ?  
 And Enoch all at once assented to it,  
 Rejoicing at that answer, to his prayer.

So now that shadow of mischance ap-  
 pear'd  
 No graver than as when some little  
 cloud  
 Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun,  
 And isles a light in the offing ; yet the  
 wife—  
 When he was gone—the children—  
 What to do ?

Then Enoch lay long-pondering on his  
 plans ;  
 To sell the boat—and yet he loved her  
 well—  
 How many a rough sea had he weath-  
 er'd in her !  
 He knew her, as a horseman knows  
 his horse—  
 And yet to sell her—then with what she  
 brought  
 Buy goods and stores—set Annie forth  
 in trade  
 With all that seamen needed or their  
 wives—  
 So might she keep the house while he  
 was gone.  
 Should he not trade himself out yonder ?  
 go  
 This voyage more than once ? yea twice  
 or thrice—  
 As oft as needed—last, returning rich,  
 Become the master of a larger craft,  
 With fuller profits lead an easier life,  
 Have all his pretty young ones edu-  
 cated,  
 And pass his days in peace among his  
 own.

Thus Enoch in his heart determined  
 all :  
 Then moving homeward came on Annie  
 pale,  
 Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-  
 born.  
 Forward she started with a happy cry,  
 And laid the feeble infant in his arms :  
 Whom Enoch took, and handled all his  
 limbs,  
 Appraised his weight and fondled  
 father-like,  
 But had no heart to break his purposes  
 To Annie, till the morrow, when he  
 spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring  
 had girt  
 Her finger, Annie fought against his  
 will ;  
 Yet not with brawling opposition she,  
 But manifold entreaties, many a tear,  
 Many a sad kiss by day by night  
 renew'd  
 (Sure that all evil would come out of it)  
 Besought him, supplicating, if he cared  
 For her or his dear children, not to go.  
 He not for his own self caring but her,  
 Her and her children, let her plead in  
 vain ;  
 So grieving held his will, and bore it  
 thro.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-  
 friend,  
 Bought Annie goods and stores, and set  
 his hand  
 To fit their little streetward sitting-  
 room  
 With shelf and corner for the goods  
 and stores.  
 So all day long till Enoch's last at home  
 Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer  
 and axe,  
 Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to  
 hear  
 Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd  
 and rang,  
 Till this was ended, and his careful  
 hand,—  
 The space was narrow,—having order'd  
 all  
 Almost as neat and close as Nature  
 packs  
 Her blossom or her seedling, paused ;  
 and he,  
 Who needs would work for Annie to  
 the last,  
 Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn

And Enoch faced this morning of  
 farewell  
 Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's  
 fears,  
 Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter to  
 him.  
 Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man  
 Bow'd himself down, and in that  
 mystery  
 Where God-in-man is one with man-  
 in-God,

Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and  
 babes  
 Whatever came to him : and then he  
 said  
 " Annie, this voyage by the grace of  
 God  
 Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.  
 Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire  
 for me,  
 For I'll be back, my girl, before you  
 know it."  
 Then lightly rocking baby's cradle  
 " and he,  
 This pretty, puny, weakly little one,—  
 Nay—for I love him all the better for  
 it—  
 God bless him, he shall sit upon my  
 knees  
 And I will tell him tales of foreign  
 parts,  
 And make him merry, when I come  
 home again.  
 Come Annie, come, cheer up before I  
 go."

Him running on thus hopefully she  
 heard  
 And almost hoped herself ; but when  
 he turn'd  
 The current of his talk to graver things  
 In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing  
 On providence and trust in Heaven,  
 she heard,  
 Heard and not heard him ; as the vil-  
 lage girl,  
 Who sets her pitcher underneath the  
 spring,  
 Musing on him that used to fill it for  
 her,  
 Hears and not hears, and lets it over-  
 flow.

At length she spoke " O Enoch, you  
 are wise ;  
 And yet for all your wisdom well know I  
 That I shall look upon your face no  
 more."

" Well then " said Enoch, " I shall  
 look on yours.  
 Annie, the ship I sail in passes here  
 (He named the day) ; get you a sea-  
 man's glass,  
 Spy out my face, and laugh at all your  
 fears."

But when the last of those last mo-  
 ments came,  
 " Annie, my girl, cheer up, be com-  
 forted,  
 Look to the babes ; and till I come  
 again,  
 Keep everything shipshape, for I must  
 go.  
 And fear no more for me ; or if you fear  
 Cast all your cares on God ; that an-  
 chor holds.  
 Is he not yonder in those uttermost  
 Parts of the morning ? if I see to these  
 Can I go from him ? and the sea is His,  
 The sea is His : He made it."

Enoch rose  
 Cast his strong arms about his drooping  
 wife,  
 And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little  
 ones ;  
 But for the third, the sickly one, who  
 slept  
 After a night of feverous wakefulness,  
 When Annie would have raised him  
 Enoch said  
 "Wake him not ; let him sleep ; how  
 should the child  
 Remember this ?" and kiss'd him in  
 his cot,  
 But Annie from her baby's forehead  
 clipt  
 A tiny curl, and gave it : this he kept  
 Thro' all his future ; but now hastily  
 caught  
 His bundle, waved his hand, and went  
 his way.

She when the day, that Enoch men-  
 tion'd, came,  
 Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain ; per-  
 haps  
 She could not fix the glass to suit her  
 eye ;  
 Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremu-  
 lous ;  
 She saw him not : and while he stood  
 on deck  
 Waving, the moment and the vessel  
 past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanishing  
 sail  
 She watch'd it, and departed weeping  
 for him ;  
 Then, tho' she mourn'd his absence as  
 his grave,  
 Set her sad will no less to chime with  
 his,  
 But thro' not in her trade, not being  
 bred  
 To barter, nor compensating the want  
 By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,  
 Nor asking overmuch and taking less,  
 And still foreboding "what would  
 Enoch say ?"  
 For more than once, in days of dif-  
 ficulty  
 And pressure, had she sold her wares  
 for less  
 Than what she gave in buying what she  
 sold :  
 She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it ;  
 and thus,  
 Expectant of that news which never  
 came,  
 Gain'd for her own a scanty sustenance  
 And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born  
 and grew  
 Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared  
 for it  
 With all a mother's care : nevertheless,  
 Whether her business often call'd her  
 from it,

Or thro' the want of what it needed  
 most,  
 Or means to pay the voice who best  
 could tell  
 What most it needed—howsoe'er it was,  
 After a lingering,—ere she was aware,—  
 Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,  
 The little innocent soul flitted away.

In that same week when Annie  
 buried it,  
 Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for  
 her peace  
 (Since Enoch left he had not look'd  
 upon her),  
 Smote him, as having kept aloof so  
 long,  
 "Surely" said Philip "I may see her  
 now,  
 May be some little comfort" there-  
 fore went,  
 Past thro' the solitary room in front,  
 Paused for a moment at an inner door,  
 Then struck it thrice, and, no one  
 opening,  
 Enter'd ; but Annie, seated with her  
 grief,  
 Fresh from the burial of her little one,  
 Cared not to look on any human face,  
 But turn'd her own toward the wall  
 and wept.  
 Then Philip standing up said falter-  
 ingly  
 "Annie, I came to ask a favor of you."  
 He spoke ; the passion in her moan'd  
 reply  
 "Favor from one so sad and so forlorn  
 As I am !" half abash'd him ; yet  
 unask'd,  
 His bashfulness and tenderness at war,  
 He set himself beside her, saying to  
 her :

"I came to speak to you of what he  
 wish'd,  
 Enoch, your husband : I have ever said  
 You chose the best among us—a strong  
 man :  
 For where he fixt his heart he set his  
 hand  
 To do the thing he will'd, and bore it  
 thro'.  
 And wherefore did he go this weary  
 way,  
 And leave you lonely ? not to see the  
 world—  
 For pleasure ?—nay, but for the where-  
 withal  
 To give his babes a better bringing-up  
 Than his had been or yours ; that was  
 his wish.  
 And if he come again, next will he be  
 To find the precious morning hours  
 were lost,  
 And it would vex him even in his  
 grave,  
 If he could know his babes were run-  
 ning wild  
 Like colts about the waste. So, Annie,  
 now—

Have we not known each other all our  
lives ?

I do beseech you by the love you bear  
Him and his children not to say me  
nay—

For, if you will, when Enoch comes  
again

Why then he shall repay me—if you  
will,

Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do,  
Now let me put the boy and girl to  
school ;

This is the favor that I came to ask."

Then Annie with her brows against  
the wall

Answer'd "I cannot look you in the  
face ;

I seem so foolish and so broken down.  
When you came in my sorrow broke  
me down ;

And now I think your kindness breaks  
me down ;

But Enoch lives ; that is borne in on  
me ;

He will repay you : money can be  
repaid ;

Not kindness such as yours."

And Philip ask'd  
"Then you will let me, Annie ?"

There she turn'd,  
She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes  
upon him,

And dwelt a moment on his kindly  
face,

Then calling down a blessing on his  
head

Caught at his hand, and wrung it pas-  
sionately,

And past into the little garth beyond.  
So lifted up in spirit he moved away.

Then Philip put the boy and girl to  
school,

And bought them needful books, and  
everyway,

Like one who does his duty by his  
own,

Made himself theirs ; and tho' for  
Annie's sake,

Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,  
He oft denied his heart his dearest wish  
And seldom crost her threshold, yet  
he sent

Gifts by the children, garden-herbs  
and fruit,

The late and early roses from his wall,  
Or cones from the down, and now and  
then,

With some pretext of fineness in the  
meal

To save the offence of charitable, flour  
From his tall mill that whistled on the  
waste.

But Philip did not fathom Annie's  
mind :

Scarce could the woman when he came  
upon her,

Out of full heart and boundless grati-  
tude

Light on a broken word to thank him  
with.

But Philip was her children's all-in-  
all ;

From distant corners of the street they  
ran

To greet his hearty welcome heartily ;  
Lords of his house and of his mill were  
they ;

Worried his passive ear with petty  
wrongs

Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd  
with him

And call'd him Father Philip. Philip  
gain'd

As Enoch lost ; for Enoch seem'd to  
them

Uncertain as a vision or a dream,  
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn

Down at the far end of an avenue,  
Going we know not where : and so ten  
years,

Since Enoch left his hearth and native  
land,

Fled forward, and no news of Enoch  
came.

It chanced one evening Annie's chil-  
dren long'd

To go with others, nutting to the wood,  
And Annie would go with them ; then  
they begg'd

For Father Philip (as they call'd him)  
too :

Him, like the working bee in blossom-  
dust,

Blanch'd with his mill, they found ;  
and saying to him

"Come with us Father Philip" he  
denied ;

But when the children pluck'd at him  
to go,

He laugh'd, and yielded readily to  
their wish,

For was not Annie with them? and  
they went.

But after scaling half the weary  
down,

Just where the prone edge of the wood  
began

To feather toward the hollow, all her  
force

Fail'd her ; and sighing "let me rest"  
she said :

So Philip rested with her well-content ;  
While all the younger ones with jubi-  
lant cries

Broke from their elders, and tumul-  
tuously

Down thro' the whitening hazels made  
a plunge

To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent  
or broke

The lithe reluctant boughs to tear  
away

Their tawny clusters, crying to each  
other

And calling, here and there, about the wood.

But Philip sitting at her side forgot  
Her presence, and remember'd one  
dark hour  
Here in this wood, when like a wound-  
ed life  
He crept into the shadow: at last he  
said  
Lifting his honest forehead "Listen,  
Annie,  
How merry they are down yonder in  
the wood.  
Tired, Annie?" for she did not speak  
a word.  
"Tired?" but her face had fall'n upon  
her hands;  
At which, as with a kind of anger in  
him,  
"The ship was lost" he said "the  
ship was lost!  
No more of that! why should you kill  
yourself  
And make them orphans quite!" And  
Annie said  
"I thought not of it: but—I know  
not why—  
Their voices make me feel so solitary."

Then Philip coming somewhat closer  
spoke.  
"Annie, there is a thing upon my  
mind,  
And it has been upon my mind so long,  
That tho' I know not when it first  
came there,  
I know that it will out at last. O  
Annie,  
It is beyond all hope, against all  
chance,  
That he who left you ten long years  
ago  
Should still be living; well then—let  
me speak:  
I grieve to see you poor and wanting  
help:  
I cannot help you as I wish to do  
Unless—they say that women are so  
quick—  
Perhaps you know what I would have  
you know—  
I wish you for my wife. I fain would  
prove  
A father to your children: I do think  
They love me as a father: I am sure  
That I love them as if they were mine  
own;  
And I believe, if you were fast my wife,  
That after all these sad uncertain  
years,  
We might be still as happy as God  
grants  
To any of His creatures. Think upon  
it:  
For I am well-to-do—no kin, no care,  
No burden, save my care for you and  
yours:  
And we have known each other all  
our lives,

And I have loved you longer than you  
know."

Then answer'd Annie; tenderly she  
spoke:  
"You have been as God's good angel  
in our house.  
God bless you for it, God reward you  
for it,  
Philip, with something happier than  
myself.  
Can one love twice? can you be ever  
loved  
As Enoch was? what is it that you  
ask?"  
"I am content" he answer'd "to be  
loved  
A little after Enoch." "O" she cried  
Scared as it were "dear Philip, wait a  
while:  
If Enoch comes—but Enoch will not  
come—  
Yet wait a year, a year is not so long:  
Surely I shall be wiser in a year:  
O wait a little!" Philip sadly said  
"Annie, as I have waited all my life  
I well may wait a little." "Nay" she  
cried  
"I am bound: you have my promise—  
in a year:  
Will you not bide your year as I bide  
mine?"  
And Philip answer'd "I will bide my  
year."

Here both were mute, till Philip glan-  
cing up  
Beheld the dead flame of the fallen  
day  
Pass from the Danish barrow over-  
head;  
Then fearing night and chill for Annie  
rose,  
And sent his voice beneath him thro'  
the wood.  
Up came the children laden with their  
spoils;  
Then all descended to the port, and  
there  
At Annie's door he paused and gave  
his hand,  
Saying gently "Annie, when I spoke  
to you,  
That was your hour of weakness. I  
was wrong.  
I am always bound to you, but you are  
free."  
Then Annie weeping answer'd "I am  
bound."

She spoke; and in one moment as it  
were,  
While yet she went about her house-  
hold ways,  
Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest  
words,  
That he had loved her longer than she  
knew,  
That autumn into autumn flash'd  
again,

And there he stood once more before  
her face,  
Claiming her promise. "Is it a year?"  
she ask'd.  
"Yes, if the nuts" he said "be ripe  
again:  
Come out and see." But she — she  
put him off —  
So much to look to — such a change —  
a month —  
Give her a month — she knew that she  
was bound —  
A month — no more. Then Philip with  
his eyes  
Full of that life-long hunger, and his  
voice  
Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,  
"Take your own time, Annie, take  
your own time."  
And Annie could have wept for pity of  
him;  
And yet she held him on delayingly  
With many a scarce-believable excuse,  
Trying his truth and his long-suffer-  
ance.  
Till half-another year had slipt away.  
By this the lazy gossips of the port,  
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,  
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.  
Some thought that Philip did but trifle  
with her;  
Some that she but held off to draw  
him on;  
And others laugh'd at her and Philip  
too,  
As simple folk that knew not their  
own minds;  
And one, in whom all evil fancies  
clung  
Like serpent eggs together, laughing-  
ly  
Would hint at worse in either. Her  
own son  
Was silent, tho' he often look'd his  
wish;  
But evermore the daughter prest upon  
her  
To wed the man so dear to all of them  
And lift the household out of pover-  
ty;  
And Philip's rosy face contracting  
grew  
Careworn and wan; and all these  
things fell on her  
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced  
That Annie could not sleep, but ear-  
estly  
Pray'd for a sign "my Enoch is he  
gone?"  
Then compass'd round by the blind  
wall of night  
Brook'd not the expectant terror of  
her heart,  
Started from bed, and struck herself a  
light,  
Then desperately seized the holy Book,  
Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,

Suddenly put her finger on the text,  
"Under the palm-tree." That was  
nothing to her;  
No meaning there: she closed the  
Book and slept;  
When lo! her Enoch sitting on a  
height,  
Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun:  
"He is gone" she thought "he is  
happy, he is singing  
Hosanna in the highest: yonder shines  
The Sun of Righteousness, and these  
be palms  
Whereof the happy people strewing  
cried  
'Hosanna in the highest!'" Here she  
woke,  
Resolved, sent for him and said wildly  
to him  
"There is no reason why we should not  
wed."  
"Then for God's sake," he answer'd,  
"both our sakes,  
So you will wed me, let it be at once."  
So these were wed and merrily rang  
the bells,  
Merrily rang the bells and they were  
wed.  
But never merrily beat Annie's heart.  
A footstep seem'd to fall beside her  
path,  
She knew not whence; a whisper on  
her ear,  
She knew not what; nor loved she to  
be left  
Alone at home, nor ventured out alone.  
What ail'd her then, that ere she  
enter'd, often  
Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the  
latch,  
Fearing to enter: Philip thought he  
knew:  
Such doubts and fears were common to  
her state.  
Being with child: but when her child  
was born,  
Then her new child was as herself  
renew'd,  
Then the new mother came about her  
heart,  
Then her good Philip was her all-in-  
all,  
And that mysterious instinct wholly  
died.

And where was Enoch? prosper-  
ously sail'd  
The ship "Good Fortune," tho' at set-  
ting forth  
The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward,  
shook  
And almost overwhelm'd her, yet  
unvext  
She slipt across the summer of the  
world,  
Then after a long tumble about the  
Cape  
And frequent interchange of foul and  
fair

She passing thro' the summer world  
again,  
The breath of heaven came continu-  
ally  
And sent her sweetly by the golden  
isles,  
Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and  
bought  
Quaint monsters for the market of  
those times.  
A gilded dragon, also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage : at first  
indeed  
Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by  
day,  
Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-  
head  
Stared o'er the ripple feathering from  
her bows :  
Then follow'd calms, and then winds  
variable,  
Then baffling, a long course of them ;  
and last  
Storm, such as drove her under moon-  
less heavens  
Till hard upon the cry of " breakers "   
came  
The crash of ruin, and the loss of all  
But Enoch and two others. Half the  
night,  
Buoy'd upon floating tackle and broken  
spars,  
These drifted, stranding on an isle at  
morn  
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.

No sail was there of human sus-  
tenance  
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourish-  
ing roots ;  
Nor save for pity was it hard to take  
The helpless life so wild that it was  
tame.  
There in a seaward-gazing mountain-  
gorge  
They built, and thatch'd with leaves of  
palm, a hut,  
Half hut, half native cavern. So the  
three,  
Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,  
Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-con-  
tent.

For one, the youngest, hardly more  
than boy,  
Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and  
wreck,  
Lay lingering out a five-years' death-  
in-life.  
They could not leave him. After he  
was gone,  
The two remaining found a fallen stem ;  
And Enoch's comrade, careless of him-  
self,  
Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion,  
fell  
Sun-stricken, and that other lived  
alone.

In those two deaths he read God's  
warning " wait."

The mountain wooded to the peak,  
the lawns  
And winding glades high up like ways  
to Heaven,  
The slender coco's drooping crown of  
plumes,  
The lightning flash of insect and of  
bird,  
The lustre of the long convolvuluses  
That coil'd around the stately stems,  
and ran  
Ev'n to the limit of the land, the  
glows  
And glories of the broad belt of the  
world,  
All these he saw ; but what he fain had  
seen  
He could not see, the kindly human  
face,  
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard  
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean-  
fowl,  
The league-long roller thundering on  
the reef,  
The moving whisper of huge trees that  
branch'd  
And blossom'd in the zenith, or the  
sweep  
Of some precipitous rivulet to the  
wave,  
As down the shore he ranged, or all  
day long  
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,  
A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a  
sail :  
No sail from day to day, but every  
day  
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts  
Among the palms and ferns and preci-  
pices ;  
The blaze upon the waters to the east ;  
The blaze upon his island overhead ;  
The blaze upon the waters to the west ;  
Then the great stars that globed them-  
selves in Heaven,  
The hollower-bellowing ocean, and  
again  
The scarlet shafts of sunrise — but no  
sail.

There often as he watch'd or seem'd  
to watch,  
So still, the golden lizard on him  
paused,  
A phantom made of many phantoms  
moved  
Before him haunting him, or he him-  
self  
Moved haunting people, things and  
places, known  
Far in a darker isle beyond the line ;  
The babes, their babble, Annie, the  
small house,  
The climbing street, the mill, the leafy  
lanes,  
The peacock-yewtree and the lonely  
Hall,

The horse he drove, the boat he sold,  
the chill  
November dawns and dewy-glooming  
downs,  
The gentle shower, the smell of dying  
leaves,  
And the low moan of leaden-color'd  
seas.

Once likewise, in the ringing of his  
ears,  
Tho' faintly, merrily — far and far  
away —  
He heard the pealing of his parish  
bells ;  
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore,  
started up  
Shuddering, and when the beauteous  
hateful isle  
Return'd upon him, had not his poor  
heart  
Spoken with That, which being every-  
where  
Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem  
all alone,  
Surely the man had died of solitude.

Thus over Enoch's early-silvering  
head  
The sunny and rainy seasons came and  
went  
Year after year. His hopes to see his  
own,  
And pace the sacred old familiar fields,  
Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely  
doom  
Came suddenly to an end. Another  
ship  
(She wanted water) blown by baffling  
winds,  
Like the Good Fortune, from her des-  
tined course,  
Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where  
she lay :  
For since the mate had seen at early  
dawn  
Across a break on the mist-wreathen  
isle

The silent water slipping from the  
hills,  
They sent a crew that landing burst  
away  
In search of stream or fount, and fill'd  
the shores  
With clamor. Downward from his  
mountain gorge  
Stept the long-hair'd long-bearded soli-  
tary,  
Brown, looking hardly human, strange-  
ly clad,  
Muttering and mumbling, idiot like it  
seem'd,  
With inarticulate rage, and making  
signs  
They knew not what : and yet he led  
the way  
To where the rivulets of sweet water  
ran ;  
And ever as he mingled with the crew,  
And heard them talking, his long-  
bounden tongue.

Was loosen'd, till he made them un-  
derstand ;  
Whom, when their casks were fill'd  
they took aboard :  
And there the tale he utter'd broken-  
ly,  
Scarce-credited at first but more and  
more,  
Amazed and melted all who listen'd  
to it :  
And clothes they gave him and free  
passage home ;  
But oft he work'd among the rest and  
shook  
His isolation from him. None of these  
Came from his county, or could answer  
him,  
If question'd, aught of what he cared  
to know,  
And dull the voyage was with long  
delays,  
The vessel scarce sea-worthy ; but  
evermore  
His fancy fled before the lazy wind  
Returning, till beneath a clouded  
moon  
He like a lover down thro' all his blood  
Drew in the dewy meadowy morning  
breath  
Of England, blown across her ghostly  
wall ;  
And that same morning officers and  
men  
Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,  
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him  
it :  
Then moving up the coast they landed  
him,  
Ev'n in that harbor whence he sail'd  
before.

There Enoch spoke no word to any  
one,  
But homeward — home — what home ?  
had he a home ?  
His home, he walk'd. Bright was that  
afternoon,  
Sunny but chill ; till drawn thro' either  
chasm,  
Where either havens open'd on the  
deeps,  
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the  
world in gray ;  
Cut off the length of highway on be-  
fore,  
And left but narrow breadth to left and  
right  
Of wither'dholt or tilth or pasturage.  
On the high-naked tree the Robin  
pip'd  
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping  
haze  
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore  
it down :  
Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the  
gloom ;  
Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted  
light  
Flared on him, and he came upon the  
place.

Then down the long street having  
slowly stolen,  
His heart foreshadowing all calamity,  
His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd  
the home  
Where Annie lived and loved him, and  
his babes  
In those far-off seven happy years  
were born ;  
But finding neither light nor murmur  
there  
(A bill of sale gleam'd thro' the driz-  
zle) crept  
Still downward thinking "dead or dead  
to me !"

Down to the pool and narrow wharf  
he went,  
Seeking a tavern which of old he  
knew,  
A front of timber-crost antiquity,  
So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,  
He thought it must have gone ; but he  
was gone  
Who kept it ; and his widow, Miriam  
Lane,  
With daily-dwinding profits held the  
house ;  
A haunt of brawling seamen once, but  
now  
Still, with yet a bed for wandering  
men.  
There Enoch rested silent many days.  
But Miriam Lane was good and gar-  
rulous,  
Nor let him be, but often breaking in,  
Told him, with other annals of the  
port,  
Not knowing — Enoch was so brown,  
so bow'd,  
So broken — all the story of his house.  
His baby's death, her growing poverty,  
How Philip put her little ones to  
school,  
And kept them in it, his long wooing  
her,  
Her slow consent, and marriage, and  
the birth  
Of Philip's child : and o'er his counte-  
nance  
No shadow past, nor motion : anyone,  
Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the  
tale  
Less than the teller : only when she  
closed  
"Enoch, poor man, was cast away and  
lost."  
He, shaking his gray head pathetically,  
Repeated muttering "cast away and  
lost ;"  
Again in deeper inward whispers  
"lost !"  
But Enoch yearn'd to see her face  
again ;  
"If I might look on her sweet face  
again  
And know that she is happy." So the  
thought  
Haunted and harass'd him, and drove  
him forth,

At evening when the dull November  
day  
Was growing duller twilight, to the  
hill.  
There he sat down gazing on all be-  
low ;  
There did a thousand memories roll  
upon him,  
Unspeakable for sadness. By and by  
The ruddy square of comfortable light,  
Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's  
house,  
Allured him, as the beacon-blaze al-  
lures  
The bird of passage, till he madly  
strikes  
Against it, and beats out his weary life.  
For Philip's dwelling fronted on the  
street,  
The latest house to landward ; but be-  
hind,  
With one small gate that open'd on the  
waste,  
Flourish'd a little garden square and  
wall'd :  
And in it throve an ancient evergreen,  
A yewtree, and all round it ran a walk  
Of shingle, and a walk divided it :  
But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk  
and stole  
Up by the wall, behind the yew ; and  
thence  
That which he better might have  
shunn'd, if griefs  
Like his have worse or better, Enoch  
saw.  
For cups and silver on the burnish'd  
board  
Sparkled and shone ; so genial was the  
hearth :  
And on the right hand of the hearth  
he saw  
Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,  
Stout, rosy, with his babe across his  
knees,  
And o'er her second father stoop'd a  
girl,  
A later but a loftier Annie Lee,  
Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lift-  
ed hand  
Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring  
To tempt the babe, who rear'd his  
creasy arms,  
Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they  
laugh'd :  
And on the left hand of the hearth he  
saw  
The mother glancing often toward her  
babe,  
But turning now and then to speak  
with him,  
Her son, who stood beside her tall and  
strong,  
And saying that which pleased him, for  
he smiled.  
Now when the dead man come to life  
beheld  
His wife his wife no more, and saw the  
babe

Hers, yet not his, upon the father's  
 knee,  
 And all the warmth, the peace, the  
 happiness,  
 And his own children tall and beauti-  
 ful,  
 And him, that other, reigning in his  
 place,  
 Lord of his rights and of his children's  
 love,—  
 Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told  
 him all,  
 Because things seen are mightier than  
 things heard,  
 Stagger'd and shook, holding the  
 branch, and fear'd  
 To send abroad a shrill and terrible  
 cry,  
 Which in one moment, like the blast  
 of doom,  
 Would shatter all the happiness of the  
 hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a  
 thief,  
 Lest the harsh shingle should grate  
 underfoot,  
 And feeling all along the garden-wall,  
 Lest he should swoon and tumble and  
 be found,  
 Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and  
 closed,  
 As lightly as a sick man's chamber-  
 door,  
 Behind him, and came out upon the  
 waste.

And there he would have knelt, but  
 that his knees  
 Were feeble, so that falling prone he  
 dug  
 His fingers into the wet earth, and  
 pray'd.

"Too hard to bear! why did they  
 take me thence?  
 O God Almighty, blessed Saviour,  
 Thou  
 That didst uphold me on my lonely  
 isle,  
 Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness  
 A little longer! aid me, give me  
 strength  
 Not to tell her, never to let her know,  
 Help me not to break in upon her  
 peace.  
 My children too! must I not speak to  
 these?  
 They know me not. I should betray  
 myself,  
 Never: no father's kiss for me—the  
 girl  
 So like her mother, and the boy, my  
 son."

There speech and thought and nature  
 fail'd a little,  
 And he lay tranec'd; but when he rose  
 and paced  
 Back toward his solitary home again,

All down the long and narrow street he  
 went  
 Beating it in upon his weary brain,  
 As tho' it were the burden of a song,  
 "Not to tell her, never to let her  
 know."

He was not all unhappy. His resolve  
 Uppore him, and firm faith, and ever-  
 more  
 Prayer from a living source within the  
 will,  
 And beating up thro' all the bitter  
 world,  
 Like fountains of sweet water in the  
 sea,  
 Kept him a living soul. "This miller's  
 wife"

He said to Miriam "that you told me  
 of,  
 Has she no fear that her first husband  
 lives?"

"Ay, ay, poor soul" said Miriam,  
 "fear enow!  
 If you could tell her you had seen him  
 dead,

Why, that would be her comfort;"  
 and he thought  
 "After the Lord has call'd me she  
 shall know,  
 I wait His time" and Enoch set himself  
 Scorning an alms, to work whereby to  
 live.

Almost to all things could he turn his  
 hand.  
 Cooper he was and carpenter, and  
 wrought

To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or  
 help'd  
 At lading and unlading the tall barks,  
 That brought the stunted commerce of  
 those days;

Thus earn'd a scanty living for him-  
 self:  
 Yet since he did but labor for himself,  
 Work without hope, there was not life  
 in it

Whereby the man could live; and as  
 the year  
 Roll'd itself round again to meet the  
 day

When Enoch had return'd, a languor  
 came  
 Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually  
 Weakening the man, till he could do  
 no more,

But kept the house, his chair, and last  
 his bed.  
 And Enoch bore his weakness cheer-  
 fully.

For sure no gladder does the stranded  
 wreck  
 See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting  
 squall

The boat that bears the hope of life  
 approach

To save the life despair'd of, than he  
 saw  
 Death dawning on him, and the close  
 of all.

For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kindlier hope  
 On Enoch thinking "after I am gone,  
 Then may she learn I loved her to the last."  
 He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said  
 "Woman, I have a secret—only swear,  
 Before I tell you—swear upon the book  
 Not to reveal it, till you see me dead."  
 "Dead" clamor'd the good woman  
 "hear him talk!  
 I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round."  
 "Swear" added Enoch sternly "on the book."  
 And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam swore.  
 Then Enoch rolling his gray eyes upon her,  
 "Did you know Enoch Arden of this town?"  
 "Know him?" she said "I knew him far away.  
 Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the street;  
 Held his head high, and cared for no man, he."  
 Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her;  
 "His head is low, and no man cares for him.  
 I think I have not three days more to live;  
 I am the man." At which the woman gave  
 A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry.  
 "You Arden, you! nay, —sure he was a foot  
 Higher than you be." Enoch said again  
 "My God has bow'd me down to what I am;  
 My grief and solitude have broken me;  
 Nevertheless, know you that I am he  
 Who married—but that name has twice been changed—  
 I married her who married Philip Ray.  
 Sit, listen." Then he told her of his voyage,  
 His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,  
 His gazing in on Annie, his resolve.  
 And how he kept it. As the woman heard,  
 Fast flow'd the current of her easy tears,  
 While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly  
 To rush abroad all round the little haven,  
 Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes;  
 But awed and promise-bounden she forbore,  
 Saying only "See your batrns before you go!  
 Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden," and arose  
 Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung

A moment on her words, but then replied.  
 "Woman, disturb me not now at the last,  
 But let me hold my purpose till I die.  
 Sit down again; mark me and understand,  
 While I have power to speak. I charge you now,  
 When you shall see her, tell her that I died  
 Blessing her, praying for her, loving her;  
 Savo for the bar between us, loving her  
 As when she laid her head beside my own.  
 And tell my daughter Annie, whom I saw  
 So like her mother, that my latest breath  
 Was spent in blessing her and praying for her.  
 And tell my son that I died blessing him.  
 And say to Philip that I blest him too;  
 He never meant us anything but good.  
 But if my children care to see me dead,  
 Who hardly knew me living, let them come,  
 I am their father; but she must not come,  
 For my dead face would vex her after-life.  
 And now there is but one of all my blood  
 Who will embrace me in the world-to-be:  
 This hair is his: she cut it off and gave it,  
 And I have borne it with me all these years,  
 And thought to bear it with me to my grave;  
 But now my mind is changed, for I shall see him,  
 My babe in bliss: wherefore when I am gone,  
 Take, give her this, for it may comfort her:  
 It will moreover be a token to her,  
 That I am he."

He ceased; and Miriam Lane  
 Made such a voluble answer promising all,  
 That once again he roll'd his eyes upon her  
 Repeating all he wish'd, and once again  
 She promised.

Then the third night after this,  
 While Enoch slumber'd motionless and pale,  
 And Miriam watch'd and dozed at intervals,  
 There came so loud a calling of the sea,  
 That all the houses in the haven rang.

He woke, he rose, he spread his arms  
abroad  
Crying with a loud voice "a sail! a  
sail!  
I am saved;" and so fell back and  
spoke no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.  
And when they buried him the little  
port  
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST are our frames; and, gilded  
dust, our pride  
Looks only for a moment whole and  
sound;  
Like that long-buried body of the  
king,  
Found lying with his urns and orna-  
ments,  
Which at a touch of light, an air of  
heaven,  
Slit into ashes and was found no  
more.

Here is a story which in rougher  
shape  
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I  
saw  
Sunning himself in a waste field  
alone—  
Old, and a mine of memories—who had  
served,  
Long since, a bygone Rector of the  
place,  
And been himself a part of what he  
told.

SIR AYLMER AYLMER that almighty  
man,  
The county God—in whose capacious  
hall,  
Hung with a hundred shields, the  
family tree  
Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate  
king—  
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd  
the spire,  
Stood from his walls and wing'd his  
entry-gates  
And swung besides on many a windy  
sign—  
Whose eyes from under a pyramidal  
head  
Saw from his windows nothing save  
his own—  
What lover of his own had he than  
her,  
His only child, his Edith, whom he  
loved  
As heiress and not heir regretfully?  
But "he that marries her marries her  
name"

This fiat somewhat soothed himself  
and wife,  
His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,  
Inspid as the Queen upon a card;  
Her all of thought and bearing hardly  
more  
Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled  
corn,  
Little about it stirring save a brook!  
A sleepy land where under the same  
wheel  
The same old rut would deepen year  
by year;  
Where almost all the village had one  
name;  
Where Aylmer follow'd Aylmer at the  
Hall  
And Averill Averill at the Rectory  
Thrice over; so that Rectory and Hall,  
Bound in an immemorial intimacy,  
Were open to each other; tho' to  
dream  
That Love could bind them closer well  
had made  
The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up  
With horror, worse than had he heard  
his priest  
Preach an inverted scripture, sons of  
men  
Daughters of God; so sleepy was the  
land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd  
it so,  
Somewhere beneath his own low range  
of roofs,  
Have also set his many-shielded tree?  
There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage  
once,  
When the red rose was redder than it-  
self,  
And York's white rose as red as Lan-  
caster's,  
With wounded peace which each had  
prick'd to death.  
"Not proven" Averill said, or laugh-  
ingly  
"Some other race of Averills"—  
prov'n or no,  
What cared he? what, if other or the  
same?  
He lea'n'd not on his fathers but him-  
self,  
But Leolin, his brother, living oft  
With Averill, and a year or two before  
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away  
By one low voice to one dear neighbor-  
hood,  
Would often, in his walks with Edith,  
claim  
A distant kinship to the gracious  
blood  
That shook the heart of Edith hearing  
him.

Sanguine he was: a but less vivid  
hue

Than of that islet in the chestnut-  
bloom  
Flamed in his cheek; and eager eyes,  
that still  
Took joyful note of all things joyful,  
beam'd,  
Beneath a manelike mass of rolling  
gold,  
Their best and brightest, when they  
dwelt on hers,  
Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect  
else,  
But subject to the season or the mood,  
Shone like a mystic star between the  
less  
And greater glory varying to and fro,  
We know not wherefore; bounteously  
made,  
And yet so finely, that a troublous  
touch  
Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in  
a day,  
A joyous to dilate, as toward the  
light.  
And these had been together from the  
first.  
Leolin's first nurse was, five years af-  
ter, hers:  
So much the boy foreran; but when  
his date  
Doubled her own, for want of play-  
mates, he  
(Since Averill was a decade and a  
half  
His elder, and their parents under-  
ground)  
Had tost his ball and flown his kite,  
and roll'd  
His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her  
dip  
Against the rush of the air in the prone  
swing,  
Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, ar-  
ranged  
Her garden, sow'd her name and kept  
it green  
In living letters, told her fairy-tales,  
Show'd her the fairy footings on the  
grass,  
The little dells of cowslip, fairy palms,  
The petty mare-stail forest, fairy pines,  
Or from the tiny pitted target blew  
What look'd a flight of fairy arrows  
aim'd  
All at one mark, all hitting: make-be-  
lieves  
For Edith and himself: or else he  
forged,  
But that was later, boyish histories  
Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon,  
wreck,  
Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and  
true love  
Crown'd after trial; sketches rude and  
faint,  
But where a passion yet unborn per-  
haps  
Lay hidden as the music of the moon  
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightin-  
gale.

And thus together, save for college-  
times  
Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair  
As ever painter painted, poet sang,  
Or Heav'n in lavish bounty moulded,  
grew.  
And more and more, the maiden  
woman-grown,  
He wasted hours with Averill; there,  
when first  
The tented winter-field was broken up  
Into that phalanx of the summer  
spears  
That soon should wear the garland;  
there again  
When burr and bine were gather'd;  
lastly there  
At Christmas; ever welcome at the  
Hall,  
On whose dull sameness his full tide of  
youth  
Broke with a phosphorescence cheer-  
ing even  
My lady; and the Baronet yet had laid  
No bar between them: dull and self-  
involved,  
Tall and erect, but bending from his  
height  
With half-allowing smiles for all the  
world,  
And mighty courteous in the main—  
his pride  
Lay deeper than to wear it as his  
ring—  
He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,  
Would care no more for Leolin's walk-  
ing with her  
Than for his old Newfoundland's,  
when they ran  
To loose him at the stables, for he rose  
Two-footed at the limit of his chain,  
Roaring to make a third: and how  
should Love,  
Whom the cross-lightnings of four  
chance-met eyes  
Flash into fiery life from nothing, fol-  
low  
Such dear familiarities of dawn?  
Seldom, but when he does, Master of  
all.

So these young hearts not knowing  
that they loved,  
Not she at least, nor conscious of a  
bar  
Between them, nor by plight or broken  
ring  
Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,  
Wander'd at will, but oft accompanied  
By Averill: his, a brother's love, that  
lung  
With wings of brooding shelter o'er  
her peace,  
Might have been other, save for Leo-  
lin's—  
Who knows? but so they wander'd,  
hour by hour  
Gather'd the blossom that rebloom'd,  
and drank  
The magic cup that fill'd itself anew.

A whisper half reveal'd her to her-  
self.  
For out beyond her lodges, where the  
brook  
Vocal, with here and there a silence,  
ran  
By sallow rims, arose the laborers'  
homes,  
A frequent haunt of Edith, on low  
knolls  
That dimpling died into each other,  
huts,  
At random scatter'd, each a nest in  
bloom.  
Her art, her hand, her counsel all had  
wrought  
About them; here was one that, sum-  
mer-blanch'd,  
Was parcel-bearded with the travel-  
ler's joy  
An autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here  
The warm-blue breathings of a hidden  
heart  
Broke from a bower of vine and honey-  
suckle;  
One look'd all rosetree, and another  
wore  
A close-set robe of jasmine sown with  
stars;  
This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers  
About it; this, a milky-way on earth,  
Like visions in the Northern dreamer's  
heavens,  
A Hy-avenue climbing to the doors;  
One, almost to the martin-haunted  
eaves  
A summer burial deep in hollyhocks;  
Each, its own charm; and Edith's  
everywhere;  
And Edith ever visitant with him,  
He but less loved than Edith, of her  
poor:  
For she—so lowly-lovely and so loving,  
Queenly responsive when the loyal  
hand  
Rose from the clay it work'd in as she  
past,  
Not sowing hedgerow texts and pass-  
ing by,  
Nor dealing goodly counsel from a  
height  
That makes the lowest hate it, but a  
voice  
Of comfort and an open hand of help,  
A splendid presence flattering the poor  
roofs  
Revered as theirs, but kindlier than  
themselves  
To ailing wife or wailing infancy  
Or old bedridden palsy,—was adored;  
He, loved for her and for himself. A  
grasp  
Having the warmth and muscles of the  
heart,  
A childly way with children, and a  
laugh  
Ringing like proven golden coinage  
true,  
Were no false passport to that easy  
realm,

Where once with Leolin at her side,  
the girl,  
Nursing a child, and turning to the  
warmth  
The tender pink five-beaded baby-soles,  
Heard the good mother softly whisper  
" Bless,  
God bless 'em : marriages are made in  
Heaven."

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to  
her.  
My lady's Indian kinsman unan-  
nounced  
With half a score of swarthy faces  
came.  
His own, tho' keen and bold and sol-  
dierly,  
Sear'd by the close ecliptic, was not  
fair;  
Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the  
hour,  
Tho' seeming boastful : so when first  
he dash'd  
Into the chronicle of a deedful day,  
Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile  
Of patron " Good ! my lady's kins-  
man ! good ! "

My lady with her fingers interlock'd,  
And rotatory thumbs on silken knees,  
Call'd all her vital spirits into each  
ear  
To listen : unawares they fitted off,  
Busying themselves about the flower-  
age  
That stood from out a stiff brocade in  
which,  
The meteor of a splendid season, she,  
Once with this kinsman, ah so long  
ago,  
Stept thro' the stately minuet of those  
days;  
But Edith's eager fancy hurried with  
him  
Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of  
his life :  
Till Leolin ever watchful of her eye  
Hated him with a momentary hate.  
Wife-hunting, as the rumor ran, was  
he :  
I know not, for he spoke not, only  
shower'd  
His oriental gifts on every one  
And most on Edith : like a storm he  
came,  
And shook the house, and like a storm  
he went.

Among the gifts he left her (possibly  
He flow'd and ebb'd uncertain, to re-  
turn  
When others had been tested) there  
was one,  
A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels  
on it  
Sprinkled about in gold that branch'd  
itself  
Fine as ice-ferns on January panes  
Made by a breath. I know not whence  
at first,

Nor of what race, the work; but as he  
told  
The story, storming a hill-fort of  
thieves  
He got it; for their captain after fight,  
His comrades having fought their last  
below,  
Was climbing up the valley; at whom  
he shot:  
Down from the beetling crag to which  
he clung  
Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,  
This dagger with him, which when now  
admired  
By Edith whom his pleasure was to  
please,  
At once the costly Sahib yielded to  
her.

And Leolin, coming after he was  
gone,  
Tost over all her presents petulantly;  
And when she show'd the wealthy  
scabbard, saying  
"Look what a lovely piece of work-  
manship!"  
Slight was his answer "Well—I care  
not for it."  
Then playing with the blade he prick'd  
his hand,  
"A gracious gift to give a lady, this!"  
"But would it be more gracious"  
ask'd the girl  
"Were I to give this gift of his to one  
That is no lady?" "Gracious? No"  
said he.  
"Me?—but I cared not for it. O par-  
don me,  
I seem to be ungraciousness itself."  
"Take it" she added sweetly "tho'  
his gift;  
For I am more ungracious ev'n than  
you,  
I care not for it either;" and he said  
"Why then I love it:" but Sir Ayl-  
mer past,  
And neither loved nor liked the thing  
he heard.

The next day came a neighbor.  
Blues and reds  
They talk'd of; blues were sure of it,  
he thought:  
Then of the latest fox—where started  
—kill'd  
In such a bottom: "Peter had the  
brush,  
My Peter, first:" and did Sir Aylmer  
know  
That great pock-pitten fellow had been  
caught?  
Then made his pleasure echo, hand to  
hand,  
And rolling as it were the substance  
of it  
Between his palms a moment up and  
down—  
"The birds were warm, the birds were  
warm upon him;  
We have him now:" and had Sir  
Aylmer heard—

Nay, but he must—the land was ring-  
ing of it—  
This blacksmith-border marriage—one  
they knew—  
Raw from the nursery—who could  
trust a child?  
That cursed France with her egalit-  
ties!  
And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially  
With nearing chair and lower'd ac-  
cent) think—  
For people talk'd—that it was wholly  
wise  
To let that handsome fellow Averill  
walk  
So freely with his daughter? people  
talk'd—  
The boy might get a notion into him;  
The girl might be entangled ere she  
knew.  
Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stiffening  
spoke:  
"The girl and boy, Sir, know their dif-  
ferences!"  
"Good" said his friend "but watch!"  
and he "enough,  
More than enough, Sir! I can guard  
my own."  
They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer  
watch'd.

Pale, for on her the thunders of the  
house  
Had fallen first, was Edith that same  
night;  
Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a  
rough piece  
Of early rigid color, under which  
Withdrawing by the counter door to  
that  
Which Leolin open'd, she cast back  
upon him  
A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He,  
as one  
Caught in a burst of unexpected storm,  
And pelted with outrageous epithets,  
Turning beheld the Powers of the  
House  
On either side the hearth, indignant;  
her,  
Cooling her false cheek with a feather-  
fan,  
Him glaring, by his own stale devil  
spur'd,  
And, like a beast hard-riden, breath-  
ing hard.  
"Ungracious, dishonorable, base,  
Presumptuous! trusted as he was with  
her,  
The sole succeder to their wealth,  
their lands,  
The last remaining pillar of their  
house,  
The one transmitter of their ancient  
name,  
Their child," "Our child!" "Our  
heirress!" "Ours!" for still,  
Like echoes from beyond a hollow,  
came  
Her sicklier iteration Last he said

"Boy, mark me! for your fortunes are  
to make.  
I swear you shall not make them out  
of mine.  
Now inasmuch as you have practised  
on her,  
Perplex her, made her half forget her-  
self,  
Swerve from her duty to herself and  
us—  
Things in an Aylmer deem'd impossi-  
ble,  
Far as we track ourselves—I say that  
this—  
Else I withdraw favor and countenance  
From you and yours forever—shall you  
do.  
Sir, when you see her—but you shall  
not see her—  
No, you shall write, and not to her, but  
me:  
And you shall say that having spoken  
with me,  
And after look'd into yourself, you  
find  
That you meant nothing—as indeed  
you know  
That you meant nothing. Such a match  
as this!  
Impossible, prodigious!" These were  
words,  
As metal by his measure of himself,  
Arguing boundless forbearance: after  
which,  
And Leolin's horror-stricken answer,  
"I  
So foul a traitor to myself and her,  
Never O never," for about as long  
As the wind-hover hangs in balance,  
paused  
Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm  
within,  
Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and  
crying  
"Boy, should I find you by my doors  
again,  
My men shall lash you from them like  
a dog:  
Hence!" with a sudden execration  
drove  
The footstool from before him, and  
arose;  
So, stammering "scoundrel" out of  
teeth that ground  
As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin  
still  
Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old  
man  
Follow'd, and under his own lintel  
stood  
Storming with lifted hands, a hoary  
face  
Meet for the reverence of the hearth,  
but now,  
Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd  
moon, [form'd,  
Vext with unworthy madness, and de-  
Slowly and conscious of the raging  
eye

That watch'd him, till he heard the  
ponderous door  
Close, crashing with long echoes thro'  
the land,  
Went Leolin; then, his passions all in  
flood  
And masters of his motion, furiously  
Down thro' the bright lawns to his  
brother's ran,  
And foam'd away his heart at Averill's  
ear:  
Whom Averill solaced as he might,  
amazed:  
The man was his, had been his father's  
friend:  
He must have seen, himself had seen  
it long:  
He must have known, himself had  
known: besides,  
He never yet had set his daughter  
forth  
Here in the woman-markets of the  
west,  
Where our Caucasians let themselves  
be sold.  
Some one, he thought, had slander'd  
Leolin to him,  
"Brother, for I have loved you more  
as son  
Than brother, let me tell you: I my-  
self—  
What is their pretty saying? jilted,  
is it?  
Jilted I was: I say it for your peace.  
Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the  
shame  
The woman should have borne, humili-  
ated,  
I lived for years a stunted sunless life;  
Till after our good parents past away  
Watching your growth, I seem'd again  
to grow.  
Leolin, I almost sin in envying you:  
The very whitest lamb in all my fold  
Loves you: I know her: the worst  
thought she has  
Is whiter even than her pretty hand:  
She must prove true: for, brother,  
where two fight  
The strongest wins, and truth and love  
are strength,  
And you are happy: let her parents  
be."  
But Leolin cried out the more upon  
them—  
Insolent, brainless, heartless! heiress,  
wealth,  
Their wealth, their heiress! wealth  
enough was theirs  
For twenty matches. Were he lord of  
this,  
Why twenty boys and girls should  
marry on it,  
And forty blest ones bless him, and  
himself  
Be wealthy still, ay wealthier. He  
believed  
This filthy marriage-hindering Man-  
mon made

The harlot of the cities : nature crost  
 Was mother of the foul adulteries  
 That saturate soul with body. Name,  
 too ! name,  
 Their ancient name ! they *might* be  
 proud : its worth  
 Was being Edith's. Ah how pale she  
 had look'd  
 Darling, to-night ! they must have  
 rated her  
 Beyond all tolerance. These old pheasant-lords,  
 These partridge-breeders of a thousand  
 years,  
 Who had mildew'd in their thousands,  
 doing nothing  
 Since Egbert—why, the greater their  
 disgrace !  
 Fall back upon a name ! rest, rot in  
 that !  
 Not *keep* it noble, make it nobler ?  
 fools,  
 With such a vantage-ground for nobleness !  
 He had known a man, a quintessence  
 of man,  
 The life of all—who madly loved—and  
 he,  
 Thwarted by one of these old father-  
 fools,  
 Had riot'd his life out, and made an  
 end.  
 He would not do it ! her sweet face  
 and faith  
 Held him from that : but he had powers,  
 he knew it :  
 Back would he to his studies, make a  
 name,  
 Name, fortune too : the world should  
 ring of him  
 To shame these mouldy Aylmers in  
 their graves :  
 Chancellor, or what is greatest would  
 he be—  
 "O brother, I am grieved to learn your  
 grief—  
 Give me my fling, and let me say my  
 say."

At which, like one that sees his own  
 excess,  
 And easily forgives it as his own,  
 He laugh'd ; and then was mute ; but  
 presently  
 Wept like a storm : and honest Averill  
 seeing  
 How low his brother's mood had fallen,  
 fetch'd  
 His richest beeswing from a binn reserved  
 For banquets, praised the waning red,  
 and told  
 The vintage—when *this* Aylmer came  
 of age—  
 Then drank and past it ; till at length  
 the two,  
 Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again,  
 agreed  
 That much allowance must be made  
 for men.

After an angry dream this kindlier glow  
 Faded with morning, but his purpose  
 held.

Yet once by night again the lovers  
 met,  
 A perilous meeting under the tall  
 pines  
 That darken'd all the northward of  
 her Hall.  
 Him, to her meek and modest bosom  
 prest  
 In agony, she promised that no force,  
 Persuasion, no, nor death could alter  
 her :  
 He, passionately hopefuller, would go,  
 Labor for his own Edith, and return  
 In such a sunlight of prosperity  
 He should not be rejected. "Write to  
 me !  
 They loved me, and because I love  
 their child  
 They hate me : there is war between  
 us, dear,  
 Which breaks all bonds but ours ; we  
 must remain  
 Sacred to one another." So they talk'd,  
 Poor children, for their comfort : the  
 wind blew ;  
 The rain of heaven, and their own bitter  
 tears,  
 Tears, and the careless rain of heaven,  
 mixt  
 Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each  
 other  
 In darkness, and above them roar'd  
 the pine.

So Leolin went ; and as we task  
 ourselves  
 To learn a language known but smatteringly  
 In phrases here and there at random,  
 toil'd  
 Mastering the lawless science of our  
 law,  
 That codeless myriad of precedent,  
 That wilderness of single instances,  
 Thro' which a few, by wit or fortune  
 led,  
 May beat a pathway out to wealth and  
 fame.  
 The jests, that flash'd about the pleader's  
 room,  
 Lightning of the hour, the pun, the  
 scurrilous tale,  
 Old scandals buried now seven decades  
 deep  
 In other scandals that have lived and  
 died,  
 And left the living scandal that shall  
 die—  
 Were dead to him already ; bent as he  
 was  
 To make disproof of scorn, and strong  
 in hopes,  
 And prodigal of all brain-labor he,  
 Charter of sleep, and wine, and exercise,  
 Except when for a breathing-while at  
 eve,

Some niggard fraction of an hour, he  
 Beside the river-bank: and then in-  
 ded  
 Harder the times were, and the hands  
 of power  
 Were bloodier, and the according  
 hearts of men  
 Seem'd harder too; but the soft river-  
 breeze,  
 Which fann'd the gardens of that rival  
 rose  
 Yet fragrant in a heart remembering  
 His former talks with Edith, on him  
 breathed  
 Far purer in his rushings to and fro,  
 After his books, to flush his blood with  
 air,  
 Then to his books again. My lady's  
 cousin,  
 Half-sickening of his pension'd after-  
 noon,  
 Drove in upon the student once or  
 twice,  
 Ran a Malayan muck against the  
 times,  
 Had golden hopes for France and all  
 mankind,  
 Answer'd all queries touching those at  
 home  
 With a heaved shoulder and a saucy  
 smile,  
 And fain had haled him out into the  
 world,  
 And air'd him there: his nearer friend  
 would say  
 "Screw not the cord too sharply lest it  
 snap."  
 Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger  
 forth  
 From where his worldless heart had  
 kept it warm,  
 Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.  
 And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of  
 him  
 Approvingly, and prophesied his rise:  
 For heart, I think, help'd head; her  
 letters too,  
 Tho' far between, and coming fitfully  
 Like broken music, written as she  
 found  
 Or made occasion, being strictly  
 watch'd,  
 Charm'd him thro' every labyrinth till  
 he saw  
 An end, a hope, a light breaking upon  
 him.

But they that cast her spirit into  
 flesh,  
 Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued  
 themselves  
 To sell her, those good parents, for her  
 good,  
 Whatever eldest-born of rank or  
 wealth  
 Might lie within their compass, him  
 they lured  
 Into their net made pleasant by the  
 baits

Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.  
 So month by month the noise about  
 their doors,  
 And distant blaze of these dull ban-  
 quets, made  
 The nightly wirer of their innocent  
 hare  
 Falter before he took it. All in vain.  
 Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd  
 Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit  
 So often, that the folly taking wings  
 Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the  
 wind  
 With rumor, and became in other  
 fields  
 A mockery to the yeomen over ale,  
 And laughter to their lords: but those  
 at home,  
 As hunters round a hunted creature  
 draw  
 The cordon close and closer toward  
 the death,  
 Narrow'd her goings out and comings  
 in;  
 Forbade her first the house of Averill,  
 Then closed her access to the wealthier  
 farms,  
 Last from her own home-circle of the  
 poor  
 They barr'd her: yet she bore it: yet  
 her cheek  
 Kept color: wondrous! but, O mys-  
 tery!  
 What amulet drew her down to that  
 old oak,  
 So old, that twenty years before, a part  
 Falling had let appear the brand of  
 John—  
 Once grovelike, each huge arm a tree,  
 but now  
 The broken base of a black tower, a  
 cave  
 Of touchwood, with a single flourishing  
 spray.  
 There the manorial lord too curiously  
 Raking in that millennial touchwood-  
 dust  
 Found for himself a bitter treasure-  
 trove;  
 Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and  
 read  
 Writing a letter from his child, for  
 which  
 Came at the moment Leolin's emis-  
 sary,  
 A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to  
 fly,  
 But scared with threats of jail and  
 halter gave  
 To him that fluster'd his poor parish  
 wits  
 The letter which he brought, and swore  
 besides  
 To play their go-between as heretofore  
 Nor let them know themselves be-  
 tray'd; and then,  
 Soul stricken at their kindness to him,  
 went  
 Hating his own lean heart and miser-  
 able.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot  
 dream  
 The father panting woke, and oft, at  
 dawn  
 Aroused the black republic on his  
 elms.  
 Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue  
 brush'd  
 Thro' the dim meadow toward his  
 treasure-trove,  
 Seized it, took home, and to my lady,—  
 who made  
 A downward crescent of her minion  
 mouth,  
 Listless in all despondence,—read ;  
 and tore,  
 As if the living passion symbol'd there  
 Were living nerves to feel the rent ;  
 and burnt,  
 Now chafing at his own great self de-  
 fied,  
 Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks  
 of scorn  
 In babyisms, and dear diminutives  
 Scatter'd all over the vocabulary  
 Of such a love as like a chidden child,  
 After much wailing, hush'd itself at last  
 Hopeless of answer : then tho' Averill  
 wrote  
 And bade him with good heart sustain  
 himself—  
 All would be well—the lover heeded  
 not,  
 But passionately restless came and  
 went,  
 And rustling once at night about the  
 place,  
 There by a keeper shot at, slightly  
 hurt,  
 Raging return'd : nor was it well for  
 her  
 Kept to the garden now, and grove of  
 pines,  
 Watch'd even there ; and one was set  
 to watch  
 The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd  
 them all,  
 Yet bitterer from his readings : once  
 indeed,  
 Warm'd with his wines, or taking pride  
 in her,  
 She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her ten-  
 derly  
 Not knowing what possess'd him : that  
 one kiss  
 Was Leolin's one strong rival upon  
 earth ;  
 Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,  
 Seem'd hope's returning rose : and  
 then ensued  
 A Martin's summer of his faded love,  
 Or ordeal by kindness ; after this  
 He seldom crost his child without a  
 sneer ;  
 The mother flow'd in shallower acri-  
 monies :  
 Never one kindly smile, one kindly  
 word :  
 So that the gentle creature shut from  
 all

Her charitable use, and face to face  
 With twenty months of silence, slowly  
 lost  
 Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on  
 life.  
 Last, some low fever ranging round to  
 spy  
 The weakness of a people or a house,  
 Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer,  
 or men,  
 Of almost all that is, hurting the hurt—  
 Save Christ as we believe him—found  
 the girl  
 And flung her down upon a couch of  
 fire,  
 Where careless of the household faces  
 near,  
 And crying upon the name of Leolin,  
 She, and with her the race of Aylmer,  
 past.

Star to star vibrates light : may soul  
 to soul  
 Strike thro' a finer element of her own ?  
 So,—from afar,—touch as at once ? or  
 why  
 That night, that moment, when she  
 named his name,  
 Did the keen shriek "yes love, yes  
 Edith, yes,"  
 Shriill, fill the comrade of his chambers  
 woke,  
 And came upon him half-arisen from  
 sleep,  
 With a weird bright eye, sweating and  
 trembling,  
 His hair as it were crackling into  
 flames,  
 His body half flung forward in pursuit,  
 And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp  
 a flyer :  
 Nor knew he wherefore he had made  
 the cry :  
 And being much befoo'd and idioted  
 By the rough amity of the other, sank  
 As into sleep again. The second day,  
 My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,  
 A breaker of the bitter news from  
 home,  
 Found a dead man, a letter edged with  
 death  
 Beside him, and the dagger which  
 himself  
 Gave Edith, redden'd with no bandit's  
 blood :  
 "From Edith" was engraven on the  
 blade.

Then Averill went and gazed upon  
 his death.  
 And when he came again, his flock be-  
 lieved—  
 Beholding how the years which are  
 not Time's  
 Had blasted him—that many thousand  
 days  
 Were elipt by horror from his term of  
 life.  
 Yet the sad mother, for the second  
 death

Scarce touch'd her thro' that nearness  
of the first,  
And being used to find her pastor  
texts,  
Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying  
him  
To speak before the people of her  
child,  
And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that  
day rose:  
Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded  
woods  
Was all the life of it; for hard on  
these,  
A breathless burden of low-folded  
heavens  
Stiffed and chill'd at once; but every  
roof  
Sent out a listener: many too had  
known  
Edith among the hamlets round, and  
since  
The parents' harshness and the hap-  
less loves  
And double death were widely mur-  
mur'd, left  
Their own gray tower, or plain-faced  
tabernacle,  
To hear him; all in mourning these,  
and those  
With blots of it about them, ribbon,  
glove  
Or kerchief; while the church,—one  
night, except  
For greenish glimmerings thro' the  
lancets,—made  
Still paler the pale head of him, who  
tower'd  
Above them, with his hopes in either  
grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd  
Averill,  
His face magnetic to the hand from  
which  
Livid he pluck'd it forth, and labor'd  
thro'  
His brief prayer-prelude, gave the  
verse "Behold,  
Your house is left unto you desolate!"  
But lapsed into so long a pause again  
As half amazed half frightened all his  
flock:  
Then from his height and loneliness  
of grief  
Bore down in flood, and dash'd his  
angry heart  
Against the desolations of the world.

Never since our bad earth became  
one sea,  
Which rolling o'er the palaces of the  
proud,  
And all but those who knew the living  
God—  
Eight that were left to make a purer  
world—  
When since had flood, fire, earthquake,  
thunder, wrought  
Such waste and havoc as the idolatries

Which from the low light of mortality  
Shot up their shadows to the Heaven  
of Heavens,  
And worshipt their own darkness as  
the Highest?  
"Gash thyself, priest, and honor thy  
brute Baäl,  
And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself,  
For with thy worst self hast thou  
clothed thy God.  
Then came a Lord in no wise like to  
Baäl.  
The babe shall lead the lion. Surely  
now  
The wilderness shall blossom as the  
rose.  
Crown thyself, worm, and worship thine  
own lusts!—  
No coarse and blockish God of acreage  
Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel  
to—  
Thy God is far diffused in noble groves  
And princely halls, and farms, and  
flowing lawns,  
And heaps of living gold that daily  
grow,  
And title-scrolls and gorgeous herald-  
ries.  
In such a shape dost thou behold thy  
God.  
Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for him;  
for thine  
Fares richly, in fair linen, not a hair  
Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while  
The deathless ruler of thy dying house  
Is wounded to the death that cannot  
die;  
And tho' thou numberest with the fol-  
lowers  
Of One who cried 'leave all and follow  
me,'  
Thee therefore with His light about  
thy feet,  
Thee with His message ringing in thine  
ears,  
Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord  
from Heaven,  
Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,  
Wonderful, Prince of peace, the Mighty  
God,  
Count the more base idolater of the two;  
Crueller: as not passing thro' the fire  
Bodies, but souls—thy children's—  
thro' the smoke,  
The blight of low desires—darkening  
thine own  
To thine own likeness; or if one of  
these,  
Thy better born unhappily from thee,  
Should, as by miracle, grow straight  
and fair—  
Friends, I was bid to speak of such a  
one  
By those who most have cause to sor-  
row for her—  
Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,  
Fairer than Ruth among the fields of  
corn,  
Fair as the Angel that said 'hail' she  
seem'd,

Who entering fill'd the house with sudden light  
 For so mine own was brighten'd: where indeed  
 The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven  
 Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway? whose the babe  
 Too ragged to be fondled on her lap.  
 Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of shame,  
 The common care whom no one cared for, leapt  
 To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart,  
 As with the mother he had never known,  
 In gambols; for her fresh and innocent eyes  
 Had such a star of morning in their blue,  
 That all neglected places of the field  
 Broke into nature's music when they saw her.  
 Low was her voice, but won mysterious way  
 Thro' the seal'd ear to which a louder one  
 Was all but silence—free of alms her hand—  
 The hand that robbed your cottage-walls with flowers  
 Has often toil'd to clothe your little ones;  
 How often placed upon the sick man's brow  
 Cool'd it, or laid his feverish pillow smooth!  
 Had you one sorrow and she shared it not?  
 One burden and she would not lighten it?  
 One spiritual doubt she did not soothe?  
 Or when some heat of difference sparkled out,  
 How sweetly would she glide between your wraths,  
 And steal you from each other! for she walk'd  
 Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love,  
 Who still'd the rolling wave of Gali-lee!  
 And one—of him I was not bid to speak—  
 Was always with her, whom you also knew.  
 Him too you loved, for he was worthy love.  
 And these had been together from the first;  
 They might have been together till the last.  
 Friends, this frail bark of ours, when sorely tried,  
 May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt,  
 Without the captain's knowledge: hope with me.  
 Whose shame is that, if he went hence with shame?

Nor mine the fault, if losing both of these  
 I cry to vacant chairs and widow'd walls,  
 'My house is left unto me desolate.'

While thus he spoke, his hearers wept; but some,  
 Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than those  
 That knit themselves for summer shadow, scowl'd  
 At their great lord. He, when it seem'd he saw  
 No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but fork'd  
 Of the near storm, and aiming at his head,  
 Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, soldier-like,  
 Erect; but when the preacher's cadence flow'd  
 Softening thro' all the gentle attributes  
 Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd his face,  
 Faled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth;  
 And "O pray God that he hold up"  
 she thought  
 "Or surely I shall shame myself and him."

"Nor yours the blame—for who beside your hearths  
 Can take her place—If echoing me you cry  
 'Our house is left unto us desolate!'  
 But thou, O thou that killest, hadst thou known,  
 O thou that stonest, hadst thou understood  
 The things belonging to thy peace and ours!  
 Is there no prophet but the voice that calls  
 Doom upon kings, or in the waste 'Repent'?  
 Is not our own child on the narrow way,  
 Who down to those that saunter in the broad  
 Cries 'come up hither,' as a prophet to us?  
 Is there no stoning save with flint and rock?  
 Yes, as the dead we weep for testify—  
 No desolation but by sword and fire?  
 Yes, as your moanings witness, and myself  
 Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my loss,  
 Give me your prayers, for he is past your prayers,  
 Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven.  
 But I that thought myself long-suffering, meek,  
 Exceeding 'poor in spirit'—how the words  
 Have twisted back upon themselves, and mean

Vileness, we are grown so proud—I  
 wish'd my voice  
 A rushing tempest of the wrath of God  
 To blow these sacrifices thro' the  
 world—  
 Sent like the twelve-divided concu-  
 bine  
 To inflame the tribes : but there—out  
 yonder—earth  
 Lightens from her own central Hell—  
 O there  
 The red fruit of an old idolatry—  
 The heads of chiefs and princes fall so  
 fast,  
 They cling together in the ghastly  
 sack—  
 The land all shambles—naked mar-  
 riages  
 Flash from the bridge, and ever-mur-  
 der'd France,  
 By shores that darken with the gather-  
 ing wolf,  
 Runs in a river of blood to the sick  
 sea.  
 Is this a time to madden madness  
 then?  
 Was this a time for these to flaunt  
 their pride?  
 May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as dense  
 as those  
 Which hid the Holiest from the peo-  
 ple's eyes  
 Ere the great death, shroud this great  
 sin from all!  
 Doubtless our narrow world must can-  
 vass it :  
 O rather pray for those and pity them,  
 Who thro' their own desire accom-  
 plish'd bring  
 Their own gray hairs with sorrow to  
 the grave—  
 Who broke the bond which they de-  
 sired to break,  
 Which else had link'd their race with  
 times to come—  
 Who wove coarse webs to snare her  
 purity,  
 Grossly contriving their dear daugh-  
 ter's good—  
 Poor souls, and knew not what they  
 did, but sat  
 Ignorant, devising their own daugh-  
 ter's death!  
 May not that earthly chastisement suf-  
 fice?  
 Have not our love and reverence left  
 them bare?  
 Will not another take their heritage?  
 Will there be children's laughter in  
 their hall  
 For ever and for ever, or one stone  
 Left on another, or is it a light thing  
 That I their guest, their host, their an-  
 cient friend,  
 I made by these the last of all my race  
 Must cry to these the last of theirs, as  
 cried  
 Christ ere His agony to those that swore  
 Not by the temple but the gold, and  
 made

Their own traditions God, and slew the  
 Lord,  
 And left their memories a world's  
 curse—' Behold,  
 Your house is left unto you deso-  
 late? "

Ended he had not, but she brook'd  
 no more :  
 Long since her heart had beat re-  
 morselessly,  
 Her cramped-up sorrow pain'd her, and  
 a sense  
 Of meanness in her unresisting life.  
 Then their eyes vext her; for on en-  
 tering  
 He had cast the curtains of their seat  
 aside—  
 Black velvet of the costliest—she her-  
 self  
 Had seen to that : fain had she closed  
 them now,  
 Yet dared not stir to do it, only near'd  
 Her husband inch by inch, but when  
 she laid,  
 Wifelike, her hand in one of his, he  
 veil'd  
 His face with the other, and at once,  
 as falls  
 A creeper when the prop is broken,  
 fell  
 The woman shrieking at his feet, and  
 swoon'd.  
 Then her own people bore along the  
 nave  
 Her pendent hands, and narrow mea-  
 gre face  
 Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty  
 years :  
 And her the Lord of all the landscape  
 round  
 Ev'n to his last horizon, and of all  
 Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd  
 out  
 Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle  
 Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded  
 ways  
 Stumbling across the market to his  
 death,  
 Unpitied ; for he groped as blind, and  
 seem'd  
 Always about to fall, grasping the  
 pews  
 And oaken finials till he touch'd the  
 door ;  
 Yet to the lychgate, where his chariot  
 stood,  
 Strode from the porch, tall and erect  
 again.

But nevermore did either pass the  
 gate  
 Save under pall with bearers. In one  
 month,  
 Thro' weary and yet ever wearier  
 hours,  
 The childless mother went to seek her  
 child ;  
 And when he felt the silence of his  
 house

About him, and the change and not  
 the change,  
 And those fixt eyes of painted ances-  
 tors  
 Staring for ever from their gilded walls  
 On him their last descendant, his own  
 head  
 Began to droop, to fall; the man be-  
 came  
 Imbecile; his one word was "des-  
 olate";  
 Dead for two years before his death  
 was he;  
 But when the second Christmas came,  
 escaped  
 His keepers, and the silence which he  
 felt,  
 To find a deeper in the narrow gloom  
 By wife and child; nor wanted at his  
 end  
 The dark retinue reverencing death  
 At golden thresholds; nor from tender  
 hearts,  
 And those who sorrow'd o'er a van-  
 ish'd race,  
 Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave.  
 Then the great Hall was wholly broken  
 down,  
 And the broad woodland parcell'd into  
 farms;  
 And where the two contrived their  
 daughter's good,  
 Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has  
 made his run,  
 The hedgehog underneath the plantain  
 bores,  
 The rabbit fondles his own harmless  
 face,  
 The slow-worm creeps, and the thin  
 weasel there  
 Follows the mouse, and all is open  
 field.

## SEA DREAMS.

A CITY clerk, but gently born and  
 bred;  
 His wife, an unknown artist's orphan  
 child—  
 One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three  
 years old:  
 They, thinking that her clear german-  
 der eye  
 Droopt in the giant-factored city-  
 gloom,  
 Came, with a month's leave given them  
 to the sea:  
 For which his gains were dock'd, how-  
 ever small:  
 Small were his gains, and hard his  
 work; besides,  
 Their slender household fortunes (for  
 the man  
 Had risk'd his little like the little  
 thrift,  
 Trembled in perilous places o'er a  
 deep:  
 And oft, when sitting all alone, his  
 face

Would darken, as he cursed his credu-  
 lousness,  
 And that one unctious mouth which  
 lured him, rogne,  
 To buy strange shares in some Peru-  
 vian mine,  
 Now seaward-bound for health they  
 gain'd a coast,  
 All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning  
 cave,  
 At close of day; slept, woke, and went  
 the next,  
 The Sabbath, pious variers from the  
 church,  
 To chapel; where a heated pulpiteer,  
 Not preaching simple Christ to simple  
 men,  
 Announced the coming doom, and ful-  
 minated  
 Against the scarlet woman and her  
 creed:  
 For sideways up he swung his arms,  
 and shriek'd  
 "Thus, thus with violence," ev'n as if  
 he held  
 The Apocalyptic millstone, and him-  
 self  
 Were that great Angel; "Thus with  
 violence  
 Shall Babylon be cast into the sea;  
 Then comes the close." The gentle-  
 hearted wife  
 Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world;  
 He at his own; but when the windy  
 storm  
 Had ended, forth they came and paced  
 the shore,  
 Ran in and out the long sea-framing  
 caves,  
 Drank the large air, and saw, but  
 scarce believed  
 (The sootflake of so many a summer  
 still  
 Clung to their fancies) that they saw  
 the sea.  
 So now on sand they walk'd, and now  
 on cliff,  
 Lingered about the thymy promonto-  
 ries,  
 Till all the sails were darken'd in the  
 west,  
 And rosed in the east: then homeward  
 and to bed:  
 Where she, who kept a tender Chris-  
 tian hope  
 Haunting a holy text, and still to that  
 Returning, as the bird returns, at  
 night,  
 "Let not the sun go down upon your  
 wrath,"  
 Said, "Love, forgive him;" but he  
 did not speak;  
 And silenced by that silence lay the  
 wife,  
 Remembering her dear Lord who died  
 for all,  
 And musing on the little lives of  
 men,  
 And how they mar this little by their  
 feuds.

But while the two were sleeping, a  
full tide  
Rose with ground-swell, which, on the  
foremost rocks  
Touching, upjetted in spirts of wild  
sea-smoke,  
And sealed in sheets of wasteful foam,  
and fell  
In vast sea-cataracts—ever and anon  
Dead claps of thunder from within the  
cliffs  
Heard thro' the living roar. At this  
the babe,  
Their Margaret cradled near them,  
wail'd and woke  
The mother, and the father suddenly  
cried,  
"A wreck, a wreck!" then turn'd, and  
groaning said,  
"Forgive! How many will say, 'for-  
give,' and find  
A sort of absolution in the sound  
To hate a little longer! No; the sin  
That neither God nor man can well  
forgive,  
Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.  
Is it so true that second thoughts are  
best?  
Not first, and third, which are a riper  
first?  
Too ripe, too late! they come too late  
for use.  
Ah love, there surely lives in man and  
beast  
Something divine to warn them of  
their foes:  
And such a sense, when first I fronted  
him,  
Said, 'trust him not;' but after, when  
I came  
To know him more, I lost it, knew him  
less;  
Fought with what seem'd my own un-  
charity;  
Sat at his table; drank his costly  
wines;  
Made more and more allowance for his  
talk;  
Went further, fool! and trusted him  
with all,  
All my poor scrapings from a dozen  
years  
Of dust and deskwork: there is no  
such mine,  
None; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing  
gold,  
Not making. Ruin'd! ruin'd! the sea  
roars  
Ruin: a fearful night!"  
"Not fearful; fair,"  
Said the good wife, "if every star in  
heaven  
Can make it fair: you do but hear the  
tide.  
Had you ill dreams?"  
"O yes," he said, "I dream'd  
Of such a tide swelling toward the  
land,  
And I from out the boundless outer  
deep

Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd  
one  
Of those dark caves that run beneath  
the cliffs.  
I thought the motion of the boundless  
deep  
Bore through the cave, and I was  
heaved upon it  
In darkness: then I saw one lovely  
star  
Larger and larger. 'What a world,' I  
thought,  
'To live in!' but in moving on I found  
Only the landward exit of the cave,  
Bright with the sun upon the stream  
beyond:  
And near the light a giant woman sat,  
All over earthy, like a piece of earth,  
A pickaxe in her hand: then out I  
slipt  
Into a land all sun and blossom, trees  
As high as heaven, and every bird that  
sings:  
And here the night-light flickering in  
my eyes  
Awoke me."

"That was then your dream," she  
said,  
"Not sad, but sweet."

"So sweet, I lay," said he,  
"And mused upon it, drifting up the  
stream  
In fancy, till I slept again, and pieced  
The broken vision; for I dream'd that  
still  
The motion of the great deep bore me  
on.  
And that the woman walk'd upon the  
brink;  
I wonder'd at her strength, and ask'd  
her of it:  
'It came,' she said, 'by working in the  
mines:'  
O then to ask her of my shares, I  
thought;  
And ask'd; but not a word; she shook  
her head.  
And then the motion of the current  
ceased,  
And there was rolling thunder; and we  
reach'd  
A mountain, like a wall of burrs and  
thorns;  
But she with her strong feet up the  
steep hill  
Trod out a path: I follow'd; and at  
top  
She pointed seaward; there a fleet of  
glass,  
That seem'd a fleet of jewels under me,  
Sailing along before a gloomy cloud  
That not one moment ceased to thun-  
der, past  
In sunshine: right across its track  
there lay,  
Down in the water, a long reef of gold,  
Or what seem'd gold: and I was glad  
at first

To think that in our often-ransack'd  
 world  
 Still so much gold was left; and then  
 I fear'd  
 Lest the gay navy there should splinter  
 on it,  
 And fearing waded my arm to warn  
 them off;  
 An idle signal, for the brittle fleet  
 (I thought I could have died to save it)  
 near'd,  
 Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and van-  
 ish'd, and I woke,  
 I heard the clash so clearly. Now I see  
 My dream was Life; the woman honest  
 Work;  
 And my poor venture but a fleet of  
 glass  
 Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold."

"Nay," said the kindly wife to com-  
 fort him,  
 "You raised your arm, you tumbled  
 down and broke  
 The glass with little Margaret's medi-  
 cine in it;  
 And, breaking that, you made and  
 broke your dream:  
 A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks."

"No trifle," groan'd the husband;  
 "yesterday  
 I met him suddenly in the street, and  
 ask'd  
 That which I ask'd the woman in my  
 dream.  
 Like her, he shook his head. 'Show  
 me the books!'  
 He dodged me with a long and loose  
 account.  
 'The books, the books!'—but he, he  
 could not wait,  
 Bound on a matter he of life and  
 death:  
 When the great Books (see Daniel  
 seven and ten)  
 Were open'd, I should find he meant  
 me well;  
 And then began to bloat himself, and  
 ooze  
 All over with the fat affectionate smile  
 That makes the widow lean. 'My  
 dearest friend,  
 Have faith, have faith! We live by  
 faith,' said he;  
 'And all things work together for the  
 good  
 Of those'—it makes me sick to quote  
 him—last  
 Gript my hand hard, and with God-  
 bless-you went.  
 I stood like one that had received a  
 blow:  
 I found a hard friend in his loose  
 accounts,  
 A loose one in the hard grip of his hand,  
 A curse in his God-bless-you: then  
 my eyes  
 Pursued him down the street, and far  
 away,

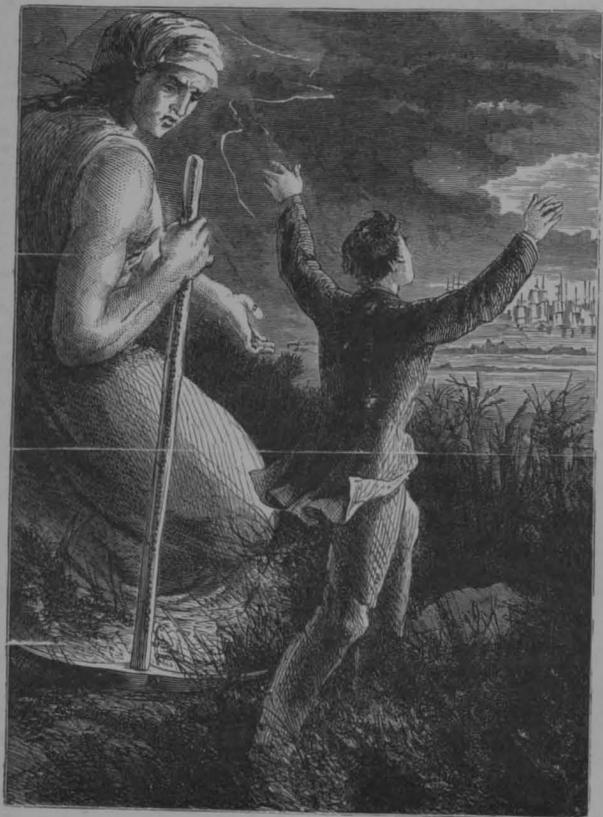
Among the honest shoulders of the  
 crowd,  
 Read rascal in the motions of his back,  
 And scoundrel in the supple-sliding  
 knee."

"Was he so bound, poor soul?" said  
 the good wife;  
 "So are we all: but do not call him,  
 love,  
 Before you prove him, rogue, and  
 proved, forgive.  
 His gain is loss; for he that wrongs his  
 friend  
 Wrongs himself more, and ever bears  
 about  
 A silent court of justice in his breast,  
 Himself the judge and jury, and himself  
 The prisoner, at the bar, ever con-  
 demn'd:  
 And that drags down his life: then  
 comes what comes  
 Hereafter: and he meant, he said he  
 meant, you well."

"With all his conscience and one  
 eye askew—  
 Love, let me quote these lines, that  
 you may learn  
 A man is likewise counsel for himself,  
 Too often, in that silent court of yours—  
 'With all his conscience and one eye  
 askew,  
 So false, he partly took himself for  
 true:  
 Whose pious talk, when most his heart  
 was dry,  
 Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round  
 his eye;  
 Who, never naming God except for  
 gain,  
 So never took that useful name in  
 vain:  
 Made Him his catspaw and the Cross  
 his tool,  
 And Christ the bait to trap his dupe  
 and fool:  
 Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he  
 forged,  
 And snake-like slimed his victim ere  
 he gorged;  
 And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the  
 rest  
 Arising, did his holy oily best,  
 Dropping the too rough H in Hell and  
 Heaven.  
 To spread the Word by which himself  
 had thriven.'  
 How like you this old satire?"

"Nay," she said,  
 "I loathe it: he had never kindly heart,  
 Nor ever cared to better his own kind,  
 Who first wrote satire, with no pity in it.  
 But will you hear my dream, for I had  
 one  
 That altogether went to music? Still  
 It awed me."

Then she told it, having dream'd  
 Of that same coast.





"—But round the North, a light,  
A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapor,  
lay,  
And ever in it a low musical note  
Swell'd up and died; and, as it swell'd,  
a ridge  
Of breaker issued from the belt, and  
still  
Grew with the growing note, and when  
the note  
Had reach'd a thunderous fulness, on  
those cliffs  
Broke, mixt with awful light (the same  
as that  
Living within the belt) whereby she saw  
That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs  
no more,  
But huge cathedral fronts of every age  
Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could  
see,  
One after one; and then the great  
ridge drew,  
Lessening to the lessening music, back,  
And past into the belt and swell'd  
again  
Slowly to music: ever when it broke  
The statues, king or saint, or founder  
fell;  
Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin  
left  
Came men and women in dark clusters  
round,  
Some crying, 'Set them up! they shall  
not fall!'  
And others 'Let them lie, for they  
have fall'n.'  
And still they strove and wrangled;  
and she grieved  
In her strange dream, she knew not  
why, to find  
Their wildest wallings never out of  
tune  
With that sweet note; and ever as their  
shrieks  
Ran highest up the gamut, that great  
wave  
Returning, while none mark'd it, on  
the crowd  
Broke, mixt with awful light, and  
show'd their eyes  
Glaring, and passionate looks, and  
swept away  
The men of flesh and blood, and men  
of stone,  
To the waste deeps together.

"Then I fixt  
My wistful eyes on two fair images,  
Both crown'd with stars and high  
among the stars,—  
The Virgin Mother standing with her  
child  
High up on one of those dark minster-  
fronts—  
Till she began to totter, and the child  
Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry  
Which mixt with little Margaret's, and  
I woke,  
And my dream awed me:—well—but  
what are dreams?

Yours came but from the breaking of  
glass,  
And mine but from the crying of a  
child."

"Child? No!" said he, "but this  
tide's roar, and his,  
Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,  
And loud-lung'd Antibabylonianisms  
(Altho' I grant but little music there)  
Went both to make your dream: but  
if there were  
A music harmonizing our wild cries,  
Sphere-music such as that you dream'd  
about,  
Why, that would make our passions  
far too like  
The discords dear to the musician. No—  
One shriek of hate would jar all the  
hymns of heaven:  
True Devils with no ear, they howl in  
tune  
With nothing but the Devil!"

"True! indeed!  
One of our town, but later by an hour  
Here than ourselves, spoke with me on  
the shore;  
While you were running down the  
sands, and made  
The dimpled flounce of the sea-fur-  
below flap,  
Good man, to please the child. She  
brought strange news.  
Why were you silent when I spoke to-  
night?  
I had set my heart on your forgiving  
him  
Before you knew. We *must* forgive the  
dead."

"Dead! who is dead?"

"The man your eye pursued,  
A little after you had parted with him,  
He suddenly dropt dead of heart-  
disease."

"Dead? he? of heart-disease? what  
heart had he  
To die of? dead!"

"Ah, dearest, if there be  
A devil in man, there is an angel too,  
And if he did that wrong you charge  
him with,  
His angel broke his heart. But your  
rough voice  
(You spoke so loud) has roused the  
child again.  
Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not  
sleep  
Without her 'little birdie?' well then,  
—sleep,  
And I will sing you 'birdie.'"

Saying this,  
The woman half turn'd round from  
him she loved,  
Left him one hand, and reaching thro'  
the night  
Her other, found (for it was close beside)  
And half embraced the basket cradle-  
head

With one soft arm, which, like the  
pliant bough  
That moving moves the nest and nest-  
ling, sway'd  
The cradle, while she sang this baby  
song.

\* What does little birdie say  
In her nest at peep of day?  
Let me fly, says little birdie,  
Mother, let me fly away.  
Birdie, rest a little longer,  
Till the little wings are stronger.  
So she rests a little longer,  
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,  
In her bed at peep of day?  
Baby says, like little birdie,  
Let me rise and fly away.  
Baby, sleep a little longer,  
Till the little limbs are stronger.  
If she sleeps a little longer  
Baby too shall fly away.

"She sleeps: let us too, let all evil,  
sleep.

He also sleeps--another sleep than ours.  
He can do no more wrong: forgive him,  
dear.

"And I shall sleep the sounder!"

Then the man,  
"His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to  
come.

Yet let your sleep for this one night  
be sound:  
I do forgive him!"

"Thanks, my love," she said,  
"Your own will be the sweeter," and  
they slept.

### THE GRANDMOTHER.

#### I.

AND Willy, my eldest-born, is gone,  
you say, little Anne?  
Ruddy, and white, and strong on his  
legs, he looks like a man.  
And Willy's wife has written; she  
never was over-wise.  
Never the wife for Willy: he wouldn't  
take my advice.

#### II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not  
the man to save,  
Hadn't a head to manage, and drank  
himself into his grave.  
Pretty enough, very pretty! but I was  
against it for one.  
Eh!--but he wouldn't hear me--and  
Willy, you say, is gone.

#### III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the  
flower of the flock;  
Never a man could flog him; for  
Willy stood like a rock.

"Here's a leg for a babe of a week!"  
says doctor; and he would be  
bound,  
There was not his like that year in  
twenty parishes round.

#### IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his  
legs, but still of his tongue!  
I ought to have gone before him: I  
wonder he went so young.  
I cannot cry for him, Annie: I have  
not long to stay;  
Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for  
he lived far away.

#### V.

Why do you look at me, Annie? you  
think I am hard and cold;  
But all my children have gone before  
me, I am so old:  
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I  
weep for the rest;  
Only at your age, Annie, I could have  
wept with the best.

#### VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with  
your father, my dear,  
All for a slanderous story, that cost me  
many a tear.  
I mean your grandfather, Annie: it  
cost me a world of woe.  
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy  
years ago.

#### VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the  
place, and I knew right well  
That Jenny had tript in her time: I  
knew, but I would not tell.  
And she to be coming and slandering  
me, the base little liar!  
But the tongue is a fire as you know,  
my dear, the tongue is a fire.

#### VIII.

And the parson made it his text that  
week, and he said likewise,  
That a lie which is half a truth is ever  
the blackest of lies,  
That a lie which is all a lie may be met  
and fought with outright,  
But a lie which is part a truth is a  
harder matter to fight.

#### IX.

And Willy had not been down to the  
farm for a week and a day;  
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it  
was the middle of May.  
Jennie, to slander me, who knew what  
Jennie had been!  
But soiling another, Annie, will never  
make one's self clean.

#### X.

And cried myself wellnigh blind, and  
all of an evening late

I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the gate of the gate. The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the dale, And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chirrup the nightingale.

## XI.

All of a sudden he stopt : there past by the gate of the farm, Willy,—he didn't see me,—and Jenny hung on his arm. Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce knew how ; Ah, there's no fool like the old one—it makes me angry now.

## XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing that he meant ; Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking courtesy, and went. And I said, " Let us part : in a hundred years it'll be all the same, You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good name."

## XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the sweet moonshine : " Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good name is mine. And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you well or ill ; But marry me out of hand : we too shall be happy still."

## XIV.

" Marry you, Willy !" said I, " but I needs must speak my mind, And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jealous and hard and unkind." But he turn'd and clasp't me in his arms, and answer'd, " No, love, no ;" Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

## XV.

So Willy and I were wedded : I wore a lilac gown ; And the ringers rang with a will, and he gave the ringers a crown. But the first that ever I bare was dead before he was born, Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and thorn.

## XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of death. There lay the sweet little body that never had drawn a breath. I had not wept, little Annie, not since I had been a wife ; But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had fought for his life

## XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger or pain :

I look'd at the still little body—his trouble had all been in vain. For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another morn : But I wept like a child for the child that was dead before he was born.

## XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom said me nay : Kind, like a man, was he ; like a man, too, would have his way : Never jealous—not he : we had many a happy year ; And he died, and I could not weep—my own time seem'd so near.

## XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that I too, then could have died : I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his side. And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't forget : But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me yet,

## XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at two, Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like you : Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at her will, While Harry is in the five-acre and Charlie ploughing the hill.

## XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too—they sing to their team : Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of a dream. They come and sit by my chair, they hover about my bed— I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

## XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them left alive ; For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five : And Willy, my eldest-born, at nigh threescore and ten ; I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly men.

## XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve ; I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at eve : And the neighbors come and laugh and gossip, and so do I ; I find myself often laughing at things that have long gone by.

## XXIV.

To be sure the preacher says, our sins should make us sad :

But mine is a time of peace, and there  
is Grace to be had ;  
And God, not man, is the Judge of us  
all when life shall cease ;  
And in this Book, little Annie, the  
message is one of Peace.

## XXV.

And age is a time of peace, so it be  
free from pain,  
And happy has been my life; but I  
would not live it again.  
I seem to be tired a little, that's all,  
and long for rest ;  
Only at your age, Annie, I could have  
wept with the best.

## XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my  
eldest-born, my flower ;  
But how can I weep for Willy, he has  
but gone for an hour,—  
Gone for a minute, my son, from this  
room into the next ;  
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time  
have I to be vext ;

## XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she  
never was over-wise.  
Get me my glasses, Annie : thank God  
that I keep my eyes.  
There is but a trifle left you, when I  
shall have past away.  
But stay with the old woman now : you  
cannot have long to stay.

## NORTHERN FARMER.

## OLD STYLE.

## I.

WHEER 'asta bein saw long and meñ  
liggin' 'ere aloän ?  
Noorse ? thoort nowt o' a noorse: whoy,  
Doctor's abeän an' agoän :  
Says that I moänt 'a naw moor säle :  
but I beänt a fool :  
Git ma my säle, for I beänt a-gooñ' to  
break my rule.

## II.

Doctors, they knows nowt, for a says  
what's nawways true :  
Naw soort o' koind o' use to säy the  
things that a do.  
I've 'ed my point o' säle ivry noight  
sin' I beän 'ere,  
An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-  
noight for foorty year.

## III.

Parson's a bein loikewise, an' a sittin  
'ere o' my bed.  
"The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to  
'issen, my friend," a said,  
An' a towd ma my sius, an' 's toithe  
were dne, an' I gied it in hond ;  
I done my duty by 'm, as I 'a done by  
the lond.

## IV.

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot  
sa mooch to larn.  
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'boot Bessy  
Marris's bairn.  
Thaw a knaws I hallus voätet wi'  
Squire an' choorch an' stäite,  
An' i' the woöst o' 'toimes I wur niver  
agin the räite.

## V.

An' I hallus coomed to's choorch afoor  
moy Sally wur deä.  
An' 'eerd in a bummin' awäy loike a  
buzzard-clock \* over my eäd,  
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meñ'd I u  
I thowt a 'ad sumnut to säy,  
An' I thowt a said whot owt to 'a said  
an' I coom'd awäy.

## VI.

Bessy Marris's bairn ! tha knaws she  
läiid it to meä.  
Mowt 'a beän, mayhap, for she wur a  
bad un, sheä.  
'Siver, I kep 'm, I kep 'm, my lass, tha  
mun understand ;  
I done my duty by 'm as I 'a done  
by the lond.

## VII.

But Parson a comes an' a goos, an' 'a  
says it eäsy an' freeä  
"The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to  
'issen, my friend," says 'eä.  
I weänt säy men be loärs, thaw sum-  
mun said it in 'wäste :  
But a reids woun sarnin a weäk,  
an' I 'a stubb'd Thurnaby  
wäaste.

## VIII.

D'ya moind the wäaste, my lass ? naw,  
naw, tha was not born then ;  
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eerd  
'm mysen ;  
Moäst loike a butter-bump, † for I 'eerd  
'm aboot an' aboot,  
But I stubb'd 'm oop wi' the lot, an'  
raäved an' rembled 'm oot.

## IX.

Keäper's it wur : fo' they fun 'm theer  
a-läiid on 'is face  
Doon i' the woild 'emies † afoor I  
coomed to the plaice.  
Noäks or Thimbleby—toaner 'ed shot  
'm as deäid as a näil.  
Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize—  
but git ma my säle.

## X.

Dubbut look at the wäiste ; theer  
warn't not feed for a cow ;  
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an'  
look at it now—  
Warn't worth nowt a hääere, an' now  
theer's lots o' feead,  
Fourscoor yows upon it an' some on it  
doon in seäd.

\* Cockchafer.

† Bittern.

‡ Anemones.

## XI.

Nobbut a bit on it 's left, an' I meän'd  
to 'a stubb'd it at fall,  
Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd  
plough thruff it an' all,  
If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut  
let ma aloöin,  
Meä, wi' hääte oonderd hääcere o'  
Squoire's, an' lond o' my oän.

## XII.

Do godamoighty knaw what a 's doing  
a-täik'in' o' meä ?  
I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an'  
yonder a peä ;  
An' Squoire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a'  
dear a' dear!  
And I 'a managed for Squoire come  
Michaelmas thutty year.

## XIII.

Ä mcwt 'a täiken owd Joänes, as 'ant  
nor a 'äipoth o' sense,  
Or a mcwt 'a täiken young Robins—a  
niver mended a fence ;  
But godamoighty a moost täike meä  
an' täike ma now  
Wi' 'äiff the cows to cauve an' Thurna-  
by hoalms to plough !

## XIV.

Look 'ow quoloty smoles when they  
seeäns ma a passin' by,  
Says to thessen naw doubt " what a  
man a beä sewer-ly !"  
For they knaws what I beän to Squoire  
sin fust a comed to the 'All ;  
I done my duty by Squoire an' I done  
my duty by hall.

## XV.

Squoire's in Lunnon, an' summun I  
reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,  
For whoä 's to howd the lond ater meä  
thot muddles ma quoit ;  
Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver  
give it to Joänes,  
Naw nor a moänt to Robins—a niver  
rembles the stoäns.

## XVI.

But summun 'ull come ater meä may  
hap wi' is kittle o' steäm  
Huzzin' an' määzin' the blessed feälds  
wi' the Devil's oän teäm.  
If I mun doy I mun doy, an' loife they  
says is sweet,  
But if I mun doy I mun doy, for I  
couldn abeär to see it.

## XVII.

What attä stannin' theer for, an' doesn  
bring ma the 'äile ?  
Doctor's a toättiler, lass, an a 's hallus !'  
the owd täile ;  
I weänt break rules for Doctor, a knaws  
naw moor nor a floy ;  
Git ma my 'äile I tell tha, an' if I mun  
doy I mun doy.

## TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay and  
fall,  
The vapors weep their burden to the  
ground,  
Man comes and tills the field and lies  
beneath,  
And after many a summer dies the  
swan.  
Me only cruel immortality  
Consumes : I wither slowly in thine  
arms,  
Here at the quiet limit of the world,  
A white-hair'd shadow roaring like a  
dream  
The ever silent spaces of the East,  
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls  
of morn.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a  
man—  
So glorious in his beauty and thy  
choice,  
Who madest him thy chosen, that he  
seem'd  
To his great heart none other than a  
God !

I ask'd thee, " Give me immortality."  
Then did'st thou grant mine asking  
with a smile,  
Like wealthy men who care not how  
they give.  
But thy strong Hours indignant work'd  
their wills,  
And beat me down and marr'd and  
wasted me,  
And tho' they could not end me, left  
me main'd

To dwell in presence of immortal youth,  
Immortal age beside immortal youth,  
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,  
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even  
now,

Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,  
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill  
with tears

To hear me ? Let me go : take back  
thy gift :

Why should a man desire in any way  
To vary from the kindly race of men,  
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance  
Where all should pause, as is most  
meet for all ?

A soft air fans the cloud apart ;  
there comes  
A glimpse of that dark world where I  
was born.

Once more the old mysterious glimmer  
steals

From thy pure brows, and from thy  
shoulders pure,

And bosom beating with a heart re-  
new'd.

Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the  
gloom,

Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close  
to mine.

Ere yet they blind the stars, and the  
wild team  
Which love thee, yearning for thy  
yoke, arise,  
And shake the darkness from their  
loosen'd manes,  
And beat the twilight into flakes of  
fire.

Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful  
In silence, then before thine answer  
given  
Departest, and thy tears are on my  
cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with  
thy tears,  
And make me tremble lest a saying  
learnt,  
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be  
true?  
"The Gods themselves cannot recall  
their gifts."

Ay me! ay me! with what another  
heart  
In days far-off, and with what other  
eyes  
I used to watch—if I be he that  
watch'd—  
The lucid outline forming round thee;  
saw  
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;  
Changed with thy mystic change, and  
felt my blood  
Glow with the glow that slowly crim-  
son'd all  
Thy presence and thy portals, while I  
lay,  
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing  
dewy-warm  
With kisses balmier than half-opening  
buds  
Of April, and could hear the lips that  
kiss'd  
Whispering I knew not what of wild  
and sweet,  
Like that strange song I heard Apollo  
sing,  
While Ilion like a mist rose into  
towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine  
East:  
How can my nature longer mix with  
thine?  
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold  
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrin-  
kled feet  
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when  
the steam  
Floats up from those dim fields about  
the homes  
Of happy men that have the power to  
die,  
And grassy barrows of the happier  
dead.  
Release me, and restore me to the  
ground;

Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my  
grave:  
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by  
morn;  
I earth in earth forget these empty  
courts,  
And thee returning on thy silver  
wheels.

## THE VOYAGE.

## I.

We left behind the painted buoy  
That tosses at the harbor-mouth;  
And madly danced our hearts with joy,  
As fast we fled to the South:  
How fresh was every sight and sound  
On open main or winding shore!  
We knew the merry world was round,  
And we might sail for evermore.

## II.

Warm broke the breeze against the  
brow,  
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail:  
The Lady's-head upon the prow  
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd  
the gale.  
The broad seas sweel'd to meet the keel,  
And swept behind: so quick the run,  
We felt the good ship shake and reel,  
We seem'd to sail into the Sun!

## III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,  
And burn the threshold of the night,  
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,  
And sleep beneath his pillar'd light!  
How oft the purple-skirted robe  
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,  
As thro' the slumber of the globe  
Again we dash'd into the dawn!

## IV.

New stars all night above the brim  
Of waters lighten'd into view;  
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim  
Changed every moment as we flew.  
Far ran the naked moon across  
The houseless ocean's heaving field,  
Or flying shone, the silver boss  
Of her own halo's dusky shield;

## V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,  
High towns on hills were dimly seen,  
We past long lines of Northern capes  
And dewy Northern meadows green.  
We came to warmer waves, and deep  
Across the boundless east we drove,  
Where those long swells of breaker  
sweep  
The nutmeg rocks and isles of cloves.  
By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,

## VI.

Gloom'd the low coast and quivering  
brine  
With ashy rains, that spreading made

Fantastic plume or sable pine ;  
By sands and steaming flats and floods,  
Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,  
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods  
Glow'd for a moment as we past.

## VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,  
How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark !  
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times  
With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;  
At times a carven craft would shoot  
From havens hid in fairy bowers,  
With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,  
But we nor paused for fruit nor  
flowers.

## VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled  
Down the waste waters day and  
night,  
And still we follow'd where she led,  
In hope to gain upon her flight.  
Her face was evermore unseen,  
And fixt upon the far sea-line ;  
But each man murmur'd, " O, my  
Queen,  
I follow till I make thee mine."

## IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd  
Like Fancy made of golden air,  
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd  
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge  
fair,  
Now high on waves that idly burst  
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd  
the sea,  
And now, the bloodless point reversed,  
She bore the blade of Liberty.

## X.

And only one among us—him  
We pleased not—he was seldom  
pleas'd :  
He saw not far : his eyes were dim :  
But ours he swore were all diseas'd.  
" A ship of fools," he shriek'd in spite,  
" A ship of fools," he sneer'd and  
wept.  
And overboard one stormy night  
He cast his body, and on we swept.

## XI.

And never sail of ours was furl'd,  
Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;  
We loved the glories of the world,  
But laws of nature were our scorn ;  
For blasts would rise and rave and  
cease,  
But whence were those that drove  
the sail  
Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,  
And to and thro' the counter-gale ?

## XII.

Again to colder climes we came,  
For still we follow'd where she led :  
Now mate is blind and captain lame,  
And half the crew are sick or dead.

But blind or lame or sick or sound  
We follow that which flies before :  
We know the merry world is round,  
And we may sail for evermore.

## IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that flash-  
est white,  
Deepening thy voice with the deepening  
of the night,  
All along the valley, where thy waters  
flow,  
I walk'd with one I loved two and thir-  
ty years ago.  
All along the valley while I walk'd to-  
day,  
The two and thirty years were a mist  
that rolls away ;  
For all along the valley, down thy  
rocky bed  
Thy living voice to me was as the voice  
of the dead,  
And all along the valley, by rock and  
cave and tree,  
The voice of the dead was a living  
voice to me.

## THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour  
I cast to earth a seed.  
Up there came a flower,  
The people said, a weed.  
To and fro they went  
Thro' my garden-bower,  
And muttering discontent  
Curs'd me and my flower.  
Then it grew so tall  
It wore a crown of light,  
But thieves from o'er the wall,  
Stole the seed by night.  
Sow'd it far and wide  
By every town and tower,  
Till all the people cried,  
" Splendid is the flower."  
Read my little fable :  
He that runs may read.  
Most can raise the flowers now,  
For all have got the seed.  
And some are pretty enough,  
And some are poor indeed  
And now again the people  
Call it but a weed.

## REQUIESCAT.

Fair is her cottage in its place,  
Where yon broad water sweetly slow-  
ly glides.  
It sees itself from thatch to base  
Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah how soon to die!  
Her quiet dream of life this hour  
may cease.  
Her peaceful being slowly passes by  
To some more perfect peace.

## THE SAILOR BOY.

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,  
Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,  
And reach'd the ship and caught the  
rope,  
And whistled to the morning star.  
And while he whistled long and loud  
He heard a fierce mermaid cry,  
"O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,  
I see the place where thou wilt lie."  
"The sands and yeasty surges mix  
In caves about the dreary bay,  
And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,  
And in thy heart the scrawl shall  
play."

"Fool," he answered, "death is sure  
To those that stay and those that  
roam,  
But I will nevermore endure  
To sit with empty hands at home.

"My mother clings about my neck,  
My sisters crying 'Stay for shame;'  
My father raves of death and wreck,  
They are all to blame, they are all to  
blame.

"God help me! save I take my part  
Of danger on the roaring sea,  
A devil rises in my heart,  
Far worse than any death to me."

## THE ISLET.

"WHITHER, O whither, love, shall we  
go,  
For a score of sweet little summers or  
so?"

The sweet little wife of the singer said,  
On the day that followed the day she  
was wed,

"Whither, O whither, love, shall we  
go?"

And the singer shaking his curly head  
Turn'd as he sat, and struck the keys  
There at his right with a sudden crash,  
Singing, "And shall it be over the seas  
With a crew that is neither rude nor  
rash,

But a bery of Eroses apple-cheek'd,  
In a shallop of crystal ivory-beak'd,  
With a satin sail of a ruby glow,  
To a sweet little Eden on earth that I  
know,

A mountain islet pointed and peak'd;  
Waves on a diamond shingle dash,  
Cataract brooks to the ocean run,  
Fairly-delicate palaces shine  
Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,  
And overstream'd and silvery-streak'd

With many a rivulet high against the  
Sun  
The facets of the glorious mountain  
flash  
Above the valleys of palm and pine."

"Thither, O thither, love, let us go."

"No, no, no!

For in all that exquisite isle, my dear,  
There is but one bird with a musical  
throat,  
And his compass is but one of a single  
note.

That it makes one weary to hear."

"Mock me not, mock me not! love, let  
us go."

"No, love, no.

For the bud ever breaks into bloom on  
the tree,

And a storm never wakes in the lonely  
sea,

And a worm is there in the lonely wood,  
That pierces the liver and blackens the  
blood,

And makes it a sorrow to be."

## THE RINGLET.

"YOUR ringlets, your ringlets,

That look so golden-gay,

If you will give me one, but one,

To kiss it ight and day,

Then never chilling touch of Time

Will turn it silver-gray;

And then shall I know it is all true  
gold  
To flame and sparkle and stream as of  
old,

Till all the comets in heaven are cold,

And all her stars decay."

"Then take it, love, and put it by;  
This cannot change, nor yet can I."

## 2.

"My ringlet, my ringlet,

That art so golden-gay,

Now never chilling touch of Time

Can turn thee silver-gray;

And a lad may wink, and a girl may  
hint,

And a fool may say his say;

For my doubts and fears were all amies,  
And I swear henceforth by this and  
this,

That a doubt will only come for a kiss,  
And a fear to be kiss'd away."

"Then kiss it, love, and put it by;  
If this can change, why so can I."

## II.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,

I kiss'd you night and day,

And Ringlet, O Ringlet,

You still are golden-gay,

But Ringlet, O Ringlet,

You should be silver-gray;

For what is this which now I'm told,

I that took you for true gold,  
She that gave you's bought and sold,  
Sold, sold.

2.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet  
She blush'd a rose red,  
When Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
She clipp'd you from her head,  
And Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
She gave you me, and said,  
"Come kiss it, love, and put it by:  
If this can change, why so can I."  
O fie, you golden nothing, fie  
You golden lie.

3.

O Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
I count you much to blame,  
For Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
You put me much to shame,  
So Ringlet, O Ringlet,  
I doom you to the flame.  
For what is this which now I learn,  
Has given all my faith a turn?  
Burn, you glossy heretic, burn,  
Burn, burn.

## A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea,  
Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,  
But all of us Danes in our welcome of  
thee,

Alexandra!  
Welcome her, thunders of fort and of  
fleet!

Welcome her, thundering cheer of the  
street!

Welcome her, all things youthful and  
sweet.

Scatter the blossom under her feet!  
Break, happy land, into earlier flowers!  
Make music, O bird, in the new-budded  
bowers!

Blazon your mottoes of blessing and  
prayer!

Welcome her, welcome her, all that is  
ours!

Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare!  
Flags, flutter out upon turrets and tow-  
ers!

Flames, on the windy headland flare!  
Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire!  
Clash, ye bells, in the merry March  
air!

Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire!  
Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and  
higher

Melt into stars for the land's desire!  
Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice.

Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the  
strand,

Roar as the sea when he welcomes the  
land,

And welcome her, welcome the land's  
desire,  
The sea-king's daughter as happy as  
fair,

Blissful bride of a blissful heir,  
Bride of the heir of the kings of the  
sea,—

O joy to the people, and joy to the  
throne,

Come to us, love us and make us your  
own:

For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,  
Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,  
We are each all Dane in our welcome  
of thee,

Alexandra!

## DEDICATION.

DEAR, near and true — no truer Time  
himself

Can prove you, tho' he make you ever-  
more

Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life  
Shoots to the fall—take this, and pray  
that he,

Who wrote it, honoring your sweet faith  
in him,

May trust himself; and spite of praise  
and scorn,

As one who feels the immeasurable  
world,

Attain the wise indifference of the wise;  
And after Autumn past — if left to  
pass

His autumn into seeming-leafless  
days —

Draw toward the long frost and longest  
night,

Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the  
fruit

Which in our winter woodland looks a  
flower.\*

## EXPERIMENTS.

## BOADICEA.

WHILE about the shore of Mona those  
Neronian legionaries

Burnt and broke the grove and altar of  
the Druid and Druidess,

Far in the East Boadicea, standing  
loftly charioted,

Mad and maddening all that heard her  
in her fierce volubility,

Girt by half the tribes of Britain, near  
the colony Càmulođüne,

Yell'd and shriek'd between her daugh-  
ters o'er a wild confederacy.

"They that scorn the tribes and call  
us Britain's barbarous populates,

Did they hear me, would they listen,  
did they pity me supplicating?

Shall I heed them in their anguish?  
shall I brook to be supplicated?

\*The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Evonymus  
Europæus*.)

Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear  
 Coritanian, Trinobant !  
 Must their ever-ravening eagle's beak  
 and talon annihilate us ?  
 Tear the noble heart of Britain, leave  
 it gorily quivering ?  
 Bark an answer, Britain's raven ! bark  
 and blacken innumerable,  
 Blacken round the Roman carrion,  
 make the carcass a skeleton,  
 Kite and kestrel, wolf and wolfkin,  
 from the wilderness, wallow in it,  
 Till the face of Bel be brighten'd, Taranis  
 be propitiated.  
 Lo their colony half-defended ! lo their  
 colony, C  mulo  ne !  
 There the horde of Roman robbers mock  
 at a barbarous adversary.  
 There the hive of Roman liars worship  
 a gluttonous emperor-idiot.  
 Such is Rome, and this her deity : hear  
 it, Spirit of Cassivelaun !

“ Hear it, Gods ! the Gods have heard  
 it, O Icenian, O Coritanian !  
 Doubt not ye the Gods have answer'd,  
 Catiuechlanian, Trinobant.  
 These have told us all their anger in  
 miraculous utterances,  
 Thunder, a flying fire in heaven, a mur-  
 mur heard aerially,  
 Phantom sound of blows descending,  
 moan of an enemy massacred,  
 Phantom wail of women and children,  
 multitudinous agonies.  
 Bloodily flow'd the Tamesa rolling  
 phantom bodies of horses and  
 men ;  
 Then the phantom colony smoulder'd  
 on the reluctant estuary ;  
 Lastly yonder yester-even, suddenly  
 giddily tottering —  
 There was one who watch'd and told  
 me—down their statue of Victory  
 fell.  
 Lo their precious Roman bantling, lo  
 the colony C  mulo  ne,  
 Shall we teach it a Roman lesson ? shall  
 we care to be pitiful ?  
 Shall we deal with it as an infant ?  
 shall we dandle it amorously ?

“ Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear  
 Coritanian, Trinobant !  
 While I roved about the forest, long  
 and bitterly meditating,  
 There I heard them in the darkness, at  
 the mystical ceremony,  
 Loosely robed in flying raiment, sang  
 the terrible prophetesses.  
 ‘ Fear not, isle of blowing woodland,  
 isle of silvery parapets !  
 Tho' the Roman eagle shadow thee, tho'  
 the gathering enemy narrow  
 thee,  
 Thou shalt wax and he shall dwindle,  
 thou shalt be the mighty one  
 yet !  
 Thine the liberty, thine the glory, thine  
 the deeds to be celebrated,

Thine the myriad-rolling ocean, light  
 and shadow illimitable,  
 Thine the lands of lasting summer,  
 many-blossoming Paradises,  
 Thine the North and thine the South  
 and thine the battle-thunder of  
 God.’

So they chanted : how shall Britain  
 light upon auguries happier ?  
 So they chanted in the darkness, and  
 there cometh a victory now.  
 “ Hear Icenian, Catiuechlanian, hear  
 Coritanian, Trinobant !  
 Me the wife of rich Frasutagus, me the  
 lover of liberty,  
 Me they seized and me they tortured,  
 me they lash'd and I humiliated,  
 Me the sport of ribald Veterans, mine  
 of ruffian violators !  
 See they sit, they hide their faces, mis-  
 erable in ignominy !  
 Wherefore in me burns an anger, not  
 by blood to be satiated,  
 Lo the palaces and the temple, lo the  
 colony C  mulo  ne !  
 There they ruled, and thence they  
 wasted all the flourishing terri-  
 tory,  
 Thither at their will they haled the yel-  
 low-ringed Britoness —  
 Bloodily, bloodily fall the battle-axe,  
 unexhausted, inexorable.  
 Shout Icenian, Catiuechlanian, shout  
 Coritanian, Trinobant,  
 Till the victim hear within and yearn  
 to hurry precipitously  
 Like the leaf in a roaring whirlwind,  
 like the smoke in a hurricane  
 whirl'd.  
 Lo the colony, there they rioted in the  
 city of C  nobeline !  
 There they drank in cups of emerald,  
 there at tables of ebony lay,  
 Rolling on their purple couches in  
 their tender effeminacy.  
 There they dwelt and there they rioted ;  
 there — there — they dwell no  
 more.  
 Burst the gates, and burn the palaces,  
 break the works of the statu-  
 ary.  
 Take the hoary Roman head and shat-  
 ter it, hold it abominable,  
 Cut the Roman boy to pieces in his lust  
 and voluptuousness,  
 Lash the maiden into swooning, me  
 they lash'd and humiliated,  
 Chop the breasts from off the mother,  
 dash the brains of the little one  
 out,  
 Up my Britons, on my chariot, on my  
 chargers, trample them under  
 us.”  
 So the Queen Bo  dic  a, standing  
 loftily charioted,  
 Brandishing in her hand a dart and  
 rolling glances lioness-like,  
 Yell'd and shriek'd that glory her daugh-  
 ters in her fierce volubility.

SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION OF THE ILIAD. 215

Till her people all around the royal  
chariot agitated,  
Madly dash'd the darts together, with-  
ing barbarous lineaments,  
Made the noise of frosty woodlands,  
when they shiver in January,  
Roar'd as when the rolling breakers  
boom and blanch on the preci-  
pices,  
Yell'd as when the winds of winter tear  
an oak on a promontory.  
So the silent colony hearing her tumul-  
tuous adversaries  
Clash the darts and on the buckler beat  
with rapid unanimous hand,  
Thought on all her evil tyrannies, all  
her pitiless avarice,  
Till she felt the heart within her fall  
and flutter tremulously,  
Then her pulses at the clamoring of her  
enemy fainted away.  
Out of evil evil flourishes, out of tyr-  
anny tyranny buds.  
Ran the land with Roman slaughter,  
multitudinous agonies.  
Perish'd many a maid and matron,  
many a valorous legionary.  
Fell the colony, city, and citadel, Lon-  
don, Verulam, Càmulodùne.

IN QUANTITY.

MILTON.

*Alcaics.*

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of har-  
monies,  
O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,  
God-gifted organ-voice of England,  
Milton, a name to resound for ages;  
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,  
Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armo-  
ries,  
Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean  
Rings to the roar of an angel onset—  
Me rather all that bowery loneliness,  
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,  
And bloom profuse and cedar arches  
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,  
Where some refulgent sunset of India  
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,  
And crimson-hued the stately palm-  
woods  
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

*Hendecasyllabics.*

O YOU chorus of indolent reviewers,  
Irresponsible, indolent reviewers,  
Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem  
All composed in a metre of Catullus,  
All in quantity, careful of my motion,  
Like the skater on ice that hardly bears  
him,  
Lest I fall unawares before the people,  
Waking laughter in indolent reviewers.  
Should I flounder awhile without a  
tumble  
Thro' this metrification of Catullus,  
They should speak to me not without a  
welcome,

All that chorus of indolent reviewers.  
Hard, hard, hard is it, only not to tum-  
ble,  
So fantastical is the dainty metre.  
Wherefore slight me not wholly, nor  
believe me  
Too presumptuous, indolent reviewers.  
O blatant Magazines, regard me rather—  
Since I blush to belaud myself a mo-  
ment—  
As some rare little rose, a piece of in-  
most  
Horticultural art, or half coquette-like  
Maiden not to be greeted unbenignly.

SPECIMEN OF A TRANSLATION  
OF THE ILIAD IN BLANK  
VERSE.

So Hector said, and sea-like roar'd his  
host;  
Then loosed their sweating horses from  
the yoke,  
And each beside his chariot bound his  
own;  
And oxen from the city, and goodly  
sheep  
In haste they drove, and honey-hearted  
wine  
And bread from out the houses brought,  
and heap'd  
Their firewood, and the winds from off  
the plain  
Roll'd the rich vapor far into the hea-  
ven.  
And these all night upon the bridge\* of  
war  
Sat glorying; many a fire before them  
blazed:  
As when in heaven the stars about the  
moon  
Look beautiful, when all the winds are  
laid,  
And every height comes out, and jut-  
ting peak  
And valley, and the immeasurable  
heavens  
Break open to their highest, and all the  
stars  
Shine, and the Shepherd gladdens in  
his heart:  
So many a fire between the ships and  
stream  
Of Xanthus blazed before the towers of  
Troy,  
A thousand on the plain; and close by  
each  
Sat fifty in the blaze of burning fire;  
And champing golden grain, the horses  
stood  
Hard by their chariots, waiting for the  
dawn.†

*Iliad* VIII. 542-561.

\* Or, ridge.

† Or more literally,—

And eating hoary grain and pulse the  
steeds  
Stood by their cars, waiting the throned  
morn.

1865.—1866.

I STOOD on a tower in the wet,  
And New Year and old Year met,  
And winds were roaring and blowing;  
And I said, "O years, that meet in tears,  
Have ye aught that is worth the know-  
ing?"

Science enough and exploring,  
Wanderers coming and going,  
Matter enough for deploring,  
But aught that is worth the know-  
ing?"

Seas at my feet were flowing,  
Waves on the shingle pouring,  
Old Year roaring and blowing,  
And New Year blowing and roaring.

## THE OLD SEAT.

DEAR Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
How strange with you once more to  
meet,  
To hold your hand, to hear your voice,  
To sit beside you on this seat!  
You mind the time we sat here last?—  
Two little children-lovers we,  
Each loving each with simple faith,  
I all to you—you all to me.

Ah! Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
We sit together now as then;  
I press your hand, you meet my glance,  
We seem as if we loved again.  
But in my heart I feel the truth,  
The dear old times have passed away:  
The love that once possessed our souls  
We do but simulate to-day.

Since last we met my Lady Vere,  
You've grown in years and culture  
too,  
And, putting childish things away,  
Have ceased to be sincere and true,  
Naught caring for a single soul.  
You spare no trouble, reck no pain,  
To add another name unto  
The bead-roll of the hearts you've  
slain.

To you, my Lady Vere de Vere,  
What is it that a heart may break?  
You had no hazard in the game—  
He should have played with equal  
stake.  
You did but seek to while away  
The slow hours of an idle night;  
The fault lay with the fool who failed  
To read your character aright.

But, Lady Clara Vere de Vere,  
You make your wares by far too  
cheap;  
Your net claims all as fish that comes  
Within the limit of its sweeps.  
You sit beside me here to-day,  
You try to make me love again  
But I am safe the while I think  
You've sat thus with a score of men.

Still, Lady Clara, Clara, dear,  
Beneath your finished mask I see  
The gentle heart, the honest mind,  
That made you once so dear to me,  
Your voice is still as sweet as then,  
Your face is still as pure and good:  
I see the graces of my love  
All ripened in her womanhood.

If some day, Clara Vere de Vere,  
You weary of the counterfeit,  
And look with yearning back upon  
The old times linked with this seat—  
If you would change your fleeting loves  
For one true love for evermore,  
Then we will come and see this place,  
And sit together, as of yore.

But meanwhile, Lady Vere de Vere,  
Of me win all renown you may;  
A plaything fresh my heart for you,  
A new world for your sovereign sway  
Bring all your practised charms in  
play.

Shoot all your darts, they cannot  
hurt;  
For when we meet I clothe me in  
The proved chain-armor of a flirt.

## THE VICTIM.

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,  
A famine after laid them low,  
Then thorp and byre arose in fire,  
For on them brake the sudden foe;  
So thick they died the people cried  
"The Gods are moved against the  
land."

The Priest in horror about his altar  
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand:  
"Help us from famine  
And plague and strife!  
What would you have of us?  
Human life?  
Were it our nearest,  
Were it our dearest,  
(Answer, O answer)  
We give you his life."

II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd  
And cattle died, and deer in wood,  
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd  
And whiten'd all the rolling flood;  
And dead men lay all over the way,  
Or down in a furrow scathed with  
flame:

And ever and aye the Priesthood  
moan'd  
Till at last it seem'd that an answer  
came:

"The King is happy  
In child and wife;  
Take you his dearest,  
Give us a life."

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill;  
The King was hunting in the wild;  
They found the mother sitting still;

She cast her arms about the child,  
The child was only eight summers old,  
His beauty still with his years in-  
creased,

His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,  
He seem'd a victim due to the priest.  
The Priest beheld him,  
And cried with joy,  
"The Gods have answer'd:  
We give them the boy,"

## VI.

The King return'd from out the wild,  
He bore but little game in hand;  
The mother said "They have taken  
the child

To spill his blood and heal the land;  
The land is sick, the people diseased,  
And blight and famine on all the lea;  
The holy Gods, they must be appeas'd,  
So I pray you tell the truth to me.

They have taken our son,  
They will have his life,  
Is he your dearest?  
Or I, the wife?"

## V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,  
He stay'd his arms upon his knee:  
"O wife, what use to answer now?  
For now the Priest has judged for  
me."

The King was shaken with holy fear:  
"The Gods," he said, "would have  
chosen well;

Yet both are near, and both are dear,  
And which the dearest I cannot  
tell!"

But the Priest was happy,  
His victim won:  
"We have his dearest,  
His only son!"

## VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,  
The knife uprising toward the blow,  
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,  
"Me, not my darling, no!"

He caught her away with a sudden cry;  
Suddenly from him brake his wife,  
And shrieking "I am his dearest, I—

I am his dearest!" rush'd on the  
knife.

And the Priest was happy,  
"O, Father Odin,  
We give you a life,  
Which was his nearest?  
Who was his dearest?  
The Gods have answer'd;  
We give them the wife!"

## LUCRETIVS.

LUCILA, wedded to Lucretius, found  
Her master cold; for when the morn-  
ing flush  
Of passion and the first embrace had  
died

Between them, tho' he loved her none  
the less,  
Yet often when the woman heard his  
foot

Return from pacings in the field, and  
ran  
To greet him with a kiss, the master  
took

Small notice, or austerely, for—his  
mind  
Half buried in some weightier agru-  
mert,

Or fancy-borne perhaps upon the rise  
And long roll of the Hexameter—he  
past

To turn and ponder those three hun-  
dred scrolls

Left by the Teacher whom he held  
divine.

She brook'd it not; but wrathful, fond-  
ulant

Dreaming some rival, sought and found  
a witch

Who brew'd the philtre which had  
power, they said,

To lead an errant passion home again.  
And this, at times, she mingled with  
his drink,

And this destroy'd him; for the wicked  
broth

Confused the chemic labor of the blood,  
And tickling the brute brain within  
the man's

Made havoc among those tender cells,  
and check'd

His power to shape: he loathed him  
self; and once

After a tempest woke upon a morn  
That mock'd him with returning calm,  
and cried;

"Storm in the night! for thrice I  
heard the rain

Rushing; and once the flash of a thun-  
derbolt—

Methought I never saw so fierce a fork—  
Struck out the streaming mountain-  
side, and show'd

A riotous confluence of watercourses  
Blanching and billowing in a hollow  
of it,

Where all but yester-eve was dusty-dry.

"Storm, and what dreams, ye holy  
Gods, what dreams!

For thrice I waken'd after dreams.  
Perchance

We do but recollect the dreams that  
come

Just ere the waking: terrible! for it  
seem'd

A void was made in Nature; all her  
bonds

Crack'd; and I saw the flaring atom-  
streams

And torrents of her myriad universe,  
Rushing along the illimitable inane,  
Fly on to clash together again, and  
make

Another and another frame of things

For ever : that was mine, my dream, I  
 knew it—  
 Of and belonging to me, as the dog  
 With inward yelp and restless forefoot  
 plies  
 His function of the woodland : but the  
 next !  
 I thought that all the blood by Sylla  
 shed  
 Came driving rainlike down again on  
 earth,  
 And where it dash'd the reddening  
 meadow, sprang  
 No dragon warriors from Cadmean  
 teeth,  
 For these I thought my dream would  
 show to me,  
 But girls, Hetaïrai, curious in their art,  
 Hired animalisms, vile as those that  
 made  
 The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies  
 worse  
 Than aught they fable of the quiet  
 Gods.  
 And hands they mixt, and yell'd and  
 round me drove  
 In narrowing circles till I yell'd again  
 Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and  
 saw—  
 Was it the first beam of my latest day?

“ Then, then, from utter gloom stood  
 out the breasts,  
 The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly  
 a sword  
 Now over and now under, now direct,  
 Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down  
 shamed  
 At all that beauty ; and as I stared, a  
 fire,  
 The fire that left a roofless Iliou,  
 Shot out of them, and scorch'd me that  
 I woke.

“ Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus,  
 thine,  
 Because I would not one of thine own  
 doves,  
 Not ev'n a rose, were offer'd to thee ?  
 thine,  
 Forgetful how my rich proemion  
 makes  
 Thy glory fly along the Italian field,  
 In lays that will outlast thy Deity ?

“ Deity ? nay, thy worshippers. My  
 tongue  
 Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of  
 these  
 Angers thee most, or angers thee at all ?  
 Not if thou be'st of those who, far  
 aloof  
 From envy, hate and pity, and spite  
 and scorn,  
 Live the great life which all our great-  
 est fain  
 Would follow, centred in eternal calm.

“ Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like  
 ours—lives

Touch, and be touch'd, then would I  
 cry to thee  
 To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender  
 arms  
 Round him, and keep him from the  
 lust of blood  
 That makes a steaming slaughter-  
 house of Rome.

“ Ay, but I meant not thee ; I meant  
 not her,  
 Whom all the pines of Ida shook to  
 see  
 Slide from that quiet heaven of hers,  
 and tempt  
 The Trojan, while his neat-herds were  
 abroad ;  
 Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter  
 wept  
 Her Deity false in human-amorous  
 tears ;  
 Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter  
 Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,  
 Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called  
 Calliope to grace his golden verse—  
 Ay, and this Kypris also—did I take  
 That popular name of thine to shadow  
 forth  
 The all-generating powers and genial  
 heat  
 Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the  
 thick blood  
 Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs  
 are glad  
 Nosing the mother's udder, and the  
 bird  
 Makes his heart voice amid the blaze  
 of flowers :  
 Which things appear the work of  
 mighty Gods.

“ The Gods ! and if I go my work is  
 left  
 Unfinish'd — if I go. The Gods, who  
 haunt  
 The lucid interspace of world and  
 world,  
 Where never creeps a cloud, or moves  
 a wind,  
 Nor ever falls the least white star of  
 snow,  
 Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,  
 Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to  
 mar  
 Their sacred everlasting calm ! and  
 such,  
 Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm.  
 Not such, nor all unlike it, man may  
 gain  
 Letting his own life go. The Gods,  
 the Gods !  
 If all be atoms, how then should the  
 Gods  
 Being atomic not be dissoluble,  
 Not follow the great law ? My master  
 held  
 That Gods there are, for all men so  
 believe.

I prest my footsteps into his, and meant  
 Surely to lead my Memmius in a train

Of flowery clauses onward to the proof  
That Gods there are, and deathless.  
Meant? I meant?  
I have forgotten what I meant: my  
mind  
Stumbles, and all my faculties are  
lamed,

“Look where another of our Gods,  
the Sun,  
Apollo, Delius, or of older use  
All-seeing Hyperion—what you will—  
Has mounted yonder; since he never  
sware,  
Except his wrath were wreak'd on  
wretched man,  
That he would only shine among the  
dead  
Hereafter; tales! for never yet on  
earth  
Could dead flesh creep, or bits of  
roasting ox  
Moan round the spit—nor knows he  
what he sees;  
King of the East altho' he seem, and  
girt  
With song and flame and fragrance,  
slowly lifts  
His golden feet on those empurpled  
stairs  
That climb into the windy halls of  
heaven;  
And here he glances on an eye new-  
born,  
And gets for greeting but a wail of  
pain;  
And here he stays upon a freezing orb  
That fain would gaze upon him to the  
last;  
And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n  
And closed by those who mourn a  
friend in vain,  
Not thankful that his troubles are no  
more.  
And me, altho' his fire is on my face  
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell  
Whether I mean this day to end myself,  
Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,  
That men like soldiers may not quit  
the post  
Allotted by the Gods: but he that  
holds  
The Gods are careless, wherefore need  
he care  
Greatly for them, nor rather plunge at  
once,  
Being troubled, wholly out of sight,  
and sink  
Past earthquake—ay, and gout and  
stone, that break  
Body toward death, and palsy, death-  
in-life,  
And wretched age—and worst disease  
of all,  
These prodigies of myriad nakednesses,  
And twisted shapes of lust, unspeak-  
able,  
Abominable, strangers at my hearth  
Not welcome, harpies mingling every  
dish,

The phantom husks of something  
foully done,  
And fleeing thro' the boundless uni-  
verse,  
And blasting the long quiet of my  
breast  
With animal heat and dire insanity?

“How should the mind, except it  
loved them, clasp  
These idols to herself? or do they fly  
Now thinner, and now thicker, like the  
flakes  
In a fall of snow, and so press in, per-  
force  
Of multitude, as crowds that in an  
hour  
Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear  
The keepers down, and through, their  
rags and they,  
The basest, far into that council-hall  
Where sit the best and stateliest of the  
land?

“Can I not fling this horror off me  
again,  
Seeing with how great ease Nature can  
smile,  
Balmier and nobler from her bath of  
storm,  
At random ravage? and how easily  
The mountain there has cast his cloudy  
slough,  
Now towering o'er him in serenest air,  
A mountain o'er a mountain,—ay, and  
within  
All hollow as the hopes and fears of  
men?

“But who was he, that in the garden  
snared  
Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale  
To laugh at—more to laugh at in my-  
self—  
For look! what is it? there? yon  
arbutus  
Totters; a noiseless riot underneath  
Strikes through the wood, sets all the  
tops quivering—  
The mountain quickens into Nymph  
and Faun;  
And here an Oread—how the sun de-  
lights  
To glance and shift about her slippery  
sides,  
And rosy knees and supple rounded-  
ness,  
And budded bosom-peaks—who this  
way runs  
Before the rest—A satyr, a satyr, see,  
Follows; but him I proved impossible;  
Two-natured is no nature: yet he draws  
Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now  
Beastlier than any phantom of his kind  
That ever butted his rough brother-  
brute  
For lust or lusty blood or provender:  
I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him; and  
she  
Loathes him as well; such a precipi-  
tate heel,

Fledged as it were with Mercury's  
 ankle-wing,  
 Whirls her to me : but will she fling  
 herself,  
 Shameless upon me ? Catch her, goat-  
 foot : nay,  
 Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wil-  
 derness,  
 And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide !  
 do I wish—  
 What ?—that the bush were leafless ?  
 or to whelm  
 All of them in one massacre ! O ye  
 Gods,  
 I know you careless, yet, behold, to you  
 From childly wont and ancient use I  
 call—  
 I thought I lived securely as your-  
 selves—  
 No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-  
 spite,  
 No madness of ambition, avarice, none:  
 No larger feast than under plane or  
 pine  
 With neighbors laid along the grass, to  
 take  
 Only such cups as left us friendly-  
 warm,  
 Affirming each his own philosophy—  
 Nothing to mar the sober majesties  
 Of settled, sweet, Epicurean life.  
 But now it seems some unseen monster  
 lays  
 His vast and filthy hands upon my will,  
 Wrenching it backward into his ; and  
 spoils  
 My bliss in being ; and 't was not great ;  
 For save when shutting reasons up in  
 rhythm,  
 Or Heliconian honey in living words,  
 To make a truth less harsh, I often  
 grew  
 Tired of so much within our little life,  
 Or of so little in our little life—  
 Poor little life that toddles half an  
 hour  
 Crown'd with a flower or two, and there  
 an end—  
 And since the nobler pleasure seems to  
 fade,  
 Why should I, beastlike as I find my-  
 self,  
 Not manlike end myself ?—our privi-  
 lege—  
 What beast has heart to do it ? And  
 what man,  
 What Roman would be dragg'd in tri-  
 umph thus ?  
 Not I ; not he, who bears one name  
 with her  
 Whose death-blow struck the dateless  
 doom of kings,  
 When, brooking not the Tarquin in her  
 veins,  
 She made her blood in sight of Colla-  
 tine  
 And all his peers, flushing the guiltless  
 air,  
 Spout from the maiden fountain in her  
 heart.

And from it sprang the Common-  
 wealth, which breaks  
 As I am breaking now !  
 " And therefore now  
 Let her, that is the womb and tomb of  
 all,  
 Great Nature, take, and forcing far  
 apart  
 Those blind beginnings that have made  
 me man  
 Dash them anew together at her will  
 Through all her cycles—into man once  
 more,  
 Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent  
 flower :  
 But till this cosmic order everywhere  
 Shatter'd into one earthquake in one  
 day  
 Cracks all to pieces,—and that hour  
 perhaps  
 Is not so far when momentary man  
 Shall seem no more a something to  
 himself,  
 But he, his hopes and hates, his homes  
 and fanes,  
 And even his bones long laid within  
 the grave,  
 The very sides of the grave itself shall  
 pass,  
 Vanishing, atom and void, atom and  
 void,  
 Into the unseen forever—till that hour,  
 My golden work in which I told a truth  
 That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel  
 And numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake,  
 and plucks  
 The mortal soul from out immortal  
 hell,  
 Shall stand : ay, surely : then it fails  
 at last  
 And perishes as I must ; for O Thou,  
 Passionless bride, divine Tranquility,  
 Yearn'd after by the wisest of the wise,  
 Who fail to find thee, being as thou art  
 Without one pleasure and without one  
 pain,  
 Howbeit I know thou surely must be  
 mine  
 Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus  
 I woo thee roughly, for thou carest not  
 How roughly men may woo thee so they  
 win—  
 Thus—thus : the soul flies out and dies  
 in the air."

With that he drove the knife into his  
 side :  
 She heard him raging, heard him fall ;  
 ran in,  
 Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon  
 herself  
 As having fall'd in duty to him, shriek'd  
 That she but meant to win him back,  
 fell on him,  
 Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd : he an-  
 swer'd, " Care not thou !  
 Thy duty ? What is duty ? Fare thee  
 well ! "

## SONG.

My life is full of weary days,  
 But good things have not kept aloof,  
 Nor wandered into other ways:  
 I have not lack'd thy mild reproof,  
 Nor golden largess of thy praise.

And now shake hands across the brink  
 Of that deep grave to which I go :  
 Shake hands once more : I cannot sink  
 So far—far down, but I shall know  
 The voice, and answer from below.

## THE CAPTAIN.

## A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

He that only rules by terror  
 Doeth grievous wrong.  
 Deep as Hell I count his error,  
 Let him hear my song.  
 Brave the Captain was : the seamen  
 Made a gallant crew,  
 Gallant sons of English freemen,  
 Sailors bold and true.  
 But they hated his oppression,  
 Stern he was and rash ;  
 So for every light transgression  
 Doom'd them to the lash.  
 Day by day more harsh and cruel  
 Seem'd the Captain's mood.  
 Secret wrath like smother'd fuel  
 Burnt in each man's blood.  
 Yet he hoped to purchase glory,  
 Hoped to make the name  
 Of his vessel great in story,  
 Wheresoe'er he came.  
 So they past by capes and islands,  
 Many a harbor-mouth,  
 Sailing under palmy highlands  
 Far within the South.  
 On a day when they were going  
 O'er the lone expanse,  
 In the north, her canvas flowing,  
 Rose a ship of France.  
 Then the Captain's color heighten'd,  
 Joyful came his speech :  
 But a cloudy gladness lighten'd  
 In the eyes of each.  
 "Chase," he said : the ship flew for-  
 ward,  
 And the wind did blow ;  
 Stately, lightly, went she Norward,  
 'Till she near'd the foe.  
 Then they look'd at him they hated,  
 Had what they desired :  
 Mute with folded arms they wait'd—  
 Not a gun was fired.  
 But they heard the foe's man's thunder  
 Roaring out their doom ;  
 All the air was torn in sunder,  
 Crashing went the boom,  
 Spars were splinter'd, decks were shat-  
 ter'd,  
 Bullets fell like rain ;  
 Over mast and deck were scatter'd  
 Blood and brains of men.

Spars were splinter'd ; decks were  
 broken :

Every mother's son—  
 Down they dropt—no word was spo-  
 ken—

Each beside his gun.  
 On the decks as they were lying,  
 Were their faces grim.  
 In their blood, as they lay dying,  
 Did they smile on him.  
 Those, in whom he had reliance  
 For his noble name,  
 With one smile of still defiance  
 Sold him unto shame.  
 Shame and wrath his heart confound-  
 ed,

• Pale he turn'd and red,  
 Till himself was deadly wounded  
 Falling on the dead.  
 Dismal error ! fearful slaughter !  
 Years have wander'd by,  
 Side by side beneath the water  
 Crew and Captain lie ;  
 There the sunlit ocean tosses  
 O'er them mouldering,  
 And the lonely seabird crosses  
 With one waft of the wing.

THREE SONNETS TO A  
COQUETTE.

## I.

CARESS'D or chidden by the dainty  
 hand,  
 And singing airy trifles this or that,  
 Light Hope at Beauty's call would  
 perch and stand,  
 And run thro' every change of sharp  
 and flat ;  
 And Fancy came and at her pillow  
 sat,  
 When sleep had bound her in his rosy  
 band,  
 And chased away the still-recurring  
 gnat,  
 And woke her with a lay from fairy  
 land.  
 But now they live with Beauty less and  
 less,  
 For Hope is other Hope and wanders  
 far,  
 Nor cares to lisp in love's delicious  
 creeds ;  
 And Fancy watches in the wilderness.  
 Poor Fancy sadder than a single star  
 That sets at twilight in a land of  
 reeds.

## II.

The form, the form alone is eloquent  
 A nobler yearning never broke he  
 rest  
 Than but to dance and sing, be gayly  
 drest,  
 And win all eyes with all accomplish-  
 ment :  
 Yet in the waltzing-circle as we went,  
 My fancy made me for a moment  
 blest

To find my heart so near the beauteous  
breast

That once had power to rob it of con-  
tent.

A moment came the tenderness of  
tears,

The phantom of a wish that once could  
move,

A ghost of passion that no smiles  
restore—

For ah ! the slight coquette, she can-  
not love,

And if you kiss'd her feet a thousand  
years,

She still would take the praise, and  
care no more.

## III.

Wan Sculptor wepest thou to take the  
cast

Of those dead lineaments that near  
thee lie ?

O sorrowest thou, pale Painter, for the  
past,

In painting some dead friend from  
memory ?

Weep on : beyond his object Love can  
last :

His object lives : more cause to weep  
have I :

My tears, no tears of love, are flowing  
fast,

No tears of love, but tears that Love  
can die.

I pledge her not in any cheerful cup,  
Nor care to sit beside her where she  
sits—

Ah pity—hint it not in human  
tones,

But breathe it into earth and close it  
up

With secret death for ever, in the pits  
Which some green Christmas crams  
with weary bones.

MOVE eastward, happy earth, and  
leave

Yon orange sunset waning slow :

From fringes of the faded eve,  
O, happy planet, eastward go ;

Till over thy dark shoulder glow  
Thy silver sister-world, and rise

To glass herself in dewy eyes  
That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,  
Dip forward under starry light,

And move me to my marriage-morn,  
And round again to happy night.

BREAK, break, break,  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !

And I would that my tongue could ut-  
ter

The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,  
That he shouts with his sister at play !

O well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay.

And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill ;  
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !  
But the tender grace of a day that is  
dead  
Will never come back to me.

## THE POET'S SONG.

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,  
He pass'd by the town and out of the  
street,

A light wind blew from the gates of the  
sun,

And waves of shadow went over the  
wheat,

And he sat him down in a lonely place,  
And chanted a melody loud and  
sweet,

That made the wild-swan pause in her  
cloud,

And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the  
bee.

The snake slipt under a spray,  
The wild hawk stood with the down on  
his beak,

And stared, with his foot on the prey,  
And the nightingale thought, "I have  
sung many songs,

But never a one so gay,  
For he sings of what the world will be  
When the years have died away."

## SONG.

LADY, let the rolling drums  
Beat to battle where thy warrior stands:  
Now thy face across his fancy comes,  
And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpets blow,  
Clasp thy little babes about thy knee :  
Now their warrior father meets the foe,  
And strikes him dead for thine and  
thee.

## SONG.

HOME they brought him slain with  
spears.

They brought him home at even-fall:  
All alone she sits and hears

Echoes in his empty hall,  
Sounding on the morrow.

The Sun peep'd in from open field,  
The boy began to leap and prance,

Rode upon his father's lance,  
Beat upon his father's shield—

"O hush, my joy, my sorrow."

## ON A MOURNER.

## I.

NATURE, so far as in her lies,  
Imitates God, and turns her face  
To every land beneath the skies,  
Counts nothing that she meets with  
base,  
But lives and loves in every place ;

## II.

Fills out the homely quickset-screens,  
And makes the purple lilac ripe,  
Steps from her airy hill, and greens  
The swamp, where hums the dropping  
snipe,  
With moss and braided marsh-pipe ;

## III.

And on thy heart a finger lays,  
Saying, "Beat quicker, for the time  
Is pleasant, and the woods and ways  
Are pleasant, and the beech and lime  
Put forth and feel a gladder clime."

## IV.

And murmurs of a deeper voice,  
Going before to some far shrine,  
Teach that sick heart the stronger  
choice,  
Till all thy life one way incline  
With one wide will that closes thine.

## V.

And when the zoning eve has died  
Where you dark valleys wind forlorn,  
Come Hope and Memory, spouse and  
bride,  
From out the borders of the morn,  
With that fair child betwixt them  
born.

## VI.

And when no mortal motion jars  
The blackness round the tombing  
sod,  
Thro' silence and the trembling stars  
Comes Faith from tracts no feet have  
trod,  
And Virtue, like a household god

## VII.

Promising empire ; such as those  
That once at dead of night did greet  
Troy's wandering prince, so that he  
rose  
With sacrifice, while all the fleet  
Had rest by stony hills of Crete.

## NORTHERN FARMER.

## NEW STYLE.

## I.

DON'T thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as  
they canters awaay ?  
Proputy, proputy, proputy—that 's  
what I 'ears 'em saay.

Proputy, proputy, proputy—Sam,  
thou 's an ass for thy pains :  
Theer 's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor  
in all thy braains.

## II.

Woi—theer 's a crow to pluck wi' tha,  
Sam : yon 's parson's 'ouse—  
Dosu't thou know that a man mun be  
eäther a man or a mouse ?  
Time to think on it then ; for thou 'll  
be twenty to week.\*  
Proputy, proputy—woi then woi—  
let ma 'ear mysen speak.

## III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as beän  
a-talkin' o' thee ;  
Thou 's been talkin' to muther, an' she  
beän a tellin' it me.  
Thou 'll not marry for munny—thou 's  
sweet upo' parson's lass—  
Noi—thou 'll marry for luvv—an' we  
boäth on us thinks tha an ass.

## IV.

Seeä'd her to-daäy goi by—Saäint's-  
daay—they was ringin the bells.  
She 's a beauty thou thinks—an' soä is  
scoors o' gells,  
Them as 'as munny an' all—wot 's a  
beauty?—the flower as blaws.  
But proputy, proputy sticks, an' pro-  
puty, proputy grows.

## V.

Do'ant be stunt : † taäke time : I know  
what maäkes tha sa mad.  
Warn' I craided fur the lasses mysen  
when I wur a lad ?  
But I know'd a Quäcker feller as often  
'as tow'd ma this :  
"Doänt thou marry for munny, but goi  
wheer munny is !"

## VI.

An' I went wheer munny war : an' thy  
mother coom to 'and,  
Wi' lots o' munny laaid by, an' a nice-  
tish bit o' land.  
Maäybe she warn't a beauty :—I niver  
giv it a thowt—  
But warn't she as good to cuddle an'  
kiss as a lass as 'ant nowt ?

## VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt  
'a nowt when 'e's deä'd,  
Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and  
addle ‡ her breäd :  
Why ? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an'  
weänt niver git naw 'igher ;  
An' 'e maäde the bed as 'e ligs on afoor  
'e coom'd to the shire.

## VIII.

And thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi  
lots o' 'Varsity debt,

\* This weck. † Obstinate. ‡ Earn.

Stook to his taal they did, an' 'e 'ant  
got shut on 'em yet.  
An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi'  
noän to lend 'im a shove,  
Woorse nor a far-welter'd\* yowe : fur,  
Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

## IX.

Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy  
lass an' 'er munny too,  
Maakin' 'em goä together as they 've  
good right to do.  
Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o'  
'er munny laaid by?  
Naäy—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor  
fur it : reason why.

## X.

Ay an' thy muther says thou wants to  
marry the lass,  
Cooms o' a gentleman burn : an' we  
boäth on us thinks tha an ass.  
Woä then, proputt, wiltha?—an ass as  
near as mays nowt—†  
Woä then, wiltha? dangtha!—the bees  
is as fell as owt. ‡

## XI.

Breäk me a bit o' the esh for his 'eäid,  
lad, out o' the fence!  
Gentleman burn! what's gentleman  
burn? is it shillins an' pence?  
Proputt, proputt 's ivrything 'ere,  
an', Sammy, I'm blest  
If it is n't the säame oop yonder, fur  
them as 'as it's the best.

## XII.

Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into  
'ouses an' steäils.  
Them as 'as coäts to their backs an'  
taäkes their regular meäls.  
Noä, but it's them as niver knows  
wheer a meäl 's to bë 'ad.  
Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor  
in a loomp is bad.

## XIII.

Them or their feythrs, tha sees, mun  
a beän a laäzy lot,  
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin'  
whiniver munny was got.  
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leäfstwäys  
'is munny was 'id.  
But 'e tued an' moll'd 'issén deäid, an'  
'e died a good un, 'e did.

## XIV.

Look thou theer wheer Wigglesby  
beck comes out by the 'ill †  
Feyther run up to the farm, an' I runs  
up to the mill;  
An' I'll run up to the brig, an' that  
thou'll live to see;  
And if thou marries a good un I'll  
leäve the land to thee.

\* Or fow-welter'd—said of a sheep lying on  
its back in the furrow.

† Makes nothing.

‡ The flies are as fierce as anything.

## XV.

Them 's my noätions, Sammy, wheerby  
I means to stick;  
But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leäve  
the land to Dick.—  
Coom oop, proputt, proputt—that 's  
what I 'ears 'im säy—  
Proputt, proputt, proputt—canter  
an' canter awäy.

## THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

(This poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio.

A young lover, Julian, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story of his own love for her and the strange sequel of it. He speaks of having been haunted in delirium by visions and the sound of bells, sometimes tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.)

He flies the event: he leaves the event  
to me:  
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the  
bells,  
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear  
and heart—  
But cast a parting glance at me, you  
saw,  
As who should say "continue." Well,  
he had  
One golden hour—of triumph shall I  
say?  
Solace at least—before he left his home.  
Would you had seen him in that hour  
of his!  
He moved thro' all of it majestically—  
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—  
but now—

Whether they were his lady's marriage-bells,  
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,  
I never ask'd; but Lionel and the girl  
Were wedded, and our Julian came  
again  
Back to his mother's house among the  
pines.  
But these, their gloom, the mountains  
and the Bay,  
The whole land weigh'd him down as  
Ætna does  
The Giant of Mythology: he would go,  
Would leave the land for ever, and had  
gone  
Surely, but for a whisper "Go not yet."  
Some warning, and divinely as it  
seem'd  
By that which follow'd—but of this I  
deem  
As of the visions that he told—the  
event  
Glanced back upon them in his after  
life,  
And partly made them—tho' he knew  
it not.

And thus he stay'd and would not  
look at her—  
No, not for months: but when the  
eleventh moon  
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,  
Heard yet once more the tolling bell,  
and said,  
Would you could toll me out of life,  
but found—  
All softly as his mother broke it to  
him—  
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,  
For that low knell tolling his lady  
dead—  
Dead—and had lain three days without  
a pulse:  
All that look'd on her had pronounced  
her dead.  
And so they bore her (for in Julian's  
land  
They never nail a dumb head up in  
elm),  
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of  
heaven,  
And laid her in the vault of her own  
kin.

What did he then? not die: he is  
here and hale—  
Not plunge headforemost from the  
mountain there,  
And leave the name of Lover's Leap:  
not he:  
He knew the meaning of the whisper  
now,  
Thought that he knew it. "This, I  
stay'd for this:  
O love, I have not seen you for so long.  
Now, now, will I go down into the  
grave,  
I will be all alone with all I love,  
And kiss her on the lips. She is his no  
more;  
The dead returns to me, and I go down  
To kiss the dead."

The fancy stirr'd him so  
He rose and went, and entering the dim  
vault.  
And, making there a sudden light, be-  
held  
All round about him that which all  
will be.  
The light was but a flash, and went  
again.  
Then at the far end of the vault he saw  
His lady with the moonlight on her  
face;  
Her breast as in a shadow-prison,  
bars  
Of black and bands of silver, which the  
moon  
Struck from an open grating overhead  
High in the wall, and all the rest of  
her  
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the  
vault.

"It was my wish," he said, "to pass,  
to sleep,

To rest, to be with her—till the great  
day  
Peal'd on us with that music which  
rights all,  
And raised us hand in hand." And  
kneeling there  
Down in the dreadful dust that once  
was man,  
Dust, as he said, that once was loving  
hearts,  
Hearts that had beat with such a love  
as mine—  
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as  
her—  
He softly put his arm about her neck  
And kiss'd her more than once, till  
helpless death  
And silence made him bold—nay, but  
I wrong him,  
He reverenced his dear lady even in  
death;  
But, placing his true hand upon her  
heart,  
"O, you warm heart," he moan'd, "not  
even death  
Can chill you all at once:" then start-  
ing, thought  
His dreams had come again. "Do I  
wake or sleep?  
Or am I made immortal, or my love  
Mortal once more?" It beat—the  
heart—it beat:  
Faint—but it beat: at which his own  
began  
To pulse with such a vehemence that  
it drown'd  
The feebler motion underneath his  
hand.  
But when at last his doubts were sat-  
isfied,  
He raised her softly from the sepul-  
chre,  
And, wrapping her all over with the  
cloak  
He came in, and now striding fast, and  
now  
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore  
Holding his golden burden in his arms,  
So bore her thro' the solitary land  
Back to the mother's house where she  
was born.

There the good mother's kindly min-  
istering,  
With half a night's appliances, recall'd  
Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye  
that ask'd  
"Where?" till the things familiar to  
her youth  
Had made a silent answer: then she  
spoke,  
"Here! and how came I here?" and  
learning it  
(They told her somewhat rashly as I  
think)  
At once began to wander and to wail,  
"Ay, but you know that you must  
give me back:  
Send I bid him come;" but Lionel was  
away—

Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none  
 knew where.  
 "He casts me out," she wept, "and  
 goes" — a wail  
 That seeming something, yet was nothing,  
 born  
 Not from believing mind, but shatter'd  
 nerve,  
 Yet haunting Julian, as her own re-  
 proof  
 At some precipitance in her burial.  
 Then, when her own true spirit had  
 return'd,  
 "Oyes, and you," she said, "and none  
 but you.  
 For you have given me life and love  
 again,  
 And none but you yourself shall tell  
 him of it,  
 And you shall give me back when he  
 returns."  
 "Stay then a little," answer'd Julian,  
 "here,  
 And keep yourself, none knowing, to  
 yourself;  
 And I will do your will. I may not  
 stay,  
 No, not an hour; but send me notice  
 of him  
 When he returns, and then will I re-  
 turn,  
 And I will make a solemn offering of  
 you  
 To him you love." And faintly she re-  
 plied,  
 "And I will do your will, and none  
 shall know."

Not know? with such a secret to be  
 known.  
 But all their house was old and loved  
 them both,  
 And all the house had known the  
 loves of both;  
 Had died almost to serve them any  
 way,  
 And all the land was waste and soli-  
 tary:  
 And then he rode away; but after  
 this,  
 An hour or two, Camilla's travail came  
 Upon her, and that day a boy was born,  
 Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode  
 away,  
 And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,  
 There fever seized upon him: myself  
 was then  
 Travelling that land, and meant to  
 rest an hour;  
 And sitting down to such a base re-  
 past,  
 It makes me angry yet to speak of it—  
 I heard a groaning overhead, and  
 climb'd  
 The moulder'd stairs (for everything  
 was vile)  
 And in a loft, with none to wait on  
 him,

Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,  
 Raving of dead men's dust and beating  
 hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,  
 A flat malarian world of reed and  
 rush!  
 But there from fever and my care of  
 him  
 Sprang up a friendship that may help  
 us yet.  
 For while we roam'd along the dreary  
 coast,  
 And waited for her message, piece by  
 piece  
 I learnt the drearier story of his life:  
 And, tho' he loved and honor'd Lionel,  
 Found that the sudden wail his lady  
 made  
 Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her  
 worth,  
 Her beauty even? should he not be  
 taught,  
 Ev'n by the price that others set upon  
 it,  
 The value of that jewel he had to  
 guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we  
 past,  
 I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind,  
 the soul:  
 That makes the sequel pure; tho'  
 some of us  
 Beginning at the sequel know no more,  
 Not such am I: and yet I say, the bird  
 That will not hear my call, however  
 sweet,  
 But if my neighbor whistle answers  
 him—  
 What matter? there are others in the  
 wood.  
 Yet when I saw her (and I thought him  
 crazed,  
 Tho' not with such a craziness as needs  
 A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of  
 hers—  
 Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes  
 alone,  
 But all from these to where she  
 touch'd on earth,  
 For such a craziness as Julian's  
 seem'd  
 No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she  
 came  
 To greet us, her young hero in her  
 arms!  
 "Kiss him," she said. "You gave me  
 life again.  
 He, but for you, had never seen it  
 once.  
 His other father you! Kiss him, and  
 then  
 Forgive him, if his name be Julian  
 too."

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart!  
 his own  
 Sent such a flame into his face, I  
 knew  
 Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him  
 there.

But he was all the more resolved to  
 go,  
 And sent at once to Limel, praying  
 him  
 By that great love they both had borne  
 the dead,  
 To come and revel for one hour with  
 him  
 Before he left the land for evermore;  
 And then to friends—they were not  
 many—who lived  
 Scatteringly about that lonely land of  
 his,  
 And bade them to a banquet of fare-  
 wells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I  
 never  
 Sat at a costlier; for all round his hall  
 From column on to column, as in a  
 wood,  
 Not such as here—an equatorial one,  
 Great garlands swung and blossom'd;  
 and beneath,  
 Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of  
 Art,  
 Chalice and salver, wines that Heaven  
 knows when,  
 Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten  
 sun  
 And kept it thro' a hundred years of  
 gloom,  
 Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups  
 Where nymph and god ran ever round  
 in gold—  
 Others of glass as costly—some with  
 gems

Movable and resettable at will  
 And trebling all the rest in value—Ah,  
 heavens!  
 Why need I tell you all?—suffice to  
 say  
 That whatsoever such a house as his,  
 And his was old, has in it rare or fair  
 Was brought before the guest: and  
 they, the guests,  
 Wonder'd at some strange light in  
 Julian's eyes  
 (I told you that he had his golden  
 hour),  
 And such a feast, ill-suited as it  
 seem'd  
 To such a time, to Lionel's loss and  
 his,  
 And that resolved self-exile from a  
 land  
 He never would revisit, such a feast  
 So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n  
 than rich,  
 But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the  
 hall

Two great funereal curtains, looping  
 down,  
 Parted a little ere they met the floor,  
 About a picture of his lady, taken  
 Some years before, and falling hid the  
 frame.  
 And just above the parting was a  
 lamp:  
 So the sweet figure folded round with  
 night  
 Seem'd stepping out of darkness with  
 a smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate  
 and drank,  
 And might—the wines being of such  
 nobleness—  
 Have jested also, but for Julian's  
 eyes,  
 And something weird and wild about  
 it all:  
 What was it? for our lover seldom  
 spoke,  
 Scarce touch'd the meats; but ever  
 and anon  
 A priceless goblet with a priceless  
 wine  
 Arising, show'd he drank beyond his  
 use;  
 And when the feast was near an end,  
 he said:

“There is a custom in the Orient,  
 friends—  
 I read of it in Persia—when a man  
 Will honor those who feast with him,  
 he brings  
 And shows them whatsoever he ac-  
 counts  
 Of all his treasures the most beautiful,  
 Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may  
 be.  
 This custom—”

Pausing here a moment, all  
 The guests broke in upon him with  
 meeting hands  
 And cries about the banquet—“Beau-  
 tiful!  
 Who could desire more beauty at a  
 feast?”

The lover answer'd, “There is more  
 than one  
 Here sitting who desires it. Laud me  
 not  
 Before my time, but hear me to the  
 close.  
 This custom steps yet further when the  
 guest  
 Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost.  
 For after he has shown him gems or  
 gold,  
 He brings and sets before him in rich  
 guise  
 That which is thrice as beautiful as  
 these,  
 The beauty that is dearest to his heart—  
 ‘O my heart's lord, would I could show  
 you,’ he says,

'Ev'n my heart too.' And I propose  
 To show you what is dearest to my  
 heart,  
 And my heart too.

"But solve me first a doubt.  
 I knew a man, not many years ago ;  
 He had a faithful' servant, one who  
 loved  
 His master more than all on earth be-  
 side.  
 He falling sick, and seeming close on  
 death,  
 His master would not wait until he  
 died,  
 But bade his mentals bear him from  
 the door,  
 And leave him in the public way to  
 die.  
 I knew another, not so long ago,  
 Who found the dying servant, took him  
 home,  
 And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved  
 his life.  
 I ask you now, should this first master  
 claim  
 His service, whom does it belong to ?  
 him  
 Who thrust him out, or him who saved  
 his life ?"

This question, so flung down before  
 the guests,  
 And balanced either way by each, at  
 length  
 When some were doubtful how the law  
 would hold,  
 Was handed over by consent of all  
 To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of  
 phrase.  
 And he beginning languidly—his loss  
 Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as  
 he went,  
 Glanced at the point of law, to pass it  
 by,  
 Affirming that as long as either lived,  
 By all the laws of love and gratef-  
 ulness,  
 The service of the one so saved was  
 due  
 All to the saver—adding, with a smile,  
 The first for many weeks—a semi-  
 smile  
 As at a strong conclusion—"body and  
 soul  
 And life and limbs, all his to work his  
 will."

Then Julian made a secret sign to  
 me  
 To bring Camille down before them  
 all.  
 And crossing her own picture as she  
 came,  
 And looking as much lovelier as her-  
 self  
 Is lovelier than all others—on her head  
 A diamond cirelet, and from under this

A veil, that seem'd no more than gilded  
 air,  
 Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern  
 gauze  
 With seeds of gold—so, with that grace  
 of hers,  
 Slow-moving as a wave against the  
 wind,  
 That flings a mist behind it in the sun—  
 And bearing high in arms the mighty  
 babe,  
 The younger Julian, who himself was  
 crown'd  
 With roses, none so rosy as himself—  
 And over all her babe and her the  
 jewels  
 Of many generations of his house  
 Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked  
 them out  
 As for a solemn sacrifice of love—  
 So she came in :—I am long in telling  
 it.

I never yet beheld a thing so strange,  
 Sad, sweet, and strange together—  
 floated in,—  
 While all the guests in mute amaze-  
 ment rose,—  
 And slowly pacing to the middle hall,  
 Before the board, there paused and  
 stood, her breast  
 Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her  
 feet,  
 Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.  
 But him she carried, him nor lights nor  
 feast  
 Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men ;  
 who cared  
 Only to use his own, and staring wide  
 And hungering for the gilt and jewel'd  
 world  
 About him, look'd, as he is like to  
 prove,  
 When Julian goes, the lord of all he  
 saw.

"My guests," said Julian : "you are  
 honor'd now  
 Ev'n to the uttermost : in her behold  
 Of all my treasures the most beautiful,  
 Of all things upon earth the dearest to  
 me."  
 Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,  
 Led his dear lady to a chair of state.  
 And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face  
 Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again  
 Thrice in a second, felt him tremble  
 too,  
 And heard him muttering, "So like, so  
 like ;  
 She never had a sister. I knew none.  
 Some cousin of his and hers—O God,  
 so like !"  
 And when he suddenly ask'd her if she  
 were.  
 She shook, and cast her eyes down, and  
 was dumb.  
 And then some other question'd if she  
 came  
 From foreign lands, and still she did  
 not speak.

Another, if the boy were hers: but  
 she  
 To all their queries answer'd not a  
 word,  
 Which made the amazement more, till  
 one of them  
 Said, shuddering, "Her spectre!" But  
 his friend  
 Replied, in half a whisper, "Not at  
 least  
 The spectre that will speak if spoken to.  
 Terrible pity, if one so beautiful  
 Prove, as I almost dread to find her,  
 dumb!"

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd  
 all:  
 "She is but dumb, because in her you  
 see  
 That faithful servant whom we spoke  
 about,  
 Obedient to her second master now;  
 Which will not last. I have here to-  
 night a guest  
 So bound to me by common love and  
 loss—  
 What! shall I bind him more? in his  
 behalf,  
 Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him  
 That which of all things is the dearest  
 to me,  
 Not only showing? and he himself pro-  
 nounced  
 That my rich gift is wholly mine to  
 give.

"Now all be dumb, and promise all  
 of you  
 Not to break in on what I say by word  
 Or whisper, while I show you all my  
 heart."  
 And then began the story of his love  
 As here to-day, but not so wordily—  
 The passionate moment would not suf-  
 fer that—  
 Past thro' his visions to the burial;  
 thence  
 Down to this last strange hour in his  
 own hall;  
 And then rose up, and with him all his  
 guests  
 Once more as by enchantment; all but  
 he,  
 Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell  
 again,  
 And sat as if in chains—to whom he  
 said:

"Take my free gift, my cousin, for  
 your wife;  
 And were it only for the giver's sake,  
 And tho' she seem so like the one you  
 lost,  
 Yet cast her not away so suddenly,  
 Lest there be none left here to bring  
 her back:  
 I leave this land forever." Here he  
 ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one  
 hand,

And bearing on one arm the noble  
 babe,  
 He slowly brought them both to Lion-  
 nel.  
 And there the widower husband and  
 dead wife  
 Knsh'd each at each with a cry, that  
 rather seem'd  
 For some new death than for a life re-  
 new'd;  
 At this the very babe began to wail;  
 At once they turn'd, and caught and  
 brought him in  
 To their charm'd circle, and, half kill-  
 ing him  
 With kisses, round him closed and  
 claspt again.  
 But Lionel, when at last he freed him-  
 self  
 From wife and child, and lifted up a  
 face  
 All over glowing with the sun of life,  
 And love, and boundless thanks—the  
 sight of this  
 So frighted our good friend, that turn-  
 ing to me  
 And saying, "It is over: let us go—"  
 There were our horses ready at the  
 doors—  
 We bade them no farewell, but mount-  
 ing these  
 He part forever from his native land;  
 And I with him, my Julian, back to  
 mine.

## WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator,  
 glory of song,  
 Paid with a voice flying by to be lost  
 on an endless sea—  
 Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle,  
 to right the wrong—  
 Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no  
 lover of glory she:  
 Give her the glory of going on, and still  
 to be.  
 The wages of sin is death: if the  
 wages of Virtue be dust,  
 Would she have heart to endure for  
 the life of the worm and the fly?  
 She desires no isles of the blest, no  
 quiet seats of the just,  
 To rest in a golden grove, or to bask  
 in a summer sky:  
 Give her the wages of going on, and  
 not to die.

## THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas,  
 the hills and the plains—  
 Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of  
 Him who reigns?  
 Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not  
 that which He seems?

Dreams are true while they last, and  
do we not live in dreams ?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of  
body and limb,  
Are they not sign and symbol of thy  
division from Him ?

Dark is the world to thee : thyself art  
the reason why ;  
For is He not all but thou, that hast  
power to feel " I am I ? "

Glorify about thee, without thee ; and  
thou fulfill'st thy doom,  
Making Him broken gleams, and a  
stifled splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and  
Spirit with Spirit can meet—  
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer  
than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise : O Soul, and  
let us rejoice,  
For if He thunder by law the thunder  
is yst His voice.

Law is God, say some : no God at all,  
says the fool ;  
For all we have power to see is :  
straight staff bent in a pool ;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and  
the eye of man cannot see ;  
But if we could see and hear, this  
Vision—were it not He ?

## SONG.

FLOWER in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies ;—  
Hold you here, root and all, in my  
hand,  
Little flower—but if I could under-  
stand  
What you are, root and all, and all in  
all,  
I should know what God and man is.

## LITERARY SQUABBLES.

AN God ! the petty fools of rhyme  
That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars  
Before the stony face of Time,  
And look'd at by the silent stars :

Who hate each other for a song,  
And do their little best to bite  
And pinch their brethren in the throng,  
And scratch the very dead for spite :

And strain to make an inch of room  
For their sweet selves, and cannot hear  
The sullen Lethe rolling doom  
On them and theirs and all things  
here :

When one small touch of Charity  
Could lift them nearer God-like state  
Than if the crowded Orb should cry  
Like those who cried Diana great :

And I too, talk, and lose the touch  
I talk of. Surely, after all,  
The noblest answer unto such  
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

## DEDICATION.

THESE to His Memory—since he held  
them dear,  
Perchance as finding there uncon-  
sciously  
Some image of himself—I dedicate,  
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears—  
These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me  
Scarce other than my own ideal knight,  
" Who revered his conscience as  
his king ;  
Whose glory was, redressing human  
wrong ;  
Who spake no slander, no, nor listen'd  
to it ;  
Who loved one only and who clave to  
her—"   
Her—over all whose realms to their  
last isle,  
Commingled with the gloom of immi-  
nent war,  
The shadow of His loss drew like  
eclipse.  
Darkening the world. We have lost  
him : he is gone :  
We know him now : all narrow jeal-  
ousies  
Are silent ; and we see him as he  
moved,  
How modest, kindly, all-accomplish'd,  
wise,  
With what sublime repression of him-  
self,  
And in what limits, and how tenderly ;  
Not swaying to this faction or to that ;  
Not making his high place the lawless  
perch  
Of wing'd ambitions, nor a vantage-  
ground  
For pleasure ; but thro' all this tract  
of years  
Wearing the white flower of a blan-  
less life,  
Before a thousand peering littlenesses,  
In that fierce light which beats upon a  
throne,  
And blackens every blot : for where is  
he,  
Who dares foreshadow for an only son  
A lovelier life, a more unstain'd, than  
his ?  
Or how should England dreaming of  
h's sons  
Hope more for these than some inher-  
itance  
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,  
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,  
Laborious for her people and her  
poor—  
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler  
day—

Far-sighted summoner of War and  
 Waste  
 To fruitful strifes and rivalries of  
 peace—  
 Sweet nature gilded by the gracious  
 gleam  
 Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,  
 Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince in-  
 deed,  
 Beyond all titles, and a household  
 name,  
 Hereafter, thro' all times, Albert the  
 Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still  
 endure ;  
 Break not, for thou art Royal, but en-  
 dure,  
 Remembering all the beauty of that  
 star  
 Which shone so close beside Thee, that  
 ye made  
 One light together, but has past and  
 leaves  
 The Crown a lonely splendor.

May all love,  
 His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow  
 Thee,  
 The love of all Thy sons encompass  
 Thee,  
 The love of all Thy daughters cherish  
 Thee,  
 The love of all Thy people comfort  
 Thee,  
 Till God's love set Thee at his side  
 again !

## THE COMING OF ARTHUR.

LEODOGRAN, the King of Cameliard,  
 Had one fair daughter, and none other  
 child ;  
 And she was fairest of all flesh on  
 earth,  
 Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur  
 came  
 Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war  
 Each upon other, wasted all the land ;  
 And still from time to time the heathen  
 host  
 Swarm'd overseas, and harried what  
 was left.  
 And so there grew great tracts of wil-  
 derness,  
 Wherein the beast was ever more and  
 more,  
 But man was less and less, till Arthur  
 came.  
 For first Aurelius lived and fought and  
 died,  
 And after him King Uther fought and  
 died,  
 But either fail'd to make the kingdom  
 one.  
 And after these King Arthur for a  
 space

And thro' the puissance of his Table  
 Round,  
 Drew all their petty principdoms under  
 him,  
 Their king and head, and made a realm,  
 and reign'd.

And thus the land of Cameliard was  
 waste,  
 Thick with wet woods, and many a  
 beast therein,  
 And none or few to scare or chase the  
 beast ;  
 So that wild dog, and wolf and boar  
 and bear  
 Came night and day, and rooted in the  
 fields,  
 And wallowed in the gardens of the  
 king.  
 And ever and anon the wolf would  
 steal  
 The children and devour, but now and  
 then,  
 Her own brood lost or dead, lent her  
 fierce teat  
 To human sucklings ; and the children,  
 housed  
 In her foul den, there at their meat  
 would growl,  
 And mock their foster-mother on four  
 feet,  
 Till, straighten'd, they grew up to wolf-  
 like men,  
 Worse than the wolves. And King  
 Leodogran  
 Groan'd for the Roman legions here  
 again,  
 And Cæsar's eagle : then his brother  
 king,  
 Rienc, assail'd him : last a heathen  
 horde,  
 Reddening the sun with smoke and  
 earth with blood,  
 And on the spike that split the moth-  
 er's heart  
 Spitting the child, brake on him, till,  
 amazed,  
 He knew not whither he should turn  
 for aid.

But—for he heard of Arthur newly  
 crown'd,  
 Tho' not without an uproar made by  
 those  
 Who cried, "He is not Uther's son"—  
 the king  
 Sent to him, saying, "Arise, and help  
 us thou !  
 For here between the man and beast  
 we die."

And Arthur yet had done no deed of  
 arms,  
 But heard the call, and came : and  
 Guinevere  
 Stood by the castle walls to watch him  
 pass ;  
 But since he neither wore on helm or  
 shield  
 The golden symbol of his kinglihood,

Fledg  
Whir  
Sham  
Hide,  
And  
What  
All o  
I kno  
From  
I tho  
No lev  
No ma  
No la  
With  
Only  
Affirm  
Nothi  
Of set  
But ne  
His va  
Wren  
My bl  
For sa  
Or He  
To ma  
Tired  
Or of s  
Poor li  
Crown  
And si  
Why sl  
Not ma  
What I  
What P  
Not I ;  
Whose  
When,  
ve  
She ma  
ti  
And all  
Spout f  
hi

But rode a simple knight among his  
knights,  
And many of these in richer arms than  
he,  
She saw him not, or mark'd not, if she  
saw,  
One among many, tho' his face was  
bare.  
But Arthur, looking downward as he  
past,  
Felt the light of her eyes into his life  
Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and  
pitch'd  
His tents beside the forest. And he  
drave  
The heathen, and he slew the beast,  
and fell'd  
The forest, and let in the sun, and  
made  
Broad pathways for the hunter and  
the knight ;  
And so return'd.

For while he linger'd there,  
A doubt that ever smoulder'd in the  
hearts  
Of those great Lords and Barons of his  
realm  
Flash'd forth and into war : for most  
of these  
Made head against him, crying, " Who  
is he  
That he should rulè us ? who hath  
proven him,  
King Uther's son ? for lo ! we look at  
him  
And find nor face nor bearing, limbs  
nor voice,  
Are like to those of Uther whom we  
knew.  
This is the son of Gorlois, not the  
king ;  
This is the son of Anton, not the king."

And Arthur, passing thence to battle,  
felt  
Travail, and throes and agonies of the  
life,  
Desiring to join'd with Guinevere ;  
And thinking as he rode, " Her father  
said  
That there between the men and beast  
they die.  
Shall I not lift her from this land of  
beasts  
Up to my throne, and side by side with  
me ?  
What happiness to reign a lonely king,  
Vext—O ye stars that shudder over me,  
O earth that soundest hollow under  
me,  
Vext with waste dreams ? for saving I  
be join'd  
To her that is the fairest under heaven,  
I seem as nothing in the mighty world,  
And cannot will my will, nor work my  
work  
Wholly, nor make myself in mine own  
realm  
Victor and lord. But were I join'd  
with her,

Then might we live together as one  
life,  
And reigning with one will in every-  
thing  
Have power on this dark land to light-  
en it,  
And power on this dead world to make  
it live."

And Arthur from the field of battle  
sent  
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere,  
His new-made knights, to King Leo-  
dogran,  
Saying, " If I in aught have served  
thee well,  
Give me thy daughter Guinevere to  
wife."

Whom when he heard, Leodogran in  
heart  
Debating—" How should I that am a  
king,  
However much he help me at my need,  
Give my one daughter saving to a king,  
And a king's son"—lifted his voice,  
and call'd  
A hoary man, his chamberlain, to  
whom  
He trusted all things, and of him re-  
quired  
His counsel : " Knowest thou aught  
of Arthur's birth ?"

Then spake the hoary chamberlain  
and said,  
" Sir king, there be but two old men  
that know :  
And each is twice as old as I ; and one  
is Merlin, the wise man that ever  
served  
King Uther thro' his magic art ; and  
one  
is Merlin's master (so they call him)  
Bleys,  
Who taught him magic ; but the  
scholar ran  
Before the master, and so far, that  
Bleys  
Laid magic by, and sat him down, and  
wrote  
All things and whatsoever Merlin did  
in one great annal-book, where after-  
years  
Will learn the secret of our Arthur's  
birth."

To whom the King Leodogran re-  
plied,  
" O friend, had I been holpen half as  
well  
By this King Arthur as by thee to-day,  
Then beast and man had had their  
share of me :  
But summon here before us once more  
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere."

Then, when they came before him,  
the king said,  
" I have seen the cuckoo chased by  
lesser fowl,



220

Fled

Whit

Shan

Hide

And

Wha

All

I kno

Fron

I th

No l

No n

No l

With

Only

Affir

Nothl

Of set

But n

His vast

Wren

My b

For

Or H

To m

Tired

Or of

Poor

Crown'd

an

And sin

fa

Why s

Not n

What

What

Not I

Whose

When

She

And

Sp

And reason in the chase : but where-  
fore now  
Do these your lords stir up the heat of  
war.  
Some calling Arthur born of Gorlois,  
Others of Anton? Tell me, ye your-  
selves,  
Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's  
son?"

And Ulfius and Brastias answer'd,  
"Ay."  
Then Bedivere, the first of all his  
knights  
Knighted by Arthur at his crowning,  
spake—  
For bold in heart and act and word  
was he,  
Whenever slander breathed against  
the king—

"Sir, there be many ramors on this  
head :  
For there be those who hate him in  
their hearts,  
Call him baseborn, and since his ways  
are sweet,  
And theirs are bestial, hold him less  
than man :  
And there be those who deem him  
more than man,  
And dream he dropt from heaven: but  
my belief

In all this matter—so ye care to learn—  
Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's  
time  
The prince and warrior Gorlois, he  
that held  
Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,  
Was wedded with a winsome wife,  
Ygerne :  
And daughters had she borne him,—  
one whereof,  
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bel-  
licent.

Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved  
To Arthur,—but a son she had not  
borne.

And Uther cast upon her eyes of love :  
But she, a staines wife to Gorlois,  
So loathed the bright dishonor of his  
love,

That Gorlois and King Uther went to  
war:

And overthrown was Gorlois and slain.  
Then Uther in his wrath and heat be-  
sieged

Ygerne within Tintagil, where her  
men,

Seeing the mighty swarm about their  
walls,

Left her and fled, and Uther enter'd  
in,

And there was none to call to but him-  
self.

So, compass'd by the power of the  
king,

Enforc'd she was to wed him in her  
tears,

And with a shameful swiftness; after-  
ward,

Not many moons, King Uther died him-  
self,

Moaning and wailing for an heir to rule  
After him, lest the realm should go to  
wrack.

And that same night, the night of the  
new year,

By reason of the bitterness and grief  
That vext his mother, all before his  
time

Was Arthur born, and all as soon as  
born

Deliver'd at a secret postern gate  
To Merlin, to be holden far apart

Until his hour should come; because  
the lords

Of that fierce day were as the lords of  
this,

Wild beasts, and surely would have  
torn the child

Piecemeal among them, had they  
known; for each

But sought to rule for his own self and  
hand,

And many hated Uther for the sake  
Of Gorlois. Wherefore Merlin took the  
child,

And gave him to Sir Anton, an old  
knight

And ancient friend of Uther; and his  
wife

Nursed the young prince, and rear'd  
him with her own;

And no man knew. And ever since  
the lords

Have foughten like wild beasts among  
themselves,

So that the realm has gone to wrack :  
but now,

This year, when Merlin (for his hour  
had come)

Brought Arthur forth, and set him in  
the hall,

Proclaiming, 'Here is Uther's heir,  
your king,'

A hundred voices cried, 'Away with  
him!

No king of ours! a son of Gorlois he,  
Or else the child of Anton, and no

king,

Or else baseborn.' Yet Merlin thro'  
his craft,

And while the people clamor'd for a  
king,

Had Arthur crown'd; but after, the  
great lords

Banded, and so brake out in open  
war."

Then while the king debated with  
himself

If Arthur were the child of shameful-  
ness,

Or born the son of Gorlois, after death,  
Or Uther's son, and born before his

time,

Or whether there were truth in any-  
thing

Said by these three, there came to  
Cameliard,

With Gawain and young Modred, her  
two sons,  
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Belli-  
cent;  
Whom as he could, not as he would, the  
king  
Made feast for, saying, as they sat at  
meat,

"A doubtful throne is ice on summer  
seas—  
Ye come from Arthur's court: think  
ye this king—  
So few his knights, however brave they  
be—  
Hath body enow to beat his foemen  
down?"

"O king," she cried, "and I will tell  
thee: few,  
Few, but all brave, all of one mind  
with him;  
For I was near him when the savage  
yells  
Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur  
sat  
Crown'd on the dais, and his warriors  
cried,  
'Be thou the king, and we will work  
thy will  
Who love thee.' Then the king in low  
deep tones,  
And simple words of great authority,  
Bound them by so strait vows to his  
own self,  
That when they rose, knighted from  
kneeling, some  
Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,  
Some flush'd, and others dazed, as one  
who wakes  
Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

"But when he spake and cheer'd his  
Table Round  
With large divine and comfortable  
words  
Beyond my tongue to tell thee—I be-  
held  
From eye to eye thro' all their Order  
flash  
A momentary likeness of the king:  
And ere it left their faces, thro' the  
cross  
And those around it and the Crucified,  
Down from the casement over Arthur,  
smote  
Flame-color, vert and azure, in three  
rays,  
One falling upon each of three fair  
queens,  
Who stood in silence near his throne,  
the friends  
Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with  
bright  
Sweet faces, who will help him at his  
need.

"And there I saw mage Merlin,  
whose vast wit

And hundred winters are but as the  
hands  
Of loyal vassals toiling for their liege.

"And near him stood the Lady of  
the Lake,  
Who knows a subtler magic than his  
own—  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
derful.  
She gave the king his huge cross-hilted  
sword,  
Whereby to drive the heathen out: a  
mist  
Of incense curl'd about her, and her  
face  
Wellnigh was hidden in the minster  
gloom;  
But there was heard among the holy  
hymns  
A voice as of the waters, for she dwells  
Down in a deep, calm, whatsoever  
storms  
May shake the world, and when the  
surface rolls,  
Hath power to walk the waters like  
our Lord.

"There likewise I beheld Excalibur  
Before him at his crowning borne, the  
sword  
That rose from out the bosom of the  
lake,  
And Arthur row'd across and took it—  
rich  
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,  
Bewildering heart and eye—the blade  
so bright.  
That men are blinded by it—on one  
side,  
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this  
world,  
'Take me,' but turn the blade and you  
shall see,  
And written in the speech ye speak  
yourself,  
'Cast me away!' And sad was Ar-  
thur's face  
Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd  
him,  
'Take thou and strike! the time to  
cast away  
Is yet far off.' So this great brand the  
king  
Took, and by this will beat his foemen  
down."

Thereat Leodegran rejoiced, but  
thought  
To sift his doubtings to the last, and  
ask'd,  
Fixing full eyes of question on her  
face,  
"The swallow and the swift are near  
akin,  
But thou art closer to this noble prince,  
Being his own dear sister;" and she  
said,  
"Daughter of Gorlois and Ygerne am  
I;"

"And therefore Arthur's sister," ask'd  
the King.  
She answer'd, "These be secret things,"  
and sign'd  
To those two sons to pass and let them  
be.  
And Gawain went, and breaking into  
song  
Sprang out, and follow'd by his flying  
hair  
Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw:  
But Modred laid his ear beside the  
doors,  
And there half heard; the same that  
afterward  
Struck for the throne, and striking  
found his doom.

And then the Queen made answer,  
"What know I?  
For dark my mother was in eyes and  
hair,  
And dark in hair and eyes am I; and  
dark  
Was Gorloës, yea and dark was Uther  
too,  
Wellnigh to blackness; but this king  
is fair  
Beyond the race of Britons and of men.  
Moreover always in my mind I hear  
A cry from out the dawning of my life,  
A mother weeping and I hear her say,  
'O that ye had some brother, pretty  
one,  
To guard thee on the rough ways of the  
world.'"

"Ay," said the King, "and hear ye  
such a cry?  
But when did Arthur chance upon thee  
first?"

"O king!" she cried, "and I will  
tell thee true:  
He found me first when yet a little  
maid:  
Beaten I had been for a little fault  
Whereof I was not guilty; and out I  
ran  
And fling myself down on a bank of  
heath,  
And hated this fair world and all  
therein,  
And wept, and wish'd that I were dead;  
and he—  
I know not whether of himself he  
came,  
Or brought by Merlin, who, they say,  
can walk  
Unseen at pleasure—he was at my side.  
And spake sweet words, and comforted  
my heart,  
And dried my tears, being a child with  
me.  
And many a time he came, and ever-  
more  
As I grew greater grew with me; and  
sad  
At times he seem'd, and sad with him  
was I,

Stern too at times, and then I loved  
him not,  
But sweet again, and then I loved him  
well.  
And now of late I see him less and  
less,  
But those first days had golden hours  
for me,  
For then I surely thought he would be  
king.

"But let me tell thee now another  
tale:  
For Bleys, our Merlin's master, as they  
say,  
Died but of late, and sent his cry to  
me,

To hear him speak before he left his  
life.  
Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the  
mage,  
And when I enter'd told me that him-  
self  
And Merlin ever served about the  
king,  
Uther, before he died, and on the  
night

When Uther in Tintagil past away  
Moaning and wailing for an heir, the  
two  
Left the still king, and passing forth  
to breathe,  
Then from the castle gateway by the  
chasm  
Descending thro' the dismal night—a  
night

In which the bounds of heaven and  
earth were lost—  
Beheld, so high upon the dreary  
deeps  
It seem'd in heaven, a ship, the shape  
thereof

A dragon wing'd, and all from stem to  
stem  
Bright with a shining people on the  
decks,

And gone as soon as seen. And then  
the two  
Dropt to the cove, and watch'd the  
great sea fall,  
Wave after wave, each mightier than  
the last,  
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half  
the deep

And full of voices, slowly rose and  
plunged  
Roaring, and all the wave was in a  
flame:

And down the wave and in the flame  
was borne  
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's  
feet,

Who stoopt and caught the babe, and  
cried 'The King!  
Here is an heir for Uther!' And the  
fringe

Of that great breaker, sweeping up the  
strand,  
Lash'd at the wizard as he spake the  
word.

And all at once all round him rose in  
fire.  
So that the child and he were clothed  
in fire.  
And presently thereafter follow'd  
calm,  
Free sky and stars: 'And this same  
child,' he said,  
'Is he who reigns; nor could I part in  
peace  
Till this were told.' And saying this  
the seer  
Went thro' the strait and dreadful pass  
of death,  
Not ever to be question'd any more  
Save on the further side; but when I  
met  
Merlin, and ask'd him if these things  
were truth—  
The shining dragon and the naked  
child  
Descending in the glory of the seas—  
He laugh'd as is his wont, and answer'd  
me  
In riddling triplets of old time, and  
said:

"Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in  
the sky!  
A young man will be wiser by and by;  
An old man's wit may wander ere he  
die.  
Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the  
lea!  
And truth is this to me, and that to  
thee;  
And truth or clothed or naked let it  
be.  
Rain, sun, and rain! and the free  
blossom blows;  
Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he  
who knows?  
From the great deep to the great deep  
he goes.'

"So Merlin riddling anger'd me; but  
thou  
Fear not to give this king thine only  
child,  
Guinevere: so great bards of him will  
sing  
Hereafter; and dark sayings from of  
old  
Ranging and ringing thro' the minds  
of men,  
And echo'd by old folk beside their  
fires  
For comfort after their wage-work is  
done.  
Speak of the king; and Merlin in our  
time  
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and  
sworn  
Tho' men may wound him that he will  
not die,  
But pass, again to come; and then or  
now  
Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,  
Till these and all men hail him for  
their king."

She spake and King Leodogran re-  
joiced,  
But musing, "Shall I answer yea or  
nay?"  
Doubted, and drowsed, nodded and  
slept, and saw,  
Dreaming, a slope of land that ever  
grew,  
Field after field, up to a height, the  
peak  
Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom  
king,  
Now looming, and now lost; and on  
the slope  
The sword rose, the hind fel, the herd  
was driven,  
Fire glimpsed; and all the land from  
roof and rick,  
In drifts of smoke before a rolling  
wind,  
Stream'd to the peak, and mingled  
with the haze  
And made it thicker; while the phan-  
tom king  
Sent out at times a voice; and here or  
there  
Stood one who pointed toward the  
voice, the rest  
Slew on and burnt, crying, "No king  
of ours,  
No son of Uther, and no king of  
ours;"  
Till with a wink his dream was changed,  
the haze  
Descended, and the solid earth became  
As nothing, and the king stood out in  
heaven,  
Crown'd. And Leodogran awoke, and  
sent  
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere,  
Back to the court of Arthur answering  
yea.

Then Arthur charged his warrior  
whom he loved  
And honor'd most, Sir Lancelot, to  
ride forth  
And bring the Queen;—and watch'd  
him from the gates:  
And Lancelot past away among the  
flowers,  
(For then was latter April) and re-  
turn'd  
Among the flowers, in May, with Guin-  
evere.  
To whom arrived, by Dubric the high  
saint,  
Chief of the church in Britain, and be-  
fore  
The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the  
king  
That morn was married, while in stain-  
less white,  
The fair beginners of a nobler time.  
And glorying in their vows and him  
his knights  
Stood round him, and rejoicing in  
joy.  
And holy Dubric spread his hands  
spake,

"Reign ye, and live and love, and  
make the world  
Other, and may thy Queen be one with  
thee.  
And all this Order of thy Table Round  
Fulfil the boundless purpose of their  
king."

Then at the marriage feast came in  
from Rome,  
The slowly-fading mistress of the  
world,  
Great lords, who claim'd the tribute as  
of yore.  
But Arthur spake, "Behold, for these  
have sworn  
To fight my wars, and worship me their  
king ;  
The old order changeth, yielding place  
to new ;  
And we that fight for our fair father  
Christ,  
Seeing that ye be grown too weak and  
old  
To drive the heathen from your Roman  
wall,  
No tribute will we pay : " so those  
great lords  
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur strove  
with Rome  
And Arthur and his knighthood for a  
space  
Were all one will, and thro' that  
strength the king  
Drew in the petty principdoms under  
him,  
Fought, and in twelve great battles  
overcame  
The heathen hordes, and made a realm  
and reign'd.

## GARETH AND LYNETTE.\*

WITH THIS POEM THE AUTHOR CON-  
CLUDES "THE IDYLS OF THE KING."

The last tall son of Lot and Belli-  
cent,  
And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful  
spring  
Stared at the spate. A slender-shafted  
Pine  
Lost footing, fell, and so was whirl'd  
away.  
"How he went down," said Gareth,  
"as a false knight  
Or evil king before my lance if lance  
Were mine to use—O senseless catar-  
act,  
Bearing all down in thy precipitancy—  
And yet thou art but swollen with cold  
snows,  
And mine is living blood : thou dost  
His will,

\* GARETH FOLLOWS THE COMING OF  
ARTHUR, AND THE LAST TOURNAMENT pre-  
cedes GUINEVERE.

The Maker's, and not knowest, and I  
that know,  
Have strength and wit, in my good  
mother's hall  
Linger with vacillating obedience,  
Prison'd, and kept and coax'd and  
whistled to—  
Since the good mother holds me still a  
child—  
Good mother is bad mother unto me !  
A worse were better ; yet no worse  
would I.  
Heaven yield her for it, but in me put  
force  
To weary her ears with one continuous  
prayer,  
Until she let me fly disengaged to sweep  
In ever-highering eagle-circles up  
To the great Sun of Glory, and thence  
swoop  
Down upon all things base, and dash  
them dead,  
A knight of Arthur, working out his  
will,  
To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain,  
when he came  
With Modred hither in the summer-  
time,  
Ask'd me to tilt with him, the proven  
knight,  
Modred for want of worthier was the  
judge.  
Then I so shook him in the saddle, he  
said,  
'Thou hast half prevail'd against me,  
said so—he—  
Tho' Modred biting his thin lips was  
mute,  
For he is always sullen : what care  
I ?"

And Gareth went, and hovering  
round her chair  
Ask'd, "Mother, tho' ye count me still  
the child,  
Sweet mother, do ye love the child ?"  
She laugh'd,  
"Thou art but a wild-goose to question  
it."  
"Then, mother, and ye love the child,"  
he said,  
"Being a goose and rather tame than  
wild,  
Hear the child's story." "Yea, my  
well-beloved,  
An't were but of the goose and golden  
eggs."

And Gareth answer'd her with kind-  
ling eyes,  
"Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg  
of mine  
Was finer gold than any goose can lay ;  
For this an Eagle, a royal Eagle, laid  
Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a  
palm  
As glitters gilded in thy Book of  
Hours.  
And there was ever haunting round the  
palm

A lusty youth, but poor, who often saw  
The splendour sparkling from aloft, and  
thought  
'An I could climb and lay my hand  
upon it,  
Then were I wealthier than a leash of  
kings.'  
But ever when he reach'd a hand to  
climb,  
One, that had loved him from his child-  
hood, caught  
And stay'd him, 'Climb not lest thou  
break thy neck,  
I charge thee by my love,' and so the  
boy,  
Sweet mother, neither clomb, nor brake  
his neck,  
But brake his very heart in pining for  
it,  
And past away."

To whom the mother said,  
"True love, sweet son, had risk'd him-  
self and climb'd,  
And handed down the golden treasure  
to him."

And Gareth answer'd her with kind-  
ling eyes,  
"Gold? said I gold?—ay, then, why  
he, or she,  
Or whosoe'er it was, or half the world  
Had ventured—had the thing I spake  
of been  
Mere gold—but this was all of that true  
steel,  
Whereof they forged the brand Excal-  
ibur,  
And lightnings played about it in the  
storm,  
And all the little fowl were flurried at  
it,  
And there were cries and clashings in  
the nest,  
That sent him from his senses: let me  
go."

Then Bellicent bemoan'd herself and  
said,  
"Hast thou no pity upon my loneli-  
ness?  
Lo, where thy father Lot beside the  
hearth  
Lies like a log, and all but smoulder'd  
out!  
For ever since when traitor to the King  
He fought against him in the Baron's  
war,  
And Arthur gave him back his terri-  
tory,  
His age hath slowly droopt, and now lies  
there  
A yet warm-corpse, and yet unburi-  
able,  
No more; nor sees, nor hears, nor  
speaks, nor knows.  
And both thy brethren are in Arthur's  
hall,  
Albeit neither loved with that full  
love;  
I feel for thee, nor worthy such a love:

Stay therefore thou; red berries charm  
the bird,  
And thee, mine innocent, the jousts,  
the wars,  
Who never knewest finger-ache, nor  
pang  
Of wrench'd or broken limb—an often  
chance  
In those brain-stunning shocks, and  
tourney-falls,  
Frights to my heart; but stay: follow  
the deer  
By these tall firs and our fast-falling  
burns;  
So make thy manhood mightier day by  
day;  
Sweet is the chase: and I will seek thee  
out  
Some comfortable bride and fair, to  
grace  
Thy climbing life, and cherish my  
prone year,  
Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness  
I know not thee, myself, nor anything.  
Stay, my best son! ye are yet more boy  
than man."

Then Gareth, "An ye hold me yet for  
child,  
Hear yet once more the story of the  
child.  
For, mother, there was once a King,  
like ours;  
The prince his heir, when tall and mar-  
riageable,  
Ask'd for a bride; and thereupon the  
King  
Set two before him. One was fair,  
strong, arm'd—  
But to be won by force—and many men  
Desired her; one, good lack, no man  
desired,  
And these were the conditions of the  
King:  
That save he won the first by force, he  
needs  
Must wed that other, whom no man de-  
sired,  
A red-faced bride who knew herself so  
vile,  
That evermore she long'd to hide her-  
self,  
Nor fronted man or woman, eye to eye—  
Yea—some she cleaved to, but they  
died of her.  
And one—they call'd her Fame; and  
one, O Mother,  
How can you keep me tether'd to you—  
Shame!  
Man am I grown, a man's work must I  
do.  
Follow the deer? follow the Christ,  
the King,  
Live pure, speak true, right wrong,  
follow the King—  
Else, wherefore born?"

To whom the mother said,  
"Sweet son, for there be many who  
deem him not,

Or will not deem him, wholly proven  
King—  
Albeit in mine own heart I knew him  
King,  
When I was frequent with him in my  
youth,  
And heard him Kingly speak, and  
doubted him  
No more than he, himself; but felt  
him mine,  
Of closest kin to me: yet—wilt thou  
leave  
Thine easeful biding here, and risk  
thine all,  
Life, limbs, for one that is not proven  
King?  
Stay, till the cloud that settles round  
his birth  
Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet  
son."

And Gareth answer'd quickly, "Not  
an hour.  
So that ye yield me—I will walk thro'  
fire,  
Mother, to gain it—your full leave to  
go.  
Not proven, who swept the dust of  
ruin'd Rome  
From off the threshold of the realm,  
and crush'd  
The Idolaters, and made the people  
free?  
Who should be King save him who  
makes us free?"

So when the Queen, who long had  
sought in vain  
To break him from the intent to which  
he grew,  
Found her son's will unwaveringly  
one,  
She answer'd craftily, "Will ye walk  
thro' fire?  
Who walks thro' fire will hardly heed  
the smoke.  
Ay, go then, an ye must: only one  
proof,  
Before thou ask the King to make thee  
knight,  
Of thine obedience and thy love to me,  
Thy mother,—I demand."

And Gareth cried,  
"A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.  
Nay—quick! the proof to prove me to  
the quick!"

But slowly spake the mother, look-  
ing at him,  
"Prince, thou shalt go disguised to  
Arthur's hall,  
And hire thyself to serve for meats  
and drinks  
Among the scullions and the kitchen-  
knaves,  
And those that hand the dish across  
the bar.  
Nor shalt thou tell thy name to any  
one.

And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth  
and a day."

For so the Queen believed that when  
her son  
Beheld his only way to glory lead  
Low down thro' villain kitchen-vassal-  
age,  
Her own true Gareth was too princely-  
proud  
To pass thereby; so should he rest  
with her,  
Closed in her castle from the sound of  
arms.

Silent a while was Gareth, then  
replied,  
"The thrall in person may be free in  
soul,  
And I shall see the jousts. Thy son  
am I,  
And since thou art my mother, must  
obey.  
I therefore yield me freely to thy will;  
For hence will I, disguised, and hire  
myself

To serve with scullions and with kitch-  
en-knives;  
Nor tell my name to any—no, not the  
King."

Gareth awhile linger'd The mother's  
eye,  
Full of the wistful fear that he would  
go,  
And turning toward him wheresoe'er  
he turn'd,  
Perplex'd his outward purpose, till an  
hour,

When waken'd by the wind which with  
full voice  
Swept bellowing thro' the darkness on  
to dawn,  
He rose, and out of slumber calling two  
That still had tended on him from his  
birth,  
Before the wakeful mother heard him,  
went.

The three were clad like tillers of the  
soil.  
Southward they set their faces. The  
birds made  
Melody on branch, and melody in mid-  
air.

The damp hill-slopes were quicken'd  
into green,  
And the live green had kindled into  
flowers,  
For it was past the time of Easterday.

So, when their feet were planted on  
the plain  
That broaden'd toward the base of  
Camelot,  
Far off they saw the silver misty morn  
Rolling her smoke about the Royal  
mount,  
That rose between the forest and the  
field,  
At times the summit of the high city  
flash'd;

At times the spires and turrets half-  
way down  
Prick'd thro' the mist; at times the  
great gate shone  
Only, that open'd on the field below:  
Anon, the whole fair city had disap-  
pear'd.

Then those who went with Gareth  
were amazed,  
One crying, "Let us go no farther, lord.  
Here is a city of Enchanters, built  
By fairy Kings." The second echo'd  
him,  
"Lord, we have heard from our wise  
men at home  
To Northward, that this King is not  
the King,  
But only changeling out of Fairyland,  
Who drave the heathen hence by sor-  
cery  
And Merlin's glamour." Then the  
first again,  
"Lord, there is no such city anywhere,  
But all a vision."

Gareth answer'd them  
With laughter, swearing he had gla-  
mour enow  
In his own blood, his principedom, youth  
and hopes,  
To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian  
sea;  
So push'd them all unwilling toward  
the gate.  
And there was no gate like it under  
heaven;  
For barefoot on the keystone, which  
was lined  
And rippled like an ever-fleeting  
wave,  
The Lady of the Lake stood: all her  
dress  
Wept from her sides as water flowing  
away;  
But like the cross her great and goodly  
arms  
Stretch'd under all the cornice and up-  
held:  
And drops of water fell from either  
hand;  
And down from one a sword was hung,  
from one  
A censer, either worn with wind and  
storm;  
And o'er her breast floated the sacred  
fish;  
And in the space to left of her, and  
right,  
Were Arthur's wars in weird devices  
done,  
New things and old co-twisted, as if  
Time  
Were nothing, so inveterately, that  
men  
Were giddy gazing there; and over all  
High on the top were those three  
Queens, the friends  
Of Arthur, who should help him at his  
need.

Then those with Gareth for so long a  
space  
Stared at the figures, that at last it  
seem'd  
The dragon-boughts and elvish emblem-  
ings  
Began to move, seethe, twine and curl:  
they call'd  
To Gareth, "Lord, the gateway is  
alive."

And Gareth likewise on them fixt his  
eyes  
So long, that ev'n to him they seem'd  
to move.  
Out of the city a blast of music peal'd.  
Back from the gate started the three,  
to whom  
From out thereunder came an ancient  
man,  
Long-bearded, saying, "Who be ye,  
my sons?"

Then Gareth, "We be tillers of the  
soil,  
Who leaving share in furrow come to  
see  
The glories of our King: but these, my  
men,  
(Your city moved so weirdly in the  
mist.)  
Doubt if the King be King at all, or  
come  
From fairyland; and whether this be  
built  
By magic, and by fairy Kings and  
Queens;  
Or whether there be any city at all,  
Or all a vision: and this music now  
Hath scared them both, but tell thou  
these the truth."

Then that old Seer made answer  
playing on him  
And saying, "Son, I have seen the good  
ship sail  
Keel upward and mast downward in  
the heavens,  
And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air:  
And here is truth; but an it please  
thee not,  
Take thou the truth as thou hast told  
it me.  
For truly, as thou sayest, a Fairy King  
And Fairy Queens have built the city,  
son;  
They came from out a sacred mountain  
cleft  
Toward the sunrise, each with harp in  
hand,  
And built it to the music of their harps  
And as thou sayest it is enchanted, son,  
For there is nothing in it as it seems  
Saving the King; tho' some there be  
that hold  
The King a shadow, and the city real.  
Yet take thou heed of him, for, so thou  
pass  
Beneath this archway, then wilt thou  
become

A thrall to his enchantments, for the  
King  
Will bind thee by such vows, as is a  
shame  
A man should not be bound by, yet the  
which  
No man can keep; but, so thou dread  
to swear,  
Pass not beneath this gateway, but  
abide  
Without, among the cattle of the field.  
For, an ye heard a music, like enow  
They are building still, seeing the city  
is built  
To music, therefore never built at all,  
And therefore built forever."

Gareth spake  
Anger'd, "Old Master, reverence thine  
own beard  
That looks as white as utter truth, and  
seems  
Wellnigh as long as thou art statured  
tall!  
Why mockest thou the stranger that  
hath been  
To thee fair-spoken?"

But the Seer replied,  
"Know ye not then the Riddling of  
the Bards?  
'Confusion, and illusion, and relation,  
Elusion, and occasion, and evasion?'  
I mock thee not but as thou mockest  
me,  
And all that see thee, for thou art not  
who  
Thou seemest, but I know thee who  
thou art.  
And now thou goest up to mock the  
King,  
Who cannot brook the shadow of any  
lie."

Unmockingly the mocker ending  
here  
Turn'd to the right, and past along the  
plain;  
Whom Gareth looking after said, "My  
men,  
Our one white lie sits like a little ghost  
Here on the threshold of our enterprise.  
Let love be blamed for it, not she, nor  
I:  
Well, we will make amends."

With all good cheer  
He spake and laugh'd, then enter'd  
with his twain  
Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces,  
And stately, rich in emblem and the  
work  
Of ancient kings who did their days in  
stone:  
Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at Ar-  
thur's court,  
Knowing all arts, had touch'd, and  
everywhere  
At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessen-  
ing peak

And pinnacle, and had made it spire  
to heaven.  
And ever and anon a knight would  
pass  
Outward, or inward to the hall: his  
arms  
Clash'd; and the sound was good to  
Gareth's ear.  
And out of bower and casement shyly  
glanced  
Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars  
of love;  
And all about a healthful people slept  
As in the presence of a gracious king.

Then into hall Gareth ascending  
heard  
A voice, the voice of Arthur, and  
beheld  
Far over heads in that long-vaulted  
hall  
The splendor of the presence of the  
King  
Throned, and delivering doom — and  
look'd no more—  
But felt his young heart hammering  
in his ears,  
And thought, "For this half-shadow  
of a lie  
The truthful King will doom me when  
I speak."

Yet pressing on, tho' all in fear to find  
Sir Gawain or Sir Modred, saw nor one  
Nor other, but in all the listening eyes  
Of those tall knights, that ranged  
about the throne,  
Clear honor shining like the dewy star  
Of dawn, and faith in their great King,  
with pure  
Affection, and the light of victory.  
And glory gain'd, and evermore to gain.

Then came a widow crying to the  
King,  
"A boon, Sir King! Thy father,  
Uther, reft  
From my dead lord a field with vio-  
lence:  
For howsoe'er at first he proffer'd gold,  
Yet, for the field was pleasant in our  
eyes,  
We yielded not; and then he reft us  
of it  
Perforce, and left us neither gold nor  
field."

Said Arthur, "Whether would ye?  
gold or field?"  
To whom the woman weeping, "Nay,  
my lord,  
The field was pleasant in my husband's  
eye."

And Arthur, "Have thy pleasant  
field again,  
And thrice the gold for Uther's use  
thereof,  
According to the years. No boon is  
here,  
But justice, so thy say be proven true.

Accursed, who from the wrongs his  
father did  
Would shape himself a right ! ”

And while she past,  
Came yet another widow crying to him  
“ A boon, Sir King ! Thine enemy,  
King, am I.  
With thine own hand thou slewest my  
dear lord,

A knight of Uther, in the Barons' war,  
When Lot and many another rose and  
fought  
Against thee, saying thou wert basely  
born.

I held with these, and loathe to ask  
thee aught.

Yet lo ! my husband's brother had my  
son

Thrall'd in his castle, and hath starved  
him dead ;

And standeth seized of that inheritance  
Which thou that slewest the sire hast  
left the son.

So tho' I scarce can ask it thee for hate,  
Grant me some knight to do the battle  
for me,

Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for  
my son.”

Then strode a good knight forward,  
crying to him,

“ A boon, Sir King ! I am her kins-  
man, I.  
Give me to right her wrong, and slay  
the man.”

Then came Sir Kay, the seneschal,  
and cried,

“ A boon, Sir King ! ev'n that thou  
grant her none,

This rafter, that hath mock'd thee in  
full hall—

None ; or the wholesome boon of gyve  
and gag.”

But Arthur, “ We sit, King, to help  
the wrong'd

Thro' all our realm. The woman loves  
her lord.

Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves  
and hates !

The kings of old had doom'd thee to  
the flames,

Aurelius Emrys would have scourged  
thee dead,

And Uther slit thy tongue : but get  
thee hence—

Lest that rough humor of the kings of  
old

Return upon me ! Thou that art her  
kin,

Go likewise ; lay him low and slay him  
not,

But bring him here, that I may judge  
the right.

According to the justice of the King :  
Then, be he guilty, by that deathless  
King

Who lived and died for men, the man  
shall die.”

Then came in hall the messenger of  
Mark,

A name of evil savor in the land,  
The Cornish king. In either hand he  
bore

What dazzled all, and shone far-off as  
shines

A field of charlock in the sudden sun  
Between twoshowers, a cloth of palest  
gold,

Which down he laid before the throne,  
and knelt,

Delivering, that his Lord, the vassal  
king,

Was ev'n upon his way to Camelot :  
For having heard that Arthur of his  
grace

Had made his goodly cousin, Tristram,  
knight,

And, for himself was of the greater  
state,

Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord  
Would yield him this large honor all  
the more

So pray'd him well to accept this cloth  
of gold,

In token of true heart and fealty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the cloth,  
to rend

In pieces, and so cast it on the hearth  
An oak-tree smoulder'd there. “ The  
goodly knight !

What ! shall the shield of Mark stand  
among these ? ”

For, midway down the side of that  
long hall

A stately pile,—whereof along the  
front,

Some blazon'd, some but carven, and  
some blank,

There ran a treble range of stony  
shields,—

Rose, and high-arching overbrow'd the  
hearth.

And under every shield a knight was  
named :

For this was Arthur's custom in his  
hall ;

When some good knight had done one  
noble deed,

His arms were carven only ; but if  
twain

His arms were blazon'd also ; but if  
none

The shield was blank and bare without  
a sign

Saving the name beneath ; and Gareth  
saw

The shield of Gawain blazon'd rich  
and bright,

And Modred's blank as death ; and  
Arthur cried

To rend the cloth and cast it on the  
hearth.

“ More like are we to reave him of  
his crown

Than make him knight because men  
call him king.

The kings we found, ye know we stay'd  
their hands

From war among themselves, but left  
them kings;

Of whom were any bounteous, merciful,

Truth-speaking, brave, good livers,  
them we enroll'd

Among us, and they sit within our  
hall,

But Mark hath tarnish'd the great  
name of king,

As Mark would sully the low state of  
churl:

And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of  
gold,

Return, and meet, and hold him from  
our eyes,

Lest we should lap him up in cloth of  
lead,

Silenced forever—craven—a man of  
plots

Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside am-  
bushings—

No fault of thine: let Kay, the senes-  
chal,

Look to thy wants, and send thee satisf-  
ied—

Accursed, who strikes nor lets the  
hand be seen!"

And many another suppliant crying,  
came

With noise of ravage wrought by beast  
and man,

And evermore a knight would ride  
away.

Last Gareth leaning both hands  
heavily

Down on the shoulders of the twain,  
his men,

Approach'd between them toward the  
King, and ask'd,

"A boon, Sir King (his voice was all  
ashamed),

"For see ye not how weak and hun-  
ger worn

I seem—leaning on these? grant me  
to serve

For meat and drink among thy kitchen-  
knaves

A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek  
my name.

Hereafter I will fight."

To him the King,  
"A goodly youth and worth a goodlier  
boon!

But an thou wilt no goodlier, then  
must Kay,

The master of the meats and drinks,  
be thine."

He rose and past; then Kay, a man  
of mien

Wan-sallow as the plant that feels it-  
self

Root-bitten by white lichen,

"Lo ye now!  
This fellow hath broken from some  
Abbey, where,

God wot, he had not beef and brewis  
enow.

However that might chance! but an  
he work,

Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,  
And sleeker shall he shine than any  
hog."

Then Lancelot standing near, "Sir  
Seneschal,

Sleuth-hound thou knowest, and gray,  
and all the hounds;

A horse thou knowest, a man thou  
dost not know:

Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair  
and fine,

High nose, a nostril large and fine,  
and hands

Large, fair and fine!—Some young  
lad's mystery—

But, or from sheepcot or king's hall,  
the boy

Is noble-natured. Treat him with all  
grace,

Lest he should come to shame thy  
judging of him."

Then Kay, "What murmurest thou  
of mystery?

Think ye this fellow will poison the  
King's dish?

Nay, for he spake too fool-like: mys-  
tery!

Tut, an the lad were noble, he had  
ask'd

For horse and armor: fair and fine,  
forsooth!

Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands? but see  
thou to it

That thine own fineness, Lancelot,  
some fine day

Undo thee not—and leave my man to  
me."

So Gareth all for glory underwent  
The sooty yoke of kitchen vassalage;

Ate with young lads his portion by the  
door,

And couch'd at night with grimy  
kitchen-knives.

And Lancelot ever spake him pleas-  
antly,

But Kay the seneschal who loved him  
not

Would hustle and harry him, and  
labor him

Beyond his comrade of the hearth, and  
set

To turn the broach, draw water, or  
hew wood,

Or grosser tasks; and Gareth bow'd  
himself

With all obedience to the King, and  
wrought

All kind of service with a noble ease  
That graced the lowliest act in doing  
it.

And when the thralls had talk among  
themselves,

And one would praise the love that  
linkt the King

And Lancelot—how the King had saved  
his life  
In battle twice, and Lancelot once the  
King's—  
For Lancelot was the first in Tourna-  
ment,  
But Arthur mightiest on the battle-  
field—  
Gareth was glad. Or if some other  
told,  
How once the wandering forester at  
dawn,  
Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,  
On Caer-Eryri's highest found the  
King,  
A naked babe, of whom the Prophet  
spoke,  
"He passes to the Isle Avilion,  
He passes and is heal'd and cannot  
die"—  
Gareth was glad. But if their talk  
were foul,  
Then would he whistle rapid as any  
lark,  
Or carol some old roundelay, and so  
loud  
That first they mock'd, but after, re-  
venced him.  
Or Gareth telling some prodigious tale  
Of knights, who sliced a red life-bub-  
bling way  
Thro' twenty folds of twisted dragon,  
held  
All in a gap-mouth'd circle his good  
mates  
Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,  
Charm'd; till Sir Kay, the seneschal,  
would come  
Blustering upon them, like a sudden  
wind  
Among dead leaves, and drive them  
all apart.  
Or when the thralls had sport among  
themselves,  
So there were any trial of mastery,  
He, by two yards in casting bar or  
stone,  
Was counted best; and if there chanced  
a joust,  
So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to go,  
Would hurry thither, and when he  
saw the knights  
Clash like the coming and retiring  
wave,  
And the spear spring, and good horse  
reel, the boy  
Was half beyond himself for ecstasy.

So for a month he wrought among  
the thralls;  
But in the weeks that follow'd, the  
good Queen,  
Repentant of the word she made him  
swear,  
And saddening in her childless castle,  
sent,  
Between the increscent and decrecent  
moon,  
Arms for her son, and loosed him from  
his vow.

This, Gareth hearing from a squire  
of Lot  
With whom he used to play at tourney  
once,  
When both were children, and in  
lonely haunts  
Would scratch a ragged oval on the  
sand,  
And each at either dash from either  
end—  
Shame never made girl redder than  
Gareth joy.  
He laugh'd; he sprang. "Out of the  
smoke, at once  
I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's  
knee—  
These news be mine, none other's—  
nay, the King's—  
Descend into the city:" whereon he  
sought  
The King alone, and found, and told  
him all.

"I have stagger'd thy strong Gawain  
in a tilt  
For pastime: yea, he said it: joust  
can I.  
Make me thy knight—in secret! let  
my name  
Be hidd'n, and give me the first quest,  
I spring  
Like flame from ashes."

Here the King's calm eye  
Fell on, and check'd, and made him  
flush, and bow  
Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answer'd  
him,  
"Son, the good mother let me know  
thee here,  
And sent her wish that I would yield  
thee thine.  
Make thee my knight? my knights are  
sworn to vows  
Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,  
And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,  
And uttermost obedience to the King."

Then Gareth, lightly springing from  
his knees,  
"My King, for hardihood I can promise  
thee.  
For uttermost obedience make de-  
mand  
Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,  
No mellow master of the meats and  
drinks!  
And as for love, God wot, I love not  
yet,  
But love I shall, God willing."

And the King—  
"Make thee my knight in secret? yea,  
but he,  
Our noblest brother, and our truest  
man,  
And one with me in all, he needs must  
know."

"Let Lancelot know, my King, let  
Lancelot know,  
Thy noblest and thy truest"

And the King—  
 "But wherefore would ye men should  
 wonder at you!  
 Nay, rather for the sake of me, their  
 King,  
 And the deed's sake my knighthood  
 do the deed,  
 Than to be noised of."

Merrily Gareth ask'd,  
 "Have I not earn'd my cake in baking  
 of it?  
 Let be my name until I make my  
 name!  
 My deeds will speak: it is but for a  
 day."  
 So with a kindly hand on Gareth's  
 arm  
 Smiled the great King, and half-un-  
 willingly  
 Loving his lusty youthhood yielded to  
 him.  
 Then, after summoning Lancelot  
 privily,  
 "I have given him the first quest: he  
 is not proven.  
 Look therefore when he calls for this  
 in hall,  
 Thou get to horse and follow him far  
 away.  
 Cover the lions on thy shield, and see  
 Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en  
 nor slain."

Then that same day there past into  
 the hall  
 A damsel of high lineage, and a brow  
 May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-  
 blossom,  
 Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slender  
 nose  
 Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower;  
 She into hall past with her page and  
 cried,  
 "O King, for thou hast driven the foe  
 without,  
 See to the foe within! bridge, ford,  
 beset  
 By bandits, every one that owns a  
 tower  
 The Lord for half a league. Why sit  
 ye there?  
 Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were  
 king,  
 Till ev'n the lonest hold were all as  
 free  
 From cursed bloodshed, as thine altar-  
 cloth  
 From that blest blood it is a sin to  
 spill."

"Comfort thyself," said Arthur, "I  
 nor mine  
 Rest: so my knighthood keep the  
 vows they swore,  
 The wastest moorland of our realm  
 shall be  
 Safe, damsel, as the centre of this  
 hall.  
 What is thy name? thy need?"

"My name?" she said—  
 "Lynette my name; noble; my need,  
 a knight  
 To combat for my sister, Lyonors,  
 A lady of high lineage, of great lands,  
 And comely, yea, and comelier than  
 myself.  
 She lives in Castle Perilous: a river  
 Runs in three loops about her living-  
 place;  
 And o'er it are three passings, and  
 three knights  
 Defend the passings, brethren, and a  
 fourth  
 And of that four the mightiest, holds  
 her stay'd  
 In her own castle and so besieges her  
 To break her will, and make her wed  
 with him:  
 And but delays his purport till thou  
 send  
 To do the battle with him, thy chief  
 man  
 Sir Lancelot whom he trusts to over-  
 throw,  
 Then wed, with glory; but she will  
 not wed  
 Save whom she loveth, or a holy life.  
 Now therefore have I come for Lancelot."

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth  
 ask'd,  
 "Damsel, ye know this Order lives to  
 crush  
 All wrongers of the Realm. But say,  
 these four,  
 Who be they? What the fashion of  
 the men?"

"They be of foolish fashion, O Sir  
 King,  
 The fashion of that old knight-errantry  
 Who ride abroad and do but what they  
 will;  
 Courteous or bestial from the moment,  
 Such as have nor law nor king; and  
 three of these  
 Proud in their fantasy call themselves  
 the Day,  
 Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and  
 Evening-Star,  
 Being strong fools; and never a whit  
 more wise  
 The fourth, who alway rideth arm'd  
 in black,  
 A huge man-beast of boundless sav-  
 agery.  
 He names himself the Night and of-  
 tener Death.  
 And wears a helmet mounted with a  
 skull  
 And bears a skeleton figured on his  
 arms,  
 To show that who may slay or scape  
 the three  
 Slain by himself shall enter endless  
 night.  
 And all these four be fools, but mighty  
 men,

And therefore am I come for Lance-  
lot."

Hereat Sir Gareth call'd from where  
he rose,  
A head with kindling eyes above the  
throng,  
"A boon, Sir King—this quest!" then  
—for he mark'd  
Kay near him groaning like a wounded  
bull—  
"Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-  
knave am I,  
And mighty thro' thy meats and  
drinks am I,  
And I can topple over a hundred such.  
Thy promise, King," and Arthur glanc-  
ing at him,  
Brought down a momentary brow,  
"Rough, sudden,  
And pardonable, worthy to be knight—  
Go therefore," and all hearers were  
amazed.

But on the damsel's forehead shame,  
pride, wrath,  
Slew the May-white: she lifted either  
arm,  
"Fie on thee, King! I ask'd for thy  
chief knight,  
And thou hast given me but a kitchen-  
knave."  
Then ere a man in hall could stay her,  
turn'd,  
Fled down the lane of access to the  
King,  
Took horse, descended the slope street,  
and past  
The weird white gate, and paused with-  
out, beside  
The field of tourney, murmuring  
"kitchen-knave."

Now two great entries open'd from  
the hall,  
At one end one, that gave upon a range  
Of level pavement where the King  
would pace  
At sunrise, gazing over plain and wood.  
And down from this a lordly stairway  
sloped  
Till lost in blowing trees and tops of  
towers.  
And out by this main doorway past the  
King.  
But one was counter to the hearth, and  
rose  
High that the highest-crested helm  
could ride  
Therethro' nor graze: and by this en-  
try fled  
The damsel in her wrath, and on to  
this  
Sir Gareth strode, and saw without the  
door  
King Arthur's gift, the worth of half a  
town,  
A warhorse of the best, and near it stood  
The two that out of north had follow'd  
him:

This bare a maiden shield, a casque;  
that held  
The horse, the spear; whereat Sir Gar-  
eth loosed  
A cloak that dropt from collar-bone to  
heel,  
A cloth of roughest web, and cast it  
down,  
And from it like a fuel-smother'd fire,  
That lookt half-dead, brake bright,  
and flash'd as those  
Dull-coated things, that making slide  
apart  
Their dusk-wing cases, all beneath  
these burns  
A jewel'd harness, ere they pass and  
fly.  
So Gareth ere he parted flash'd in  
arms.  
Then while he donn'd the helm, and  
took the shield  
And mounted horse and graspt a spear,  
of grain  
Storm-strengthen'd on a windy site,  
and tipt  
With trenchant steel, around him  
slowly prest  
The people, and from out of kitchen  
came  
The thralls in throng, and seeing who  
had work'd  
Lustier than any, and whom they could  
but love,  
Mounted in arms, threw up their caps  
and cried,  
"God bless the King, and all his fel-  
lowship!"  
And on thro' lanes of shouting Gareth  
rode  
Down the slope street, and past with-  
out the gate.

So Gareth past with joy; but as the  
cur  
Pluckt from the cur he fights with, ere  
his cause  
Be cool'd by fighting, follows, being  
named,  
His owner, but remembers all, and  
growls  
Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the  
door  
Mutter'd in scorn of Gareth whom he  
used  
To harry and hustle.

"Bound upon a quest  
With horse and arms—the King hath  
past his time—  
My scullion knave. Thralls to your  
work again,  
For an your fire be low ve kindle mine!  
Will there be dawn in West and eve in  
East?  
Begone! — my knave! — belike and  
like enow  
Some old head-blow not heeded in his  
youth  
So shook his wits they wander in his  
prime —

Crazed! How the villain lifted up his  
voice,  
Nor shamed to bawl himself a kitchen-  
knave,  
Tut: he was tame and meek enow with  
me,  
Till peacock'd up with Lancelot's no-  
ticing.  
Well—I will after my loud knave, and  
learn  
Whether he know me for his master  
yet.  
Out of the smoke he came, and so my  
lance  
Hold, by God's grace, he shall into the  
mire—  
Thence, if the King awoken from his  
craze,  
Into the smoke again."

But Lancelot said,  
"Kay, wherefore will ye go against  
the King,  
For that did never he whereon ye rail,  
But ever meekly served the King in  
thee?  
Abide: take counsel; for this lad is  
great  
And lusty, and knowing both of lance  
and sword."  
"Tut, tell not me," said Kay, "ye are  
overfine  
To mar stout knaves with foolish cour-  
tesies."  
Then mounted, on thro' silent faces  
rode  
Down the slope city, and out beyond  
the gate.

But by the field of tourney lingering  
yet  
Mutter'd the damsel, "Wherefore did  
the King  
Scorn me? for, were Sir Lancelot lackt,  
at least  
He might have yielded to me one of  
those  
Who tilt for lady's love and glory here,  
Rather than—O sweet heaven? O fie  
upon him—  
His kitchen-knave."

To whom Sir Gareth drew  
(And there were none but few goodlier  
than he)  
Shining in arms, "Damsel, the quest  
is mine.  
Lead, and I follow." She thereat, as  
one  
That smells a foul-flesh'd agaric in the  
holt,  
And deems it carrion of some woodland  
thing,  
Or shrew, or weasel, nipt her slender  
nose  
With petulant thumb and finger shrill-  
ing, "Hence!  
Avoid, thou smelllest all of kitchen-  
grease.  
And look who comes behind," for  
there was Kay.

"Knowest thou not me? thy master?  
I am Kay.  
We lack thee by the hearth."

And Gareth to him,  
"Master no more! too well I know  
thee, ay—  
The most ungente knight in Arthur's  
hall."  
"Have at thee then," said Kay: they  
shook'd, and Kay  
Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried  
again,  
"Lead, and I follow," and fast away  
she fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to  
fly  
Behind her, and the heart of her good  
horse  
Was nigh to burst with violence of the  
beat,  
Perforce she stay'd, and overtaken  
spoke.

"What doest thou, scullion, in my  
fellowship?  
Deem'st thou that I accept thee aught  
the more  
Or love thee better, that by some de-  
vice  
Full cowardly, or by mere unhappi-  
ness,  
Thou hast overthrown and slain thy  
master—thou!—  
Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon!  
—tell me  
Thou smelllest all of kitchen as before."

"Damsel," Sir Gareth answer'd gen-  
tly, "say  
Whate'er ye will, but whatso'er ye  
say,  
I leave not till I finish this fair quest,  
Or die therefor."

"Ay, wilt thou finish it?  
Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he  
talks!  
The listening rogue hath caught the  
manner of it.  
But, knave, anon thou shalt be met  
with, knave,  
And then by such a one that thou for  
all  
The kitchen brewis that was ever sput  
Shall not once dare to look him in the  
face."

"I shall assay," said Gareth with a  
smile  
That madden'd her, and away she  
flash'd again  
Down the long avenues of a boundless  
wood,  
And Gareth following was again be-  
knaved.

"Sir Kitchen-knave, I have miss'd  
the only way  
Where Arthur's men are set along the  
wood;

The wood is nigh as full of thieves as  
leaves :  
If both be slain, I am rid of thee ; but  
yet,  
Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit of  
thine ?  
Fight, an thou canst : I have miss'd  
the only way."

So till the dusk that follow'd even-  
song  
Rode on the two, reviler and reviled :  
Then after one long slope was mounted,  
saw,  
Bowl-shaped, thro' tops of many thou-  
sand pines  
A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink  
To westward—in the deeps whereof a  
mere,  
Round as the red eye of an Eagle-owl,  
Under the half-dead sunset glared; and  
cries  
Ascended, and there brake a serving-  
man  
Flying from out of the black wood, and  
crying,  
" They have bound my lord to cast him  
in the mere."  
Then Gareth, " Bound am I to right  
the wrong'd,  
But straitlier bound am I to bide with  
thee,"  
And when the damsel spake contempt-  
uously,  
" Lead and I follow," Gareth cried  
again,  
" Follow, I lead ! " so down among the  
pines  
He plunged ; and there, blackshadow'd  
nigh the mere,  
And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and  
reed,  
Saw six tall men haling a seventh along,  
A stone about his neck, to drown him  
in it.  
Three with good blows he quieted, but  
three  
Fled thro' the pines; and Gareth loosed  
the stone  
From off his neck, then in the mere  
beside  
Tumbled it; oilily bubbled up the  
mere.  
Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on  
free feet  
Set him, a stalwart Baron, Arthur's  
friend.

" Well that ye came, or else these  
cattiff rogues  
Had wreak'd themselves on me; good  
cause is theirs  
To hate me, for my wont hath ever  
been  
To catch my thief, and then like ver-  
min here  
Drown him, and with a stone about his  
neck ;  
And under this wan water many of  
them

Lie rotting, but at night let go the  
stone,  
And rise, and flickering in a grimly  
light  
Dance on the mere. Good now, ye  
have saved a life  
Worth somewhat as the cleanser of  
this wood.  
And fain would I reward thee worship-  
fully.  
What guerdon will ye ? "

Gareth sharply spake,  
" None ! for the deed's sake have I  
done the deed,  
In uttermost obedience to the King.  
But will ye yield this damsel harbor-  
age ? "

Whereat the Baron saying, " I well  
believe  
Ye be of Arthur's Table," a light laugh  
Broke from Lynette, " Ay, truly of a  
truth,  
And in a sort, being Arthur's kitchen-  
knave ! —  
But deem not I accept thee aught the  
more,  
Scullion, for running sharply with thy  
spit  
Down on a rout of craven foresters.  
A thresher with his flail had scatter'd  
them.  
Nay—for thou smell'st of the kitchen  
still.  
But an this lord will yield us harbor-  
age,  
Well."

So she spake. A league beyond the  
wood,  
All in a full-fair manor and a rich,  
His towers where that day a feast had  
been  
Held in high hall, and many a viand  
left,  
And many a costly cate, received the  
three.  
And there they placed a peacock in his  
pride  
Before the damsel, and the Baron set  
Gareth beside her, but at once she rose.

" Meseems, that here is much dis-  
courtesy,  
Setting this Knave, Lord Baron, at my  
side.  
Hear me — this morn I stood in Ar-  
thur's hall,  
And pray'd the King would grant me  
Lancelot  
To fight the brotherhood of Day and  
Night—  
The last a monster unsubduable  
Of any save of him for whom I call'd —  
Suddenly bawls this frontless kitchen-  
knave.  
' The quest is mine; thy kitchen-knave  
am I,  
And mighty thro' thy meats and drinks  
am I."

Then Arthur all at once gone mad re-  
piles,  
'Go therefore,' and so gives the quest  
to him—  
Him—here—a villain fitter to stick  
swine  
Than ride abroad redressing women's  
wrong,  
Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman."

Then half-ashamed and part-amazed,  
the lord  
Now look'd at one and now at other,  
left

The damsel by the peacock in his pride,  
And, seating Gareth at another board,  
Sat down beside him, ate and then be-  
gan.

"Friend, whether ye be kitchen-  
knave, or not,  
Or whether it be the maiden's fan-  
tasy,  
And whether she be mad, or else the  
King,  
Or both or neither, or thyself be mad,  
I ask not: but thou strikest a strong  
stroke,  
For strong thou art and goodly there-  
withal,  
And savor of my life; and therefore  
now,  
For here be mighty men to joust with,  
weigh,  
Whether thou wilt not with thy damsel  
back  
To crave again Sir Lancelot of the  
King,  
Thy pardon; I but speak for thine  
avail,  
The savor of my life."

And Gareth said,  
"Full pardon, but I follow up the  
quest,  
Despite of Day and Night and Death  
and Hell."

So when, next morn, the lord whose  
life he saved  
Had, some brief space, convey'd them  
on their way  
And left them with God-speed, Sir Ga-  
reth spake,  
"Lead and I follow." Haughtily she  
replied,

"I fly no more: I allow thee for an  
hour.  
Lion and stoat have isled together,  
knave,  
In time of flood. Nay, furthermore,  
methinks  
Some ruth is mine for thee. Back wilt  
thou, fool?"

For hard by here is one will over-  
throw  
And slay thee: then will I to court  
again,  
And shame the King for only yielding  
me

My champion from the ashes of his  
hearth."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd cour-  
teously,  
"Say thou thy say, and I will do my  
deed.  
Allow me for mine hour, and thou  
wilt find  
My fortunes all as fair as hers, who  
lay  
Among the ashes and wedded the  
King's son."

Then to the shore of one of those  
long loops  
Wherethro' the serpent river coil'd,  
they came.

Rough-thicketed were the banks and  
steep; the stream  
Full, narrow; this a bridge of single  
arc

Took at a leap; and on the further  
side  
Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold  
In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily  
in hue,

Save that the dome was purple, and  
above,  
Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.  
And there before the lawless warrior  
paced

Unarm'd, and calling, "Damsel, is  
this he,  
The champion ye have brought from  
Arthur's hall?"

For whom we let thee pass." "Nay,  
nay," she said,  
"Sir Morning-Star, 'The King in utter  
scorn

Of thee and thy much folly hath sent  
thee here  
His kitchen-knave: and look thou to  
thyself:

See that he fall not on thee suddenly,  
And slay thee unarm'd: he is not  
knight but knave."

Then at his call, "O daughters of  
the Dawn,  
And servants of the Morning-Star, ap-  
proach

Arm me," from out the silken curtain-  
folds  
Barefooted and bareheaded three fair  
girls

In gilt and rosy raiment came: their  
feet

In dewy grasses glisten'd; and the  
hair

All over glanced with dewdrop or with  
gem

Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.  
These arm'd him in blue arms, and  
gave a shield

Blue also, and thereon the morning  
star.

And Gareth silent gazed upon the  
knight,

Who stood a moment, ere his horse  
was brought,

Glorying; and in the stream beneath  
him, shone,  
Immingled with Heaven's azure wa-  
veringly,  
The gay pavilion and the naked feet,  
His arms, the rosy raiment, and the  
star.

Then she that watch'd him, "Where-  
fore stare ye so?  
Thou shakest in thy fear: there yet is  
time:  
Flee down the valley before he get to  
horse.  
Who will cry shame? Thou art not  
knight but knave."

Said Gareth, "Damsel, whether  
knave or knight,  
Far hever had I fight a score of times  
Than hear thee so missay me and re-  
vile.  
Fair words were best for him who  
fights for thee;  
But truly foul are better, for they send  
That strength of anger thro' mine  
arms, I know  
That I shall overthrow him."

And he that bore  
The star, being mounted, cried from  
o'er the bridge,  
"A kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn  
of me!  
Such fight not I, but answer scorn with  
scorn.  
For this were shame to do him further  
wrong  
Than set him on his feet, and take his  
horse  
And arms, and so return him to the  
King.  
Come, therefore, leave thy lady light-  
ly, knave.  
Avoid: for it beseemeth not a knave  
To ride with such a lady."

"Dog, thou liest.  
I spring from loftier lineage than thine  
owl."  
He spake; and all at fiery speed the  
two  
Shock'd on the central bridge, and  
either spear  
Bent but not brake, and either knight  
at once,  
Hurl'd as a stone from out of a cata-  
pult  
Beyond his horse's crupper and the  
bridge,  
Fell, as if dead; but quickly rose and  
drew,  
And Gareth lash'd so fiercely with his  
brand  
He drave his enemy backward down  
the bridge,  
The damsel crying, "Well-stricken,  
kitchen-knave!"  
Till Gareth's shield was cloven; but  
one stroke

Laid him that clove it grovelling on  
the ground.

Then cried the fall'n, "Take not my  
life: I yield."  
And Gareth, "So this damsel ask it of  
me  
Good — I accord it easily as a grace."  
She reddening, "Insolent scullion: I  
of thee?  
I bound to thee for any favor ask'd!"  
"Then shall he die." And Gareth  
there unlaced  
His helmet as to slay him, but she  
shriek'd,  
"Be not so hardy, scullion, as to slay  
One nobler than thyself." "Damsel,  
thy charge  
Is an abounding pleasure to me.  
Knight,  
Thy life is thine at her command.  
Arise  
And quickly pass to Arthur's hall, and  
say  
His kitchen-knave hath sent thee.  
See thou crave  
His pardon for thy breaking of his  
laws.  
Myself, when I return, will plead for  
thee.  
Thy shield is mine — farewell; and,  
damsel, thou  
Lead, and I follow."

And fast away she fled.  
Then when he came upon her, spake,  
"Methought,  
Knave, when I watch'd thee striking  
on the bridge  
The savor of thy kitchen came upon  
me  
A little faintlier: but the wind hath  
changed:  
I scent it twentyfold." And then she  
sang,  
"'O morning star' (not that tall felon  
there  
Whom thou by sorcery or unhappiness  
Or some device, hast foully over-  
thrown),  
'O morning star that smilest in the  
blue,  
O star, my morning dream hath proven  
true,  
Smile sweetly, thou! my love hath  
smiled on me."

"But thou begone, take counsel, and  
away,  
For hard by here is one that guards a  
ford —  
The second brother in their fool's par-  
able —  
Will pay thee all thy wages, and to  
boot.  
Care not for shame: thou art not  
knight but knave."

To whom Sir Gareth answer'd, laugh-  
ingly,

"Parables? Hear a parable of the knave.  
 When I was kitchen-knave among the rest  
 Fierce was the hearth, and one of my co-mates  
 Own'd a rough dog, to whom he cast his coat,  
 'Guard it,' and there was none to meddle with it.  
 And such a coat art thou, and thee the King  
 Gave me to guard, and such a dog am I,  
 To worry, and not to flee—and—knight or knave—  
 The knave that doth thee service as full knight  
 Is all as good, meseems, as any knight  
 Toward thy sister's freeing."

"Ay, Sir Knave!  
 Ay, knave, because thou strikest as a knight  
 Being but knave, I hate thee all the more."

"Fair damsel, ye should worship me the more.  
 That, being but knave, I throw thine enemies."

"Ay, ay," she said, "but thou shalt meet thy match."

So when they touch'd the second river-loop,  
 Huge on a huge red horse, and all in mail  
 Burnish'd to blinding, shone the Noon-day Sun  
 Beyond a raging shallow. As if the flower,  
 That blows a globe of after arrowlets,  
 Ten thousand-fold had grown, flash'd the fierce shield,  
 All sun; and Gareth's eyes had flying blots  
 Before them when he turn'd from watching him.  
 He from beyond the roaring shallow roar'd,  
 "What doest thou, brother, in my marches here?"  
 And she athwart the shallow shrill'd again,  
 "Here is a kitchen-knave from Arthur's hall  
 Hath overthrown thy brother, and hath his arms."  
 "Ugh!" cried the Sun, and vizingor up a red  
 And eipher face of rounded foolishness,  
 Push'd horse across the foamings of the ford,  
 Whom Gareth met midstream: no room was there  
 For lance or tourney-skill: four strokes they struck

With sword, and these were mighty: the new knight  
 Had fear he might be shamed; but as the Sun  
 Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike the fifth,  
 The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream, the stream  
 Descended, and the Sun was wash'd away.

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart the ford;  
 So drew him home; but he that would not fight,  
 As being all bone-battered on the rock,  
 Yielded; and Gareth sent him to the King.  
 "Myself when I return will plead for thee.  
 Lead, and I follow." Quietly she led.  
 "Hath not the good wind, damsel, changed again!"  
 "Nay, not a point: nor art thou victor here.  
 There lies a ridge of slate across the ford;  
 His horse thereon stumbled—ay, for I saw it.

"O Sun' (not this strong fool whom thou, Sir Knave,  
 Hast overthrown thro' mere unhappiness),  
 'O Sun, that wakenest all to bliss or pain,  
 O moon, that layest all to sleep again,  
 Shine sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of lovesong or of love?  
 Nay, nay, God wot, so thou wert nobly born,  
 Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea, perchance,—

"O dewy flowers that open to the sun,  
 O dewy flowers that close when day is done,  
 Blow sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of flowers, except, belike,  
 To garnish meats with? hath not our good King  
 Who lent me thee, the flower of kitchen-  
 endom,  
 A foolish love for flowers? what stick  
 ye round  
 The pasty? wherewithal deck the  
 boar's head?  
 Flowers? nay, the boar hath rose-  
 maries and bay.

"O birds, that warble to the morning sky,  
 O birds that warble as the day goes by,  
 Sing sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me.'

"What knowest thou of birds, lark,  
 mavis, merle,  
 Linnet? what dream ye when they  
 utter forth  
 May-music growing with the growing  
 light,  
 Their sweet sun-worship? these be for  
 the snare  
 (So runs thy fancy) these be for the  
 spit,  
 Larding and basting. See thou have  
 not now  
 Larded thy last, except thou turn and  
 fly.  
 There stands the third fool of their  
 allegory."

For there beyond a bridge of treble  
 bow,  
 All in a rose-red from the west, and all  
 Naked it seem'd, and glowing in the  
 broad  
 Deep-dimpled current underneath, the  
 knight,  
 That named himself the Star of Eve-  
 ning, stood.

And Gareth, "Wherefore waits the  
 madman there  
 Naked in open dayshine?" "Nay,"  
 she cried,  
 "Not naked, only wrapt in harden'd  
 skins  
 That fit him like his own; and so ye  
 cleave  
 His armor off him, these will turn the  
 blade."

Then the third brother shouted o'er  
 the bridge,  
 "O brother-star, why shine ye here so  
 low?  
 Thy ward is higher up: but have ye  
 slain  
 The damsel's champion?" and the  
 damsel cried,

"No star of thine, but shot from Ar-  
 thur's heaven  
 With all disaster unto thine and thee!  
 For both thy younger brethren have  
 gone down  
 Before this youth; and so wilt thou,  
 Sir Star;  
 Art thou not old?"

"Old, damsel, old and hard,  
 Old, with the might and breath of  
 twenty boys."  
 Said Gareth, "Old, and over-bold in  
 brag!  
 But that same strength which threw  
 the Morning-Star  
 Can throw the Evening."

Then that other blew  
 A hard and deadly note upon the horn.  
 "Approach and arm me!" With slow  
 steps from out  
 An old storm-beaten, russet, many-  
 stain'd

Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,  
 And arm'd him in old arms, and  
 brought a helm  
 With but a drying evergreen for crest,  
 And gave a shield whereon the Star of  
 Even  
 Half-tarnish'd and half-bright, his em-  
 blem, shone.  
 But when it glitter'd o'er the raddle-  
 bow,  
 They madly hurl'd together on the  
 bridge,  
 And Gareth overthrew him, lighted,  
 drew,  
 There met him drawn, and overthrew  
 him again,  
 But up like fire he started: and as oft  
 As Gareth brought him grovelling on  
 his knees,  
 So many a time he vaulted up again;  
 Till Gareth panted hard, and his great  
 heart,  
 Foredooming all his trouble was in  
 vain,  
 Labor'd within him, for he seem'd as  
 one  
 That all in later, sadder age begins  
 To war against ill uses of a life,  
 But these from all his life arise, and  
 cry,  
 "Thou hast made us lords, and canst  
 not put us down!"  
 He half despairs; so Gareth seem'd to  
 strike  
 Vainly, the damsel clamoring all the  
 while,  
 "Well done, knave-knight, well strick-  
 en, O good knight-knave—  
 O knave, as noble as any of all the  
 knights—  
 Shame me not, shame me not. I have  
 prophesied—  
 Strike, thou art worthy of the Table  
 Round—  
 His arms are old, he trusts the hard-  
 en'd skin—  
 Strike—strike—the wind will never  
 change again."  
 And Gareth hearing ever stronglier  
 smote,  
 And hew'd great pieces of his armor off  
 him,  
 But lash'd in vain against the hard-  
 en'd skin,  
 And could not wholly bring him under,  
 more  
 Than loud Southwesterns, rolling ridge  
 on ridge,  
 The buoy that rides at sea, and dips  
 and springs  
 Forever: till at length Sir Gareth's  
 brand  
 Clash'd his, and brake it utterly to the  
 hilt.  
 "I have thee now;" but forth that  
 other sprang,  
 And, all unknighthlike, writhed his  
 wiry arms  
 Around him, till he felt, despite his  
 mail,

Strangled, but straining ev'n his uttermost  
 Cast, and so hurl'd him headlong o'er  
 the bridge  
 Down to the river, sink or swim, and  
 cried,  
 "Lead, and I follow."

But the damsel said,  
 "I lead no longer; ride thou at my  
 side;  
 Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-  
 knives."

"O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy  
 plain,  
 O rainbow with three colors after rain,  
 Shine sweetly: thrice my love hath  
 smiled on me."

"Sir,—and, good faith, I fain had  
 added—Knight,  
 But that I heard thee call thyself a  
 knave,—  
 Shamed am I that I so rebuked, re-  
 viled,  
 Missaid thee: noble I am; and thought  
 the King  
 Scorn'd me and mine; and now thy  
 pardon, friend,  
 For thou hast ever answer'd courte-  
 ously,  
 And wholly bold thou art, and meek  
 withal  
 As any of Arthur's best, but, being  
 knave,  
 Hast mazed my wit: I marvel what  
 thou art."

"Damsel," he said, "ye be not all to  
 blame,  
 Saying that ye mistrusted our good  
 King  
 Would handle scorn, or yield thee,  
 asking, one  
 Not fit to cope thy quest. Ye said  
 your say;  
 Mine answer was my deed. Good  
 sooth! I hold  
 He scarce is knight, yea but half-man,  
 nor meet  
 To fight for gentle damsel, he, who  
 lets  
 His heart be stirr'd with any foolish  
 heat  
 At any gentle damsel's waywardness,  
 Shamed? care not! thy foul sayings  
 fought for me:  
 And seeing now thy words are fair,  
 methinks,  
 There rides no knight, not Lancelot,  
 his great self,  
 Hath force to quell me."

Nigh upon that hour  
 When the lone heron forgets his melan-  
 choly,  
 Lets down his other leg, and stretch-  
 ing dreams  
 Of goodly supper in the distant pool,  
 Then turn'd the noble damsel smiling  
 at him,

And told him of a cavern hard at hand,  
 Where bread and baken meats and  
 good red wine  
 Of Southland, which the Lady Lyon-  
 ors  
 Had sent her coming champion, waited  
 him.

Anon they past a narrow comb  
 wherein  
 Were slabs of rock with figures, knights  
 on horse  
 Sculptured, and deckt in slowly wan-  
 ing hues.  
 "Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit once  
 was here,  
 Whose holy hand hath fashion'd on  
 the rock  
 The war of Time against the soul of  
 man.

And you four fools have suck'd their  
 allegory  
 From these damp walls, and taken  
 but the form.  
 Know ye not these?" and Gareth  
 lookt and read—

In letters like to those the vexillary  
 Hath left crag-carven o'er the stream-  
 ing Gelt—

"PHOSPHORUS," then "MERIDIUS"—  
 "HESPERUS"—

"NOX"—"MORS," beneath five fig-  
 ures, armed men,  
 Slab after slab, their faces forward all,  
 And running down the Soul, a Shape  
 that fled

With broken wings, torn raiment and  
 loose hair,  
 For help and shelter to the hermit's  
 cave.

"Follow the faces, and we find it.  
 Look,

Who comes behind?"

For one—delay'd at first  
 Thro' helping back the dislocated Kay  
 To Camelot, then by what thereafter  
 chanced,

The damsel's headlong error thro' the  
 wood—

Sir Lancelot, having swum the river—  
 loops—

His blue shield-lions cover'd—softly  
 drew

Behind the twain, and when he saw  
 the star

Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to him,  
 cried,

"Stay, felon knight, I avengo me for  
 my friend."

And Gareth crying prick'd against the  
 cry;

But when they closed—in a moment—  
 at one touch

Of that skill'd spear, the wonder of  
 the world—

Went sliding down so easily, and fell,  
 That when he found the grass within  
 his hands

He laugh'd; the laughter jarr'd upon  
 Lynette;

Harshly she ask'd him, "Shamed and  
overthrown,  
And tumbled back into the kitchen-  
knave,  
Why laugh ye? that ye blew your  
boast in vain?"  
"Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the  
son  
Of old King Lot and good Queen Belli-  
cent,  
And victor of the bridges and the ford,  
And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown  
by whom  
I know not, all thro' mere unhappi-  
ness—  
Device and sorcery and unhappiness—  
Out, sword; we are thrown!" and  
Lancelot answer'd, "Prince,  
O Gareth—thro' the mere unhappiness  
Of one who came to help thee not to  
harm,  
Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee  
whole,  
As on the day when Arthur knighted  
him."

Then Gareth, "Thou—Lancelot!—  
thine the hand  
That threw me? An some chance to  
mar the boast  
Thy brethren of thee make—which  
could not chance—  
Had sent thee down before a lesser  
spear  
Shamed had I been and sad—O Lance-  
lot—thou!"

Whereat the maiden, petulant,  
"Lancelot,  
Why came ye not, when call'd? and  
wherefore now  
Come ye, not call'd? I gloried in my  
knave,  
Who being still rebuked, would answer  
still  
Courteous as any knight—but now, if  
knight,  
The marvel dies, and leaves me fool'd  
and trick'd,  
And only wandering wherefore play'd  
upon:  
And doubtful whether I and mine be  
scorn'd.  
Where should be truth if not in Ar-  
thur's hall,  
In Arthur's presence? Knight, knave,  
prince and fool,  
I hate thee and forever."

And Lancelot said,  
"Blessed be thou, Sir Gareth! knight  
art thou  
To the King's best wish. O damsel,  
be ye wise  
To call him shamed, who is but over-  
thrown?  
Thrown have I been, nor once but  
many a time.  
Victor from vanquish'd issues at the  
last,

And overthrower from being over-  
thrown.  
With sword we have not striven; and  
thy good horse  
And thou art weary; yet not less I  
felt  
Thy manhood thro' that wearied lance  
of thine.  
Well hast thou done; for all the  
stream is freed,  
And thou hast wreak'd his justice on  
his foes,  
And when reviled, hast answer'd gra-  
ciously,  
And makest merry, when overthrown.  
Prince Knight,  
Hail, Knight and Prince, and of our  
Table Round!"

And then when turning to Lynette  
he told  
The tale of Gareth, petulantly she  
said,  
"Ay well—ay well—for worse than  
being fool'd  
Of others, is to fool one's self. A cave,  
Sir Lancelot is hard by, with meats  
and drinks  
And forage for the horse, and flint for  
fire.  
But all about it flies a honeysuckle,  
Seek, till we find." And when they  
sought and found,  
Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his  
life  
Past into sleep; on whom the maiden  
gazed.  
"Sound sleep be thine! sound cause  
to sleep hast thou.  
Wake lusty! Seem I not as tender to  
him  
As any mother? Ay, but such a one  
As all day long hath rated at her  
child,  
And vext his day, but blesses him  
asleep—  
Good lord, how sweetly smells the  
honeysuckle  
In the hush'd night, as if the world  
were one  
Of utter peace, and love, and gentle-  
ness!  
O Lancelot, Lancelot!"—and she clapt  
her hands—  
"Full merry am I to find my goodly  
knave  
Is knight and noble. See now, sworn  
have I,  
Else yon black felon had not let me  
pass,  
To bring thee back to do the battle  
with him.  
Thus an thou goest, he will fight thee  
first;  
Who doubts thee victor? so will my  
knight-knave  
Miss the full flower of the accomplish-  
ment."  
Said Lancelot, "Peradventure he,  
ye name,

May know my shield. Let Gareth, an  
he will,

Change his for mine, and take my  
charger, fresh,

Not to be spurr'd, loving the battle as  
well

As he that rides him." "Lancelot-  
like," she said,

"Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as  
in all."

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely  
clutch'd the shield;

"Ramp, ye lance-splintering lions, on  
whom all spears

Are rotten sticks! ye seem agape to  
roar!

Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of your  
lord!—

Care not, good beasts, so well I care  
for you.

O noble Lancelot, from my hold on  
these

Streams virtue—fire—thro' one that  
will not shame

Even the shadow of Lancelot under  
shield,

Hence: let us go."

Silent the silent field

They traversed. Arthur's harp thro'  
summer-wan,

In counter motion to the clouds, al-  
lured

The glance of Gareth dreaming on his  
liege.

A star shot: "Lo," said Gareth, "the  
foe falls!"

An owl whoopt: "Hark the victor  
pealing there!"

Suddenly she that rode upon his left  
Clung to the shield that Lancelot lent

him, crying,

"Yield, yield him this again: 'tis he  
must fight:

I curse the tongue that all thro' yester-  
day

Reviled thee, and hath wrought on  
Lancelot now

To lend thee horse and shield: won-  
ders ye have done;

Miracles ye cannot: here is glory enow  
In having flung the three: I see thee

maim'd,

Mangled: I swear thou canst not fling  
the fourth."

"And wherefore, damsel? tell me  
all ye know.

Ye cannot scare me; nor rough face,  
or voice,

Brute bulk of limb, or boundless sav-  
agery

Appall me from the quest."

"Nay, Prince," she cried,

"God wot, I never look'd upon the  
face,

Seeing he never rides abroad by day;  
But watch'd him have I like a phan-  
tom pass

Chilling the night; nor have I heard  
the voice.

Always he made his mouthpiece of a  
page

Who came and went, and still reported  
him

As closing in himself the strength of  
ten,

And when his anger tare him, massa-  
cing

Man, woman, lad and girl—yea the  
soft babe—

Some hold that he hath swallow'd in-  
fant flesh,

Monster! O prince, I went for Lance-  
lot first,

The quest is Lancelot's: give him  
back the shield."

Said Gareth laughing, "An he fight  
for this,

Belike he wins it as the better man:  
Thus—and not else?"

But Lancelot on him urged  
All the devisings of their chivalry

Where one might meet a mightier  
than himself;

How best to manage horse, lance,  
sword and shield,

And so fill up the gap where force  
might fall

With skill and fineness. Instant were  
his words.

Then Gareth, "Here be rules. I  
know but one—

To dash against mine enemy and to  
win.

Yet have I watch'd thee victor in the  
joust,

And seen thy way." "Heaven help  
thee," sigh'd Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud  
that grew

To thunder-gloom paling all stars,  
they rode

In converse till she made her palfry  
halt,

Lifted an arm, and softly whisper'd,  
"There."

And all the three were silent seeing,  
pitch'd

Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,  
A huge pavilion like a mountain peak

Sunder the glooming crimson on the  
marge,

Black, with black banner, and a long  
black horn

Beside it hanging; which Sir Gareth  
graspt,

And so, before the two could hinder  
him,

Sent all his heart and breath thro' all  
the horn.

Echo'd the walls; a light twinkled;  
anon

Came lights and lights, and once again  
he blew:

Whereon were hollow trappings up  
and down  
And muffled voices heard, and shadows  
past;  
Till high above him, circled with her  
maids,  
The Lady Lyonors at a window stood,  
Beautiful among lights, and waving to  
him  
White hands, and courtesy; but when  
the Prince  
Three times had blown—after long  
hush—at last—  
The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,  
Thro' those black foldings, that which  
housed therein.  
High on a nightblack horse, in night-  
black arms,  
With white breast-bone, and barren  
ribs of Death,  
And crown'd with fleshless laughter—  
some ten steps—  
In the half-light—thro' the dim dawn  
—advanced  
The monster, and then paused, and  
spake no word.

But Gareth spake and all indignantly,  
"Fool, for thou hast, men say, the  
strength of ten,  
Canst thou not trust the limbs thy God  
hath given,  
But must, to make the terror of thee  
more,  
Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries  
Of that which Life hath done with, and  
the clod,  
Less dull than thou, will hide with  
mantling flowers  
As if for pity?" But he spake no  
word;  
Which set the horror higher: a maiden  
swoon'd;  
The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands and  
wept,  
As doom'd to be the bride of Night and  
Death;  
Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath his  
helm;  
And ev'n Sir Lancelot thro' his warm  
blood felt  
Ice strike, and all that mark'd him were  
aghast.

At once Sir Lancelot's charger fierce-  
ly neigh'd—  
At once the black horse bounded for-  
ward with him.  
Then those that did not blink the ter-  
ror, saw  
That Death was cast to ground, and  
slowly rose.  
But with one stroke Sir Gareth split  
the skull.  
Half fell to right and half to left and  
lay.  
Then with a stronger buffet he clove  
the helm  
As throughly as the skull; and out  
from this

Issued the bright face of a blooming  
boy  
Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying,  
"Knight,  
Slay me not; my three brethren bad me  
do it,  
To make a horror all about the house,  
And stay the world from Lady Lyonors.  
They never dream'd the passes would  
be past."  
Answer'd Sir Gareth graciously to one  
Not many a moon his younger, "My  
fair child,  
What madness made thee challenge the  
chief knight  
Of Arthur's hall?" "Fair Sir, they  
bad me do it.  
They hate the King, and Lancelot, the  
King's friend,  
They hoped to slay him somewhere on  
the stream,  
They never dream'd the passes could  
be past."

Then sprang the happier day from  
underground;  
And Lady Lyonors and her house, with  
dance  
And revel and song, made merry over  
Death,  
As being after all their foolish fears  
And horrors only proven a blooming  
boy.  
So large mirth lived and Gareth won  
the quest.

And he that told the tale in older  
times  
Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,  
But he, that told it later, says Lynette.

---

 GERAINT AND ENID.

THE brave Geraint, a knight of Ar-  
thur's court,  
A tributary prince of Devon, one  
Of that great order of the Table Round,  
Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,  
And loved her, as he loved the light of  
Heaven.  
And as the light of Heaven varies,  
now  
At sunrise, now at sunset, now by night  
With moon and trembling stars, so  
loved Geraint  
To make her beauty vary day by day,  
In crimsons and in purples and in gems.  
And Enid, but to please her husband's  
eye,  
Who first had found and loved her in a  
state  
Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him  
In some fresh splendor; and the Queen  
herself,  
Grateful to Prince Geraint for service  
done,  
Loved her, and often with her own  
white hands

Array'd and deck'd her, as the loveliest,  
Next after her own self, in all the  
court.

And Enid loved the Queen, and with  
true heart

Adored her, as the stateliest and the  
best

And loveliest of all women upon earth.

And seeing them so tender and so  
close,

Long in their common love rejoiced  
Geraint.

But when a rumor rose about the Queen,  
Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,

Tho' yet there lived no proof, nor yet  
was heard

The world's loud whisper breaking  
into storm,

Not less Geraint believed it; and there  
fell

A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,  
Tho' that great tenderness for Guinevere,

Had suffer'd, or should suffer any  
taint

In nature: wherefore going to the  
king.

He made this pretext, that his prince-  
dom lay

Close on the borders of a territory,  
Wherein were bandit earls, and caitiff

knights,

Assassins, and all fiends from the hand  
Of Justice, and whatever loathes a

law:

And therefore, till the king himself  
should please

To cleanse this common sewer of all  
his realm,

He craved a fair permission to depart,  
And there defend his marches; and  
the king

Mused for a little on his plea, but, last,  
Allowing it, the Prince and Enid

rode,

And fifty knights rode with them, to  
the shores

Of Severn, and they past to their own  
land;

Where, thinking, that if ever yet was  
wife

True to her lord, mine shall be so to  
me,

He compass'd her with sweet observ-  
ances

And worship, never leaving her, and  
grew

Forgetful of his promise to the king,  
Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,

Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,  
Forgetful of his glory and his name,

Forgetful of his principedom and its  
cares.

And this forgetfulness was hateful to  
her.

And by and by the people, when they  
met

In twos and threes, or fuller companies,  
Began to scoff and jeer and babble of  
him

As of a prince whose manhood was all  
gone,

And mollen down in mere uxorious-  
ness.

And this she gather'd from the people's  
eyes:

This too the woman who attired her  
head,

To please her, dwelling on his boundless  
love,

Told Enid, and they sadden'd her the  
more:

And day by day she thought to tell  
Geraint,

But could not out of bashful delicacy;  
While he that watch'd her sadden, was  
the more

Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

At last it chanced that on a summer  
morn

(They sleeping each by either) the new  
sun

Beat thro' the blindless casement of  
the room,

And heated the strong warrior in his  
dreams;

Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,  
And bared the knotted column of his

throat,

The massive square of his heroic  
breast,

And arms on which the standing mus-  
cle sloped,

As slopes a wild brook o'er a little  
stone,

Running too vehemently to break upon  
it.

And Enid woke and sat beside the  
couch,

Admiring him, and thought within  
herself,

Was ever man so grandly made as he?  
Then, like a shadow, past the people's

talk

And accusation of uxoriousness  
Across her mind, and bowing over

him,

Low to her own heart piteously she  
said:

"O noble breast and all-puissant  
arms,

Am I the cause, I the poor cause that  
men

Reproach you, saying all your force is  
gone?

I am the cause because I dare not  
speak

And tell him what I think and what  
they say.

And yet I hate that he should linger  
here;

I cannot love my lord and not his  
name.

Far liefer had I gird his harness on  
him,

And ride with him to battle and stand  
by,

And watch his mightful hand striking  
great blows

At catiffs and at wrongers of the world,  
 Far better were I laid in the dark earth,  
 Not hearing any more his noble voice,  
 Not to be folded more in these dear arms,  
 And darken'd from the high light in his eyes,  
 Than that my lord thro' me should suffer shame.  
 Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,  
 And see my dear lord wounded in the strife,  
 Or maybe pierced to death before mine eyes,  
 And yet not dare to tell him what I think,  
 And how men slur him, saying all his force  
 Is melted into mere effeminacy?  
 O me, I fear that I am no true wife."

Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke,  
 And the strong passion in her made her weep  
 True tears upon his broad and naked breast,  
 And these awoke him, and by great mischance  
 He heard but fragments of her later words,  
 And that she fear'd she was not a true wife.  
 And then he thought, "In spite of all my care,  
 For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains,  
 She is not faithful to me, and I see her Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall."  
 Then tho' he loved and revered her too much  
 To dream she could be guilty of foul act,  
 Right thro' his manful breast darted the pang  
 That makes a man, in the sweet face of her  
 Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.  
 At this he hurl'd his huge limbs out of bed,  
 And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,  
 "My charger and her palfrey," then to her,  
 "I will ride forth into the wilderness;  
 For tho' it seems my spurs are yet to win,  
 I have not fall'n so low as some would wish.  
 And you, put on your worst and meanest dress  
 And ride with me." And Enid ask'd, amazed,  
 "If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault."  
 But he, "I charge you, ask not but obey."

Then she bethought ther of a faded silk,  
 A faded mantle and a faded veil,  
 And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,  
 Wherein she kept them folded reverently  
 With sprigs of summer laid between the folds,  
 She took them, and array'd herself therein,  
 Remembering when first he came on her  
 Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,  
 And all her foolish fears about the dress,  
 And all his journey to her, as himself  
 Had told her, and their coming to the court.

For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before  
 Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.  
 There on a day, he sitting high in hall,  
 Before him came a forester of Dean,  
 Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart  
 Taller than all his fellows, milky-white,  
 First seen that day: these things he told the king.  
 Then the good king gave order to let blow  
 His horns for hunting on the morrow morn.  
 And when the Queen petition'd for his leave  
 To see the hunt, allow'd it easily.  
 So with the morning all the court were gone.  
 But Guinevere lay late into the morn,  
 Iost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her love  
 For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt;  
 But rose at last, a single maiden with her,  
 Took horse, and forded Usk, and gain'd the wood;  
 There, on a little knoll beside it, stay'd  
 Waiting to hear the hounds; but heard instead  
 A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince Geraint,  
 Late also, wearing neither hunting-dress  
 Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted brand,  
 Came quickly flashing thro' the shallow ford  
 Behind them, and so gallop'd up the knoll.  
 A purple scarf, at either end whereof  
 There swung an apple of the purest gold,  
 Sway'd round about him, as he gallop'd up  
 To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly  
 In summer suit and silks of holiday.  
 Low bow'd the tributary Prince, and she,

Sweetly and stately, and with all grace  
 Of womanhood and queenhood, answer'd him :  
 " Late, late, Sir Prince," she said,  
 " later than we !"  
 " Yea, noble Queen," he answer'd,  
 " and so late  
 That I but come like you to see the hunt,  
 Not join it." " Therefore wait with me," she said ;  
 " For on this little knoll, if anywhere,  
 There is good chance that we shall hear the hounds :  
 Here often they break covert at our feet."  
 And while they listen'd for the distant hunt,  
 And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,  
 King Arthur's hound of deepest mouth,  
 there rode  
 Full slowly by a knight, lady, and dwarf ;  
 Whereof the dwarf lagg'd latest, and the knight  
 Had visor up, and show'd a youthful face,  
 Imperious, and of haughtiest lineaments.  
 And Guinevere, not mindful of his face  
 In the king's hall, desired his name,  
 and sent  
 Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf ;  
 Who being vicious, old, and irritable,  
 And doubling all his master's vice of pride,  
 Made answer sharply that she should not know.  
 " Then will I ask it of himself," she said.  
 " Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not," cried the dwarf ;  
 " Thou art not worthy ev'n to speak of him ;"  
 And when she put her horse toward the knight,  
 Struck at her with his whip, and she return'd  
 Indignant to the Queen ; whereat Geraint  
 Exclaiming, " Surely I will learn the name,"  
 Made sharply to the dwarf, and ask'd it of him,  
 Who answer'd as before ; and when the Prince  
 Had put his horse in motion toward the knight,  
 Struck at him with his whip, and cut his cheek.  
 The Prince's blood spirted upon the scari,  
 Dyeing it : and his quick, instinctive hand  
 Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him :  
 But he, from his exceeding manfulness

And pure nobility of temperament,  
 Wroth to be wroth at such a worm, refrain'd  
 From ev'n a word, and so returning said :  
 " I will avenge this insult, noble Queen,  
 Done in your maiden's person to yourself :  
 And I will track this vermin to their earths :  
 For tho' I ride unarm'd, I do not doubt  
 To find, at some place I shall come at,  
 arms  
 On loan, or else for pledge ; and, being found,  
 Then will I fight him, and will break his bride,  
 And on the third day, will again be here,  
 So that I be not fall'n in fight. Farewell."  
 " Farewell, fair Prince," answer'd the stately Queen.  
 " Be prosperous in this journey, as in all ;  
 And may ye light on all things that ye love,  
 And live to wed with her whom first ye love :  
 But ere ye wed with any, bring your bride,  
 And I, were she the daughter of a king,  
 Yea, tho' she were a beggar from the hedge,  
 Will clothe her for her bridals like the sun."  
 And Prince Geraint, now thinking that he heard  
 The noble hart at bay, now the far horn,  
 A little vext at losing of the hunt,  
 A little at the vile occasion, rode,  
 By ups and downs, thro' many a grassy glade  
 And valley, with fixt eye following the three.  
 At last they issued from the world of wood,  
 And climb'd upon a fair and even ridge,  
 And show'd themselves against the sky, and sank.  
 And thither came Geraint, and underneath  
 Beheld the long street of a little town  
 In a long valley, on one side whereof,  
 White from the mason's hand, a fortress rose ;  
 And on one side a castle in decay,  
 Beyond a bridge that spann'd a dry ravine :  
 And out of town and valley came a noise  
 As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed  
 Brawling, or like a clamor of the rooks  
 At distance, ere they settle for the night.

And onward to the fortress rode the  
three,  
And enter'd, and were lost behind the  
walls.  
"So," thought Geraint, "I have  
track'd him to his earth."  
And down the long street riding wear-  
ily,  
Found every hostel full, and every-  
where  
Was hammer laid to hoof, and the hot  
hiss  
And bustling whistle of the youth who  
scour'd  
His master's armor; and of such a one  
He ask'd, "What means the tumult in  
the town?"  
Who told him, scouring still "The  
sparrow-hawk!"  
Then riding close behind an ancient  
churl,  
Who, smitten by the dusty sloping  
beam,  
Went sweating underneath a sack of  
corn,  
Ask'd yet once more what meant the  
hubbub here?  
Who answer'd gruffly, "Ugh! the spar-  
row-hawk."  
Then riding further past an armorer's,  
Who, with back turn'd, and bow'd above  
his work,  
Sat riveting a helmet on his knee,  
He put the self-same query, but the  
man  
Not turning round, nor looking at him,  
said:  
"Friend, he that labors for the spar-  
row-hawk  
Has little time for idle questioners."  
Whereat Geraint flash'd into sudden  
spleen:  
"A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-  
hawk!  
Tits, wrens, and all wing'd nothings  
peek him dead!  
Ye think the rustic cackle of your  
bourg  
The murmur of the world! What is it  
to me?  
O wretched set of sparrows, one and  
all,  
Who pipe of nothing but of sparrow-  
hawks!  
Speak, if ye be not like the rest, hawk-  
mad,  
Where can I get me harborage for the  
night?  
And arms, arms, arms to fight my  
enemy? Speak!"  
At this the armorer turning all amazed  
And seeing one so gay in purple silks,  
Came forward with the helmet yet in  
hand  
And answer'd, "Pardon me, O stran-  
ger knight;  
We hold a tourney here to-morrow  
morn,  
And there is scanty time for half the  
work.

Arms? truth! I know not: all are  
wanted here.  
Harborage? truth, good truth, I know  
not, save,  
It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the  
bridge  
Yonder." He spoke and fell to work  
again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful  
yet,  
Across the bridge that spann'd the dry  
ravine.  
There musing sat the hoary-headed  
Earl,  
(His dress a suit of fray'd magnifi-  
cence,  
Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and  
said:  
"Whither, fair son?" to whom Ger-  
aint replied,  
"O friend, I seek a harborage for the  
night."  
Then Yniol, "Enter therefore and par-  
take  
The slender entertainment of a house  
Once rich, now poor, but ever open-  
door'd."  
"Thanks, venerable friend," replied  
Geraint;  
"So that ye do not serve me sparrow-  
hawks  
For supper, I will enter, I will eat  
With all the passion of a twelve hours'  
fast."  
Then sigh'd and smiled the hoary-  
headed Earl,  
And answer'd, "Graver cause than  
yours is mine  
To curse this hedgerow thief, the spar-  
row-hawk:  
But in, go in; for save yourself desire  
it,  
We will not touch upon him ev'n in  
jest."  
Then rode Geraint into the castle  
court,  
His charger trampling many a prickly  
star  
Of sprouted thistle on the broken  
stones.  
He look'd and saw that all was ruin-  
ous.  
Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed  
with fern;  
And here had fall'n a great part of a  
tower,  
Whole, like a crag that tumbles from  
the cliff,  
And like a crag was gay with wilding  
flowers:  
And high above a piece of turret stair,  
Worn by the feet that now were silent,  
wound  
Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-  
stems  
Claspt the gray walls with hairy  
fibred arms,  
And suck'd the joining of the stones,  
and look'd

A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a  
grove.

And while he waited in the castle  
court,

The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter,  
rang

Clear thro' the open casement of the  
Hall,

Singing; and as the sweet voice of a  
bird,

Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,  
Moves him to think what kind of bird  
it is

That sings so delicately clear, and  
make

Conjecture of the plumage and the  
form;

So the sweet voice of Enid moved Ger-  
aint;

And made him like a man abroad at  
morn

When first the liquid note beloved of  
men

Comes flying over many a windy wave  
To Britain, and in April suddenly

Breaks from a coppice gemm'd with  
green and red,

And he suspends his converse with a  
friend,

Or it may be the labor of his hands,  
To think or say, "there is the nightin-  
gale."

So fared it with Geraint, who thought  
and said,

"Here, by God's grace, is the one voice  
for me."

It chanced the song that Enid sang  
was one

Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid  
sang:

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and  
lower the proud;

Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine,  
storm, and cloud;

Thy wheel and thee we neither love  
nor hate.

"Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with  
smile or frown;

With that wild wheel we go not up or  
down;

Our hoard is little, but our hearts are  
great.

"Smile and we smile, the lords of  
many lands;

Frown and we smile, the lords of our  
own hands;

For man is man and master of his fate.

"Turn turn thy wheel above the  
staring crowd;

Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the  
cloud;

Thy wheel and thee we neither love  
nor hate."

"Hark, by the bird's song you may  
learn the nest"

Said Yniol: "Enter quickly." Enter-  
ing then,

Right o'er a mount of newly-fallen  
stones,

The dusky rafter'd many-cobweb'd  
Hall,

He found an ancient dame in dim bro-  
cade;

And near her, like a blossom vermeil-  
white,

That lightly breaks a faded flower-  
sheath,

Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk,  
Her daughter. In a moment thought

Geraint,  
"Here by God's rood is the one maid  
for me."

But none spake word except the hoary  
Earl:

"Enid, the good knight's horse stands  
in the court;

Take him to stall, and give him corn,  
and then

Go to the town and buy us flesh and  
wine;

And we will make us merry as we may.  
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are  
great."

He spake: the Prince, as Enid past  
him, fain

To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol  
caught

His purple scarf, and held, and said  
"Forbear!"

Rest! the good house, tho' ruin'd, O  
my Son,

Endures not that her guest should  
serve himself."

And reverencing the custom of the  
house

Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the stall;

And after went her way across the  
bridge,

And reach'd the town, and while the  
Prince and Earl

Yet spoke together, came again with  
one,

A youth, that following with a costrel  
bore

The means of godly welcome, flesh  
and wine.

And Enid brought sweet cakes to make  
them cheer,

And in her veil enfolded, manchet  
bread.

And then, because their hall must also  
serve

For kitchen, boil'd the flesh, and spread  
the board,

And stood behind, and waited on the  
three.

And seeing her so sweet and service-  
able,

Geraint had longing in him evermore  
To stoop and kiss the tender little

thumb,

That crost the trencher as she laid it  
down;

But after all had eaten, then Gerald,  
 Not now the wise made summer in his  
 veins,

Not his eye rove in following, or rest:  
 On Enid, at her lovely unadorn'd-work,  
 Now here, now there, about the stately  
 hall:

Then suddenly address the hoary Earl:  
 "Fair Host, and Earl, I pray your  
 courtesy—

This sparrow-hawk, what is he; and line  
 of him.

His name? but no, good faith, I will  
 not have it:

For if he be the knight whom line draw  
 Bille into that new fortress by your  
 name,

White from the sunset land, then  
 have I sworn

From his own lips to have it—Then  
 Gerald:

Of Doreen—for this morning when the  
 Queen:

Sent her own maid to demand the  
 name,

His descent, as various and un-  
 derstanding,

Strook at her with his whip, and she  
 returned:

Diligent to the Queen, and then I  
 swore:

That I would track his castle to the  
 land,

And fight and break his pride and law-  
 of him.

And all manner of good, and thought  
 to find.

And so it was, when all the court  
 are made:

They take the wish, and many a  
 hour:

For the great were that winter, and  
 the world:

They would not have me speak, but I  
 ye know:

Whoso I can fight to serve, or all I  
 can:

Should have done, and I am, for  
 I have sworn:

That I will track his castle and  
 his name:

And so it was, when all the court  
 are made:

They take the wish, and many a  
 hour:

For the great were that winter, and  
 the world:

They would not have me speak, but I  
 ye know:

Whoso I can fight to serve, or all I  
 can:

Should have done, and I am, for  
 I have sworn:

That I will track his castle and  
 his name:

And so it was, when all the court  
 are made:

They take the wish, and many a  
 hour:

For the great were that winter, and  
 the world:

They would not have me speak, but I  
 ye know:

Whoso I can fight to serve, or all I  
 can:

Should have done, and I am, for  
 I have sworn:

That I will track his castle and  
 his name:

And so it was, when all the court  
 are made:

Your feast of arms, and offers when I  
 passed:

Had I not seen, and ever loved to  
 hear:

So grateful is the voice of noble deeds  
 To noble hearts who see but acts of  
 wrong:

Or never yet had woman well requit  
 Of actions at this castle: then I  
 swore:

At morning wholly given to travel and  
 vice,

Detail every other day, and he be  
 the:

I know not, but the past to the wild  
 land:

The second day your file, the sparrow-  
 hawk,

My name, my nephew—I will not let  
 his name:

And so it was, when all the court  
 are made:

They take the wish, and many a  
 hour:

For the great were that winter, and  
 the world:

They would not have me speak, but I  
 ye know:

Whoso I can fight to serve, or all I  
 can:

Should have done, and I am, for  
 I have sworn:

That I will track his castle and  
 his name:

And so it was, when all the court  
 are made:

They take the wish, and many a  
 hour:

For the great were that winter, and  
 the world:

They would not have me speak, but I  
 ye know:

Whoso I can fight to serve, or all I  
 can:

Should have done, and I am, for  
 I have sworn:

That I will track his castle and  
 his name:

And so it was, when all the court  
 are made:

They take the wish, and many a  
 hour:

For the great were that winter, and  
 the world:

They would not have me speak, but I  
 ye know:

Whoso I can fight to serve, or all I  
 can:

Should have done, and I am, for  
 I have sworn:

That I will track his castle and  
 his name:

And so it was, when all the court  
 are made:

They take the wish, and many a  
 hour:

For the great were that winter, and  
 the world:

They would not have me speak, but I  
 ye know:

Whoso I can fight to serve, or all I  
 can:

Should have done, and I am, for  
 I have sworn:

That I will track his castle and  
 his name:

And so it was, when all the court  
 are made:

They take the wish, and many a  
 hour:

For the great were that winter, and  
 the world:

They would not have me speak, but I  
 ye know:

In next day's tourney I may break his  
pride."  
And Yniol answer'd "Arms, indeed,  
but old  
And rusty, old and rusty, Prince Ge-  
raint,  
Are mine, and therefore at your ask-  
ing, yours.  
But in this tournament can no man  
tilt,  
Except the lady he loves best be there.  
Two forks are fixt into the meadow  
ground,  
And over these is laid a silver wand,  
And over that is placed the sparrow-  
hawk,  
The prize of beauty for the fairest  
there.  
And this, what knight soever be in  
field  
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,  
And tilts with my good nephew there-  
upon,  
Who being apt at arms and big of bone  
Has ever won it for the lady with him,  
And toppling over all antagonism  
Has earn'd himself the name of spar-  
row-hawk.  
But you, that have no lady, cannot  
fight."

To whom Geraint with eyes all bright  
replied,  
Leaning a little toward him, "Your  
leave!  
Let me lay lance in rest, O noble host,  
For this dear child, because I never  
saw,  
Tho' having seen all beauties of our  
time,  
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so  
fair.  
And if I fall her name will yet remain  
Untarnish'd as before; but if I live,  
So add me Heaven when at mine utter-  
most,  
As I will make her truly my true  
wife."

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's  
heart  
Danced in his bosom, seeing better  
days.  
And looking round he saw not Enid  
there,  
(Who hearing her own name had slept  
away)  
But that old dame, to whom full ten-  
derly  
And fondling all her hand in his he  
said,  
"Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,  
And best by her that bore her under-  
stood.  
Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to rest  
Tell her, and prove her heart toward  
the Prince."

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl,  
and she

With frequent smile and nod departing  
found,  
Half disarray'd as to her rest, the girl;  
Whom first she kiss'd on either cheek,  
and then  
On either shining shoulder laid a hand,  
And kept her off and gazed upon her  
face,  
And told her all their converse in the  
hall,  
Proving her heart: but never light and  
shade  
Cours'd one another more on open  
ground  
Beneath a troubled heaven, than red  
and pale  
Across the face of Enid hearing her;  
While slowly falling as a scale that  
falls,  
When weight is added only grain by  
grain,  
Sank her sweet head upon her gentle  
breast;  
Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a  
word,  
Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of  
it;  
So moving without answer to her rest  
She found no rest, and ever fall'd to  
draw  
The quiet night into her blood, but lay  
Contemplating her own unworthiness;  
And when the pale and bloodless east  
began  
To quicken to the sun, arose, and  
raised  
Her mother too, and hand in hand they  
moved  
Down to the meadow where the jonsts  
were held,  
And waited there for Yniol and Ge-  
raint.

And thither came the twain, and  
when Geraint  
Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,  
He felt, were she the prize of bodily  
force,  
Himself beyond the rest pushing could  
move  
The chair of Idris. Yniol's rusted arms  
Were on his princely person, but thro'  
these  
Princelike his bearing, shone; and er-  
rant knights  
And ladies came, and by and by the  
town  
Flow'd in, and settling circled all the  
lists.  
And there they fixt the forks into the  
ground,  
And over these they placed a silver  
wand  
And over that a golden sparrow-hawk.  
Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet  
blown,  
Spake to the lady with him and pro-  
claim'd,  
"Advance and take as fairest of the  
fair,

For I these two years past have won it  
 for thee,  
 The prize of beauty." Loudly spake  
 the Prince,  
 "Forbear: there is a worthier," and  
 the knight  
 With some surprise and thrice as much  
 disdain  
 Turn'd, and beheld the four, and all  
 his face  
 Glow'd like the heart of a great fire at  
 Yule,  
 So burnt he was with passion, crying out,  
 "Do battle for it then," no more; and  
 thrice  
 They clash'd together, and thrice they  
 brake their spears.  
 Then each, dishorsed and drawing,  
 lash'd at each  
 So often and with such blows, that all  
 the crowd  
 Wonder'd, and now and then from dis-  
 tant walls  
 There came a clapping as of phantom  
 hands.  
 So twice they fought, and twice they  
 breathed, and still  
 The dew of their great labor, and the  
 blood  
 Of their strong bodies, flowing, drain'd  
 their force.  
 But either's force was match'd till  
 Yniol's cry,  
 "Remember that great insult done the  
 Queen,"  
 Increased Geraint's, who heaved his  
 blade aloft,  
 And crack'd the helmet thro', and bit  
 the bone,  
 And fell'd him, and set foot upon his  
 breast,  
 And said, "Thy name?" To whom the  
 fallen man  
 Made answer, groaning, "Edyrn, son  
 of Nudd!  
 Ashamed am I that I should tell it  
 thee.  
 My pride is broken: men have seen my  
 fall."  
 "Then, Edyrn, son of Nudd," replied  
 Geraint,  
 "These two things shalt thou do, or  
 else thou diest.  
 First, thou thyself, thy lady, and thy  
 dwarf,  
 Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and being  
 there,  
 Crave pardon for that insult done the  
 Queen,  
 And shalt abide her judgment, on it;  
 next,  
 Thou shalt give back their earldom to  
 thy kin.  
 These two things shalt thou do, or thou  
 shalt die."  
 And Edyrn answer'd, "These things  
 will I do,  
 For I have never yet been overthrown,  
 And thou hast overthrown me, and my  
 pride

Is broken down, for Enid sees my fall!"  
 And rising up, he rode to Arthur's  
 court,  
 And there the Queen forgave him  
 easily.  
 And being young, he changed, and  
 came to loathe  
 His crime of traitor, slowly drew him-  
 self  
 Bright from his old dark life, and fell  
 at last  
 In the great battle fighting for the  
 king.

But when the third day from the  
 hunting-morn  
 Made a low splendor in the world, and  
 wings  
 Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay  
 With her fair head in the dim-yellow  
 light,  
 Among the dancing shadows of the  
 birds,  
 Woke and bethought her of her prom-  
 ise given  
 No later than last eve to Prince Ge-  
 raint—  
 So bent he seem'd on going the third  
 day,  
 He would not leave her, till her prom-  
 ise given—  
 To ride with him this morning to the  
 court,  
 And there be made known to the  
 stately Queen,  
 And there be wedded with all cere-  
 mony.  
 At this she cast her eyes upon her  
 dress,  
 And thought it never yet had look'd  
 so mean.  
 For as a leaf in mid-November is  
 To what it was in mid-October, seem'd  
 The dress that now she look'd on to  
 the dress  
 She look'd on ere the coming of Ge-  
 raint.  
 And still she look'd, and still the ter-  
 ror grew  
 Of that strange bright and dreadful  
 thing, a court,  
 All staring at her in her faded silk:  
 And softly to her own sweet heart she  
 said:

"This noble prince who won our  
 earldom back,  
 So splendid in his acts and his attire,  
 Sweet heaven, how much I shall dis-  
 credit him!  
 Would he could tarry with us here  
 awhile!  
 But being so beholden to the Prince,  
 It were but little grace in any of us,  
 Bent as he seem'd on going this third  
 day,  
 To seek a second favor at his hands,  
 Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,  
 Myself would work eye dim, and fin-  
 ger lame,

Far Hefer than so much discredit  
him."

And Enid fell in longing for a dress  
All branch'd and flower'd with gold, a  
costly gift  
Of her good mother, given her on the  
night  
Before her birthday, three sad years  
ago,  
That night of fire, when Edyrn sack'd  
their house,  
And scatter'd all they had to all the  
winds:  
For while the mother show'd it, and  
the two  
Were turning and admiring it, the work  
To both appear'd so costly, rose a cry  
That Edyrn's men were on them, and  
they fled  
With little save the jewels they had on,  
Which being sold and sold had bought  
them bread:  
And Edyrn's men had caught them in  
their flight,  
And placed them in this ruin; and  
she wish'd  
The Prince had found her in her an-  
cient home;  
Then let her fancy flit across the past,  
And roam the goodly places that she  
knew;  
And last bethought her how she used  
to watch,  
Near that old home, a pool of golden  
carp;  
And one was patch'd and blurr'd and  
lustreless  
Among his burnish'd brethren of the  
pool;  
And half asleep she made comparison  
Of that and these to her own faded  
self  
And the gay court, and fell asleep  
again;  
And dreamt herself was such a faded  
form  
Among her burnish'd sisters of the  
pool;  
But this was in the garden of a king;  
And tho' she lay dark in the pool, she  
knew  
That all was bright; that all about  
were birds  
Of sunny plume in gilded trellis-  
work;  
That all the turf was rich in plots that  
look'd  
Each like a garnet or a turkis in it;  
And lords and ladies of the high court  
went  
In silver tissue talking things of state;  
And children of the king in cloth of  
gold  
Glanced at the doors or gambol'd down  
the walks;  
And while she thought "they will not  
see me," came  
A stately queen whose name was  
Guinevere,

And all the children in their cloth of  
gold  
Ran to her, crying, "if we have fish at  
all  
Let them be gold; and charge the gar-  
deners now  
To pick the faded creature from the  
pool,  
And cast it on the mixen that it die."  
And therewithal one came and seized  
on her,  
And Enid started waking, with her  
heart  
All overshadow'd by the foolish dream,  
And lo! it was her mother grasping  
her  
To get her well awake; and in her  
hand  
A suit of bright apparel, which she  
laid  
Flat on the couch, and spoke exult-  
ingly:

"See here, my child, how fresh the  
colors look,  
How fast they hold like colors of a  
shell  
That keeps the wear and polish of the  
wave.  
Why not? it never yet was worn, I  
trow:  
Look on it, child, and tell me if ye  
know it."

And Enid look'd, but all confused at  
first,  
Could scarce divide it from her foolish  
dream:  
Then suddenly she knew it and re-  
joiced,  
And answer'd, "Yea, I know it; your  
good gift,  
So sadly lost on that unhappy night;  
Your own good gift!" "Yea, surely,"  
said the dame,  
"And gladly given again this happy  
morn.  
For when the jousts were ended yes-  
terday,  
Went Yniol thro' the town, and every  
where  
He found the sack and plunder of our  
house  
All scatter'd thro' the houses of the  
town;  
And gave eommand that all which  
once was ours,  
Should now be ours again: and yester-  
eve,  
While you were talking sweetly with  
your Prince  
Came one with this and laid it in my  
hand,  
For love or fear, or seeking favor of us,  
Because we have our earldom back  
again.  
And yester-eve I would not tell you of  
it,  
But kept it for a sweet surprise at  
morn.

Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise?  
 For I myself unwillingly have worn  
 My faded suit, as you, my child, have  
 yours,  
 And howsoever patient, Yniol his.  
 Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly  
 house,  
 With store of rich apparel, sumptuous  
 fare,  
 And page, and maid, and squire, and  
 seneschal,  
 And pastime both of hawk and hound,  
 and all  
 That appertains to noble maintenance.  
 Yea, and he brought me to a goodly  
 house;  
 But since our fortune slipt from sun to  
 shade,  
 And all thro' that young traitor, cruel  
 need  
 Constrain'd us, but a better time has  
 come;  
 So clothe yourself in this, that better  
 fits  
 Our mended fortunes and a Prince's  
 bride:  
 For tho' ye won the prize of fairest  
 fair,  
 And tho' I heard him call you fairest  
 fair,  
 Let never maiden think, however fair,  
 She is not fairer in new clothes than  
 old.  
 And should some great court-lady say,  
 the Prince  
 Hath pick'd a ragged robin from the  
 hedge,  
 And like a madman brought her to the  
 court,  
 Then were ye shamed, and, worse,  
 might shame the Prince  
 To whom we are beholden; but I  
 know,  
 When my dear child is set forth at her  
 best,  
 That neither court nor country, tho'  
 they sought  
 Thro' all the provinces like those of  
 old  
 That lighted on Queen Esther, has her  
 match."

Here ceased the kindly mother out  
 of breath;  
 And Enid listen'd brightening as she  
 lay;  
 Then, as the white and glittering star  
 of morn  
 Parts from a bank of snow, and by and  
 by  
 Slips into golden cloud, the maiden  
 rose,  
 And left her maiden couch, and robed  
 herself,  
 Help'd by the mother's careful hand  
 and eye,  
 Without a mirror, in the gorgeous  
 gown;  
 Who, after, turn'd her daughter round,  
 and said,

She never yet had seen her half so  
 fair;  
 And call'd her like that maiden in the  
 tale,  
 Whom Gwydion made by glamour out  
 of flowers,  
 And sweeter than the bride of Cassi-  
 velaun,  
 Flur, for whose love the Roman Cæsar  
 first  
 Invaded Britain, ("but we beat him  
 back,  
 As this great prince invaded us, and  
 we,  
 Not beat him back, but welcomed him  
 with joy.  
 And I can scarcely ride with you to  
 court,  
 For old am I, and rough the ways and  
 wild;  
 But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall  
 dream  
 I see my princess as I see her now.  
 Clothed with my gift, and gay among  
 the gay."

But while the women thus rejoiced,  
 Geraint  
 Woke where he slept in the high hall,  
 and call'd  
 For Enid, and when Yniol made re-  
 port  
 Of that good mother making Enid gay  
 In such apparel as might well bessem  
 His princess, or indeed the stately  
 queen,  
 He answer'd; "Earl, entreat her by  
 my love,  
 Albert I give no reason but my wish,  
 That she ride with me in her faded  
 silk."  
 Yniol with that hard message went; it  
 fell,  
 Like flaws in summer laying lusty  
 corn:  
 For Enid all abash'd she knew not  
 why,  
 Dared not to glance at her good  
 mother's face,  
 But silently, in all obedience,  
 Her mother silent too, nor helping her,  
 Laid from her limbs the costly-broid-  
 er'd gift,  
 And robed them in her ancient suit  
 again,  
 And so descended. Never man re-  
 joiced  
 More than Geraint to greet her thus  
 attired;  
 And glancing all at once as keenly at  
 her,  
 As careful robins eye the delver's toil,  
 Made her cheek burn and either eye-  
 lid fall,  
 But rested with her sweet face satis-  
 fied;  
 Then seeing cloud upon the mother's  
 brow,  
 Her by both hands he caught, and  
 sweetly said,

"O my new mother, be not wroth or  
 grieved  
 At your new son, for my petition to  
 her.  
 When late I left Caerleon, our great  
 Queen,  
 In words whose echo lasts, they were  
 so sweet,  
 Made promise, that whatever bride I  
 brought,  
 Herself would clothe her like the sun  
 in Heaven.  
 Thereafter, when I reach'd this ruin'd  
 hold,  
 Beholding one so bright in dark estate,  
 I vow'd that could I gain her, our kind  
 Queen,  
 No hand but hers, should make your  
 Enid burst  
 Sunlike from cloud — and likewise  
 thought perhaps,  
 That service done so graciously would  
 bind  
 The two together; for I wish the two  
 To love each other: how should Enid  
 find  
 A nobler friend? Another thought I  
 had;  
 I came among you here so suddenly,  
 That tho' her gentle presence at the  
 lists  
 Might well have served for proof that  
 I was loved,  
 I doubted whether her filial tenderness,  
 Or easy nature, did not let itself  
 Be moulded by your wishes for her  
 weal;  
 Or whether some false sense in her own  
 self  
 Of my contrasting brightness, over-  
 bore  
 Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall;  
 And such a sense might make her long  
 for court  
 And all its dangerous glories: and I  
 thought,  
 That could I somehow prove such force  
 in her  
 Link'd with such love for me, that at  
 a word  
 (No reason given, her) she could cast  
 aside  
 A splendor dear to women, new to her,  
 And therefore dearer; or if not so  
 new,  
 Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the  
 power  
 Of intermitted custom; then I felt  
 That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and  
 flows,  
 Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I  
 do rest,  
 A prophet certain of my prophecy,  
 That never shadow of mistrust can  
 cross  
 Between us. Grant me pardon for my  
 thoughts;  
 And for my strange petition I will  
 make  
 Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day,

When your fair child shall wear your  
 costly gift  
 Beside your own warm hearth, with,  
 on her knees,  
 Who knows? another gift of the high  
 God,  
 Which, maybe, shall have learn'd to  
 lisp you thanks."

He spoke: the mother smiled, but  
 half in tears,  
 Then brought a mantle down, and  
 wrapt her in it,  
 And claspt and kiss'd her, and they  
 rode away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere  
 had climb'd  
 The giant tower, from whose high  
 crest, they say,  
 Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,  
 And white sails flying on the yellow  
 sea;  
 But not to goodly hill or yellow sea  
 Look'd the fair Queen, but up the vale  
 of Usk,  
 By the flat meadow, till she saw them  
 come;  
 And then descending met them at the  
 gates,  
 Embraced her with all welcome as a  
 friend,  
 And did her honor as the Prince's  
 bride,  
 And clothed her for her bridals like  
 the sun;  
 And all that week was old Caerleon  
 gay,  
 For by the hands of Dubric, the high  
 saint,  
 They twain were wedded with all cere-  
 mony.

And this was on the last year's Whit-  
 suntide.  
 But Enid ever kept the faded silk,  
 Remembering how first he came on  
 her,  
 Drest in that dress, and how he loved  
 her in it,  
 And all her foolish fears about the  
 dress,  
 And all his journey toward her, as  
 himself  
 Had told her, and their coming to the  
 court.

And now this morning when he said  
 to her,  
 "Put on your worst and meanest  
 dress," she found  
 And took it, and array'd herself there-  
 in.

O purblind race of miserable men,  
 How many among us at this very hour  
 Do forge a life-long trouble for our-  
 selves,  
 By taking true for false, or false for  
 true;

Here, thro' the feeble twilight of this  
world  
Groping, how many, until we pass and  
reach  
That other, where we see as we are  
seen!

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing  
forth  
That morning, when they both had got  
to horse,  
Perhaps because he loved her passion-  
ately,  
And felt that tempest brooding round  
his heart,  
Which, if he spoke at all, would break  
perforce  
Upon a head so dear in thunder, said:  
"Not at my side. I charge you ride  
before,  
Ever a good way on before; and this  
I charge you, on your duty as a wife,  
Whatever happens, not to speak to  
me,  
No, not a word!" and Enid was  
aghast;

And forth they rode, but scarce three  
paces on  
When crying out "Effeminate as I am,  
I will not fight my way with gilded  
arms,  
All shall be iron;" he loosed a mighty  
purse,  
Hung at his belt, and hurl'd it toward  
the squire.

So the last sight that Enid had of home  
Was all the marble threshold flashing,  
strown  
With gold and scatter'd coinage, and  
the squire

Chafing his shoulder: then he cried  
again,  
"To the wilds!" and Enid leading  
down the tracks

Thro' which he bade her lead him on,  
they past  
The marches, and by bandit-haunted  
holds,

Gray swamps and pools, waste places  
of the hern

And wildernesses, perilous paths, they  
rode:

Round was their pace at first, but  
slacken'd soon:

A stranger meeting them had surely  
thought

They rode so slowly and they look'd so  
pale,

That each had suffer'd some exceeding  
wrong.

For he was ever saying to himself

"O I that wasted time to tend upon  
her,

To compass her with sweet observ-  
ances,

To dress her beautifully and keep her  
true—"

And there he broke the sentence in his  
heart

Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue

May break it, when his passion masters  
him.

And she was ever praying the sweet  
heavens

To save her dear lord whole from any  
wound.

And ever in her mind she cast about  
For that unnoticed failing in herself,

Which made him look so cloudy and  
so cold;

Till the great plover's human whistle  
amazed

Her heart, and glancing round the  
waste she fear'd

In every wavering brake an ambus-  
cade.

Then thought again "if there be such  
in me,

I might amend it by the grace of  
heaven,

If he would only speak and tell me of  
it."

But when the fourth part of the day  
was gone,

Then Enid was aware of three tall  
knights

On horseback, wholly arm'd, behind a  
rock

In shadow, waiting for them, catiffs  
all;

And heard one crying to his fellow,  
"Look,

Here comes a Jaggard hanging down  
his head,

Who seems no bolder than a beaten  
hound;

Come, we will slay him and will have  
his horse

And armor, and his damsel shall be  
ours."

Then Enid ponder'd in her heart,  
and said;

"I will go back a little to my lord,  
And I will tell him all their catiff  
talk;

For, be he wroth even to slaying me,  
Far liever by his dear hand had I die,  
Than that my lord should suffer loss or  
shame."

Then she went back some paces of  
return,

Met his full frown timidly firm, and  
said:

"My lord, I saw three bandits by the  
rock

Waiting to fall on you, and heard them  
boast

That they would slay you, and possess  
your horse

And armor, and your damsel should be  
theirs."

He made a wrathful answer. "Did I  
wish

Your warning or your silence? one  
command

I laid upon you, not to speak to me,  
And thus you keep it! Well when,  
look—for now,

Whether you wish me victory or defeat,  
Long for my life, or hunger for my death,  
Yourself shall see my vigor is not lost."

Then Enid waited pale and sorrowful,  
And down upon him bare the bandit three.

And at the midstom charging, Prince Geraint

Drove the long spear a cubit thro' his breast

And out beyond; and then against his brace

Of comrades, each of whom had broken on him

A lance that splinter'd like an icicle,  
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out

Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunn'd the twain

Or slew them, and dismounting like a man

That skins the wild beast after slaying him,

Strip'd from the three dead wolves of woman born

The three gay suits of armor which they wore,

And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits

Of armor on their horses, each on each,  
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three

Together, and said to her, "Drive them on

Before you;" and she drove them thro' the waste.

He follow'd nearer: ruth began to work

Against his anger in him, while he watch'd

The being he loved best in all the world,

With difficulty in mild obedience

Driving them on: he fain had spoken to her,

And loosed in words of sudden fire the wrath

And smoulder'd wrong that burnt him all within:

But evermore it seem'd an easier thing

At once without remorse to strike her dead,

Than to cry "Halt," and to her own bright face

Accuse her of the least immodesty:

And thus tongue-tied, it made him wroth the more

That she could speak whom his own ear had heard

Call herself false: and suffering thus he made

Minutes an age: but in scarce longer time

Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,  
Before he turn to fall seaward again,

Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, behold

In the first shallow shade of a deep wood,

Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted oaks,

Three other horsemen waiting, wholly arm'd,

Whereof one seem'd far larger than her lord,

And shook her pulses, crying, "Look, a prize!

Three horses and three goodly suits of arms,

And all in charge of whom? a girl: set on."

"Nay" said the second, "yonder comes a knight."

The third, "A craven; how he hangs his head."

The giant answer'd merrily, "Yea, but one?"

Wait here, and when he passes fall upon him."

And Enid ponder'd in her heart and said,

"I will abide the coming of my lord,  
And I will tell him all their villany.

My lord is weary with the fight before,  
And they will fall upon him unawares.

I needs must disobey him for his good;  
How should I dare obey him to his harm?

Needs must I speak, and tho' he kill me for it,

I save a life dearer to me than mine."

And she abode his coming, and said to him

With timid firmness, "Have I leave to speak?"

He said, "Ye take it, speaking," and she spoke.

"There lurk three villains yonder in the wood,

And each of them is wholly arm'd, and one

Is larger-limb'd than you are, and they say

That they will fall upon you while you pass."

To which he flung a wrathful answer back:

"And if there were an hundred in the wood,

And every man were larger-limb'd than I,

And all at once should sally out upon me,

I swear it would not ruffle me so much  
As you that not obey me. Stand aside,  
And if I fall, cleave to the better man."

And Enid stood aside to wait the event,

Not dare to watch the combat, only breathe

Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a  
breath.  
And he, she dreaded most, bare down  
upon him.  
Aim'd at the helm, his lance err'd; but  
Geraint's,  
A little in the late encounter strain'd,  
Struck thro' the bulky bandit's corse-  
let home,  
And then brake short, and down his  
enemy roll'd,  
And there lay still; as he that tells the  
tale,  
Saw once a great piece of a promon-  
tory,  
That had a sapling growing on it, slip  
From the long shore-cliff's windy walls  
to the beach,  
And there lie still, and yet the sapling  
grew:  
So lay the man transfixt. His craven  
pair  
Of comrades, making slower at the  
Prince,  
When now they saw their bulwark fall-  
en, stood;  
On whom the victor, to confound them  
more,  
Spurr'd with his terrible war-cry; for  
as one,  
That listens near a torrent mountain-  
brook,  
All thro' the crash of the near cataract  
hears  
The drumming thunder of the huger  
fall  
At distance, were the soldiers wont to  
hear  
His voice in battle, and be kindled by  
it,  
And foeman scared, like that false pair  
who turn'd  
Flying, but, overtaken, died the death  
Themselves had wrought on many an  
innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting, pick'd  
the lance  
That pleased him best, and drew from  
those dead wolves  
Their three gay suits of armor, each  
from each,  
And bound them on their horses, each  
on each,  
And tied the bridle-reins of all the  
three  
Together, and said to her, "Drive  
them on  
Before you," and she drove them thro'  
the wood.

He follow'd nearer still: the pain  
she had  
To keep them in the wild ways of the  
wood,  
Two sets of three laden with jingling  
arms,  
Together, served a little to disedge  
The sharpness of that pain about her  
heart:

And they themselves, like creatures  
gently born  
But into bad hands fall'n, and now so  
long  
By bandits groom'd, prick'd their light  
ears, and felt  
Her low firm voice and tender govern-  
ment.

So thro' the green gloom of the wood  
they past,  
And issuing under open heavens be-  
held  
A little town with towers, upon a rock,  
And close beneath, a meadow gemlike  
chased  
In the brown wild, and mowers mow-  
ing in it:  
And down a rocky pathway from the  
place  
There came a fair-hair'd youth, that in  
his hand  
Bare victual for the mowers: and  
Geraint  
Had ruth again on Enid looking pale:  
Then, moving downward to the mead-  
ow ground,  
He, when the fair-hair'd youth came  
by him, said,  
"Friend, let her eat; the damsel is so  
faint."  
"Yea, willingly," replied the youth;  
"and you,  
My lord, eat also, tho' the fare is coarse,  
And only meet for mowers;" then set  
down  
His basket, and dismounting on the  
sward  
They let the horses graze, and ate  
themselves.  
And Enid took a little delicately,  
Less having stomach for it than desire  
To close with her lord's pleasure; but  
Geraint  
Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,  
And when found all empty, was amazed;  
And "Boy," said he, "I have eaten  
all, but take  
A horse and arms for guerdon; choose  
the best."  
He, reddening in extremity of delight,  
"My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold."  
"Ye will be all the wealthier," cried  
the Prince.  
"I take it as free gift, then," said the  
boy.  
"Not guerdon; for myself can easily.  
While your good damsel rests, return,  
and fetch  
Fresh victual for these mowers of our  
Earl;  
For these are his, and all the field is  
his,  
And I myself am his; and I will tell  
him  
How great a man you are: he loves to  
know  
When men of mark are in his terri-  
tory:  
And he will have you to his palace

And serve you costlier than with mowers' fare."

Then said Geraint, "I wish no better fare:  
I never ate with angrier appetite  
Than when I left your mowers dinnerless,  
And into no Earl's palace will I go.  
I know God knows, too much of palaces!  
And if he want me, let him come to me.  
But hire us some fair chamber for the night,  
And stalling for the horses, and return  
With victual for these men, and let us know."

"Yea, my kind lord," said the glad youth, and went,  
Held his head high, and thought himself a knight,  
And up the rocky pathway disappear'd,  
Leading the horse, and they were left alone.

But when the Prince had brought his errant eyes  
Home from the rock, sideways he let them glance  
At Enid, where she droopt: his own false doom,  
That shadow of mistrust should never cross  
Betwixt them, came upon him, and he sigh'd:  
Then with another humorous ruth remark'd  
The lusty mowers laboring dinnerless,  
And watch'd the sun blaze on the turning scythe,  
And after nodded sleepily in the heat.  
But she, remembering her old ruin'd hall,  
And all the windy clamor of the daws  
About her hollow turret, pluck'd the grass  
There growing longest by the meadow's edge,  
And into many a listless annulet,  
Now over, now beneath her marriage ring,  
Wove and unweave it, till the boy return'd  
And told them of a chamber, and they went;  
Where, after saying to her, "If ye will,  
Call for the woman of the house," to which  
She answer'd, "Thanks, my lord;" the two remain'd  
Apart by all the chamber's width, and mute  
As creatures voiceless thro' the fault of birth,  
Or two wild men supporters of a shield,  
Painted, who stare at open space, nor glance  
The one at other, parted by the shield.

On a sudden, many a voice along the street,  
And heel against the pavement echoing, burst  
Their drowse; and either started while the door,  
Push'd from without, drave backward to the wall,  
And midst of a rout of roisterers,  
Femininely fair and dissolutely pale,  
Her suitor in old years before Geraint,  
Enter'd, the wild lord of the place,  
Limours.  
He moving up with pliant courtliness,  
Greeted Geraint full face, but stealthily,  
In the mid-warmth of welcome and graspt hand.  
Found Enid with the corner of his eye,  
And knew her sitting sad and solitary.  
Then cried Geraint for wine and goodly cheer  
To feed the sudden guest, and sumptuously  
According to his fashion, bade the host  
Call in what men soever were his friends,  
And feast with these in honor of their earl;  
"And care not for the cost; the cost is mine."

And wine and food were brought,  
and Earl Limours  
Drank till he jested with all ease, and told  
Free tales, and took the word and play'd upon it,  
And made it of two colors; for his talk,  
When wine and free companions kindled him,  
Was wont to glance and sparkle like a gem  
Of fifty facets; thus he moved the Prince  
To laughter and his comrades to applause,  
Then, when the Prince was merry,  
ask'd Limours,  
"Your leave, my lord, to cross the room, and speak  
To your good damsel there who sits apart,  
And seems so lonely?" "My free leave" he said;  
"Get her to speak: she does not speak to me."  
Then rose Limours and looking at his feet,  
Like him who tries the bridge he fears may fall,  
Crossed and came near, lifted adoring eyes,  
Bow'd at her side and utter'd whisperingly:

"Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,  
Enid my early and my only love,  
Enid the loss of whom has turn'd me wild—

What chance is this? how is it I see you  
 here?  
 You are in my power at last, are in my  
 power.  
 Yet fear me not: I call mine own self  
 wild,  
 But keep a touch of sweet civility  
 Here in the heart of waste and wilder-  
 ness.  
 I thought, but that your father came  
 between,  
 In former days you saw me favorably.  
 And if it were so do not keep it back:  
 Make me a little happier: let me know  
 it:  
 Owe you me nothing for a life half-  
 lost?  
 Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all  
 you are.  
 And, Enid, you and he, I see it with  
 joy—  
 You sit apart, you do not speak to him,  
 You come with no attendance, page or  
 maid,  
 To serve you—does he love you as of  
 old?  
 For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know  
 Tho' men may bicker with the things  
 they love,  
 They would not make them laughable  
 in all eyes,  
 Not while they loved them; and your  
 wretched dress,  
 A wretched insult on you, dumbly  
 speaks  
 Your story, that this man loves you no  
 more.  
 Your beauty is no beauty to him now:  
 A common chance—right well I know  
 it—pall'd—  
 For I know men: nor will ye win him  
 back,  
 For the man's love once gone never re-  
 turns.  
 But here is one who loves you as of  
 old;  
 With more exceeding passion than of  
 old:  
 Good, speak the word: my followers  
 ring him round:  
 He sits unarm'd: I hold a finger up;  
 They understand: no; I do not mean  
 blood:  
 Nor need you look so scared at what I  
 say:  
 My malice is no deeper than a moat.  
 No stronger than a wall: there is the  
 keep:  
 He shall not cross us more; speak but  
 the word:  
 Or speak it not; but then by Him that  
 made me  
 The one true lover which you ever had,  
 I will make use of all the power I have.  
 O pardon me! the madness of that  
 hour,  
 When first I parted from you, moves  
 me yet."  
 At this the tender sound of his own  
 voice

And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it,  
 Made his eye moist; but Enid fear'd  
 his eyes,  
 Moist as they were, wine-heated from  
 the feast;  
 And answer'd with such craft as wo-  
 men use,  
 Guilty or guiltless, to stave off a chance  
 That breaks upon them perilously, and  
 said:

"Earl, if you love me as in former  
 years,  
 And do not practise on me, come with  
 morn,  
 And snatch me from him as by vio-  
 lence;  
 Leave me to-night: I am weary to the  
 death."

Low at leave-taking, with his bran-  
 dish'd plume  
 Brushing his instep, bow'd the all-am-  
 orous Earl,  
 And the stout Prince bade him a loud  
 good-night.  
 He moving homeward babbled to his  
 men,  
 How Enid never loved a man but him,  
 Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her  
 lord.

But Enid left alone with Prince Ge-  
 raint,  
 Debating his command of silence given,  
 And that she now perforce must violate  
 it,  
 Held commune with herself, and while  
 she held  
 He fell asleep, and Enid had no heart  
 To wake him, but hung o'er him,  
 wholly pleased  
 To find him yet unwounded after fight,  
 And hear him breathing low and  
 equally.  
 Anon she rose, and stepping lightly,  
 heap'd  
 The pieces of his armor in one place,  
 All to be there against a sudden need;  
 Then dozed awhile herself, but over-  
 toil'd  
 By that day's grief and travel, ever-  
 more  
 Seem'd catching at a rootless thorn,  
 and then  
 Went slipping down horrible preci-  
 pices,  
 And strongly striking out her limbs  
 awoke;  
 Then thought she heard the wild Earl  
 at the door,  
 With all his rout of random followers,  
 Sound on a dreadful trumpet, summon-  
 ing her;  
 Which was the red cock shouting to  
 the light,  
 As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy  
 world,  
 And glimmer'd on his armor in the  
 room.  
 And once again she rose to look at it,





But touch'd it unawares : jangling, the  
casque  
Fell, and he started up and stared at  
her.  
Then breaking his command of silence  
given,  
She told him all that Earl Limours had  
said,  
Except the passage that he loved her  
not ;  
Nor left untold the craft herself had  
used ;  
But ended with apology so sweet,  
Low-spoken, and of so few words, and  
seem'd  
So justified by that necessity,  
That tho' he thought " was it for him  
she wept  
In Devon ? " he but gave a wrathful  
groan,  
Saying " your sweet faces make good  
fellows fools  
And traitors. Call the host and bid  
him bring  
Charger and palfrey." So she glided  
out  
Among the heavy breathings of the  
house,  
And like a household Spirit at the  
walls  
Beat, till she woke the sleepers, and  
return'd :  
Then tending her rough lord, tho' all  
unask'd,  
In silence, did him service as a squire ;  
Till issuing arm'd he found the host  
and cried,  
" Thy reckoning, friend ? " and ere he  
learnt it, " Take  
Five horses and their armors ; " and  
the host,  
Suddenly honest, answer'd in amaze,  
" My lord, I scarce have spent the  
worth of one ! " " Ye  
will be all the wealthier," said  
the Prince,  
And then to Enid, " Forward ! and to-  
day  
I charge you, Enid, more especially,  
What thing soever ye may hear, or see,  
Or fancy (tho' I count it of small use  
To charge you) that ye speak not but  
obey."

And Enid answer'd, " Yea, my lord,  
I know  
Your wish, and would obey ; but riding  
first,  
I hear the violent threats you do not  
hear,  
I see the danger which you cannot see :  
Then not to give you warning, that  
seems hard ;  
Almost beyond me : yet I would obey."

" Yea so," said he, " do it: be not  
too wise ;  
Seeing that ye are wedded to a man,  
Not quite mismated with a yawning  
clown,

But one with arms to guard his head  
and yours,  
With eyes to find you out however far,  
And ears to hear you even in his  
dreams."

With that he turn'd and look'd as  
keenly at her  
As careful robins eye the delver's toil ;  
And that within her, which a wanton  
fool,  
Or hasty judger would have call'd her  
guilt,  
Made her cheek burn and either eye-  
lid fall.  
And Geraint look'd and was not satis-  
fied.

Then forward by a way which, beaten  
broad,  
Led from the territory of false Limours  
To the waste earldom of another earl,  
Doorm, whom his shaking vassals call'd  
the Bull,  
Went Enid with her sullen follower on.  
Once she look'd back, and when she  
saw him ride  
More near by many a rood than yester-  
morn,  
It wellnigh made her cheerful ; till Ge-  
raint  
Waving an angry hand as who should  
say  
" Ye watch me," sadden'd all her heart  
again.  
But while the sun yet beat a dewy  
blade,  
The sound of many a heavily-galloping  
hoof  
Smote on her ear, and turning round  
she saw  
Dust, and the points of lances bicker  
in it.  
Then not to disobey her lord's behest,  
And yet to give him warning, for he  
rode  
As if he heard not, moving back she  
held  
Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.  
At which the warrior in his obstinacy,  
Because she kept the letter of his  
word  
Was in a manner pleased, and turning,  
stood.  
And in the moment after, wild Li-  
mours,  
Borne on a black horse, like a thun-  
der-cloud  
Whose skirts are loosen'd by the break-  
ing storm,  
Half ridden off with by the thing he  
rode,  
And all in passion uttering a dry  
shriek,  
Dash'd on Geraint, who closed with  
him, and bore  
Down by the length of lance and arm  
beyond  
The crupper, and so left him stunn'd  
or dead,

And overthrew the next that followed  
him,  
And blindly rush'd on all the rout be-  
hind.  
But at the flash and motion of the man  
They vanish'd panic-stricken, like a  
shoal  
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn  
Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot  
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the  
sand,  
But if a man who stands upon the brink  
But lift a shining hand against the sun,  
There is not left the twinkle of a fin  
Betwixt the cressy islets white in  
flower,  
So, scared but at the motion of the  
man,  
Fled all the boon companions of the  
Earl,  
And left him lying in the public way;  
So vanish friendships only made in  
wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled  
Geraint,  
Who saw the chargers of the two that  
fell  
Start from their fallen lords, and wild-  
ly fly,  
Mixt with the fliers. "Horse and  
man," he said,  
"All of one mind and all right honest  
friends!  
Not a hoof left: and I methinks till  
now  
Was honest—paid with horses and  
with arms;  
I cannot steal or plunder, nor nor beg:  
And so what say ye, shall we strip him  
there  
Your lover? has your palfrey heart  
enough  
To bear his armor? shall we fast or  
dine?  
No?—then do you, being right hon-  
est, pray  
That we may meet the horsemen of  
Earl Doorn,  
I too would still be honest." Thus he  
said:  
And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,  
And answering not one word, she led  
the way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful  
loss  
Falls in a far land and he knows it not,  
But coming back he learns it, and the  
loss  
So pains him that he sickens nigh to  
death;  
So fare it with Geraint, who being  
prick'd  
In combat with the followers of Li-  
mours,  
Bled underneath his armor secretly,  
And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife  
What ail'd him, hardly knowing it him-  
self,

Till his eye darken'd and his helmet  
wagg'd;  
And at a sudden swerving of the road,  
Tho' happily down on a bank of grass,  
The Prince, without a word, from his  
horse fell.

And Enid heard the crashing of his  
fall,  
Suddenly came, and at his side all pale  
Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of  
his arms,  
Nor let her true hand falter, nor blue  
eye  
Moisten, till she had lighted on his  
wound,  
And tearing off her veil of faded silk  
Had bared her forehead to the blister-  
ing sun,  
And swathed the hurt that drain'd her  
dear lord's life.  
Then after all was done that hand could  
do,  
She rested, and her desolation came  
Upon her, and she wept beside the  
way.

And many past, but none regarded  
her,  
For in that realm of lawless turbu-  
lence,  
A woman weeping for her murder'd  
mate  
Was cared as much for as a summer  
shower:  
One took him for a victim of Earl  
Doorn,  
Nor dared to waste a perilous pity on  
him:  
Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms,  
Rode on a mission to the bandit Earl;  
Half whistling and half singing a  
coarse song,  
He drove the dust against her veiless  
eyes.  
Another, flying from the wrath of  
Doorn  
Before an ever-fancied arrow, made  
The long way smoke beneath him in  
his fear;  
At which her palfrey whinnying lifted  
heel,  
And scour'd into the coppices and was  
lost,  
While the great charger stood, grieved  
like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge  
Earl Doorn,  
Broad-faced with under-fringe of rus-  
set beard,  
Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,  
Came riding with a hundred lances up;  
But ere he came, like one that hails a  
ship,  
Cried out with a big voice, "What, is  
he dead?"  
"No, no, not dead!" she answered in  
all haste.  
"Would some of your kind people  
take him up,

And bear him hence out of this cruel  
sun ;  
Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not  
dead."

Then said Earl Doorm ; " Well if he  
be not dead,  
Why will ye for him thus ? ye seem a  
child.

And be he dead, I count you for a fool ;  
Your wailing will not quicken him :  
dead or not,

Ye mar a comely face with idiot tears.  
Yet, since the face is comely—some of  
you,

Here, take him up, and bear him to  
our hall :

An if he live, we will have him of our  
band ;

And if he die, why earth has earth  
enough

To hide him. See ye take the charger  
too,

A noble one."

He spake, and past away,  
But left two brawny spearmen, who  
advanced,

Each growling like a dog, when his  
good bone

Seems to be pluck'd at by the village  
boys

Who love to vex him eating, and he  
fears

To lose his bone, and lays his foot  
upon it,

Gnawing and growling : so the ruffians  
growl'd,

Fearing to lose, and all for a dead man,  
Their chance of booty from the morn-  
ing's raid ;

Yet raised and laid him on a litter-  
bier,

Such as they brought upon their fo-  
rays out

For those that might be wounded ; laid  
him on it

All in the hollow of his shield, and  
took

And bore him to the naked hall of  
Doorm,

(His gentle charger following him un-  
led)

And cast him and the bier in which he  
lay

Down on an oaken settle in the hall,  
And then departed, hot in haste to join

Their luckier mates, but growling as  
before,

And cursing their lost time, and the  
dead man,

And their own Earl, and their own  
souls, and her.

They might as well have blest her : she  
was deaf

To blessing and to cursing save from  
one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her  
lord,

There in the naked hall, propping his  
head,

And chafing his pale hands, and call-  
ing to him.

And at the last he waken'd from his  
swoon,

And found his own dear bride propping  
his head,

And chafing his faint hands, and call-  
ing to him ;

And felt the warm tears falling on his  
face ;

And said to his own heart, " she weeps  
for me : "

And yet lay still, and feign'd himself  
as dead,

That he might prove her to the utter-  
most,

And say to his own heart " she weeps  
for me."

But in the falling afternoon return'd  
The huge Earl Doorm with plunder to  
the hall.

His lusty spearmen follow'd him with  
noise :

Each hurling down a heap of things  
that rang

Against the pavement, cast his lance  
aside,

And doff'd his helm : and then there  
flutter'd in,

Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated  
eyes,

A tribe of women, dress'd in many  
hues,

And mingled with the spearmen : and  
Earl Doorm

Struck with a knife's haft hard against  
the board,

And call'd for flesh and wine to feed  
his spears.

And men brought in whole hogs and  
quarter beeves,

And all the hall was dim with steam of  
flesh :

And none spake word, but all sat down  
at once,

And ate with tumult in the naked  
hall,

Feeding like horses when you hear  
them feed ;

Till Enid shrank far back into herself,  
To shun the wild ways of the lawless  
tribe.

But when Earl Doorm had eaten all he  
would,

He roll'd his eyes about the hall, and  
found

A damsel drooping in a corner of it.  
Then he remember'd her, and how she  
wept :

And out of her there came a power  
upon him ;

And rising on a sudden, he said, " Eat !  
I never yet beheld a thing so pale.

God's curse, it makes me mad to see  
you weep.

Eat ! Look yourself. Good luck had  
your good man.

For were I dead who is it would weep  
for me ?

Sweet lady, never since I first drew  
 breath,  
 Have I beheld a lily like yourself.  
 And so there lived some color in your  
 cheek,  
 There is not one among my gentle-  
 women  
 Were fit to wear your slipper for a  
 glove.  
 But listen to me, and by me be ruled,  
 And I will do the thing I have not  
 done,  
 For you shall share my earldom with  
 me, girl,  
 And we will live like two birds in one  
 nest,  
 And I will fetch you forage from all  
 fields,  
 For I compel all creatures to my will."

He spoke: the brawny spearman let  
 his cheek  
 Bulge with the unswallow'd piece, and  
 turning stared;  
 While some, whose souls the old ser-  
 pent long had drawn  
 Down, as the worm draws in the  
 wither'd leaf,  
 And makes it earth, hiss'd each at  
 other's ear  
 What shall not be recorded — women  
 they,  
 Women, or what had been those gra-  
 cious things,  
 But now desired the humbling of their  
 best,  
 Yea, would have help'd him to it: and  
 all at once  
 They hated her, who took no thought  
 of them,  
 But answer'd in low voice, her meek  
 head yet  
 Drooping, "I pray you of your cour-  
 tesy,  
 He being as he is, to let me be."

She spake so low he hardly heard her  
 speak,  
 But like a mighty patron, satisfied  
 With what himself had done so gra-  
 ciously,  
 Assumed that she had thanked him,  
 adding, "yea.  
 Eat and be glad, for I account you  
 mine."

She answer'd meekly, "How should  
 I be glad  
 Henceforth in all the world at any-  
 thing,  
 Until my lord arise and look upon  
 me?"

Here the huge Earl cried out upon  
 her talk,  
 As all but empty heart and weariness  
 And sickly nothing; suddenly seized  
 on her,  
 And bare her by main violence to the  
 board,  
 And thrust the dish before her, crying,  
 "Eat."

"No, no," said Enid, vext, "I will  
 not eat,  
 Till yonder man upon the bier arise,  
 And eat with me." "Drink, then," he  
 answer'd. "Here!"  
 (And fill'd a horn with wine and held  
 it to her,)  
 "Lo! I, myself, when flush'd with  
 fight, or hot,  
 God's curse, with anger — often I my-  
 self,  
 Before I well have drunken, scarce can  
 eat:  
 Drink therefore and the wine will  
 change your will."

"Not so," she cried, "by Heaven, I  
 will not drink,  
 Till my dear lord arise and bid me do  
 it,  
 And drink with me; and if he rise no  
 more,  
 I will not look at wine until I die."

At this he turn'd all red and paced  
 his hall,  
 Now gnaw'd his under, now his upper  
 lip,  
 And coming up close to her, said at  
 last;  
 "Girl, for I see you scorn my cour-  
 tesies,  
 Take warning: yonder man is surely  
 dead;  
 And I compel all creatures to my will.  
 Not eat nor drink? And wherefore  
 wait for one,  
 Who put your beauty to this flout and  
 scorn  
 By dressing it in rags? Amazed am I,  
 Beholding how ye butt against my wish,  
 That I forbear you thus: cross me no  
 more.

At least put off to please me this poor  
 gown,  
 This silken rag, this beggar-woman's  
 weed:  
 I love that beauty should go beauti-  
 fully:  
 For see ye not my gentlewomen here,  
 How gay, how suited to the house of  
 one,  
 Who loves that beauty should go beau-  
 tifully!  
 Rise therefore; robe yourself in this:  
 obey."

He spoke, and one among his gentle-  
 women  
 Display'd a splendid silk of foreign  
 loom,  
 Where like a shoaling sea the lovely  
 blue  
 Play'd into green, and thicker down  
 the front  
 With jewels than the sward with drops  
 of dew,  
 When all night long a cloud clings to  
 the hill,  
 And with the dawn ascending lets the  
 day

Strike where it clung : so thickly shone  
the gems.

But Enid answer'd, harder to be  
moved  
Than hardest tyrants in their day of  
power,  
With life-long injuries burning un-  
avenged,  
And now their hour has come ; and  
Enid said :

" In this poor gown my dear lord  
found me first,  
And loved me serving in my father's  
hall :  
In this poor gown I rode with him to  
court,  
And there the Queen array'd me like  
the sun :  
In this poor gown he bade me clothe  
myself,  
When now we rode upon this fatal  
quest  
Of honor, where no honor can be  
gain'd :  
And this poor gown I will not cast  
aside  
Until himself arise a living man,  
And bid me cast it. I have griefs  
enough :  
Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be :  
I never loved, can never love but him :  
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentle-  
ness,  
He being as he is, to let me be."

Then strode the brute Earl up and  
down his hall,  
And took his russet beard between his  
teeth ;  
Last, coming up quite close, and in his  
mood  
Crying, " I count it of no more avail,  
Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with  
you ;  
Take my salute," unknighly with flat  
hand,  
However lightly, smote her on the  
cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helples-  
ness,  
And since she thought, " he had not  
dared to do it,  
Except he surely knew my lord was  
dead,"  
Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter  
cry,  
As of a wild thing taken in the trap,  
Which sees the trapper coming thro'  
the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at  
his sword,  
(It lay beside him in the hollow shield,  
Made but a single bound, and with a  
sweep of it  
Shore thro' the swarthy neck, and like  
a ball  
The russet-bearded head roll'd on the  
floor.

So died Earl Doorm by him he counted  
dead.

And all the men and women in the hall  
Rose when they saw the dead man rise,  
and fled  
Yelling as from a spectre, and the two  
Were left alone together, and he said :

" Enid, I have used you worse than  
that dead man ;  
Done you more wrong : we both have  
undergone  
That trouble which has left me thrice  
your own :  
Henceforward I will rather die than  
doubt.  
And here I lay this penance on myself,  
Not, tho' mine own ears heard you  
yester-morn—  
You thought me sleeping, but I heard  
you say,  
I heard you say, that you were no true  
wife :  
I swear I will not ask your meaning in  
it :  
I do believe yourself against yourself,  
And will henceforward rather die than  
doubt."

And Enid could not say one tender  
word,  
She felt so blunt and stupid at the  
heart :  
She only prayed him, " Fly, they will  
return  
And slay you : fly, your charger is  
without,  
My palfry lost." " Then, Enid, shall  
you ride  
Behind me." " Yea," said Enid, " let  
us go,"  
And moving out they found the stately  
horse,  
Who now no more a vassal to the thief,  
But free to stretch its limbs in lawful  
fight,  
Neigh'd with all gladness as they came,  
and stoop'd  
With a low whinny toward the pair :  
and she  
Kiss'd the white star upon his noble  
front,  
Glad also ; then Geraint upon the horse  
Mounted, and reach'd a hand, and on  
his foot  
She set her own and climb'd ; he turn'd  
his face  
And kiss'd her climbing, and she cast  
her arms  
About him, and at once they rode  
away.

And never yet, since high in Para-  
dise  
O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,  
Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind  
Than lived thro' her, who in that per-  
lous hour  
Put hand to hand beneath her hus-  
band's heart,

And felt him hers again : she did not weep,  
 But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist  
 Like that which kept the heart of Eden green  
 Before the useful trouble of the rain ;  
 Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes  
 As not to see before them on the path,  
 Right in the gateway of the bandit hold,  
 A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his lance  
 In rest, and made as if to fall upon him.  
 Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood,  
 She, with her mind all full of what had chanced,  
 Shriek'd to the stranger, "Slay not a dead man !"  
 "The voice of Enid," said the knight ;  
 but she,  
 Beholding it was Edyrn, son of Nudd,  
 Was moved so much the more, and shriek'd again,  
 "O cousin, slay not him who gave you life."  
 And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake :  
 "My lord Geraint, I greet you with all love ;  
 I took you for a bandit knight of Doorn ;  
 And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him,  
 Who love you, Prince, with something of the love  
 Wherewith we love the Heaven that chastens us.  
 For once, when I was up so high in pride  
 That I was halfway down the slope to Hell,  
 By overthrowing me you threw me higher,  
 Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table Round,  
 And since I knew this Earl, when I myself  
 Was half a bandit in my lawless hour,  
 I come the mouthpiece of our King to Doorn  
 (The King is close behind me) bidding him  
 Disband himself, and scatter all his powers,  
 Submit, and hear the judgment of the King."

"He hears the judgment of the King of Kings,"  
 Cried the wan Prince ; "And lo the powers of Doorn  
 Are scatter'd," and he pointed to the field,  
 Where, huddled here and there on mound and knoll,  
 Were men and women staring and aghast,

While some yet fled ; and then he plainlier told  
 How the huge Earl lay slain within his hall.  
 But when the knight besought him,  
 "Follow me,  
 Prince, to the camp, and in the King's own ear  
 Speak what has chanced ; ye surely have endured  
 Strange chances here alone ;" that other flush'd,  
 And hung his head, and halted in reply.  
 Fearing the mild face of the blameless King,  
 And after madness acted question ask'd :  
 Till Edyrn crying, "If ye will not go  
 To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you ;"  
 "Enough," he said, "I follow," and they went,  
 But Enid in their going had two fears,  
 One from the bandit scatter'd in the field,  
 And one from Edyrn. Every now and then,  
 When Edyrn rein'd his charger at her side,  
 She shrank a little. In a hollow land,  
 From which old fires have broken, men may fear  
 Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving, said :

"Fair and dear cousin, you that most had cause  
 To fear me, fear no longer, I am changed.  
 Yourself were first the blameless cause to make  
 My nature's prideful sparkle in the blood  
 Break into furious flame ; being repulsed  
 By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and wrought  
 Until I overturn'd him ; then set up  
 (With one main purpose ever at my heart)  
 My haughty jousts, and took a paramour ;  
 Did her mock-honor as the fairest fair,  
 And, toppling over all antagonism,  
 So wax'd in pride, that I believed myself  
 Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh mad ;  
 And, but for my main purpose in these jousts,  
 I should have slain your father, seized yourself.  
 I lived in hope that sometime you would come  
 To these my lists with him whom best you loved ;  
 And there, poor cousin, with your meek blue eyes,

The truest eyes that ever answer'd  
 heaven,  
 Behold me overturn and trample on  
 him.  
 Then, had you cried, or knelt, or pray'd  
 to me,  
 I should not less have kill'd him. And  
 you came,—  
 But once you came,—and with your  
 own true eyes  
 Beheld the man you loved (I speak as  
 one  
 Speaks of a service done him) over-  
 throw  
 My proud self, and my purpose three  
 years old,  
 And set his foot upon me, and give me  
 life.  
 There was I broken down; there was I  
 saved;  
 Tho' thence I rode all-shamed, hating  
 the life  
 He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.  
 And all the penance the Queen laid  
 upon me  
 Was but to rest awhile within her  
 court;  
 Where first as sullen as a beast new-  
 caged,  
 And waiting to be treated like a wolf,  
 Because I knew my deeds were known,  
 I found,  
 Instead of scornful pity or pure scorn,  
 Such fine reserve and noble reticence,  
 Manners so kind, yet stately, such a  
 grace  
 Of tenderest courtesy, that I began  
 To glance behind me at my former life,  
 And find that it had been the wolf's  
 indeed;  
 And oft I talk'd with Dubric, the high  
 saint,  
 Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,  
 Subdued me somewhat to that gentle-  
 ness,  
 Which, when it weds with manhood,  
 makes a man.  
 And you were often there about the  
 Queen,  
 But saw me not, or mark'd not if you  
 saw;  
 Nor did I care or dare to speak with  
 you,  
 But kept myself aloof till I was  
 changed;  
 And fear not, cousin; I am changed  
 indeed."

He spoke, and Enid easily believed,  
 Like simple noble natures, credulous  
 Of what they long for, good in friend  
 or foe,  
 There most in those who most have  
 done them ill.  
 And when they reach'd the camp the  
 King himself  
 Advanced to greet them, and behold-  
 ing her  
 Tho' pale, yet happy, ask'd her not a  
 word,

But went apart with Edyrn, whom he  
 held  
 In converse for a little, and return'd,  
 And, gravely smiling, lifted her from  
 horse,  
 And kiss'd her with all pureness,  
 brother-like,  
 And show'd an empty tent allotted  
 her,  
 And glancing for a minute, till he saw  
 her  
 Pass into it, turn'd to the Prince, and  
 said:

"Prince, when of late ye pray'd me  
 for my leave  
 To move to your own land and there  
 defend  
 Your marches, I was prick'd with some  
 reproof,  
 As one that let foul wrong stagnate  
 and be,  
 By having look'd too much thro' alien  
 eyes,  
 And wrought too long with delegated  
 hands,  
 Not used mine own: but now behold  
 me come  
 To cleanse this common sewer of all  
 my realm,  
 With Edyrn and with others: have ye  
 look'd  
 At Edyrn? have ye seen how nobly  
 changed?  
 This work of his is great and wonder-  
 ful.  
 His very face with change of heart is  
 changed.  
 The world will not believe a man re-  
 pents:  
 And this wise world of ours is mainly  
 right.  
 Full seldom *does* a man repent, or use  
 Both grace and will to pick the vicious  
 quitch  
 Of blood and custom wholly out of  
 him,  
 And make all clean, and plant himself  
 afresh.  
 Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart  
 As I will weed this land before I go.  
 I, therefore, made him of our Table  
 Round,  
 Not rashly, but have proved him every-  
 way  
 One of our noblest, our most valorous,  
 Sanest and most obedient: and indeed  
 This work of Edyrn wrought upon  
 himself  
 After a life of violence, seems to me  
 A thousand-fold more great and won-  
 ful  
 Then if some knight of mine, risking  
 his life,  
 My subject with my subjects under  
 him,  
 Should make an onslaught single on a  
 realm  
 Of robbers, tho' he slew them one by  
 one

And were himself nigh wounded to  
the death."

So spake the King; low bow'd the  
Prince, and felt  
His work was neither great nor won-  
derful,  
And past to Enid's tent; and thither  
came  
The King's own leech to look into his  
hurt;  
And Enid tended on him there; and  
there  
Her constant motion round him, and  
the breath  
Of her sweet tendance hovering over  
him,  
Fill'd all the genial courses of his  
blood  
With deeper and with ever deeper  
love,  
As the south-west that blowing Bala  
lake  
Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the  
days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his  
hurt,  
The blameless King went forth and  
cast his eyes  
On each of all whom Uther left in  
charge  
Long since, to guard the justice of the  
King;  
He look'd and found them wanting;  
and as now  
Men weed the white horse on the Berk-  
shire hills  
To keep him bright and clean as here-  
tofore,  
He rooted out the slothful officer  
Or guilty, which for bribe had wink'd  
at wrong,  
And in their chairs set up a stronger  
race  
With hearts and hands, and sent a  
thousand men  
To till the wastes, and moving every-  
where  
Clear'd the dark places and let in the  
law,  
And broke the bandit holds and  
cleansed the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again,  
they past  
With Arthur to Caerleon upon Usk.  
There the great Queen once more em-  
braced her friend,  
And clothed her in apparel like the  
day.  
And tho' Geraint could never take  
again  
That comfort from their converse  
which he took  
Before the Queen's fair name was  
breathed upon,  
He rested well content that all was  
well.  
Thence after tarrying for a space they  
rode,

And fifty knights rode with them to the  
shores  
Of Severn, and they past to their own  
land.  
And there he kept the justice of the  
King  
So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts  
Applauded, and the spiteful whisper  
died:  
And being ever foremost in the chase,  
And victor at the tilt and tournament,  
They call'd him the great Prince and  
man of men.  
But Enid, whom her ladies loved to  
call  
Enid the Fair, a grateful people named  
Enid the Good; and in their halls  
arose  
The cry of children, Enids and Ger-  
aints  
Of times to be; nor did he doubt her  
more  
But rested in her fealty, till he crown'd  
A happy life with a fair death, and fell  
Against the heathen of the Northern  
Sea  
In battle, fighting for the blameless  
King.

---

MERLIN AND VIVIEN.

A STORM was coming, but the winds  
were still,  
And in the wild woods of Broceliande,  
Before an oak, so hollow huge and old  
It look'd a tower of ruin'd masonwork,  
At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay.

The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's  
court:  
She hated all the knights, and heard  
in thought  
Their lavish comment when her name  
was named.  
For once, when Arthur walking all  
alone,  
Vext at a rumor rife about the Queen,  
Had met her, Vivien, being greeted  
fair,  
Would fain have wrought upon his  
cloudy mood  
With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken  
voice,  
And flutter'd adoration, and at last  
With dark sweet hints of some who  
prized him more  
Than who should prize him most; at  
which the King  
Had gazed upon her blankly and gone  
by:  
But one had watch'd, and had not held  
his peace:  
It made the laughter of one afternoon  
That Vivien should attempt the blame-  
less King.  
And after that, she set herself to gain  
Him, the most famous man of all those  
times,

Merlin, who knew the range of all  
 their arts,  
 Had built the King his havens, ships,  
 and halls,  
 Was also Bard, and knew the starry  
 heavens ;  
 The people call'd him Wizard ; whom  
 at first  
 She play'd about with slight and  
 sprightly talk,  
 And vivid smiles, and faintly-venom'd  
 points  
 Of slander, glancing here and gazing  
 there ;  
 And yielding to his kindlier moods,  
 the Seer  
 Would watch her at her petulance, and  
 play,  
 E'en when they seem'd unlovable, and  
 laugh  
 As those that watch a kitten ; thus he  
 grew  
 Tolerant of what he half disdain'd, and  
 she,  
 Perceiving that she was but half dis-  
 dain'd,  
 Began to break her sports with graver  
 fits,  
 Turn red or pale, would often when  
 they met  
 Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him  
 With such a fixt devotion, that the old  
 man,  
 Tho' doubtful, felt the flattery, and at  
 times  
 Would flatter his own wish in age for  
 love,  
 And half believe her true : for thus at  
 times  
 He waver'd ; but that other clung to  
 him,  
 Fixt in her will, and so the seasons  
 went,  
 Then fell upon him a great melan-  
 choly ;  
 And leaving Arthur's court he gain'd  
 the beach ;  
 There found a little boat, and stept  
 into it ;  
 And Vivien follow'd, but he mark'd  
 her not.  
 She took the helm and he the sail ; the  
 boat  
 Drave with a sudden wind across the  
 deeps,  
 And touching Bretcn sands, they disem-  
 bark'd.  
 And then she follow'd Merlin all the  
 way,  
 Ev'n to the wild woods of Broceliande.  
 For Merlin once had told her of a  
 charm,  
 The which if any wrought on any one  
 With woven paces and with waving  
 arms,  
 The man so wrought on ever seem'd to  
 lie  
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow  
 tower,  
 From which was no escape for ever-

And none could find that man for ever-  
 more,  
 Nor could he see but him who wrought  
 the charm  
 Coming and going, and he lay as dead  
 And lost to life and use and name and  
 fame.  
 And Vivien ever sought to work the  
 charm  
 Upon the great Enchanter of the Time,  
 As fancying, that her glory would be  
 great  
 According to his greatness whom she  
 quench'd.

There lay she all her length and  
 kiss'd his feet,  
 As if in deepest reverence and in love.  
 A twist of gold was round her hair ; a  
 robe  
 Of samite without price, that more  
 express  
 Than hid her, clung about her lissome  
 limbs,  
 In color like the satin-shining palm  
 On shallows in the windy gleams of  
 March :  
 And while she kiss'd them, crying,  
 " Trample me,  
 Dear feet, that I have follow'd thro'  
 the world,  
 And I will pay you worship ; tread me  
 down  
 And I will kiss you for it ; " he was  
 mute :  
 So dark a forethought roll'd about his  
 brain,  
 As on a dull day in an Ocean cave  
 The blind wave feeling round his long  
 sea-hall  
 In silence : wherefore, when she lifted  
 up  
 A face of sad appeal, and spake and  
 said,  
 " O Merlin, do ye love me ? " and  
 again,  
 " O Merlin, do ye love me ? " and once  
 more,  
 " Great Master, do ye love me ? " he  
 was mute.  
 And lissome Vivien, holding by his  
 heel,  
 Writhed toward him, slid up his  
 knee and sat,  
 Behind his ankle twined her hollow  
 feet  
 Together, curv'd an arm about his  
 neck,  
 Clung like a snake ; and letting her  
 left hand  
 Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a  
 leaf,  
 Made with her right a comb of pearl to  
 part  
 The lists of such a beard as youth gone  
 out  
 Had left in ashes : then he spoke and  
 said,  
 Not looking at her, " who are wise in  
 love

Love most, say least," and Vivien answer'd quick.

"I saw the little elf-god eyeless once  
In Arthur's arras hall at Camelot:  
But neither eyes nor tongue—O stupid  
child!

Yet you are wise who say it; let me  
think

Silence is wisdom; I am silent then  
And ask no kiss;" then adding all at  
once,

"And lo, I clothe myself with wis-  
dom," drew

The vast and shaggy mantle of his  
beard:

Across her neck and bosom to her  
knee,

And call'd herself a gilded summer fly  
Caught in a great old tyrant spider's  
web,

Who meant to eat her up in that wild  
wood

Without one word. So Vivien call'd  
herself,

But rather seem'd a lovely baleful star  
Veil'd in gray vapor; till he sadly  
smiled:

"To what request for what strange  
boon," he said

"Are these your pretty tricks and fool-  
eries,

O Vivien, the preamble? yet my thanks,  
For these have broken up my melan-  
choly."

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily,  
"What, O my Master, have ye found  
your voice?

I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks  
at last!

But yesterday you never open'd lip,  
Except indeed to drink: no cup had  
we:

In mine own lady palms I call'd the  
spring

That gather'd trickling dropwise from  
the cleft,

And made a pretty cup of both my  
hands

And offer'd you it kneeling: then ye  
drank

And knew no more, nor gave me one  
poor word;

O no more thanks than might a goat  
have given

With no more sign of reverence than a  
beard.

And when we halted at that other well,  
And I was faint to swooning, and ye  
lay

Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of  
those

Deep meadows we had traversed, did  
you know

That Vivien bathed your feet before  
her own?

And yet no thanks: and all thro' this  
wild wood

And all this morning when I fondled  
you:

Boon, yes, there was a boon, one not  
so strange—

How had I wrong'd you? surely you  
are wise,

But such a silence is more wise than  
kind."

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers  
and said;

"O did you never lie upon the shore.  
And watch the curl'd white of the  
coming wave

Glass'd in the slippery sand before it  
breaks?

Ev'n such a wave, but not so pleasa-  
rable,

Dark in the glass of some presageful  
mood,

Had I for three days seen, ready to  
fall.

And then I rose and fled from Arthur's  
court

To break the mood. You follow'd me  
unask'd;

And when I look'd, and saw you follow-  
ing still,

My mind involved yourself the nearest  
thing

In that mind-mist: for shall I tell you  
truth?

You seem'd that wave about to break  
upon me

And sweep me from my hold upon the  
world,

My use and name and fame. Your  
pardon, child,

Your pretty sports have brighten'd all  
again.

And ask your boon, for boon I owe you  
thrice,

Once for wrong done you by confusion,  
next

For thanks it seems till now neglected,  
last

For these your dainty gambols: where-  
fore ask;

And take this boon so strange and not  
so strange."

And Vivien answer'd smiling mourn-  
fully;

"O not so strange as my long asking  
it,

Nor yet so strange as you yourself  
are strange,

Nor half so strange as that dark mood  
of yours.

I ever fear'd ye were not wholly mine;  
And see, yourself have own'd ye did  
me wrong.

The people call you prophet: let it be  
But not of those that can expound  
themselves.

Take Vivien for expounder: she will  
call

That three-day-long presageful gloom  
of yours

No presage, but the same mistrustful  
mood

That makes you seem less noble than  
yourself

Whenever I have ask'd this very boon,  
 Now ask'd again : for see you not,  
 dear love,  
 That such a mood as that, which lately  
 gloom'd  
 Your fancy when you saw me follow-  
 ing you,  
 Must make me fear still more you  
 are not mine,  
 Must make me yearn still more to prove  
 you mine,  
 And make me wish still more to learn  
 this charm  
 Of woven paces and of waving hands,  
 As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it  
 me.  
 The charm so taught will charm us both  
 to rest.  
 For, grant me some slight power upon  
 your fate,  
 I, feeling that you felt me worthy  
 trust,  
 Should rest and let you rest, knowing  
 you mine.  
 And therefore be as great as you are  
 named,  
 Not muffled round with selfish reti-  
 cence.  
 How hard you look and how denyingly!  
 O, if you think this wickedness in me,  
 That I should prove it on you unawares,  
 To make you lose your use and name  
 and fame,  
 That makes me most indignant : then  
 our bond  
 Had best be loosed for ever : but think  
 or not,  
 By Heaven that hears I tell you the  
 clean truth,  
 As clean as blood of babes, as white as  
 milk :  
 O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,  
 If these unwitty wandering wits of  
 mine,  
 Ev'n in the jumbled rubbish of a dream,  
 Have tript on such conjectural treach-  
 ery—  
 May this hard earth cleave to the Nadir  
 hell  
 Down, down, and close again, and nip  
 me flat,  
 If I be such a traitress. Yield my  
 boon,  
 Till which I scarce can yield you all I  
 am ;  
 And grant my re-reiterated wish,  
 The great proof of your love : because  
 I think,  
 However wise, ye hardly know me yet."

And Merlin loosed his hand from  
 hers and said,  
 "I never was less wise, however wise,  
 Too curious Vivien, tho' you talk of  
 trust,  
 Than when I told you first of such a  
 charm.  
 Yea, if ye talk of trust I tell you this,  
 Too much I trusted, when I told you  
 that,

And stir'd this vice in you which  
 ruin'd man  
 Thro' woman the first hour ; for how-  
 soe'er  
 In children a great curiousness be  
 well,  
 Who have to learn themselves and all  
 the world,  
 In you, that are no child, for still I find  
 Your face is practised, when I spell the  
 lines,  
 I call it,—well, I will not call it vice :  
 But since you name yourself the sum-  
 mer fly,  
 I well could wish a cobweb for the  
 gnat,  
 That settles, beaten back, and beaten  
 back  
 Settles, till one could yield for wear-  
 ness ;  
 But since I will not yield to give you  
 power  
 Upon my life and use and name and  
 fame,  
 Why will you never ask some other  
 boon ?  
 Yea, by God's rood, I trusted you too  
 much."

And Vivien, like the tenderest-heart-  
 ed maid  
 That ever bided tryst at village stile,  
 Made answer, either eyelid wet with  
 tears.  
 "Nay, master, be not wrathful with  
 your maid ;  
 Caress her : let her feel herself for-  
 given  
 Who feels no heart to ask another  
 boon.  
 I think you hardly know the tender  
 rhyme  
 Of 'trust me not at all or all in all.'  
 I heard the great Sir Lancelot sing it  
 once,  
 And it shall answer for me. Listen to  
 it.

'In Love, if Love be Love, if Love be  
 ours,  
 Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal  
 powers ;  
 Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.  
 'It is the little rift within the lute,  
 That by and by will make the music  
 mute,  
 And ever widening slowly silence all.

'The little rift within the lover's  
 lute  
 Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,  
 That rotting inward slowly moulders  
 all.

'It is not worth the keeping : let it  
 go :  
 But shall it ? answer, darling, answer,  
 no.  
 And trust me not at all or all in all.'  
 O master, do ye love my tender  
 rhyme ?"

And Merlin look'd and half believed  
her true,  
So tender was her voice, so fair her  
face,  
So sweetly gleam'd her eyes behind her  
tears  
Like sunlight on the plain behind a  
shower:  
And yet he answer'd half indigmantly.

"Far other was the song that once I  
heard  
By this huge oak, sung nearly where  
we sit:  
For here we met, some ten or twelve  
of us,  
To chase a creature that was current  
then  
In these wild woods, the hart with  
golden horns.  
It was the time when first the question  
rose  
About the founding of a Table Round,  
That was to be, for love of God and  
men  
And noble deeds, the flower of all the  
world.  
And each incited each to noble deeds.  
And while we waited one, the youngest  
of us,  
We could not keep him silent, out he  
flash'd,  
And into such a song, such fire for  
fame,  
Such trumpet-blowings in it, coming  
down  
To such a stern and iron-clashing close,  
That when he stopt we long'd to hurl  
together,  
And should have done it; but the  
beauteous beast  
Scared by the noise upstarted at our  
feet,  
And like a silver shadow slipt away  
Thro' the dim land; and all day long  
we rode  
Thro' the dim land against a rushing  
wind,  
That glorious roundel echoing in our  
ears,  
And chased the flashes of his golden  
horns  
Until they vanish'd by the fairy well  
That laughs at iron—as our warriors  
did—  
Where children cast their pins and  
nails, and cry,  
'Laugh, little well,' but touch it with  
a sword,  
It buzzes wildly round the point; and  
there  
We lost him: such a noble song was  
that.  
But, Vivien, when you sang me that  
sweet rhyme,  
I felt as tho' you knew this cursed  
charm,  
Were proving it on me, and that I lay  
And felt them slowly ebbing, name  
and fame."

And Vivien answer'd smiling mourn  
fully;  
"O mine have ebb'd away for ever-  
more,  
And all thro' following you to this  
wild wood,  
Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.  
Lo now, what hearts have men! they  
never mount  
As high as woman in her selfless mood.  
And touching fame, howe'er ye scorn  
my song,  
Take one verse more—the lady speaks  
it—this:

'My name, once mine, now thine, is  
closeseller mine,  
For fame, could fame be mine, that  
fame were thine,  
And shame, could shame be thine, that  
shame were mine.  
So trust me not at all or all in all.'

"Says she not well? and there is  
more—this rhyme  
Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the  
Queen,  
That burst in dancing, and the pearls  
were spilt;  
Some lost, some stolen, some as relics  
kept.  
But nevermore the same two sister  
pearls  
Ran down the silken thread to kiss  
each other  
On her white neck—so is it with this  
rhyme:  
It lives dispersedly in many hands,  
And every minstrel sings it differ-  
ently;  
Yet is there one true line, the pearl of  
pearls;  
'Man dreams of Fame while woman  
wakes to love,'  
True: Love, tho' Love were of the  
grossest, carves  
A portion from the solid present, eats  
And uses, careless of the rest; but  
Fame  
The Fame that follows death is nothing  
to us;  
And what is Fame in life but half-dis-  
fame,  
And counterchanged with darkness?  
you yourself  
Know well that Envy calls you Devil's  
son,  
And since you seem the Master of all  
Art,  
They fain would make you Master of  
all Vice."

And Merlin lock'd his hand in hers  
and said,  
"I once was looking for a magic weed.  
And found a fair young squire who sat  
alone.  
Had carved himself a knightly shield  
of wood,  
And then was painting on it fancied  
arms,

Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun  
 In dexter chief; the scroll 'I follow  
 fame.'  
 And speaking not, but leaning over  
 him,  
 I took his brush and blotted out the  
 bird,  
 And made a Gardener putting in a  
 graft,  
 With this for motto, 'Rather use than  
 fame.'  
 You should have seen him blush; but  
 afterwards  
 He made a stalwart knight. O Vivien,  
 For you, methinks you think you love  
 me well;  
 For me, I love you somewhat; rest:  
 and Love  
 Should have some rest and pleasure in  
 himself,  
 Not ever be too curious for a boon,  
 To prurient for a proof against the  
 grain  
 Of him you say you love: but, Fame  
 with men,  
 Being but ampler means to serve man-  
 kind,  
 Should have small rest or pleasure in  
 herself,  
 But work as vassal to the larger love,  
 That dwarfs the petty love of one to  
 one.  
 Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame  
 again  
 Increasing gave me use. Lo, there my  
 boon!  
 What other? for men sought to prove  
 me vile,  
 Because I wish'd to give them greater  
 minds:  
 And then did Envy call me Devil's son:  
 The sick weak beast seeking to help  
 herself  
 By striking at her better, miss'd, and  
 brought  
 Her own claw back, and wounded her  
 own heart.  
 Sweet were the days when I was all un-  
 known,  
 But when my name was lifted up, the  
 storm  
 Broke on the mountain and I cared  
 not for it.  
 Right well know I that Fame is half-  
 dis-  
 fame,  
 Yet needs must work my work. That  
 other fame,  
 To one at least, who hath not children,  
 vague,  
 The cackle of the unborn about the  
 grave,  
 I cared not for it; a single misty star,  
 Which is the second in a line of stars  
 That seem a sword beneath a belt of  
 three.  
 I never gazed upon it but I dreamt,  
 Of some vast charm concluded in that  
 star  
 To make fame nothing. Wherefore, if  
 I fear,

Giving you power upon me thro' this  
 charm,  
 That you might play me falsely, having  
 power,  
 However well you think you love me  
 now  
 (As sons of kings loving in pupillage  
 Have turn'd to tyrants when they came  
 to power)  
 I rather dread the loss of use than  
 fame;  
 If you—and not so much from wicked-  
 ness,  
 As some wild turn of anger, or a mood  
 Of overstrain'd affection, it may be,  
 To keep me all to your own self, or  
 else  
 A sudden spurt of woman's jealousy,—  
 Should try this charm on whom you  
 say you love."

And Vivien answer'd smiling as in  
 wrath.  
 "Have I not sworn? I am not trusted.  
 Good!  
 Well, hide it, hide it; I shall find it  
 out;  
 And being found take heed of Vivien.  
 A woman and not trusted, doubtless I  
 Might feel some sudden turn of anger  
 born  
 Of your misfaith; and your fine  
 epithet  
 Is accurate too, for this full love of  
 mine  
 Without the full heart back may merit  
 well  
 Your term of overstrain'd. So used  
 as I,  
 My daily wonder is, I love at all.  
 And as to woman's jealousy, O why  
 not?  
 O to what end, except a jealous one,  
 And one to make me jealous if I love,  
 Was this fair charm invented by your-  
 self?  
 I well believe that all about this world  
 Ye cage a buxom captive here and  
 there,  
 Closed in the four walls of a hollow  
 tower  
 From which is no escape for ever-  
 more."

Then the great Master merrily an-  
 swer'd her.  
 "Full many a love in loving youth was  
 mine,  
 I needed then no charm to keep them  
 mine  
 But youth and love; and that full  
 heart of yours  
 Whereof you prattle, may now assure  
 you mine;  
 So live uncharm'd. For those who  
 wrought it first,  
 The wrist is parted from the hand that  
 waved,  
 The feet unmortised from their ankle-  
 bones

Who paced it ages, back : but will ye  
hear  
The legend as in guerdon for your  
rhyme?

“There lived a king in the most  
Eastern East,  
Less old than I, yet older, for my blood  
Hath earnest in it of far springs to be.  
A tawny pirate anchor'd in his port,  
Whose bark had plunder'd twenty  
nameless isles ;  
And passing one, at the high peep of  
dawn,  
He saw two cities in a thousand boats  
All fighting for a woman on the sea.  
And pushing his black craft among  
them all,  
He lightly scatter'd theirs and brought  
her off,  
With loss of half his people arrow-  
slain ;  
A maid so smooth, so white, so wonder-  
ful,  
They said a light came from her when  
she moved :  
And since the pirate would not yield  
her up,  
The King impaled him for his piracy ;  
Then made her Queen : but those isle-  
nurtur'd eyes  
Waged such unwilling tho' successful  
war  
On all the youth, they sicken'd ; coun-  
cils thinn'd,  
And armies waned, for magnet-like  
she drew  
The rustiest iron of old fighters' hearts ;  
And beasts themselves would worship ;  
camels knelt  
Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain  
back  
That carry kings in castles, bow'd  
black knees  
Of homage, ringing with their serpent  
hands,  
To make her smile, her golden ankle-  
bells.  
What wonder, being jealous, that he  
sent  
His horns of proclamation out thro' all  
The hundred under-kingdoms that he  
sway'd  
To find a wizard who might teach the  
King  
Some charm, which being wrought  
upon the Queen  
Might keep her all his own : to such a  
one  
He promised more than ever king has  
given,  
A league of mountain full of golden  
mines,  
A province with a hundred miles of  
coast,  
A palace and a princess, all for him :  
But on all those who tried and fail'd,  
the King  
Pronounced a dismal sentence, mean-  
ing by it

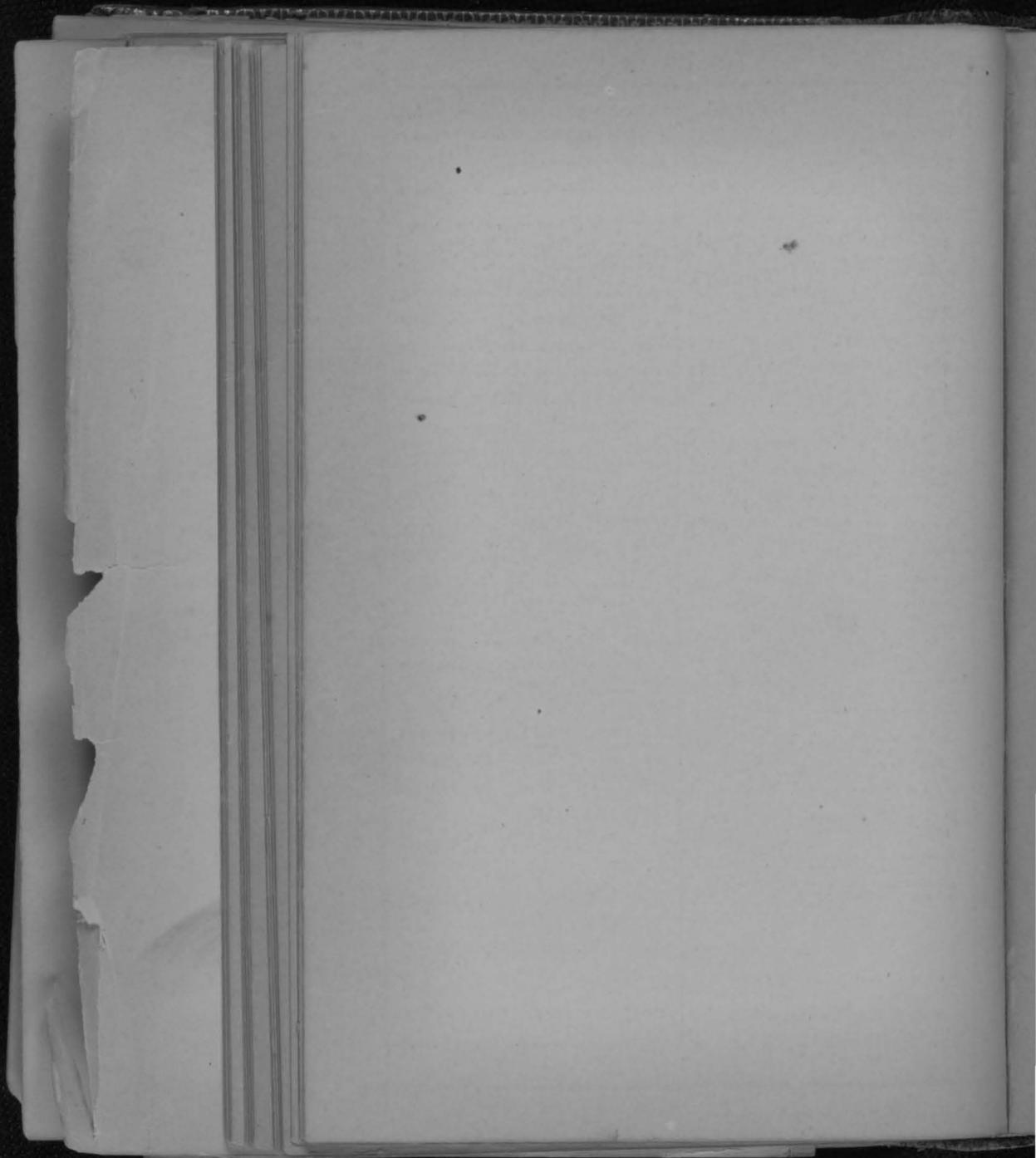
To keep the list low and pretenders  
back,  
Or like a king, not to be trifled with—  
Their heads should moulder on the  
city gates.  
And many tried and fail'd, because the  
charm  
Of nature in her overbore their own :  
And many a wizard brow bleach'd on  
the walls :  
And many weeks a troop of carrion  
crows  
Hung like a cloud above the gateway  
towers.”

And Vivien breaking in upon him  
said :  
“I sit and gather honey ; yet, me-  
thinks,  
Your tongue has tript a little : ask  
yourself.  
The lady never made *unwilling* war  
With those fine eyes : she had her  
pleasure in it,  
And made her good man jealous with  
good cause.  
And lived there neither dame nor dam-  
sel then  
Wroth at a lover's loss ? were all as  
tame,  
I mean, as noble, as their Queen was  
fair ?  
Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes,  
Or pinch a murderous dust into her  
drink,  
Or make her paler with a poison'd  
rose ?  
Well, those were not our days : but did  
they find  
A wizard ? Tell me, was he like to  
thee ?”

She ceased, and made her lithe arm  
round his neck  
Tighten, and then drew back, and let  
her eyes  
Speak for her, glowing on him, like a  
bride's  
On her new lord, her own, the first of  
men.

He answer'd laughing, “Nay, not  
like to me.  
At last they found—his foragers for  
charms—  
A little glassy-headed hairless man,  
Who lived alone in a great wild on  
grass ;  
Read but one book, and ever reading  
grew  
So grated down and filed away with  
thought,  
So lean his eyes were monstrous ; while  
the skin  
Clung but to crate and basket, ribs  
and spine.  
And since he kept his mind on one  
sole aim,  
Nor ever touch'd fierce wine, nor tasted  
flesh.





Nor own'd a sensual wish, to him the wall  
That sunders ghosts and shadow-casting men  
Became a crystal, and he saw them thro' it,  
And heard their voices talk behind the wall,  
And learnt their elemental secrets, powers  
And forces; often o'er the sun's bright eye  
Drew the vast eyelid of an inky cloud,  
And lash'd it at the base with slanting storm;  
Or in the noon of mist and driving rain,  
When the lake whiten'd and the pine-wood roar'd,  
And the cairn'd mountain was a shadow, sunn'd  
The world to peace again: here was the man.  
And so by force they dragg'd him to the King.  
And then he taught the King to charm the Queen  
In such-wise, that no man could see her more,  
Nor saw she save the King, who wrought the charm,  
Coming and going, and she lay as dead.  
And lost all use of life: but when the King  
Made proffer of the league of golden mines,  
The province with a hundred miles of coast,  
The palace and the princess, that old man  
Went back to his old wild, and lived on grass,  
And vanish'd, and his book came down to me."

And Vivien answer'd smiling saucily;  
"You have the book: the charm is written in it:  
Good: take my counsel: let me know it at once:  
For keep it like a puzzle chest in chest,  
With each chest lock'd and padlock'd thirty-fold,  
And whelm all this beneath as vast a mound  
As after furious battle turfs the s'ain  
On some wild down above the windy deep,  
I yet should strike upon a sudden means  
To dig, pick, open, find and read the charm:  
Then, if I tried it, who should blame me then?"

And smiling as a Master smiles at one  
That is not of his school, nor any school

But that where blind and naked Ignorance  
Delivers brawling judgments, unashamed,  
On all things all day long; he answer'd her.

"You read the book, my pretty Vivien!  
O ay, it is but twenty pages long,  
But every page having an ample marge,  
And every marge enclosing in the midst  
A square of text that looks a little blot,  
The text no larger than the limbs of fleas:  
And every square of text an awful charm,  
Writ in a language that has long gone by.  
So long, that mountains have arisen since  
With cities on their flanks—you read the book!  
And every margin scribbled, crost, and cramm'd  
With comment, densest condensation, hard  
To mind and eye; but the long sleepless nights  
Of my long life have made it easy to me.  
And none can read the text, not even I;  
And none can read the comment but myself;  
And in the comment did I find the charm.  
O, the results are simple; a mere child  
Might use it to the harm of any one,  
And never could undo it: ask no more:  
For tho' you should not prove it upon me,  
But keep, that oath you swore, you might, perchance,  
Assay it on some one of the Table Round,  
And all because you dream they babble of you."

And Vivien, frowning in true anger, said:  
"What dare the full-fed liars say of me?  
They ride abroad redressing human wrongs!  
They sit with knife in meat and wine in horn.  
They bound to holy vows of chastity!  
Were I not woman, I could tell a tale.  
But you are man, you well can understand  
The shame that cannot be explain'd for shame.  
Not one of all the drove should touch me: swine!"

Then answer'd Merlin careless of her words.

"Ye breathe but accusation vast and vague,  
Spleen-born, I think, and proofless. If  
ye know,  
Set up the charge ye know, to stand or fall."

And Vivien answer'd frowning  
wraithfully.

"O ay, what say ye to Sir Valence, him  
Whose kinsman left him watcher o'er  
his wife

And two fair babes, and went to dis-  
tant lands;

Was one year gone, and on returning  
found

Not two but three : there lay the reck-  
ling, one

But one hour old ! What said the  
happy sire ?

A seven months' babe had been a truer  
gift.

Those twelve sweet moons confused  
his fatherhood."

Then answer'd Merlin "Nay, I know  
the tale.

Sir Valence wedded with an outland  
dame :

Some cause had kept him sunder'd  
from his wife :

One child they had : it lived with her :  
she died :

His kinsman travelling on his own  
affair

Was charged by Valence to bring home  
the child.

He brought, not found it therefore :  
take the truth."

"O ay," said Vivien, "overtrue a tale.  
What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagra-  
more,

That ardent man ? 'to pluck the flower  
in season ;'

So says the song, 'I trow it is no trea-  
son.'

O Master, shall we call him overquick  
To crop his own sweet rose before the  
hour ?"

And Merlin answer'd "Overquick  
are you

To catch a lothly plume fall'n from the  
wing

Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole  
prey

Is man's good name : he never wrong'd  
his bride.

I know the tale. An angry gust of  
wind

Puff'd out his torch among the myriad  
room'd

And many-corridor'd complexities  
Of Arthur's palace : then he found a  
door

And darkling felt the sculptured orna-  
ment

That wreathen round it made it seem  
his own ;

And wearied out made for the couch  
and slept,

A stainless man besides a stainless  
maid ;

And either slept, nor knew of other  
there ;

Till the high dawn piercing the royal  
rose

In Arthur's casement glimmer'd  
chastely down,

Blushing upon them blushing, and at  
once

He rose without a word and parted  
from her :

But when the thing was blazed about  
the court.

The brute world howling forced them  
into bonds,

And as it chanced they are happy,  
being pure."

"O ay," said Vivien, "that were like-  
ly too.

What say ye then to fair Sir Percivale  
And of the horrid foulness that he  
wrought,

The saintly youth, the spotless lamb  
of Christ,

Or some black wether of St. Satan's  
fold.

What, in the precincts of the chapel-  
yard,

Among the knightly brasses of the  
graves,

And by the cold Hic Jacets of the  
dead !"

And Merlin answer'd careless of her  
charge,

"A sober man is Percivale and pure ;  
But once in life was fluster'd with new  
wine,

Then paced for coolness in the chapel-  
yard ;

Where one of Satan's shepherdesses  
caught

And meant to stamp him with her  
master's mark ;

And that he sinn'd, is not believable ;  
For, look upon his face ! — but if he  
sinn'd,

The sin that practice burns into the  
blood.

And not the one dark hour which  
brings remorse,

Will brand us, after, of whose fold we  
be :

Or else were he, the holy king, whose  
hymns

Are chanted in the minster, worse than  
all.

But is your spleen froth'd out, or have  
ye more ?"

And Vivien answer'd frowning yet  
in wrath ;

"O ay ; what say ye to Sir Lancelot,  
friend ?

Traitor or true ? that commerce with  
the Queen,

I ask you, is it clamor'd by the child,  
Or whisper'd in the corner? do you  
know it?"

To which he answer'd sadly, "Yea, I  
know it.  
Sir Lancelot went ambassador, at first,  
To fetch her, and she took him for the  
King;  
So fixt her fancy on him: let him be.  
But have you no one word of loyal  
praise  
For Arthur, blameless King and stain-  
less man?"

She answer'd with a low and chuck-  
ling laugh;  
"Him? is he man at all, who knows  
and winks?  
Sees what his fair bride is and does,  
and winks?  
By which the good king means to  
blind himself,  
And blinds himself and all the Table  
Round  
To all the foulness that they work.  
Myself  
Could call him (were it not for woman-  
hood)  
The pretty, popular name such man-  
hood earns,  
Could call him the main cause of all  
their crime;  
Yea, were he not crown'd king, coward,  
and fool."

Then Merlin to his own heart, loath-  
ing, said;  
"O true and tender! O my liege and  
king!  
O selfless man and stainless gentleman,  
Who wouldst against thine own eye-  
witness fain  
Have all men true and leal, all women  
pure;  
How, in the mouths of base interpre-  
ters,  
From over-fineness not intelligible  
To things with every sense as false and  
foul  
As the poach'd filth that floods the  
middle street,  
Is thy white blamelessness accounted  
blame!"

But Vivien deeming Merlin over-  
borne  
By instance, recommenced, and let  
her tongue  
Rage like a fire among the noblest  
names,  
Polluting, and imputing her whole  
self,  
Defaming and defacing, till she left  
Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad  
clean.

Her words had issue other than she  
will'd.  
He dragg'd his eyebrow bushes down,  
and made

A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes,  
And mutter'd in himself, "tell her the  
charm!

So, if she had it, would she rail on me  
To snare the next, and if she have it  
not,  
So will she rail. What did the wan-  
ton say?

'Not mount as high;' we scarce can  
sink as low:

For men at most differ as Heaven and  
earth,  
But women, worst and best, as Heaven  
and Hell.

I know the Table Round, my friends  
of old;

All brave, and many generous, and  
some chaste.

I think she cloaks the wounds of loss  
with lies;

I do believe she tempted them and  
fail'd,

She is so bitter: for fine plots may fail,  
Tho' harlots paint their talk as well  
as face

With colors of the heart that are not  
theirs.

I will not let her know: nine tithes  
of times

Face-flatterers and backbiters are the  
same.

And they, sweet soul, that most im-  
pute a crime

Are pronest to it, and impute them-  
selves,

Wanting the mental range; or low  
desire

Not to feel lowest makes them level  
all;

Yea, they would pare the mountain to  
the plain.

To leave an equal baseness; and in this  
Ave harlots like the crowd, that if they  
find

Some stain or blemish in a name of  
note,

Not grieving that their greatest are so  
small,

Inflate themselves with some insane  
delight,

And judge all nature from her feet of  
clay,

Without the will to lift their eyes, and  
see

Her godlike head crown'd with spirit-  
ual fire,

And touching other worlds. I am  
weary of her."

He spoke in words part heard, in  
whispers part,

Half-suffocated in the hoary fell  
And many-winter'd fleece of throat and  
chin.

But Vivien, gathering somewhat of his  
mood,

And hearing "harlot" mutter'd twice  
or thrice,

Leapt from her session on his lap, and  
stood

Stiff as a viper frozen; loathsome  
sight,  
How from the rosy lips of life and love,  
Flash'd the bare-grinning skeleton of  
death!  
White was her cheek; sharp breaths  
of anger puff'd  
Her fairy nostril out; her hand half-  
clench'd  
Went faltering sideways downward to  
her belt,  
And feeling; had she found a dagger  
there  
(For in a wink the false love turns to  
hate)  
She would have stabb'd him; but she  
found it not:  
His eye was calm, and suddenly she  
took  
To bitter weeping like a beaten child,  
A long, long weeping, not consolable.  
Then her false voice made way broken  
with sobs  
"O crueller than was ever told in  
tale,  
Or sung in song! O vainly lavish'd  
love!  
O cruel, there was nothing wild or  
strange,  
Or seeming shameful, for what shame  
in love  
So love be true, and not as yours is—  
nothing  
Poor Vivien had not done to win his  
trust  
Who call'd her what he call'd her—all  
her crime,  
All—all—the wish to prove him  
wholly hers,"

She mused a little, and then clapt  
her hands  
Together with a wailing shriek, and  
said:  
"Stabb'd through the heart's affec-  
tions to the heart!  
Seethed like the kid in its own mother's  
milk!  
Kill'd with a word worse than a life of  
blows!  
I thought that he was gentle, being  
great:  
O God, that I had loved a smaller man!  
I should have found in him a greater  
heart.  
O, I, that flattering my true passion,  
saw  
The knights, the court, the king, dark  
in your light,  
Who love to make men darker than  
they are,  
Because of that high pleasure which I  
had  
To seat you sole upon my pedestal  
Of worship—I am answer'd, and hence-  
forth  
The course of life that seem'd so  
flowery to me  
With you for guide and master, only  
you,

Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken  
short,  
And ending in a ruin—nothing left,  
But into some low cave to crawl, and  
there,  
If the wolf spare me, weep my life  
away,  
Kill'd with inutterable unkindness."

She paused, she turn'd away, she  
hung her head,  
The snake of gold slid from her hair,  
the braid  
Slipt and uncoil'd itself, she wept  
afresh,  
And the dark wood grew darker  
toward the storm  
In silence, while his anger slowly died  
Within him, till he let his wisdom go  
For ease of heart, and half believed her  
true:  
Call'd her to shelter in the hollow oak,  
"Come from the storm" and having  
no reply,  
Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and  
the face  
Hand-hidden, as for utmost grief or  
shame:  
Then thrice essay'd, by tenderest-  
touching terms  
To sleek her ruffled peace of mind, in  
vain,  
At last she let herself be conquer'd by  
him,  
And as the cageling newly flown re-  
turns,  
The seeming-injured simple-hearted  
thing  
Came to her old perch back, and  
settled there.  
There while she sat, half-falling from  
his knees,  
Half-nestled at his heart, and since he  
saw  
The slow tear creep from her closed  
eyelid yet,  
About her, more in kindness than in  
love,  
The gentle wizard cast a shielding arm.  
But she dislink'd herself at once and  
rose  
Her arms upon her breast across, and  
stood  
A virtuous gentlewoman deeply  
wrong'd,  
Upright and flush'd before him: then  
she said:  
"There must be now no passages of  
love  
Betwixt us twain henceforward ever-  
more.  
Since, if I be what I am grossly call'd,  
What should be granted which your  
own gross heart  
Would reckon worth the taking? I  
will go.  
In truth, but one thing now—better  
have died  
Thrice than have ask'd it once—could  
make me stay—

That proof of trust—so often asked in  
vain!  
How justly, after that vile term of  
yours,  
I find with grief! I might believe you  
then,  
Who knows? once more. O, what was  
once to me  
Mere matter of the fancy, now has  
grown  
The vast necessity of heart and life.  
Farewell; think kindly of me, for I  
fear  
My fate or fault, omitting gayer youth  
For one so old, must be to love you  
still.  
But ere I leave you let me swear once  
more  
That if I schemed against your peace  
in this,  
May you just heaven, that darkens  
o'er me, send  
One flash, that, missing all things else,  
may make  
My scheming brain a cinder, if I lie."

Scarce had she ceased, when out of  
heaven a bolt  
(For now the storm was close above  
them) struck,  
Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining  
With darted spikes and splinters of the  
wood  
The dark earth round. He raised his  
eyes and saw  
The tree that shone white-listed thro'  
the gloom.  
But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard  
her oath,  
And dazzled by the livid flickering fork,  
And deafen'd with the stammering  
cracks and claps  
That follow'd, flying back and crying  
out,  
"O Merlin, tho' you do not love me,  
save,  
Yet save me!" clung to him and  
hugg'd him close;  
And call'd him dear protector in her  
fright,  
Nor yet forgot her practice in her  
fright,  
But wrought upon his mood and  
hugg'd him close.  
The pale blood of the wizard at her  
touch  
Took gayer colors, like an opal warm'd.  
She blamed herself for telling hearsay  
tales:  
She shook from fear, and for her fault  
she wept  
Of petulancy; she call'd him lord and  
liege,  
Her seer, her bard, her silver star of  
eve,  
Her God, her Merlin, the one passion-  
ate love  
Of her whole life; and ever overhead  
Bellow'd the tempest, and the rotten  
branch

Snap'd in the rushing of the river rain  
Above them; and in change of glare  
and gloom  
Her eyes and neck glittering went and  
came;  
Till now the storm, its burst of pas-  
sion spent,  
Moaning and calling out of other lands,  
Had left the ravaged woodland yet  
once more  
To peace; and what should not have  
been had been,  
For Merlin, overtalk'd and overworn,  
Had yielded, told her all the charm,  
and slept.

Then, in one moment, she put forth  
the charm  
Of woven paces and of waving hands,  
And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,  
And lost to life and use and name and  
fame.

Then crying "I have made his glory  
mine,"  
And shrieking out "O fool!" the har-  
lot leapt  
Adown the forest, and the thicket  
closed  
Behind her, and the forest echo'd  
"fool."

## LANCELOT AND ELAINE.

ELAINE the fair, Elaine the lovable,  
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,  
High in her chamber up a tower to the  
east  
Guarded the sacred shield of Lance-  
lot;  
Which first she placed where morn-  
ing's earliest ray  
Might strike it, and awake her with  
the gleam;  
Then fearing rust or soilure fashion'd  
for it  
A case of silk, and braided thereupon  
All the devices blazon'd on the shield  
In their own thact, and added, of her  
wit,  
A border fantasy of branch and flower,  
And yellow-throated nestling in the  
nest.  
Nor rested thus content, but day by  
day  
Leaving her household and good father  
climb'd  
That eastern tower, and entering  
barr'd her door,  
Strip'd off the case, and read the naked  
shield,  
Now guess'd a hidden meaning in his  
arms,  
Now made a pretty history to herself  
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,  
And every scratch a lance had made  
upon it,  
Conjecturing when and where: this  
cut is fresh;

That ten years back ; this dealt him at  
Caerlyle ;  
That at Caerleon ; this at Camelot :  
And ah God's mercy what a stroke was  
there !  
And here a thrust that might have  
kill'd, but God  
Broke the strong lance, and roll'd his  
enemy down,  
And saved him : so she lived in fan-  
tasy.

How came the lily maid by that good  
shield  
Of Lancelot, she that knew not ev'n  
his name ?  
He left it with her, when he rode to  
tilt  
For the great diamond in the diamond  
jousts,  
Which Arthur had ordain'd, and by  
that name  
Had named them, since a diamond was  
the prize.

For Arthur long before they crown'd  
him king,  
Roving the trackless realms of Lyon-  
nesse,  
Had found a glen, gray boulder and  
black tarn.  
A horror lived about the tarn, and  
clave  
Like its own mists to all the mountain  
side :  
For here two brothers, one a king, had  
met  
And fought together ; but their names  
were lost.  
And each had slain his brother at a  
blow,  
And down they fell and made the glen  
abhor'd :  
And there they lay till all their bones  
were bleach'd,  
And lichen'd into color with the crags :  
And he, that once was king, had on a  
crown  
Of diamonds, one in front, and four  
aside.  
And Arthur came, and laboring up the  
pass  
All in a misty moonshine, unawares  
Had trodden that crown'd skeleton,  
and the skull  
Broke from the nape, and from the  
skull the crown  
Roll'd into light, and turning on its  
rims  
Fled like a glittering rivulet to the  
tarn :  
And down the shingly scaur he  
plunged, and caught,  
And set it on his head, and in his heart  
Heard murmurs "lo, thou likewise  
shalt be king."

Thereafter, when a king, he had the  
gems  
Pluck'd from the crown, and show'd  
them to his knights.

Saying "these jewels, whereupon I  
chanced  
Divinely, are the kingdom's not the  
king's—  
For public use : henceforward let there  
be,  
Once every year, a joust for one of  
these :  
For so by nine years' proof we needs  
must learn  
Which is our mightiest, and ourselves  
shall grow  
In use of arms and manhood, till we  
drive  
The Heathen, who, some say, shall  
rule the land  
Hereafter, which God hinder." Thus  
he spoke :  
And eight years past, eight jousts had  
been, and still  
Had Lancelot won the diamond of the  
year,  
With purpose to present them to the  
Queen,  
When all were won ; but meaning all  
at once  
To snare her royal fancy with a boon  
Worth half her realm, had never  
spoken word.

Now for the central diamond and  
the last  
And largest, Arthur, holding then his  
court  
Hard on the river nigh the place which  
now  
Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a  
joust  
At Camelot, and when the time drew  
nigh  
Spake (for she had been sick) to Guine-  
vere  
"Are you so sick, my Queen, you can  
not move  
To these fair jousts?" "Yea, lord,"  
she said, "ye know it."  
"Then will ye miss," he answer'd,  
"the great deeds  
Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the  
lists,  
A sight ye love to look on." And the  
Queen  
Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt lan-  
guidly  
On Lancelot, where he stood beside  
the King.  
He thinking that he read her meaning  
there,  
"Stay with me, I am sick ; my love is  
more  
Than many diamonds," yielded, and a  
heart,  
Love-loyal to the least wish of the  
Queen  
(However much he yearn'd to make  
complete  
The tale of diamonds for his destined  
boon)  
Urged him to speak against the truth,  
and say,

"Sir King, mine ancient wound is hardly whole, And lets me from the saddle;" and the King Glanced first at him, then her, and went his way. No sooner gone than suddenly she began.

"To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot, much to blame. Why go ye not to these fair jousts? the knights Are half of them our enemies, and the crowd Will murmur, lo the shameless ones, who take Their pastime now the trustful king is gone!" Then Lancelot vexed at having lied in vain: "Are ye so wise? ye were not once so wise, My Queen, that summer, when ye loved me first. Then of the crowd ye took no more account Than of the myriad cricket of the mead, When its own voice clings to each blade of grass, And every voice is nothing. As to knights, Them surely can I silence with all ease. But now my loyal worship is allow'd Of all men: many a bard, without of fence, Has link'd our names together in his lay, Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guinevere, The pearl of beauty: and our knights at feast Have pledged us in this union, while the king Would listen smiling. How then? is there more? Has Arthur spoken aught? or would yourself, Now weary of my service and devoir, Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord?"

She broke into a little scornful laugh. "Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless King, That passionate perfection, my good lord— But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven? He never spake word of reproach to me, He never had a glimpse of mine untruth, He cares not for me: only here to-day There gleam'd a vague suspicion in his eyes: Some meddling rogue has tamper'd with him—else

Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round, And swearing men to vows impossible, To make them like himself: but, friend, to me He is all fault who hath no fault at all: For who loves me must have a touch of earth; The low sun makes the color: I am yours, Not Arthur's, as ye know save by the bond. And therefore hear my words: go to the jousts: The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream When sweetest; and the vermin voices here May buzz so loud—we scorn them, but they sting."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of knights. "And with what face, after my pretext made, Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot, I Before a king who honors his own word, As if it were his God's?"

"Yea," said the Queen, "A moral child without the craft to rule, Else had he not lost me: but listen to me, If I must find you wit: we hear it said That men go down before your spear at a touch But knowing you are Lancelot; your great name, This conquers: hide it therefore; go unknown: Win! by this kiss you will: and our true king Will then allow your pretext, O my knight, As all for glory; for to speak him true, Ye know right well, how meek soe'er he seem, No keener hunter after glory breathes. He loves it in his knights more than himself: They prove to him his work: win and return."

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse, Wroth at himself: not willing to be known, He left the barren-beaten thorough-fares, Chose the green path that show'd the rarer foot, And there among the solitary downs, Full often lost in fancy, lost his way; Till as he traced a faintly-shadow'd track, That all in loops and links among the dales

Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw  
 Fired from the west, far on a hill, the  
 towers.  
 Thither he made and wound the gate-  
 way horn.  
 Then came an old, dumb, myriad-  
 wrinkled man,  
 Who let him into lodging and dis-  
 arm'd.  
 And Lancelot marvell'd at the word-  
 less man;  
 And issuing found the Lord of Astolat  
 With two strong sons, Sir Torre and  
 Sir Lavaine,  
 Moving to meet him in the castle  
 court;  
 And close behind them stept the lily  
 maid  
 Elaine, his daughter: mother of the  
 house  
 There was not: some light jest among  
 them rose  
 With laughter dying down as the great  
 knight  
 Approach'd them: then the Lord of  
 Astolat.  
 "Whence comest thou, my guest, and  
 by what name  
 Livest between the lips? for by thy  
 state  
 And presence I might guess thee chief  
 of those,  
 After the king, who eat in Arthur's  
 halls.  
 Him have I seen: the rest, his Table  
 Round,  
 Known as they are, to me they are un-  
 known."

Then answer'd Lancelot, the chief of  
 knights.  
 "Known am I, and of Arthur's hall,  
 and known,  
 What I by mere mischance have  
 brought, my shield.  
 But since I go to joust as one unknown  
 At Camelot for the diamond, ask me  
 not,  
 Hereafter you shall know me—and the  
 shield—  
 I pray you lend me one, if such you  
 have,  
 Blank, or at least with some device not  
 mine."

Then said the Lord of Astolat, "Here  
 is Torre's:  
 Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir  
 Torre.  
 And so, God wot, his shield is blank  
 enough.  
 His ye can have." Then added plain  
 Sir Torre,  
 "Yea since I cannot use it, ye may  
 have it."  
 Here laugh'd the father saying "Fie,  
 Sir Churl,  
 Is that an answer for a noble knight?  
 Allow him: but Lavaine, my younger  
 here,

He is so full of lustihood, he will ride  
 Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an  
 hour  
 And set it in this damsel's golden hair,  
 To make her thrice as wilful as be-  
 fore."

"Nay, father, nay good father, shame  
 me not  
 Before this noble knight" said young  
 Lavaine  
 "For nothing, Surely I but play'd on  
 Torre:  
 He seem'd so sullen, next he could not  
 go:  
 A jest, no more: for, knight, the maid-  
 en dream,  
 That some one put this diamond in her  
 hand,  
 And that it was too slippery to be held,  
 And slipt and fell into some pool or  
 stream,  
 The castle-well, belike; and then I said  
 That if I went and if I fought and won  
 it  
 (But all was jest and joke among our-  
 selves)  
 Then must she keep it safelier. All was  
 jest.  
 But father give me leave, and if he will,  
 To ride to Camelot with this noble  
 knight:  
 Win shall I not, but do my best to win:  
 Young as I am, yet would I do my  
 best."

"So ye will grace me," answer'd  
 Lancelot,  
 Smiling a moment, "with your fellow-  
 ship  
 O'er these waste downs whereon I lost  
 myself,  
 Then were I glad of you as guide and  
 friend;  
 And you shall win this diamond—as I  
 hear,  
 It is a fair large diamond,—if ye may;  
 And yield it to this maiden, if ye will."  
 "A fair large diamond," added plain  
 Sir Torre,  
 "Such be for Queens and not for sim-  
 ple maids."  
 Then she, who held her eyes upon the  
 ground,  
 Elaine, and heard her name so tost  
 about,  
 Flush'd slightly at the slight disparage-  
 ment  
 Before the stranger knight, who, look-  
 ing at her,  
 Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus re-  
 turn'd.  
 "If what is fair be but for what is fair,  
 And only Queens are to be counted so,  
 Rash were my judgment then, who  
 deem this maid  
 Might wear as fair a jewel as is on  
 earth,  
 Not violating the bond of like to like.

He spoke and ceased: the lily maid  
 Elaine,  
 Won by the mellow voice before she  
 look'd,  
 Lifted her eyes, and read his linea-  
 ments.  
 The great and gully love he bare the  
 Queen,  
 In battle with the love he bare his lord,  
 Had marr'd his face, and mark'd it ere  
 his time.  
 Another sinning on such heights with  
 one,  
 The flower of all the west and all the  
 world,  
 Had been the sleeker of it: but in him  
 His mood was often like a fiend, and  
 rose  
 And drove him into wastes and soli-  
 tudes  
 For agony, who was yet a living soul.  
 Marr'd as he was, he seem'd the good-  
 liest man,  
 That ever among ladies ate in Hall,  
 And noblest, when she lifted up her  
 eyes  
 However marr'd, of more than twice  
 her years,  
 Seam'd with an ancient swordcut on  
 the cheek,  
 And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up  
 her eyes  
 And loved him, with that love which  
 was her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of  
 the court,  
 Loved of the loveliest, into that rude  
 hall  
 Stept with all grace, and not with half  
 disdain  
 T'rid under grace, as in a smaller time,  
 But kindly man moving among his  
 kind:  
 Whom they with meats and vintage of  
 their best  
 And talk and minstrel melody enter-  
 tain'd.  
 And much they ask'd of court and  
 Table Round,  
 And ever well and readily answer'd he:  
 But Lancelot, when they glanced at  
 Guinevere,  
 Suddenly speaking of the wordless man,  
 Heard from the Baron that, ten years  
 before,  
 The heathen caught and reft him of his  
 tongue.  
 "He learnt and warn'd me of their  
 fierce design  
 Against my house, and him they caught  
 and maim'd;  
 But I my sons and little daughter fled  
 From bonds of death, and dwelt among  
 the woods  
 By the great river in a boatman's hut.  
 Dull days were those, till our good  
 Arthur broke  
 The Pagan yet once more on Badon  
 hill."

"O there, great Lord, doubtless,"  
 Lavaine said, rapt  
 By all the sweet and sudden passion of  
 youth.  
 Toward greatness in its elder, "you  
 have fought.  
 O tell us—for we live apart—you know  
 Of Arthur's glorious wars." And Lan-  
 celot spoke  
 And answer'd him at full, as having  
 been  
 With Arthur in the fight which all day  
 long  
 Rang by the white mouth of the violent  
 Glen;  
 And in the four wild battles by the  
 shore  
 Of Douglas; that on Bassa; then the  
 war  
 That thunder'd in and out the gloomy  
 skirts  
 Of Celidon the forest; and again  
 By castle Gurnion where the glorious  
 King  
 Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's  
 Head,  
 Carved on one emerald, center'd in a  
 sun  
 Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he  
 breathed;  
 And at Caerleon had he help'd his lord,  
 When the strong neighings of the wild  
 white Horse  
 Set every gilded parapet shuddering;  
 And up in Agned Cathregonion too,  
 And down the waste sand-shores of  
 Trath Trerôit,  
 Where many a heathen fell; "and on  
 the mount  
 Of Badon I myself beheld the King  
 Charge at the head of all his Table  
 Round,  
 And all his legions crying Christ and  
 him,  
 And break them; and I saw him, after,  
 stand  
 High on a heap of slain, from spur to  
 plume  
 Red as the rising sun with heathen  
 blood,  
 And seeing me, with a great voice he  
 cried  
 'They are broken, they are broken,' for  
 the King,  
 However mild he seems at home, nor  
 cares  
 For triumph in our mimic wars, the  
 jousts—  
 For if his own knight cast him down,  
 he laughs  
 Saying, his knights are better men than  
 he—  
 Yet in this heathen war the fire of God  
 Fills him: I never saw his like: there  
 lives  
 No greater leader."  
 While he utter'd this,  
 Low to her own heart said the lily maid  
 "Save you great self, fair lord;" and  
 when he fell

From talk of war to traits of pleasantry—  
 Being mirthful he but in a stately kind—  
 She still took note that when the living smile  
 Died from his lips, across him came a cloud  
 Of melancholy severe, from which again,  
 Whenever in her hovering to and fro  
 The lily maid had striven to make him cheer,  
 There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness  
 Of manners and of nature, and she thought  
 That all was nature, all, perchance, for her.  
 And all that night long his face before her lived,  
 As when a painter, poring on a face,  
 Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man  
 Behind it, and so paints him that his face,  
 The shape and color of a mind and life,  
 Lives for his children, ever at its best  
 And fullest; so the face before her lived,  
 Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence, full  
 Of noble things, and held her from her sleep.  
 Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the thought  
 She needs must bid farewell to sweet Lavaine.  
 First as in fear, step after step, she stole  
 Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating:  
 Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the court,  
 "This shield, my friend, where is it?"  
 and Lavaine  
 Past inward, as she came from out the tower.  
 There to his proud horse Lancelot turn'd, and smooth'd  
 The glossy shoulder, humming to himself.  
 Half-envious of the flattering hand, she drew  
 Nearer and stood. He look'd, and more amazed  
 Then if seven men had set upon him, saw  
 The maiden standing in the dewy light.  
 He had not dreamed she was so beautiful.  
 Then came on him a sort of sacred fear,  
 For silent, tho' he greeted her, she stood  
 Rapt on his face as if it were a God's.  
 Suddenly flash'd on her a wild desire,  
 That he should wear her favor at the tilt.  
 She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.  
 "Fair lord, whose name I know not—  
 noble it is,

I well believe, the noblest—will you wear  
 My favor at this tourney?" "Nay,"  
 said he,  
 "Fair lady, since I never yet have worn  
 Favor of any lady in the lists.  
 Such is my wont, as those, who know me, know."  
 "Yea, so," she answer'd; "then in wearing mine  
 Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble lord,  
 That those who know should know you." And he turn'd  
 Her counsel up and down within his mind,  
 And found it true, and answer'd, "true, my child.  
 Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:  
 What is it?" and she told him "a red sleeve  
 Broider'd with pearls," and brought it: then he bound  
 Her token on his helmet, with a smile  
 Saying, "I never yet have done so much  
 For any maiden living," and the blood  
 Sprang to her face and fill'd her with delight:  
 But left her all the paler, when Lavaine  
 Returning brought the yet-unblazon'd shield,  
 His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,  
 Who parted with his own to fair Elaine;  
 "Do me this grace, my child, to have my shield  
 In keeping till I come." "A grace to me,"  
 She answer'd, "twice to-day. I am your Squire."  
 Whereat Lavaine said, laughing, "Lily maid,  
 For fear our people call you lily maid  
 In earnest, let be bring your color back;  
 Once, twice, and thrice: now get you hence to bed."  
 So kiss'd her, and Sir Lancelot his own hand,  
 And thus they moved away; she stay'd a minute,  
 Then made a sudden step to the gate, and there—  
 Her bright hair blown about the serious face  
 Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss—  
 Paused in the gateway, standing by the shield  
 In silence, while she watch'd their arms far-off  
 Sparkle, until they dipt below the downs.  
 Then to her tower she climb'd, and took the shield,  
 There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.  
 Meanwhile the two companions part away  
 Far o'er the long backs of the bushless

To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived  
 a knight  
 Not far from Camelot, now for forty  
 years  
 A hermit, who had pray'd, labor'd and  
 pray'd  
 And ever laboring had scoop'd himself  
 In the white rock a chapel and a hall  
 On massive columns, like a shorecliff  
 cave,  
 And cells and chambers : all were fair  
 and dry ;  
 The green light from the meadows un-  
 derneath  
 Struck up and lived along the milky  
 roofs ;  
 And in the meadows tremulous aspen-  
 trees  
 And poplars made a noise of falling  
 showers.  
 And thither wending there that night  
 they bode.

But when the next day broke from  
 undergrowth,  
 And shot red fire and shadows thro' the  
 cave,  
 They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and  
 rode away :  
 Then Lancelot saying, "hear, but hold  
 my name  
 Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the  
 Lake,"  
 Abash'd Lavaine, whose instant rever-  
 ence,  
 Dearer to true young hearts than their  
 own praise,  
 But left him leave to stammer, "is it  
 indeed?"  
 And after muttering "the great Lance-  
 lot"  
 At last he got his breath and answer'd  
 "One,  
 One have I seen— that other, our liege  
 lord,  
 The dread Pendragon, Britain's king  
 of kings,  
 Of whom the people talk mysteriously,  
 He will be there—then were I stricken  
 blind  
 That minute, I might say that I had  
 seen."

So spake Lavaine, and when they  
 reach'd the lists  
 By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes  
 Run thro' the peopled gallery which  
 half round  
 Lay like a rainbow fall'n upon the  
 grass,  
 Until they found the clear-faced King,  
 who sat  
 Robed in red samite, easily to be  
 known,  
 Since to his crown the golden dragon  
 clung,  
 And down his robe the dragon writhed  
 in gold,  
 And from the carven-work behind him  
 crept

Two dragons gilded, sloping down to  
 make  
 Arms for his chair, while all the rest  
 of them  
 Thro' knots and loops and folds innu-  
 merable  
 Fled ever thro' the woodwork, till they  
 found  
 The new design wherein they lost them-  
 selves,  
 Yet with all ease, so tender was the  
 work :  
 And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,  
 Blazed the last diamond of the name-  
 less king.  
 Then Lancelot answer'd young Lavaine  
 and said,  
 "Me you call great : mine is the firmer  
 seat,  
 The truer lance : but there is many a  
 youth  
 Now crescent, who will come to all I  
 am  
 And overcome it ; and in me there  
 dwells  
 No greatness, save it be some far-off  
 touch  
 Of greatness to know well I am not  
 great :  
 There is the man." And Lavaine gaped  
 upon him  
 As on a thing miraculous, and anon  
 The trumpets blew ; and then did either  
 side,  
 They that assail'd, and they that held  
 the lists,  
 Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly  
 move,  
 Meet in the midst, and there so fur-  
 ously  
 Shock, that a man far-off might well  
 perceive,  
 If any man that day were left afield,  
 The hard earth shake, and a low thun-  
 der of arms.  
 And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw  
 Which were the weaker ; then he hurl'd  
 into it  
 Against the stronger : little need to  
 speak  
 Of Lancelot in his glory : King, duke,  
 earl,  
 Count, baron — whom he smote, he  
 overthrew.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith  
 and kin,  
 Ranged with the Table Round that held  
 the lists,  
 Strong men, and wrathful that a stran-  
 ger knight  
 Should do and almost overdo the deeds  
 Of Lancelot ; and one said to the other  
 "Lo !  
 What is he ? I do not mean the force  
 alone,  
 The grace and versatility of the man —  
 Is it not Lancelot !" "When has Lan-  
 celot worn  
 Favor of any lady in the lists ?

Not such his wont, as we, who know  
 him, know."  
 "How then? who then?" a fury seized  
 on them,  
 A fiery family passion for the name  
 Of Lancelot, and a glory one with  
 theirs.  
 They couch'd their spears and prick'd  
 their steeds and thus,  
 Their plumes driv'n backward by the  
 wind they made  
 In moving, all together down upon  
 him  
 Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-  
 sea,  
 Green-glimmering toward the summit,  
 bears, with all  
 Its stormy crests that smoke against  
 the skies,  
 Down on a bark, and overbears the  
 bark,  
 And him that helms it, so they over-  
 bore  
 Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a  
 spear  
 Down-glancing, lamed the charger, and  
 a spear  
 Prick'd sharply his own cuirass, and  
 the head  
 Pierced thro' his side, and there snapt,  
 and remain'd.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and wor  
 shipfully;  
 He bore a knight of old repute to the  
 earth,  
 And brought his horse to Lancelot  
 where he lay.  
 He up the side, sweating with agony,  
 got,  
 But thought to do while he might yet  
 endure,  
 And being lustily holpen by the rest,  
 His party,— tho' it seemed half-mir-  
 acle  
 To those he fought with — drave his  
 kith and kin,  
 And all the Table Round that held the  
 lists,  
 Back to the barrier; then the heralds  
 blew  
 Proclaiming his the prize, who wore  
 the sleeve  
 Of scarlet, and the pearls; and all the  
 knights,  
 His party, cried "Advance, and take  
 your prize  
 The diamond;" but he answer'd,  
 "diamond me  
 No diamonds! for God's love, a little  
 air!  
 Prize me no prizes, for my prize is  
 death!  
 Hence will I and I charge you, follow  
 me not."

He spoke, and vanish'd suddenly  
 from the field  
 With young Lavaine into the poplar  
 grove.

There from his charger down he slid,  
 and sat,  
 Gasping to Sir Lavaine, "draw the  
 lance-head:"  
 "Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot," said  
 Lavaine,  
 "I dread me, if I draw it, ye shall  
 die."  
 But he "I die already with it: draw—  
 Draw,"— and Lavaine drew, and that  
 other gave  
 A marvellous great shriek and ghastly  
 groan,  
 And half his blood burst forth, and  
 down he sank  
 For the pure pain, and wholly swoon'd  
 away.  
 Then came the hermit out and bare  
 him in,  
 There stanch'd his wound; and there,  
 in daily doubt  
 Whether to live or die, for many a  
 week  
 Hid from the wide world's rumor by  
 the grove  
 Of poplars with their noise of falling  
 showers,  
 And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he  
 lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled  
 the lists,  
 His party, knights of utmost North and  
 West,  
 Lords of waste marches, kings of deso-  
 late isles,  
 Came round their great Pendragon,  
 saying to him  
 "Lo. Sir, our knight thro' whom we  
 won the day  
 Hath gone sore wounded, and hath left  
 his prize  
 Untaken, crying that his prize is  
 death."  
 "Heaven hinder," said the King,  
 "that such an one,  
 So great a knight as we have seen to-  
 day—  
 He seem'd to me another Lancelot—  
 Yea, twenty times I thought him Lance-  
 lot—  
 He must not pass uncared for. Where-  
 fore rise,  
 O Gawain, and ride forth and find the  
 knight.  
 Wounded and wearied needs must he  
 be near.  
 I charge you that you get at once to  
 horse.  
 And, knights and kings, there breathes  
 not one of you  
 Will deem this prize of ours is rashly  
 given:  
 His prowess was too wondrous. We  
 will do him  
 No customary honor: since the knight  
 Came not to us, of us to claim the  
 prize,  
 Ourselves will send it after. Rise and  
 take

This diamond, and deliver it, and return,  
And bring us where he is and how he fares,  
And cease not from your quest, until you find."

So saying from the carven flower above,  
To which it made a restless heart, he took,  
And gave, the diamond: then from where he sat  
At Arthur's right, with smiling face arose,  
With smiling face and frowning heart, a Prince  
In the mid might and flourish of his May,  
Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair and strong,  
And after Lancelot, Tristram, and Geraint  
And Lamorack, a good knight, but therewithal  
Sir Modred's brother, of a crafty house,  
Nor often loyal to his word, and now  
Wroth that the king's command to sally forth  
In quest of whom he knew not, made him leave  
The banquet, and concourse of knights and kings.

So all in wrath he got to horse and went;  
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in mood,  
Past, thinking "is it Lancelot who has come  
Despite the wound he spake of, all for gain  
Of glory, and has added wound to wound,  
And ridd'n away to die?" So fear'd the King,  
And, after two days' trarriance there, return'd.  
Then when he saw the Queen, embracing, ask'd,  
"Love, are you yet so sick?" "Nay, lord," she said.  
"And where is Lancelot?" Then the Queen amazed  
"Was he not with you? won he not your prize?"  
"Nay, but one like him." "Why that like was he."  
And when the King demanded how she knew,  
Said "Lord, no sooner had ye parted from us,  
Than Lancelot told me of a common talk  
That men went down before his spear at a touch,  
But knowing he was Lancelot; his great name  
Conquer'd; and therefore would he hide his name

From all men, ev'n the king, and to this end  
Had made the pretext of a hindering wound,  
That he might joust unknown of all, and learn  
If his old prowess was in aught decay'd:  
And added, 'our true Arthur, when he learns,  
Will well allow my pretext, as for gain of purer glory.'

Then replied the King:  
"Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it been,  
In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,  
To have trusted me as he has trusted you.  
Surely his king and most familiar friend  
Might well have kept his secret. True, indeed,  
Albeit I know my knights fantastical,  
So fine a fear in our large Lancelot  
Must needs have moved my laughter: now remains  
But little cause for laughter: his own kin—  
Ill news, my Queen, for all who love him, these!  
His kith and kin, not knowing, set upon him;  
So that he went sore wounded from the field:  
Yet good news too: for goodly hopes are mine  
That Lancelot is no more a lonely heart.  
He wore, against his wont, upon his helm  
A sleeve of scarlet, broidered with great pearls,  
Some gentle maiden's gift."

"Yea, lord," she said,  
"Your hopes are mine," and saying that she choked,  
And sharply turn'd about to hide her face,  
Past to her chamber, and there flung herself  
Down on the great King's couch, and writhed upon it,  
And clenched her fingers till they bit the palm,  
And shriek'd out "traitor" to the unhearing wall,  
Then flash'd into wild tears, and rose again,  
And moved about her palace, proud and pale.

Gawain the while thro' all the region round  
Rode with his diamond, wearied of the quest,  
Touch'd at all points, except the poplar grove,  
And came at last, tho' late, to Astolat:

Whom glittering in enamell'd arms  
 the maid  
 Glanced at, and cried "What news  
 from Camelot, lord?  
 What of the knight with the red  
 sleeve?" "He won."  
 "I knew it," she said. "But parted  
 from the jousts  
 Hurt in the side," whereat she caught  
 her breath;  
 Thro' her own side she felt the sharp  
 lance go;  
 Thereon she smote her hand: well-  
 nigh she swoon'd;  
 And, while he gazed wonderingly at  
 her, came  
 The lord of Astolat out, to whom the  
 Prince  
 Reported who he was, and on what  
 quest  
 Sent, that he bore the prize and could  
 not find  
 The victor, but had ridden wildly  
 round  
 To seek him, and was wearied of the  
 search.  
 To whom the lord of Astolat "Bide  
 with us,  
 And ride no longer wildly, noble  
 Prince!  
 Here was the knight, and here he left  
 a shield;  
 This will he send or come for: further-  
 more  
 Our son is with him: we shall hear  
 anon,  
 Needs must we hear." To this the  
 courteous Prince  
 Accorded with his wonted courtesy,  
 Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it,  
 And stay'd; and cast his eyes on fair  
 Elaine:  
 Where could be found face daintier?  
 then her shape  
 From forehead down to foot perfect—  
 again  
 From foot to forehead exquisitely  
 turn'd:  
 "Well—if I bide, lo! this wild flower  
 for me!"  
 And oft they met among the garden  
 yews,  
 And there he set himself to play upon  
 her  
 With sallying wit, free flashes from a  
 height  
 Above her, graces of the court, and  
 songs,  
 Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden  
 eloquence  
 And amorous adulation, till the maid  
 Rebell'd against it, saying to him,  
 "Prince,  
 O loyal nephew of our noble King,  
 Why ask you not to see the shield he left,  
 Whence you might learn his name?  
 Why slight your King,  
 And lose the quest he sent you on,  
 and prove  
 No surer than our falcon yesterday,

Who lost the henn we slipt him at,  
 and went  
 To all the winds?" "Nay, by mine  
 head," said he,  
 "I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven,  
 O damsel, in the light of your blue  
 eyes:  
 But an ye will it let me see the shield."  
 And when the shield was brought, and  
 Gawain saw  
 Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crown'd  
 with gold,  
 Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh,  
 and mock'd;  
 "Right was the King! our Lancelot!  
 that true man!"  
 "And right was I," she answer'd mer-  
 rily, "I,  
 Who dream'd my knight the greatest  
 knight of all."  
 "And if I dream'd," said Gawain,  
 "that you love  
 This greatest knight, your pardon!  
 lo, you know it!  
 Speak therefore: shall I waste myself  
 in vain?"  
 Full simple was her answer "What  
 know I?  
 My brethren have been all my fellow-  
 ship,  
 And I, when often they have talk'd of  
 love,  
 Wish'd it had been my mother, for  
 they talk'd,  
 Meseem'd, of what they knew not; so  
 myself—  
 I know not if I know what true love is,  
 But if I know, then, if I love not him,  
 Methinks there is none other I can  
 love."  
 "Yea, by God's death," said he, "ye  
 love him well,  
 But would not, knew ye what all  
 others know,  
 And whom he loves." "So be it,"  
 cried Elaine,  
 And lifted her fair face and moved  
 away:  
 But he pursued her calling "Stay a  
 little!  
 One golden minute's grace: he wore  
 your sleeve:  
 Would he break faith with one I may  
 not name?  
 Must our true man change like a leaf  
 at last?  
 Nay—like enough: why then, far be it  
 from me  
 To cross our mighty Lancelot in his  
 loves!  
 And, damsel, for I deem you know full  
 well  
 Where your great knight is hidden, let  
 me leave  
 My quest with you; the diamond also:  
 here!  
 For if you love, it will be sweet to give  
 it;  
 And if he love, it will be sweet to  
 have it

From your own hand ; and whether he  
love or not,  
A diamond is a diamond. Fare you  
well  
A thousand times !—a thousand times  
farewell !  
Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we  
two  
May meet at court hereafter : there, I  
think,  
So you will learn the courtesies of the  
court,  
We two shall know each other."

Then he gave,  
And slightly kiss'd the hand to which  
he gave,  
The diamond, and all wearied of the  
quest  
Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he  
went  
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he past ; there  
told the King  
What the King knew "Sir Lancelot is  
the knight."  
And added "Sire, my liege, so much I  
learnt ;  
But fall'd to find him tho' I rode all  
round  
The region : but I lighted on the maid,  
Whose sleeve he wore ; she loves him ;  
and to her,  
Deeming our courtesy is the truest  
law,  
I gave the diamond : she will render  
it ;  
For by mine head she knows his hid-  
ing-place."

The seldom-frowning King frown'd,  
and replied,  
"Too courteous truly ! ye shall go no  
more  
On quest of mine, seeing that ye for-  
get  
Obedience is the courtesy due to  
kings."

He spake and parted. Wroth but  
all in awe,  
For twenty strokes of the blood, with-  
out a word,  
Linger'd that other, staring after him ;  
Then shook his hair, strode off, and  
buzz'd abroad  
About the maid of Astolat, and her  
love.  
All ears were prick'd at once, all  
tongues were loosed :  
"The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lance-  
lot,  
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Asto-  
lat."  
Some read the King's face, some the  
Queen's, and all  
Had marvel what the maid might be,  
but most  
Predom'd her as unworthy. One old  
dame

Came suddenly on the Queen with the  
sharp news.  
She, that had heard the noise of it be-  
fore,  
But sorrowing Lancelot should have  
stoop'd so low,  
Marr'd her friend's point with pale  
tranquillity.  
So ran the tale like fire about the  
court,  
Fire in dry stubble a nine days' won-  
der flared :  
Till ev'n the knights at banquet twice  
or thrice  
Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the  
Queen,  
And pledging Lancelot and the lily  
maid  
Smiled at each other, while the Queen  
who sat  
With lips severely placid felt the knot  
Climb in her throat, and with her feet  
unseen  
Crush'd the wild passion out against  
the floor  
Beneath the banquet, where the meats  
became  
As wormwood, and she hated all who  
pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,  
Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept  
The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her  
heart,  
Crept to her father, while he mused  
alone,  
Sat on his knee, stroked his gray face  
and said,  
"Father, you call me wilful, and the  
fault  
Is yours who let me have my will, and  
now,  
Sweet father, will you let me lose my  
wits?"  
"Nay," said he, "surely." "Where-  
fore, let me hence,"  
She answer'd, "and find out our dear  
Lorraine."  
"Ye will not lose your wits for dear  
Lorraine ;  
Bide," answer'd he : "we needs must  
hear anon  
Of him, and of that other." "Ay,"  
she said,  
"And of that other, for I needs must  
hence  
And find that other, wheresoe'er he  
be,  
And with mine own hand give his dia-  
mond to him,  
Lest I be found as faithless in the  
quest  
As you proud Prince who left the  
quest to me.  
Sweet father, I behold him in my  
dreams  
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of him-  
self,  
Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's  
aid.

The gentler-born the maiden, the more bound,  
 My father, to be sweet and serviceable  
 To noble knights in sickness, as ye know,  
 When these have worn their tokens :  
 let me hence  
 I pray you." Then her father nod-  
 ding said,  
 "Ay, ay, the diamond: wit you well,  
 my child,  
 Right fain were I to learn this knight  
 were whole,  
 Being our greatest; yea, and you must  
 give it—  
 And sure I think this fruit is hung too  
 high  
 For any mouth to gape for save a  
 Queen's—  
 Nay, I mean nothing: so then, get  
 you gone,  
 Being so very wilful you must go."

Lightly, her suit allow'd, she slept  
 away,  
 And while she made her ready for her  
 ride,  
 Her father's latest word humm'd in  
 her ear,  
 "Being so very wilful you must go,"  
 And changed itself and echoed in her  
 heart,  
 "Being so very wilful you must die."  
 But she was happy enough and shook  
 it off,  
 As we shake off the bee that buzzes at  
 us;  
 And in her heart she answer'd it and  
 said,  
 "What matter, so I help him back to  
 life?"  
 Then far away with good Sir Torre for  
 guide  
 Rode o'er the long backs of the bush-  
 less downs  
 To Camelot, and before the city-gates  
 Came on her brother with a happy  
 face  
 Making a roan horse caper and curvet  
 For pleasure all about a field of  
 flowers:  
 Whom when she saw, "Lavaine," she  
 cried, "Lavaine,  
 How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?"  
 He amazed,  
 "Torre and Elaine! why here? Sir  
 Lancelot!  
 How know ye my lord's name is Lan-  
 celot?"  
 But when the maid had told him all  
 her tale,  
 Then turn'd Sir Torre, and being in  
 his moods  
 Left them, and under the strange-  
 statued gate,  
 Where Arthur's wars were render'd  
 mystically,  
 Past up the still rich city to his kin,  
 His own far blood, which dwelt at  
 Camelot;

And her, Lavaine across the poplar  
 grove  
 Led to the caves: there first she saw  
 the casque  
 Of Lancelot on the wall: her scarlet  
 sleeve,  
 Tho' carved and cut, and half the  
 pearls away,  
 Stream'd from it still; and in her  
 heart she laugh'd,  
 Because he had not loosed it from his  
 helm,  
 But meant once more perchance a  
 tourney in it.  
 And when they gain'd the cell in  
 which he slept,  
 His battle-writhen arms and mighty  
 hands  
 Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a  
 dream  
 Of dragging down his enemy made  
 them move.  
 Then she that saw him lying unsleek,  
 unshorn,  
 Gaunt as it were the skeleton of him-  
 self.  
 Uttered a little tender do'lorous cry.  
 The sound not wonted in a place so still  
 Woke the sick knight, and while he  
 roll'd his eyes  
 Yet blank from sleep, she started to  
 him, saying  
 "Your prize the diamond sent you by  
 the King:"  
 His eyes glisten'd: she fancied "is it  
 for me?"  
 And when the maid had told him all  
 the tale  
 Of King and Prince, the diamond  
 sent, the quest  
 Assign'd to her not worthy of it, she  
 knelt  
 Full lowly by the corners of his bed,  
 And laid the diamond in his open  
 hand.  
 Her face was near, and as we kiss the  
 child  
 That does the task assign'd, he kiss'd  
 her face.  
 At once she slept like water to the  
 floor.  
 "Alas," he said, "your ride has  
 wearied you.  
 Rest must you have." "No rest for  
 me," she said;  
 "Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at  
 rest."  
 What might she mean by that? his  
 large black eyes,  
 Yet larger thro' his leanness, dwelt  
 upon her,  
 Till all her heart's sad secret blazed  
 itself  
 In the heart's colors on her simple  
 face;  
 And Lancelot look'd and was perplexed  
 in mind,  
 And being weak in body said no more;  
 But did not love the color; woman's  
 love,

Save one, he not regarded, and so  
 turn'd  
 Sighing, and feign'd a sleep until he  
 slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided thro'  
 the fields,  
 And past beneath the wildly-sculptured  
 gates  
 Far up the dim rich city to her kin;  
 There bode the night: but woke with  
 dawn, and past  
 Down thro' the dim rich city to the  
 fields,  
 Thence to the cave: so day by day she  
 past  
 In either twilight ghost-like to and fro  
 Gliding, and every day she tended  
 him,  
 And likewise many a night: and Lan-  
 celot  
 Would, tho' he call'd his wound a  
 little hurt  
 Whereof he should be quickly whole,  
 at times  
 Brain-feverous in his heat and agony,  
 seem  
 Uncourteous, even he: but the meek  
 maid  
 Sweetly forebore him ever, being to  
 him  
 Meeker than any child to a rough  
 nurse  
 Milder than any mother to a sick  
 child,  
 And never woman yet, since man's  
 first fall,  
 Did kinder unto man, but her deep  
 love  
 Upbore her; till the hermit, skill'd in  
 all  
 The simples and the science of that  
 time,  
 Told him that her fine care had saved  
 his life.  
 And the sick man forgot her simple  
 blush,  
 Would call her friend and sister, sweet  
 Elaine,  
 Would listen for her coming and regret  
 Her parting step, and held her ten-  
 derly,  
 And loved her with all love except the  
 love  
 Of man and woman when they love  
 their best  
 Closest and sweetest, and had died the  
 death  
 In any knightly fashion for her sake,  
 And peradventure had he seen her  
 first  
 She might have made this and that  
 other world  
 Another world for the sick man; but  
 now  
 The shackles of an old love straiten'd  
 him,  
 His honor rooted in dishonor stood,  
 And faith unfaithful kept him falsely  
 true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-  
 sickness made  
 Full many a holy vow and pure re-  
 solve,  
 These, as but born of sickness, could  
 not live:  
 For when the blood ran lustier in him  
 again,  
 Full often the sweet image of one  
 face,  
 Making a treacherous quiet in his  
 heart,  
 Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.  
 Then if the maiden, while that ghostly  
 grace  
 Beam'd on his fancy, spoke, he an-  
 swer'd not,  
 Or short and coldly, and she knew  
 right well  
 What the rough sickness meant, but  
 what this meant  
 She knew not, and the sorrow dimm'd  
 her sight,  
 And drove her ere her time across the  
 fields  
 Far into the rich city, where alone  
 She murmur'd "vain, in vain: it can-  
 not be  
 He will not love me: how then? must  
 I die."  
 Then as a little helpless innocent bird,  
 That has but one plain passage of few  
 notes,  
 Will sing the simple passage o'er and  
 o'er  
 For all an April morning, till the ear  
 Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid  
 Went half the night repeating, "must  
 I die?"  
 And now to right she turn'd, and now  
 to left,  
 And found no ease in turning or in  
 rest;  
 And "him or death" she mutter'd,  
 "death or him,"  
 Again and like a burthen, "him or  
 death."

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt  
 was whole,  
 To Astolat returning rode the three.  
 There morn by morn, arraying her  
 sweet self  
 In that wherein she deem'd she look'd  
 her best,  
 She came before Sir Lancelot, for she  
 thought  
 "If I be loved, these are my festal  
 robes,  
 If not, the victim's flowers before he  
 fall."  
 And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid  
 That she should ask some goodly gift  
 of him  
 For her own self or hers; "and do not  
 shun  
 To speak the wish most dear to your  
 true heart;  
 Such service have ye done me, that I  
 make

My will of yours, and Prince and Lord  
 am I  
 In mine own land, and what I will I  
 can."  
 Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,  
 But like a ghost without the power to  
 speak.  
 And Lancelot saw that she withheld  
 her wish,  
 And bode among them yet a little  
 space  
 Till he should learn it; and one morn  
 it chanced  
 He found her in among the garden  
 yews,  
 And said, "Delay no longer, speak  
 your wish,  
 Seeing I must go to-day:" then out  
 she brake;  
 "Going? and we shall never see you  
 more.  
 And I must die for want of one bold  
 word."  
 "Speak: that I live to hear," he said,  
 "is yours."  
 Then suddenly and passionately she  
 spoke:  
 "I have gone mad. I love you: let me  
 die."  
 "Ah, sister," answer'd Lancelot,  
 "what is this?"  
 And innocently extending her white  
 arms,  
 "Your love," she said, "your love —  
 to be your wife."  
 And Lancelot answer'd, "Had I chos'n  
 to wed,  
 I had been wedded earlier, sweet  
 Elaine:  
 But now there never will be wife of  
 mine."  
 "No, no," she cried, "I care not to be  
 wife,  
 But to be with you still, to see your  
 face,  
 To serve you, and to follow you thro'  
 the world."  
 And Lancelot answer'd, "Nay, the  
 world, the world,  
 All ear and eye, with such a stupid  
 heart  
 To interpret ear and eye, and such a  
 tongue  
 To blare its own interpretation—nay,  
 Full ill then should I quit your bro-  
 ther's love,  
 And your good father's kindness."  
 And she said  
 "Not to be with you, not to see your  
 face—  
 Alas for me then, my good days are  
 done."  
 "Nay, noble maid," he answer'd, "ten  
 times nay!  
 This is not love: but love's first flash  
 in youth,  
 Most common: yea I know it of mine  
 own self:  
 And you yourself will smile at your  
 own self

Hereafter, when you yield your flower  
 of life  
 To one more fitly yours, not thrice  
 your age:  
 And then will I, for true you are and  
 sweet  
 Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,  
 More specially should your good  
 knight be poor,  
 Endow you with broad land and ter-  
 ritory  
 Even to the half my realm beyond the  
 seas,  
 So that would make you happy: fur-  
 thermore,  
 Ev'n to the death, as tho' ye were my  
 blood,  
 In all your quarrels will I be your  
 knight.  
 This will I do, dear damsel, for your  
 sake,  
 And more than this I cannot."  
 While he spoke  
 She neither blush'd nor shook, but  
 deathly-pale  
 Stood grasping what was nearest, then  
 replied;  
 "Of all this will I nothing;" and so  
 fell,  
 And thus they bore her swooning to  
 her tower.

Then spake, to whom thro' those  
 black walls of yew  
 Their talk had pierced, her father.  
 "Ay, a flash,  
 I fear me, that will strike my blossom  
 dead.  
 Too courteous are you, fair Lord  
 Lancelot.  
 I pray you, use some rough discourtesy  
 To blunt or break her passion."  
 Lancelot said,  
 "That were against me: what I can I  
 will;"  
 And there that day remain'd, and  
 toward even  
 Sent for his shield: full meekly rose  
 the maid,  
 Stript off the case, and gave the naked  
 shield;  
 Then, when she heard his horse upon  
 the stones,  
 Unclasping flung the casement back,  
 and look'd  
 Down on his helm, from which her  
 sleeve had gone.  
 And Lancelot knew the little clinking  
 sound;  
 And she by tact of love was well aware  
 That Lancelot knew that she was look-  
 ing at him.  
 And yet he glanced not up, nor waved  
 his hand,  
 Nor bade farewell, but sadly rode away.  
 This was the one discourtesy that he  
 used.

So in her tower alone the maiden  
 sat:

His very shield was gone; only the  
 case,  
 Her own poor work, her empty labor,  
 left.  
 But still she heard him, still his pic-  
 ture form'd  
 And grew between her and the pic-  
 tured wall.  
 Then came her father, saying in low  
 tones  
 "Have comfort," whom she greeted  
 quietly.  
 Then came her brethren saying, "Peace  
 to thee  
 Sweet sister," whom she answer'd with  
 all calm.  
 But when they left her to herself again,  
 Death, like a friend's voice from a dis-  
 tant field  
 Approaching thro' the darkness, call'd;  
 the owls  
 Wailing had power upon her, and she  
 mixt  
 Her fancies with the sallow-rifted  
 glooms  
 Of evening, and the moanings of the  
 wind.

And in those days she made a little  
 song.  
 And call'd her song "The song of Love  
 and Death."  
 And sang it: sweetly could she make  
 and sing.

"Sweet is true love tho' given in vain,  
 in vain;  
 And sweet is death who puts an end to  
 pain:  
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"Love, art thou sweet? then bitter  
 death must be:  
 Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to  
 me.  
 O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

"Sweet love, that seems not made to  
 fade away,  
 Sweet death, that seems to make us  
 loveless clay,  
 I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

"I fain would follow love, if that  
 could be:  
 I needs must follow death, who calls  
 for me:  
 Call and I follow, I follow! let me  
 die."

High with the last line scaled her  
 voice, and this,  
 All in a fiery dawning wild with wind  
 That shook her tower, the brothers  
 heard, and thought  
 With shuddering "Hark the Phantom  
 of the house  
 That ever shrieks before a death," and  
 call'd  
 The father, and all three in hurry and  
 fear

Ran to her, and lo! the blood-red light  
 of dawn  
 Flared on her face, she shrieking "Let  
 me die!"

As when we dwell upon a word we  
 know  
 Repeating, till the word we know so  
 well  
 Becomes a wonder and we know not  
 why,  
 So dwelt the father on her face and  
 thought  
 "Is this Elaine?" till back the maiden  
 fell,  
 Then gave a languid hand to each, and  
 lay,  
 Speaking a still good-morrow with her  
 eyes.

At last she said "Sweet brothers,  
 yester night  
 I seem'd a curious little maid again,  
 As happy as when we dwelt among the  
 woods,  
 And when ye used to take me with the  
 flood  
 Up the great river in the boatman's  
 boat.

Only ye would not pass beyond the  
 cape  
 That has the poplar on it: there ye  
 fixt  
 Your limit, oft returning with the tide.  
 And yet I cried because ye would not  
 pass

Beyond it, and far up the shining flood  
 Until we found the palace of the king.  
 And yet ye would not; but this night  
 I dream'd  
 That I was all alone upon the flood,  
 And then I said "Now shall I have my  
 will:"

And there I woke, but still the wish  
 remain'd.  
 So let me hence that I may pass at  
 last

Beyond the poplar and far up the flood,  
 Until I find the palace of the king.  
 There will I enter in among them all,  
 And no man there will dare to mock at  
 me;

But there the fine Gawain will wonder  
 at me,  
 And there the great Sir Lancelot muse  
 at me;

Gawain, who bade a thousand fare-  
 wells to me,  
 Lancelot, who coldly went nor bade me  
 one:

And there the King will know me and  
 my love,  
 And there the Queen herself will pity  
 me,  
 And all the gentle court will welcome  
 me,  
 And after my long voyage I shall  
 rest!"

"Peace," said her father, "O my  
 child, ye seem

Light-headed, for what force is yours  
to go,  
So far, being sick? and wherefore  
would ye look  
On this proud fellow again, who scorns  
us all?"

Then the rough Torre began to heave  
and move,  
And bluster into stormy sobs and say  
"I never loved him: an I meet with  
him,  
I care not howsoever great he be,  
Then will I strike at him and strike  
him down,  
G'v'e me good fortune, I will strike him  
dead,  
For this discomfort he hath done the  
house."

To which the gentle sister made  
reply,  
"Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor  
be wroth,  
Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's  
fault

Not to love me, than it is mine to love  
Him of all men who seems to me the  
highest."

"Highest?" the Father answer'd,  
echoing "highest?"  
(He meant to break the passion in her)  
"nay,

Daughter, I know not what you call  
the highest;  
But this I know, for all the people  
know it,  
He loves the Queen, and in an open  
shame:  
And she returns his love in open shame.  
If this be high, what is it to be low?"

Then spake the lily maid of Astolat;  
"Sweet father, all too faint and sick  
am I

For anger: these are slanders: never  
yet  
Was noble man but made ignoble talk.  
He makes no friend who never made a  
foe.

But now it is my glory to have loved  
One peerless, without stain: so let me  
pass,

My father, howso'er I seem to you,  
Not all unhappy, having loved God's  
best

And greatest, tho' my love had no  
return:

Yet, seeing ye desire your child to live,  
Thanks, but ye work against your own  
desire:

For if I could believe the things ye say  
I should but die the sooner; where-  
fore cease

Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly  
man

Hither, and let me shrive me clean,  
and die."

So when the ghostly man had come  
and gone,

She with a face, bright as for sin for-  
given,  
Besought Lavaine to write as she  
devised

A letter, word for word; and when he  
ask'd

"Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear  
lord?"

Then will I bear it gladly," she replied,  
"For Lancelot and the Queen and all  
the world,

But I myself must bear it." Then he  
wrote

The letter she devised; which being  
writ

And folded, "O sweet father, tender  
and true,

Deny me not," she said—"ye never  
yet

Denied my fancies—this, however  
strange,

My latest: lay the letter in my hand  
A little ere I die, and close the hand

Upon it; I shall guard it even in death.  
And when the heat is gone from out  
my heart,

Then take the little bed on which I  
died

For Lancelot's love, and deck it like  
the Queen's

For richness, and me also like the  
Queen

In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.  
And let there be prepared a chariot-  
bier

To take me to the river, and a barge  
Be ready on the river, clothed in black.

I go in state to court, to meet the  
Queen.

There surely I shall speak for mine  
own self,

And none of you can speak for me so  
well.

And therefore let our dumb old man  
alone

Go with me, he can steer and row, and  
he

Will guide me to that palace, to the  
doors."

She ceased: her father promised;  
wherupon

She grew so cheerful that they deem'd  
her death

Was rather in the fantasy than the  
blood.

But ten slow mornings past, and on  
the eleventh

Her father laid the letter in her hand,  
And closed the hand upon it, and she  
died.

So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from  
underground,

Then, those two brethren slowly with  
bent brows

Accompanying the sad chariot-bier  
Past like a shadow thro' the field, that  
shone

Full-summer, to that stream whereon  
 the barge,  
 PaFd all its length in blackest samite,  
 lay.  
 There sat the lifelong creature of the  
 house,  
 Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,  
 Winking his eyes, and twisted all his  
 face.  
 So those two brethren from the chariot  
 took  
 And on the black decks laid her in her  
 bed,  
 Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung  
 The silken case with braided blazonings,  
 And kiss'd her quiet brows, and saying  
 to her  
 "Sister, farewell for ever," and again  
 "Farewell, sweet sister," parted all in  
 tears.  
 Then rose the dumb old servitor, and  
 the dead  
 Steer'd by the dumb went upward with  
 the flood—  
 In her right hand the lily, in her left  
 The letter—all her bright hair stream-  
 ing down—  
 And all the coverlid was cloth of gold  
 Drawn to her waist, and she herself in  
 white  
 All but her face, and that clear-fea-  
 tured face  
 Was lovely, for she did not seem as  
 dead  
 But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she  
 smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace  
 craved  
 Audience of Guinevere, to give at last  
 The price of half a realm, his costly  
 gift,  
 Hard-won and hardly won with bruise  
 and blow,  
 With deaths of others, and almost his  
 own,  
 The nine-years-fought-for diamonds :  
 for he saw  
 One of her house, and sent him to the  
 Queen  
 Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen  
 agreed  
 With such and so unmoved a majesty  
 She might have seem'd her statue, but  
 that he,  
 Low-drooping till he wellnigh kiss'd  
 her feet  
 For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye  
 The shadow of a piece of pointed lace,  
 In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the  
 walls,  
 And parted, laughing in his courtly  
 heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side,  
 Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward  
 the stream,  
 They met, and Lancelot kneeling ut-  
 ter'd, "Queen,  
 Lady, my liege, in whom I have my  
 joy,

Take, what I had not won except for  
 you,  
 These jewels, and make me happy,  
 making them  
 An armlet for the roundest arm on  
 earth,  
 Or necklace for a neck to which the  
 swan's  
 Is tawnier than her cygnet's : these  
 are words :  
 Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin  
 In speaking, yet O grant my worship  
 of it  
 Words, as we grant grief tears. Such  
 sin in words  
 Perchance, we both can pardon : but,  
 my Queen,  
 I hear of rumors flying thro' your  
 court.  
 Our bond, as not the bond of man and  
 wife,  
 Should have in it an absoluter trust  
 To make up that defect : let rumors  
 be :  
 When did not rumors fly ? these, as I  
 trust  
 That you trust me in your own noble-  
 ness,  
 I may not well believe that you be-  
 lieve."

While thus he spoke, half turn'd  
 away, the Queen  
 Brake from the vast oriel-embowering  
 vine  
 Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast  
 them off,  
 Till all the piece whereon she stood  
 was green :  
 Then, when he ceased, in one cold  
 passive hand  
 Received at once and laid aside the  
 gems  
 There on a table near her, and re-  
 plied.

"It may be, I am quicker of belief  
 Than you believe me, Lancelot of the  
 Lake  
 Our bond is not the bond of man and  
 wife,  
 This good is in it, whatsoever of ill,  
 It can be broken easier. I for you  
 This many a year have done despite  
 and wrong  
 To one whom ever in my heart of  
 hearts  
 I did acknowledge nobler. What are  
 these ?  
 Diamonds for me ? they had been  
 thrice their worth  
 Being your gift, had you not lost your  
 own.  
 To loyal hearts the value of all gifts  
 Must vary as the giver's. Not for me !  
 For her ! for your new fancy. Only  
 this  
 Grant me, I pray you : have your joys  
 apart.  
 I doubt not that however changed, you  
 keep

So much of what is graceful : and my-  
self  
Would shun to break those bounds of  
courtesy  
In which as Arthur's queen I move  
and rule :  
So cannot speak my mind. An end to  
this !  
A strange one ! yet I take it with  
Amen.  
So pray you, add my diamonds to her  
pearls ;  
Deck her with these ; tell her she  
shines me down :  
An armlet for an arm to which the  
Queen's  
Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck  
O as much fairer — as a faith once fair  
Was richer than these diamonds—hers  
not mine—  
Nay, by the mother of our Lord him-  
self,  
Or hers or mine, mine now to work my  
will—  
She shall not have them."

Saying which she seized,  
And, thro' the casement standing wide  
for heat,  
Flung them, and down they flash'd,  
and smote the stream.  
Then from the smitten surface flash'd,  
as it were,  
Diamonds to meet them, and they past  
away.  
Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half  
disgust  
At love, life, all things, on the window  
ledge,  
Close underneath his eyes, and right  
across  
Where these had fallen, slowly past  
the barge  
Whereon the lily maid of Astolat  
Lay smiling, like a star in blackest  
night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not,  
burst away  
To weep and wail in secret ; and the  
barge,  
On to the palace-doorway sliding,  
paused.  
There two stood arm'd, and kept the  
door ; to whom,  
All up the marble stair, tier over tier,  
Were added mouths that gaped, and  
eyes that ask'd  
"What is it?" but that oarsman's  
haggard face,  
As hard and still as is the face that  
men  
Shape to their fancy's eye from broken  
rocks  
On some cliff-side, appall'd them, and  
they said,  
"He is enchanted, cannot speak — and  
she,  
Look how she sleeps—the Fairy Queen,  
so fair !

Yea, but how pale ! what are they ?  
flesh and blood ?  
Or come to take the King to fairy  
land ?  
For some do hold our Arthur cannot  
die,  
But that he passes into fairy land."

While thus they babbled of the  
King, the King  
Came girt with knights ; then turn'd  
the tongueless man  
From the half-face to the full eye, and  
rose  
And pointed to the damsel, and the  
doors.  
So Arthur bade the meek Sir Perci-  
vale  
And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the  
maid ;  
And reverently they bore her into  
hall.  
Then came the fine Gawain and won-  
der'd at her,  
And Lancelot later came and mused at  
her,  
And last the Queen herself and pitied  
her :  
But Arthur spied the letter in her  
hand,  
Stooped, took, brake seal, and read it ;  
this was all.

"Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of  
the Lake,  
I, sometime call'd the maid of Astolat,  
Come, for you left me taking no fare-  
well,  
Hither, to take my last farewell of  
you.  
I loved you, and my love had no re-  
turn,  
And therefore my true love has been  
my death.  
And therefore to our lady Guinevere,  
And to all other ladies, I make moan.  
Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.  
Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lancelot,  
As thou art a knight peerless."

Thus he read,  
And ever in the reading, lords and  
dames  
Wept, looking often from his face who  
read  
To hers which lay so silent, and at  
times,  
So touch'd were they, half-thinking  
that her lips,  
Who had devised the letter, moved  
again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to  
them all ;  
"My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that  
hear,  
Know that for this most gentle maid-  
en's death  
Right heavy am I ; for good she was  
and true,

But loved me with a love beyond all  
love  
In women, whomsoever I have known.  
Yet to be loved makes not to love  
again ;  
Not at my years, however it hold in  
youth.  
I swear by truth and knighthood that  
I gave  
No cause, not willingly, for such a  
love :  
To this I call my friends in testimony,  
Her brethren, and her father, who  
himself  
Besought me to be plain and blunt,  
and use,  
To break her passion, some discourtesy  
Against my nature : what I could, I  
did.  
I left her and I bade her no farewell.  
Tho', had I dreamt the damsel would  
have died,  
I might have put my wits to some  
rough use,  
And help'd her from herself."

Then said the Queen  
(Sea was her wrath, yet working after  
storm)  
"Ye might at least have done her so  
much grace,  
Fair lord, as would have help'd her  
from her death."  
He raised his head, their eyes met and  
hers fell,  
He adding,  
"Queen, she would not be content  
Save that I wedded her, which could  
not be.  
Then might she follow me thro' the  
world, she ask'd ;  
It could not be. I told her that her  
love  
Was but the flash of youth, would  
darken down  
To rise hereafter in a stiller flame  
Toward one more worthy of her—then  
would I,  
More specially were he, she wedded,  
poor,  
Estate them with large land and terri-  
tory  
In mine own realm beyond the narrow  
seas,  
To keep them in all joyance : more  
than this  
I could not ; this she would not, and  
she died."

He pausing, Arthur answer'd, "O  
my knight,  
It will be to thy worship, as my knight,  
And mine, as head of all our Table  
Round,  
To see that she be buried worship-  
fully."

So toward that shrine which then in  
all the realm

Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly  
went  
The marshall'd order of their Table  
Round,  
And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to  
see  
The maiden buried, not as one un-  
known,  
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obse-  
quies,  
And mass, and rolling music, like a  
Queen.  
And when the knights had laid her  
comely head  
Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,  
Then Arthur spake among them,  
"Let her tomb  
Be costly, and her image thereupon.  
And let the shield of Lancelot at her  
feet  
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.  
And let the story of her dolorous voy-  
age  
For all true hearts be blazon'd on her  
tomb  
In letters gold and azure!" which  
was wrought  
Thereafter ; but when now the lords  
and dames  
And people, from the high door stream-  
ing, brake  
Disorderly, as homeward each, the  
Queen,  
Who mark'd Sir Lancelot where he  
moved apart,  
Drew near, and sigh'd in passing  
"Lancelot,  
Forgive me ; mine was jealousy in  
love."  
He answer'd with his eyes upon the  
ground,  
"That is love's curse ; pass on, my  
Queen, forgiven."  
But Arthur who beheld his cloudy  
brows  
Approach'd him, and with full affec-  
tion flung  
One arm about his neck, and spake  
and said.

"Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in  
whom I have  
Most love and most affiance, for I  
know  
What thou hast been in battle by my  
side,  
And many a time have watched thee  
at the tilt  
Strike down the lusty and long-prac-  
tised knight,  
And let the younger and unskill'd go  
by  
To win his honor and to make his  
name,  
And loved thy courtesies and thee, a  
man  
Made to be loved ; but now I would  
to God,  
For the wild people say wild things of  
thee,

Thou couldst have loved this maiden,  
 shaped, it seems,  
 By God for thee alone, and from her  
 face,  
 If one may judge the living by the  
 dead,  
 Delicately pure and marvellously fair,  
 Who might have brought thee, now a  
 lonely man  
 Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons  
 Born to the glory of thy name and  
 fame,  
 My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of  
 the Lake."

Then answer'd Lancelot, "Fair she  
 was, my King,  
 Pure, as you ever wish your knights to  
 be.  
 To doubt her fairness were to want an  
 eye,  
 To doubt her pureness were to want a  
 heart—  
 Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love  
 Could bind him, but free love will not  
 be bound."

"Free love, so bound, were freest,"  
 said the King.  
 "Let love be free; free love is for the  
 best:  
 And, after heaven, on our dull side of  
 death,  
 What should be best, if not so pure a  
 love  
 Clothed in so pure a loveliness? yet  
 thee  
 She fail'd to bind, tho' being, as I  
 think,  
 Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I  
 know."

And Lancelot answer'd nothing, but  
 he went,  
 And at the inrunning of a little brook  
 Sat by the river in a cove, and watch'd  
 The high reed wave, and lifted up his  
 eyes  
 And saw the barge that brought her  
 moving down,  
 Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and  
 said  
 Low in himself "Ah simple heart and  
 sweet,  
 Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a  
 love  
 Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray  
 for thy soul?  
 Ay, that will I. Farewell too—now at  
 last—  
 Farewell, fair lily. 'Jealousy in love?'  
 Not rather dead love's harsh heir,  
 jealous pride?  
 Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of  
 love,  
 May not your crescent fear for name  
 and fame  
 Speak, as it waxes, of a love that  
 wanes?  
 Why did the King dwell on my name  
 to me?"

Mine own name shames me, seeming a  
 reproach,  
 Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake  
 Stole from his mother—as the story  
 runs—  
 She chanted snatches of mysterious  
 song  
 Heard on the winding waters, eve and  
 morn  
 She kiss'd me saying thou art fair, my  
 child,  
 As a king's son, and often in her arms  
 She bare me, pacing on the dusky  
 mere.  
 Would she had drown'd me in it,  
 where'er it be!  
 For what am I? what profits me my  
 name  
 Of greatest knight? I fought for it,  
 and have it:  
 Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it,  
 pain;  
 Now grown a part of me: but what  
 use in it?  
 To make men worse by making my sin  
 known?  
 Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming  
 great?  
 Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a  
 man  
 Not after Arthur's heart! I needs  
 must break  
 These bonds that so defame me: not  
 without  
 She wills it: would I, if she will'd it?  
 nay,  
 Who knows? but if I would not, then  
 may God,  
 I pray him, send a sudden Angel down  
 To seize me by the hair and bear me  
 far,  
 And fling me deep in that forgotten  
 mere,  
 Among the tumbled fragments of the  
 hills."

So groan'd Sir Lancelot in remorse-  
 ful pain,  
 Not knowing he should die a holy man.

---

 THE HOLY GRAIL.

FROM noiseful arms, and acts of prow-  
 ess done  
 In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,  
 Whom Arthur and his knighthood  
 call'd The Pure,  
 Had pass'd into the silent life of  
 prayer,  
 Praise, fast, and alms; and leaving  
 for the cowl  
 The helmet in an abbey far away  
 From Camelot, there, and not long  
 after, died.  
 And one, a fellow-monk among the  
 rest,  
 Ambrosius, loved him much beyond  
 the rest,

And honor'd him, and wrought into  
his heart  
A way by love that waken'd love with-  
in,  
To answer that which came; and as  
they sat  
Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darken-  
ing half  
The cloisters, on a gustful April morn  
That puff'd the swaying branches into  
smoke  
Above them, ere the summer when he  
died,  
The monk Ambrosius question'd Perci-  
vale:

"O brother, I have seen this yew-  
tree smoke,  
Spring after spring, for half a hundred  
years:  
For never have I known the world  
without,  
Nor ever stray'd beyond the pale: but  
thee,  
When first thou camest—such a cour-  
tesy  
Spake thro' the limbs and in the  
voice—I knew  
For one of those who eat in Arthur's  
hall;  
For good ye are and bad, and like to  
come,  
Some true, some light, but every one  
of you  
Stamp'd with the image of the King;  
and now  
Tell me, what drove thee from the  
Table Round,  
My brother? was it earthly passion  
crost?"

"Nay," said the knight; "for no  
such passion mine,  
But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail  
Drove me from all vainglories, rival-  
ries,  
And earthly heats that spring and  
sparkle out  
Among us in the jousts, while women  
watch  
Who wins, who falls; and waste the  
spiritual strength  
Within us, better offer'd up to Hea-  
ven."

To whom the monk: "The Holy  
Grail—I trust  
We are green in Heaven's eyes; but  
here too much  
We moulder—as to things without I  
mean—  
Yet one of your own knights, a guest  
of ours,  
Told us of this in our refectory,  
But spake with such a sadness and so  
low  
We heard not half of what he said.  
What is it?  
The phantom of a cup that comes and  
goes?"

"Nay, monk! what phantom?" an-  
swer'd Percivale.  
"The cup, the cup itself, from which  
our Lord  
Drank at the last sad supper with his  
own.  
This, from the blessed land of Aromat—  
After the day of darkness, when the  
dead  
Went wandering o'er Moriah—the  
good saint,  
Arimathæan Joseph, journeying  
brought  
To Glastonbury, where the winter  
thorn  
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our  
Lord.  
And there awhile it bode; and if a  
man  
Could touch or see it, he was heal'd at  
once,  
By faith, of all his ills. But then the  
times  
Grew to such evil that the holy cup  
Was caught away to Heaven, and dis-  
appear'd."

To whom the monk: "From our old  
books I know  
That Joseph came of old to Glaston-  
bury,  
And there the heathen Prince, Arvira-  
gus,  
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to  
build;  
And there he built with wattles from  
the marsh  
A little lonely church in days of yore,  
For so they say, these books of ours,  
but seem  
Mute of this miracle, far as I have  
read.  
But who first saw the holy thing to-  
day?"

"A woman," answer'd Percivale,  
"a nun,  
And one no further off in blood from  
me  
Than sister; and if ever holy maid  
With knees of adoration wore the  
stone,  
A holy maid; tho' never maiden glow'd,  
But that was in her earlier maiden-  
hood,  
With such a fervent flame of human  
love,  
Which being rudely blunted, glanced  
and shot  
Only to holy things; to prayer and  
praise  
She gave herself, to fast and alms.  
And yet,  
Nun as she was, the scandal of the  
Court,  
Sin against Arthur and the Table  
Round,  
And the strange sound of an adulter-  
ous race,  
Across the iron grating of her cell

Beat, and she pray'd and fasted all the more.

"And he to whom she told her sins, or what

Her all but utter whiteness held for sin,

A man wellnigh a hundred winters old, Spake often with her of the Holy Grail, A legend handed down thro' five or six, And each of these a hundred winters old,

From our Lord's time. And when King Arthur made

His Table Round, and all men's hearts became

Clean for a season, surely he had thought

That now the Holy Grai! would come again;

But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that it would come,

And heal the world of all their wickedness!

'O Father!' asked the maiden, 'might it come

To me by prayer and fasting?' 'Nay,' said he,

'I know not, for thy heart is pure as snow.'

And so she pray'd and fasted, till the sun

Shone, and the wind blew, thro' her, and I thought

She might have risen and floated when I saw her.

"For on a day she sent to speak with me.

And when she came to speak, behold her eyes

Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful,

Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful,

Beautiful in the light of holiness.

And 'O my brother, Percivale,' she said,

'Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail:

For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound

As of a silver horn from o'er the hills Blown, and I thought, "It is not Arthur's use

To hunt by moonlight;" and the slender sound

As from a distance beyond distance grew

Coming upon me—O never harp nor horn,

Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch with hand,

Was like that music as it came; and then

Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and silver beam,

And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,

Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,

Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed

With rosy colors leaping on the wall; And then the music faded, and the Grail

Pass'd, and the beam decay'd, and from the walls

The rosy quiverings died into the night.

So now the Holy Thing is here again Among us, brother, fast thou too and

pray,

And tell thy brother knights to fast and pray,

That so perchance the vision may be seen

By thee and those, all the world be heal'd.'

"Then leaving the pale nun, I spake of this

To all men; and myself fasted and pray'd

Always, and many among us many a week

Fasted and pray'd even to the uttermost,

Expectant of the wonder that would be.

"And one there was among us, ever moved

Among us in white armor, Galahad, 'God make thee good as thou art beautiful,'

Said Arthur, when he dubb'd him knight; and none,

In so young youth, was ever made a knight

Till Galahad; and this Galahad, when he heard

Mysister's vision, fill'd me with amaze; His eyes became so like her own, they seem'd

Hers, and himself her brother more than I.

"Sister or brother none had he; but some

Call'd him a son of Lancelot, and some said

Begotten by enchantment—chatterers they,

Like birds of passage piping up and down,

That gape for flies—we know not whence they come;

For when was Lancelot wanderingly lewd?

"But she, the wan sweet maiden shore away

Clean from her forehead all that wealth of hair

Which made a silken mat-work for her feet;

And out of this she plaited broad and long

A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver thread

And crimson in the belt a strange  
device,  
A crimson grail within a silver beam;  
And saw the bright boy-knight, and  
bound it on him,  
Saying, 'My knight, my love, my  
knight of heaven.

O thou, my love, whose love is one  
with mine,  
I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my  
belt.

Go forth, for thou shalt see what I  
have seen,  
And brook thro' all, till one will crown  
thee king  
Far in the spiritual city : ' and as she  
spake

She sent the deathless passion in her  
eyes

Thro' him, and made him hers, and  
laid her mind

On him, and he believed in her belief.

"Then came a year of miracle : O  
brother,

In our great hall there stood a vacant  
chair,

Fashion'd by Merlin ere he past away,  
And carven with strange figures ; and  
in and out

The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll  
Of letters in a tongue no man could  
read.

And Merlin call'd it 'The Siege peril-  
ous,'

Perilous for good and ill ; 'for there,'  
he said,

'No man could sit but he should lose  
himself :'

And once by misadventence Merlin sat  
In his own chair, and so was lost ; but  
he,

Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's  
doom,

Cried, 'If I lose myself I save my-  
self !'

"Then on a summer night it came  
to pass,

While the great banquet lay along the  
hall,

That Galahad would sit down in Mer-  
lin's chair.

"And all at once, as there we sat,  
we heard

A cracking and a riving of the roofs,  
And rending, and a blast, and over-  
head

Thunder, and in the thunder was a  
cry.

And in the blast there smote along the  
hall

A beam of light seven times more clear  
than day :

And down the long beam stole the  
Holy Grail

All over cover'd with a luminous  
cloud,

And none might see who bare it, and  
it past.

But every knight beheld his fellow's  
face

As in a glory, and all the knights  
arose,

And staring each at other like dumb  
men

Stood, till I found a voice and sware a  
vow.

"I sware a vow before them all, that  
I,

Because I had not seen the Grail,  
would ride

A twelvemonth and a day in quest of  
it.

Until I found and saw it, as the nun  
My sister saw it ; and Galahad sware

the vow,  
And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's

cousin, sware,  
And Lancelot sware, and many among

the knights,  
And Gawain sware, and louder than

the rest."

Then spake the monk Ambrosius,  
asking him,

"What said the King? Did Arthur  
take the vow?"

"Nay, for my lord," said Percivale,  
"the king,

Was not in hall : for early that same  
day,

Scaped thro' a cavern from a bandit  
hold,

An outraged maiden sprang into the  
hall

Crying on help : for all her shining  
hair

Was smear'd with earth, and either  
milky arm

Red-rent with hooks of bramble, and  
all she wore

Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is  
torn

In tempest : so the king arose and  
went

To smoke the scandalous hive of those  
wild bees

That made such honey in his realm.  
Howbeit

Some little of this marvel he too saw,  
Returning o'er the plain that then

began  
To darken under Camelot ; whence the  
king

Look'd up, calling aloud, 'Lo there !  
the roofs

Of our great hall are rolled in thunder-  
smoke !

Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by  
the bolt.'

For dear to Arthur was that hall of  
ours,

As having there so oft with all his  
knights

Feasted, and as the stateliest under  
heaven.

"O brother, had you known our  
 mighty hall,  
 Which Merlin built for Arthur long  
 ago!  
 For all the sacred mount of Camelot,  
 And all the dim rich city, roof by roof,  
 Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,  
 By grove, and garden-lawn, and rush-  
 ing brook,  
 Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin  
 built.  
 And four great zones of sculpture, set  
 betwixt  
 With many a mystic symbol, gird the  
 hall:  
 And in the lowest beasts are slaying  
 men,  
 And in the second men are slaying  
 beasts,  
 And on the third are warriors, perfect  
 men,  
 And on the fourth are men with grow-  
 ing wings,  
 And over all one statue in the mould  
 Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a  
 crown,  
 And peak'd wings pointed to the  
 Northern Star.  
 And eastward fronts the statue, and  
 the crown  
 And both the wings are made of gold,  
 and flame  
 At sunrise till the people in far fields,  
 Wasted so often by the heathen hordes,  
 Behold it, crying, 'We have still a  
 king.'

"And, brother, had you known our  
 hall within,  
 Broader and higher than any in all  
 the lands!  
 Where twelve great windows blazon  
 Arthur's wars.  
 And all the light that falls upon the  
 board  
 Streams thro' the twelve great battles  
 of our King.  
 Nay, one there is, and at the eastern  
 end,  
 Wealthy with wandering lines of  
 mount and mere,  
 Where Arthur finds the brand, Ex-  
 calibur.  
 And also one to the west, and counter  
 to it,  
 And blank: and who shall blazon it?  
 when and how?—  
 O there perchance, when all our wars  
 are done,  
 The brand Excalibur will be cast away.

"So to this hall full quickly rode the  
 King,  
 In horror lest the work by Merlin  
 wrought,  
 Dreamlike, should on the sudden van-  
 ish, wrapt  
 In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.  
 And in he rode, and up I glanced, and  
 saw

The golden dragon sparkling over all:  
 And many of those who burnt the hold,  
 their arms  
 Hack'd, and their foreheads grimed  
 with smoke, and sear'd,  
 Follow'd, and in among bright faces,  
 ours,  
 Full of the vision, prest: and then the  
 King  
 Spake to me, being nearest, 'Perci-  
 vale.'  
 (Because the hall was all in tumult—  
 some  
 Vowing, and some protesting), 'what  
 is this?'

"O brother, when I told him what  
 had chanced,  
 My sister's vision, and the rest, his  
 face  
 Darken'd, as I have seen it more than  
 once,  
 When some brave deed seem'd to be  
 done in vain,  
 Darken; and 'Woe is me, my knights,'  
 he cried,  
 'Had I been here, ye had not sworn  
 the vow.'  
 Bold was mine answer, 'Had thyself  
 been here,  
 My King, thou wouldst have sworn.'  
 'Yea, yea,' said he,  
 'Art thou so bold and hast not seen  
 the Grail?'

"Nay, Lord, I heard the sound, I  
 saw the light,  
 But since I did not see the Holy  
 Thing,  
 I swear a vow to follow it till I saw.'  
 "Then when he asked us, knight by  
 knight, if any  
 Had seen it, all their answers were as  
 one:  
 'Nay, Lord, and therefore have we  
 sworn our vows.'

"Lo, now," said Arthur, 'have ye  
 seen a cloud?  
 What go ye into the wilderness to see?'

"Then Galahad on the sudden, and  
 in a voice  
 Shrilling along the hall to Arthur,  
 call'd,  
 'But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail,  
 I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry—  
 O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me.'

"Ah, Galahad, Galahad," said the  
 King, 'for such  
 As thou art is the vision, not for these.  
 Thy holy nun and thou have seen a  
 sign—  
 Holier is none, my Percivale, than  
 she—  
 A sign to main this Order which I  
 made.  
 But you, that follow but the leader's  
 bell'

(Brother, the King was hard upon his knights)  
 'Taliessin is our fullest throat of song,  
 And one hath sung and all the dumb  
 will sing,  
 Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath over-  
 borne  
 Five knights at once, and every young-  
 er knight,  
 Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,  
 Till overborne by one, he learns—and ye,  
 What are ye? Galahads?—no, nor Per-  
 cival's'  
 (For thus it pleased the King to range  
 me close  
 After Sir Galahad); 'nay,' said he, 'but  
 men  
 With strength and will to right the  
 wrong'd, of power  
 To lay the sudden heads of violence flat,  
 Knights that in twelve great battles  
 splash'd and dyed  
 The strong White Horse in his own  
 heathen blood—  
 But one hath seen, and all the blind  
 will see.  
 Go, since your vows are sacred, being  
 made:  
 Yet—for ye know the cries of all my  
 realm  
 Pass thro' this hall—how often, O my  
 knights,  
 Your places being vacant at my side,  
 This chance of noble deeds will come  
 and go  
 Unchallenged, while you follow wander-  
 ing fires  
 Lost in the quagmire? Many of you,  
 yea most,  
 Return no more: ye think I show my-  
 self  
 Too dark a prophet: come now, let us  
 meet  
 The morrow morn once more in one full  
 field  
 Of gracious pastime, that once more the  
 King,  
 Before you leave him for this Quest,  
 may count  
 The yet-unbroken strength of all his  
 knights,  
 Rejoicing in that Order which he made.'

"So when the sun broke next from  
 under ground,  
 All the great table of our Arthur closed  
 And clash'd in such a tourney and so  
 full,  
 So many lances broken—never yet  
 Had Camelot seen the like, since Arthur  
 came,  
 And I myself and Galahad, for a  
 strength  
 Was in us from the vision, overthrew  
 So many knights that all the people  
 cried,  
 And almost burst the barriers in their  
 heat,  
 Shouting 'Sir Galahad and Sir Perci-  
 vale!'

"But when the next day brake from  
 under ground—  
 O brother, had you known our Camelot,  
 Built by old kings, age after age, so old  
 The King himself had fears that it  
 would fall,  
 So strange, and rich, and dim; for  
 where the roofs  
 Totter'd toward each other in the sky,  
 Met foreheads all along the street of  
 those  
 Who watch'd us pass; and lower, and  
 where the long  
 Rich galleries, lady-laden, weigh'd the  
 necks  
 Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,  
 Thicker than crops from thunder,  
 showers of flowers  
 Fell as we past; and men and boys  
 astride  
 On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,  
 At all the corners, named us each by  
 name,  
 Calling 'God speed!' but in the street  
 below  
 The knights and ladies wept, and rich  
 and poor  
 Wept, and the King himself could  
 hardly speak  
 For grief, and in the middle street the  
 Queen,  
 Who rode by Lancelot, wail'd and  
 shriek'd aloud,  
 'This madness has come on us for our  
 sins'  
 And then we reach'd the weirdly-sculp-  
 tured gate,  
 Where Arthur's wars were render'd  
 mystically,  
 And thence departed every one his  
 way.

"And I was lifted up in heart, and  
 thought  
 Of all my late-shown prowess in the  
 lists,  
 How my strong lance had beaten  
 down the knights,  
 So many and famous names; and never  
 yet  
 Had heaven appear'd so blue, nor earth  
 so green,  
 For all my blood danced in me, and I  
 knew  
 That I should light upon the Holy  
 Grail.

"Thereafter, the dark warning of our  
 King,  
 That most of us would follow wander-  
 ing fires,  
 Came like a driving gloom across my  
 mind.  
 Then every evil word I had spoken  
 once,  
 And every evil thought I had thought  
 of old,  
 And every evil deed I ever did,  
 Awoke and cried, 'This Quest is not for  
 thee.'

And lifting up mine eyes, I found my-  
self  
Alone, and in a land of sand and thorns,  
And I was thirsty even unto death ;  
And I, too, cried, ' This Quest is not for  
thee.'

" And on I rode, and when I thought  
my thirst  
Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and  
then a brook,  
With one sharp rapid, where the crisp-  
ing white  
Play'd ever back upon the sloping  
wave,  
And took both ear and eye ; and o'er  
the brook  
Were apple-trees, and apples by the  
brook  
Fallen, and on the lawns. ' I will rest  
here.'  
I said, ' I am not worthy of the Quest ;'  
But even while I drank the brook, and  
ate  
The goodly apples, all these things at  
once  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone,  
And thirsting, in a land of sand and  
thorns.

" And then behold a woman at a door  
Spinning ; and fair the house whereby  
she sat,  
And kind the woman's eyes and inno-  
cent,  
And all her bearing gracious ; and she  
rose  
Opening her arms to meet me, as who  
should say,  
' Rest here ;' but when I touched her,  
lo ! she, too,  
Fell into dust ; and nothing, and the  
house  
Became no better than a broken shed,  
And in it a dead babe ; and also this  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone

" And on I rode, and greater was my  
thirst.  
Then flash'd a yellow gleam across the  
world,  
And where it smote the ploughshare in  
the field,  
The ploughman left his ploughing, and  
fell down  
Before it ; where it glitter'd on her  
pail,  
The milkmaid left her milking, and fell  
down  
Before it, and I knew not why, but  
thought  
' The sun is rising,' tho' the sun had  
risen.  
Then was I ware of one that on me  
moved  
In golden armor with a crown of gold  
About a casque all jewels ; and his  
horse  
In golden armor jewell'd everywhere :  
And on the splendor came, flashing me  
blind ;

And seem'd to me the Lord of all the  
world,  
Being so huge. But when I thought he  
meant  
To crush me, moving on me, lo ! he, too,  
Opened his arms to embrace me as he  
came,  
And up I went and touch'd him, and he,  
too,  
Fell into dust, and I was left alone  
And wearying in a land of sand and  
thorns.

" And I rode on and found a mighty  
hill,  
And on the top, a city wall'd : the spires  
Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into  
heaven.  
And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd ;  
and these  
Cried to me climbing, ' Welcome, Per-  
civale !  
Thou mightiest and thou purest among  
men !'  
And glad was I and clomb, but found  
at top  
No man, nor any voice. And thence I  
past  
Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw  
That man had once dwelt there ; but  
there I found  
Only one man of an exceeding age.  
' Where is that goodly company,' said I,  
' That so cried out upon me?' and he  
had  
Scarce any voice to answer, and yet  
gasp'd  
' Whence and what art thou !' and even  
as he spoke  
Fell into dust, and disappear'd, and I  
Was left alone once more, and cried in  
grief,  
' Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself  
And touch it, it will crumble into dust.'

" And thence I dropt into a holy vale,  
Low as the hill was high, and where the  
vale  
Was lowest, found a chapel and thereby  
A holy hermit in a hermitage,  
To whom I told my phantoms, and he  
said :

" O son, thou hast not true humility,  
The highest virtue, mother of them all ;  
For when the Lord of all things made  
Himself  
Naked of glory for His mortal change,  
" Take thou my robe," she said, " for  
all is thine,"  
And all her form shone forth with sud-  
den light  
So that the angels were amazed, and  
she  
Follow'd him down, and like a flying  
star  
Led on the gray-hair'd wisdom of the  
east ;  
But her thou hast not known : for what  
is this

Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and thy  
 sins?  
 Thou hast not lost thyself to save thy-  
 self  
 As Galahad, When the hermit made  
 an end,  
 In silver armor suddenly Galahad  
 shone  
 Before us, and against the chapel door  
 Laid lance, and enter'd, and we knelt  
 in prayer.  
 And there the hermit slaked my burn-  
 ing thirst  
 And at the sacrificing of the mass I saw  
 The holy elements alone; but he:  
 'Saw ye no more? I, Galahad, saw the  
 Grail,  
 The Holy Grail, descend upon the  
 shrine:  
 I saw the fiery face of a child  
 That smote itself into the bread, and  
 went;  
 And lithèr am I come; and never yet  
 Hath what thy sister taught me first to  
 see,  
 This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side,  
 nor come  
 Cover'd, but moving with me night and  
 day,  
 Fainter by day, but always in the night  
 Blood-red, and sliding down the black-  
 en'd marsh  
 Blood-red, and on the naked mountain  
 top  
 Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere be-  
 low  
 Blood-red. And in the strength of this  
 I rode,  
 Shattering all evil customs everywhere,  
 And past thro' Pagan realms, and made  
 them mine,  
 And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and  
 bore them down,  
 And brake thro' all, and in the strength  
 of this  
 Come victor. But my time is hard at  
 hand,  
 And hence I go; and one will crown me  
 king  
 Far in the spiritual city, and come thou,  
 too,  
 For thou shalt see the vision when I go.'  
 "While thus he spake, his eye, dwell-  
 ing on mine,  
 Drew me, with power upon me, till I  
 grew  
 One with him, to believe as he believed,  
 Then, when the day began to wane, we  
 went,  
 "There rose a hill that none but man  
 could climb,  
 Scarr'd with a hundred wintry water-  
 courses—  
 Storm at the top, and when we gain'd  
 it, storm  
 Round us and death; for every moment  
 glanced  
 His silver arms and gloom'd; so quick  
 and thick  
 The lightnings here and there to left  
 and right  
 Struck, till the dry old trunks about us,  
 dead,  
 Yea, rotten with a hundred years of  
 death,  
 Sprang into fire; and at the base we  
 found  
 On either hand, as far as eye could see,  
 A great black swamp and of an evil  
 smell,  
 Part black, part whiten'd with the bones  
 of men,  
 Not to be crost, save that some ancient  
 king  
 Had built a way, where, link'd with  
 many a bridge,  
 A thousand piers ran into the great sea.  
 And Galahad fled along them bridge by  
 bridge,  
 And every bridge as quickly as he crost  
 Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I  
 yearn'd  
 To follow; and thrice above him all  
 the heavens  
 Open'd and blazed with thunder such  
 as seem'd  
 Shoutings of all the sons of God; and  
 first  
 At once I saw him far on the great sea,  
 In silver-shining armor starry-clear;  
 And o'er his head the holy vessel hung  
 Clothed in white samite or a luminous  
 cloud.  
 And with exceeding swiftness ran the  
 boat  
 If boat it were—I saw not whence it  
 came.  
 And when the heavens open'd and  
 blazed again  
 Roaring, I saw him like a silver star—  
 And had he set the sail, or had the boat  
 Become a living creature clad with  
 wings?  
 And o'er his head the holy vessel hung  
 Redder than any rose, a joy to me,  
 For now I knew the veil had been with-  
 drawn.  
 Then in a moment when they blazed  
 again  
 Opening, I saw the least of little stars  
 Down on the waste, and straight beyond  
 the star  
 I saw the spiritual city and all her spires  
 And gateways in a glory like one pearl—  
 No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints—  
 Strike from the sea; and from the star  
 there shot  
 A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there  
 Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail,  
 Which never eyes on earth again shall  
 see.  
 Then fell the floods of heaven drown-  
 ing the deep,  
 And how my feet recross'd the death-  
 ful ridge  
 No memory in me lives; but that I  
 touch'd  
 The chapel-doors at dawn I know; and  
 thence

Taking my war-horse from the holy  
man,  
Glad that no phantom vex me more,  
return'd  
To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's  
wars."

"O brother," ask'd Ambrosius,—  
"for in sooth  
These ancient books—and they would  
win thee—teem,  
Only I find not there this Holy Grail,  
With miracles and marvels like to  
these,  
Not all unlike ; which oftentime I read,  
Who read but on my breviary with ease,  
Till my head swims ; and then go forth  
and pass  
Down to the little thorp that lies so  
close,  
And almost plaster'd like a martin's  
nest  
To these old walls—and mingle with  
our folk ;  
And knowing every honest face of  
theirs,  
As well as ever shepherd knew his  
sheep,  
And every homely secret in their  
hearts,  
Delight myself with gossip and old  
wives,  
And ills and aches, and teething, ly-  
ings-in,  
And mirthful sayings, children of the  
place,  
That have no meaning half a league  
away :  
Or lulling random squabbles when they  
rise,  
Chafferings and chatterings at the mar-  
ket-cross,  
Rejoice, small man, in this small world  
of mine,  
Yea, even in their hens and in their  
eggs—  
O brother, saving this Sir Galahad  
Came ye on none but phantoms in your  
quest,  
No man, no woman ?"

Then, Sir Percivale :  
"All men, to one so bound by such a  
vow,  
And women were as phantoms. O, my  
brother,  
Why wilt thou shame me to confess to  
thee  
How far I falter'd from my quest and  
vow ?  
For after I had lain so many nights  
A bedmate of the snail and eft and  
snake,  
In grass and burdock, I was changed to  
wan  
And meagre, and the vision had not  
come,  
And then I chanced upon a goodly town  
With one great dwelling in the middle  
of it ;

Thither I made, and there was I dis-  
arm'd  
By maidens each as fair as any flower :  
But when they led me into hall, behold  
The Princess of that castle was the one,  
Brother, and that one only, who had  
ever  
Made my heart leap ; for when I moved  
of old  
A slender page about her father's hall.  
And she a slender maiden, all my heart  
Went after her with longing : yet we  
twain  
Had never kiss'd a kiss, or vow'd a  
vow.  
And now I came upon her once again,  
And one had wedded her, and he was  
dead,  
And all his land and wealth and state  
were hers.  
And while I tarried, every day she set  
A banquet richer than the day before  
By me ; for all her longing and her  
will  
Was toward me as of old ; till one fair  
morn,  
I walking to and fro beside a stream  
That flash'd across her orchard under-  
neath  
Her castle-walls, she stole upon my  
walk,  
And calling me the greatest of all  
knights,  
Embraced me, and so kiss'd me the  
first time,  
And gave herself and all her wealth to  
me.  
Then I remember'd Arthur's warning  
word,  
That most of us would follow wander-  
ing fires,  
And the Quest faded in my heart.  
Anon,  
The heads of all her people drew to  
me,  
With supplication both of knees and  
tongue :  
'We have heard of thee : thou art our  
greatest knight,  
Our Lady says it, and we well believe :  
Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,  
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our  
land.'  
O me, my brother ! but one night my  
vow  
Burnt me within, so that I rose and  
fled,  
But wail'd and wept, and hated mine  
own self,  
And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but  
her ;  
Then after I was join'd with Galahad  
Cared not for her, nor anything upon  
earth."

Then said the monk, "Poor men,  
when yule is cold,  
Must be content to sit by little fires.  
And this am I, so that ye care for me  
Ever so little ; yea, and blest be Heaven

That brought thee here to this poor  
house of ours,  
Where all the brethren are so hard, to  
warm  
My cold heart with a friend : but O the  
pity  
To find thine own first love once more  
—to hold,  
Hold her a wealthy bride within thine  
arms,  
Or all but hold, and then—cast her  
aside,  
Foregoing all her sweetness, like a  
weed.  
For we that want the warmth of double  
life,  
We that are plagued with dreams of  
something sweet  
Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich.—  
Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthly-  
wise,  
Seeing I never stray'd beyond the cell,  
But live like an old badger in his earth,  
With earth about him everywhere, de-  
spite  
All fast and penance. Saw ye none  
beside,  
None of your knights?"

"Yea so," said Percivale :  
"One night my pathway swerving east,  
I saw  
The pelican on the casque of our Sir  
Bors  
All in the middle of the rising moon :  
And toward him spurr'd and hail'd  
him, and he me,  
And each made joy of either ; then he  
ask'd,  
'Where is he? hast thou seen him—  
Lancelot?' 'Once,'  
Said good Sir Bors, 'he dash'd across  
me—mad,  
And maddening what he rode : and  
when I cried,  
'Ridest thou then so hotly on a quest  
So hotly?' Lancelot shouted, "Stay  
me not!  
I have been the sluggard, and I ride  
apace,  
For now there is a lion in the way."  
So vanish'd.'

"Then Sir Bors had ridden on  
Softly, and sorrowing for our Lancelot,  
Because his former madness, once the  
talk  
And scandal of our table, had re-  
turn'd ;  
For Lancelot's kith and kin so worship  
him  
That ill to him is ill to them ; to Bors  
Beyond the rest : he well had been  
content  
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might  
have seen,  
The Holy Cup of healing ; and, indeed,  
Being so clouded with his grief and  
love,  
Small heart was his after the Holy  
Quest :

If God would send the vision, well : if  
not,  
The Quest and he were in the hands of  
heaven.

"And then, with small adventure  
met, Sir Bors  
Rode to the lonest tract of all the  
realm,  
And found a people there among their  
crags,  
Our race and blood, a remnant that  
were left  
Paynim amid their circles, and the  
stones  
They pitch up straight to heaven ; and  
their wise men  
Were strong in that old magic which  
can trace  
The wandering of the stars, and scoff'd  
at him  
At this high Quest as at a simple  
thing :  
Told him he follow'd—almost Arthur's  
words—  
A mocking fire : 'what other fire than  
he,  
Whereby the blood beats, and the  
blossom blows,  
And the sea rolls, and all the world is  
warm'd?'  
And when his answer chafed them, the  
rough crowd,  
Hearing he had a difference with their  
priests,  
Seized him, and bound and plunged  
him into a cell  
Of great piled stones ; and lying  
bounden there  
In darkness thro' innumerable hours  
He heard the hollow-ringing heavens  
sweep  
Over him, till by miracle—what else?—  
Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt and  
fell,  
Such as no wind could move : and  
thro' the gap  
Glimmer'd the streaming scud : then  
came a night  
Still as the day was loud ; and thro'  
the gap  
The seven clear stars of Arthur's Table  
Round—  
For, brother, so one night, because  
they roll  
Thro' such around in heaven, we named  
the stars,  
Rejoicing in ourselves and in our king—  
And these, like bright eyes of familiar  
friends,  
In on him shone, 'And then to me, to  
me.'  
Said good Sir Bors, 'beyond all hopes  
of mine,  
Who scarce had pray'd or ask'd it for  
myself—  
Across the seven clear stars—O grace  
to me—  
In color like the fingers of a hand  
Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail

Glided and past, and close upon it  
 peal'd  
 A sharp quick thunder.' Afterwards  
 a maid,  
 Who kept our holy faith among her kin  
 In secret, entering, loosed and let him  
 go."

To whom the monk: "And I remember  
 now  
 That pelican on the casque. Sir Bors  
 it was  
 Who spake so low and sadly at our  
 board;  
 And mighty reverent at our grace was  
 he:  
 A square-set man and honest; and his  
 eyes,  
 An out-door sign of all the warmth  
 within.  
 Smiled with his lips—a smile beneath  
 a cloud,  
 But heaven had meant it for a sunny  
 one:  
 Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else? But when  
 ye reach'd  
 The city, found ye all your knights re-  
 turn'd,  
 Or was there sooth in Arthur's pro-  
 phecy,  
 Tell me, and what said each, and what  
 the King?"

Then answer'd Percivale: "And  
 that can I,  
 Brother, and truly; since the living  
 words  
 Of so great men as Lancelot and our  
 King  
 Pass not from door to door and out  
 again,  
 But sit within the house. O, when we  
 reach'd  
 The city, our horses stumbling as they  
 trode  
 On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,  
 Crack'd basilisks, and splinter'd cock-  
 atrices,  
 And shatter'd talbots, which had left  
 the stones  
 Raw, that they fell from, brought us to  
 the hall.

"And there sat Arthur on the daïs-  
 throne,  
 And those that had gone out upon the  
 Quest,  
 Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of  
 them,  
 And those that had not, stood before  
 the King.  
 Who, when he saw me, rose, and bade  
 me hail,  
 Saying, 'A welfare in thine eye re-  
 proves  
 Our fear of some disastrous chance for  
 thee  
 On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding  
 ford.  
 So fierce a gale made havoc here of  
 late

Among the strange devices of our  
 kings;  
 Yea, shook this newer, stronger hall of  
 ours,  
 And from the statue Merlin moulded  
 for us  
 Half-wrench'd a golden wing; but now  
 —the quest,  
 This vision—hast thou seen the Holy  
 Cup,  
 That Joseph brought of old to Glaston-  
 bury?"

"So when I told him all thyself hast  
 heard,  
 Ambrosius, and my fresh but fixt re-  
 solve  
 To pass away into the quiet life,  
 He answer'd not, but, sharply turning,  
 ask'd  
 Of Gawain, 'Gawain, was this Quest  
 for thee?"

"'Nay, lord,' said Gawain, 'not for  
 such as I.  
 Therefore I communed with a saintly  
 man,  
 Who made me sure the Quest was not  
 for me;  
 For I was much aweared of the  
 Quest:  
 But found a silk pavilion in a field,  
 And merry maidens in it; and then  
 this gale  
 Tore my pavilion from the tenting-pin,  
 And blew my merry maidens all about  
 With all discomfort; yea, and but for  
 this,  
 My twelvemonth and a day were pleas-  
 ant to me.'

"He ceased; and Arthur turn'd to  
 whom at first  
 He saw not, for Sir Bors, on entering,  
 push'd  
 Athwart the throng to Lancelot, caught  
 his hand,  
 Held it, and there, half-hidden by him,  
 stood,  
 Until the King espied him, saying to  
 him,  
 'Hail, Bors! if ever loyal man and  
 true  
 Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail;'  
 and Bors,  
 'Ask me not, for I may not speak of it,  
 I saw it: and the tears were in his  
 eyes.'

"Then there remain'd but Lancelot,  
 for the rest  
 Spake but of sundry perils in the  
 storm;  
 Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy  
 Writ,  
 Our Arthur kept his best until the last;  
 'Thou, too, my Lancelot,' ask'd the  
 King, 'my friend,  
 Our mightiest, hath this Quest avail'd  
 for thee?"

"Our mightiest," answer'd Lancelot, with a groan;  
 O King!—and when he paused, methought I spied  
 A dying fire of madness in his eyes—  
 'O King, my friend, if friend of thine  
 I be,  
 Happier are those that welter in their  
 sin,  
 Swine in the mud, that cannot see for  
 slime,  
 Slime of the ditch: but in me lived a  
 sin  
 So strange, of such a kind, that all of  
 pure,  
 Noble, and knightly in me twined and  
 clung  
 Round that one sin, until the whole-  
 some flower  
 And poisonous grew together, each as  
 each,  
 Not to be pluck'd asunder; and when  
 thy knights  
 Swore, I swore with them only in the  
 hope  
 That could I touch or see the Holy  
 Grail  
 They might be pluck'd asunder. Then  
 I spake  
 To one most holy saint, who wept and  
 said,  
 That save they could be pluck'd asunder,  
 all  
 My quest were but in vain; to whom I  
 vow'd  
 That I would work according as he  
 will'd.  
 And forth I went, and while I yearn'd  
 and strove  
 To tear the twain asunder in my heart,  
 My madness came upon me as of old,  
 And whipt me into waste fields far  
 away;  
 There was I beaten down by little men.  
 Mean knights, to whom the moving of  
 my sword  
 And shadow of my spear had been enow  
 To scare them from me once; and then  
 I came  
 All in my folly to the naked shore,  
 Wide flats, where nothing but coarse  
 grasses grew;  
 But such a blast, my King, began to  
 blow,  
 So loud a blast along the shore and  
 sea,  
 Ye could not hear the waters for the  
 blast,  
 Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all  
 the sea  
 Drove like a cataract, and all the sand  
 Swept like a river, and the clouded  
 heavens  
 Were shaken with the motion and the  
 sound.  
 And blackening in the sea-foam sway'd  
 a boat,  
 Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a  
 chain;  
 And in my madness to myself I said

"I will embark and I will lose myself  
 And in the great sea wash away my sin.  
 I burst the chain, I sprang into th  
 boat.  
 Seven days I drove along the dreary  
 deep,  
 And with me drove the moon and all  
 the stars;  
 And the wind fell, and on the seventh  
 night  
 I heard the shingle grinding in the  
 surge,  
 And felt the boat shock earth, and  
 looking up,  
 Behold, the enchanted towers of Car-  
 bonek,  
 A castle like a rock upon a rock,  
 With chasm-like portals open to the  
 sea,  
 And steps that met the breaker! there  
 was none  
 Stood near it but a lion on each side  
 That kept the entry, and the moon was  
 full.  
 Then from the boat I leapt, and up the  
 stairs.  
 There drew my sword. With sudden-  
 flaring manes  
 Those two great beasts rose upright  
 like a man,  
 Each gript a shoulder, and I stood be-  
 tween;  
 And, when I would have smitten them,  
 heard a voice,  
 "Doubt not, go forward; if thou  
 doubt, the beasts  
 Will tear thee piecemeal." Then with  
 violence  
 The sword was dash'd from out my  
 hand, and fell.  
 And up into the sounding hall I past;  
 But nothing in the sounding hall I saw  
 No bench nor table, painting on the  
 wall  
 Or shield of knight; only the rounded  
 moon  
 Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea.  
 But always in the quiet house I heard,  
 Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark,  
 A sweet voice singing in the topmost  
 tower  
 To the eastward: up I climb'd a thou-  
 sand steps  
 With pain: as in dream I seem'd to  
 climb  
 For ever: at the last I reach'd a door,  
 A light was in the crannies, and I  
 heard,  
 "Glory and joy and honor to our Lord  
 And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail."  
 Then in my madness I essay'd the  
 door:  
 It gave; and thro' a stormy glare, a  
 heat  
 As from a seventimes-heated furnace,  
 I,  
 Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I  
 was,  
 With such a fierceness that I swoon'd  
 away—

O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,  
 All pall'd in crimson samite, and  
 around  
 Great angels, awful shapes, and wings  
 and eyes.  
 And but for all my madness and my  
 sin,  
 And then my swooning, I had sworn I  
 saw  
 That which I saw; but what I saw was  
 veil'd  
 And cover'd; and this quest was not  
 for me.'

"So speaking, and here ceasing,  
 Lancelot left  
 The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain—  
 nay  
 Brother, I need not tell thee foolish  
 words,—  
 A reckless and irreverent knight was  
 he,  
 Now bolden'd by the silence of his  
 King,—  
 Well, I will tell thee: 'O king, my  
 liege,' he said,  
 'Hath Gawain fail'd in any quest of  
 thine?  
 When have I stinted stroke in foughten  
 field?  
 But as for thine, my good friend, Per-  
 cival,  
 Thy holy nun and thou have driven  
 men mad,  
 Yea, made our mightiest madder than  
 our least.  
 But by mine eyes and by mine ears I  
 swear,  
 I will be deafer than the blue-eyed cat,  
 And thrice as blind as any noonday  
 owl,  
 The holy virgins in their ecstasies,  
 Henceforward.'

"'Deafer,' said the blameless King,  
 'Gawain, and blinder unto holy things  
 Hope not to make thyself by idle vows,  
 Being too blind to have desire to see.  
 But if indeed there came a sign from  
 heaven,  
 Blessed are Bors, Lancelot, and Perci-  
 val,  
 For these have seen according to their  
 sight.  
 For every fiery prophet in old times,  
 And all the sacred madness of the  
 bard,  
 When God made music thro' them,  
 could but speak  
 His music by the framework and the  
 chord;  
 And as ye saw it ye have spoken truth.  
 "'Nay—but thou errest, Lancelot:  
 never yet  
 Could all of true and noble in knight  
 and man  
 Twine round one sin, whatever it might  
 be,  
 With such a closeness, but apart there  
 grew.

Save that he were the swine thou  
 spakest of,  
 Some root of knighthood and pure  
 nobleness:  
 Whereto see thou, that it may bear its  
 flower.

"'And spake I not too truly, O my  
 knights?  
 Was I too dark a prophet when I said  
 To those who went upon the Holy  
 Quest,  
 That most of them would follow wan-  
 dering fires,  
 Lost in the quagmire?—lost to me and  
 gone,  
 And left me gazing at a barren board,  
 And a lean Order—scarce return'd a  
 tithe—  
 And out of those to whom the vision  
 came  
 My greatest hardly will believe he  
 saw;  
 Another hath beheld it afar off,  
 And leaving human wrongs to right  
 themselves,  
 Cares but to pass into the silent life.  
 And one hath had the vision face to  
 face,  
 And now his chair desires him here in  
 vain,  
 However they may crown him other-  
 where.

"And some among you held, that if  
 the King  
 Had seen the sight he would have  
 sworn the vow:  
 Not easily, seeing that the King must  
 guard  
 That which he rules, and is but as the  
 hind  
 To whom a space of land is given to  
 plough,  
 Who may not wander from the allotted  
 field,  
 Before his work be done; but, being  
 done,  
 Let visions of the night or of the day  
 Come, as they will; and many a time  
 they come,  
 Until this earth he walks on seems  
 not earth,  
 This light that strikes his eyeball is  
 not light,  
 This air that smites his forehead is  
 not air  
 But vision—yea, his very hand and  
 foot—  
 In moments when he feels he cannot  
 die,  
 And knows himself no vision to him-  
 self,  
 Nor the high God a vision, nor that  
 One  
 Who rose again; ye have seen what ye  
 have seen.'

"So spake the king: I knew not all  
 he meant."

## PELLEAS AND ETTARRE.

KING ARTHUR made new knights to fill the gap  
Left by the Holy Quest; and as he sat  
In hall at old Caerleon, the high doors  
Were softly sunder'd, and thro' these  
A youth,  
Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the  
fields  
Past, and the sunshine came along  
with him.

"Make me thy knight, because I know, Sir King,  
All that belongs to knighthood, and I love."

Such was his cry; for having heard the King  
Had let proclaim a tournament—the prize

A golden circlet and a knightly sword,  
Full fain had Pelleas for his lady won  
The golden circlet, for himself the sword:

And there were those who knew him near the King

And promised for him; and Arthur made him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of the isles—

But lately come to his inheritance,  
And lord of many a barren isle was he—

Riding at noon, a day or twain before,  
Across the forest call'd of Dean, to find

Caerleon and the King, had felt the sun  
Beat like a strong knight on his helm,  
and reel'd

Almost to falling from his horse; but saw

Near him a mound of even-sloping side,  
Whereon a hundred stately beeches

grew,  
And here and there great hollies under them.

But for a mile all round was open space,

And fern and heath: and slowly Pelleas drew

To that dim day, then binding his good horse

To a tree, cast himself down; and as he lay

At random looking over the brown earth

Thro' that green-glooming twilight of the grove,

It seem'd to Pelleas that the fern without

Burnt as a living fire of emeralds,  
So that his eyes were dazzled looking at it.

Then o'er it crost the dimness of a cloud

Floating, and once the shadow of a bird

Flying, and then a fawn; and his eyes closed.

And since he loved all maidens, but no maid

In special, half-awake he whisper'd, "Where?"

O where? I love thee, tho' I know thee not,

For fair thou art and pure as Guinevere.

And I will make thee with my spear and sword

As famous—O my queen, my Guinevere.

For I will be thine Arthur when we meet."

Suddenly waken'd with a sound of talk

And laughter at the limit of the wood,  
And glancing thro' the hoary boles, he saw,

Strange as to some old prophet might have seem'd

A vision hovering on a sea of fire,  
Damsels in divers colors like the cloud

Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them  
On horses, and the horses richly trapt

Breast-high in that bright line of bracken stood:

And all the damsels talk'd confusedly,  
And one was pointing this way, and one that,

Because the way was lost.

And Pelleas rose,  
And loosed his horse, and led him to the light.

There she that seem'd the chief among them said,

"In happy time behold our pilot-star!  
Youth, we are damsels-errant, and we ride,

Arm'd as ye see, to tilt against the knights

There at Caerleon, but have lost our way:

To right? to left? straightforward? back again?

Which? tell us quickly."

And Pelleas gazing thought,  
"Is Guinevere herself so beautiful?"

For large her violet eyes look'd, and her bloom

A rosy dawn kindled in stainless heavens,

And round her limbs, mature in womanhood,

And slender was her hand and small her shape,

And but for those large eyes, the haunts of scorn,

She might have seem'd a toy to trifle with,

And pass and care no more. But while he gazed

The beauty of her flesh abash'd the boy,

As tho' it were the beauty of her soul :  
 For as the base man, judging of the  
 good,  
 Puts his own baseness in him by de-  
 fault  
 Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend  
 All the young beauty of his own soul  
 to hers,  
 Believing her; and when she spake to  
 him,  
 Stammer'd, and could not make her a  
 reply.  
 For out of the waste islands had he  
 come,  
 Where saving his own sisters he had  
 known  
 Scarce any but the women of his isles,  
 Rough wives, that laugh'd and  
 scream'd against the gulls,  
 Makers of nets, and living from the  
 sea.

Then with a slow smile turn'd the  
 lady round  
 And look'd upon her people; and as  
 when  
 A stone is flung into some sleeping  
 tarn,  
 The circle widens till it lip the marge,  
 Spread the slow smile thro' all her  
 company.  
 Three knights were thereamong; and  
 they too smiled,  
 Scorning him; for the lady was Et-  
 tarre,  
 And she was a great lady in her land.

Again she said, "O wild and of the  
 woods,  
 Knowest thou not the fashion of our  
 speech?  
 Or have the Heavens but given thee a  
 fair face,  
 Lacking a tongue?"

"O damsel," answer'd he,  
 "I woke from dreams; and coming  
 out of gloom  
 Was dazzled by the sudden light, and  
 crave  
 Pardon: but will ye to Caerleon? I  
 Go likewise: shall I lead you to the  
 King?"

"Lead then," she said; and thro'  
 the woods they went.  
 And while they rode, the meaning in  
 his eyes,  
 His tenderness of manner, and chaste  
 awe,  
 His broken utterance and bashfulness,  
 Were all a burthen to her, and in her  
 heart  
 She mutter'd, "I have lighted on a  
 fool,  
 Raw, yet so stale!" But since her  
 mind was bent  
 On hearing, after trumpet blown, her  
 name  
 And title, "Queen of Beauty," in the  
 lists

Cried—and beholding him so strong,  
 she thought  
 That peradventure he will fight for  
 me,  
 And win the circlet: therefore flatter'd  
 him,  
 Being so 'gracious, that he wellnigh  
 deem'd  
 His wish by hers was echo'd; and her  
 knights  
 And all her damsels too were gracious  
 to him,  
 For she was a great lady.

And when they reach'd  
 Caerleon, ere they past to lodging,  
 she,  
 Taking his hand, "O the strong hand,"  
 she said,  
 "See! look at mine! but wilt thou  
 fight for me,  
 And win me this fine circlet, Pelleas,  
 That I may love thee?"

Then his helpless heart  
 Leapt, and he cried "Ay! wilt thou if  
 I win?"  
 "Ay, that will I," she answer'd, and  
 she laugh'd,  
 And straitly nipt the hand, and flung  
 it from her;  
 Then glanced askew at those three  
 knights of hers,  
 Till all her ladies laugh'd along with  
 her.

"O happy world," thought Pelleas,  
 "all, meseems,  
 Are happy; I the happiest of them  
 all."  
 Nor slept that night for pleasure in  
 his blood,  
 And green wood-ways, and eyes among  
 the leaves:  
 Then being on the morrow knighted,  
 sware  
 To love one only. And as he came  
 away,  
 The men who met him rounded on  
 their heels  
 And wonder'd after him, because his  
 face  
 Shone like the countenance of a priest  
 of old  
 Against the flame about a sacrifice  
 Kindled by fire from heaven: so glad  
 was he

Then Arthur made vast banquets,  
 and strange knights  
 From the four winds came in: and  
 each one sat,  
 Tho' served with choice from air, land,  
 stream, and sea,  
 Oft in mid-banquet measuring with  
 his eyes  
 His neighbor's make and might: and  
 Pelleas look'd  
 Noble among the noble, for he  
 dream'd

His lady loved him, and he knew  
himself  
Loved of the King : and him his new-  
made knight  
Worshipt, whose lightest whisper  
moved him more  
Than all the ranged reasons of the  
world.

Then blush'd and brake the morning  
of the jousts,  
And this was call'd "The Tournament  
of Youth :"  
For Arthur, loving his young knight,  
withheld  
His older and his mightier from the  
lists,  
That Pelleas might obtain his lady's  
love,  
According to her promise, and remain  
Lord of the tourney. And Arthur  
had the jousts  
Down in the flat field by the shore of  
Usk  
Holden : the gilded parapets were  
crown'd  
With faces, and the great tower fill'd  
with eyes  
Up to the summit, and the trumpets  
blew.  
There all day long Sir Pelleas kept the  
field  
With honor : so by that strong hand  
of his  
The sword and golden circlet were  
achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved :  
the heat  
Of pride and glory fired her face ; her  
eye  
Sparkled ; she caught the circlet from  
his lance,  
And there before the people crown'd  
herself.  
So for the last time she was gracious  
to him.

Then at Caerleon for a space—her  
look  
Bright for all others, cloudier on her  
knight—  
Linger'd Ettarre : and seeing Pelleas  
droop,  
Said Guinevere, "We marvel at thee  
much,  
O damsel, wearing this unsunny face  
To him who won thee glory !" And  
she said,  
"Had ye not held your Lancelot in  
your bower,  
My Queen, he had not won." Whereat  
the Queen,  
As one whose foot is bitten by an ant,  
Glanced down upon her, turn'd and  
went her way.

But after, when her damsels, and  
herself,  
And those three knights all set their  
faces home,

Sir Pelleas follow'd. She that saw  
him cried,  
"Damsels—and yet I should be shamed  
to say it—  
I cannot hide Sir Baby. Keep him  
back  
Among yourselves. Would rather that  
we had  
Some rough old knight who knew the  
worldly way,  
Albeit grizzlier than a bear, to ride  
And jest with : take him to you, keep  
him off,  
And pamper him with papmeat, if ye  
will,  
Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep,  
Such as the wholesome mothers tell  
their boys.  
Nay should ye try him with a merry  
one  
To find his mettle, good : and if he fly  
us,  
Small matter ! let him." This her  
damsels heard,  
And mindful of her small and cruel  
hand,  
They, closing round him thro' the  
journey home,  
Acted her hest, and always from her  
side  
Restrain'd him with all manner of  
device,  
So that he could not come to speech  
with her.  
And when she gain'd her castle, up-  
sprang the bridge,  
Down rang the grate of iron thro' the  
groove,  
And he was left alone in open field.

"These be the ways of ladies," Pel-  
leas thought,  
"To those who love them, trials of  
our faith.  
Yea, let her prove me to the utter-  
most,  
For loyal to the uttermost am I."  
So made his moan ; and, darkness fall-  
ing, sought  
A priory not far off, there lodged, but  
rose  
With morning every day, and, moist  
or dry,  
Full-arm'd upon his charger all day  
long  
Sat by the walls, and no one open'd to  
him.

And this persistence turn'd her scorn  
to wrath.  
Then calling her three knights, she  
charged them, "Out !  
And drive him from the walls." And  
out they came,  
But Pelleas overthrew them as they  
dash'd  
Against him one by one ; and these  
return'd,  
But still he kept his watch beneath  
the wall.

Thereon her wrath became a hate ;  
 and once,  
 A week beyond, while walking on the  
 walls  
 With her three knights, she pointed  
 downward, "Look,  
 He haunts me—I cannot breathe—be-  
 seiges me ;  
 Down ! strike him ! put my hate into  
 your strokes,  
 And drive him from my walls." And  
 down they went.  
 And Pelleas overthrew them one by  
 one ;  
 And from the tower above him cried  
 Ettarre,  
 " Bind him and bring him in."

He heard her voice ;  
 Then let the strong hand, which had  
 overthrown  
 Her minion-knights, by those he over-  
 threw  
 Be bounden straight, and so they  
 brought him in.

Then when he came before Ettarre,  
 the sight  
 Of her rich beauty made him at one  
 glance  
 More bondsman in his heart than in  
 his bonds.  
 Yet with good cheer he spake, "Be-  
 hold me Lady,  
 A prisoner and the vassal of thy will ;  
 And if thou keep me in thy donjon  
 here,  
 Content am I so that I see thy face  
 But once a day : for I have sworn my  
 vows,  
 And thou hast given thy promise, and  
 I know  
 That all these pains are trials of my  
 faith,  
 And that thyself when thou hast seen  
 me strain'd  
 And sifted to the utmost, wilt at  
 length  
 Yield me thy love and know me for  
 thy knight."

Then she began to rail so bitterly,  
 With all her damsels, he was stricken  
 mute ;  
 But when she mock'd his vows and the  
 great King,  
 Lighted on words : "For pity of thine  
 own self,  
 Peace, Lady, peace : is he not thine  
 and mine ?"  
 "Thou fool," she said, "I never heard  
 his voice  
 But long'd to break away. Unbind  
 him now,  
 And thrust him out of doors ; for save  
 he be  
 Fool to the midmost marrow of his  
 bones,  
 He will return no more." And those,  
 her three,

Laugh'd, and unbound, and thrust  
 him from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond, again  
 She call'd them, saying, "There he  
 watches yet,  
 There like a dog before his master's  
 door !  
 Kick'd, he returns : do ye not hate  
 him, ye ?  
 Ye know yourselves : how can ye bide  
 at peace,  
 Affronted with his fulsome innocence ?  
 Are ye but creatures of the board and  
 bed,  
 No men to strike ? Fall on him all at  
 once,  
 And if ye slay him I reckon not : if ye  
 fail,  
 Give ye the slave mine order to be  
 bound,  
 Bind him as heretofore, and bring him  
 in :  
 It may be ye shall slay him in his  
 bonds."

She spake ; and at her will they  
 couch'd their spears.  
 Three against one : and Gawain pass-  
 ing by,  
 Bound upon solitary adventure, saw  
 Low down beneath the shadow of  
 those towers  
 A villany, three to one : and thro' his  
 heart  
 The fire of honor and all noble deeds  
 Flash'd, and he call'd, "I strike upon  
 thy side—  
 The caitiffs !" "Nay," said Pelleas,  
 "but forbear ;  
 He needs no aid who doth his lady's  
 will."

So Gawain, looking at the villany  
 done,  
 Forebore, but in his heat and eagerness  
 Trembled and quiver'd, as the dog,  
 withheld  
 A moment from the vermin that he  
 sees  
 Before him, shivers, ere he springs  
 and kills.

And Pelleas overthrew them, one to  
 three ;  
 And they rose up, and bound, and  
 brought him in.  
 Then first her anger, leaving Pelleas,  
 burn'd  
 Full on her knights in many an evil  
 name  
 Of craven, weakling, and thrice-beat-  
 en hound :  
 "Yet, take him, ye that scarce are fit  
 to touch.  
 Far less to bind, your victor, and  
 thrust him out,  
 And let who will release him from his  
 bonds.  
 And if he comes again"—there she  
 brake short ;

And Pelleas answer'd, "Lady, for indeed I loved you and I deem'd you beautiful, I cannot brook to see your beauty marr'd Thro' evil spite : and if ye love me not, I cannot bear to dream you so forsworn : I had liefer ye were worthy of my love, Than to be loved again of you—farewell ; And tho' ye kill my hope, not yet my love, Vex not yourself : ye will not see me more."

While thus he spake, she gazed upon the man Of princely bearing, tho' in bonds, and thought, "Why have I push'd him from me? this man loves, If love there be : yet him I loved not. Why? I deem'd him fool? yea, so? or that in him A something—was it nobler than myself?— Seem'd my reproach? He is not of my kind. He could not love me, did he know me well. Nay, let him go—and quickly." And her knights Laugh'd not, but thrust him bounden out of door.

Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed him from his bonds, And flung them o'er the walls ; and afterward, Shaking his hands, as from a lazar's rag, "Faith of my body," he said, "and art thou not— Yea thou art he, whom late our Arthur made Knight of his table ; yea and he that won The circlet? wherefore hast thou so defamed Thy brotherhood in me and all the rest, As let these catiffs on thee work their will?"

And Pelleas answer'd, "O, their wills are hers For whom I won the circlet ; and mine, hers, Thus to be bounden, so to see her face, Marr'd tho' it be with spite and mockery now, Other than when I found her in the woods ; And tho' she hath me bounden but in spite, And all to flout me, when they bring me, in,

Let me be bounden, I shall see her face ; Else must I die thro' mine unhappiness."

And Gawain answer'd kindly tho' in scorn, "Why, let my lady bind me if she will, And let my lady beat me if she will : But an she send her delegate to thrall These fighting hands of mine—Christ kill me then But I will slice him handless by the wrist, And let my lady sear the stump for him, Howl as he may. But hold me for your friend : Come, ye know nothing : here I pledge my troth, Yea, by the honor of the Table Round, I will be leal to thee and work thy work, And tame thy jailing princess to thine hand. Lend me thine horse and arms, and I will say That I have slain thee. She will let me in To hear the manner of thy fight and fall ; Then, when I come within her counsels, then From prime to vespers will I chant thy praise As prowtest knight and truest lover, more Than any have sung the living, till she long To have thee back in lusty life again, Not to be bound, save by white bonds and warm, Dearer than freedom. Wherefore now thy horse And armor : let me go : be comforted : Give me three days to melt her fancy, and hope The third night hence will bring thee news of gold."

The Pelleas lent his horse and all his arms, Saving the goodly sword, his prize, and took Gawain's, and said, "Betray me not but help— Art thou not he whom men call light-of-love?"

"Ay," said Gawain, "for women be so light." Then bounded forward to the castle walls, And raised a bugle hanging from his neck, And winded it, and that so musically That all the old echoes hidden in the wall Rang out like hollow woods at hunting-tide.

Up ran a score of damsels to the tower ;  
 "Avaunt," they cried, "our lady loves thee not."  
 But Gawain lifting up his visor said,  
 Gawain am I, Gawain of Arthur's court,  
 And I have slain this Pelleas whom ye hate :  
 Behold his horse and armor. Open gate,  
 And I will make you merry."

And down they ran,  
 Her damsels, crying to their lady,  
 "Lo !  
 Pelleas is dead — he told us — he that hath  
 His horse and armor : will ye let him in ?  
 He slew him ! Gawain, Gawain of the court,  
 Sir Gawain — there he waits below the wall,  
 Blowing his bugle as who should say him nay."

And so, leave given, straight on thro' open door  
 Rode Gawain, whom she greeted courteously.  
 "Dead, is it so?" she ask'd. "Ay, ay,"  
 said he,  
 "And oft in dying cried upon your name."  
 "Pity on him," she answer'd, "a good knight,  
 But never let me bide one hour at peace."  
 "Ay," thought Gawain, "and ye be fair enow :  
 But I to your dead man have given my troth,  
 That whom ye loathe him will I make you love."

So those three days, aimless about the land,  
 Lost in a doubt, Pelleas wandering waited, until the third night brought a moon  
 With promise of large light on woods and ways.

The night was hot : he could not rest, but rode  
 Ere midnight to her walls, and bound his horse  
 Hard by the gates. Wide open were the gates,  
 And no watch kept ; and in thro' these he past,  
 And heard but his own steps, and his own heart  
 Beating, for nothing moved but his own self,  
 And his own shadow. Then he crost the court,  
 And saw the postern portal also wide yawning ; and up a slope of garden,  
 all

Of roses white and red, and wild ones mixt  
 And overgrowing them, went on, and found,  
 Here too, all hush'd below the meadow moon,  
 Save that one rivulet from a tiny cave  
 Came lightening downward, and so spilt itself  
 Among the roses, and was lost again.

Then was he ware that white pavilions rose,  
 Three from the bushes, gilden-peakt :  
 in one,  
 Red after revel, droned her lurdane knights  
 Slumbering, and their three squires across their feet :  
 In one, their malice on the placid lip  
 Froz'n by sweet sleep, four of her damsels lay :  
 And in the third, the circlet of the jousts  
 Bound on her brow, were Gawain and Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes thro' the leaf  
 To find a nest and feels a snake, he drew :  
 Back, as a coward slinks from what he fears  
 To cope with, or a traitor proven, or hound  
 Beaten, did Pelleas in an utter shame  
 Creep with his shadow thro' the court again,  
 Fingering at his sword-handle until he stood  
 There on the castle-bridge once more,  
 and thought,  
 "I will go back, and slay them where they lie."

And so went back and seeing them yet in sleep  
 Said, "Ye, that so dishallow the holy sleep,  
 Your sleep is death," and drew the sword, and thought,  
 "What ! slay a sleeping knight ? the King hath bound  
 And sworn me to this brotherhood ;" again,  
 "Alas that ever a knight should be so false."  
 Then turn'd ; and so return'd, and groaning laid  
 The naked sword athwart their naked throats,  
 There left it, and them sleeping ; and she lay,  
 The circlet of the tourney round her brows,  
 And the sword of the tourney across her throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on his horse

Stared at her towers that, larger than themselves  
In their own darkness, throng'd into the moon.  
Then crush'd the saddle with his thighs, and clench'd  
His hands, and madden'd with himself and moan'd :

" Would they have risen against me in their blood  
At the last day? I might have answer'd them  
Even before high God. O towers so strong,  
Huge, solid, would that even while I gaze  
The crack of earthquake shivering to your base  
Split you, and Hell burst up your harlot roofs  
Bellowing, and char'd you thro' and thro' within,  
Black as the harlot's heart—hollow as a skull !

Let the fierce east scream thro' your eyelet-holes,  
And whirl the dust of harlots round and round  
In dung and nettles ! hiss, snake—I saw him there—  
Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell. Who yells  
Here in the still sweet summer night, but I—

I, the poor Pelleas whom she call'd her fool?  
Fool, beast—he, she, or I? myself most fool ;  
Beast too, as lacking human wit—disgraced,  
Dishonor'd all for trial of true love—  
Love?—we be all alike : only the king

Hath made us fools and liars. O noble vows !  
O great and sane and simple race of brutes  
That own no lust because they have no law !

For why should I have loved her to my shame?  
I loathe her, as I loved her to my shame.  
I never loved her, I but lusted for her—  
—A way—"

He dash'd the rowel into his horse,  
And bounded forth and vanish'd thro' the night.

Then she, that felt the cold touch on her throat,  
Awaking knew the sword, and turn'd herself  
To Gawain : " Liar, for thou hast not slain  
This Pelleas ! here he stood and might have slain  
Me and thyself." And he that tells the tale

Says that her ever-veering fancy turn'd  
To Pelleas, as the one true knight on earth,  
And only lover ; and thro' her love her life  
Wasted and pined, desiring him in vain.

But he by wild and way, for half the night,  
And over hard and soft, striking the sod  
From out the soft, the spark from off the hard,  
Rode till the star above the wakening sun,  
Beside that tower where Percivale was cowl'd,  
Glanced from the rosy forehead of the dawn.

For so the words were flash'd into his heart  
He knew not whence or wherefore :  
" O sweet star,  
Pure on the virgin forehead of the dawn."

And there he would have wept, but felt his eyes  
Harder and drier than a fountain bed  
In summer : thither came the village girls  
And linger'd talking, and they come no more  
Till the sweet heavens have fill'd it from the heights

Again with living waters in the change  
Of seasons : hard his eyes ; harder his heart  
Seem'd ; but so weary were his limbs, that he,

Gasping, " Of Arthur's hall am I, but here,  
Here let me rest and die," cast himself down,  
And gulph'd his griefs in inmost sleep ;  
so lay,  
Till shaken by a dream, that Gawain fired  
The hall of Merlin, and the morning star  
Reel'd in the smoke, brake into flame, and fell.

He woke, and being ware of some one nigh,  
Sent hands upon him, as to tear him, crying  
" False ! and I held thee pure as Guinevere."

But Percivale stood near him and replied,  
" Am I but false as Guinevere is pure?  
Or art thou mazed with dreams? or being one  
Of our free-spoken Table hast not heard  
That Lancelot"—there he check'd himself and paused.

Then fare'd it with Sir Pelleas as with one

Who gets a wound in battle, and the sword  
That made it plunges thro' the wound  
again,  
And pricks it deeper: and he shrunk  
and wail'd,  
"Is the Queen false?" and Percivale  
was mute,  
"Have any of our Round Table held  
their vows?"  
And Percivale made answer not a word.  
"Is the king true?" "The King!"  
said Percivale.  
"Why then let men couple at once with  
wolves.  
What! art thou mad?"

But Pelleas, leaping up,  
Ran thro' the doors and vaulted on his  
horse  
And fled: small pity upon his horse  
had he,  
Or on himself, or any, and when he met  
A cripple, one that held a hand for  
alms—  
Hunch'd as he was, and like an old  
dwarf-elm  
That turns its back on the salt blast,  
the boy,  
Paused not but overrode him, shouting  
"False,  
And false with Gawain!" and so left  
him bruised  
And batter'd, and fled on, and hill and  
wood  
Went ever streaming by him till the  
gloom,  
That follows on the turning of the  
world,  
Darken'd the common path: he twitch'd  
the reins,  
And made his beast that better knew  
it, swerve  
Now off it and now on; but when he saw  
High up in heaven the hall that Merlin  
built,  
Blackening against the dead-green  
stripes of even,  
"Black nest of rats," he groan'd, "ye  
build too high."

Not long thereafter from the city  
gates  
Issued Sir Lancelot riding airily,  
Warm with a gracious parting from the  
Queen,  
Peace at his heart, and gazing at a star  
And marvelling what it was: on whom  
the boy,  
Across the silent seeded meadow-grass  
Borne, clash'd: and Lancelot, saying,  
"What name hast thou  
That ridest here so blindly and so  
hard?"  
"I have no name," he shouted, "a  
scourge am I,  
To lash the treasons of the Table  
Round."  
"Yea, but thy name?" "I have many  
names," he cried:

"I am wrath and shame and hate and  
evil fame,  
And like a poisonous wind I pass to  
blast  
And blaze the crime of Lancelot and  
the Queen."  
"First over me," said Lancelot, "shalt  
thou pass."  
"Fight therefore," yell'd the other,  
and either knight  
Drew back a space, and when they  
closed, at once  
The weary steed of Pelleas floundering  
fung  
His rider, who called out from the dark  
field,  
"Thou art false as Hell: slay me: I  
have no sword."  
Then Lancelot, "Yea, between thy lips  
—and sharp:  
But here will I disedge it by thy death."  
"Slay then," he shriek'd, "my will is  
to be slain."  
And Lancelot, with his heel upon the  
fall'n,  
Rolling his eyes, a moment stood, then  
spake:  
"Rise, weakling; I am Lancelot; say  
thy say."

And Lancelot slowly rode his war-  
horse back  
To Camelot, and Sir Pelleas in brief  
while  
Caught his unbroken limbs from the  
dark field,  
And follow'd to the city. It chanced  
that both  
Brake into hall together, worn and pale.  
There with her knights and dames was  
Guinevere.  
Full wonderingly she gazed on Lance-  
lot  
So soon return'd, and then on Pelleas,  
him  
Who had not greeted her, but cast him-  
self  
Down on a bench, hard-breathing.  
"Have ye fought?"  
She ask'd of Lancelot. "Ay, my  
Queen," he said,  
"And thou art overthrown him?"  
"Ay, my Queen."  
Then she, turning to Pelleas, "O young  
knight,  
Hath the great heart of knighthood in  
thee fail'd  
So far thou canst not bide, unfrowardly,  
A fall from him?" Then, for he an-  
swer'd not,  
"Or hast thou other griefs? If I, the  
Queen,  
May help them, loose thy tongue, and  
let me know."  
But Pelleas lifted up an eye so fierce  
She quail'd; and he, hissing "I have  
no sword,"  
Sprang from the door into the dark.  
The Queen  
Look'd hard upon her lover, he on her;

And each foresaw the dolorous day to  
be :  
And all talk died, as in a grove all song  
Beneath the shadow of some bird of  
prey,  
Then a long silence came upon the hall,  
And Modfred thought, "The time is  
hard at hand."

## THE LAST TOURNAMENT.

DAGONET, the fool, whom Gawain in  
his moods  
Had made mock-knight of Arthur's Ta-  
ble Round,  
At Camelot, high above the yellowing  
woods,  
Danced like a wither'd leaf before the  
Hall,  
And toward him from the Hall, with  
harp in hand,  
And from the crown thereof a carca-  
net  
Of ruby swaying to and fro, the prize  
Of Tristram in the jousts of yesterday,  
Came Tristram, saying, "Why skip ye  
so, Sir Fool?"

For Arthur and Sir Lancelot riding  
one  
Far down beneath a winding wall of  
rock  
I heard a child wail. A stump of oak  
half-dead,  
From roots like some black coil of  
carven snakes  
Clutch'd at the crag, and started thro'  
mid-air  
Bearing an eagle's nest : and thro' the  
tree  
Rush'd ever a rainy wind, and thro' the  
wind  
Pierced ever a child's cry : and crag  
and tree  
Sealing, Sir Lancelot from the peril-  
ous nest,  
This ruby necklace thrice around her  
neck,  
And all unscarr'd from beak or talon,  
brought  
A maiden babe ; which Arthur pity-  
ing took,  
Then gave it to his Queen to rear ; the  
Queen  
But coldly acquiescing, in her white  
arms  
Received, and after loved it tenderly,  
And named it Nestling ; so forgot her-  
self  
A moment, and her cares ; till that  
young life  
Being smitten in mid-heaven with  
mortal cold  
Past from her ; and in time the carca-  
net  
Vext her with plaintive memories of  
the child :  
So she, delivering it to Arthur, said,

"Take thou the jewels of this dead  
innocence,  
And make them, an thou wilt, a tour-  
ney prize."

To whom the King, "Peace to  
thine eagle-borne  
Dead nestling, and this honor after  
death,  
Following thy will ! but, O my Queen,  
I muse  
Why ye not wear on arm, or neck, or  
zone,  
Those diamonds that I rescued from  
the tarn,  
And Lancelot won, methought, for thee  
to wear."

"Would rather ye had let them  
fall," she cried,  
"Plunge and be lost — ill-fated as they  
were,  
A bitterness to me ! — ye look amazed,  
Not knowing they were lost as soon as  
given —  
Slid from my hands, when I was lean-  
ing out  
Above the river — that unhappy child  
Past in her barge : but rosier luck will  
go  
With these rich jewels, seeing that  
they came  
Not from the skeleton of a brother-  
slayer,  
But the sweet body of a maiden babe.  
Perchance — who knows? — the purest  
of thy knights  
May win them for the purest of my  
maids."

She ended, and the cry of a great  
jousts  
With trumpet-blowings ran on all the  
ways  
From Camelot in among the faded  
fields  
To furthest towers ; and everywhere  
the knights  
Arm'd for a day of glory before the  
King.

But on the hither side of that loud  
morn  
Into the hall stagger'd, his visage  
ribb'd  
From ear to ear with dogwhip-weals,  
his nose  
Bridge-broken, one eye out, and one  
hand off,  
And one with shatter'd fingers dang-  
ling lame,  
A churl, to whom indignantly the  
King,  
"My churl, for whom Christ died,  
what evil beast  
Hath drawn his claws athwart thy  
face ? or fiend ?  
Man was it who marr'd Heaven's im-  
age in thee thus ?"

Then, sputtering thro' the hedge of  
splinter'd teeth,  
Yet strangers to the tongue, and with  
blunt stump  
Pitch-blacken'd sawing the air, said the  
maim'd churl,

"He took them and he drave them  
to his tower—  
Some hold he was a table-knight of  
thine—

A hundred goodly ones—the Red  
Knight he—  
Lord, I was tending swine, and the  
Red Knight

Brake in upon me and drave them to  
his tower;  
And when I called upon thy name as  
one

That doest right by gentle and by  
churl,  
Maim'd me and maul'd, and would  
outright have slain,

Save that he sware me to a message,  
saying—  
'Tell thou the King and all his liars,  
that I

Have founded my Round Table in the  
North,  
And whatsoever his own knights have  
sworn

My knights have sworn the counter to  
it—and say  
My tower is full of harlots, like his  
court,

But mine are worthier, seeing they  
profess  
To be none other than themselves—  
and say

My knights are all adulterers like his  
own,  
But mine are truer, seeing they pro-  
fess

To be none other; and say his hour is  
come,  
The heathen are upon him, his long  
lance

Broken, and his Excalibur a straw.'"

Then Arthur turn'd to Kay the sen-  
eschal,  
"Take thou my churl, and tend him  
curiously

Like a king's heir, till all his hurts be  
whole.  
The heathen—but that ever-climbing  
wave,

Hurl'd back again so often in empty  
foam,  
Hath lain for years at rest—and rene-  
gades,

Thieves, bandits, leavings of confusion,  
whom  
The wholesome realm is purged of  
otherwise,—

Friends, thro' your manhood and your  
fealty,—now  
Make their last head like Satan in the  
North.

My younger knights, new-made, in  
whom your flower

Waits to be solid fruit of golden deeds,  
Move with me toward their quelling,  
which achieved,  
The loneliest ways are safe from shore  
to shore.

But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my  
place  
Enchair'd to-morrow, arbitrate the  
field;

For wherefore shouldst thou care to  
mingle with it,  
Only to yield my Queen her own  
again?

Speak, Lancelot, thou art silent: is it  
well?"

There to Sir Lancelot answer'd, "It  
is well;

Yet better if the King abide, and leave  
The leading of his younger knights to  
me.

Else, for the King has will'd it, it is  
well."

Then Arthur rose and Lancelot fol-  
low'd him,  
And while they stood without the  
doors, the King

Turn'd to him saying, "Is it then so  
well?

Or mine the blame that oft I seem at  
he  
Of whom was written, 'a sound is in his  
ears'—

The foot that loiters, bidden go,— the  
glance  
That only seems half-loyal to com-  
mand,—

A manner somewhat fall'n from rever-  
ence—  
Or have I dream'd the bearing of our  
knights

Tells of a manhood ever less and low-  
er?

Or whence the fear lest this my realm,  
uprear'd,  
By noble deeds at one with noble vows,  
From flat confusion and brute vio-  
lences,

Reel back into the beast, and be no  
more?"

He spoke, and taking all his younger  
knights,  
Down the slope city rode, and sharply  
turn'd

North by the gate. In her high bower  
the Queen,  
Working a tapestry, lifted up her head,  
Watch'd her lord pass, and knew not  
that she sigh'd.

Then ran across her memory the  
strange rhyme  
Of bygone Merlin, "Where is he who  
knows?

From the great deep to the great deep  
he goes."

But when the morning of a tourna-  
ment,

By these in earnest, those in mockery,  
 call'd  
 The Tournament of the Dead Innocence,  
 Brake with a wet wind blowing, Lancelot,  
 Round whose sick head all night, like  
 birds of prey,  
 The words of Arthur flying shriek'd,  
 arose,  
 And down a streetway hung with folds  
 of pure  
 White samite, and by fountains running  
 wine,  
 Where children sat in white with cups  
 of gold,  
 Moved to the lists, and there, with  
 slow sad steps  
 Ascending, fill'd his double-dragon'd  
 chair.

He glanced and saw the stately galleries,  
 Dame, damsel, each thro' worship of  
 their Queen  
 White-robed in honor of the stainless  
 child,  
 And some with scatter'd jewels, like a  
 bank  
 Of maiden snow mingled with sparks  
 of fire.  
 He lookt but once, and veil'd his eyes  
 again.

The sudden trumpet sounded as in a  
 dream  
 To ears but half-awaked, then one low  
 roll  
 Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts  
 began :  
 And ever the wind blew, and yellow-  
 ing leaf  
 And gloom and gleam, and shower and  
 shorn plume  
 Went down it. Sighing wearily, as  
 one  
 Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,  
 When all the goodlier guests are past  
 away,  
 Sat their great umpire, looking o'er  
 the lists.  
 He saw the laws that ruled the tourna-  
 ment  
 Broken, but spake not ; once, a knight  
 cast down  
 Before his throne of arbitration cursed  
 The dead babe and the follies of the  
 King ;  
 And once the laces of a helmet crack'd,  
 And show'd him, like a vermin in its  
 hole,  
 Modred, a narrow face : anon he heard  
 The voice that billow'd round the bar-  
 riers roar  
 An ocean-sounding welcome to one  
 knight,  
 But newly-enter'd, taller than the rest,  
 And armor'd all in forest green,  
 whereon  
 There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,

And wearing but a holly-spray for  
 crest,  
 With ever-scattering berries, and on  
 shield  
 A spear, a harp, a bugle—Tristram—  
 late  
 From overseas in Brittany return'd,  
 And marriage with a princess of that  
 realm,  
 Isolt the White—Sir Tristram of the  
 Woods—  
 Whom Lancelot knew, had held some-  
 time with pain  
 His own against him, and now yearn'd  
 to shake  
 The burthen off his heart in one full  
 shock  
 With Tristram ev'n to death : his  
 strong hands guipt  
 And dinted the gilt dragons right and  
 left,  
 Until he groan'd for wrath—so many  
 of those,  
 That ware their ladies' colors on the  
 casque,  
 Drew from before Sir Tristram to the  
 bounds,  
 And there with gibes and flickering  
 mockeries  
 Stood, while he mutter'd, "Craven  
 crests ! O shame !  
 What faith have these in whom they  
 sware to love ?  
 The glory of our Round Table is no  
 more."

So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave,  
 the gems,  
 Not speaking other word than "Hast  
 thou won ?  
 Art thou the purest, brother ? See, the  
 hand  
 Wherewith thou takest this is red !"  
 to whom  
 Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot's  
 languorous mood,  
 Made answer, "Ay, but wherefore toss  
 me this  
 Like a dry bone cast to some hungry  
 hound ?  
 Let be thy fair Queen's fantasy.  
 Strength of heart  
 And might of limb, but mainly use and  
 skill,  
 Are winners in this pastime of our  
 King.  
 My hand—belike the lance hath dript  
 upon it—  
 No blood of mine, I trow ; but O chief  
 knight,  
 Right arm of Arthur in the battle-  
 field,  
 Great brother, thou nor I have made  
 the world ;  
 Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in  
 mine."

And Tristram round the gallery  
 made his horse  
 Caracole ; then bow'd his homage,  
 bluntly saying,

"Fair damsels, each to him who wor-  
ships each  
Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, be-  
hold  
This day my Queen of Beauty is not  
here."  
Then most of these were mute, some  
anger'd, one  
Murmuring "All courtesy is dead,"  
and one,  
"The glory of our Round Table is no  
more."

Then fell thick rain, plume droopt  
and mantle clung,  
And pettish cries awoke, and the wan  
day  
Went glooming down in wet and  
weariness:  
But under her black brows a swarthy  
dame  
Laught shrilly, crying "Praise the pa-  
tient saints,  
Our one white day of Innocence hath  
past,  
Tho' somewhat dragged at the skirt.  
So be it.  
The snowdrop only, flow'ring thro' the  
year.  
Would make the world as blank as  
wintertide.  
Come—let us comfort their sad eyes,  
our Queen's  
And Lancelot's, at this night's solemn-  
ity  
With all the kindlier colors of the  
field."

So dame and damsel glitter'd at the  
feast  
Variously gay: for he that tells the  
tale  
Liken'd them, saying "as when an  
hour of cold  
Falls on the mountain in midsummer  
snows,  
And all the purple slopes of mountain  
flowers  
Pass under white, till the warm hour  
returns  
With veer of wind, and all are flowers  
again;"  
So dame and damsel cast the simple  
white,  
And glowing in all colors, the live  
grass,  
Rose-campion, bluebell, kingcup, pop-  
py, glanced  
About the revels, and with mirth so  
loud  
Beyond all use, that, half-amazed, the  
Queen,  
And wroth at Tristram and the law-  
less jousts,  
Brake up their sports, then slowly to  
her bower  
Parted, and in her bosom pain was  
lord.

And little Dagonet on the morrow  
morn,

High over all the yellowing Autumn  
tide,  
Danced like a wither'd leaf before the  
hall.  
Then Tristram saying, "Why skip ye  
so, Sir Fool?"  
Wheel'd round on either heel, Dagonet  
replied,  
"Belike for lack of wiser company;  
Or being fool, and seeing too much wit  
Makes the world rotten, why, belike I  
skip  
To know myself the wisest knight of  
all."

"Ay, fool," said Tristram, "but 'tis  
eating dry  
To dance without a catch, a roundelay  
To dance to." Then he twangled on  
his harp,  
And while he twangled little Dagonet  
stood

Quiet as any water-sodden log  
Stay'd in the wandering warble of a  
brook;  
But when the twangling ended, skipt  
again:  
Then being ask'd, "Why skipt ye not,  
Sir fool?"  
Made answer, "I had liefer twenty  
years

Skip to the broken music of my brains  
Than any broken music ye can make."  
Then Tristram, waiting for the quip  
to come,  
"Good now, what music have I broken,  
fool?"

And little Dagonet, skipping, "Arthur,  
the king's;  
For when thou playest that air with  
Queen Isolt,  
Thou makest broken music with thy  
bride,  
Her daintier namesake down in Brit-  
tany—  
And so thou breakest Arthur's music  
too,"

"Save for that broken music in thy  
brains,  
Sir Fool," said Tristram, "I would  
break thy head.  
Fool, I came late, the heathen wars  
were o'er,  
The life had flown, we sware but by  
the shell—  
I am but a fool to reason with a fool.  
Come, thou art crabbed and sour: but  
lean me down.  
Sir Dagonet, one of thy long asses' ears,  
And hearken if my music be not true.

"Free love—free field—we love but  
while we may:  
The woods are hush'd, their music is  
no more:  
The leaf is dead, the yearning past  
away:  
New leaf, new life—the days of frost  
are o'er:  
New life, new love to suit the newer  
day:

New loves are sweet as those that went before :  
Free love—free field—we love but while we may.'

"Ye might have moved slow-measure to my tune,  
Not stood stockstill. I made it in the woods,  
And found it ring as true as tested gold."

But Dagonet with one foot poised in his hand,  
"Friend, did ye mark that fountain yesterday  
Made to run wine?—but this had run itself

All out like a long life to a sour end—  
And them that round it sat with golden cups

To hand the wine to whomsoever came—  
The twelve small damosels white as Innocence,

In honor of poor Innocence the babe,  
Who left the gems which Innocence the Queen  
Lent to the King, and Innocence the King

Gave for a prize—and one of those white slips  
Handed her cup and piped, the pretty one,

'Drink, drink, Sir Fool,' and thereupon I drank,  
Spat—plash—the cup was gold, the draught was mud."

And Tristram, "Was it muddier than thy gibes?  
Is all the laughter gone dead out of thee?—

Not marking how the knighthood mock thee, fool—

'Fear God; honor the king—his one true knight—  
Sole follower of the vows'—for here be they

Who knew thee swine enow before I came,  
Smuttier than blasted grain: but when the King

Had made thee fool, thy vanity so shot up  
It frightened all free fool from out thy heart;

Which left thee less than fool, and less than swine,  
A naked aught—yet swine I hold thee still,

For I have flung thee pearls, and find thee swine."

And little Dagonet mincing with his feet,

"Knight, an ye fling those rubies round my neck

In lieu of hers, I'll hold thou hast some touch

Of music, since I care not for thy pearls,

Swine? I have wallow'd, I have wash'd—  
—the world

Is flesh and shadow—I have had my day.

The dirty nurse, Experience, in her kind

Hath foul'd me—an I wallow'd, then I wash'd—

I have had my day and my philosophies—

And thank the Lord I am King Arthur's fool.

Swine, say ye? swine, goats, asses, rams, and geese

Troop'd round a Paynim harper once, who thrum'd

On such a wire as musically as thou  
Some such fine song—but never a king's fool."

And Tristram, "Then were swine, goats, asses, geese

The wiser fools, seeing thy Paynim bard

Had such a mastery of his mystery  
That he could harp his wife up out of Hell."

Then Dagonet, turning on the ball of his foot,

"And whither harp'st thou thine? down! and thyself

Down! and two more: a helpful harper thou,

That harpest downward! Dost thou know the star

We call the harp of Arthur up in heaven?"

And Tristram, "Ay, Sir Fool, for when our King

Was victor wellnigh day by day, the knights,

Glorying in each new glory, set his name

High on all hills, and in the signs of heaven."

And Dagonet answer'd, "Ay, and when the land

Was freed, and the Queen false, ye set yourself

To babble about him, all to show your wit—

And whether he were king by courtesy, Or king by right—and so went harping

down  
The black king's highway, got so far,

and grew  
So witty, that ye play'd at ducks and drakes

With Arthur's vows on the great lake of fire.

Tuwhee! do ye see it? do ye see the star?"

"Nay, fool," said Tristram, "not in open day."

And Dagonet, "Nay, nor will I see it and hear."

It makes a silent music up in heaven,  
 And I, and Arthur and the angels  
 hear,  
 And then we skip," "Lo, fool," he  
 said, "ye talk  
 Fool's treason: is the king thy brother  
 fool?"  
 Then little Dagonet clapt his hands  
 and shrill'd,  
 "Ay, ay, my brother fool, the king of  
 fools!  
 Conceits himself as God that he can  
 make  
 Figs out of thistles, silk from bristles,  
 milk  
 From burning spurge, honey from  
 hornet-combs,  
 And men from beasts. Long live the  
 king of fools!"

And down the city Dagonet danced  
 away.  
 But thro' the slowly-mellowing ave-  
 nues  
 And solitary passes of the wood  
 Rode Tristram toward Lyonesse and  
 the west.  
 Before him fled the face of Queen Isolt  
 With ruby-circled neck, but evermore  
 Past, as a rustle or twitter in the wood  
 Made dull his inner, keen his outer eye  
 For all that walk'd, or crept, or  
 perched, or flew.  
 Anon the face, as, when a gust hath  
 blown,  
 Unruffling waters re-collect the shape  
 Of one that in them sees himself, re-  
 turn'd;  
 But at the slot or fewmets of a deer,  
 Or ev'n a fall'n feather, vanish'd again.

So on for all that day from lawn to  
 lawn  
 Thro' many a league-long plover he  
 rode. At length  
 A lodge of intertwisted beechen-  
 boughs  
 Furze-cranm'd, and bracken-rooft, the  
 which himself  
 Built for a summer day with Queen  
 Isolt  
 Against a shower, dark in the golden  
 grove  
 Appearing, sent his fancy back to  
 where  
 She lived a moon in that low lodge  
 with him:  
 Till Mark her lord had past, the  
 Cornish king,  
 With six or seven, when Tristram was  
 away,  
 And snatch'd her thence; yet dreading  
 worse than shame  
 Her warrior Tristram, spake not any  
 word,  
 But bode his hour, devising wretched-  
 ness.

And now that desert lodge to Tris-  
 tram lookt

So sweet, that, halting, in he past, and  
 sank  
 Down on a drift of foliage random-  
 blown:  
 But could not rest for musing how to  
 smooth  
 And sleek his marriage over to the  
 Queen.  
 Perchance in lone Tintagil far from  
 all  
 The tonguesters of the court she had  
 not heard.  
 But then what folly had sent him over-  
 seas  
 After she left him lonely here? a  
 name?  
 Was it the name of one in Britanny,  
 Isolt, the daughter of the King?  
 "Isolt  
 Of the white hands" they call'd her:  
 the sweet name  
 Allured him first, and then the maid  
 herself,  
 Who served him well with those white  
 hands of hers,  
 And loved him well, until himself had  
 thought  
 He loved her also, wedded easily,  
 But left her all as easily, and return'd.  
 The black-blue Irish hair and Irish  
 eyes  
 Had drawn him home — what marvel?  
 then he laid  
 His brows upon the drifted leaf and  
 dream'd.

He seem'd to pace the strand of Brit-  
 tany  
 Between Isolt of Britain and his  
 bride,  
 And show'd them both the ruby-chain,  
 and both  
 Began to struggle for it, till his Queen  
 Graspt it so hard, that all her hand was  
 red.  
 Then cried the Breton, "Look, her  
 hand is red!  
 These be no rubies, this is frozen blood,  
 And melts within her hand — her hand  
 is hot  
 With ill desires, but this I gave thee,  
 look,  
 Is all as cool and white as any flower."  
 Follow'd a rush of eagle's wings and  
 then  
 A whimpering of the spirit of the  
 child,  
 Because the twain had spoil'd her car-  
 canet.

He dream'd; but Arthur with a hun-  
 dred spears  
 Rode far, till o'er the illimitable reed,  
 And many a glancing plash and sal-  
 lowy isle,  
 The wide-wing'd sunset of the misty  
 marsh  
 Glared on a huge machicolated tower  
 That stood with open doors, whereout  
 was roll'd

A roar of riot, as from men secure  
Amid their marshes, ruffians at their  
ease

Among their harlot-brides, an evil  
song.

"Lo there," said one of Arthur's youth,  
for there,

High on a grim dead tree before the  
tower,

A goodly brother of The Table Round  
Swung by the neck : and on the boughs  
a shield

Showing a shower of blood in a field  
near,

And there beside a horn, inflamed the  
knights

At that dishonor done the gilded spur.  
Till each would clash the shield, and  
blow the horn.

But Arthur waved them back : alone  
he rode.

Then at the dry harsh roar of the  
great horn,

That sent the face of all the marsh  
aloft

An ever upward-rushing storm and  
cloud

Of shriek and plume, the Red Knight  
heard, and all,

Even to tipmost lance and topmost  
helm,

In blood-red armor sallying, howl'd to  
the King,

"The teeth of Hell flay bare and  
gnash thee flat !—

Lo ! art thou not that eunuch-hearted  
King

Who fain had clipt free manhood from  
the world—

The woman-worshipper ? Yea, God's  
curse, and I !

Slain was the brother of my paramour  
By a knight of thine, and I that heard  
her whine

And snivel, being eunuch-hearted too,  
Swore by the scorpion-worm that twists  
in hell,

And stings itself to everlasting death.  
To hang whatever knight of thine I  
fought

And tumbled. Art thou King ?—Look  
to thy life !"

He ended : Arthur knew the voice ;  
the face

Wellnigh was helmet-hidden, and the  
name

Went wandering somewhere darkling  
in his mind.

And Arthur deign'd not use of word or  
sword,

But let the drunkard, as he stretch'd  
from horse

To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,  
Down from the causeway heavily to  
the swamp

Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching  
wave

Heard in dead night along that table-  
gorse

Drops flat, and after the great waters  
break

Whitening for half a league, and thin  
themselves

Far over sands marbled with moon and  
cloud,

From less and less to nothing ; thus he  
fell

Head-heavy, while the knights, who  
watch'd him, roar'd

And shouted and leapt down upon the  
fall'n ;

There trampled out his face from being  
known,

And sank his head in mire, and slimed  
themselves :

Nor heard the King for their own cries,  
but sprang

Thro' open doors, and swording right  
and left

Men, women, on their sodden faces,  
hurl'd

The tables over and the wines, and  
slew

Till all the rafters rang with woman-  
yells,

And all the pavement stream'd with  
massacre :

Then, yell with yell echoing, they fired  
the tower,

Which half that autumn night, like the  
live North,

Red-puising up thro' Aloth and Alcor,  
Made all above it, and a hundred meres

About it, as the water Moab saw  
Come round by the East, and out be-  
yond them flush'd

The long low dune, and lazy-plunging  
sea.

So all the ways were safe from shore  
to shore,

But in the heart of Arthur pain was  
lord.

Then out of Tristram waking the red  
dream

Fled with a shout, and that low lodge  
return'd,

Mid-forest, and the wind among the  
boughs.

He whistled his good warhorse left to  
graze

Among the forest greens, vaulted upon  
him,

And rode beneath an ever-showering  
leaf,

Till one lone woman, weeping near a  
cross,

Stay'd him, " Why weep ye ? " " Lord,"  
she said, " my man

Hath left me or is dead " ; whereon he  
thought—

" What an she hate me now ? I would  
not this.

What an she love me still ? I would  
not that.

I know not what I would " — but said  
to her, —

" Yet weep not thou, leet, if thy mate  
return

He find thy favor changed and love thee  
not —  
Then pressing day by day thro' Lyon-  
esse  
Last in a roky hollow, belling, heard  
The hounds of Mark, and felt the good-  
ly hounds  
Yelp at his heart, but, turning, past and  
gain'd  
Tintagil, half in sea, and high on land,  
A crown of towers.

Down in a casement sat,  
A low sea-sunset glorying round her  
hair  
And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the  
Queen.  
And when she heard the feet of Tris-  
tram grind  
The spiring stone that scaled about  
her tower,  
Flush'd, started, met him at the doors,  
and there  
Belted his body with her white em-  
brace.  
Crying aloud, "Not Mark — not Mark,  
my soul!  
The footstep flutter'd me at first: not  
he:  
Catlike thro' his own castle steals my  
Mark,  
But warrior-wise thou stridest through  
his halls  
Who hates thee, as I him — ev'n to the  
death.  
My soul, I felt my hatred for my  
Mark  
Quicken within me, and knew that  
thou wert nigh."  
To whom Sir Tristram smiling, "I am  
here.  
Let be thy Mark, seeing he is not thine."

And drawing somewhat backward  
she replied,  
"Can he be wrong'd who is not ev'n his  
own,  
But save for dread of thee had beaten  
me,  
Scratch'd, bitten, blinded, marr'd me  
somehow — Mark?  
What rights are his that dare not  
strike for them?  
Not lift a hand — not, tho' he found  
me thus!  
But hearken, have ye met him? hence  
he went  
To-day for three days' hunting — as he  
said —  
And so returns belike within an hour.  
Mark's way, my soul! — but eat not  
thou with him,  
Because he hates thee even more than  
fears;  
Nor drink: and when thou passest any  
wood  
Close visor, lest an arrow from the  
bush  
Should leave me all alone with Mark  
and hell.

My God, the measure of my hate for  
Mark  
Is as the measure of my love for thee."

So, pluck'd one way by hate and one  
by love,  
Drain'd of her force, again she sat, and  
spake  
To Tristram, as he knelt before her,  
saying,  
"O hunter, and O blower of the horn,  
Harper, and thou hast been a rover  
too,  
For, ere I mated with my shambling  
king,  
Ye twain had fallen out about the  
bride  
Of one — his name is out of me — the  
prize,  
If prize she were — (what marvel —  
she could see) —  
Thine, friend; and ever since my  
craven seeks  
To wreck thee villainously: but, O Sir  
Knight,  
What dame or damsel have ye kneeled  
to last?"

And Tristram, "Last to my Queen  
Paramount,  
Here now to my Queen Paramount of  
love,  
And loveliness, ay, lovelier than when  
first  
Her light feet fell on our rough  
Lyonesse,  
Sailing from Ireland."

Softly laugh'd Isolt,  
"Flatter me not, for hath not our great  
Queen  
My dole of beauty trebled?" and he  
said,  
"Her beauty is her beauty, and thine  
thine,  
And thine is more to me — soft, gra-  
cious, kind —  
Save when thy Mark is kindled on thy  
lips  
Most gracious; but she, haughty, ev'n  
to him,  
Lancelot: for I have seen him wan  
enow  
To make one doubt if ever the great  
Queen  
Have yielded him her love."

To whom Isolt,  
"Ah then, false hunter and false har-  
per, thou  
Who brakest thro' the scruple of my  
bond,  
Calling me thy white hind, and saying  
to me  
That Guinevere had sinned against the  
highest,  
And I — misyoked with such a wart of  
man —  
That I could hardly sin against the  
lowest."

He answered, "O my soul, be comforted!  
If this be sweet, to sin in leading-strings,  
If here be comfort, and if ours be sin,  
Crown'd warrant had we for the crowning sin  
That made us happy: but how ye greet me — fear  
And fault and doubt — no word of that fond tale —  
Thy deep heart-yearnings, thy sweet memories  
Of Tristram in that year he was away."

And, saddening on the sudden, spake Isolt,  
"I had forgotten all in my strong joy  
To see thee — yearnings? — ay! for, hour by hour,  
Here in the never-ended afternoon,  
O sweeter than all memories of thee,  
Deeper than any yearnings after thee  
Seem'd those far-rolling, westward-smiling seas,  
Watched from this tower. Isolt of Britain dash'd  
Before Isolt of Brittany on the strand,  
Would that have chill'd her bride-kiss?  
Wedded her?  
Fought in her father's battles? wounded there?  
The King was all fulfill'd with gratefulness,  
And she, my namesake of the hands,  
that heal'd  
Thy hurt and heart with unguent and caress —  
Well — can I wish her any huger wrong  
Than having known thee? her too hast thou left  
To pine and waste in those sweet memories?  
O were I not my Mark's, by whom all men  
Are noble, I should hate thee more than love."

And Tristram, fondling her light hands, replied,  
"Grace, Queen, for being loved: she loved me well.  
Did I love her? the name at least I loved.  
Isolt? — I fought his battles, for Isolt!  
The night was dark; the true star set.  
Isolt!  
The name was ruler of the dark — Isolt?  
Care not for her! patient, and prayerful, meek,  
Pale-blooded, she will yield herself to God."

And Isolt answer'd, "Yea, and why not I?  
Mine is the larger need, who am not meek,  
Pale-blooded, prayerful. Let me tell the new

Here one black, mute midsummer night  
I sat  
Lonely, but musing on thee, wondering where,  
Murmuring a light song I had heard thee sing,  
And once or twice I spake thy name aloud.  
Then flash'd a levin-brand; and near me stood,  
In fuming sulphur blue and green, a fiend —  
Mark's way to steal behind one in the dark —  
For there was Mark: 'He has wedded her,' he said,  
Not said, but hissed it: then this crown of towers  
So shook to such a roar of all the sky,  
That here in utter dark I swoon'd away,  
And woke again in utter dark, and cried,  
'I will flee hence and give myself to God' —  
And thou wert lying in thy new leman's arms."

Then Tristram, ever dallying with her hand,  
"May God be with thee, sweet, when old and gray,  
And past desire!" a saying that anger'd her.  
"May God be with thee, sweet, when thou art old,  
And sweet no more to me! I need Him now.  
For when had Lancelot utter'd aught so gross  
Ev'n to the swineherd's malkin in the mast?  
The greater man, the greater courtesy.  
But thou, thro' ever harrying thy wild beasts —  
Save that to touch a harp, tilt with a lance  
Becomes thee well — art grown wild beast thyself.  
How darest thou, if lover, push me even  
In fancy from thy side, and set me far  
In the gray distance, half a life away,  
Here to be loved no more? Unsay it, unswear!  
Flatter me rather, seeing me so weak,  
Broken with Mark and hate and solitude,  
Thy marriage and mine own, that I should suck  
Lies like sweet wines: lie to me: I believe.  
Will ye not lie? not swear, as there ye kneel,  
And solemnly as when ye swear to him,  
The man of men, our King — My God, the power  
Was once in vows when men believed the King!  
They lied not then, who swear, and thro' their vows

The King prevailing made his realm :—  
I say,  
Swear to me thou wilt love me ev'n  
when old,  
Gray-haired, and past desire, and in  
despair."

Then Tristram, pacing moodily up  
and down,  
"Vows! did ye keep the vow ye made  
to Mark  
More than I mine? Lied, say ye?  
Nay, but learnt,  
The vow that binds too strictly snaps  
itself—  
My knighthood taught me this—ay,  
being snapt—  
We run more counter to the soul there-  
of  
Than had we never sworn. I swear no  
more.  
I swore to the great King, and am for-  
sworn.  
For once—ev'n to the height—I hon-  
or'd him.  
'Man, is he man at all?' methought,  
when first  
I rode from our rough Lyonesse, and  
beheld  
That victor of the Pagan throned in  
hall—  
His hair, a sun that ray'd from off a  
brow  
Like hillsnow high in heaven, the steel-  
blue eyes,  
The golden beard that clothed his lips  
with light—  
Moreover, that weird legend of his  
birth,  
With Merlin's mystic babble about his  
end,  
Amazed me; then, his foot was on a  
stool  
Shaped as a dragon; he seem'd to me  
no man,  
But Michaël trampling Satan; so I  
sware,  
Being amazed: but this went by—the  
vows!  
O ay—the wholesome madness of an  
hour  
They served their use, their time; for  
every knight  
Believed himself a greater than himself  
And every follower eyed him as a God;  
Till he, being lifted up beyond himself,  
Did mightier deeds than otherwise he  
had done,  
And so the realm was made; but then  
their vows—  
First mainly thro' that sullyng of our  
Queen—  
Began to gall the knighthood, asking  
whence  
Had Arthur right to bind them to him-  
self?  
Dropt down from heaven? wash'd up  
from out the deep?  
They fail'd to trace him thro' the flesh  
and blood

Of our old Kings: whence then? a  
doubtful lord  
To bind them by inviolable vows,  
Which flesh and blood perforce would  
violate:  
For feel this arm of mine—the tide  
within  
Red with free chase and heather-  
scented air,  
Pulsing full man; can Arthur make  
me pure  
As any maiden child? lock up my  
tongue  
From uttering freely what I freely  
hear?  
Bind me to one? The great world  
laughs at it.  
And worldling of the world am I, and  
know  
The ptarmigan that whitens ere his  
hour  
Wooes his own end; we are not angels  
here  
Nor shall be: vows—I am woodman of  
the woods,  
And hear the garnet-headed yaffingale  
Mock them: my soul, we love but while  
we may;  
And therefore is my love so large for  
thee,  
Seeing it is not bounded save by love."

Here ending, he moved toward her,  
and she said,  
"Good: an I turn'd away my love for  
thee  
To some one thrice as courteous as thy-  
self—  
For courtesy wins woman all as well  
As valor may—but he that closes both  
Is perfect, he is Lancelot—taller in-  
deed,  
Rosier, and comelier, thou—but say I  
loved  
This knightliest of all knights, and  
cast thee back  
Thine own small saw 'We love but  
while we may,'  
Well then, what answer?"

He that while she spake,  
Mindful of what he brought to adorn  
her with,  
The jewels, had let one finger lightly  
touch  
The warm white apple of her throat,  
replied,  
"Press this a little closer, sweet, un-  
til—  
Come, I am hunger'd and half-anger'd  
—meat,  
Wine, wine—and I will love thee to the  
death,  
And out beyond into the dream to  
come."

So then, when both were brought to  
full accord,  
She rose, and set before him all he  
will'd;

And after these had comforted the  
 blood  
 With meats and wines, and satiated  
 their hearts—  
 Now talking of their woodland para-  
 dise,  
 The deer, the dews, the fern, the  
 founts, the lawns;  
 Now mocking at the much ungainli-  
 ness,  
 And craven shifts, and long crane legs  
 of Mark—  
 Then Tristram laughing caught the  
 harp, and sang:

“Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bend  
 the brier!  
 A star in heaven, a star within the  
 mere!  
 Ay, ay, O ay—a star was my desire,  
 And one was far apart, and one was  
 near:  
 Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that bow the  
 grass!  
 And one was water and one star was  
 fire,  
 And one will ever shine and one will  
 pass.  
 Ay, ay, O ay—the winds that move the  
 mere.”

Then in the light's last glimmer Tris-  
 tram show'd  
 And swung the ruby carcanet. She  
 cried,  
 “The collar of some order, which our  
 King  
 Hath newly founded, all for thee, my  
 soul,  
 For thee, to yield thee grace beyond  
 thy peers.”

“Not so, my Queen,” he said, “but  
 the red fruit  
 Grown on a magic oak-tree in mid-  
 heaven,  
 And won by Tristram as a tourney-  
 prize,  
 And hither brought by Tristram for his  
 last  
 Love-offering and peace-offering unto  
 thee.”

He rose, he turn'd, and flinging round  
 her neck,  
 Clasp'd it; but while he bow'd himself  
 to lay  
 Warm kisses in the hollow of her  
 throat,  
 Out of the dark, just as the lips had  
 touch'd,  
 Behind him rose a shadow and a shriek—  
 “Mark's way,” said Mark, and clove  
 him thro' the brain.

That night came Arthur home, and  
 while he climb'd,  
 All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping  
 gloom,  
 The stairway to the hall, and look'd  
 and saw

The great Queen's bower was dark,—  
 about his feet  
 A voice clung sobbing till he question'd  
 it,  
 “What art thou?” and the voice about  
 his feet  
 Sent up an answer, sobbing, “I am thy  
 fool,  
 And I shall never make thee smile  
 again.”

## GUINEVERE.

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court,  
 and sat  
 There in the holy house at Almesbury  
 Weeping, none with her save a little  
 maid,  
 A novice: one low light betwixt them  
 burn'd  
 Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all  
 abroad,  
 Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,  
 The white mist, like a face-cloth to the  
 face,  
 Clung to the dead earth, and the land  
 was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause of  
 flight  
 Sir Modred; he that like a subtle beast  
 Lay couchant with his eyes upon the  
 throne.  
 Ready to spring, waiting a chance: for  
 this,  
 He chill'd the popular praises of the  
 King  
 With silent smiles of slow disparage-  
 ment;  
 And tamper'd with the Lords of the  
 White Horse,  
 Heathen, the brood by Hengist left;  
 and sought  
 To make disruption in the Table  
 Round  
 Of Arthur and to splinter it into feuds  
 Serving his traitorous end; and all his  
 aims  
 Were sharpen'd by strong hate for  
 Lancelot.

For thus it chanced one morn when  
 all the court,  
 Green-suited, but with plumes that  
 mock'd the may,  
 Had been, their wont, a-maying and  
 return'd,  
 That Modred still in green, all ear and  
 eye,  
 Climb'd to the high top of the garden-  
 wall  
 To spy some secret scandal if he might,  
 And saw the Queen who sat betwixt  
 her best  
 Enid, and lissome Vivien, of her court  
 The wildest and the worst; and more  
 than this  
 He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing  
 by

Spied where he couch'd, and as the  
gardener's hand  
Picks from the colewort a green cater-  
pillar,  
So from the high wall and the flowering  
grove  
Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by the  
heel,  
And cast him as a worm upon the way;  
But when he knew the Prince tho'  
marr'd with dust,  
He, reverencing king's blood in a bad  
man,  
Made such excuses as he might, and  
these  
Full knightly without scorn; for in  
those days  
No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in  
scorn;  
But, if a man were halt or hunch'd, in  
him  
By those whom God had made full-  
limb'd and tall,  
Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,  
And he was answer'd softly by the  
King  
And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot help  
To raise the Prince, who rising twice  
or thrice  
Full sharply smote his knees, and  
smiled, and went:  
But, ever after, the small violence  
done  
Rankled in him and ruffled all his  
heart,  
As the sharp wind that ruffles all day  
long  
A little bitter pool about a stone  
On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told  
This matter to the Queen, at first she  
laugh'd  
Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty  
fall,  
Then shudder'd, as the village wife  
who cries  
"I shudder, some one steps across my  
grave;"  
Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for  
indeed  
She half-foresaw that he, the subtle  
beast,  
Would track her guilt until he found,  
and hers  
Would be for evermore a name of  
scorn.  
Henceforward rarely could she front  
in Hall,  
Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy  
face,  
Heart-hiding smile, and gray persis-  
tent eye:  
Henceforward too, the Powers that  
tend the soul,  
To help it from the death that cannot  
die,  
And save it even in extremes, began  
To vex and plague her. Many a time  
for hours,

Beside the placid breathings of the  
King,  
In the dead night, grim faces came and  
went  
Before her, or a vague spiritual fear—  
Like to some doubtful noise of creaking  
doors,  
Heard by the watcher in a haunted  
house,  
That keeps the rust of murder on the  
walls—  
Held her awake: or, if she slept, she  
dream'd  
An awful dream; for then she seem'd  
to stand  
On some vast plain before a setting  
sun,  
And from the sun there swiftly made at  
her  
A ghastly something, and its shadow  
flew  
Before it, till it touch'd her, and she  
turn'd—  
When lo! her own, that broadening  
from her feet,  
And blackening, swallow'd all the land,  
and in it  
Far cities burnt, and with a cry she  
woke.  
And all this trouble did not pass but  
grew;  
Till ev'n the clear face of the guileless  
King,  
And trustful courtesies of household  
life,  
Became her bane; and at the last she  
said,  
"O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine  
own land,  
For if thou tarry we shall meet again,  
And if we meet again, some evil  
chance  
Will make the smouldering scandal  
break and blaze  
Before the people, and our lord the  
King."  
And Lancelot ever promised, but re-  
main'd,  
And still they met and met. Again she  
said,  
"O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee  
hence."  
And then they were agreed upon a  
night  
(When the good King should not be  
there) to meet  
And part for ever. Passion-pale they  
met  
And greeted: hands in hands, and eye  
to eye,  
Low on the border of her couch they  
sat  
Stammering and staring: it was their  
last hour.  
A madness of farewells. And Modred  
brought  
His creatures to the basement of the  
tower  
For testimony; and crying with full  
voice

"Traitor, come out, ye are trapt at last," aroused Lancelot, who rushing outward lion-like leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong, and he fell stunn'd, and his creatures took and bare him off. And all was still : then she, " the end is come And I am shamed for ever ;" and he said " Mine be the shame ; mine was the sin : but rise, And fly to my strong castle overseas : There will I hide thee, till my life shall end, There hold thee with my life against the world." She answer'd " Lancelot, wilt thou hold me so ? Nay friend, for we have taken our farewells. Would God, that thou couldst hide me from myself ! Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou unwedded ; yet rise now, and let us fly, For I will draw me into sanctuary, And bide my doom." So Lancelot got set her thereon, and mounted on his own, And then they rode to the divided way, There kiss'd, and parted weeping : for he past, Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen, Back to his land ; but she to Almesbury Fled all night long by glimmering waste and weald, And heard the Spirits of the waste and weald Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan : And in herself she moaned " too late, too late !" Till in the cold wind that foreruns the morn, A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying high, Croak'd, and she thought " he spies a field of death ; For now the Heathen of the Northern Sea, Lured by the crimes and frailties of the court, Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land."

And when she came to Almesbury she spake  
 There to the nuns, and said, mine enemies  
 Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,  
 Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor ask

Her name, to whom ye yield it, till her time  
 To tell you : " and her beauty, grace, and power  
 Wrought as a charm upon them, and they spared  
 To ask it. So the stately Queen abode  
 For many a week, unknown, among the nuns ;  
 Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name, nor sought,  
 Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for shrift,  
 But communed only with the little maid,  
 Who pleased her with a babbling heedlessness  
 Which often lured her from herself ; but now,  
 This night, a rumor wildly blown about  
 Came, that Sir Modred had usurped the realm,  
 And leagued him with the heathen, while the King  
 Was waging war on Lancelot : then she thought,  
 " With what a hate the people and the King  
 Must hate me," and bow'd down upon her hands  
 Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd  
 No silence, brake it, uttering " late ! so late !  
 What hour, I wonder, now ?" and when she drew  
 No answer, by and by began to hum  
 An air the nuns had taught her ; " late, so late !"  
 Which when she heard, the Queen look'd up, and said,  
 " O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,  
 Sing, and unbind my heart that I may weep."  
 Whereat full willingly sang the little maid.

" Late, late so late ! and dark th. night and chill !  
 Late, late, so late ! but we can enter still.  
 Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

" No light had we : for that we do repent ;  
 And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.  
 Too late, too late ! ye cannot enter now.

" No light : so late : and dark and chill the night !  
 O let us in, that we may find the light !  
 Too late, too late : ye cannot enter now.

Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet ?

O let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet!  
No, no, too late! ye cannot enter  
now."

So sang the novice, while full pas-  
sionately,  
Her head upon her hands, remembering  
Her thought when first she came, wept  
the sad Queen.  
Then said the little novice prattling to  
her.

"O pray you, noble lady, weep no  
more:  
But let my words, the words of one so  
small,  
Who knowing nothing knows but to  
obey,  
And if I do not there is penance given—  
Comfort your sorrows; for they do not  
flow  
From evil done; right sure am I of  
that,  
Who see your tender grace and stateli-  
ness.  
But weigh your sorrows with our lord  
the King's,  
And weighing find them less; for gone  
is he  
To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot  
there,  
Round that strong castle where he holds  
the Queen;  
And Modred whom he left in charge of  
all,  
The traitor—Ah sweet lady, the King's  
grief  
For his own self, and his own Queen,  
and realm,  
Must needs be thrice as great as any of  
ours.  
For me, I thank the saints, I am not  
great.  
For if there ever come a grief to me  
I cry my cry in silence, and have done:  
None knows it and my tears have  
brought me good:  
But even were the griefs of little ones  
As great as those of great ones, yet this  
grief  
Is added to the griefs the great must  
bear,  
That howsoever much they may desire  
Silence, they cannot weep behind a  
cloud:  
As even here they talk at Almesbury  
About the good King and his wicked  
Queen,  
And were I such a King with such a  
Queen,  
Well might I wish to veil her wicked-  
ness,  
But were I such a King, it could not  
be."

Then to her own sad heart mutter'd  
the Queen,  
"Will the child kill me with her inno-  
cent talk?"  
But openly she answer'd "must not I,

If this false traitor have displaced his  
lord,  
Grieve with the common grief of all  
the realm?"

"Yea," said the maid, "this is all  
woman's grief,  
That *she* is woman, whose disloyal life  
Hath wrought confusion in the Table  
Round  
Which good King Arthur founded,  
years ago,  
With signs and miracles and wonders,  
the  
At Camelot, ere the coming of the  
Queen."

Then thought the Queen within her-  
self again;  
"Will the child kill me with her fool-  
ish prate?"  
But openly she spake and said to her;  
"O little maid, shut in by nunnery  
walls,  
What canst thou know of Kings and  
Tables Round,  
Or what of signs and wonders, but the  
signs  
And simple miracles of thy nunnery?"

To whom the little novice garrulous-  
ly.  
"Yea, but I know: the land was full  
of signs  
And wonders ere the coming of the  
Queen,  
So said my father, and himself was  
knight  
Of the great Table—at the founding  
of it;  
And rode thereto from Lyonnesse, and  
he said  
That as he rode, an hour or maybe  
twain  
After the sunset, down the coast, he  
heard  
Strange music, and he paused and  
turning—there,  
All down the lonely coast of Lyon-  
nesse,  
Each with a beacon-star upon his head,  
And with a wild sea-light about his  
feet,  
He saw them—headland after head-  
land flame  
Far on into the rich heart of the west:  
And in the light the white mermaiden  
swam.  
And strong man-breasted things stood  
from the sea,  
And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the  
land,  
To which the little elves of chasm and  
cleft  
Made answer, sounding like a distant  
horn.  
So said my father—yea, and further-  
more,  
Next morning, while he past the dim  
lit woods,

Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy  
 Come dashing down on a tall wayside flower,  
 That shook beneath them, as the thistle shakes  
 When three gray linnets wrangle for the seed;  
 And still at evenings on before his horse  
 The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and broke  
 Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd and broke  
 Flying, for all the land was full of life.  
 And when at last he came to Camelot,  
 A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand  
 Swung round the lighted lantern of the hall;  
 And in the hall itself was such a feast  
 As never man had dream'd; for every knight  
 Had whatsoever meat he long'd for served  
 By hands unseen; and even as he said  
 Down in the cellars merry bloated things  
 Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on the butts  
 While the wine ran; so glad were spirits and men  
 Before the coming of the sinful Queen."

Then spake the Queen and somewhat bitterly.

"Were they so glad? ill prophets were they all,  
 Spirits and men; could none of them foresee,  
 Not even thy wise father with his signs  
 And wonders, what has fall'n upon the realm?"

To whom the novice garrulously again.  
 "Yea, one, a bard; of whom my father said,  
 Full many a noble war-song had he sung,  
 Ev'n in the presence of an enemy's fleet,  
 Between the steep cliff and the coming wave;  
 And many a mystic lay of life and death  
 Had chanted on the smoky mountain-tops,  
 When round him bent the spirits of the hills  
 With all their dewy hair blown back like flame:  
 So said my father—and that night the bard  
 Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang the King  
 As wellnigh more than man, and rail'd at those  
 Who call'd him the false son of Gorboloi:  
 For there was no man knew from whence he came;

But after tempest, when the long wave broke  
 All down the thundering shores of Bude and Bos,  
 There came a day as still as heaven, and then  
 They found a naked child upon the sands  
 Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea;  
 And that was Arthur; and they foster'd him  
 Till he by miracle was approven king:  
 And that his grave should be a mystery  
 From all men, like his birth; and could he find  
 A woman in her womanhood as great  
 As he was in his manhood, then, he sang,  
 The twain together well might change the world.  
 But even in the middle of his song  
 He falter'd, and his hand fell from the harp,  
 And pale he turn'd, and reel'd, and would have fall'n,  
 But that they stay'd him up; nor would he tell  
 His vision; but what doubt that he foresaw  
 This evil work of Lancelot and the Queen?"

Then thought the Queen "lo! they have set her on,  
 Our simple-seeming Abbess and her nuns,  
 To play upon me," and bow'd her head nor spake.  
 Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd hands,  
 Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,  
 Said the good nuns would check her gadding tongue  
 Full often, "and, sweet lady, if I seem  
 To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,  
 Unmannerly, with prattling and the tales  
 Which my good father told, check me too:  
 Nor let me shame my father's memory, one  
 Of noblest manners, tho' himself would say  
 Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he died,  
 Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five summers back,  
 And left me; but of others who remain,  
 And of the two first-famed for courtesy—  
 And pray you check me if I ask amiss—  
 But pray you, which had noblest, while you moved  
 Among them, Lancelot or our lord the King?"

Then the pale Queen look'd up and answer'd her.  
 "Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,

Was gracious to all ladies, and the same  
In open battle or the tilting-field  
Forbore his own advantage, and the  
King

In open battle or the tilting-field  
Forbore his own advantage, and these  
two

Were the most nobly-mannered men of  
all ;

For manners are not idle, but the fruit  
Of loyal nature, and of noble mind."

" Yea," said the maid, " be manners  
such fair fruit ?

Then Lancelot's needs must be a thou-  
sand-fold

Less noble, being, as all rumor runs,  
The most disloyal friend in all the  
world."

To which a mournful answer made  
the Queen.

" O closed about by narrowing nunner-  
walls,

What knowest thou of the world, and  
all its lights

And shadows, all the wealth and all the  
woe ?

If ever Lancelot, that most noble  
knight,

Were for one hour less noble than him-  
self,

Pray for him that he scape the doom of  
fire,

And weep for her, who drew him to his  
doom."

" Yea," said the little novice, " I pray  
for both :

But I should all as soon believe that his,  
Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the  
King's,

As I could think, sweet lady, yours  
would be

Such as they are, were you the sinful  
Queen."

So she, like many another babbler,  
hurt

Whom she would soothe, and harm'd  
where she would heal ;

For here a sudden flush of wrathful  
heat

Fired all the pale face of the Queen,  
who cried,

" Such as thou art be never maiden  
more

For ever ! thou their tool, set on to  
plague

And play upon, and harry me, petty spy  
And traitress." When that storm of  
anger brake

From Guinevere, aghast the maiden  
rose,

White as her veil, and stood before the  
Queen

As tremulously as foam upon the beach  
Stands in a wind, ready to break and  
fly,

And when the Queen had added " get  
thce hence "

Fled frighted. Then that other left  
alone

Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again,  
Saying in herself " the simple, fearful  
child

Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful  
guilt

Simpler than any child, betrays itself.  
But help me, heaven, for surely I re-  
pent.

For what is true repentance but in  
thought—

Not ev'n in inmost thought to think  
again

The sins that made the past so pleasant  
to us :

And I have sworn never to see him  
more,

To see him more."

And ev'n in saying this,  
Her memory from old habits of the  
mind

Went slipping back upon the golden  
days

In which she saw him first, when Lance-  
lot came,

Reputed the best knight and goodliest  
man,

Ambassador, to lead her to his lord  
Arthur, and led her forth, and far  
ahead

Of his and her refine moving, they,  
Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love

And sport and tilts and pleasure, (for  
the time

Was maytime, and as yet no sin was  
dream'd.)

Rode under groves that look'd a para-  
dise

Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth  
That seem'd the heavens upbreacking  
thro' the earth,

And on from hill to hill, and every day  
Beheld at noon in some delicious dale

The silk pavilions of King Arthur  
raised

For brief repast or afternoon repose  
By couriers gone before ; and on again,

Till yet once more ere set of sun they  
saw

The Dragon of the great Pendragon-  
ship,

That crown'd the state pavilion of the  
King.

Blaze by the rushing brook or silent  
well.

But when the Queen immersed in  
such a trance,

And moving through the past uncon-  
sciously,

Came to that point where first she saw  
the King

Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to  
find

Her journey done, glanced at him,  
thought him cold,

High, self-contain'd, and passionless,  
not like him,

"Not like my Lancelot"—while she  
 brooded thus  
 And grew half-guilty in her thoughts  
 again,  
 There rode an armed warrior to the  
 doors.  
 A murmuring whisper thro' the nun-  
 nery ran,  
 Then on a sudden a cry, "the King."  
 She sat  
 Stiff-stricken, listening; but when  
 armed feet  
 Thro' the long gallery from the outer  
 doors  
 Rang coming, prone from off her seat  
 she fell,  
 And grovell'd with her face against the  
 floor:  
 There with her milkwhite arms and  
 shadowy hair  
 She made her face a darkness from the  
 King:  
 And in the darkness heard his armed  
 feet  
 Pause by her; then came silence, then  
 a voice,  
 Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost's  
 Denouncing judgment, but tho'  
 changed the King's.

"Liest thou here so low, the child of  
 one  
 I honor'd, happy, dead before thy  
 shame?  
 Well is it that no child is born of thee.  
 The children born of thee are sword  
 and fire,  
 Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,  
 The craft of kindred and the Godless  
 hosts  
 Of heathen swarming o'er the North-  
 ern Sea.  
 Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my  
 right arm,  
 The mightiest of my knights, abode  
 with me,  
 Have everywhere about this land of  
 Christ  
 In twelve great battles ruining over-  
 thrown.  
 And knowest thou now from whence I  
 come—from him,  
 From waging bitter war with him:  
 and he,  
 That did not shun to smite me in  
 worse way,  
 Had yet that grace of courtesy in him  
 left,  
 He spared to lift his hand against the  
 King  
 Who made him knight: but many a  
 knight was slain;  
 And many more, and all his kith and  
 kin  
 Clave to him, and abode in his own  
 land.  
 And many more when Modred raised  
 revolt,  
 Forgetful of their troth and fealty,  
 clave

To Modred, and a remnant stays with  
 me,  
 And of this remnant will I leave a  
 part,  
 True men who love me still, for whom  
 I live,  
 To guard thee in the wild hour coming  
 on,  
 Lest but a hair of this low head be  
 harm'd.  
 Fear not: thou shalt be guarded till  
 my death.  
 Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies  
 Have err'd not, that I march to meet  
 my doom.  
 Thou hast not made my life so sweet  
 to me,  
 That I the King should greatly care to  
 live;  
 For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my  
 life.  
 Bear with me for the last time while I  
 show,  
 Ev'n for thy sake, the sin which thou  
 hast sinn'd.  
 For when the Roman left us, and their  
 law  
 Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways  
 Were fill'd with rapine, here and there  
 a deed  
 Of prowess done redress'd a random  
 wrong,  
 But I was first of all the kings who  
 drew  
 The knighthood-errant of this realm  
 and all  
 The realms together under me, their  
 Head,  
 In that fair order of my Table Round,  
 A glorious company, the flower of  
 men,  
 To serve as model for the mighty  
 world,  
 And be the fair beginning of a time.  
 I made them lay their hands in mine  
 and swear  
 To reverence the King, as if he were  
 Their conscience, and their conscience  
 as their King,  
 To break the heathen and uphold the  
 Christ,  
 To ride abroad redressing human  
 wrongs,  
 To speak no slander, no, nor listen to  
 it,  
 To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,  
 To love one maiden only, cleave to  
 her,  
 And worship her by years of noble  
 deeds,  
 Until they won her; for indeed I  
 knew  
 Of no more subtle master under heaven  
 Than is the maiden passion for a maid,  
 Not only to keep down the base in  
 man,  
 But teach high thought, and amiable  
 words  
 And courtliness, and the desire of  
 fame,

And love of truth, and all that makes  
a man.  
And all this throve until I wedded  
thee!  
Believing, 'lo mine helpmate, one to  
feel  
My purpose and rejoicing in my joy.'  
Then came thy shameful sin with  
Lancelot;  
Then came the sin of Tristram and  
Isolt;  
Then others, following these my might-  
est knights,  
And drawing foul ensample from fair  
names,  
Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite  
Of all my heart had destined did ob-  
tain,  
And all thro' thee! so that this life of  
mine  
I guard as God's high gift from scathe  
and wrong,  
Not greatly care to lose; but rather  
think  
How sad it were for Arthur, should he  
live,  
To sit once more within his lonely  
hall,  
And miss the wonted number of my  
knights,  
And miss to hear high talk of noble  
deeds  
As in the golden days before thy sin.  
For which of us, who might be left,  
could speak  
Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance  
at thee?  
And in thy bowers of Camelot or of  
Usk  
Thy shadow still would glide from  
room to room,  
And I should evermore be vext with  
thee  
In hanging robe or vacant ornament  
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the  
stair.  
For think not, tho' thou wouldst not  
love thy lord,  
Thy lord has wholly lost his love for  
thee.  
I am not made of so slight elements.  
Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy  
shame.  
I hold that man the worst of public  
foes  
Who either for his own or children's  
sake,  
To save his blood from scandal, lets  
the wife  
Whom he knows false, abide and rule  
the house:  
For being thro' his cowardice allow'd  
Her station, taken everywhere for  
pure,  
She like a new disease, unknown to  
men,  
Creeps, no precaution used, among the  
crowd,  
Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes,  
and saps

The fealty of our friends, and stirs the  
pulse  
With devil's leaps, and poisons half  
the young.  
Worst of the worst were that man he  
that reigns!  
Better the King's waste hearth and  
aching heart  
Than thou reseated in thy place of  
light,  
The mockery of my people, and their  
bane."

He paused, and in the pause she  
crept an inch  
Nearer, and laid her hands about his  
feet.  
Far off a solitary trumpet blew,  
Then waiting by the doors the war-  
horse neigh'd  
As at a friend's voice, and he spake  
again.

"Yet think not that I come to urge  
thy crimes,  
I did not come to curse thee, Guine-  
vere,  
I, whose vast pity almost makes me  
die  
To see thee, laying there thy golden  
head,  
My pride in happier summers, at my  
feet.  
The wrath which forced my thoughts  
on that fierce law,  
The doom of treason and the flaming  
death,  
(When first I learnt thee hidden here)  
is past.  
The pang—which while I weigh'd thy  
heart with one  
Too wholly true to dream untruth in  
thee,  
Made my tears burn—is also past, in  
part.  
And all is past, the sin is sinn'd, and I,  
Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God  
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul  
the rest.  
But how to take last leave of all I  
loved?  
O golden hair, with which I used to  
play  
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded  
form,  
And beauty such as never woman  
wore,  
Until it came a kingdom's curse with  
thee—  
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not  
mine,  
But Lancelot's: nay, they never were  
the King's.  
I cannot take thy hand; that too is  
flesh,  
And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd; and  
mine own flesh,  
Here looking down on thine polluted,  
cries  
'I loathe thee:' yet not less, O Guine-  
vere,

For I was ever virgin save for thee,  
 My love thro' flesh hath wrought into  
 my life  
 So far, that my doom is, I love thee  
 still.  
 Let no man dream but that I love thee  
 still,  
 Perchance, and so thou purify thy  
 soul,  
 And so thou lean on our fair father  
 Christ,  
 Hereafter in that world where all are  
 pure  
 We two may meet before high God,  
 and thou  
 Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,  
 and know  
 I am thine husband — not a smaller  
 soul,  
 Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me  
 that,  
 I charge thee, my last hope. Now must  
 I hence.  
 Thro' the thick night I hear the trumpet  
 blow :  
 They summon me their King to lead  
 mine hosts  
 Far down to that great battle in the  
 west,  
 Where I must strike against the man  
 they call  
 My sister's son — no kin of mine, who  
 leagues  
 With lords of the White Horse, hea-  
 then, and knights —  
 Traitors — and strike him dead, and  
 meet myself  
 Death, or I know not what mysterious  
 doom.  
 And thou remaining here wilt learn  
 the event :  
 But hither shall I never come again,  
 Never lie by thy side, see thee no more,  
 Farewell !"

And while she grovell'd at his feet,  
 She felt the King's breath wander o'er  
 her neck,  
 And in the darkness o'er her fallen  
 head,  
 Perceived the waving of his hands that  
 blest.

Then, listening till those armed steps  
 were gone,  
 Ross the pale Queen, and in her an-  
 guish found  
 The casement : "peradventure" so she  
 thought,  
 "If I might see his face, and not be  
 seen."  
 And lo, he sat on horseback at the  
 door !  
 And near him the sad nuns with each  
 a light  
 Stood, and he gave them charge about  
 the Queen,  
 To guard and foster her for evermore.  
 And while he spake to these his helm  
 was lower'd,

To which for crest the golden dragon  
 clung  
 Of Britain ; so she did not see the face,  
 Which then was as an angel's, but she  
 saw,  
 Wet with the mists and smitten by the  
 lights,  
 The Dragon of the great Pendragon-  
 ship  
 Blaze, making all the night a steam of  
 fire.  
 And even then he turn'd ; and more  
 and more  
 The moony vapor rolling round the  
 King,  
 Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant  
 in it,  
 Enwound him fold by fold, and made  
 him gray  
 And grayer, till himself became as  
 mist  
 Before her, moving ghostlike to his  
 doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arms and  
 cried aloud  
 "O Arthur!" there her voice brake  
 suddenly,  
 Then — as a stream that spouting from  
 a cliff  
 Falls in mid air, but gathering at the  
 base  
 Re-makes itself, and flashes down the  
 vale —  
 Went on in passionate utterance.

"Gone — my lord !  
 Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be  
 slain !  
 And he forgave me, and I could not  
 speak.  
 Farewell ? I should have answer'd his  
 farewell.  
 His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord  
 the King,  
 My own true lord ! how dare I call him  
 mine ?  
 The shadow of another cleaves to me,  
 And makes me one pollution : he, the  
 King,  
 Call'd me polluted : shall I kill myself ?  
 What help in that ? I cannot kill my  
 sin,  
 If soul be soul ; nor can I kill my  
 shame ;  
 No, nor by living can I live it down.  
 The days will grow to weeks, the weeks  
 to months,  
 The months will add themselves and  
 make the years,  
 The years will roll into the centuries,  
 And mine will ever be a name of scorn.  
 I must not dwell on that defeat of  
 fame.  
 Let the world be ; that is but of the  
 world.  
 What else ? what hope ? I think there  
 was a hope,  
 Except he mock'd me when he spake  
 of hope ;

His hope he call'd it; but he never  
 mocks,  
 For mockery is the fume of little  
 hearts.  
 And blessed be the King, who hath  
 forgiven  
 My wickedness to him, and left me  
 hope  
 That in mine own heart I can live down  
 sin  
 And be his mate hereafter in the  
 heavens  
 Before high God. Ah great and gentle  
 lord,  
 Who wast, as is the conscience of a  
 saint  
 Among his warring senses, to thy  
 knights—  
 To whom my false voluptuous pride,  
 that took  
 Full easily all impressions from below,  
 Would not look up, or half-despised  
 the height  
 To which I would not or I could not  
 climb—  
 I thought I could not breathe in that  
 fine air  
 That pure severity of perfect light—  
 I wanted warmth and color which I  
 found  
 In Lancelot—now I see thee what  
 thou art,  
 Thou art the highest and most human  
 too,  
 Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there  
 none  
 Will tell the King I love him tho' so  
 late?  
 Now—ere he goes to the great Battle?  
 none:  
 Myself must tell him in that purer life,  
 But now it were too daring. Ah my  
 God,  
 What might I not have made of thy  
 fair world,  
 Had I but loved thy highest creature  
 here?  
 It was my duty to have loved the high-  
 est;  
 It surely was my profit had I known;  
 It would have been my pleasure had I  
 seen.  
 We needs must love the highest when  
 we see it,  
 Not Lancelot, nor another."

Here her hand  
 Grasp'd, made her veil her eyes: she  
 look'd and saw  
 The novice, weeping, suppliant, and  
 said to her  
 "Yea, little maid, for am I not for-  
 given?"  
 Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns  
 All round her, weeping; and her heart  
 was loosed  
 Within her, and she wept with these  
 and said.

"Ye know me then, that wicked one,  
 who broke

The vast design and purpose of the  
 King.  
 O shut me round with narrowing nun-  
 nery-walls,  
 Meek maidens, from the voices crying  
 'shame.'  
 I must not scorn myself; he loves me  
 still.  
 Let no one dream but that he loves me  
 still.  
 So let me, if you do not shudder at me  
 Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with  
 you;  
 Wear black and white, and be a nun  
 like you;  
 Fast with your fasts, not feasting with  
 your feasts;  
 Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at  
 your joys,  
 But not rejoicing; mingle with your  
 rites;  
 Pray and be pray'd for; lie before your  
 shrines;  
 Do each low office of your holy house;  
 Walk your dim cloister, and distribute  
 dole  
 To poor sick people, richer in his eyes  
 Who ransom'd us, and haler too than I;  
 And treat their loathsome hurts and  
 heal mine own;  
 And so wear out in almsdeed and in  
 prayer  
 The sombre close of that voluptuous  
 day,  
 Which wrought the ruin of my lord the  
 King."

She said: they took her to them-  
 selves; and she  
 Still hoping, fearing "is it yet too  
 late?"  
 Dwelt with them, till in time their Ab-  
 bess died.  
 Then she, for her good deeds and her  
 pure life,  
 And for the power of ministration in  
 her,  
 And likewise for the high rank she had  
 borne,  
 Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess,  
 lived  
 For three brief years, and there, an  
 Abbess, past  
 To where beyond these voices there is  
 peace.

#### THE PASSING OF ARTHUR.

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedi-  
 vere,  
 First made and latest left of all the  
 knights,  
 Told, when the man was no more than  
 a voice  
 In the white winter of his age, to those  
 With whom he dwelt, new faces, other  
 minds.

Before that last weird battle in the west  
 There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain  
 kill'd  
 In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain  
 blown  
 Along a wandering wind, and past his  
 ear  
 Went shrilling "Hollow, hollow all de-  
 light!  
 Hall, king! to-morrow thou shalt pass  
 away.  
 Farewell! there is an isle of rest for  
 thee.  
 And I am blown along a wandering  
 wind,  
 And hollow, hollow, hollow all de-  
 light."  
 And fainter onward, like wild birds  
 that change  
 Their season in the night and wail their  
 way  
 From cloud to cloud, down the long  
 wind the dream  
 shrill'd; but in going mingled with dim  
 cries  
 Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,  
 As of some lonely city sack'd by night,  
 When all is lost, and wife and child  
 with wail  
 Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke  
 and call'd.  
 "Who spake? A dream. O light upon  
 the wind.  
 Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are  
 these dim cries  
 Thine? or doth all that haunts the  
 waste and wild  
 Mourn, knowing it will go along with  
 me?"  
 Thus heard the bold Sir Bedivere and  
 spake:  
 "O me, my king, let pass whatever will,  
 Elves, and the harmless glamour of the  
 field;  
 But in their stead thy name and glory  
 cling  
 To all high places like a golden cloud  
 For ever: but as yet thou shalt not pass.  
 Light was Gawain in life, and light in  
 death  
 Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;  
 And care not thou for dreams from  
 him, but rise—  
 I hear the steps of Modred in the west,  
 And with him many of thy people and  
 knights  
 Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but  
 grosser grown  
 Than heathen, spitting at their vows  
 and thee.  
 Right well in heart they know thee for  
 the king.  
 Arise, go forth and conquer as of old."  
 Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
 vere:  
 "Far other is this battle in the west  
 Whereto we move, than when we strove  
 in youth,

And thrust the heathen from the Roman  
 wall,  
 And shook him thro' the north. Ill  
 doom is mine  
 To war against my people and my  
 knights,  
 The king who fights his people fights  
 himself,  
 And they my knights, who loved me  
 once, the stroke  
 That strikes them dead is as my death  
 to me.  
 Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way  
 Thro' this blind haze, which ever since  
 I saw  
 One lying in the dust at Almesbury,  
 Hath folded in the passes of the world."  
 Then rose the king and moved his  
 host by night,  
 And ever push'd Sir Modred, leagued by  
 leagued,  
 Back to the sunset bound of Lyon-  
 nesse—  
 A land of old upheaven from the abyss  
 By fire, to sink into the abyss again;  
 Where fragments of forgotten peoples  
 dwelt,  
 And the long mountains ended in a  
 coast  
 Of ever-shifting sand, and far away  
 The phantom circle of a moaning sea.  
 There the pursuer could pursue no  
 more,  
 And he that fled no further fly the  
 king;  
 And there, that day when the great  
 light of heaven  
 Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,  
 On the waste sand by the waste sea  
 they closed.  
 Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight  
 Like this last, dim, weird battle of the  
 west.  
 A death white mist slept over sand and  
 sea:  
 Whereof the chill, to him who breathed  
 it, drew  
 Down with his blood, till all his heart  
 was cold  
 With formless fear: and ev'n on Arthur  
 fell  
 Confusion, since he saw not whom he  
 fought,  
 For friend and foe were shadows in the  
 mist,  
 And friend slew friend not knowing  
 whom he slew;  
 And some had visions out of golden  
 youth,  
 And some beheld the faces of old ghosts  
 Look in upon the battle; and in the mist  
 Was many a noble deed, many a base,  
 And chance and craft and strength in  
 single fights,  
 And ever and anon with host to host  
 Shocks, and the splintering spear, the  
 hard mail hewn,  
 Shield-breakings, and the clash of  
 brands, the crash

Of battle-axes on shatter'd helms, and shrieks  
 After the Christ, of those who falling down  
 Looked up for heaven, and only saw the mist ;  
 And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,  
 Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blasphemies,  
 Sweat, writhings, anguish, laboring of the lungs  
 In that close mist, and cryings for the light,  
 Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last, as by some one death-bed after wall  
 Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death  
 Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that shore,  
 Save for some whisper of the seething seas,  
 A dead hush fell ; but when the dolorous day  
 Grew drearier toward twilight falling, came  
 A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew  
 The mist aside, and with that wind the tide  
 Rose, and the pale king glanced across the field  
 Of battle : but no man was moving there ;  
 Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,  
 Nor yet of heathen ; only the wan wave  
 Brake in among dead faces, to and fro  
 Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down  
 Tumbling the hollow helmets, of the fallen,  
 And shiver'd brands that once had fought with Rome,  
 And rolling far along the gloomy shores  
 The voice of days of old and days to be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,  
 And whiter than the mist that all day long  
 Had held the field of battle was the King :

"Hearest thou this great voice that shakes the world,  
 And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move,  
 And beats upon the faces of the dead,  
 My dead, as tho' they had not died for me ?—  
 O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n  
 Confusion, till I know not what I am,  
 Nor whence I am, nor whether I be king.  
 Behold, I seem but king among the dead."

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere :  
 " My King,

King everywhere ! and 'so the dead have kings,  
 There also will I worship thee as king.  
 Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live  
 Who love thee ; but who hates thee, he that brought  
 The heathen back among us, yonder stands,  
 Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine house."

Then spake the King : " My house hath been my doom.  
 But call not thou this traitor of my house  
 Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with me.  
 My house are rather they who swear my vows,  
 Yea, even while they brake them, own'd me king.  
 And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,  
 When all the purport of my throne hath fall'd,  
 That quick or dead thou holdest me for king.  
 King am I, whatsoever be their cry ;  
 And one last act of kinghood shalt thou see  
 Yet, ere I pass." And uttering this the king  
 Made at the man : then Modred smote his liege  
 Hard on that helm which many a heathen sword  
 Had beaten thin ; while Arthur at one blow,  
 Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,  
 Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd  
 Among the mountains by the winter sea ;  
 Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,  
 Hall fall'n in Lyonesse about their lord,  
 King Arthur. Then, because his wound was deep,  
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,  
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land :  
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one  
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :  
 " The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights  
 Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep

They sleep—the men I loved. I think  
that we  
Shall never more, at any future time,  
Delight our souls with talk of knightly  
deeds,  
Walking about the gardens and the  
halls  
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
I perish by this people which I made,—  
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come  
again  
To rule once more; but let what will  
be, be,  
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm  
That without help I cannot last till  
morn.  
Thou therefore take my brand Excali-  
bur,  
Which was my pride: for thou remem-  
berest how  
In those old days, one summer noon,  
an arm  
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-  
ful,  
Holding the sword—and how I row'd  
across  
And took it, and have worn it, like a  
king;  
And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known:  
But now delay not: take Excalibur,  
And fling him far into the middle  
mere:  
Watch what thou seest, and lightly  
bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:  
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee  
thus,  
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the  
helm—  
A little thing may harm a wounded  
man;  
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,  
Watch what I see, and lightly bring  
thee word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he  
stept,  
And in the moon athwart the place of  
tombs,  
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient  
men,  
Old knights, and over them the sea-  
wind sang  
Shrill, chill with flakes of foam. He,  
stepping down  
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed  
rock,  
Came on the shining levels of the lake.  
There drew he forth the brand Ex-  
calibur,  
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter  
moon,  
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,  
ran forth  
And sparkled keen with frost against  
the hilt:

For all the haft twinkled with diamond  
sparks,  
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-  
work  
Of subtlest jewelry. He gazed so long  
That both his eyes were dazzled as he  
stood,  
This way and that dividing the swift  
mind,  
In act to throw: but at the last it  
seem'd  
Better to leave Excalibur concea'd  
There in the many-knotted waterflags,  
That whistled stiff and dry about the  
marge.  
So strode he back slow to the wounded  
King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-  
vere:  
"Hast thou perform'd my mission  
which I gave?  
What is it thou has seen? or what hast  
heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:  
"I heard the ripple washing in the  
reeds,  
And the wild water lapping on the  
crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint  
and pale:  
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and  
thy name,  
Not rendering true answer, as be-  
seem'd  
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:  
For surer sign had follow'd, either  
hand,  
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.  
This is a shameful thing for men to  
lie.  
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go  
again,  
As thou art lief and dear, and do the  
thing  
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring  
me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second  
time  
Across the ridge, and paced beside the  
mere,  
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in  
thought;  
But when he saw the wonder of the  
hill,  
How curiously and strangely chased,  
he smote  
His palms together, and he cried  
aloud:  
"And if indeed I cast the brand  
away,  
Surely a precious thing, one worthy  
note,  
Should thus be lost for ever from the  
earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of  
many men.

What good should follow this, if this  
were done?

What harm, undone? Deep harm to  
disobey.

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.  
Were it well to obey then, if a king  
demand?

An act unprofitable, against himself?  
The King is sick, and knows not what  
he does.

What record, or what relic of my lord  
Should be to aftertime, but empty  
breath

And rumors of a doubt? But were  
this kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of  
mighty kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of  
arms,

Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excali-  
bur,

Wrought by the lonely maiden of the  
Lake.

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in  
the deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'  
So might some old man speak in the  
aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence.  
But now much honor and much fame  
were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own  
conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time,  
And so strode back slow to the wounded  
King.

Then spake King Arthur, breathing  
heavily:

"What is it thou hast seen? or what  
hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:

"I heard the water lapping on the  
crag,

And the long ripple washing in the  
reefs."

To whom replied King Arthur, much  
in wrath:

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,  
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is  
me!

Authority forgets a dying king,  
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye  
That bow'd the will. I see thee what  
thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my  
knights

In whom should meet the offices of all,  
Thou wouldst betray me for the pre-  
cious hilt;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl  
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,  
And the third time May prosper, get  
thee hence:

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur.

I will arise and slay thee with my  
hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and  
ran,

And leaping down the ridges lightly,  
plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd  
the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it.  
The great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the  
moon,

And flashing round and round, and  
whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern  
morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter  
shock

By night, with noises of the northern  
sea.

So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:  
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an  
arm

Clothed in white samitè, mystic, won-  
derful,

And caught him by the hilt, and bran-  
dish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in  
the mere

And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing  
thicker breath:

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is  
done.

Speak out: what is it thou hast heard,  
or seen?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:

"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest  
the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never  
saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I  
die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal  
men,

So great a miracle as yonder hilt.  
Then with both hands I flung him,

wheeling him;

But when I look'd again, behold an  
arm,

Clothed in white samitè, mystic, won-  
derful.

That caught him by the hilt, and bran-  
dish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in  
the mere."

And answer made King Arthur,  
breathing hard:

"My end draws nigh; 't is time that I  
were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive  
my weight.

And bear me to the margin; yet I fear  
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall  
die."

So saying, from the pavement he  
half rose.

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,  
And looking wistfully with wide blue  
eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere  
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,  
And would have spoken, but he found  
not words;  
Then took with care, and kneeling on  
one knee,  
O'er both his shoulders drew the lan-  
guid hands,  
And rising bore him thro' the place of  
tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted  
hard,  
Like one that feels a nightmare on his  
bed.

When all the house is mute. So sigh'd  
the King,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear  
"Quick, quick!  
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."  
But the other swiftly strode from ridge  
to ridge,

Cloth'd with his breath, and looking, as  
he walk'd,  
Larger than human on the frozen hills,  
He heard the deep behind him, and a  
cry

Before. His own thought drove him  
like a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy  
caves  
And barren chasms, and all to left and  
right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him,  
as he bas'd

His feet on juts of slippery crag that  
rang  
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed  
heels—

And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter  
moon.

Then saw they how there hove a  
dusky barge,  
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to  
stem,

Beneath them; and descending they  
were ware

That all the decks were dense with  
stately forms,  
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a  
dream—by these

Three Queens with crowns of gold:  
and from them rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
And, as it were one voice, and agony  
of lamentation, like a wind that shrills  
All night in a waste land, where no  
one comes,

Or hath come; since the making of the  
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me  
in the barge;"

So to the barge they came. There  
those three Queens

Put forth their hands, and took the  
King, and wept.

But she, that rose the tallest of them  
all

And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
And loos'd the shatter'd casque, and  
chafed his hands,

And call'd him by his name, complain-  
ing loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his  
brow

Striped with dark blood: for all his  
face was white

And colorless, and like the wither'd  
moon

Smote by the fresh beam of the spring-  
ing east:

And all his graves and cuises dash'd  
with drops

Of onset; and the light and lustrous  
curls—

That made his forehead like a rising  
sun

High from the da's-throne—were  
parch'd with dust;

Or, clotted into points and hanging  
loose,

Mix'd with the knightly growth that  
fringed his lips.

So like a shatter'd column lay the  
King;

Not like that Arthur who, with lance  
in rest,

From spur to plume a star of tourna-  
ment,

Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and  
charg'd  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedi-  
vere:

"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall  
I go?

Where shall I hide my forehead and  
my eyes?

For now I see the true old times are  
dead,

When every morning brought a noble  
chance,

And every chance brought out a noble  
knight.

Such times have been not since the  
light that led

The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole Round Table is dis-  
solved

Which was an image of the mighty  
world;

And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me, and  
the years,

Among new men, strange faces, other  
minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from  
the barge:

"The old order changeth, yielding  
place to new,

And God fulfil himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt  
the world.

Comfort thyself : what comfort is in  
me ?

I have lived my wife, and that which  
I have done

May He within himself make pure !  
but thou,

If thou shouldst never see my face  
again,

Pray for my soul. More things are  
wrought by prayer

Than this world dreams of. Where-  
fore, let thy voice

Rise like a fountain for me night and  
day.

For what are men better than sheep or  
goats

That nourish a blind life within the  
brain,

If, knowing God, they lift not hands  
of prayer

Both for themselves and those who  
call them friend ?

For so the whole round earth is every  
way

Bound by gold chains about the feet  
of God.

But now farewell. I am going a long  
way

With these thou seest—if indeed I go  
(For all my mind is clouded with a  
doubt)—

To the island-valley of Avilion ;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any  
snow,

Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it  
lies

Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with  
orchard lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with  
summer sea,

Where I will heal me of my grievous  
wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar  
and sail

Moved from the brink, like some full-  
breasted swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her  
death,

Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes  
the flood

With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir  
Bedivere

Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Look'd one black dot against the verge  
of dawn,

And on the mere the wailing died  
away.

At length he groan'd, and turning  
slowly clomb

The last hardfootstep of that iron crag  
Thence mark'd the black hull moving  
yet and cried,

"He passes to be king among the dead  
And after healing of his grievous  
wound

He comes again ; but—if he come no  
more—

O me, be you dark Queens in yon black  
boat,

Who shriek'd and wall'd, the three  
whereat we gazed

On that high day, when, clothed with  
living light,

They stood before his throne in silence,  
friends

Of Arthur, who should help him at his  
need?"

Then from the dawn it seem'd there  
came, but faint

As from beyond the limit of the world,  
Like the last echo born of a great cry,

Sounds, as if some fair city were one  
voice

Around a king returning from his  
wars.

Thereat once more he moved about,  
and clomb

E'en to the highest he could climb, and  
saw,

Straining his eyes beneath an arch of  
hand,

Or thought he saw, the speck that bare  
the king,

Down that long water opening on the  
deep

Somewhere far off, pass on, and on,  
and go

From less to less and vanish into light.  
And the new sun rose bringing the  
new year.

#### IN THE GARDEN AT SWAINSTON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,

Within was weeping for thee :

Shadows of three dead men

Walk'd in the walks with me,

Shadows of three dead men, and thou  
wast one of the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods :

The Master was far away :

Nightingales warbled and sang

Of a passion that lasts but a day :

Still in the house in his coffin the Prince  
of courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known

In courtesy like to thee :

Two dead men have I loved

With a love that ever will be :

Three dead men have I loved, and thou  
art last of the three.

#### THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

The voice and the Peak

Far over summit and lawn,

The lone glow and long roar

Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of  
dawn !

All night have I heard the voice  
Rave over the rocky bar,  
But thou wert silent in heaven,  
Above thee glided the star.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,  
That standest high above all?  
"I am the voice of the Peak,  
I roar and rave for I fall.

"A thousand voices go  
To North, South, East and West,  
They leave the heights and are trou-  
bled,  
And moan and sink to their rest.

"The fields are fair beside them,  
The chestnut towers in his bloom;  
But they—they feel the desire of the  
deep—  
Fall, and follow their doom.

"The deep has power on the height,  
And the height has power on the deep;  
They are raised for ever and ever,  
And sink again into sleep."

Not raised for ever and ever,  
But when their cycle is o'er,  
The valley, the voice, the peak, the  
star,  
Pass, and are found no more.

The Peak is high and flush'd  
At his highest with sunrise fire;  
The peak is high, and the stars are high,  
And the thought of a man is higher.

A voice below the voice,  
And a height beyond the height  
Our hearing is not hearing,  
And our seeing is not sight.

The voice and the Peak  
Far into heaven withdrawn,  
The lone glow and the long roar  
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones  
of dawn!

## TO THE QUEEN.

## EPILOGUE TO THE IDYLS.

O LOYAL to the royal in thyself,  
And loyal to thy land, as this to thee—  
Bear witness, that rememberable day,  
When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the  
Prince  
Who scarce had pluck'd his flickering  
life again  
From half-way down the shadow of the  
grave,  
Past with thee thro' thy people and  
their love,  
And London roll'd one tide of joy thro'  
all  
Her trebled millions, and loud leagues  
of man

And welcome! witness, too, the silen-  
cry,  
The prayer of many a race and creed,  
and clime—  
Thunderless lightnings striking under  
sea  
From sunset and sunrise of all thy  
realm,  
And that true North, whereof we late-  
ly heard  
A strain to shame us "keep you to  
yourselves:  
So loyal is too costly! friends—your  
love  
Is but a burden: loose the bond, and  
go."  
Is this the tone of empire? here the  
faith  
That made us rulers? this, indeed, her  
voice  
And meaning, whom the roar of Hou-  
goumont  
Left mightiest of all peoples under  
heaven?  
What shock has fool'd her since, that  
she should speak  
So feebly? wealthier—wealthier—hour  
by hour!  
The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,  
Some third-rate isle half-lost among  
her seas?  
There rang her voice, when the full  
city peal'd  
Thee and thy Prince! The loyal to their  
crown  
Are loyal to their own far sons, who  
love  
Our ocean-empire with her boundless  
homes  
For ever-broadening England, and her  
throne  
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,  
That knows not her own greatness: if  
she knows  
And dreads it we are fall'n.—But  
thou, my Queen,  
Not for itself, but thro' thy living love  
For one to whom I made it o'er his  
grave  
Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,  
New-old, and shadowing Sense at war  
with Soul  
Rather than that gray king, whose  
name, a ghost  
Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from  
mountain peak,  
And cleaves to cairn and cromlech  
still: or him  
Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's,  
one  
Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a  
time  
That hover'd between war and wanton-  
ness,  
And crownings and dethronements:  
take withal  
The poet's blessing, and his trust that  
Heaven  
Will blow the tempest in the distance  
back

From thine and ours : for some are sa-  
 cred, who mark,  
 Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,  
 Waverings of every vane with every  
 wind,  
 And wordy trucklings to the transient  
 hour,  
 And fierce or careless looseners of the  
 faith,  
 And Softness breeding scorn of simple  
 life,  
 Or Cowardice, the child of lust for  
 gold,  
 Or Labor, with a groan and not a voice,  
 Or Art, with poisonous honey stol'n  
 from France,  
 And that which knows, but careful for  
 itself,  
 And that which knows not, ruling that  
 which knows  
 To its own harm : the goal of this great  
 world  
 Lies beyond sight : yet—if our slowly-  
 grown  
 And crown'd Republic's crowning com-  
 mon-sense,  
 That saved her many times, not fail—  
 their fears  
 Are morning shadows huger than the  
 shapes  
 That cast them, not those gloomier  
 which forego  
 The darkness of that battle in the West,  
 Where all of high and holy dies away.

A WELCOME TO THE DUKE AND  
 DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH.

March, 1874.

I.

THE Son of him with whom we strove  
 for power—  
 Whose will is lord thro' all his world-  
 domain—  
 Who made the serf a man, and burst  
 his chain—  
 Has given our Prince his own Imperial  
 Flower,

Alexandrovna.

And welcome, Russian flower, a peo-  
 ple's pride,  
 To Britain, when her flowers begin  
 to blow !  
 From love to love, from home to home  
 you go,  
 From mother unto mother, stately  
 bride,

Marie-Alexandrovna.

II.

The golden news along the steppes is  
 blown,  
 And at thy name the Tartar tents  
 are stirred :  
 Elburz and all the Caucasus have  
 heard ;

And all the sultry palms of India  
 known,

Alexandrovna.

The voice of our universal sea,  
 On capes of Afric as on cliffs of  
 Kent,  
 The Maoris and that Isle of Conti-  
 nent,  
 And loyal pines of Canada murmur  
 thee,

Marie-Alexandrovna.

III.

Fair empires branching, both, in lusty  
 life !—

Yet Harold's England fell to Norman  
 swords :

Yet thine own land has bow'd to  
 Tartar hordes  
 Since English Harold gave its throne a  
 wife,

Alexandrovna.

For thrones and peoples are as waifs  
 that swing,

And float or fall, in endless ebb and  
 flow ;

But who love best have best the  
 grace to know

That Love by right divine is deathless  
 king,

Marie-Alexandrovna !

IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger  
 land,

Where men are bold and strongly  
 say their say :—

See, empire upon empire smiles to-  
 day,

As thou with thy young lover hand in  
 hand,

Alexandrovna !

So now thy fuller life is in the West,  
 Whose hand at home was gracious to  
 thy poor :

Thy name was blest within the nar-  
 row door ;

Here, also, Marie, shall thy name be  
 blest,

Marie-Alexandrovna !

V.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame  
 again ?

Or at thy coming, Princess, every-  
 where,

The blue heaven break, and some  
 diviner air

Breathe thro' the world and change  
 the hearts of men,

Alexandrovna ?

But hearts that change not, love that  
 cannot cease,

And peace be yours, the peace of soul  
 in soul !

And howsoever this wide world may  
 roll,

Between your peoples truth and man-  
 ful peace,

Alfred—Alexandrovna !

## QUEEN MARY.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Queen Mary.

Philip, *King of Naples and Sicily, afterwards King of Spain.*

The Princess Elizabeth.

Reginald Pole, *Cardinal and Papal Legate.*

Simon Renard, *Spanish Ambassador.*

Le Steur de Noailles, *French Ambassador.*

Thomas Cranmer, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*

Sir Nicholas Heath, *Archbishop of York; Lord Chancellor after Gardiner.*

Edward Courtenay, *Earl of Devon.*

Lord William Howard, *afterwards Lord Howard and Lord High Admiral.*

Lord Williams of Thame.

Lord Paget.

Lord Petre.

Stephen Gardiner, *Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor.*

Edmund Bonner, *Bishop of London.*

Thomas Thirlby, *Bishop of Ely.*

Sir Thomas Wyatt, } *Insurrectionary*

Sir Thomas Stafford } *leaders.*

Sir Ralph Bagenhall.

Sir Robert Southwell.

Sir Henry Redingfield.

Sir William Cecil.

Sir Thomas White, *Lord Mayor of London.*

The Duke of Alva, } *Attending on*

The Count de Feria, } *Philip.*

Peter Martyr.

Father Cole.

Father Bourne.

Villa Garcia.

Soto.

Captain Brett, } *Adherents of Wyatt,*

Antony Knyvett, } *Peters, Gentleman of Lord Howard.*

Roger, *Servant to Noailles.*

William, *Servant to Wyatt.*

Steward of Household to the Princess

Old Nokes, *(Elizabeth.*

Marchioness of Exeter, *Mother of*

Courtenay.

Lady Clarence, } *Ladies in*

Lady Magdalen Daeres, } *waiting to*

Alice, } *the Queen*

Maid of Honor to the Princess Eliza-

Joan, } *Two Country Wives.* [beth.

Tib, }

Lords and other Attendants, Members

of the Privy Council, Members of

Parliament, two Gentlemen, Alder-

men, Citizens, Peasants, Ushers,

Messengers, Guards, Pages, &c.

### ACT I.

SCENE I.—Aldgate *richly decorated.*  
Crowd. Marshalmen.

*Marshalman.* Stand back, keep a clear lane. When will her Majesty pass, sayst thou? why now, even now; wherefore draw back your heads and your horns before I break them, and make what noise you will with your tongues, so it be not treason. Long live Queen Mary, the lawful and legitimate daughter of Harry the Eighth. Shout, knaves!

*Citizens.* Long live Queen Mary!

1 *Cit.* That's a hard word, legitimate; what does it mean?

2 *Cit.* It means a bastard.

3 *Cit.* Nay, it means true-born.

1 *Cit.* Why, didn't the Parliament make her a bastard? [beth.

2 *Cit.* No; it was the lady Eliza-

3 *Cit.* That was after, man; that was after.

1 *Cit.* Then which is the bastard?

2 *Cit.* Troth, they be both bastards by Act of Parliament and Council.

3 *Cit.* Ay, the Parliament can make every true-born man of us a bastard.

Old Nokes, can't it make thee a bastard? thou shouldst know, for thou art as white as three Christmasses.

*O. Nokes (dreamily).* Who's a-passing? King Edward or King Richard?

3 *Cit.* No, old Nokes.

*O. Nokes.* It's Harry!

3 *Cit.* It's Queen Mary.

*O. Nokes.* The blessed Mary's a-passing!

[*Falls on his knees.*  
*Nokes.* Let father alone, my masters! he's past your questioning.

3 *Cit.* Answer thou for him, then! thou art no such cockerel thyself, for

thou was born i' the tail end of old Harry the Seventh.

*Nokes.* Eh! that was before bastard-making began. I was born true man at five in the forenoon i' the tail of old Harry, and so they can't make me a bastard.

*3 Cit.* But if Parliament can make the Queen a bastard, why, it follows all the more that they can make thee one, who are fray'd i' the knees, and out at elbows, and bald o' the back, and bursten at the toes, and down at heels.

*Nokes.* I was born of a true man and a ring'd wife, and I can't argue upon it; but I and my old woman 'ud burn upon it, that would we.

*Marshalman.* What are you cackling of bastardy under the Queen's own nose? I'll have you flogg'd and burnt too, by the Rood I will.

*1 Cit.* He swears by the Rood. Whew!

*2 Cit.* Hark! the trumpets.  
[*The procession passes, Mary and Elizabeth riding side by side, and disappears under the gate.*]

*Citizens.* Long live Queen Mary! down with all traitors! God save Her Grace; and death to Northumberland!

[*Exeunt.*]

*Manent* Two Gentlemen.

*1 Gent.* By God's light a noble creature, right royal.

*2 Gent.* She looks comelier than ordinary to-day; but to my mind the Lady Elizabeth is the more noble and royal.

*1 Gent.* I mean the lady Elizabeth. Did you hear (I have a daughter in her service who reported it) that she met the Queen at Wanstead with five hundred horse, and the Queen (tho' some say they be much divided) took her hand, call'd her sweet sister, and kiss'd not her alone, but all the ladies of her following.

*2 Gent.* Ay, that was in her hour of joy, there will be plenty to sunder and unsister them again; this Gardiner for one, who is to be made Lord Chancellor, and will pounce like a wild beast out of his cage to worry Cranmer.

*1 Gent.* And furthermore, my daughter said that when there rose a talk of the late rebellion, she spoke even of Northumberland pitifully, and of the good Lady Jane as a poor innocent child who had but obeyed her father; and furthermore, she said that no one in her time should be burnt for heresy.

*2 Gent.* Well, sir, I look for happy times.

*1 Gent.* There is but one thing against them. I know not if you know.

*2 Gent.* I suppose you touch upon the rumor that Charles, the master of the world, has offer'd her his son Phil-

ip, the Pope and the Devil. I trust it is but a rumor.

*1 Gent.* She is going now to the Tower to loose the prisoners there, and among them Courtenay, to be made Earl of Devon, of royal blood, of splendid feature, whom the council and all her people wish her to marry. May it be so, for we are many of us Catholics, but few Papists, and the Hot Gospel lers will go mad upon it.

*2 Gent.* Was she not betroth'd in her babyhood to the Great Emperor himself.

*1 Gent.* Ay but he's too old.

*2 Gent.* And again to her cousin Reginald Pole, now Cardinal, but I hear that he too is full of aches and broken before his day.

*1 Gent.* O, the Pope could dispense with his Cardinalate, and his achage, and his breakage, if that were all: but will you not follow the procession?

*2 Gent.* No; I have seen enough for this day.

*1 Gent.* Well. I shall follow; if I can get near enough I shall judge with my own eyes whether Her Grace incline to this splendid scion of Plantagenet.

[*Exeunt.*]  
SCENE II.—*A room in Lambeth Palace.*  
*Cran.* To Strasburg, Antwerp, Frankfort, Zurich, Worms, Geneva, Basle—our Bishops from their sees

Or fled, they say, or flying—Poinet, Barlow,

Bale, Scory, Coverdale; besides the Deans [Wells— Of Christchurh, Durham, Exeter and Ailmer and Bullingham, and hundreds more;

So they report: I shall be left alone. No; Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not fly.

*Enter Peter Martyr.*

*Mart.* Fly Cranmer! were there nothing else, your name

Stands first of those who signed the Letters Patent [Jane.

That gave her royal crown to Lady Cran. Stand first it may, but it was written last: [cil, sign'd

Those that are now her Privy Council. Before me: nay, the judges had pronounced

That our young Edward might bequeath the crown [will.

Of England, putting by his father's Yet I stood out, till Edward sent for me. [eyes

The wan boy-king, with his fast-fading Fixt hard on mine, his frail, transparent hand, [gripping mine,

Damp with the sweat of death, and Whisper'd me, if I loved him not to yield [wolf

His Church of England to the Papal And Mary; then I could no more—I sign'd.

Nay, for bare shame of inconsistency,  
She cannot pass her traitor council by,  
To make me headless.

*Mart.* That might be forgiven.  
I tell you, fly, my Lord. You do not  
own

The bodily presence in the Eucharist.  
Their wafer and perpetual sacrifice—  
Your creed will be your death.

*Cran.* Step after step,  
Thro' many voices crying right and  
left,

Have I climb'd back into the primal  
And stand within the porch, and Christ  
with me:

My flight were such a scandal to the  
The downfall of so many simple souls,  
I dare not leave my post.

*Mart.* But you divorced  
Queen Catharine and her father; hence,  
her hate

Will burn till you are burn'd.  
*Cran.* I cannot help it.  
The Canonists and Schoolmen were  
with me.

"Thou shalt not wed thy brother's  
wife."—'Tis written,  
"They shall be childless." True, Mary  
was born,

But France would not accept her for  
As being born from incest; and this  
wrought

Upon the king; and child by child,  
Were momentary sparkles out as  
quick

Almost as kindled; and he brought  
And fears to me. Peter, I'll swear for  
him

He *did* believe the bond incestuous.  
But wherefore am I trenching on the  
time

That should already have seen your  
From me and Lambeth? God be with  
you! Go

*Mart.* Ah, but how fierce a letter  
you wrote against

Their superstition when they slander'd  
For setting up a mass at Canterbury.  
To please the Queen.

*Cran.* It was a wheedling monk  
Set up the mass.

*Mart.* I know it, my good Lord.  
But you so bubbled over with hot  
terms

Of Satan, liars, blasphemy, Antichrist,  
She never will forgive you. Fly my  
Lord, fly!

*Cran.* I wrote it, and God grant me  
*Mart.* They have given me a safe  
conduct: for all that

I dare not stay, I fear, I fear, I see you,  
Dear friend, for the last time; fare-  
well, and fly.

*Cran.* Fly and farewell, and let me  
die the death. [*Ex.* Peter Martyr.

*Enter* Old Servant.  
*O. Serv.* O, kind and gentle master,  
the Queen's Officers

Are here in force to take you to the  
Tower.

*Cran.* Ay, gentle friend, admit  
them. I will go.  
I thank my God it is too late to fly.

[*Exeunt.*  
SCENE III.—St. Paul's Cross.  
Father Bourne in the Pulpit. A crowd,  
Marchioness of Exeter, Courtenay,  
The Sieur de Noailles and his man  
Roger in front of the stage. *Hubbub.*  
*Noail.* Hast thou let fall those pa-  
pers in the palace?

*Rog.* Ay, sir.  
*Noail.* "There will be no peace for  
Mary till Elizabeth lose her head."

*Rog.* Ay, sir.  
*Noail.* And the other. "Long live  
Elizabeth the Queen."

*Rog.* Ay, sir; she needs must tread  
upon them—  
*Noail.* Well.

These beastly swine make such a  
grunting here,

I cannot catch what father Bourne is  
*Rog.* Quiet a moment, my masters;  
hear what the shaveling has to say  
for himself.

*Crowd.* Hush—hear.  
*Bourne.*—and so this unhappy land,  
long divided in itself, and sever'd from  
the faith, will return into the one true  
fold, seeing that our gracious Virgin  
Queen hath—

*Crowd.* No pope! no pope!  
*Rog.* (*to those about him, mimicking*  
*Bourne.*)—hath sent for the holy  
legate of the holy father the Pope,  
Cardinal Pole, to give us all that holy  
absolution which—

1 *Cit.* Old Bourne to the life!  
4 *Cit.* Holy absolution! holy In-  
quisition!

3 *Cit.* Down with the Papist.  
[*Hubbub.*

*Bourne.*—and now that your good  
bishop, Bonner, who hath lain so long  
under bonds for the faith—

*Noail.* Friend Roger, steal thou in  
among the crowd,  
And get the swine to shout Elizabeth.  
You gray old Gospeller, sour as mid-  
winter,

Begin with him.  
*Rog.* (*goes.*) By the mass, old friend,  
we'll have no pope here while the Lady  
Elizabeth lives.

*Gospeller.* Art thou of the true faith  
fellow, that swearest by the mass?

*Rog.* Ay, that am I, new converted,  
but the old leaven sticks to my tongue  
yet.

1 *Cit.* He says right; by the mass  
we'll have no mass here.

*Voices of the Crowd.* Peace! hear  
him; let his own words damn the  
Papist. From thine own mouth I  
judge thee—tear him down.

*Bourne.*—and since our Gracious  
Queen, let me call her our second Vir-  
gin Mary, hath begun, to re-edify the  
true temple—

1 *Cit.* Virgin Mary! we'll have no virgins here—we'll have the Lady Elizabeth!

[*Swords are drawn, a knife is hurled, and sticks in the pulpit. The mob throng to the pulpit stairs.*]

*M. of Ex.* Son Courtenay, wilt thou see the holy father Murder'd before thy face? up, son, and save him!

They love thee, and thou canst not come to harm.

*Court.* (*in the pulpit.*) Shame, shame, my masters! are you English-born, and set yourselves by hundreds against one?

*Crowd.* A Courtenay! a Courtenay! [*A train of Spanish servants crosses at the back of the stage.*]

*Noail.* These birds of passage come before their time: [there]

Stave off the crowd upon the Spaniard *Rog.* My masters, yonder's fatter game for you [you there—

Than this old gaping gurgoyle: look The Prince of Spain coming to wed our Queen? [the city]

After him, boys! and pelt him from [*They seize stones and follow the Spaniards. Exeunt on the other side Marchioness of Exeter and Attendants.*]

*Noail* (*to Rog.*) Stand from me. If Elizabeth lose her head—

That makes for France. And if her people, anger'd thereupon, Arise against her and dethrone the Queen—

That makes for France. And if I breed confusion anyway— That makes for France.

Good day, my Lord of Devon; A bold heart yours to beard that raging mob!

*Court.* My mother said, Go up; and up I went. [wrong.]

I knew they would not do me any For I am mighty popular with them, Noailles.

*Noail.* You look'd a king. *Court.* Why not? I am king's blood.

*Noail.* And in the world of change may come to be one.

*Court.* Ah!

*Noail.* But does your gracious Queen entreat you king-like?

*Court.* 'Fore God, I think she entertains me like a child.

*Noail.* You've but a dull life in this maiden court,

I fear, my Lord. *Court.* A life of nods and yawns.

*Noail.* So you would honor my poor house to-night.

We might enliven you. Divers honest fellows,

The Duke of Suffolk lately freed from prison,

Sir Peter Carew and Sir Thomas Wyatt,

Sir Thomas Stafford, and some more—we play.

*Court.* At what? *Noail.* The Game of Chess.

*Court.* The Game of Chess! I can play well, and I shall beat you there.

*Noail.* Ay, but we play with Henry, King of France, And certain of his court.

His Highness makes his moves across the channel, [are messengers] We answer him with ours, and there That go between us.

*Court.* Why, such a game, sir, were whole years a playing.

*Noail.* Nay; not so long I trust. That all depends [players.]

Upon the skill and swiftness of the *Court.* The King is skilful at it?

*Noail.* Very, my Lord. *Court.* And the stakes high?

*Noail.* But not beyond your means. *Court.* Well, I'm the first of players.

I shall win. [company.] *Noail.* With our advice and in our

And so you well attend to the king's I think you may. [moves,]

*Court.* When do you meet? *Noail.* To-night.

*Court.* (*aside.*) I will be there; the fellow's at his tricks—

Deep—I shall fathom him. (*Aloud.*) Good morning, Noailles.

[*Exit* Courtenay. *Noail.* Good-day, my Lord. Strange

game of chess! a King That with her own pawns plays against

a Queen, [King] Whose play is all to find herself a

Ay; but this fine blue-blooded Court-enay seems [Knight,

Too princely for a pawn. Call him a That, with an ass's not a horse's head,

Skips every way, from levity or from fear.

Well, we shall use him somehow, so that Gardner [game]

And Simon Renard spy not out our Too early. Roger, thinkest thou that

any one Suspected thee to be my man?

*Rog.* Not one, sir. *Noail.* No! the disguise was perfect. Let's away! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—London. *A Room in the Palace.* Elizabeth. *Enter* Court-enay.

*Court.* So yet am I, [me,]

Unless my friends and mirrors lie to A goodlier-looking fellow than this

Philip. [traitor?]

Pah! The Queen is ill advised; shall I turn

They've almost talk'd me into; yet the word

Affrights me somewhat; to be such a one,

As Harry Bolingbroke hath a lure in it.

Good now, my Lady Queen, tho' by your age,  
And by your looks you are not worth the having,  
Yet by your crown you are.

[Seeing Elizabeth.  
The Princess there?

If I tried her and la—she's amorous.  
Have we not heard of her in Edward's time, [Lord Admiral?

Her freaks and frolics with the late I do believe she'd yield. I should be still [knows—

a party in the state; and then, who *Eliz.* What are you musing on, my Lord of Devon?

*Court.* Has not the Queen—  
*Eliz.* Done what, Sir?

*Court.* —Made you follow  
The Lady Suffolk and the Lady Len-  
You. [no.

The heir presumptive. [it.  
*Eliz.* Why do you ask? you know

*Court.* You needs must bear it hard-  
ly.

*Eliz.* No, indeed!  
I am utterly submissive to the Queen.

*Court.* Well, I was musing upon  
that; the Queen [be friends-  
Is both my foe and yours; we should

*Eliz.* My Lord, the hatred of another to us  
Is no true bond of friendship.

*Court.* Might it not  
Be the rough preface of some closer  
bond?

*Eliz.* My Lord, you late were loosed  
from out the Tower,  
Where, like a butterfly in a chrysalis,  
You spent your life; that broken, out  
you flutter [would settle

Thro' the new world, go zigzag, now  
Upon this flower, now that; but all  
things here [ed

At court are known; you have solicited  
The Queen, and been rejected.

*Court.* Flower, she!  
Half faded! but you, cousin, are fresh  
and sweet [tried.

As the first flower no bee has ever  
*Eliz.* Are you the bee to try me?  
why, but now

I called you butterfly.  
*Court.* You did me wrong,  
I love not to be called a butterfly:  
Why do you call me butterfly?

*Eliz.* Why do you go so gay then?  
*Court.* Velvet and gold.  
This dress was made me as the Earl of  
Devon

To take my seat in: looks it not  
right royal?

*Eliz.* So royal that the Queen for-  
bade your wearing it.

*Court.* I wear it then to spite her.  
*Eliz.* My Lord, my Lord;  
I see you in the Tower again. Her  
majesty

Hears you affect the Prince—prelates  
kneel to you.—

*Court.* I am the noblest blood in  
Europe, Madam.  
A Courtenay of Devon, and her coun-  
in.

*Eliz.* She hears you make you  
boasts that after all

She means to wed you. Folly, my good  
Lord. [the state

*Court.* How folly? a great party in  
wills me to wed her.  
*Eliz.* Failing her, my Lord,  
Doth not as great a party in the state  
Will you to wed me?

*Court.* Even so, fair lady.  
*Eliz.* You know to flatter ladies.  
*Court.* Nay, I meant

True matters of the heart.  
*Eliz.* My heart, my Lord,  
Is no great party in the state as yet.

*Court.* Great, said you? nay, you  
shall be great. I love you.  
Lay my life in your hands. Can you  
be close?

*Eliz.* Can you, my Lord?  
*Court.* Close as a miser's casket.  
Listen: [bassador,

The King of France, Noailles the Am-  
The Duke of Suffolk and Sir Peter  
Carew, [others,

Sir Thomas Wyatt, I myself, some  
Have sworn this Spanish marriage  
shall not be. [secture—

If Mary will not hear us—well—con-  
Were I in Devon with my wedded  
bride, [ear;

The people there so worship me—Your  
You shall be Queen.  
*Eliz.* You speak too low, my Lord;  
I cannot hear you.

*Court.* I'll repeat it.  
*Eliz.* No!  
Stand farther off, or you may lose your  
head. [sweet sake.

*Court.* I have a head to lose for you  
*Eliz.* Have you, my Lord? Best  
keep it for your own.

Nay, pout not, cousin. [indeed  
Not many friends are mine, except  
Among the many. I believe you mine; [well,

And so you may continue mine, far-  
And that at once.

*Enter Mary behind.*  
*Mary.* Whispering—leagued  
together

To bar me from my Philip.  
*Court.* Pray—consider—  
*Eliz.* (seeing the Queen). Well,  
that's a noble horse of yours, my  
Lord. [day,

I trust that he will carry you well to-  
And heal your headache.  
*Court.* You are wild; what  
headache?

Heartache, perchance; not headache.  
*Eliz.* (aside to Courtenay). Are  
you blind?

[Courtenay sees the Queen and exit.  
*Exit Mary.*  
*Enter Lord William Howard.*

*How.* Was that my Lord of Devon?  
do not you [Devon.  
Be seen in corners with my Lord of  
He hath fallen out of favor with the  
Queen. [and him

She fears the Lords may side with you  
Against her marriage; therefore is  
he dangerous, [come  
And if this Prince of fluff and feather  
To woo you, niece, he is dangerous  
every way.

*Eliz.* Not very dangerous that way,  
my good uncle. [danger here.

*How.* But your state is full of  
The disaffected, heretics, reformers,  
Look to you as the one to crown their  
ends. [you;

Mix not yourself with any plot I pray  
Nay, if by chance you hear of any  
such, [

Speak not thereof—no, not to your  
best friend, [it. Still—  
Lest you should be confounded with  
Perinde ac cadaver—as the priest says,  
[dead body.

You know your Latin—quiet as a  
What was my Lord of Devon telling  
you? [for not,

*Eliz.* Whether he told me any thing  
I follow your good counsel, gracious  
uncle.

Quiet as a dead body.

*How.* You do right well.  
I do not care to know; but this I  
charge you. [Chancellor

Tell Courtenay nothing. The Lord  
(I count it as a kind of virtue in him,  
He hath not many), as a mastiff dog  
May love a puppy cur for no more  
reason [up together,

Than that the twain have been tied  
Thus Gardiner—for the two were fel-  
low-prisoners

So many years in you accursed Tower—  
[to it, niece,

Hath taken to this Courtenay. Look  
He hath no fence when Gardiner ques-  
tions him; [know him

All oozes out; yet him—because they  
The last White Rose, the last Planta-  
genet [people

(Nay, there is Cardinal Pole, too), the  
Claim as their natural leader—ay, some  
say, [King belike.

That you shall marry him, make him  
*Eliz.* Do they say so, good uncle?

*How.* Ay, good niece!  
You should be plain and open with me,  
niece.

You should not play upon me.

*Eliz.* No, good uncle.

*Enter Gard.* The Queen would see  
your Grace upon the moment.

*Eliz.* Why, my lord Bishop?

*Gard.* I think she means to counsel  
your withdrawing [house,  
To Ashridge, or some other country

*Eliz.* Why, my lord Bishop?

*Gard.* I do but bring the message,  
know no more.

Your Grace will hear her reasons from  
herself. [before the word

*Eliz.* 'Tis mine own wish fulfill'd  
Was spoken, for in truth I had meant  
to crave,

Permission of her Highness to retire  
To Ashridge, and pursue my studies  
there. [before the word

*Gard.* Madam, to have the wish  
Is man's good Fairy—and the Queen is  
yours.

I left her with rich jewels in her hand,  
Whereof 'tis like enough she means to  
make

A farewell present to your Grace.

*Eliz.* My Lord,  
I have the jewel of a loyal heart.

*Gard.* I doubt it not, Madam, most  
loyal. [Bows low and exit.

*How.* See,

This comes of parleying with my Lord  
of Devon. [self

Well, well, you must obey; and I my-  
Believe it will be better for your wel-  
Your time will come. [fare.

*Eliz.* I think my time will come.  
Uncle,

I am of sovereign nature, that I know,  
Not to be quell'd; and I have felt  
within me. [God's just hour

Stirrings of some great doom when  
Peals—but this fierce old Gardiner—  
his big baldness,

That irritable forelock which he rubs,  
His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd  
Half fright me. [eyes

*How.* You've a bold heart; keep it  
so. [turn traitor!

He cannot touch you save that you  
And so take heed I pray you—you are  
one [you, niece,

Who love that men should smile upon  
They'd smile you into treason—some of  
them. [smiling sea.

*Eliz.* I spy the rock beneath the  
But if this Phillip, the proud Catholic  
prince, [hates me, seek

And this bald priest, and she that  
In that lone house, to practise on my  
By poison, fire, shot, stab— [life,

*How.* They will not, niece.  
Mine is the fleet and all the power at  
sea—

Or will be in a moment. If they dared  
To harm you, I would blow this Phillip  
and all [devil.

Your trouble to the dogstar and the  
*Eliz.* To the Pleiads, uncle; they  
have lost a sister.

*How.* But why say that? what have  
you done to lose her? [Queen.

Come, come, I will go with you to the  
[Exeunt.

SCENE V.—A Room in the Palace. Mary  
with Phillip's miniature. Alice,  
Mary (Kissing the miniature). Most

goodly, kinglike, and an emperor's  
son,—

A king to be,—is he not noble, girl?

*Alice.* Goodly enough, your Grace,  
and yet, methinks,  
I have seen goodlier.

*Mary.* Ay; some waxen doll  
Thy baby eyes have rested on, belkic;  
All red and white, the fashion of our  
land. [her soul]  
But my good mother came (God rest  
Of Spain, and I am Spanish in myself,  
And in my likings.

*Alice.* By your Grace's leave  
Your royal mother came of Spain, but  
took [royal father  
To the English red and white. Your  
(For so they say) was all pure lily and  
In his youth, and like a lady. [rose

*Mary.* O, just God!  
Sweet mother, you had time and cause  
enough

To sicken of his lilies and his roses.  
Cast off, betray'd, defamed, divorced,  
forlorn! [forgiveness,

And then the king—that traitor past  
The false archbishop fawning on him,  
married

The mother of Elizabeth—a heretic  
Ev'n as she is; but God hath sent me  
here

To take such order with all heretics  
That it shall be, before I die, as tho'  
My father and my brother had not  
lived. [Jane,

What wast thou saying of this Lady  
Now in the Tower?

*Alice.* Why, Madam, she was pass-  
ing [her.  
Some chapel down in Essex, and with  
Lady Anne Wharton, and the Lady  
Anne [stood up

Bow'd to the Pyx; but Lady Jane  
Stiff as the very backbone of heresy.  
And wherefore bow ye not, says Lady  
Anne [and Earth?

To him within there who made Heaven  
I can not, and I dare not, tell your  
What Lady Jane replied. [Grace

*Mary.* But I will have it.  
*Alice.* She said—pray pardon me,  
and pity her—

She hath harken'd evil counsel—ah!  
The baker made him. [she said,

*Mary.* Monstrous! blasphemous!  
She ought to burn. Hence, thou [exit

*Alice.* No—being traitor [a child  
Her head will fall: shall it? she is but  
We do not kill the child for doing that  
His father whipt him into doing—a  
head [that mine

So full of grace and beauty! would  
Were half as gracious! O, My lord to  
be,

My love, for thy sake only.  
I am eleven years older than he is.  
But will he care for that?

No, by the holy Virgin, being noble,  
But love me only: then the bastard  
sprout,

My siste', is far fairer than myself.  
Will he be drawn to her?

No, being of the true faith with myself.

Paget is for him—for to wed with  
Spain [against him;

Would treble England—Gardiner is  
The Council, people, Parliament  
against him; [hated me;

But I will have him! My hard father  
My brother rather hated me than  
loved; [Virgin,

My sister cowers and hates me. Holy  
Plead with thy blessed Son; grant me  
my prayer; [lead

Give me my Philip; and we two will  
The living waters of the Faith again  
Back thro' their widow'd channel  
here, and watch [of old,

The parch'd banks rolling incense, as  
To heaven, and kindled with the palms  
of Christ!

*Enter Usher.*

Who waits, sir? [lor.

*Usher.* Madam, the Lord Chancel-  
*Mary.* Bid him come in [Enter

Gardiner.] Good-morning, my  
good Lord. [Exit Usher.

*Gard.* That every morning of your  
Majesty

May be most good, is every morning's  
prayer [Gardiner.

Of your most loyal subject, Stephen  
*Mary.* Come you to tell me this,  
my Lord?

*Gard.* And more.  
Your people have begun to learn your  
debt.

Your pious wish to pay King Edward's  
Your lavish household curb'd, and  
the remission [people,

Of half that subsidy levied on the  
Make all tongues praise and all hearts  
beat for you.

I'd have you yet more loved: the  
realm is poor, [withdraw  
The exchequer at neap-ebb: we might  
Part of our garrison at Calais.

*Mary.* Calais!  
Our one point on the main, the gate of  
France!

I am Queen of England; take mine  
eyes, mine heart,  
But do not lose me Calais.

*Gard.* Do not fear it.  
Of that hereafter. I say your Grace  
is loved. [your friend

That I may keep you thus, who am  
And ever faithful counsellor, might I  
speak?

*Mary.* I can forespeak your speak-  
ing. Would I marry

Prince Philip, if all England hate him?  
That is [another:

Your question, and I front it with  
Is it England, or a party? Now, your  
answer [my dress

*Gard.* My answer is, I wear beneath  
A shirt of mail: my house hath been  
assaulted, [laee,

And when I walk abroad, the popu-  
With fingers pointed like so many dag-  
gers, [Philip;

Stab me in fancy, hissing Spain and

And when I sleep, a hundred men-at-arms  
Guard my poor dreams for England.  
Men would murder me,  
Because they think me favorer of this marriage.

*Mary.* And that were hard upon you, my Lord Chancellor. [*von—*  
*Gard.* But our young Earl of De-  
*Mary.* Earl of Devon?  
I freed him from the tower, placed him at Court; [*fool—*

I made him Earl of Devon, and—the He wrecks his health and wealth on courtesans, [*dog.*  
And rolls himself in carrion like a  
*Card.* More like a school-boy that hath broken bounds,  
Sickening himself with sweets.

*Mary.* I will not hear of him. Good, then, they will revolt; but I And shall control them. [*am Tudor,*

*Gard.* I will help you, Madam, Even to the utmost. All the church is grateful. [*pulpited*  
You have ousted the mock priest, re-The shepherd of St. Peter, raised the rood again,

And brought us back the mass. I am all thanks [*well,*  
To God and to your Grace; yet I know Your people, and I go with them so far, [*here to play*  
Will brook nor Pope nor Spaniard The tyrant, or in commonwealth or church.

*Mary* (*showing the picture*). Is this the face of one who plays the tyrant? [*gentle?*

Peruse it; it is not goodly, ay, and  
*Gard.* Madam, methinks a cold face and a haughty.

And when your Highness talks of Courtenay— [*life*  
Ay, true—a goodly one. I would his Were half as goodly (*aside*).

*Mary.* What is that you mutter?  
*Gard.* Oh, Madam, take it bluntly; marry Philip.

And be stepmother of a score of sons! The prince is known in Spain, in Flanders, ha!

For Philip—  
*Mary.* You offend us; you may leave us.

You see thro' warping glasses.  
*Gard.* If your Majesty—  
*Mary.* I have sworn upon the body and blood of Christ  
I'll none but Philip.

*Gard.* Hath your Grace so sworn?  
*Mary.* Ay, Simon Renard knows it.  
*Gard.* News to me!

It then remains for your poor Gardiner, [*what less*  
So you still care to trust him some-Than Simon Renard, to compose the event

In some such form as least may harm your Grace.

*Mary.* I'll have the scandal sound-  
ed to the mud.  
I know it a scandal.

*Gard.* All my hope is now  
It may be found a scandal.

*Mary.* You offend us.  
*Gard.* (*aside*). These princes are like children, must be physick'd. The bitter in the sweet. I have lost mine office, [*fool.*  
It may be, thro' mine honesty, like a [*Exit.*

*Enter Usher.*

*Mary.* Who waits?

*Usher.* The Ambassador from France, your Grace.

*Mary.* Bid him come in. Good morning, Sir de Noailles.

[*Exit Usher.*

*Noail* (*entering*). A happy morning to your majesty.

*Mary.* And I should some time have a happy morning;

I have had none yet. What says the King your master?

*Noail.* Madam, my master hears with much alarm, [*Spain—*

That you may marry Philip, Prince of Foreseeing, with whate'er unwillingness,

That if this Philip be the titular king Of England, and at war with him, your Grace [*war,*

And kingdom will be suck'd into the Ay, tho' you long for peace; wherefore, my master, [*will,*

If but to prove your Majesty's good Would fain have some fresh treaty drawn between you.

*Mary.* Why some fresh treaty? wherefore should I do it?

Sir, if we marry, we shall still maintain

All former treaties with his Majes.y. Our royal word for that! and your good master, [*break them,*

Pray God he do not be the first to Must be content with that; and so, farewell.

*Noail.* (*going, returns*). I would your answer had been other, Madam, For I foresee dark days.

*Mary.* And so do I, sir; Your master works against me in the dark.

I do believe he help Northumberland Against me. [*Grace.*

*Noail.* Nay, pure fantasy, your Why should he move against you?

*Mary.* Will you hear why? Mary of Scotland,—for I have not own'd

My sister, and I will not,—after me Is heir of England; and my royal father, [*with ours,*

To make the crown of Scotland one Had mark'd her for my brother Edward's bride; [*from Scotland*

Ay, but your king stole her a babe

In order to betroth her to your Dauphin.

See then: [Dauphin, Mary of Scotland, married to your Would make our England, France; Mary of England, joining hands with Spain,

Would be too strong for France. Yea, were there issue born to her, Spain and we,

The crown, might rule the world. There lies your fear.

That is your drift. You play at hide and seek.

Show me your faces!

Noail. Madam, I am amazed: French, I must needs wish all good things for France. [protest

That must be pardon'd me; but I Your Grace's policy hath a farther flight

Than mine into the future. We but Some settled ground for peace to stand upon.

Mary. Well, we will leave all this, sir, to our council.

Have you seen Philip ever?

Noail. Only once.

Mary. Is this like Philip?

Noail. Ay, but nobler-looking.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of the Emperor?

Noail. No, surely [thee,

Mary. I can make allowance for Thou speakest of the enemy of thy king.

Noail. Make no allowance for the He is every way a lesser man than Charles;

Stone-hard, ice-cold—no dash of dar- Mary. If cold, his life is pure.

Noail. Why (smiling), no, indeed.

Mary. Sayst thou? [(smiling).

Noail. A very wanton life indeed

Mary. Your audience is concluded, sir. [Exit Noailles.

You cannot Learn a man's nature from his natural foe.

Enter Usher.

Who waits?

Usher. The ambassador of Spain, your Grace. [Exit.

Enter Simon Renard.

Mary. Thou art ever welcome, Simon Renard. Hast thou Brought me the letter which thine Emperor promised

Long since, a formal offer of the hand Of Philip? [reach'd me.

Ren. Nay, your Grace, it hath not I know not wherefore—some mischance of flood,

And broken bridge, or spavin'd horse, or wave [have written.

And wind at their old battle; he must

Mary. But Philip never writes me one poor word. [wealth.

Which in his absence had been all my

Strange in a wooer!

Ren. Yet I know the Prince, So your king-parliament suffer him to land,

Yeans to set foot upon your island

Mary. God change the pebble which his kingly foot [stone

First presses into some more costly Than ever blinded eye. I'll have one mark it [firelike;

And bring it me. I'll have it burnish'd I'll set it round with gold, with pearl, with diamond.

Let the great angel of the church come with him;

Stand on the deck and spread his wings for sail!

God lay the waves and strew the storms at sea, [O Renard,

And here at land among the people. I am much beset, I am almost in despair

Paget is ours. Gardiner perchance is But for our heretic Parliament—

Ren. O Madam, You fly your thoughts like kites. My Master, Charles, [here,

Bade you go softly with your heretics Until your throne had ceased to tremble. Then [Besides,

Spit them like larks for aught I care. When Henry broke the carcass of your church [among you

To pieces, there were many wolves Who dragg'd the scatter'd limbs into their den. [render these;

The Pope would have you make them So would your cousin, Cardinal Pole; ill counsel! [not yet

These let them keep at present; stir This matter of the church lands. At his coming

Your star will rise.

Mary. My star! a baleful one. I see but the black night, and hear the wolf.

What star?

Ren. Your star will be your princely son, [lands!

Heir of this England and the Nether- And if your wolf the while should howl for more. [gold.

We'll dust him from a bag of Spanish I do believe, I have dusted some already, [ours.

That, soon or late, your parliament is

Mary. Why do they talk so foully of your Prince,

Renard?

Ren. The lot of princes. To sit Is to be lied about. [high

Mary. They call him cold, Haughty, ay, worse.

Ren. Why, doubtless, Philip shows Some of the bearing of your blue blood—still

All within measure—nay, it well becomes him.

Mary. Hath he the large ability of his father?

*Ren.* Nay, some believe that he will go beyond him.

*Mary.* Is this like him?

*Ren.* Ay, somewhat; but your Phillip <sup>[the sun]</sup> Is the most princelike Prince beneath This is a daub to Phillip.

*Mary.* Of a pure life? <sup>[all follie]</sup>

*Ren.* As an angel among angels. Yea, by Heaven, <sup>["Whosoever The text—Your Highness knows it, Looketh after a woman," would not graze</sup> <sup>[in him there.]</sup>

The Prince of Spain. You are happy Chaste as your grace!

*Mary.* I am happy in him there.

*Ren.* And would be altogether happy, madam, <sup>[closer.]</sup> So that your sister were but look'd to You have sent her from the court, but then she goes,

I warrant, not to hear the nightingales, But hatch you some new treason in the woods.

*Mary.* We have our spies abroad to catch her tripping,

And then if caught, to the Tower.

*Ren.* The Tower! the block. The word has turn'd your Highness pale; the thing <sup>[er's time.]</sup>

Was no such scarecrow in your father I have heard, the tongue yet quiver'd with the jest

When the head leapt—so common! I do think

To save your crown that it must come to this. <sup>[people love her.]</sup>

*Mary.* I love her not, but all the And would not have her even to the Tower.

*Ren.* Not yet; but your old Traitors of the Tower—

Why, when you put Northumberland to death, <sup>[them all.]</sup>

The sentence having passed upon Spared you the Duke of Suffolk, Guilford Dudley,

Ev'n that young girl who dared to wear your crown?

*Mary.* Dared, no, not that; the child obey'd her father

Spite of her tears her father forced it on her.

*Ren.* Good Madam, when the Roman wish'd to reign,

He slew not him alone who wore the purple,

But his assessor in the throne, perchance

A child more innocent than Lady Jane. <sup>[Roman Emperor.]</sup>

*Mary.* I am English Queen, not *Ren.* Yet too much mercy is a want of mercy, <sup>[fire, or this]</sup>

And wastes more life. Stamp out the Will smoulder and re-flame, and burn the throne <sup>[will not come]</sup>

Where you should sit with Phillip: he Till she be gone.

*Mary.* Indeed, if that were true—

But I must say farewell. I am some what faint <sup>[not Queen]</sup>

With our long talk. Tho' Queen, I am Of mine own heart, which every now and then <sup>golden chain—</sup>

Beats me half dead: yet stay, this My father on a birthday gave it me,

And I have broken with my father—take

And wear it as memorial of a morning Which found me full of foolish doubts, and leaves me

As hopeful. <sup>[all follie]</sup>

*Ren.* *(aside.)* Whew—the folly of Is to be love-sick for a shadow.

*(Aloud)* Madam, <sup>[with gold.]</sup> This chains me to your service, not But dearest links of love. Farewell, and trust me,

Philip is yours. <sup>[Exit.]</sup>

*Mary.* Mine—but not yet all mine.

*Enter Usher.*

*Usher.* Your Council is in Session, please your Majesty.

*Mary.* Sir, let them sit. I must have time to breathe.

No, say I come. *(Exit Usher.)* I won by boldness once.

The Emperor counsell'd me to fly to Flanders. <sup>[rode.]</sup>

I would not; but a hundred miles I Sent out my letters, call'd my friends together,

Struck home and won.

And when the Council would not crown me—thought <sup>[keep.]</sup>

To bind me first by oaths I could not And keep with Christ and conscience was it boldness.

Or weakness that won there? when I their Queen, <sup>[fore them.]</sup>

Cast myself down upon my knees be- And those hard men brake into woman tears, <sup>[that passion]</sup>

Ev'n Gardiner, all amazed, and in Gave me my Crown.

*Enter Alice.*

Girl; hast thou ever heard Slanders against Prince I hilip in our Court? <sup>[Grace; no, never.]</sup>

*Alice.* What slanders? I, your *Mary.* Nothing?

*Alice.* Never, your Grace.

*Mary.* See that you neither hear them nor repeat!

*Alice* *(aside.)* Good Lord! but I have heard a thousand such.

Ay, and repeated them as often—mum! <sup>[again?]</sup>

Why comes that old fox-Fleming back

*Enter Renard.*

*Ren.* Madam, I scarce had left your Grace's presence

Before I chanced upon the messenger Who brings that letter which we waited for— <sup>[hand.]</sup>

The formal offer of Prince Phillip's

It craves an instant answer, Ay or No?  
[Council sits.]

Mary. An instant, Ay or No! the Give it me quick.

Alice *(stepping before her)*. Your Highness is all trembling.

Mary. Make way.  
*(Exit into the Council Chamber.)*

Alice. O, Master Renard, Master Renard.

If you have falsely painted your fine Praised, where you should have blamed him, I pray God.

No woman ever loved you, Master Renard.

It breaks my heart to hear her moan As tho' the nightmare never left her bed.

Ren. My pretty maiden, tell me, did Sigh for a beard?

Alice. That's not a pretty question.

Ren. Not prettily put? I mean, my pretty maiden,

A pretty man for such a pretty maiden.

Alice. My Lord of Devon is a pretty man.

I hate him. Well, but if I have, what Ren. Then, pretty maiden, you should know that whether.

A wind be warm or cold, it serves to A kindled fire.

Alice. According to the song. *His friends would praise him, I believed 'em.*

*His foes would blame him, and I scorned 'em,*

*His friends—as Angels I received 'em,*  
*His foes—The Devil had suborn'd 'em.*

Ren. Peace, pretty maiden. I hear them stirring in the Council Chamber.

Lord Paget's "Ay" is sure—who else? They are all too much at odds to close at once.

In one full throated No! Her Highness.

*Enter Mary.*

Alice. How deathly pale!—a chair, your Highness.

*(Bringing one to the Queen.)*

Ren. Madam, The Council?

Mary. Ay! My Philip is all mine.

*(Sinks into chair, half fainting.)*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Allington Castle.

Sir Thomas Wyatt. I do not hear from Carew or the Duke

Of Suffolk, and till then I should not The Duke hath gone to Leicester;

Carew stirs In Devon: that fine porcelain Courtenay,

Save that he fears he might be crack'd (I have known a semi-madman in my time

So fancy ridd'n) should be in Devon

*Enter William.*

News abroad, William?

Will. None so new, Sir Thomas, and none so old, Sir Thomas.

No new news that Philip comes to wed Mary, no old news that all men hate it.

Old Sir Thomas would have hated it. The bells are ringing at Maidstone.

Doesn't your worship hear?

Wyatt. Ay, for the Saints are come to reign again.

Most like it is a Saint's-day. There's As yet for me; so in this pause, before

The mine be fired, it were a pious work To string my father's sonnets, left

about Like loosely-scatter'd jewels, in fair And head them with a lamer rhyme of

mine, To grace his memory.

Will. Ay, why not, Sir Thomas? He was a fine courtier, he; Queen

Anne loved him. All the women loved him. I loved him, I was in

Spain with him. I couldn't eat in Spain, I couldn't sleep in Spain. I

hate Spain, Sir Thomas.

Wyatt. But thou couldst drink in Spain if I remember.

Will. Sir Thomas, we may grant the wine. Old Sir Thomas always

granted the wine.

Wyatt. Hand me the casket with my father's sonnets.

Will. Ay—sonnets—a fine courtier of the old Court, old Sir Thomas.

*(Exit.)*

Wyatt. Courtier of many courts, he loved the more

His own gray towers, plain life and letter'd peace,

To read and rhyme in solitary fields, The lark above, the nightingale below,

And answer them in song. The Sire begets

Not half his likeness in his son. I fail Where he was fullest: yet—to write it

down. *(He writes.)*

*Re-enter William.*

Will. There is news, there is news, and no call for sonnet-sorting now,

nor for sonnet-making either, but ten thousand men on Penenden Heath

all calling after your worship, and your worship's name heard into Maidstone

market, and your worship to the first man in Kent and Christendom, for the world's up, and your worship a-top of

it.

Wyatt. Inverted Æsop—mountain out of mouse.

Say for ten thousand ten—and pot-Brain-dizzied with a draught of morning ale.

*Enter Antony Knyvett.*

Will. Here's Antony Knyvett.

Kny. Look you, Master Wyatt. Tear up that woman's work there.

Wyatt. No; not these,  
Dumb children of my father, that will  
speak

When I and thou and all rebellious lie  
Dead bodies without voice. Song flies  
For ayes, [you know

Kny. Tut, your sonnet's a flying  
Wing'd for a moment. [ant,

Wyatt. Well, for mine own work  
[tearing the paper],

It lies there in six pieces at your feet;  
For all that I can carry it in my head.

Kny. If you can carry your head  
upon your shoulders.

Wyatt. I fear you come to carry it  
off my shoulders,  
And sonnet-making's safer.

Kny. Why, good Lord,  
Write you as many sonnets as you  
will. [ears, brains?

Ay, but not now; what, have you eyes,  
This Philip and the black-faced  
swarms of Spain, [world,

The hardest, cruellest people in the  
Come locusting upon us, eat us up.

Confiscate lands, goods, money—  
Wyatt, Wyatt, [come

Wake, or the stout old island will be-  
A rotten limb of Spain. They roar

for you [them—more—  
On Penenden Heath, a thousand of

All arm'd waiting a leader; there's  
no glory

Like his who saves his country: and  
you sit [judge,

Sing-songing here; but, if I'm any  
By God, you are as poor a poet, Wyatt,  
As a good soldier.

Wyatt. You as poor a critic  
As an honest friend: you stroke me  
on one cheek, [Anthony!

Buffet the other. Come, you bluster,  
You know I know all this. I must not  
move

Until I hear from Carew and the Duke.  
I fear the mine is fired before the time.

Kny. [showing a paper]. But here's  
some Hebrew. Faith, I half forgot  
it. [strange youth

Look; can you make it English? A  
Suddenly thrust it on me, whisper'd,

"Wyatt," [his back

And whisking round a corner, show'd  
Before I read his face.

Wyatt. Ha! Courtenay's cipher,  
[Reads.

"*Sir Peter Carew fled to France: It  
is thought the Duke will be taken. I  
am with you still; but, for appearance'  
sake, stay with the Queen. Gardiner  
knows, but the Council are all at odds,  
and the Queen hath no force for resist-  
ance. Move, if you move, at once.*"

[taken?  
Is Peter Carew fled? Is the Duke

Down scabbard, and out sword! and  
let Rebellion

Roar till throne rock, and crown fall.  
No; not that; [reign.

But we will teach Queen Mary how to

Who are those that shout below there?  
Kny. Why, some fifty

That follow'd me from Penenden  
Heath in hope

To hear you speak. [Knyvett;  
Wyatt. Open the window,

The mine is fired, and I will speak to  
them.

Men of Kent; England of England:  
you that have kept your old customs  
upright, while all the rest of England  
bow'd theirs to the Norman, the cause  
that hath brought us together is not  
the cause of a county or a shire, but  
of this England, in whose crown our Kent  
is the fairest jewel. Philip shall not  
wed Mary; and ye have called me to  
be your leader. I know Spain. I have  
been there with my father; I have seen  
them in their own land; I have marked  
the haughtiness of their nobles; the  
cruelty of their priests. If this man  
marry our Queen, however the Council  
and the Commons may fence round his  
power with restriction, he will be King,  
King of England, my masters; and the  
Queen, and the laws, and the people, his  
slaves. What? shall we have Spain on  
the throne and in the parliament; Spain  
in the pulpit and on the law-bench;  
Spain in all the great officers of state;  
Spain in our ships, in our forts, in our  
houses, in our beds?

Crowd. No! no! no Spain.

Will. No Spain in our beds—that  
were worse than all. I have been  
there with old Sir Thomas, and the  
beds I know. I hate Spain.

A Peasant. But, Sir Thomas, must  
we levy war against the Queen's  
Grace?

Wyatt. No, my friend; war for the  
Queen's Grace—to save her from her-  
self and Phillip—war against Spain.  
And think not we shall be alone—  
thousands will flock to us. The Coun-  
cil, the Court itself, is on our side.  
The Lord Chancellor himself is on our  
side. The King of France is with us;  
the King of Denmark is with us; the  
world is with us—war against Spain!  
And if we move not now, yet it will be  
known that we have moved; and if  
Phillip come to be King, O, my God!  
the rope, the rack, the thumbscrew,  
the stake, the fire. If we move not  
now, Spain moves, bribes our nobles  
with her gold, and creeps, creeps snake-  
like about our legs till we cannot move  
at all; and ye know, my masters,  
that wherever Spain hath ruled she  
hath wither'd all beneath her. Look  
at the New World—a paradise made  
hell; the red man, that good helpless  
creature, starved, maim'd, flogg'd,  
flay'd, burn'd, boil'd, buried alive,  
worried by dogs; and here, nearer  
home, the Netherlands, Sicily, Naples,  
Lombardy. I say no more—only this,  
their lot is yours. Forward to London

with me! forward to London! If ye love your liberties or your skins, forward to London! [Wyatt! A Wyatt!

*Crowd.* Forward to London! A Wyatt. But first to Rochester, to take the guns [river. From out the vessels lying in the Then on.

*A Peasant.* Ay, but I fear we be too few, Sir Thomas.

*Wyatt.* Not many yet. The world as yet, my friend, [tower Is not half-waked; but every parish Shall clang and clash alarm as we pass, [and fed

And pour along the land, and swoll'n With indraughts and side-currents, in full force

Roll upon London. [Forward!

*Crowd.* A Wyatt! a Wyatt!

*Kny.* Wyatt, shall we proclaim Elizabeth?

*Wyatt.* I'll think upon it, Knyvett. *Kny.* Or Lady Jane?

*Wyatt.* No, poor soul; no. Ay, gray old castle of Allington, green field [chance

Beside the brimming Medway, it may That I shall never look upon you more.

*Kny.* Come, now, you're sonneting again.

*Wyatt.* Not I. I'll have my head set higher in the state; [stake.

Or—if the Lord God will it—on the [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—Guildhall. Sir Thomas White (the Lord Mayor), Lord William Howard, Sir Ralph Bagenhall, Aldermen and Citizens.

*White.* I trust the Queen comes hither with her guards.

*How.* Ay, all in arms. [Several of the citizens move hastily out of the hall.

Why do they hurry out there?

*White.* My Lord, cut out the rotten from your apple, [go.

Your apple eats the better. Let them They go like those old Pharisees in John [cowards, Convicted by their conscience, arrant Or tamperers with that treason out of Kent.

When will her Grace be here?

*How.* In some few minutes. She will address your guilds and companies. [her.

I have striven in vain to raise a man for But help her in this exigency, make Your city loyal, and be the mightiest man

This day in England.

*White.* I am Thomas White. Few things have fall'd to which I set my will.

I do my most and best. *How.* You know that after

The Captain Brett, who went with your train bands [him

To fight with Wyatt, had gone over to With all his men, the Queen in that distress [traitor,

Sent Cornwallis and Hastings to the Possession of her person and the marriage—

Know too what Wyatt said. *White.* He'd sooner be,

While this same marriage question was being argued,

Trusted than trust—the scoundrel—and demanded [Tower.

Possession of her person and the *How.* And four of her poor Council too, my Lord,

As hostages. *White.* I know it. What do and say Your Council at this hour?

*How.* I will trust you. We fling ourselves on you, my Lord.

The Council, [waters; The Parliament as well, are troubled

And yet like waters of the fen they know not [address,

Which way to flow. All hangs on her And upon you, Lord Mayor.

*White.* How look'd the city When now you past it? Quiet?

*How.* Like our Council, Your city is divided. As we past,

Some hail'd, some hiss'd us. There were citizens [and look'd

Stood each before his shut-up booth, As grim and grave as from a funeral.

And here a knot of ruffians all in rags, With execrating execrable eyes,

Glared at the citizen. Here was a young mother, [blown back,

Her face on flame, her red hair all She shrilling "Wyatt," while the boy she held [red as she

Mimick'd and piped her "Wyatt," as In hair and cheek; and almost elbowing her, [death

So close they stood, another, mute as And white as her own milk; her babe in arms [heart

Had felt the faltering of his mother's And look'd as bloodless. Here a pious Catholic, [prayers

Mumbling and mixing up in his scared Heaven and earth's Maries; over his bow'd shoulder [hating beast,

Scowl'd that world-hated and world-A haggard Anabaptist. Many such groups, [Courtenay,

The names of Wyatt, Elizabeth, Nay the Queen's right to reign—fore God, the rogues— [I say

Were freely buzz'd among them. So Your city is divided, and I fear

One scruple, this or that way, of success [now the Queen

Would turn it thither. Wherefore In this low pulse and palsy of the state,

Bade me to tell you that she counts on you

And on myself as her two hands; on  
you, [Lord,  
In your own city, as her right, my  
For you are loyal.

*White.* Am I Thomas White?  
One word before she comes. Eliza-  
beth— [these traitors,  
Her name is much abused among  
Where is she? She is loved by all of  
us. [matter.

I scarce have heart to mingle in this  
If she should be mishandled?

*How.* No; she shall not.  
The Queen had written her word to  
come to court: [letter,

Methought I smelt out Renard in the  
And fearing for her, sent a secret  
missive [or not

Which told her to be sick. Happily  
It found her sick indeed.

*White.* God send her well;  
Here comes her Royal Grace.

*Enter Guards, Mary and Gardiner.*  
*Sir Thomas White leads her to a  
raised seat on the dais.*

*White.* I, the Lord Mayor, and these  
our companies

And guilds of London, gathered here,  
beseech [thanks

Your highness to accept our lowliest  
For your most princely presence; and  
we pray

That we, your true and loyal citizens,  
From your own royal lips, at once may  
know [learn

The wherefore of this coming, and so  
Your royal will, and do it—I, Lord  
Mayor [panies.

Of London, and our Guilds and Com-  
*Mary.* In mine own person am I  
come to you, [know.

To tell you what indeed ye see and  
How traitorously these rebels out of  
[selves and you.

*Kent*  
Have made strong head against our-  
They would not have me wed the  
Prince of Spain; [at first—

That was their pretext—so they spake  
But we sent divers of our Council to  
them. [ask'd,

And by their answer to the question  
It doth appear this marriage is the  
least

Of all their quarrel. [their hearts:  
They have betrayed the treason of  
Seek to possess our person, hold our  
Tower, [and use

Place and displace our councillors,  
Both us and them according as they  
will. [your Queen—

Now what am I ye know right well—  
To whom, when I was wedded to the  
realm [ring whereof,

And the realm's laws (the sponsal  
Not ever to be laid aside, I wear  
Upon this finger), ye did promise  
full

Allegiance and obedience to the death.  
Ye know my father was the rightful  
heir

Of England, and his right came down  
to me,  
Corroborate by your acts of Parlia-  
ment:

And as ye were most loving unto him,  
So doubtless will ye show yourselves  
to me. [one

Wherefore, ye will not brook that any  
Should seize our person, occupy our  
state, [sumptuous

More especially a traitor so pre-  
As this same Wyatt, who hath tam-  
per'd with

A public ignorance, and, under color  
Of such a cause as hath no color,  
seeks [yield

To bend the laws to his own will, and  
Full scope to persons rascal and for-  
lorn, [goods.

To make free spoil and havoc of your  
Now as your Prince, I say,  
I, that was never mother, cannot tell  
How mothers love their children; yet

methinks,  
A prince as naturally may love his peo-  
ple [your Queen

As these their children; and be sure  
So loves you, and so loving, needs  
must deem

This love by you return'd as heartily:  
And thro' this common knot and bond  
of love, [thrown.

Doubt not they will be speedily over-  
As to this marriage, ye shall under-  
stand [selves,

We made thereto no treaty of our-  
And set no foot theretoward unad-  
vised [more,

Of all our Privy council; further-  
This marriage had the assent of those  
to whom [trust;

The king, my father, did commit his  
Who not alone esteem'd it honorable,  
But for the wealth and glory of our  
realm, [pedient.

And all our loving subjects, most ex-  
As to myself, [choose

I am not so set on wedlock as to  
But where I list, nor yet so amorous  
That I must needs be husbanded; I  
thank God, [doubt

I have lived a virgin, and I noway  
But that with God's grace, I can live  
so still. [should leave

Yet if it might please God that I  
Some fruit of mine own body after me,  
To be your king, ye would rejoice  
thereat, [trust;

And it would be your comfort, as I  
And truly, if I either thought or knew  
This marriage should bring loss or  
danger to you,

My subjects, or impair in any way  
This royal state of England, I would  
never [live;

Consent thereto, nor marry while I  
Moreover, if this marriage should not  
seem,  
Before our own high Court of Parlia-  
ment,

To be of rich advantage to our realm  
We will refrain, and not alone from  
this,

Likewise from any other, out of which  
Looms the least chance of peril to our  
realm.

Wherefore be bold, and with your  
lawful Prince [yours,  
Stand fast against our enemies and  
And fear them not. I fear them not.  
My Lord.

I leave Lord William Howard in your  
city,

To guard and keep you whole and safe  
from all [these rebels,  
The spoil and sackage aim'd at by  
Who mouth and foam against the  
Prince of Spain.

*Voices.* Long live Queen Mary :  
Down with Wyatt !

The Queen !

*White.* Three voices from our guilds  
and companies.

You are shy and proud like English-  
men, my masters,  
And will not trust your voices. Un-  
derstand :

Your lawful Prince hath come to cast  
herself [fall

On loyal hearts and bosoms, hoped to  
Into the wide-spread arms of fealty,  
And finds you statues. Speak at once  
For whom ? [—and all !

Our sovereign Lady by King Harry's  
will ; [ish Squire ?

The Queen of England—or the Kent-  
I know you loyal. Speak ! in the  
name of God ! [of Kent ?

The Queen of England or the rabble  
The recking dungfork master of the  
mace ! [and spade—

Your havings wasted by the scythe  
Your rights and charters hobnail'd  
into slush— [bling blood—

Your houses fired—your gutters bub-  
*Acclamation.* No ! No ! The Queen !  
the Queen !

*White.* Your Highness hears  
This burst and bass of loyal harmony,  
And how we each and all of us abhor  
The venomous, bestial, devilish revolt  
Of Thomas Wyatt. Hear us now  
make oath

To raise your Highness thirty thou-  
sand men, [and brush

And arm and strike as with one hand,  
This Wyatt from our shoulders, like  
a flea [wares.

That might have leapt upon us un-  
swear with me, noble fellow-citizens,  
all, [companies.

With all your trades, and guilds, and  
*Citizens.* We swear !

*Mary.* We thank your Lordship  
and your loyal city.

[*Exit Mary attended.*

*White.* I trust this day, thro' God,  
I have saved the crown.

1 *Ald.* Ay, so my Lord of Pembroke  
in command

Of all her force be safe ; but there are  
doubts.

2 *Ald.* I hear that Gardiner, coming  
with the Queen,  
And meeting Pembroke, bent to his  
saddle-bow, [him.

As if to win the man by flattering  
Is he so safe to fight upon her side ?

1 *Ald.* If not, there's no man safe.  
*White.* Yes, Thomas White.

I am safe enough : no man need flatter  
me, [you mark our Queen ?

2 *Ald.* Nay, no man need ; but did  
The color freely play'd into her face,  
And the half sight which makes her  
look so stern, [of hers,

Seem'd thro' that dim dilated world  
To read our faces ; I have never seen  
So queenly or so goodly. [her

*White.* Courage, sir,  
*That* makes or man or woman look  
their goodliest. [whine

Die like the torn fox-dumb, but never  
Like that poor heart, Northumberland,  
at the block.

*Bag.* The man had children, and he  
whined for those.

Methinks most men are but poor-  
hearted, else [it commoner ?

Should we so doat on courage, were  
The Queen stands up, and speaks for  
her own self ; [is goodly.

And all men cry, she is queenly, she  
Yet she's no goodlier ; tho' my Lord  
Mayor here, [to-day,

By his own rule, he had been so bold  
Should look more goodly than the rest  
of us.

*White.* Goodly ? I feel most goodly  
heart and hand, [all Kent.

And strong to throw ten Wyatts and  
Ha ! ha ! sir ; but you jest ; I love it : a  
jest [even.

In time of danger shows the pulses  
Be merry ! yet, Sir Ralph, you look but  
sad. [self.

I dare avouch you'd stand up for your-  
Tho' all the world should bay like win-  
ter wolves.

*Bag.* Who knows ? the man is proven  
by the hour.

*White.* The man should make the  
hour, not this the man ;

And Thomas White will prove this  
Thomas Wyatt, [Cade,

And he will prove an Iden to this  
And he will play the Walworth to this  
Wat ;

Come, sirs, we prate ; hence all—gather  
your men—

Myself must bustle. Wyatt comes to  
Southwark ; [the Thames

I'll have the drawbridge hewn into  
And see the citizen arm'd. Good day ;  
good day. [*Exit White.*

*Bag.* One of much outdoor bluster.  
*How.* For all that,

Most honest, brave, and skilful ; and  
his wealth

A fountain of perennial alms—his

55

So thoroughly to believe in his own self.

*Bag.* Yet thoroughly to believe in So one's own self be thorough, were to Great things, my lord.

*How.* It may be.  
*Bag.* I have heard One of your council flee and jeer at him.

*How.* The nursery-cocker'd child That may seem strange beyond his nursery.  
The statesman that shall jeer and Makes enemies for himself and for his king;

And if he jeer not seeing the true man Behind his folly, he is thrice the fool; And if he see the man and still will jeer,

He is child and fool, and traitor to the Who is he? Let me shun him.

*Bag.* Nay, my Lord, He is damn'd enough already.

*How.* I must set The guard at Ludgate. Fare you well, Sir Ralph.

*Bag.* "Who knows?" I am for England. But who knows. That knows the Queen, the Spaniard, and the Pope.

Whether I be for Wyatt, or the Queen? *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.—*London Bridge.*

*Enter Sir Thomas Wyatt and Brett.*

*Wyatt.* Brett, when the Duke of Norfolk moved against us, Thou criest "a Wyatt," and flying to our side

Left his all bare, for which I love thee, Brett.

Have for thine asking aught that I For thro' thine help we are come to London Bridge;

But how to cross it balks me. I fear *Brett.* Nay, hardly, save by boat, swimming, or wings.

*Wyatt.* Last night I climb'd into the gate-house, Brett, And scared the gray old porter and his wife.

And then I crept along the gloom and They had hevn the drawbridge down into the river.

It roll'd as black as death; and that Which, coming with our coming, seem'd to smile

And sparkle like our fortune as thou Ran sunless down, and moan'd against the piers.

But o'er the chasm I saw Lord William Howard

By torchlight, and his guard; four guns gaped at me, Black, silent mouths: had Howard spied me there

And made them speak, as well he might have done,

Yet voice had left me none to tell us shall we do?

*Brett.* On somehow. To go back Were to lose all.

*Wyatt.* On over London Bridge We cannot; stay we cannot; there is ordnance

On the White Tower and on the Devil's And pointed full at Southwark; we By Kingston Bridge.

*Brett.* Ten miles about.  
*Wyatt.* Ev'n so.

But I have noticed from our partisans Within the city that they will stand by us,

If Ludgate can be reach'd by dawn

*Enter one of Wyatt's men.*

*Man.* Sir Thomas, I've found this paper, pray your worship read it; I know not my letters; the old priest taught me nothing.

*Wyatt (reads).* Whosoever will apprehend the traitor Thomas Wyatt shall have a hundred pounds for reward.

*Man.* Is that it? That's a big lot of money.

*Wyatt.* Ay, ay, my friend; not read it? 'tis not written

Half plain enough. Give me a piece of paper!

*[Writes "Thomas Wyatt" large.]* There, any man can read that.

*Brett.* But that's foolhardy.

*Wyatt.* No! boldness, which will give my followers boldness.

*Enter Man with a prisoner.*

*Man.* We found him, your worship, a plundering o' Bishop Winchester's house; he says he's a poor gentleman.

*Wyatt.* Gentleman, a thief! Go hang him. Shall we make Those that we come to serve our sharpest foes?

*Brett.* Sir Thomas—

*Wyatt.* Hang him, I say.  
*Brett.* Wyatt, but now you promised me a boon.

*Wyatt.* Ay, and I warrant this fine *Brett.* Ev'n so; he was my neighbor once in Kent.

He's poor enough, has drunk and All that he had, and gentleman he was.

We have been glad together; let him *Wyatt.* He has gambled for his life, and lost, he hangs.

No, no, my word's my word. Take thy poor gentleman!

Gamble thyself at once out of my sight, Or I will dig thee with my dagger. Women and children!

*Enter a crowd of Women and Children.*

*1 Woman.* O Sir Thomas, Sir Thomas, pray you go away, Sir Thomas, or you'll make the White Tower a black'un for us this blessed day. He'll be

the death on us; and you'll set the Devil's Tower a-spitting, and he'll smash all our bits o' things worse than Philip o' Spain.

2 *Woman*. Don't ye now go to think that we be for Philip o' Spain.

3 *Woman*. No, we know that ye be come to kill the Queen, and we'll pray for you all on our bended knees. But o' God's mercy don't ye kill the Queen here, Sir Thomas; look ye, here's little Dickon, and little Robin and little Jenny—though she's but a side-cousin—and all on our knees, we pray you to kill the Queen farther off, Sir Thomas.

*Wyatt*. My friends, I have not come to kill the Queen [all, Or here or there: I come to save you And I'll go farther off.

*Crowd*. Thanks, Sir Thomas, we be beholden to you, and we'll pray for you on our bended knees till our lives' end.

*Wyatt*. Be happy, I am your friend. To Kingston; forward. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—*Room in the Gatehouse of Westminster Palace.* Mary, Alice, Gardiner, Renard, Ladies.

*Alice*. O madam, if Lord Pembroke should be false?

*Mary*. No, girl: most brave and loyal, brave and loyal.

His breaking with Northumberland broke Northumberland. [guards. At the park gate he hovers with our These Kentish ploughmen cannot break the guards.

Enter Messenger.

*Mes*. Wyatt, your Grace, hath broken thro' the guards And gone to Ludgate.

*Gard*. Madame, I much fear That all is lost; but we can save your Grace.

The river still is free. I do beseech you, [to Windsor.

There yet is time, take boat and pass *Mary*. I pass to Windsor and I lose my crown.

*Gard*. Pass, then, I pray your Highness, to the Tower.

*Mary*. I shall but be their prisoner in the Tower. [Pembroke!

*Cries without*. The traitor! treason! Ladies. Treason! Treason!

*Mary*. Peace. [to me? False to Northumberland, is he false Bear witness, Renard, that I live and die [A sound

The true and faithful bride of Philip— Of feet and voices thickening hither— blows— [gates,

Hark, there is battle at the palace And I will out upon the gallery.

*Ladies*. No, no, your Grace; see there the arrows flying.

*Mary*. I am Harry's daughter, Tudor, and not fear,

[ *Goes out on the gallery.* The guards are all driven in, skulk into corners [guard Like rabbits to their holes. A gracious Truly; or shame on them, they have shut the gates!

Enter Sir Robert Southwell.

*South*. The porter, please your Grace, hath shut the gates On friend and foe. Your gentlemen-at-arms,

If this be not your Grace's order, cry To have the gates set wide again, and they [you right With their good battle-axes will do Against all traitors.

*Mary*. They are the flower of England; set the gates wide. [Exit Southwell.

Enter Courtenay.

*Court*. All lost, all lost, all yielded; a barge, a barge, The Queen must to the Tower.

*Mary*. Whence come you, sir?

*Court*. From Charing Cross; the rebels broke us there, [might And I sped hither with what haste I To save my royal cousin.

*Mary*. Where is Pembroke?

*Court*. I left him somewhere in the thick of it. [that wouldst be King.

*Mary*. Left him and died; and thou And hast no heart nor honor. I myself Will down into the battle and there bide [those

The upshot of my quarrel, or die with That are no cowards and no Courtenays [should call me coward.

*Court*. I do not love your Grace

Enter another Messenger.

*Mes*. Over, your Grace, all crush'd; The brave Lord William

Thrust him from Ludgate, and the traitor flying [Berkeley To Temple Bar there by Sir Maurice Was taken prisoner.

*Mary*. To the Tower with him!

*Mes*. 'Tis said he told Sir Maurice there was one [unto, Cognizant of this, and party there— My Lord of Devon.

*Mary*. To the Tower with him!

*Court*. O la, the Tower, the Tower always the Tower, [the Tower.

I shall grow into it—I shall be *Mary*. Your Lordship may not have so long to wait.

Remove him!

*Court*. La, to whistle out my life, And carve my coat upon the walls again! [Exit Courtenay guarded.

*Mes*. Also this Wyatt did come's the Princess [unto,

Cognizant thereof, and party there— *Mary*. What? whom—whom did you say?

*Mes.*  
Your Royal sister.  
*Mary.* To the Tower with her!  
My foes are at my feet and I am Queen.  
[*Gardiner and her Ladies kneel to her.*  
*Gard.* (rising.) There let them lie,  
your footstool! (*Aside.*)  
Can I strike [life  
Elizabeth?—not now and save the  
Of Devon: if I save him, he and his  
Are bound to me—may strike here-  
after. (*Aloud.*) Madam,  
What Wyatt said, or what they said  
he said,  
Cries of the moment and the street—  
*Mary.* He said it.  
*Gard.* Your courts of justice will  
determine that.  
*Ren.* (*advancing.*) I trust by this  
your Highness will allow  
Some spice of wisdom in my telling  
you, [not come  
When last we talk'd, that Philip would  
Till Guildford Dudley and the Duke  
of Suffolk  
And Lady Jane had left us.  
*Mary.* They shall die.  
*Ren.* And your so loving sister?  
*Mary.* She shall die.  
My foes are at my feet, and Philip  
King. [*Exeunt.*]

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Conduit in Grace Church. Pa'n'd with the Nine Worthies among them King Henry VIII., holding a book, on it inscribed "Verbum Dei."*

*Enter Sir Ralph Bagenhall and Sir Thomas Stafford.*

*Bag.* A hundred here and hundreds  
hang'd in Kent. [at last,  
The Tigress had unsheath'd her nails  
And Renard and the Chancellor sharp-  
en'd them. [stood.  
In every London street a gibbet  
They are down to-day. Here by this  
house was one; [door,  
The traitor husband dangled at the  
And when the traitor wife came out  
for bread  
To still the petty treason therewithin,  
Her cap would brush his heels.  
*Staf.* It is Sir Ralph,  
And muttering to himself as hereto-  
fore.  
Sir, see you aught up yonder?  
*Bag.* I miss something,  
The tree that only bears dead fruit is  
gone.  
*Staf.* What tree, sir? [sir,  
*Bag.* Well, the tree in Virgil,  
That bears not its own apples.  
*Staf.* What! the gallows?

*Bag.* Sir, this dead fruit was ripen-  
ing overmuch, [Spain  
And had to be removed lest living  
Should sicken at dead England.

*Staf.* Not so dead  
But that a shock may rouse her.

*Bag.* I believe  
Sir Thomas Stafford?

*Staf.* I am ill disguised.  
*Bag.* Well, are you not in peril  
here?

*Staf.* I think so.  
I came to feel the pulse of England,  
whether [you see 't?  
It beats hard at this marriage. Did

*Bag.* Stafford, I am a sad man and  
a serious.

Far liefer had I in my country hall  
Been reading some old book, with  
mine old hound [flask of wine  
Conch'd at my hearth, and mine old  
Beside me, than have seen it, yet I  
saw it.

*Staf.* Good, was it splendid?

*Bag.* Ay, if Dukes, and Earls,  
And Counts, and sixty Spanish cava-  
llers, [pearls,  
Some six or seven Bishops, diamonds,  
That royal commonplace too, cloth  
Could make it so. [of gold,

*Staf.* And what was Mary's dress?  
*Bag.* Good faith, I was too sorry  
for the woman [shoes!  
To mark the dress. She wore red

*Staf.* Red shoes?  
*Bag.* Scarlet, as if her feet were  
washed in blood,

As if she had waded in it.  
*Staf.* Were your eyes  
So bashful that you look'd no higher?

*Bag.* A diamond,  
And Philip's gift, as proof of Philip's  
love, [true cue,  
Who hath not any for any,—tho' a  
Blazed false upon her heart.

*Staf.* But this proud Prince—  
*Bag.* Nay, he is King, you know,  
the King of Naples.

The father ceded Naples, that the son  
Being a King, might wed a Queen—O  
he [trunk hose,  
Flamed in brocade—white satin his  
Inwrought with silver,—on his neck a  
collar, [down from this  
Gold, thick with diamonds; hanging  
The Golden Fleece—and round his  
knee, misplaced,  
Our English Garter, studded with  
great emeralds, [had enough  
Rubies, I know not what. Have you  
Of all this gear?

*Staf.* Ay, since you hate the  
telling it.  
How look'd the Queen?

*Bag.* No fairer for her jewels.  
And I could see that as the new-made  
couple [by side  
Came from the Minster, moving side  
Beneath one canopy, ever and anon  
She cast on him a vassal smile of love,

Which Philip, with a glance of some  
distaste, [wrong, sir.]  
Or so methought, return'd. I may be  
This marriage will not hold.

*Staf.* I think with you.  
The King of France will help to break  
it.

*Bag.* France!  
We once had half of France, and  
hurli'd our battles

Into the heart of Spain; but England  
now [and Spain,

Is but a ball chuck'd between France  
His in whose hand she drops; Harry  
of Bolingbroke

Had holpen Richard's tottering throne  
to stand, [our nobles

Could Harry have foreseen that all  
Would perish on the civil slaughter-  
field, [crown,

And leave the people naked to the  
And the crown naked to the people;  
the crown [men

Female, too! Sir, no woman's regi-  
Can save us. We are fallen, and as I  
think,

Never to rise again.

*Staf.* You are too black-blooded.  
I'd make a move myself to hinder  
that; [France.]

I know some lusty fellows there in  
*Bag.* You would but make us  
weaker, Thomas Stafford.

Wyatt was a good soldier, yet he  
And strengthen'd Philip. [fail'd,

*Staf.* Did not his last breath  
Clear Courtenay and the Princess  
from the charge

Of being his co-rebels?

*Bag.* Ay, but then  
What such a one as Wyatt says is  
nothing: [Lords

We have no men among us. The new  
Are quieted with their sop of Abbey-  
lands, [Gardiner buys them

And ev'n before the Queen's face  
With Philip's gold. All greed, no  
faith, no courage! [umberland,

Why, ev'n the haughty prince, North-  
The leader of our Reformation, knelt  
And blubber'd like a lad, and on the  
scaffold [Rome.

Recanted, and resold himself to  
*Staf.* I swear you do your country  
wrong, Sir Ralph.

I know a set of exiles over there,  
Dare-devils, that would eat fire and  
spit it out [already.

At Philip's beard: they pillage Spain  
The French King winks at it. An  
hour will come

When they will sweep her from the  
seas. No men? [man?

Did not Lord Suffolk die like a true  
Is not Lord William Howard a true  
man? [black-blooded

Yea, you yourself, altho' you are  
And I, by God, believe myself a man.  
Ay, even in the church there is a man—  
Crammer.

Fly, would he not, when all men  
bade him fly.

And what a letter he wrote against the  
Pope?

There's a brave man, if any.  
*Bag.* Ay; if it hold. [Graces!

*Crowd (coming on).* God save their  
*Staf.* Bagenhall, I see  
The Tudor green and white. [*Trum-*  
*pets.*] They are coming now.

And here's a crowd as thick as her-  
ring-shoals. [we are torn

*Bag.* Be limpets to this pillar, or  
Down the strong wave of brawlers.

*Crowd.* God save their Graces.  
[*Procession of Trumpeters, Javelin-*  
*men, etc.; then Spanish and Flem-*  
*ish Nobles intermingled.*

*Staf.* Worth seeing, Bagenhall!  
These black dog-Dons

Garb themselves bravely. Who's the  
long-face there.

Looks very Spain of very Spain?

*Bag.* The Duke  
Of Alva, an iron soldier.

*Staf.* And the Dutchman,  
Now laughing at some jest?

*Bag.* William of Orange,  
William the Silent.

*Staf.* Why do they call him so?

*Bag.* He keeps, they say, some se-  
cret that may cost  
Philip his life.

*Staf.* But then he looks so merry.  
*Bag.* I cannot tell you why they call  
him so.

[*The King and Queen pass, attended  
by Peers of the Realm, Officers of  
State, etc. Cannon shot off.*

*Crowd.* Philip and Mary, Philip and  
Mary. [Philip and Mary.

Long live the King and Queen,  
*Staf.* They smile as if content with  
one another.

*Bag.* A smile abroad is oft a scowl  
at home.

[*King and Queen pass on, Procession.*

1 *Cit.* I thought this Philip had  
been one of those black devils of Spain,  
but he hath a yellow beard.

2 *Cit.* Not red like Isariot's.

1 *Cit.* Like a carrot's, as thou  
sayst, and English carrot's better than  
Spanish licorice; but I thought he was  
a beast.

3 *Cit.* Certain I had heard that  
every Spaniard carries a tail like a  
devil under his trunk hose.

*Tailor.* Ay, but see what trunk-  
hoses! Lord! they be fine; I never  
stitch'd none such. They make amends  
for the tails.

4 *Cit.* Tut! every Spanish priest  
will tell you that all English heretics  
have tails.

5 *Cit.* Death and the Devil—if he  
find I have one—

4 *Cit.* Lo! thou hast call'd them  
up! here they come—a pale horse for  
Death and Gardiner for the Devil.

*Enter Gardiner (turning back from the procession).*

*Gard.* Knave, wilt thou wear thy cap before the Queen?

*Man.* My lord, I stand so squeezed among the crowd [head.

I cannot lift my hands unto my *Gard.* Knock off his cap there, some of you about him! [hands.  
See there be others that can use their Thou art one of Wyatt's men?

*Man.* No, my Lord, no.

*Gard.* Thy name, thou knave?

*Man.* I am nobody, my Lord.

*Gard.* (shouting). God's passion! knave, thy name?

*Man.* I have ears to hear. ears to hear. [Attendant).

Find out his name and bring it me (to *At.* Ay, my Lord.

*Gard.* Knave, thou shalt lose thine ears and find thy tongue, And shalt be thankful if I leave thee that.

[*Coming before the Conduit.*

The conduit painted—the nine worthies—ay!

But then what's here? King Harry with a scroll. [God!

Ha—*Verbum Dei*—*verbum*—word of God's passion! do you know the knave that painted it?

*At.* I do, my Lord.

*Gard.* Tell him to paint it out, And put some fresh device in lieu of it— [ha?

A pair of gloves, a pair of gloves, sir; There is no heresy there.

*At.* I will, my Lord. The man shall paint a pair of gloves.

I am sure [ignorantly, (Knowing the man) he wrought it And not from any malice.

*Gard.* Word of God— In English! over this the brainless loons [Paul,

That cannot spell *Esaias* from *St.* Make themselves drunk and mad, fly out and flare [burnt.

Into rebellions. I'll have their Bibles The Bible is the priest's. Ay! fellow, what! [ing rogue.

Stand staring at me! shout, you gap— *Man.* I have, my Lord, shouted till I am hoarse. [knave?—

*Gard.* What hast thou shouted,

*Man.* Long live Queen Mary.

*Gard.* Knave, there be two. There be both King and Queen, Philip and Mary. Shout.

*Man.* Nay, but, my Lord. The Queen comes first, Mary and Philip.

*Gard.* Shout, then

Mary and Philip.

*Man.* Mary and Philip!

*Gard.* Now,

Thou hast shouted for thy pleasure, shout for mine!

Philip and Mary!

*Man.* Must it be so, my Lord?

*Gard.* Ay knave.

*Man.* Philip and Mary.

*Gard.* I distrust thee.

Thine is a half voice and a lean assent.

What is thy name?

*Man.* Sanders.

*Gard.* What else!

*Man.* Zerubbabel.

*Gard.* Where dost thou live?

*Man.* In Cornhill.

*Gard.* Where, knave, where?

*Man.* Sign of the Talbot.

*Gard.* Come to me to-morrow.—

Rascal!—this land is like a bill of fire, One crater opens when another shuts. But so I get the laws against the heretic, [Liam Howard,

Spite of Lord Paget and Lord Wil— And others of our Parliament, revived, [and fire—

I will show fire on my side—stake Sharp work and short. The knives are easily cow'd.

Follow their Majesties.

[*Exit. The crowd following.*

*Bag.* As proud as Becket.

*Staf.* You would not have him murder'd as Becket was?

*Bag.* No—murder fathers murder: but I say [woman with us—

There is no man—there was one It was a sin to love her married, dead I cannot choose but love her.

*Staf.* Lady Jane?

*Crowd (going off).* God save their Graces.

*Staf.* Did you see her die?

*Bag.* No, no; her innocent blood had blinded me. [enough,

You call me too black-blooded—true Her dark dead blood is in my heart with mine.

If ever I cry out against the Pope, Her dark dead blood that ever moves with mine [he cry.

Will stir the living tongue and rafe *Staf.* Yet doubtless you can tell me how she died?

*Bag.* Seventeen—and knew eight languages—in music

Peerless—her needle perfect, and her learning [so modest,

Beyond the churchmen; yet so meek, So wife-like humble to the trivial boy

Mismatch'd with her for policy! I have heard [of him,

She would not take a last farewell She fear'd it might unman him for his end [outwoman'd—

She could not be unmann'd—no nor Seventeen—a rose of grace!

Girl never breathed to rival such a rose: [a bud.

Rose never blew that equal'd such a *Staf.* Pray you go on.

*Bag.* She came upon the scaffold,

And said she was condemn'd to die for treason;  
 She had but follow'd the device of Her nearest kin: she thought they knew the laws  
 But for herself, she knew but little And nothing of the titles to the crown;  
 She had no desire for that, and wrung Left Mary a wife-widow here alone,  
 And trusted God would save her thro' Of Jesus Christ alone.  
*Staf.* Pray you go on.  
*Bag.* Then knelt and said the Miserere Mei—  
 But all in English, mark you; rose And, when the headsman pray'd to be forgiven,  
 Said, "You will give me my true But do it quickly;" then all wept but she,  
 Who changed not color when she saw But ask'd him, childlike: "Will you take it off  
 Before I lay me down?" "No, mad-Gasp; and when her innocent eyes were bound,  
 She, with her poor blind hands feeling—" where is it?—  
 Where is it!—You must fancy that If you have heart to do it!  
*Crowd (in the distance).* God save their Graces!  
*Staf.* Their Graces, our disgraces! God confound them!  
 Why, she's grown bloodier! when I last was here,  
 This was against her conscience—would be murder!  
*Bag.* The "Thou shalt do no murder," which God's hand wrote on her conscience, Mary rubb'd out pale—  
 She could not make it white—and over Traced in the blackest text of Hell—"Thou shalt!"  
 And sign'd it—Mary!  
*Staf.* Phillip, and the Pope Must have sign'd too. I hear this Legate's coming  
 To bring us absolution from the Pope. The Lords and Commons will bow down before him—  
 You are of the house? what will you do, Sir Ralph?  
*Bag.* And why should I be bolder Or honest than all?  
*Staf.* But, sir, if I—  
 And over sea they say this state of yours  
 Hath no more mortise than a tower And that a puff would do it—then if I And others made that move I've touch'd upon,  
 Back'd by the power of France, and Came with a sudden splendor, shout, and show,  
 And dazzled men and deafen'd by some bright  
 Loud venture, and the people so unquiet—

And I the race of murder'd Bucking-ham—  
 Not for myself, but for the kingdom—  
 Sir,  
 I trust that you would fight along *Bag.* No; you would fling your lives into the gulf,  
*Staf.* But if this Philip, as he's Left Mary a wife-widow here alone, Set up a viceroy, sent his myriads hither  
 To seize upon the forts and fleet, and A Spanish province; would you not fight then?  
*Bag.* I think I should fight then.  
*Staf.* I am sure of it.  
 Hist! there's the face coming on here of one  
 Who knows me. I must leave you. You'll hear of me again.  
*Bag.* Upon the scaffold. *[Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Room in Whitehall Palace.  
 Mary. Enter Philip and Cardinal Pole.  
*Pole.* Ava Maria, gratia plena, Benedicta tu in mulieribus.  
*Mary.* Loyal and royal cousin, humblest thanks.  
 Had you a pleasant voyage up the *Pole.* We had your royal barge, and that same chair,  
 Or rather throne of purple, on the deck.  
 Our silver cross sparkled before the prow,  
 The ripples twinkled at their dia-The boats that follow'd, were as glow-ing-gay  
 As regal gardens; and your flocks As fair and white as angels; and your shores  
 Wore in mine eyes the green of Para-MY foreign friends, who dream'd us blanketed  
 In ever-closing fog, were much amaz-ing to find as fair a sun as might have flash'd  
 Upon their Lake of Garda, fire the Our voyage by sea was all but miracle;  
 And here the river flowing from the Not toward it (for they thought not of our tides),  
 Seem'd as a happy miracle to make In quiet—home your banish'd country-man,  
*Mary.* We heard that you were sick *Pole.* A dizziness.  
*Mary.* And how came you round again?  
*Pole.* The scarlet thread of Rahab And mine, a little letting of the *Mary.* Well? now?  
*Pole.* Ay, cousin, as the heathen giant  
 Had but to touch the ground, his force Thus, after twenty years of banish-ment,  
 Feeling my native land beneath my

I said thereto : " Ah, native land of mine,  
Thou art much beholden to this foot  
That hastes with full commission from  
the Pope

To absolve thee from thy guilt of  
heresy.

Thou hast disgraced me and attained  
And mark'd me ev'n as Cain, and I  
return

As Peter, but to bless thee : make  
Methinks the good land heard me, for  
to-day

My heart beats twenty, when I see  
Ah, gentle cousin, since your Herod's  
death.

How oft hath Peter knock'd at Mary's  
And Mary would have risen and let  
him in,

But Mary, there were those within  
Who would not have it.

Mary. True, good cousin Pole ;  
And there were also those without  
Who would not have it.

Pole. I believe so, cousin.  
State-policy and church-policy are con-  
joint,

But Janus-faces looking diverse ways.  
I fear the Emperor much misvalued  
me.

But all is well ; 'twas ev'n the will of  
Who, waiting till the time had ripen'd,  
now,

Makes me his mouth of holy greeting.  
Daughter of God, and savor of the  
faith,

Sit benedictus fructus ventris tui ! "

Mary. Ah, heaven !  
Pole. Unwell, your grace ?

Mary. No, cousin, happy—  
Happy to see you : never yet so happy  
Since I was crown'd.

Pole. Sweet cousin, you forget  
That long low minster where you gave  
your hand

To this great Catholic King.  
Phi. Well said, Lord Legate.

Mary. Nay, not well said ; I thought  
of you, my liege,  
Ev'n as I spoke.

Phi. Ay, Madam ; my Lord Paget  
Waits to present our Council to the  
Legate.

Sit down here, all ; Madam, between  
us you.

Pole. Lo, now you are enclosed with  
boards of cedar,  
Our little sister of the Song of Songs !  
You are doubly fenced and shielded  
sitting here

Between the two most high-set thrones  
on earth,

The Emperor's highness happily sym-  
The King your husband, the Pope's  
By mine own self.

Mary. True, cousin, I am happy.  
When will you that we summon both  
our houses

To take this absolution from your lips,  
And be regather'd to the Papal fold ?

Pole. In Britain's calendar the  
brightest day  
Behold our rough forefathers break  
And clasp the faith in Christ ; but  
after that  
Might not St. Andrew's be her hap-  
Mary. Then these shall meet upon  
St. Andrew's day.

Enter Paget, who presents the Coun-  
cil. Dumb show.

Pole. I am an old man wearied with  
my journey,  
Ev'n with my joy. Permit me to  
To Lambeth ?

Phi. Ay, Lambeth has ousted  
It was not meet the heretic swine  
In Lambeth.

Mary. There or anywhere, or at all.  
Phi. We have had it swept and  
garnish'd after him.

Pole. Not for the seven devils to  
enter in ?

Phi. No, for we trust they parted  
Pole. True, and I am the Angel of  
Farewell, your Graces.

Phi. Nay, not here—to me ;  
I will go with you to the waterside.

Pole. Not be my Charon to the  
counter side ?

Phi. No, my Lord Legate, the Lord  
Chancellor goes.

Pole. And unto no dead world ; but  
Lambeth palace,  
Henceforth a centre of the living  
[Exeunt Philip, Pole, Paget, etc

Manet Mary.

He hath awaked ! he hath awaked !  
He stirs within the darkness !  
Oh, Philip, husband ! now thy love to  
mine

Will cling more close, and those bleak  
That make me shamed and tongue-  
tied in my love.

The second Prince of Peace—  
The great unborn defender of the  
Faith,

Who will avenge me of mine enemies—  
He comes, and my star rises.

The stormy Wyatts and Northumber-  
The proud ambitions of Elizabeth,  
And all her fieriest partisans—are  
pale

Before my star !

The light of this new learning wanes  
The ghosts of Luther and Zuinglius  
fade

Into the deathless hell which is their  
Before my star !

His sceptre shall go forth from Ind  
His sword shall hew the heretic peoples  
down !

His faith shall clothe the world that  
Like universal air and sunshine ! Open,  
Ye everlasting gates ! The King is  
My star, my son !

Enter Philip, Duke of Alva, etc.  
Oh, Philip, come with me,

Good news have I to tell you, news to make [too.]

Both of us happy—ay the Kingdom Nay come with me—one moment!

*Phi.* (to Alva). More than that: There was one here of late—William the Silent [talk.] They call him—he is free enough in But tells me nothing. You will be, we trust, [inces—

Some time the viceroy of those provinces He must deserve his surname better. *Alva.* Ay, sir; inherit the Great Silence.

*Phi.* True; the provinces Are hard to rule and must be hardly ruled; [rind,

Most fruitful, yet, indeed, an empty All hollowed out with stinging heresies; [fight:

And for their heresies, Alva, they will You must break them or they break you.

*Alva.* (proudly). The first. *Phi.* Good!

Well, Madam, this new happiness of mine. [Exeunt.

Enter Three Pages.

1 Page. News, mates! a miracle! a miracle! news!

The bells must ring; Te Deums must be sung; [her babe!

The Queen hath felt the motion of

2 Page. Ay; but see here!

1 Page. See what?

2 Page. This paper, Dickon. I found it fluttering at the palace gates— [of a dead dog!"

"The Queen of England is delivered

3 Page. These are the things that madden her. Fie upon it.

1 Page. Ay; but I hear she hath a dropsy, lad, [call it.

Or a high-dropsy, as the doctors

3 Page. Fie on her dropsy, so she have a dropsy! [me.

I know that she was ever sweet to

1 Page. For thou and thine are Roman to the core. [Take heed!

3 Page. So thou and thine must be.

1 Page. Not I. And whether this flash of news be false or true,

So the wine run, and there be revelry, Content am I. Let all the steeples clash,

Till the sun dance, as upon Easter Day. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*Great Hall in Whitehall* [At the far end a dais. On this three chairs, two under one canopy for Mary and Phillip, another on the right of these for Pole. Under the dais on Pole's side, ranged along the wall, sit all the Spiritual Peers, and along the wall opposite, all the Temporal. The Commons on cross benches in front, a line of approach to the dais

between them. In the foreground Sir Ralph Bagenhall and other Members of the Commons.

1 Mem. St. Andrew's day; sit close, sit close, we are friends, [again?

Is reconciled the word? The Pope It must be thus; and yet, cocksbody! how strange [of us

That Gardiner, once so one with all Against this foreign marriage, should have yielded [still that he,

So utterly!—strange! but stranger So fierce against the Headship of the Pope, [pageant

Should play the second actor in this That brings him in; such a chameleon he!

2 Mem. This Gardiner turn'd his coat in Henry's time;

The serpent that hath slough'd will slough again, [pents.

3 Mem. Tut, then we are all ser-

2 Mem. Speak for yourself.

3 Mem. Ay, and for Gardiner! being English citizen,

How should he bear a bridegroom out of Spain?

The Queen would have him! being English churchman, [the Pope?

How should he bear the headship of The Queen would have it! Statesmen that are wise

Shape a necessity, as the sculptor clay, To their own model.

2 Mem. Statesmen that are wise Take truth herself for model, what say you?

[To Sir Ralph Bagenhall, Bag. We talk and talk. [talk?

1 Mem. Ay, and what use to Phillip's no sudden alien—the Queen's husband, [cocksbody!

He's here, and king, or will be,—yet So hated here! I watched a hive of late; [my young boy;

My seven-years' friend was with me, Out crept a wasp, with half the swarm behind, [rogue

"Phillip," says he. I had to cuff the Fox infant treason.

3 Mem. But they say that bees, If any creeping life invade their hive Too gross to be thrust out, will build him round [their combs.

And bind him in from harming of And Phillip by these articles is bound From stirring hand or feet to wrong the realm.

2 Mem. By bonds of beeswax, like your creeping thing;

But your wise bees had stung him first to death.

3 Mem. Hush, hush!

You wrong the Chancellor: the clauses added [or sent us

To that same treaty which the emperor Were madly Gardiner's: that no foreigner

Hold office in the household, fleet, forts, army;

That if the Queen should die without  
a child, [dissolved ;  
The bond between the kingdoms be  
That Philip should not mix us any way  
With his French wars—

2 Mem. Ay, ay, but what security,  
Good sir, for this, if Philip—

3 Mem. Peace—the Queen,  
Philip, and Pole. [All rise and stand.  
Enter Mary, Philip, and Pole.

[Gardiner conducts them to the three  
chairs of state. Philip sits on the  
Queen's left, Pole on her right.

Gard. Our short-lived sun, before  
his winter plunge, [drew's day.

Laughs at the last red leaf, and An-  
Mary. Should not this day be held  
in after years

More solemn than of old ?

Phi. Madam, my wish  
Echoes your Majesty's.

Pole. It shall be so.  
Gard. Mine echoes both your  
Graces', (aside) but the Pope—

Can we not have the Catholic church  
as well [cannot,

Without as with the Italian ? if we  
Why then the Pope.

My lords of the upper house,  
And ye my masters, of the lower  
house, resolved ?

Do you stand fast by that which ye  
Voices. We do. [supplicate

Gard. And be you all one mind to  
The Legate here for pardon, and ac-  
knowledge

The primacy of the Pope ?

Voices. We are all one mind.  
Gard. Then must I play the vassal  
to this Pole. [Aside.

He draws a paper from under his robes  
and presents it to the King and Queen,  
who look through it and return it to  
him ; then ascends a tribune and  
reads.

We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal,

And Commons here in Parliament  
[assembled,

Presenting the whole body of this  
realm [same,

Of England, and dominions of the  
Do make most humble suit unto your  
Majesties, [state,

In our own name and that of all the  
That by your gracious means and in-  
tercession

Our supplication be exhibited  
To the Lord Cardinal Pole, sent here  
as Legate [Pope,

From our most holy father Julius,  
And from the apostolic see of Rome ;  
And do declare our penitence and  
grief

For our long schism and disobedience,  
Either in making laws and ordinances  
Against the Holy Father's primacy,  
Or else by doing or by speaking  
[same ;

Which might impugn or prejudice the  
By this our supplication promising,

As well for our own selves as all the  
realm, [quick,  
That now we be and ever shall be  
Under and with your Majesties' au-  
thorities,

To do to the utmost all that in us lies  
Towards the abrogation and repeal  
Of all such laws and ordinances made ;

[ties,  
Whereon we humbly pray your Majes-  
As persons undefiled with our offence,  
So to set forth this humble suit of  
ours [sion

That we the rather by your interces-  
May from the apostolic see obtain,  
Thro' this most reverend Father, ab-  
solution, [censures

And full release from danger of all  
Of Holy Church that we be fall'n into,  
So that we may, as children penitent,  
Be once again received into the bosom  
And unity of Universal Church ;  
And that this noble realm thro' after  
years

May in this unity and obedience  
Unto the holy see and reigning Pope  
Serve God and both your Majesties.  
Voices. Amen. [All sit.  
[He again presents the petition to the  
King and Queen, who hand it rever-  
entially to Pole.

Pole (sitting). This is the loveliest  
day that ever smiled  
On England. All her breath should,  
incense like, [of Him  
Rise to the heavens in grateful praise  
Who now recalls her to his ancient  
fold. [given  
Lo ! once again God to this realm hath  
A token of His more especial Grace ;  
For as this people were the first of all  
[church  
The islands call'd into the dawning  
Out of the dead, deep night of heathen-  
dom,  
So now are these the first whom God  
hath given [schism ;  
Grace to repent and sorrow for their  
And if your penitence be not mockery,  
[joice  
Oh how the blessed angels who re-  
Over one saved do triumph at this  
hour  
In the reborn salvation of a land  
So noble. [A pause.  
For ourselves we do protest  
That our commission is to heal, not  
harm ; [cle ;  
We come not to condemn, but recon-  
We come not to compel, but call  
again ;  
We come not to destroy, but edify ;  
Nor yet to question things already  
done ;  
These are forgiven — matters of the  
past—  
And range with jetsam and with offal  
thrown  
Into the blind sea of forgetfulness.  
[A pause.

Ye have reversed the attainder laid on us [and we,  
By him who sacked the house of God; Amplier than any field on our poor earth [sown,  
Can render thanks in fruit for being Do here and now repay you sixty-fold, A hundred, yea, a thousand thousand With heaven for earth. [fold,

[Rising and stretching forth his hands. All kneel but Sir Ralph Bagenhall, who rises and remains standing.

The Lord who hath redeem'd us With his own blood, and wash'd us from our sins, [bride; To purchase for himself a stainless He, whom the Father hath appointed Head [absolve you! Of all his church, He by His mercy [A pause.

And we by that authority Apostolic Given unto us, his Legate, by the Pope, Our Lord and Holy Father, Julius, God's Vicar and Vicegerent upon earth, Do here absolve you and deliver you And every one of you, and all the realm

And its dominions from all heresy, All schism, and from all and every censure, [upon; Judgment, and pain accruing there— And also we restore you to the bosom And unity of Universal Church.

[Turning to Gardiner. Our letters of commission will declare this plainlier.

[Queen heard sobbing. Cries of Amen! Amen! Some of the members embrace one another. All but Sir Ralph Bagenhall pass out into the neighboring chapel, whence is heard the Te Deum.

Bag. We strove against the papacy from the first, [ward's time, In William's time, in our first Edward in my master Henry's time; but now, The unity of Universal Church, Mary would have it; and this Gardiner follows; The Unity of Universal Hell, Philip would have it; and this Gardiner follows!

A Parliament of imitative apes! Shee! at the gap which Gardiner takes, who not believe— Believes the Pope, nor any of them These spaniel-Spaniard English of the time, [dust, Who rub their fawning noses in the For that is Philip's gold-dust, and adore

This Vicar of their Vicar. Would I had been Born Spaniard! I had held my head up then,

I am ashamed that I am Bagenhall, English.

Enter Officer.

Of. Sir Ralph Bagenhall,  
Bag. What of that?

Of. You were the one sole man in either house [houses fell. Who stood upright when both the Bag. The houses fell!

Of. I mean the houses knelt Before the Legate.

Bag. Do not scrimp your phrase, But stretch it wider; say when England fell. [man who stood.

Of. I say you were the one sole Bag. I am the one sole man in either house [a son.

Perchance in England loves her like Of. Well, you one man, because you stood upright, [to the Tower.

Her Grace the Queen commands you Bag. As traitor, or as heretic, or for what? [be

Of. If any man in any way would The one man he shall be so to his cost.

Bag. What! will she have my head?

Of. A round fine likelier. Your pardon. [Calling to Attendant.

By the river to the Tower. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—Whitehall. A room in the Palace.

Mary, Gardiner, Pole, Paget, Bonner, etc.

Mary. The king and I, my Lords, now that all traitors [the heads Against our royal state have lost Wherewith they plotted in their treasonous malice, Have talk'd together and are well agreed [Gardiner

That those old statutes touching Lol-To bring the heretic to the stake, should be [quicken'd.

No longer a dead letter, but re- One of the Council. Why, what hath fluster'd Gardiner? how he rubs His forelock.

Paget. I have changed a word with him [again.

In coming, and may change a word Gard. Madam, your Highness is our sun, the King [one;

And you together our two suns in And so the beams of both may shine upon us, [feel your light,

The faith that seem'd to droop will Lift head, and flourish; yet not light alone, [heat enough

There must be heat—there must be To scorch and wither heresy to the root. [to come in."

For what saith Christ? "Compel them And what saith Paul? "I would they were cut off [ter live!

That trouble you. "Let the dead let-

Trace it in fire, that all the louts to whom  
Their A B C is darkness, clowns and  
May read it! so you quash rebellion  
too,  
For heretic and traitor are all one:  
Two vipers of one breed—an amphis-  
bœna, [letter burn!  
Each end a sting: let the dead  
*Pag.* Yet there be some disloyal  
Catholics, [throats  
And many heretics loyal; heretic  
Cried no God-bless-her to the Lady  
Jane, [be  
But shouted in Queen Mary. So there  
Some traitor-heretic, there is axe and  
cord. [loyal,  
To take the lives of others that are  
And by the churchman's pitiless  
doom of fire, [crown,  
Were but a thankless policy in the  
Ay, and against itself; for there are  
many.

*Mary.* If we could burn out heresy,  
my Lord Paget, [of England—  
We reck not tho' we lost this crown  
Ay! tho' it were ten Englands!

*Gard.* Right your Grace.  
*Paget.* Paget, you are all for this poor life of  
ours,  
And care but little for the life to be.  
*Paget.* I have some time, for  
curiousness, my Lord,  
Watch'd children playing at *their* life  
to be,  
And cruel at it, killing helpless flies;  
Such is our time—all times for aught  
I know. [sting the soul—

*Gard.* We kill the heretics that  
They, with right reason, flies that  
prick the flesh.

*Paget.* They had not reach'd right  
reason; little children!  
They kill'd but for their pleasure and  
They felt in killing. [the power

*Gard.* A spice of Satan, ha!  
Why, good! what then? granted!—  
we are fallen creatures;

Look to your Bible, *Paget!* we are  
fallen. [Lord Bishop,

*Paget.* I am but of the laity, my  
And may not read your Bible, yet I  
found [the children,  
One day a wholesome scripture, "Lit-  
Love one another."

*Gard.* Did you find a scripture,  
"I come not to bring peace but a  
sword"? The sword [Paget,  
Is in her Grace's hand to smite with.  
You stand up here to fight for heresy,  
You are more than guess'd at as a  
heretic, [true faith  
And on the steep up-track of the  
Your lapses are far seen.

*Paget.* The faultless Gardiner!  
*Mary.* You brawl beyond the ques-  
tion; speak, Lord Legate.

*Pole.* Indeed, I cannot follow with  
your Grace, [not kill  
Rather would say—the shepherd doth

The sheep that wander from his flock,  
but sends [fold.  
His careful dog to bring them to the  
Look to the Netherlands, wherein have  
been [end?  
Such holocausts of heresy! to what  
For yet the faith is not established  
*Gard.* The end's not come. [there.  
*Pole.* No—nor this way will come,  
Seeing there lie two ways to every  
end, [there  
A better and a worse—the worse is  
To persecute, because to persecute  
Makes a faith hated, and is further-  
more

No perfect witness of a perfect faith  
In him who persecutes: when men are  
tost [sure  
On tides of strange opinion, and not  
Of their own selves, they are wroth  
with their own selves,  
And thence with others; then, who  
lights the fagot?  
Not the full faith, no, but the lurking  
doubt. [the Church,  
Old Rome, that first made martyrs in  
Trembled for her own gods, for these  
were trembling—  
But when did our Rome tremble?

*Paget.* Did she not  
In Henry's time and Edward's?  
*Pole.* What, my Lord!  
The Church on Peter's rock? never!  
I have seen

A pine in Italy that cast its shadow  
Athwart a cataract; firm stood the  
pine— [my mind,  
The cataract shook the shadow. To  
The cataract typed the headlong plunge  
and fall [Rome.

Of heresy to the pit: the pine was  
You see, my Lords, [trembled;  
It was the shadow of the Church that  
Your church was but the shadow of  
Wanting the triple mitre. [a church,

*Gard.* (*muttering*). Here be tropes.  
*Pole.* And tropes are good to clothe  
a naked truth,

And make it look more secretly.  
*Gard.* Tropes again!

*Pole.* You are hard to please. Then  
without tropes my Lord,  
An overmuch severeness, I repeat,  
When faith is wavering makes the  
waverer pass [doctrines

Into the more settled hatred of the  
Of those who rule, which hatred by  
and by [to light  
Involves the ruler (thus there springs  
That Centaur of a monstrous common-  
weal [may quail,  
The traitor-heretic) then tho' some  
Yet others are that dare the stake and  
fire, [borne, begets

And their strong torment bravely  
An admiration and an indignation,  
And hot desire to imitate; so the  
plague  
Of schism spreads; were there but  
three or four

Of these misleaders, yet I would not  
say

Burn! and we cannot burn whole  
towns; yet are many  
As my Lord Paget says.

*Gard.* Yet my Lord Cardinal—  
*Pole.* I am your Legate; please you  
let me finish. [regimen]

Methinks that under our Queen's  
We might go softer than with crimson  
rowel [Henry first  
And streaming lash. When Herod-  
Began to batter at your English Church  
This was the cause, and hence the  
judgment on her.

She seethed with such adulteries, and  
the lives [so foul  
Of many among your churchmen were  
That heaven wept and earth blush'd.  
I would advise

That we should thoroughly cleanse the  
Church within [quicken'd.  
Before these bitter statutes be re-  
So after that when she once more is  
seen [of Christ,

White as the light, the spotless bride  
Like Christ himself on Tabor, possi-  
bly [again;  
The Lutheran may be won to her  
Till when, my Lords, I counsel toler-  
ance. [hand my Lord,

*Gard.* What if a mad dog bit your  
Would you not chop the bitten finger  
off, [with the poison?  
Lest your whole body should madden  
I would not, were I Queen, tolerate the  
heretic,

No, not an hour. The ruler of a land  
Is bounden by his power and place to  
see [them!

His people be not poison'd. Tolerate  
Why? do they tolerate you? Nay,  
many of them [call they not  
Would burn—have burnt each other;  
The one true faith, a loathsome idol-  
worship? [crime

Beware, Lord Legate, of a heavier  
Than heresy is itself; beware I say,  
Lest men accuse you of indifference  
To all faith, all religion; for you know  
Right well that you yourself have been  
supposed

Tainted with Lutheranism in Italy.

*Pole* [angered]. But you, my Lord,  
beyond all supposition,  
In clear and open day were congruent  
With that vile Cranmer in the accus-  
ed lie [the spring

Of good Queen Catherine's divorce—  
Of all those evils that have flow'd upon  
us; [tyrant,  
For you yourself have truckled to the  
And done your best to bastardize our  
Queen, [fell upon you

For which God's righteous judgment  
In your five years of imprisonment,  
my Lord [ster'd up  
Under young Edward. Who so bol-  
The gross King's headship of the  
Church, or more

Denied the Holy Father!

*Gard.* Ha! what! eh?  
But you, my Lord, a polish'd gentle-  
man, [tussle,

A bookman, flying from the heat and  
You lived among your vines and  
oranges, [sent for,  
In your soft Italy yonder! You were  
You were appeal'd to, but you still pre-  
fer'd [did

Your learned leisure. As for what I  
I suffer'd and repented. You, Lord  
Legate [to learn

And Cardinal-Deacon, have not now  
That ev'n St. Peter in his time of fear  
Denied his Master, ay, and thrice, my  
Lord, [years, my Lord,

*Pole.* But not for five and twenty  
*Gard.* Ha! good! it seems then I  
was summon'd hither

But to be mock'd and baited. Speak,  
friend Bonner, [friend Bonner,  
And tell this earned Legate he lacks  
zeal.

The Church's evil is not as the King's.  
Cannot be heal'd by stroking. The  
mad bite [at once,

Must have the cautery—tell him—and  
What wouldst thou do hadst thou his  
power, thou [with me.

That layest so long in heretic bonds  
Wouldst thou not burn and blast them  
root and branch?

*Bon.* Ay, after you, my Lord.

*Gard.* Nay, God's passion, before  
me! speak. [flame.

*Bon.* I am on fire until I see them  
*Gard.* Ay, the psalm-singing weav-  
ers, cobblers, seum— [genet,

But this most noble prince Planta-  
Our good Queen's cousin—dallying  
over seas [noble mother's  
Even when his brother's, nay, his  
Head fell—

*Pole.* Peace, mad man!  
Thou stirrest up a grief thou canst not  
fathom. [Chancellor

Thou Christian Bishop, thou Lord  
Of England? no more rein upon  
thine anger [ashamed

Than any child! Thou mak'st me much  
That I was for a moment wroth at  
thee. [give me feuds,

*Mary.* I come for counsel and ye  
Like dogs that set to watch their mas-  
ter's gate,

Fall, when the thief is ev'n within the  
walls [Chancellor,

To worrying one another. My Lord  
You have an old trick of offending  
us; [with us

And but that you are art and part  
In purging heresy, well we might, for  
this [the Legate,

Your violence and much roughness to  
Have shut you from our counsels.  
Cousin Pole, [Retire with me.

You are fresh from brighter lauds.  
His highness and myself (so you allow  
us)

Will let you learn in peace and privacy

What power this cooler son of England hath  
In breeding Godless vermin. And That you may see according to our Come, cousin.

*Execunt Queen and Pole, etc.*  
*Gard.* Pole has the Plantagenet face.

But not the force made them our Fine eyes—but melancholy, irrelative—

A fine beard, Bonner, a very full But a weak mouth, an indeterminate—ha?

*Bon.* Well, a weak mouth per*Gard.* And not like thine To gorge a heretic whole roasted or raw.

*Bon.* I'd do my best, my Lord; but Is here as Pope and Master of the Church,

And if he go not with you—  
*Gard.* Tut, Master Bishop,

Our bashful Legate, saw'st not how he flush'd?

Touch him upon his old heretical talk, He'll burn a diocese to prove his orthodoxy.

And let him call me truckler. In Thou knowest we had to dodge, or duck, or die;

I kept my head for use of Holy And see you, we shall have to dodge again,

And let the Pope trample our rights, His foreign fist into our island Church

To plumb the leaner pouch of Italy. For a time for a time.

Why? that these statutes may be And that his fan may thoroughly purge his floor.

*Bon.* So then you hold the Pope—  
*Gard.* I hold the Pope:

What do I hold him? what do I hold the Pope?

Come, come, the morsel stuck—this I have gulped it down. I am wholly for the Pope,

Utterly and altogether for the Pope, The Eternal Peter of the changeless chair,

Crown'd slave of slaves, and mitred God upon earth! what more? what would you have?

Hence, let's be gone.

*Enter Usher.*

*Ush.* Well that you be not gone, My Lord. The Queen, most wroth at first with you,

Is now content to grant you full So that you crave full pardon of the Legate.

I am sent to fetch you.  
*Gard.* Doth Pole yield, sir, ha!

Did you hear 'em? were you by?  
*Ush.* I cannot tell you,

His bearing is so courtly delicate; And yet methinks he falters: their two Graces

Do so dear-cousin and royal-cousin So press on him the duty which as Legate

He owes himself, and with such *Gard.* Smiles that burn men. Bonner, it will be carried.

He falters, ha? fore God we change and change;

Men now are bow'd and old, the doc- At three-score years; then if we change at all

We needs must do it quickly; it is Of brief life, and brief purpose, and fury patience,

As I have shown to-day. I am sorry If Pole be like to turn. Our old friend Crammer,

Your more especial love, hath turn'd He knows not where he stands, which, if this pass,

We two shall have to teach him; let Crammer and Hooper, Ridley and Latimer,

Rogers and Ferrar, for their time Their hour is hard at hand, their "dies Irae,"

Their "dies Illa," which will test I feel it but a duty—you will find in it

Pleasure as well as duty, worthy To test their sect. Sir, I attend the Queen

To crave most humble pardon—of her Royal, Infallible, Papal Legate-cousin.

SCENE V.—*Woodstock.*

Elizabeth, Lady in Waiting.

*Lady.* The colors of our Queen are green and white, These fields are only green, they make me gape.

*Eliz.* There's a whitethorn, girl.  
*Lady.* Ay, for an hour in May. But court is always May, buds out in masks,

Breaks into feather'd merriments, and In silken pageants. Why do they keep us here?

Why still suspect your Grace?  
*Eliz.* Hard upon both.

*[Writes on the window with a diamond.*

*Much suspected, of me Nothing proven can be, Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.*

*Lady.* What hath your Highness written?

*Eliz.* A true rhyme.  
*Lady.* Cut with a diamond; so to last like truth.

*Eliz.* Ay, if truth last. *[out.*

*Lady.* But truth, they say, will So it must last. It is not like a word,

That comes and goes in uttering.

*Eliz.* Truth, a word !  
The very Truth and very Word are  
one. [at, girl,

But truth of story, which I glanced  
Is like a word that comes from olden  
days, [tongue

And passes thro' the peoples : every  
Asters it passing, till it spells and  
speaks

Quite other than at first.

*Lady.* I do not follow.  
*Eliz.* How many names in the long  
sweep of time [but hang

That so foreshortens greatness, may  
On the chance mention of some fool  
that once

Brake bread with us, perhaps ; and  
my poor chronicle [field  
Is but of glass. Sir Henry Beding-  
May split it for a spite.

*Lady.* God grant it last,  
And witness to your Grace's inno-  
cence,

Till doomsday melt it.

*Eliz.* Or a second fire,  
Like that which lately crackled under-  
foot [glass,

And in this very chamber, fuse the  
And char us back again into the dust  
We spring from. Never peacock  
against rain

Seream'd as you did for water.

*Lady.* And I got it.  
I woke Sir Henry—and he's true to  
you—

I read his honest horror in his eyes.

*Eliz.* Or true to you ?

*Lady.* Sir Henry Bedingfield !  
I will have no man true to me, your  
Grace, [the clown !

But one that pares his nails ; to me ?  
For, like his cloak, his manners want  
the nap [says,

And gloss of court ; but of this fire he  
Nay swears, it was no wicked wilful-  
ness,

Only a natural chance.

*Eliz.* A chance—perchance  
One of those wicked wilfuls that men  
make, [know

Nor shame to call it nature. Nay, I  
They hunt my blood. Save for my  
daily range [Writ

Among the pleasant fields of Holy  
I might despair. But there hath some  
one come ;

The house is all in movement. Hence,  
and see.

[Exit Lady.

*Milkmaid* (singing without),

Shame upon you, Robin,

Shame upon you now !

Kiss me would you ? with my hands

Milking the cow ?

Daisies grow again,

Kingcups blow again,

And you came and kiss'd me milking  
the cow.

*Robin came behind me,*

*Kiss'd me well I vow ;*

*Cuff him could I ? with my hands*

*Milking the cow ?*

*Swallows fly again,*

*Cuckoos cry again,*

*And you came and kiss'd me milking  
the cow.*

*Come, Robin, Robin,*

*Come and kiss me now ;*

*Help it can I ? with my hands*

*Milking the cow ?*

*Kingdoves coo again,*

*All things woo again,*

*Come behind and kiss me milking the  
cow.*

*Eliz.* Right honest and red-cheek'd ;

Robin was violent,

And she was crafty—a sweet violence,

And a sweet craft. I would I were a

milkmaid, [bake, and die,

To sing, love, marry, churn, brew,

Then have my simple headstone by

the church,

And all things lived and ended honest-  
ly.

I could not if I would. I am Harry's  
daughter : [are not sweet.

Gardiner would have my head. They

The violence and the craft that do

divide [must lie ;

The world of nature ; what is weak

The lion needs but roar to guard his

young ; [they are there.

The lapwing lies, says " here " when

Threaten the child ; " I'll scourge

you if you did it." [soft tongue,

What weapon hath the child, save his

To say, " I did not ? " and my rod's

the block.

I never lay my head upon the pillow

But that I think, " Wilt thou lie there

to-morrow ? " [fell,

How oft the falling axe, that never

Hath shock'd me back into the day-  
light truth [black, dead

That it may fall to-day ! To see damp,

Nights in the Tower ; dead—with the

fear of death— [of a bell,

Too dead ev'n for a death-watch ! Toll

Stroke of a clock, the scurrying of a

rat

Affrighted me, and then delighted me,

For there was life—And there was life

in death— [light—

The little murder'd princes, in a pale

Rose hand in hand, and whisper'd,

" come away,

The civil wars are gone forevermore :

Thou last of all the Tudors, come away

[was a dream ;

With us is peace ! " The last ? It

I must not dream, not wink, but watch.

She has gone, [by

Maid Marian to her Robin—by and

Both happy ! a fox may flinch a hen by

night, [yard :

And make a morning outcry in ti-

But there's no Renard here to "catch  
her tripping." [have wish'd  
Catch me who can; yet, sometimes I  
that I were caught, and kill'd away  
at once [Gardiner,  
Out of the flutter. The gray rogue,  
Went on his knees, and pray'd me to  
confess [self  
In Wyatt's business, and to cast my  
Upon the good Queen's mercy; ay,  
when, my Lord?

God save the Queen. My jailer—  
Enter Sir Henry Bedingfield.

Bed. One, whose bolts  
That jail you from free life, bar you  
from death. [hereabout  
There haunt some Papist ruffians  
Would murder you.

Eliz. I thank you heartily, sir,  
But I am royal, tho' your prisoner,  
And God hath blest or curs'd me with  
a nose—

Your boots are from the horses.

Bed. Ay, my Lady.  
When next there comes a missive from  
the Queen [hour  
It shall be all my study for one  
To rose and lavender my horsiness,  
Before I dare to glance upon your  
Grace. [time she wrote,

Eliz. A missive from the Queen: last  
I had like to have lost my life: it  
takes my breath: [boots,

O God, sir, do you look upon your  
Are you so small a man? Help me:  
Is it life or death? [what think you,

Bed. I thought not on my boots;  
The devil take all boots were ever  
made [lay it here,

Since man went barefoot. See, I  
For I will come no nearer to your  
Grace; [Laying down the letter.

And whether it bring you bitter news  
or sweet, [or not,  
And God hath given your Grace a nose  
I'll help you, if I may.

Eliz. Your pardon, then;  
It is the heat and narrowness of the  
cage [free wing

That makes the captive testy; with  
The world were all one Araby. Leave  
me now,

Will you, companion to myself, sir?

Bed. Will I?  
With most exceeding willingness, I  
will;

You know I never come until I be  
call'd. [Exit.

Eliz. It lies there folded: is there  
venom in it? [sting.

A snake—and if I touch it, it may  
Come, come, the worst!  
Best wisdom is to know the worst at  
once. [Reads:

It is the King's wish that you should  
wed Prince Philibert of Savoy. You  
are to come to Court on the instant;  
and think of this in your coming.

Mary the Queen.  
Think! I have many thoughts;

I think there may be birdlime here for  
me; [the realm;

I think they fain would have me from  
I think the Queen may never bear a  
child; [Queen,

I think that I may be some time the  
Then, Queen indeed: no foreign  
prince or pries [the steps.

Should fill my throne, myself upon  
I think I will not marry any one,

Specially not this landless Philibert  
Of Savoy; but, if Philip menace me,  
I think that I will play with Philib-  
ert,—

As once the holy father did with mine,  
Before my father married my good  
mother,—  
For fear of Spain.

Enter Lady.

Lady. O Lord! your Grace,  
your Grace, [shall fly  
I feel so happy: it seems that we  
These bald, blank fields, and dance  
into the sun

That shines on princes.

Eliz. Yet, a moment since,  
I wish'd myself the milkmaid singing  
here; [flowers—  
To kiss and cuff among the birds and  
A right rough life and headful.

Lady. But the wench  
Hath her own troubles; she is weep-  
ing now; [word.

For the wrong Robin took her at her  
Then the cow kick'd, and all her milk  
was spilt.

Your Highness such a milkmaid?

Eliz. I had kept  
My Robins and my cows in sweeter  
order

Had I been such. [a Robin?

Lady [stily]. And had your Grace

Eliz. Come, come, you are chill  
here; you want the sun

That shines at court; make ready for  
the journey.

Pray God, we 'scape the sunstroke.  
Ready at once. [Exit.

SCENE VI.—London. A Room in the  
Palace.

Lord Petre and Lord William How-  
ard.

Petre. You cannot see the Queen.

Renard denied her,

Ev'n now to me.

How. Their Flemish go-between

And all-in-all. I came to thank her

Majesty [the Tower;

For freeing my friend Bagenhall from

A grace to me! Mercy, that herb-of-

Flowers now but seldom. [grace,

Petre. Only now perhaps,

Because the Queen hath been three

days in tears [hedge-rose

For Philip's going—like the wild

Of a soft winter, possible, not proba-  
ble,

However, you have prov'n it.

How.

I must see her.

Enter Renard.

Ren. My Lords, you cannot see her Majesty.

How. Why then the King! for I would have him bring it [Queen, Home to the leisure wisdom of his Before he go, that since these statutes

past, [his heat, Gardiner out-Gardiners Gardiner in Bonner cannot out-Bonner his own self— [dren do,

Beast!—but they play with fire as child—And burn the house. I know that these are breeding [in men

A fierce resolve and fixt heart-hate Against the King, the Queen, the Holy Father,

The faith itself. Can I not see him?

Ren. Not now.

And in all this, my Lord, her Majesty Is flint of flint, you may strike fire From her, [your message.

Not hope to melt her. I will give [Execute Petre and Howard.

Enter Philip (musing).

Phi. She will not have Prince Philibert of Savoy, [she will live

I talk'd with her in vain—says And die true maid—a goodly creature too [she must have him;

Would she had been the Queen! yet She troubles England: that she breathes in England

Is life and lungs to every rebel birth That passes out of embryo.

Simon Renard!—

This Howard, whom they fear, what was he saying? [said, my liege,

Ren. What your imperial father To deal with heresy gentlier. Gardiner burns, [this people

And Bonner burns; and it would seem Care more for our brief life in their wet land [my Lord

Than yours in happier Spain. I told He should not vex her Highness; she would say [that His church

These are the means God works with, May flourish.

Phi. Ay, sir, but in statemanship [blow.

To strike too soon is oft to miss the Thou knowest I bade my chaplain,

Castro, preach Against these burnings.

Ren. And the Emperor Approved you, and when last he wrote, declared [were bland

His comfort in your Grace that you And affable to men of all estates,

In hope to charm them from their hate of Spain. [under Spain.

Phi. In hope to crush all heresy But, Renard, I am sicker staying here Than any sea could make me passing

hence, Tho' I be ever deadly sick at sea.

So sick am I with biding for this child. [women

Is it the fashion in this clime for

To go twelve months in bearing of a child? [they led

The nurses yawn'd, the cradle gaped, Processions, chanted litanies, clash'd their bells, [priests

Shot off their lying cannon, and her Have preach'd, the fools, of this fair prince to come, [fool.

Till, by St. James, I find myself tho' Why do you lift your eyebrow at me thus? [moved till now.

Ren. I never saw your Highness

Phi. So, weary am I of this wet land of theirs,

And every soul of man that breathes therein.

Ren. My liege, we must not drop the mask before

The masquerade is over—

Phi. —Have I dropt it? I have but shown a loathing face to you,

Who knew it from the first.

Enter Mary.

Mary (aside). With Renard. Still Parleying with Renard, all the day with Renard, me—

And scarce a greeting all the day for And goes to-morrow. [Exit Mary.

Phi. (to Renard who advances to him). Well, sir, is there more?

Ren. (who has perceived the Queen). May Simon Renard speak a single word?

Phi. Ay.

Ren. And be forgiven for it?

Phi. Simon Renard Knows me too well to speak a single That could not be forgiven. [word

Ren. Well, my liege, Your Grace hath a most chaste and loving wife,

Phi. Why not? The Queen of Philip should be chaste.

Ren. Ay, but, my Lord, you know what Virgil sings,

Woman is various and most mutable.

Phi. She play the harlot! never.

Ren. No, sire, no, Not dream'd of by the rabidest gopeller. [palace,

There was a paper thrown into the "The King hath wearied of his barren bride." [rent it,

She came upon it, read it, and then With all the rage of one who hates a truth [have you—

He cannot but allow. Sir, I would What should I say, I cannot pick my words— [Queen.

Be somewhat less—majestic to your

Phi. Am I to change my manners, Simon Renard, [beasts?

Because these islanders are brutal Or would you have me turn a sonneteer,

And warble those brief-sighted eyes of hers?

*Ren.* Brief-sighted tho' they be, I have seen them, sire, [royally] When you perchance were trifling With some fair dame of court, suddenly ill [indeed]

With such fierce fire—had it been fire It would have burnt both speakers.

*Phi.* Ay, and then?

*Ren.* Sire, might it not be policy in some matter [to cede] Of small importance now and then A point to her demand?

*Phi.* Well, I am going. *Ren.* For should her love when you are gone, my liege, [be wanting] Witness these papers, there will not Those that will urge her injury— should her love— [than one—] And I have known such women more Veer to the counterpoint, and jealousy Hath in it an alchemic force to fuse Almost into one metal love and hate,— [Council,

And she impress her wrongs upon her And these again upon her Parliament— [then perhaps]

We are not loved here, and would Not so well holpen in our wars with France;

As else we might be—here she comes.

*Enter Mary.*

*Mary.* Nay, must you go indeed? *O Phillip!*

*Phi.* Madam, I must. *Mary.* The parting of a husband and a wife [half] Is like the cleaving of a heart; one Will flutter here, one there.

*Phi.* You say true, Madam. *Mary.* The Holy Virgin will not have me yet [a prince,

Lose the sweet hope that I may bear If such a prince were born and you not here! [were born.

*Phi.* I should be here if such a prince *Mary.* But must you go?

*Phi.* Madam, you know my father, Retiring into cloistral solitude To yield the remnant of his years to heaven, [the world]

Will shift the yoke and weight of all From off his neck to mine. We meet at Brussels. [long,

But since mine absence will not be for Your Majesty shall go to Dover with And wait my coming back. [me,

*Mary.* To Dover? no, I am too feeble. I will go to Greenwich, [there watch] So you will have me with you; and All that is gracious in the breath of heaven [land, and pass]

Draw with your sails from our poor And leave me, Philip, with my prayers for you. [your prayers.

*Phi.* And doubtless I shall profit by *Mary.* Methinks that would you tarry one day more [myself]

The news was sudden) I could mould

To bear your going better; will you do it? [save a realm.

*Phi.* Madam, a day may sink or *Mary.* A day may save a heart from breaking too. [stop a day?

*Phi.* Well, Simon Renard, shall we *Ren.* Your Grace's business will not suffer, sire, [tell.

For one day more, so far as I can *Phi.* Then one day more to please her Majesty. [my life again.

*Mary.* The sunshine sweeps across O if I knew you felt this parting, As I do! [Philip,

*Phi.* By St. James I do protest, Upon the faith and honor of a Spaniard, [Majesty.

I am vastly grieved to leave your Simon, is supper ready?

*Ren.* Ay, my liege, I saw the covers laying.

*Phi.* Let us have it. [Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in the Palace.

Mary, Cardinal Pole.

*Mary.* What have you there? *Pole.* So please your Majesty,

A long petition from the foreign exiles To spare the life of Crammer. Bishop Thirlby, [Howard] And my Lord Paget and Lord William Crave, in the same cause, hearing of your Grace. [ated—]

Hath he not written himself—infatuate To sue you for his life?

*Mary.* His life? Oh, no; Not sued for that—he knows it were in vain.

But so much of the anti-papal leaven Works in him yet, he hath pray'd me not to sully [the realm]

Mine own prerogative, and degrade By seeking justice at a stranger's hand [Queen,

Against my natural subject. King and To whom he owes his loyalty after God, [prince?

Shall these accuse him to a foreign Death would not grieve him more, I cannot be [Pope]

True to this realm of England and the Together, says the heretic.

*Pole.* And there errs; As he hath ever err'd thro' vanity. A secular kingdom is but as the body Lacking a soul; and in itself a beast. The Holy Father in a secular kingdom Is as the soul descending out of heaven Into a body generate.

*Mary.* Write to him, then. *Pole.* I will.

*Mary.* And sharply, Pole. *Pole.* Here come the Crammerites!

*Enter Thirlby, Lord Paget, Lord William Howard.*

*How.* Health to your Grace, Good-morrow, my Lord Cardinal ; We make our humble prayer unto your Grace [sign parts, That Cranmer may withdraw to for- Or into private life within the realm. In several bills and declarations, Madam,

He hath recanted all his heresies. *Paget.* Ay, ay ; if Bonner have not forged the bills. [*Aside*

*Mary.* Did not More die, and Fisher ? he must burn.

*How.* He hath recanted, Madam. *Mary.* The better for him. He burns in Purgatory, not in Hell.

*How.* Ay, ay, your Grace ; but it was never seen That any one recanting thus at full, As Cranmer hath, came to the fire on earth.

*Mary.* It will be seen now, then. *Thi.* O Madam, Madam ! I thus implore you, low upon my knees,

To reach the hand of mercy to my I have err'd with him ; with him I have recanted.

What human reason is there why my friend Should meet with lesser mercy than myself ? [a riot

*Mary.* My Lord of Ely, this. After We hang the leaders, let their following go.

Cranmer is head and father of these heresies, [God New learning as they call it ; yea, may Forget me at most need when I forget Her foul divorce—my sainted mother— No !— [doubted there.

*How.* Ay, ay, but mighty doctors The Pope himself waver'd ; and more than one [wit, Row'd in that galley—Gardiner to Whom truly I deny not to have been Your faithful friend and trusty coun- cillor. [book,

Hath not your Highness ever read his His tractate upon True Obedience, Writ by himself and Bonner ?

*Mary.* I will take Such order with all bad heretical books [house and live, That none shall hold them in his Henceforward. No, my Lord.

*How.* Then never read it. The truth is here. Your father was a man [courtuous, Of such colossal kingdom, yet so Except when wroth, you scarce could meet his eye And hold your own ; and were he wroth indeed,

You held it less, or not at all. I say, Your father had a will that beat men down ; [men down—

Your father had a brain that beat *Pole.* Not me, my Lord.

*How.* No, for you were not here ;

You sit upon this fallen Cranmer's throne ; [Lord Legate, And it would more become you, my To join a voice, so potent with her Highness, [stand To ours in plea for Cranmer than to On naked self-assertion.

*Mary.* All your voices Are waves on flint. The heretic must burn. [esty's own life ;

*How.* Yet once he saved your Ma- Stood out against the King in your At his own peril. [bel, a f,

*Mary.* I know not if he did ; And if he did I care not, my Lord Howard.

My life is not so happy, no such boon, That I should spare to take a heretic priest's, [you vex me ? Who saved it or not saved. Why do

*Paget.* Yet to save Cranmer were to save the Church, Your Majesty's I mean ; he is effaced, Self-blotted out ; so wounded his honor,

He can but creep down into some dark Like a hurt beast, and hide himself and die ; [Highness knows But if you burn him,—well, your The saying, " Martyr's blood—seed of the Church."

*Mary.* Of the true Church ; but his is none, nor will be.

You are too politic for me, my Lord *Paget,* [life, And if he have to live so loath'd a It were more merciful to burn him now. [knew him

*Thi.* O yet relent. O Madam, if you As I do, ever gentle, and so gracious, With all his learning—

*Mary.* Yet a heretic still. His learning makes his burning the more just. [came across him ;

*Thi.* So worship't of all those that The stranger at his hearth, and all his house— [bine, belike.

*Mary.* His children and his concu- *Thi.* To do him any wrong was to beget [was rich,

A kindness from him, for his heart Of such fine mould, that if you sow'd therein [ity.

The seed of Hate, it blossom'd Char- *Pole.* " After his kind it costs him nothing," there's [point.

An old world English adage to th- These are but natural graces, my good Bishop, [flowers,

Which in the Catholick garden are as But on the heretic dunghill only weeds. [gracious.

*How.* Such weeds make dunghills

*Mary.* Enough, my Lords. It is God's will, the Holy Father's will,

And Philip's will, and mine, that he should burn.

He is pronounced anathema.

*How.* Farewell, Madam,

God grant you ampler mercy at your  
cull  
Than you have shown to Cranmer.

*Pole.* After this,  
Your Grace will hardly care to over-  
look [exiles,  
This same petition of the foreign  
For Cranmer's life.

*Mary.* Make out the writ to-night.

SCENE II.—*Oxford. Cranmer in prison.*

*Cran.* Last night I dream'd the  
fuzots were alight, [stake,  
And that myself was fasten'd to the  
And found it all a visionary flame,  
Cool as the light in old decaying wood;  
And then King Harry look'd from out  
And bade me have good courage; and  
I heard [heaven,"—  
An angel cry, "there is more joy in  
And after that, the trumpet of the  
dead. [Trumpets without.  
Why, there are trumpets blowing now;  
what is it?

*Enter Father Cole.*

*Cole.* Cranmer, I come to question  
you again; [olle Faith,  
Have you remain'd in the true Cath-  
I left you in?

*Cran.* In the true Catholic faith,  
By Heaven's grace, I am more and  
more confirm'd. [ther Cole?

Why are the trumpets blowing, Fa-  
*Cole.* Cranmer, it is decided by the  
Council [cantation  
That you to-day should read your re-  
Before the people in St. Mary's  
Church.

And there be many heretics in the town,  
Who loathe you for your late return to  
Rome, [the street,  
And might assail you passing through  
And tear you piecemeal: so you have  
a guard. [thank the Council.

*Cran.* Or seek to rescue me. I

*Cole.* Do you lack any money?

*Cran.* Nay, why should I?

The prison fare is good enough for me.

*Cole.* Ay, but to give the poor.

*Cran.* Hand it me, then!

I thank you.

*Cole.* For a little space, farewell;

Until I see you in St. Mary's Church.

[*Exit Cole.*

*Cran.* It is against all precedent to  
burn [don me,  
One who recanis; they mean to par-  
To give the poor—they give the poor  
who die. [fixt:

Well, burn me or not burn me I am

It is but a communion, not a mass;

A holy supper, not a sacrifice;

No man can make his Maker—Villa

Garcia.

*Enter Villa Garcia.*

*V. G.* Pray you write out this  
paper for me, Cranmer.

*Cran.* Have I not writ enough to  
satisfy you?

*V. G.* It it the last.

*Cran.* Give it me, then. [*He writes.*

*V. G.* Now sign.

*Cran.* I have sign'd enough, and I

will sign no more.

*V. G.* It is no more than what you

have sign'd already.

The public form thereof.

*Cran.* It may be so;

I sign it with my presence, if I read

it. [sir, well,

*V. G.* But this is idle of you. Well,

You are to beg the people to pray for

you; [life;

Exhort them to a pure and virtuous

Declare the Queen's right to the

throne; confess [and retract

Your faith before all your hearers;

That Eucharistic doctrine in your

Will you not sign it now? [book.

*Cran.* No, Villa Garcia,

I sign no more. Will they have mercy

on me? [cy. So, farewell

*V. G.* Have you good hopes of mer-

[*Exit.*

*Cran.* Good hopes, not theirs, have

I that I am fixt.

Fixt beyond fall; however, in strange

hours, [quies,

After the long brain-dazing collo-

And thousand-times recurring argu-

ment

Of those two friars ever in my prison,

When left alone in my despondency,

Without a friend, a book, my faith

would seem [heavily

Dead or half-drown'd, or else swam

Against the huge corruptions of the

Church,

Mousters of mistradition, old enough

To scare me into dreaming, "what

am I, [it so,

Cranmer, against whole ages!" was

Or am I slandering my most inward

friend, [foe—

To veil the fault of my most outward

The soft and tremulous coward in the

flesh?

O higher, holler, earlier, purer church,

I have found thee and not leave thee

any more.

It is but a communion, not a mass—

No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast!

[*Writes.*] So, so; this will I say—thus

will I pray. [*Puts up the paper.*

*Enter Bonner.*

*Bon.* Good-day, old friend; what,

you look somewhat worn:

And yet it is a day to test your health

Ev'n at the best: I scarce have spoken

with you [your trial

Since when?—your degradation. At

Never stood up a bolder man than

you; [missioner—

You would not cap the Pope's com-

Your learning, and your stoutness,

and your heresy,

Dumfounded half of us. So, after that,

We had to dis-archbishop and unlord.  
And make you simple Cranmer once again.

The common barber clipt your hair,  
and I [holy oil;  
Scraped from your finger-points the  
And worse than all, you had to kneel  
to me: [Master Cranmer.

Which was not pleasant for you,  
Now you, that would not recognize the  
Pope, [Presence.

And you, that would not own the Real  
Have found a real presence in the  
stake, [ancient faith;

Which frights you back into the  
And so you have recanted to the Pope.  
How are the mighty fallen, Master  
Cranmer!

*Cran.* You have been more fierce  
against the Pope than I;

But why fling back the stone he  
strikes me with? [Aside.

O Bonner, if I ever did you kindness—  
Power hath been given you to try  
faith by fire—

Pray you, remembering how yourself  
have changed, [gone,

Be somewhat pitiful, after I have  
To the poor flock—to women and to  
children— [me.

That when I was archbishop held with  
*Bon.* Ay—gentle as they call you—  
live or die!

Pitiful to this pitiful heresy?  
I must obey the Queen and Council,  
man, [yourself.

Win thro' this day with honor to  
And I'll say something for you—so—  
good-by. [Exit.

*Cran.* This hard coarse man of old  
hath crouch'd to me [him.  
Till I myself was half ashamed for

*Enter Thirby.*

Weep not, good Thirby.

*Thi.* Oh, my Lord, my Lord!  
My heart is no such block as Bonner's  
Who would not weep? [is:

*Cran.* Why do you so my lord me,  
Who am disgraced? [ven

*Thi.* On earth; but saved in hea-  
By your recanting.

*Cran.* Will they burn me, Thirby?  
*Thi.* Alas, they will; these burn-  
ings will not help

The purpose of the faith; but my poor  
voice

Against them is a whisper to the roar  
Of a spring tide. [me?

*Cran.* And they will surely burn  
*Thi.* Ay; and besides, will have  
you in the church

Repeat your recantation in the ears  
Of all men, to the saving of their  
souls, [help you

Before your execution. May God  
Thro' that hard hour. [Thirby.

*Cran.* And may God bless you,  
Well, they shall hear my recantation  
there. [Exit Thirby.

Disgraced, dishonor'd!—not by them,  
indeed,

By mine own self—by mine own hand!  
O thin-skin'd hand and jutting veins,

'twas you [of Kent;  
That sign'd the burning of poor Joan  
But then she was a witch. You have

written much, [for Faith;  
But you were never raised to plead  
Whose dogmas I have reach'd: he was

deliver'd [was Lambert;  
To the secular arm to burn; and there  
Who can forsee himself? truly these

burnings, [burners,  
As Thirby says, are profitless to the  
And help the other side. You shall

burn too,  
Burn first when I am burnt.

Fire—inch by inch to die in agony!  
Latimer [burn'd

Had a brief end—not Ridley. Hooper  
Three-quarters of an hour. Will my

fagots [rain.  
Be wet as his were? It is a day of  
I will not muse upon it. [makes

My fancy takes the burner's part, and  
The fire seem even crueller than it is.

No, I not doubt that God will give me  
Albeit I have denied him. [strength,

*Enter Soto and Villa Garcia.*

*V. G.* We are ready  
To take you to St. Mary's, Master  
Cranmer.

*Cran.* And I: lead on; ye loose me  
from my bonds. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*St. Mary's Church.*

*Cole in the Pulpit.* Lord Williams of  
Thame presiding. Lord William  
Howard, Lord Paget, and others.

*Cranmer enters between Soto and  
Villa Garcia, and the whole Choir  
strike up "Nunc Dimittis."* Cran-  
mer is set upon a Scaffold before  
the people.

*Cole.* Behold him—  
[A pause: people in the foreground.

*People.* Oh, unhappy sight!  
1 *Prot.* See how the tears run down  
his fatherly face.

2 *Prot.* James, didst thou ever see  
a carrion crow [dies?

Stand watching a sick beast before he  
1 *Prot.* Him perch'd up there? I  
wish some thunderbolt

Would make this Cole a cinder, pulpit  
and all.

*Cole.* Behold him, brethren: he  
hath cause to weep!— [will,

So have we all: weep with him if ye  
Yet—

It is expedient for one man to die,  
Yea, for the people, lest the people  
die. [return'd

Yet wherefore should he die that hath  
To the one Catholic Universal Church,  
Repentant of his errors.

*Prot. murmurs.* Ay, tell us that.

*Cole.* Those of the wrong side will  
despise the man,

Deeming him one that thro' the fear  
of death  
Gave up his cause, except he seal his  
faith [dom-  
In sight of all with flaming martyr-  
Cran. Ay. [may seem  
Cole. Ye hear him, and albeit there  
According to the canons pardon due  
To him that so repents, yet are there  
causes [this time  
Wherefore our Queen and Council at  
Adjudge him to the death. He hath  
been a traitor,  
A shaker and confounder of the realm;  
And when the King's divorce was  
sued at Rome  
He here, this heretic metropolitan,  
As if he had been the Holy Father,  
sat  
And judged it. Did I call him heretic?  
A huge heresiarch! never was it  
known  
That any man so writing, preaching so,  
So poisoning the Church, so long con-  
tinuing, [must die,  
Hath found his pardon; therefore he  
For warning and example.  
Other reasons  
There be for this man's ending, which  
our Queen [not  
And Council at this present deem it  
Expedient to be known.  
Prot. murmurs. I warrant you.  
Cole. Take therefore, all, example  
by this man,  
For if our Holy Queen not pardon him,  
Much less shall others in like cause  
escape, [lowest,  
That all of you, the highest as the  
May learn there is no power against  
the Lord. [degree,  
There stands a man, once of so high  
Chief prelate of our Church, arch-  
bishop, first [him,  
In Council, second person in the  
realm,  
Friend for so long time of a mighty  
King; [based  
And now ye see downfallen and de-  
From councillor to catiff — fallen so  
low, [seum  
The leprous flutterings of the byway,  
And offal of the city would not change  
Estates with him; in brief, so miser-  
ble, [him,  
There is no hope of better left for  
No place for worse.  
Yet, Cramme, be thou glad.  
This is the work of God. He is glori-  
fied [claim'd;  
In thy conversion: lo! thou art re-  
He brings thee home; nor fear but  
that to-day [thief's award,  
Thou shalt receive the penitent  
And be with Christ the Lord in Para-  
dise. [fire seem  
Remember how God made the fierce  
To those three children like a pleasant  
dew.  
Remember, too,

The triumph of St. Andrew on his  
cross, [fire,  
The patience of St. Lawrence in the  
Thus, if thou call on God and all the  
saints, [Name,  
God will beat down the fury of the  
Or give thee saintly strength to under-  
go. [sung  
And for thy soul shall masses here be  
By every priest in Oxford. Pray for  
him. [pray for me;  
Cran. Ay, one and all, dear brothers,  
Pray with one breath, one heart, one  
soul, for me. [you doubt  
Cole. And now, lest any one among  
The man's conversion and remorse of  
heart, [Speak Master Cramer,  
Yourselves shall hear him speak.  
Fulfill your promise made me, and pro-  
claim [may hear.  
Your true undoubted faith, that all  
Cran. And that I will. O God,  
Father of Heaven! [world!  
O Son of God, Redeemer of the  
O Holy Ghost! proceeding from them  
both, [mercy on me,  
Three persons and one God, have  
Most miserable sinner, wretched  
man. [earth  
I have offended against heaven and  
More grievously than any tongue can  
tell.  
Then whither should I flee for any  
help? [heaven,  
I am ashamed to lift my eyes to  
And I can find no refuge upon earth.  
Shall I despair then?—God forbid! O  
God,  
For thou art merciful, refusing none  
That come to Thee for succor; unto  
Thee, [to Thee;  
Therefore, I come; humble myself  
Saying, O Lord God, although my sins  
be great, [God the Son,  
For thy great mercy have mercy! O  
Not for slight faults alone, when thou  
becamest  
Man in the Flesh, was the great mys-  
tery wrought;  
O God the Father, not for little sins  
Didst thou yield up thy Son to human  
death; [sinn'd,  
But for the greatest sin that can be  
Yea, even such as mine, incalculable,  
Unpardonable,—sin against the light,  
The truth of God, which I had proven  
and known. [sin.  
Thy mercy must be greater than all  
Forgive me, Father, for no merit of  
mine,  
But that thy name by man be glorified,  
And thy most blessed Son's who died  
for man. [death  
Good people, every man at time of  
Would fain set forth some saying that  
may live  
After his death and better human-  
kind;  
For death gives life's last word a  
power to live,

And, like the stone-cut epitaph, remain  
 After the vanish'd voice, and speak  
 God grant me grace to glorify my  
 God!

And first I say it is a grievous case,  
 Many so dote upon this bubble  
 world,

Whose colors in a moment break and  
 They care for nothing else. What  
 saith St. John:

"Love of this world is hatred against  
 God, I pray you all that, next to  
 God,

You do unmurmuringly and willingly  
 Obey your King and Queen, and not  
 for dread

Of these alone, but from the fear of  
 Whose ministers they be to govern  
 you.

Thirdly, I pray you all to love to-  
 Like brethren; yet what hatred Chris-  
 tian men

Bear to each other, seeming not as  
 But mortal foes! But do you good to  
 all

As much as in you lieth. Hurt no  
 Than you would harm your loving  
 natural brother

Of the same roof, same breast. If  
 Albeit he think himself at home with  
 God,

Of this be sure, he is whole worlds  
 Protestant murmurs.. What sort of  
 brothers then be those that lust  
 To burn each other?

Will. Peace among you, there.  
 Cran. Fourthly, to those that own  
 exceeding wealth,

Remember that sore saying spoken  
 By Him that was the truth, "how  
 hard it is

For the rich man to enter into  
 Let all rich men remember that hard  
 word.

I have not time for more: if ever,  
 Let them flow forth in charity, seeing  
 now

The poor so many, and all food so  
 Long have I lain in prison, yet have  
 heard

Of all their wretchedness. Give to  
 Yet give to God. He is with us in the  
 poor.

And now, and forasmuch as I have  
 To the last end of life, and thereupon  
 Hangs all my past, and all my life to  
 be,

Either to live with Christ in Heaven  
 Or to be still in pain with devils in  
 hell;

And, seeing in a moment, I shall find  
 [Pointing upwards.

Heaven or else hell ready to swallow  
 me, [Pointing downwards.

I shall declare to you my very faith  
 Without all color.

Cole. Hear him my good brethren.  
 Cran. I do believe in God, Father  
 of all;

In every article of the Catholic faith,  
 And every syllable taught us by our  
 Lord,

His prophets and apostles, in the Tes-  
 Both Old and New. [tamen s  
 Cole. Be plainer, Master Cranmer.

Cran. And now I come to the great  
 cause that weighs [thing  
 Upon my conscience more than any  
 Or said or done in all my life by me;

For there be writings I have set  
 abroad [heart,  
 Against the truth I knew within my  
 Written for fear of death, to save my  
 life,

If that might be; the papers by my  
 Sign'd since my degradation—by this  
 hand [Holding out his right hand  
 Written and sign'd—I here renounce  
 them all;

And, since my hand offended, having  
 Against my heart, my hand shall first  
 be burnt,

So I may come to the fire.  
 [Dead silence.

Protestant murmurs.

1 Prot. I knew it would be so.

2 Prot. Our prayers are heard!

3 Prot. God bless him!

Catholic murmurs. Out upon him!

out upon him!

Liar! dissembler! traitor! to the fire!  
 Will. (raising his voice). You know  
 that you recanted all you said

Touching the sacrament in that same  
 book [chester;

You wrote against my Lord of Win-  
 Dissemble not; play the plain Chris-  
 tian man.

Cran. Alas, my Lord,  
 I have been a man loved plainness all  
 my life;

I did dissemble, but the hour has come  
 [fore, I say,  
 For utter truth and plainness; where-  
 I hold by all I wrote within that book.

Moreover, [christ,  
 As for the Pope I count him Anti-  
 With all his devil's doctrines; and re-  
 fuse,

Reject him, and abhor him. I have  
 [Cries on all sides, "Pull him  
 down! Away with him."

Cole. Ay, stop the heretic's mouth.  
 Hale him away.

Will. Harm him not, harm him not,  
 have him to the fire.

[Cranmer goes out between two  
 Friars, smiling; hands are reached  
 to him from the crowd. Lord Wil-  
 liam Howard and Lord Paget are  
 left alone in the church.

Paget. The nave and aisles all  
 empty as a fool's jest!

No, here's Lord William Howard.  
 What, my Lord,

You have not gone to see the burning?  
 How. Fie!

To stand at ease, and stare as at a  
show, [again.  
And watch a good man burn. Never  
I saw the deaths of Latimer and Ridley.

[not  
Moreover, tho' a Catholic, I would  
For the pure honor of our common  
nature. [tation  
Hear what I might—another recan-  
Of Crammer at the stake.

Paget. You'd not hear that.  
He pass'd out smiling, and he walk'd  
upright; [general

His eye was like a soldier's whom the  
He looks to and he leans on as his  
God,

Hath rated for some backwardness  
and bidd'n him [the man  
Charge one against a thousand, and  
Hurls his soil'd life against the pikes  
and dies. [all those papers

How. Yet that he might not after  
Of recantation yield again, who  
knows? [think you then

Paget. Papers of recantation,  
That Crammer read all papers that  
he sign'd? [sign'd?

Or sign'd all those they tell us that he  
Nay, I trow not: and you shall see,  
my Lord,

That howsoever hero-like the man  
Dies in the fire, this Bommer or another  
Will in some lying fashion misreport  
His ending to the glory of their  
church.

And you saw Latimer and Ridley die?  
Latimer was eighty, was he not? his  
Of life was over then. [best

How. His eighty years  
Look'd somewhat crooked on him in  
his frieze. [shroud,

But after they had stript him to his  
He stood upright, a lad of twenty-one,  
And gather'd with his hands the start-  
ing flame, [therein,  
And wash'd his hands and all his face  
Until the powder suddenly blew him  
dead. [died

Ridley was longer burning; but he  
As manfully and boldly, and 'fore  
God, [lish ones.

I know them heretics, but right Eng-  
If ever, as heaven grant, we clash with  
Spain, [sailors

Our Ridley-soldiers and our Latimer-  
Will teach her something.

Paget. Your mild Legate Pole  
Will tell you that the devil helpt them  
thro' it.

[A murmur of the crowd in the dis-  
tance.

Hark, how those Roman wolfdogs  
howl and bay him.

How. Might it not be the other side  
rejoicing

In his brave end?  
Paget. They are too crush'd, too  
broken,

They can but weep in silence.

How. Ay, ay, Paget,

They have brought it in large meas-  
ure on themselves. [blessed Host  
Have I not heard them mock the  
In songs so lewd, the beast might  
roar his claim [they?

To being in God's image, more than  
Have I not seen the gamekeeper, the  
groom, [son's place,  
Gardener and huntsman, in the par-  
The parson from his own spire swung  
out dead, [and all men

And Ignorance crying in the streets,  
Regarding her? I say they have drawn  
the fire [do hold

On their own heads: yet, Paget, I  
The Catholic, if he have the greater  
Hath been the crueller. [right,

Paget. Action and re-action,  
The miserable see-saw of our child-  
world. [Lord.

Make us despite it at odd hours, my  
Heaven help that this re-action not  
re-act

Yet fiercelier under Queen Elizabeth,  
So that she come to rule us.

How. The world's mad.

Paget. My Lord, the world is like a  
drunken man,

Who cannot move straight to his end—  
but reels

Now to the right, then as far to the  
left, [underfoot;

Push'd by the crowd beside—and  
An earthquake; for since Henry for  
a doubt— [the back,

Which a young lust had clapt upon  
Crying, "Forward,"—set our old  
church rocking, men [or whether

Have hardly known what to believe,  
They should believe in anything;  
the currents [they are borne,

So shift and change, they see not how  
Nor whither. I conclude the King a  
beast;

Verily a lion if you will—the world  
A most obedient beast and fool—my-  
self [to it;

Half beast and fool as appertaining  
Altho' your Lordship hath as little of  
each

Cleaving to your original Adam-clay,  
As may be consonant with mortality.

How. We talk and Crammer suffers.  
The kindest man I ever knew; see,  
see, [land!

I speak of him in the past. Unhappy  
Hard-natured Queen, half Spanish in  
herself, [stock of Spain—

And grafted on the hard-grain'd  
Her life, since Phillip left her, and she  
lost [child,

Her fierce desire of bearing him a  
Hath, like a brief and bitter winter's  
day, [to a close.

Gone narrowing down and darkening  
There will be more conspiracies, I  
fear.

Paget. Ay, ay, beware of France.

How. O Paget, Paget!  
I have seen heretics of the poorer sort,

Expectant of the rack from day to day,  
To whom the fire were welcome, lying  
chain'd, [ing sewers,

In breathless dungeons over steam'd,  
Fed with rank bread that crawl'd upon  
the tongue,

And putrid water, every drop a worm,  
Until they died of rotted limbs; and  
then, [come

Cast on the dunghill naked, and be-  
hideously alive again from head to  
heel,

Made even the carrion-nosing mon-  
With hate and horror. [grel vomit  
*Page*.

To hear you.

*How*. Fancy-sick; these things  
are done, [Queen

Done right against the promise of this  
Twice given.

*Page*. No faith with heretics,  
my Lord! [pellers,

Hist! there be two old gossips—goss-  
I take it; stand behind the pillar  
here; [burning.

I warrant you they talk about the  
*Enter Two Old Women, Joan, and  
after her Tib.*

*Joan*. Why, it be Tib.

*Tib*. I cum behind tha, gall, and  
couldn't make tha hear. Eh, the  
wind and the wet! What a day, what  
a day! nigh upo' judgment daay loike.  
Pwoaps be pretty things, Joan, but  
they wunt set i' the Lords' cheer o'  
that daay.

*Joan*. I must set down myself,  
Tib; it be a var waay vor my owld  
legs up vro' Islip. Eh, my rheuma-  
tize be that bad howiver be I to win  
to the burnin'.

*Tib*. I should saay 'twur ower by  
now. I'd ha' been here avore, but  
Dumble wur blow'd wi' the wind, and  
Dumble's the best milcher in Islip.

*Joan*. Our Daisy's as good 'z her.

*Tib*. Noa, Joan.

*Joan*. Our Daisy's butter's as good

*Tib*. Noa, Joan. [z hern.

*Joan*. Our Daisy's cheeses be bet-

*Tib*. Noa, Joan. [ter.

*Joan*. Eh, then ha' thy waay wi' me,

Tib; ez thou hast wi' thy owld man.

*Tib*. Ay, Joan, and my owld man  
wur up and awaay betimes wi' dree  
hard eggs for a good ppeace at the  
burnin'; and barrin' the wet, Hodge  
'ud ha' been a-harrowin' o' white  
peasen i' the outfield—and barrin' the  
wind, Dumble wur blow'd wi' the  
wind, so 'z we was forced to stick her,  
but we fetched her round at last.  
Thank the Lord therevore. Dumble's  
the best milcher in Islip.

*Joan*. Thou's thy way wi' man and  
beast, Tib. I wonder at tha', it beats  
me! Eh, but I do know ez Pwoaps  
and vives be bad things; tell 'ee now,  
I heerd summat as summun towld  
summun o' owld Bishop Gardiner's

end; there wur an owld lord a-cum to  
dine wi' un, and a wur so owld a  
couldn't bide vor his dinner, but a had  
to bide howsomiver, vor, "I wunt  
dine," says my Lord Bishop, says he,  
"not till I hears ez Latimer and  
Ridley be a-vire;" and so they bided  
on and on till your o'clock, till his  
man cum in post vro' here, and tells  
un ez the vire has tuk bolt. "Now,"  
says the bishop, says he, "we'll gwo  
to dinner;" and the owld lord fell to  
's meat wi' a will, God bless un; but  
Gardiner wur struck down like by the  
hand-o' God avore a could taste a  
mossel, and a set him all a-vire, so 'z  
the tongue on un cum a lolluping out  
o' 'is mouth, as black as a rat. Thank  
the Lord, therevore.

*Page*. The fools!

*Tib*. Ay, Joan; and Queen Mary  
gwoes on a-burnin' and a burnin', to  
git her baaby born; but all her burn-  
ins' 'ill never burn out the hypocrisy  
that makes the water in her. There's  
nought but the vire of God's hell ez  
can burn out that.

*Joan*. Thank the Lord, therevore.

*Page*. The fools!

*Tib*. A-burnin', and a-burnin', and a-  
makin' o' volk madder and madder;  
but tek thou my word vor't, Joan,—  
and I bean't wrong not twice i' ten  
year—the burnin' o' the owld arch-  
bishop 'ill burn the Pwoap out o' this  
'ere land vor iver and iver.

*How*. Out of the church, you brace  
of cursed crones,  
Or I will have you duck'd.

[*Women hurry out.*

Said I not right?

For how should reverend prelate or  
throne prince [nity?  
Brook for an hour such brute malig-  
Ah, what an acrid wine has Luther  
brew'd!

*Page*. Pooch, pooch, my Lord! poor  
garrulous countryvives.

Buy you their cheeses, and they'll side  
with you; [the lees.

You cannot judge the liquor from  
*How*. I think that in some sort we  
may. But see,

*Enter Peters.*

Peters, my gentleman, an honest  
Catholic, [Crammer's fire.  
Who follow'd with the crowd to  
One that would neither misreport  
nor lie, [Pope  
Not to gain paradise: no, nor if the  
Charged him to do it—he is white as  
death.

Peters, how pale you look! you bring  
the smoke

Of Crammer's burning with you.

*Pet*. Twice or thrice  
The smoke of Crammer's burning  
wrapt me round.

*How.* Peters, you know me Catholic, but English. [or leave  
Did he die bravely? Tell me that,  
All else untold.

*Pet.* My Lord, he died most bravely.  
*How.* Then tell me all.

*Paget.* Ay, Master Peters, tell us.  
*Pet.* You saw him how he passed  
among the crowd; [friars

And ever as he walk'd the Spanish  
Still plied him with entreaty and reproach: [helm

But Cranmer, as the helmsman at the  
Steers, ever looking to the happy  
haven [his death;

Where he shall rest at night, moved to  
And I could see that many silent  
hands [own; and thus,

Came from the crowd and met his  
When we had come where Ridley  
burnt with Latimer, [whose mind

He, with a cheerful smile, as one  
Is all made up, in haste put off the  
rags [all in white,

They had mocked his misery with, and  
His long white beard, which he had  
never shaven [to the chain,

Since Henry's death, down-sweeping  
Wherewith they bound him to the  
stake, he stood, [Church,

More like an ancient father of the  
Than heretic of these times; and still  
the friars [his head,

Plied him, but Cranmer only shook  
Or answer'd them in smiling nega-  
tives; [den cry:—

Wherewith Lord Williams gave a sud-  
"Make short! make short!" and so  
they lit the wood.

Then Cranmer lifted his left hand to  
heaven,  
And thrust his right into the bitter  
flame; [than once,

And crying, in his deep voice, more  
"This hath offended—this unworthy  
hand!"

So held it till all was burn'd, before  
The flame had reach'd his body; I  
stood near— [of pain:

Mark'd him—he never uttered moan  
He never stir'd or writhed, but, like  
a statue, [flame,

Unmoving in the greatness of the  
Gave up the ghost; and so past mar-  
tyr-like— [but whither?

Martyr I may not call him—past—  
*Paget.* To purgatory, man, to pur-  
gatory.

*Pet.* Nay, but my Lord, he denied  
purgatory.

*Paget.* Why then to heaven, and  
God ha' mercy on him.

*How.* *Paget,* despite his fearful  
heresies, [moan for him;

I loved the man, and needs must  
O Cranmer!

*Paget.* But your moan is useless  
now:

Come out, my Lord, it is a world of  
fools. [Exeunt.

## ACT. V.

SCENE I.—London. Hall in the Palace.

Queen, Sir Nicholas Heath.

*Heath.* Madam, [look'd to:  
I do assure you, that it must be  
Calais is but ill-garrison'd in Guisnes  
Are scarce two hundred men, and the  
French fleet [look'd to,

Rule in the narrow seas. It must be  
If war should fall between yourself  
and France;

Or you will lose your Calais.

*Mary.* It shall be look'd to;  
I wish you a good-morning, good Sir

Nicholas:  
Here is the King. [Exit Heath

*Enter Philip.*

*Phi.* Sir Nicholas tells you true,  
And you must look to Calais when I  
go. [again—so soon?

*Mary.* Go! must you go, indeed—  
Why, nature's licensed vagabond, the  
swallow,

That might live always in the sun's  
warm heart,

Stays longer here in our poor north  
than you:— [again.

Knows where he nested—ever comes  
*Phi.* And, Madam, so shall I.

*Mary.* O, will you? will you?  
I am faint with fear that you will  
come no more. [me hence.

*Phi.* Ay, ay; but many voices call  
*Mary.* Voices—I hear unhappy ru-  
mors—nay

I say not, I believe. What voices call  
you [est to you?

Dearer than mine that should be dear-  
Alas, my Lord; what voices and how  
many? [agon,

*Phi.* The voices of Castile and Ar-  
Granada, Naples, Sicily and Milan,—  
The voices of the Franche-Comte and  
the Netherlands.

The voices of Peru and Mexico,  
Tunis, and Oran, and the Philippines.

And all the fair spice-islands of the  
East.

*Mary* (admiringly). You are the  
mightiest monarch upon earth,  
I but a little Queen; and so, indeed,  
Need you the more: and whereto e  
could you not [liege,

Helm the huge vessel of your state, my  
Here, by the side of her who loves you  
most? [the sun

*Phi.* No, Madam, no! a candle in  
Is all but smoke—a star beside the  
moon [crown me—

Is all but lost; your people will not  
Your people are as cheerless as your  
clime; [brawls, the gibbets.

Hate me and mine; witness the  
Here swings a Spaniard—there an  
Englishman;

The peoples are unlike as their com-  
plexion;

Yet will I be your swallow and return—  
But now I cannot bide.

*Mary.* Not to help me? They hate me also for my love to you, My Philip; and these judgments on the land— [plague—

Harvestless autumns, horrible agues,  
*Phi.* The blood and sweat of heretics at the stake

Is God's best dew upon the barren field.

Burn more!

*Mary.* I will, I will: and you will stay. [came to sue

*Phi.* Have I not said? Madam, I Your Council and yourself to declare war. [in your ranks

*Mary.* Sir, there are many English To help your battle.

*Phi.* So far good. I say. I came to sue your Council and yourself [France,

To declare war against the King of *Mary.* Not to see me?

*Phi.* Ay, Madam, to see you. Unalterably and pesteringly fond!

[*Aside.* But, soon or late you must have war with France; [his hearth.

King Henry warms your traitors at Carew is there, and Thomas Stafford Courtenay, belike— [there.

*Mary.* A fool and featherhead! *Phi.* Ay, but they use his name.

In brief, this Henry [the intent Stirs up your land against you to That you may lose your English heritage. [marrying

And then your Scottish namesake The Dauphin, he would weld France, England, Scotland. [me-

Into one sword to hack at Spain and *Mary.* And yet the Pope is now col-

leagu'd with France;

You make your wars upon him down in Italy:—

Philip, can that be well? *Phi.* Content you, Madam;

You must abide my judgment, and my father's, [war.

Who deems it a most just and holy The Pope would cast the Spaniard out of Naples: [Saracens.

He calls us worse than Jews, Moors, The Pope has pushed his horns beyond his mitre—

Beyond his province. Now, Duke Alva will but touch him on the horns, [head—

And he withdraws; and of his holy For Alva is true son of the true church— [help me here?

No hair is harm'd. Will you not *Mary.* Alas! the Council will not hear of war. [of England.

They say your wars are not the wars They will not lay more taxes on a land [you know

So hunger-nipt and wretched: and

The crown is poor. We have given the church-lands back:

The nobles would not; nay, they clapt their hands [therefore God

Upon their swords when ask'd; and Is hard upon the people. What's to be done? [again,

Sir, I will move them in your cause And we will raise us loans and subsidies [Thomas Gresham

Among the merchants; and Sir Will aid us. There is Antwerp and the Jews,

*Phi.* Madam, my thanks. [ing? *Mary.* And you will stay your go-

*Phi.* And further to discourage and lay lame [her not,

The plots of France, altho' you love You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir. [of Scots.

She stands beyond you and the Queen *Mary.* The Queen of Scots at least is Catholic.

*Phi.* Ay, Madam, Catholic; but I will not have [land too.

The King of France the King of Eng- *Mary.* But she's a heretic, and, when I am gone,

Brings the new learning back. *Phi.* It must be done.

You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir *Mary.* Then it is done; but you will stay your going [pose?

Somewhat beyond your settled pur- *Phi.* No!

*Mary.* What, not one day? *Phi.* You beat upon the rock.

*Mary.* And I am broken there. *Phi.* Is this a place

To wail in, Madam? what! a public hall.

Go in, I pray you. *Mary.* Do not seem so changed.

Say go; but only say it lovingly. *Phi.* You do mistake. I am not one to change.

I never loved you more. *Mary.* Sire, I obey you,

Come quickly. *Phi.* Ay. [Exit *Mary.*

*Enter* Count de Feria.

*Fer.* *(aside.)* The Queen in tears. *Phi.* Feria!

Hast thou not mark'd—come closer to mine ear— [hath grown

How doubly aged this Queen of ours Since she lost hope of bearing us a child? *Fer.* Sire, if your Grace hath mark'd it, so have I.

*Phi.* Hast thou not likewise mark'd Elizabeth, [deed?

How fair and royal—like a Queen, in- *Fer.* Allow me the same answer as before— [so have I.

That if your grace hath mark'd her, *Phi.* Good, now; methinks my Queen is like enough

To leave by and by.

*Fer.* To leave you, sire?

*Phi.* I mean not like to live. Elizabeth—  
To Philibert of Savoy, as you know,  
We meant to wed her; but I am not  
sure [Queen  
She will not serve me better—so my  
Would leave me—as—my wife.

*Fer.* Sire, even so.

*Phi.* She will not have Prince Philibert of Savoy.

*Fer.* No, sire. [time.

*Phi.* I have to pray you, some odd  
To sound the Princess carelessly on  
this;

Not as from me, but as your fantasy;  
And tell me how she takes it.

*Fer.* Sire, I will.

*Phi.* I am not certain but that  
Philibert [his suit  
Shall be the man; and I shall urge  
Upon the Queen, because I am not  
certain:

You understand, *Feria*.

*Fer.* Sire, I do.

*Phi.* And if you be not secret in  
this matter,

You understand me there, too?

*Fer.* Sire, I do.

*Phi.* You must be sweet and supple,  
like a Frenchman.  
She is none of those who loathe the  
honeycomb. [Exit *Feria*.

*Enter Renard.*

*Ren.* My liege, I bring you goodly  
tidings.

*Phi.* Well.

*Ren.* There will be war with France,  
at last, my liege; [ass,

Sir Thomas Stafford, a bull-headed  
Sailing from France, with thirty Eng-  
lishmen, [of York;

Hath taken Scarboro' Castle, north  
Proclaims himself protector, and af-  
firms [to reign

The Queen has forfeited her right  
By marriage with an alien—other things  
As idle; a weak Wyatt! Little doubt  
This buzz will soon be silenced! but  
the Council [for war.

(I have talk'd with some already) are  
This is the fifth conspiracy hatch'd in  
France; [your Grace,

They show their teeth upon it; and  
So you will take advice of mine, should  
stay [the event.

Yet for awhile, to shape and guide  
*Phi.* Good! Renard, I will stay  
then.

*Ren.* Also, sire,

Might I not say—to please your wife,  
the Queen? [it so.

*Phi.* Ay, Renard, if you care to put  
[Exit.

SCENE II.—A Room in the Palace.

Mary and Cardinal Pole.

Lady Clarence and Alice in the back-  
ground.

*Mary.* Reginald Pole, what news  
hath plagued thy heart?  
What makes thy favor like the blood-  
less head [the hair?

Fall'n on the block, and held up by  
Philip?—

*Pole.* No, Philip is as warm in life  
As ever.

*Mary.* Ay, and then as cold as ever.  
Is Calais taken?

*Pole.* Cousin, there hath chanced  
A sharper harm to England and to  
Rome.

Than Calais taken. Julius the Third  
Was ever just, and mild, and father-  
like; [Fourth,

But this new Pope Caraffa, Paul the  
Not only reft me of that legateship  
Which Julius gave me, and the legate-  
ship

Annex'd to Canterbury—nay, but  
worse—

And yet I must obey the holy father,  
And so must you, good cousin;—worse  
than all,

A passing bell toll'd in a dying ear—  
He hath cited me to Rome, for her-  
esy,

Before his Inquisition.

*Mary.* I knew it, cousin,  
But held from you all papers sent by  
Rome, [the Pope,

That you might rest among us, till  
To compass which I wrote myself to  
Rome, [might not seem

Reversed his doom, and that you  
To disobey his Holiness.

*Pole.* He hates Philip;  
He is all Italian, and he hates the  
Spaniard; [war

He cannot dream that I advised the  
He strikes thro' me at Philip and your-  
self. [me too;

Nay, but I know it of old, he hates  
So brands me in the star of Christen-  
dom

A heretic!

Now, even now, when bow'd before  
my time, [out;

The house half-ruin'd ere the lease be  
When I should guide the Church in  
peace at home,

After my twenty years of banishment,  
And all my lifelong labor to uphold  
The primacy—a heretic. Long ago,

When I was ruler in the patrimony,  
I was too lenient to the Lutheran,  
And I and learned friends among our-  
selves [anisms.

Would freely canvass certain Luther-  
What then, he knew I was no Lu-  
A heretic! [theran.

He drew this shaft against me to the  
head, [chosen Pope,

When it was thought I might be  
But then withdrew it. In full con-  
sistory, [proved me.

When I was made Archbishop, he ap-  
And how should he have sent me Le-  
gate hither,

Deeming me heretic? and what heresy since?

But he was evermore mine enemy,  
And hates the Spaniard—fiery-choleeric,

[wines.  
That ever make him fiercer. I, a heretic!  
[ing heresy

Your Highness knows that in pursuit I have gone beyond your late Lord Chancellor,— [his death.—

He cried enough! enough! before  
Gone beyond him and mine own natural man [me now,

(It was God's cause); so far they call  
The scourge and butcher of their English church.

Mary. Have courage, your reward  
is Heaven itself. [into the fire

Pole. They groan amen; they swarm  
Like flies—for what? no dogma. They  
know nothing.

They burn for nothing.

Mary. You have done your best.  
Pole. Have done my best, and as a  
faithful son, [father's work,

That all day long hath wrought his  
When back he comes at evening hath  
the door [loved,

Shut on him by the father whom he  
His early follies cast into his teeth,

And the poor son turn'd out into the  
street [cousin.

To sleep, to die—I shall die of it,  
Mary. I pray you be not so disconsolate;

[Pope,  
I still will do my utmost with the  
Poor cousin. [your life

Have I not been the fast friend of  
Since mine began, and it was thought  
we two [each other

Might make one flesh, and cleave unto  
As man and wife.

Pole. Ah, cousin, I remember  
How I would dandle you upon my  
knee [once

At lisping-age. I watch'd you dancing  
With your huge father; he look'd the  
Great Harry, [did it,

You but his cockboat; prettily you  
And innocently. No—we were not  
made [here;

One flesh in happiness, no happiness  
But now we are made one flesh in  
misery; [appointment,

Our bridemaids are not lovely—Dis-  
ingratitude, Injustice, Evil-tongue,  
Labor-in-vain.

Mary. Surely, not all in vain.  
Peace, cousin, peace! I am sad at  
heart myself.

Pole. Our altar is a mound of dead  
men's clay,  
Dug from the grave that yawns for us  
beyond; [the Groom,

And there is one Death stands behind  
And there is one Death stands be-  
hind the Bride—

Mary. Have you been looking at the  
"Dance of Death?"

Pole. No; but these libellous pa-  
pers which I found

Strewn in your palace. Look you here  
—the Pope [sic,

Pointing at me with "Pole, the here-  
Thou hast burnt others, do thou burn  
thyself, [see!—

Or I will burn thee," and this other;  
"We pray continually for the death  
Of our accursed Queen and Cardinal  
Pole."

This last—I dare not read it her.

Mary. [Aside.  
Away!

Why do you bring me these?  
I thought you knew me better. I never  
read, [my dreams.

I tear them: they come back upon  
The hands that write them should be  
burnt clean off [utter them

As Crammer's, and the fiends that  
Tongue-torn with pinners, lash'd to  
death, or lie [ish'd rats

Famishing in black cells, while fam-  
Eat them alive. Why do they bring  
me these?

Do you mean to drive me mad?  
Pole. I had forgotten

How these poor libels trouble you.  
Your pardon, [ble world,

Sweet cousin, and farewell! "O bub-  
Whose colors in a moment break and  
fly!" [true enough!

Why, who said that? I know not—  
[Puts up the papers, all but the last,  
which falls.

[Exit Pole.

Alice. If Cranmer's spirit were a  
mocking one [sport for him.

And heard these two, there might be  
[Aside.

Mary. Clarence, they hate me;  
even while I speak

There lurks a silent dagger, listening  
In some dark closet, some long gallery,  
drawn,

And panting for my blood as I go by.  
Lady C. Nay, Madam, there be  
loyal papers too,

And I have often found them.

Mary. Find me one!  
Lady C. Ay, Madam; but Sir Nich-  
olas Heath, the Chancellor,

Would see your Highness.

Mary. Wherefore should I see him?  
Lady C. Well, Madam, he may bring  
you news from Phillip.

Mary. So, Clarence.

Lady C. Let me first put up your  
It tumbles all abroad. [hair;

Mary. And the gray dawn  
Of an old age that never will be mine  
Is all the clearer seen. No, no; what  
matters?

Forlorn I am, and let me look forlorn.

Enter Sir Nicholas Heath.

Heath. I bring your Majesty such  
grievous news

I grieve to bring it. Madam. Calais is  
taken.

*Mary.* What traitor spoke? Here,  
let my cousin Pole [ran,  
Seize him and burn him for a Luthe-  
*Heath.* Her Highness is unwell. I  
will retire.  
*Lady C.* Madam, your chancellor,  
Sir Nicholas Heath.  
*Mary.* Sir Nicholas? I am stunn'd  
—Nicholas Heath? [the head.  
Methought some traitor smote me on  
What said you, my good Lord, that our  
brave English [back  
Had sallied out from Calais and driven  
The Frenchman from their trenches?  
*Heath.* Alas! no.  
That gateway to the mainland over  
which [years  
Our flag hath floated for two hundred  
Is France again.  
*Mary.* So; but it is not lost—  
Not yet. Send out: let England as of  
old [into  
Rise Honlike, strike hard and deep  
The prey they are rending from her  
—ay, and rend [and make  
The renders too. Send out, send out.  
Musters in all the counties; gather all  
From sixteen years to sixty; collect  
the fleet; [gun  
Let every craft that carries sail and  
Steer towards Calais. Guisnes is not  
taken yet?  
*Heath.* Guisnes is not taken yet.  
*Mary.* There yet is hope.  
*Heath.* Ah, Madam, but your people  
are so cold; [care.  
I do much fear that England will not  
Methinks there is no manhood left  
among us.  
*Mary.* Send out; I am too weak to  
stir abroad: [Parliament;  
Tell my mind to the Council—to the  
Proclaim it to the winds. Thou art  
cold thyself [I were  
To babble of their coldness. O would  
My father for an hour! Away now—  
quick! [Exit Heath.  
I hoped I had served God with all my  
might!  
It seems I have not. Ah! much heresy  
Shelter'd in Calais. Saints, I have re-  
built [ages;  
Your shrines, set up your broken im-  
Be comfortable to me. Suffer not  
That my brief reign in England be de-  
famed [after  
Thro' all her angry chronicles here-  
By loss of Calais. Grant me Calais.  
Philip, [Father  
We have made war upon the Holy  
All for your sake: what good could  
come of that?  
*Lady C.* No, Madam, not against  
the Holy Father;  
You did but help King Philip's war  
with France,  
Your troops were never down in Italy.  
*Mary.* I am a byword. Heretic and  
rebel [gone!  
Point at me and make merry. Philip

And Calais gone! Time that I were  
gone too! [a voice  
*Lady C.* Nay, if the fetid gutter had  
And cried I was not clean, what should  
I care?  
Or you, for heretic cries! And I be-  
lieve, [las,  
Spite of your melancholy, Sir Nicho-  
Your England is as loyal as myself.  
*Mary* (seeing the paper dropt by Pole).  
There, there! another paper! Said  
you not [try  
Many of these were loyal? Shall I  
If this be one of such?  
*Lady C.* Let it be, let it be.  
God pardon me! I have never yet  
found one. [Aside.  
*Mary* (reads). "Your people hate you  
as your husband hates you."  
Clarence, Clarence, what have I done?  
what sin [Mother of God,  
Beyond all grace, all pardon?  
Thou knowest never woman meant so  
well, [world.  
And fared so ill in this disastrous  
My people hate me and desire my  
*Lady C.* No, Madam, no. [death.  
*Mary.* My husband hates me, and  
desires my death [bels.  
*Lady C.* No Madam; these are li-  
*Mary.* I hate myself, and I desire  
my death. [Shall Alice sing you  
*Lady C.* Long live your Majesty!  
One of her pleasant songs? Alice, my  
child, [say the gloom of Saul  
Bring us your lute (Alice goes). They  
Was lighten'd by young David's harp.  
*Mary.* Too young!  
And never knew a Philip (re-enter  
Alice). Give me the lute.  
He hates me!  
*She sings.*  
*Hapless doom of woman happy in be-  
trothing!  
Beauty passes like a breath and love is  
lost in loathing:  
Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but  
say the world is nothing—  
Low, lute, low!  
Love will hover round the flowers when  
they first awaken;  
Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not  
be overtaken;  
Low, my lute! oh low, my lute! we fade  
and are forsaken—  
Low; dear lute, low!*  
Take it away! not low enough for me!  
*Alice.* Your Grace hath a low voice.  
*Mary.* How dare you say it?  
Even for that he hates me. A low voice  
Lost in a wilderness where none can  
hear! [scal  
A voice of shipwreck on a shoreless  
A low voice from the dust and from the  
grave. (sitting on the ground).  
There, am I low enough now?  
*Alice.* Good Lord, how grim and  
ghastly looks her Grace,

With both her knees drawn upward to her chin.

There was an old-world tomb beside my father's,

And this was open'd, and the dead were found [a corpse.

Sitting, and in this fashion; she looks  
Enter Lady Magdalen Daeres.

Lady M. Madam, the Count de Feria waits without.

In hopes to see your Highness.

Lady C. (pointing to Mary.) Wait he must—

Her trance again. She neither sees And may not speak for hours.

Lady M. Unhappiest Of Queens and wives and women.

Alice (in the foreground with Lady Magdalen). And all along Of Philip.

Lady M. Not so loud! Our Clarence there [Queen,

Sees ever such an aureole round the It gilds the greatest wronger of her

peace,  
Who stands the nearest to her.

Alice. Ay, this Philip; I used to love the Queen with all my

heart— [less  
God help me, but methinks I love her

For such a dotage upon such a man.  
I would I were as tall and strong as

you. [to be so tall.  
Lady M. I seem half-shamed at times

Alice. You are the stateliest deer in all the herd— [scandalous,

Beyond his aim—but I am small and And love to hear bad tales of Philip.

Lady M. Why? I never heard him utter worse of you

Than that you were low-statured.  
Alice. Does he think

Low stature is low nature, or all women's

Low as his own? [naïf.  
Lady M. There you strike in the

This coarseness is a want of fantasy.  
It is the low man thinks the woman

low;  
Sin is too dull to see beyond himself.

Alice. Ah, Magdalen, sin is bold as How dared he? [well as dull.

Lady M. Stupid soldiers oft are bold. [eral sees,

Poor lads, they see not what the gen- Beyond his aim, or was not.

Alice. Who? Not you? Tell, tell me: save my credit with my-

self. [bird in the eaves,  
Lady M. I never breathed it to a

Would not for all the stars and maiden moon

Our drooping queen should know! In Hampton Court

My window look'd upon the corridor; And I was robing;—this poor throat

of mine,  
Barer than I should wish a man to see

it,—

When he we speak of drove the win- dow back, [hand;

And, like a thief, push'd in his royal But by God's providence a good

stout staff  
Lay near me; and you know me

strong of arm;  
I do believe I lamed his Majesty's

For a day or two, tho', give the Devil his due,

I never found he bore me any spite.  
Alice. I would she could have wed-

ded that poor youth,  
My Lord of Devon—light enough, God

knows, [the boy  
And mix with Wyatt's rising—and Not out of lim—but neither cold,

coarse, cruel,  
And more than all—no Spaniard.

Lady C. Not so loud. Lord Devon, girls! what are you wis-

pering here?  
Alice. Probing an old state secret—

how it chanced [foreign travel,  
That this young Earl was sent on

Not lest his head. [him.  
Lady C. There was no proof against

Alice. Nay, Madam; did not Gardiner intercept [wrote,

A letter which the Count de Noailles To that dead traitor, Wyatt, with full

proof [came of that?  
Of Courtenay's treason? What, be-

Lady C. Some say that Gardiner, out of love for him, [lest

Burnt it, and some relate that it was When Wyatt sack'd the Chancellor's

house in Southwark.  
Let dead things rest.

Alice. Ay, and with him who died Alone in Italy.

Lady C. Much changed, I hear, [on.  
Had put off levity and put graveness

The foreign courts report him in his manner [shield.

Noble as his young person and old It might be so—but all is ov. r now;

He caught a chill in the lagoons of And died in Padua. [Venice,

Mary (looking up suddenly). Died in the true faith?

Lady C. Ay, Madam, happily.  
Mary. Happier he than I.

Lady M. It seems her Highness hath awaken'd. Think you

That I might dare to tell her that the Count— [evermore.

Mary. I will see no man hence for Saving my confessor and my cousin

Pole. [dear lady.  
Lady M. It is the Count de Feria, my

Mary. What Count?  
Lady M. The Count de Feria, from

his Majesty King Philip. [hair!

Mary. Philip! quick! loop up my Throw cushions on that seat, and make

it throne-like.  
Arrange my dress—the gorgeous In-

dian shawl

That Philip brought me in our happy days!—

That covers all. So—am I somewhat Queenlike. [earth?]

Bride of the mightiest sovereign upon Lady C. Ay, so your Grace would bide a moment yet.

Mary. No, no, he brings a letter. I may die

Before I read it. Let me see him at once.

Enter Count de Feria (kneels).

Fer. I trust your Grace is well. (aside) How her hand burns.

Mary. I am not well, but it will better me. [bring.]

Sir Count, to read the letter which you

Fer. Madam, I bring no letter.

Mary. How! no letter?

Fer. His Highness is so vex'd with strange affairs—

Mary. That his own wife is no affair of his. [veriest love.]

Fer. Nay, Madam, nay! he sends his And says he will come quickly.

Mary. Doth he, indeed? You, sir, do you remember what you said

When last you came to England?

Fer. Madam, I brought My King's congratulations; it was hoped [happy state]

Your Highness was once more in To give him an heir male.

Mary. Sir, you said more: You said he would come quickly. I had horses [night;

On all the road from Dover, day and On all the road from Harwich, night

and day; [band came not; But the child came not, and the hus-

And yet he will come quickly . . . . . Thou hast learnt [need

Thy lesson and I mine. There is no For Philip so to shame himself again.

Return, [more, And tell him that I know he comes no

Tell him at last I know his love is dead, [death—

And that I am in state to bring forth Thou art commission'd to Elizabeth,

And not to me!

Fer. Mere compliments and wishes. [your Grace?

But shall I take some message from Mary. Tell her to come and close my

dying eyes, [my grave. And wear my crown, and dance upon

Fer. Then I may say your Grace will see your sister?

Your Grace is too low-spirited. Air and sunshine. [warm Spain.

I would we had you, Madam, in our You droop in your dim London.

Mary. Have him away, I sicken of his readiness.

Lady C. My Lord Count, Her Highness is too ill for colloquy.

Fer. (kneels and kisses her hand). I wish her Highness better. (Aside)

How her hand burns. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—A House near London.

Elizabeth, Steward of the Household, Attendants.

Eliz. There's half an angel wrong'd in your account;

Methinks I am all angel that I bear it Without more ruffling. Cast it o'er again.

Steward. I were whole devil if I wrong'd you, Madam.

[Exit Steward.]

At. The Count de Feria, from the King of Spain. [need not go:]

Eliz. Ah!—let him enter. Nay, you [To her Ladies.]

Remain within the chamber, but apart. [Welcome to England!]

We'll have no private conference.

Enter Feria.

Fer. Fair island star. [Count?]

Eliz. I shine! what else, Sir

Fer. As far as France, and into Philip's heart. [served,]

My King would know if you be fairly And lodged, and treated.

Eliz. You see the lodging, sir, I am well served, and am in every thing [Queen.]

Most loyal and most grateful to the Fer. You should be grateful to my

master, too, [towa He spoke of this; and unto him you

That Mary hath acknowledged you her heir. [the people.]

Eliz. No, not to her or him; but to Who know my right, and love me as I

The people! whom God aid! [love Fer. You will be Queen,

And were I Philip—

Eliz. Wherefore pause you—what?

Fer. Nay, I but speak from mine own self, not him:

Your royal sister cannot last; your hand [catch one!

Will be much coveted! What a deli- Our Spanish ladies have none such—

and there, [samer gold— Were you in Spain, this fine fair gos-

Like sun-glitt breathings on a frosty dawn—

That hovers round your shoulder—

Eliz. Is it so fine? Troth, some have said so.

Fer. Would be deemed a miracle.

Eliz. Your Philip hath gold hair and golden beard, [like mine.]

There must be ladies many with hair Fer. Some few of Gothic blood have

golden hair, But none like yours.

Eliz. I am happy you approve it.

Fer. But as to Philip and your Grace—consider,—

If such a one as you should match with Spain, What hinders but that Spain and Eng-

land join'd,

Should make the mightiest empire  
earth has known.

Spain would be England on her seas,  
and England

Mistress of the Indies.

*Eliz.* It may chance, that England  
Will be mistress of the Indies yet,  
Without the help of Spain.

*Fer.* Impossible;  
Except you put Spain down.

Wide of the mark ev'n for a madman's  
dream. [*men. Count de Feria,*  
*Eliz.* Perhaps; but we have sea-  
I take it that the King hath spoken to  
you; [*match?*

But is Don Carlos such a goodly  
*Fer.* Don Carlos, madam, is but  
twelve years old.

*Eliz.* Ay, tell the King that I will  
muse upon it; [*keep him so;*  
He is my good friend, and I would  
But—he would have me Catholic of  
Rome,

And that I scarce can be; and, sir,  
[*till now*] [*marriages,*  
My sister's marriage, and my father's  
Make me full fain to live and die a  
maid. [*King.*

But I am much beholden to your  
Have you aught else to tell me?

*Fer.* Nothing, Madam,  
Save that methought I gather'd from  
the Queen [*fore she—died.*

That she would see your Grace be-  
*Eliz.* God's death! and wherefore  
spake you not before?

We dally with our lazy moments here,  
And hers are number'd. Horses there,  
without! [*master.*

I am much beholden to the King, your  
Why did you keep me prating. Horses,  
there! [*Exit Elizabeth, etc.*

*Fer.* So from a clear sky falls the  
thunderbolt! [*Philip.*

Don Carlos? Madam, if you marry  
Then I and he will snaffle your "God's  
death," [*you tame;*

And break your paces in, and make  
God's death, forsooth—you do not  
know King Philip. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*London. Before the Pal-  
ace.*

*A light burning within. Voices of the  
night passing.*

1. Is not your light in the Queen's  
chamber?

2. Ay,  
They say she's dying.

1. So is Cardinal Pole.  
May the great angels join their wings,  
and make

Down for their heads to heaven!

2. Amen. Come on.  
[*Exeunt.*

Two Others.

1. There's the Queen's light, I hear  
she cannot live.

2. God curse her and her Legate!  
Gardiner burns

Already: but to pay them full in kind,  
The hottest hold in all the devil's den  
[*Guernsey,*

Were but a sort of winter; sir, in  
I watch'd a woman burn; and in her  
agony [*was born—*

The mother came upon her—a child  
And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the  
fire. [*babe*

That, being but baptized in fire, the  
Might be in fire forever. Ah, good  
neighbor. [*thou first*

There should be something fierier  
To yield them their deserts.

1. Amen to all  
You wish, and further.

*A 3d. Voice.* Deserts! Amen to what?  
Whose deserts? Yours? You have a  
gold ring on your finger, and soft  
raiment about your body; and is not  
the woman up yonder sleeping after  
all she has done, in peace and quiet-  
ness, on a soft bed, in a closed room,  
with light, fire, physic, tendance; and  
I have seen the true men of Christ  
lying famine-dead by scores, and under  
no ceiling but the cloud that wept on  
them, not for them.

1. Friend, tho' so late, it is not safe  
to preach. [*you?*

You had best go home. What are  
3. What am I? One who cries con-  
tinually with sweat and tears to the  
Lord God that it would please Him  
out of His infinite love to break down  
all kingship and queenship, all priest-  
hood and prelacy; to cancel and abol-  
ish all bonds of human allegiance, all  
the magistracy, all the nobles, and all  
the wealthy; and to send us again,  
according to his promise, the one King,  
the Christ, and all things in common,  
as in the day of the first church, when  
Christ Jesus was King.

1. If ever I heard a madman,—let's  
away! [*beyond me*

Why, you long-winded— Sir, you go  
I pride myself on being moderate.

Good night! Go home. Besides, you  
curse so loud,

The watch will hear you. Get you  
home at once. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*London. A Room in the  
Palace.*

*Gallery on one side. The moon-  
light streaming through a range of  
windows on the wall opposite.*  
Mary, Lady Clarence, Lady Mag-  
dalen Daeres, Alice. *Queen pacing  
the Gallery. A writing-table in  
front. Queen comes to the table and  
writes and goes again, pacing the  
Gallery.*

*Lady C.* Mine eyes are dim: what  
hath she written? read. [*to me.*

*Alice.* "I am dying, Philip; come

*Lady M.* There—up and down, poor lady, up and down.  
*Alice.* And how her shadow crosses one by one [on the wall, The moonlight casements pattern'd Following her like her sorrow. She turns again.  
 [Queen sits and writes and goes again.  
*Lady C.* What hath she written now? [come, and all awry,  
*Alice.* Nothing; but "come, come, And blotted by her tears. This cannot last. [Queen returns.  
*Mary.* I whistle to the bird has broken cage, [Sitting down.  
 And all in vain. Calais gone—Guineses gone, too—and Philip gone!  
*Lady C.* Dear Madam, Philip is but at the wars; [again; I cannot doubt but that he comes And he is with you in a measure still. I never look'd upon so fair a likeness As your great King in armor there, Upon his helmet. [his hand  
 [Pointing to the portrait of Philip on the wall.  
*Mary.* Doth he not look noble? I had heard of him in battle over seas, And I would have my warrior all in arms. He said it was not courtly to stand helmeted [cious moment, Before the Queen. He had his gra— Altho' you'll not believe me. How As if he loved me yet! [he smiles  
*Lady C.* And so he does.  
*Mary.* He never loved me—nay, he could not love me. [France. It was his father's policy against I am eleven years older than he, Poor boy. [Weeps.  
*Alice.* That was a lusty boy of twenty-seven; [Aside  
 Poor enough in God's grace!  
*Mary.* —And all in vain!  
 The Queen of Scots is married to the Dauphin, [world is gone; And Charles, the lord of this low And all his wars and wisdoms past away;  
 And in a moment I shall follow him.  
*Lady C.* Nay, dearest Lady, see your good physician.  
*Mary.* Drugs—but he knows they cannot help me—says [think— That rest is all—tells me I must not That I must rest—I shall rest by and by. [when he springs Catch the wild cat, cage him, and And maims himself against the bars, say "rest:" [have him rest— Why, you must kill him if you would Dead or alive you cannot make him happy. [pure a life,  
*Lady C.* Your Majesty has lived so And done such mighty things by Holy Church, [yet. I trust that God will make you happy

*Mary.* What is the strange thing happiness? Sit down here; Tell me thine happiest hour.  
*Lady C.* I will, if that May make your Grace forget yourself a little. [our field There runs a shallow brook across For twenty miles, where the black crow flies five, [the way And doth so bound and babble all As if itself were happy. It was May-time, [loved. And I was walking with the man I I loved him, but I thought I was not loved. [brook And both were silent, letting the wild Speak for us—till he stoop'd and gather'd one [nots, From out a bed of thick forget-me- Look'd hard and sweet at me, and gave it me, I took it, tho' I did not know I took it, And put it in my bosom, and all at once I felt his arms about me, and his lips—  
*Mary.* O God! I have been too slack, too slack;  
 There are Hot Gospellers even among our guards— [but burnt Nobles we dared not touch. We have The heretic priest, workmen, and women and children. Wet, famine, ague, fever, storm, wreck, wrath,— [God's grace, We have so play'd the coward; but by We'll follow Philip's leading, and set up The Holy Office here—gather the wheat, And burn the tares with unquenchable fire!  
 Burn!—  
 Fie, what a savor! tell the cooks to close The doors of all the offices below.  
 Latimer! [here— Sir, we are private with our women Ever a rough, blunt, and uncourtly fellow— [out!  
 Thou light a torch that never will go 'Tis out—mine flames. Women, the Holy Father [in Pole— Has ta'en the legateship from our cousins Was that well done? and poor Pole pines of it. As I do, to the death. I am but a woman, I have no power—Ah, weak and meek old man. Sevenfold dishonor'd even in the sight Of thine own secretaries—No, no. No pardon!— [hand still Why that was false: there is the right Beckons me hence. Sir, you were burnt for heresy, not for treason. Remember that! 'twas I and Bonner did it, And Pole; we are three to one—Have you found mercy there. Grant it me here: and see he smiles and goes,  
 Gentle as in life.  
*Alice.* Madam, who goes? King Philip?

Mary. No, Philip comes and goes,  
but never goes.  
Women, when I am dead,  
Open my heart, and there you will find  
written [his,—  
Two names, Philip and Calais; open  
So that he have one,— [icy,—  
You will find Philip only, policy, pol-  
Ay, worse than that—not one hour true  
to me! [vice !

Foul maggots crawling in a fester'd  
Adulterous to the very heart of Hell.  
Hast thou a knife? [God's mercy—

Alice. Ay, Madam, but o'  
Mary. Fool, think'st thou I would  
peril mine own soul [girl,

By slaughter of the body? I could not,  
Not this way—callous with a constant  
strife,

Unwoundable. Thy knife!  
Alice. Take heed, take heed!  
The blade is keen as death.

Mary. This Philip shall not  
Stare in upon me in my haggardness;  
Old, miserable, diseased, [down,  
Incapable of children. Come thou  
[Cuts out the picture and throws it  
down. [my Philip.

Lie there. [Wails.] O God, I have killed  
Alice. No [out,  
Madam, you have but cut the canvas  
We can replace it.

Mary. All is well then; rest—  
I will to rest; he said, I must have rest.  
[Cries of "Elizabeth" in the street.

A cry! What's that? Elizabeth? re-  
volt? [Wyatt?  
A new Northumberland, another  
I'll fight it on the threshold of the  
grave. [comes to see you.

Lady C. Madam, your royal sister  
Mary. I will not see her.

Who knows if Boleyn's daughter be my  
sister? [arm.  
I will see none except the priest. Your  
[To Lady Clarence.

O Saint of Aragon, with that sweet  
worn smile [hence.  
Among thy patient wrinkles—help me  
[Exeunt.

The Priest passes. Enter Elizabeth  
and Sir William Cecil.

Eliz. Good counsel yours—  
No one in waiting? still,  
As if the chamberlain were Death him-  
self! way?  
The room she sleeps in—is not this the  
No, that way there are voices. Am I  
too late? [way.  
Cecil . . . God guide me lest I lose the  
[Exit Elizabeth.

Cecil. Many points weather'd, many  
perilous ones,  
At last a harbor opens; but therein  
Sunk rocks—they need fine steering—  
much it is

To be nor mad, nor bigot—have a mind—  
Not let Priests' talk, or dream of worlds  
to be,

Miscolor things about her—sudden  
touches  
For him, or him—sunk rocks; no pas-  
sionate faith— [mice;  
But—if let be—balance and compro-  
Brave, wary, same to the heart of her,  
—a Tudor [Boleyn, too,  
School'd by the shadow of death—a  
Glancing across the Tudor—not so well.

Enter Alice.  
How is the good Queen now?  
Alice. Away from Philip.  
Back in her childhood—prattling to  
her mother [Charles,  
Of her betrothal to the Emperor  
And childlike-jealous of him again—  
and once [book  
She thank'd her father sweetly for his  
Against that godless German. Ah, those  
days

Were happy. It was never merry world  
in England, since the Bible came  
among us.  
Cecil. And who says that?  
Alice. It is a saying among the Cath-  
olics.

Cecil. It never will be merry world  
in England, [poor,  
Till all men have their Bible, rich and  
Alice. The Queen is dying, or you  
dare not say it.

Enter Elizabeth.  
Eliz. The Queen is dead.  
Cecil. Then here she stands!  
my homage.  
Eliz. She knew me, and acknowl-  
edged me her heir,  
Pray'd me to pay her debts, and keep  
the Faith; [in peace.  
Then claspt the cross, and pass'd away  
I left her lying still and beautiful,  
More beautiful than in life. Why  
should you vex yourself,  
Poor sister? Sir, I swear I have no  
heart [fence,  
To be your Queen. To reign is restless  
Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is  
with the dead. [nipt :  
Her life was winter, for her spring was  
And she loved much: pray God she be  
forgiven.  
Cecil. Peace with the dead who  
never were at peace!  
Yet she loved one so much—I needs  
must say—  
That never English monarch dying left  
England so little.  
Eliz. But with Cecil's aid  
And others, if our person be secured  
From traitor stabs—we will make Eng-  
land great.  
Enter Paget, and other Lords of the  
Council, Sir Ralph Bagenhall, etc.  
Lords. God save Elizabeth, the  
Queen of England!  
Pag. God save the Crown: the Pa-  
pacy is no more.  
Paget (aside). Are we so sure of that?  
Acclamation. God save the Queen!

## HAROLD.

SHOW-DAY AT BATTLE ABBEY. 1876.

A GARDEN here—May breath and bloom  
of spring—  
The cuckoo yonder from an English elm  
Crying “with my false egg I overwhelm  
The native nest:” and faucey hears the  
ring [sing,  
Of harness, and that deathful arrow  
And Saxon battle-axe clang on Norman  
helm. [realm:  
Here rose the dragon-banner of our

Here fought, here fell, our Norman-  
slander'd king.  
O Garden blossoming out of English  
blood!  
O strange hate-healer Time! We stroll  
and stare [years ago;  
Where might made right eight hundred  
Might, right? ay good, so all things  
make for good—  
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where  
Each stands full face with all he did  
below.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

King Edward the Confessor.  
Stigand, *created Archbishop of Can-  
terbury by the Anti-pope Benedict.*  
Aldred, *Archbishop of York.*  
The Norman Bishop of London.  
Harold, *Earl of Wessex, af-  
terwards King of Eng-  
land.* [bria,  
Tostig, *Earl of Northum-  
burgh.* *Earl of East Anglia.*  
Leofwin, *Earl of Kent and  
Essex,*  
Wulfnoth.  
Count William of Normandy.  
William Rufus.  
William Malet, *a Norman Noble.\**

Edwin, *Earl of Mercia,* } *Sons of Alfgar*  
Morcar, *Earl of North-* } *of Mercia.*  
          *umbria after Tostig,* }  
Gamel, *a Northumbrian Thane.*  
Guy, *Count of Ponthieu.*  
Rolf, *a Ponthieu Fisherman.*  
Hugh Margot, *a Norman Monk.*  
Osgod and Athelric, *Canons from Wal-  
tham.*  
The Queen, *Edward the Confessor's  
Wife, Daughter of Godwin.*  
Aldwyth, *Daughter of Alfgar and  
Widow of Griffyth, King of Wales.*  
Edith, *Ward of King Edward.*  
Courtiers, Earls and Thanes, Men-at-  
Arms, Canons of Waltham, Fisher-  
men, &c.

\* . . . quidam partim Normannus et Anglus  
Computar Heraldus. (*Guy of Amiens*, 357.)

### ACT I.

SCENE I.—London. *The King's Palace.*  
(*A comet seen through the open win-  
dow.*) Aldwyth, Gamel, Courtiers  
*talking together.*

*First Courtier.* Lo! there once more  
—this is the seventh night! [scourge  
You grimly-glaring, treble-brandished  
Of England!

*Second Courtier.* Horrible!

*1 Court.* Look you, there's a star  
That dances in it as mad with agony!  
*Third Courtier.* Ay, like a spirit in  
Hell who skips and flies  
To right and left, and cannot scape the  
flame.

*2 Court.* Steam'd upward from the  
undescendable  
Abysm.

*1 Court.* Or floated downward from  
the throne

Of God Almighty.  
*Aldwyth.* Gamel, son of Orm,

What thinkest thou this means?

*Gamel.* War, my dear lady!

*Ald.* Doth this affright thee?

*Gamel.* Mi, htily, my dear lady.

*Ald.* Stand by me then, and look  
upon my face,  
Not on the comet.

*Enter Morcar.*

Brother! why so pale?

*Morcar.* It glares in heaven, it flares  
upon the Thames.

The people are thick as bees below,  
They hum like bees,—they cannot  
speak—for awe; [strike  
Look to the skies, then to the river,

Their hearts, and hold their babies up  
to it. [too,  
I think that they would Molochize them  
To have the heavens clear.

*Alld.* They fright not me.

*Enter* Leofwin, *after* him Gurth.  
Ask thou Lord Leofwin what he thinks  
of this! [lieve, that these

*Mor.* Lord Leofwin, dost thou be-  
Three rods of blood-red fire up yonder  
mean [Heaven?

The doom of England and the wrath of  
*Bishop of London (passing).* Did ye  
not cast with bestial violence fall  
Our holy Norman bishops down from  
Their thrones in England? I alone  
remain.

Why should not Heaven be wroth?  
*Leofwin.* With us or thee?

*Bp. of Lond.* Did ye not outlaw your  
archbishop Robert,  
Robert of Jumiéges—well-nigh murder  
him too? [Heaven?

Is there no reason for the wrath of  
*Leof.* Why then the wrath of Hea-  
ven hath three tails, [London.  
The devil only one. [*Exit* Bishop of

*Enter* Archbishop Stigand.

Ask our Archbishop.

Stigand should know the purposes of  
Heaven. [face of heaven,

*Stigand.* Not I. I cannot read the  
Perhaps our vines will grow the better  
for it. [the king's face on his coins.  
*Leof.* (laughing.) He can but read  
*Stig.* Ay, ay, young lord, there the  
king's face is power. [lie fear,

*Gurth.* O father mock not at a pub-  
But tell us, is this pendent heil in hea-  
ven

A harm to England?

*Stig.* Ask it of King Edward!  
And he may tell thee, I am a harm to  
England.

Old uncanonical Stigand—ask of me  
Who had my pallium from an Anti-  
pope? [world

Not he the man—for in our windy  
What's up is faith, what's down is  
heresy. [shake his chair.

Our friends, the Normans, help to  
I have a Norman fever on me, son,  
And cannot answer sanely . . . What  
it means?

Ask our broad Earl. [*Pointing* to Har-  
old, *who enters.*

*Harold seeing* Gamel.) Hail, Gamel,  
son of Orm! [Gamel,

Albeit no rolling stone, my good friend  
Thou hast rounded since we met. Thy  
life at home [not

Is easier than mine here. Look! am I  
Work-wan, flesh-fallen!

*Gamel.* Art thou sick, good Earl?

*Har.* Sick as an autumn swallow for  
a voyage, [hound

Sick for an idle week of hawk and  
Beyond the seas—a change! When  
camest thou hither?

*Gamel.* To-day, good Earl.

*Har.* Is the North quiet, Gamel?

*Gamel.* Nay, there be murmurs, for  
thy brother bœaks us

With over-taxing—quiet, ay, as yet—  
Nothing as yet.

*Har.* Stand by him, mine old friend,  
Thou art a great voice in Northumber-  
land! [hear thee.

Advise him; speak him sweetly, he will  
He is passionate but honest. Stand  
thou by him! [weird sign

More talk of this to-morrow, if you  
Not blast us in our dreams.—Well,  
father Stigand—

To Stigand, *who advances* to him.

*Stigand (pointing to the comet).* War  
here, my son? is that the doom  
of England?

*Har.* Why not the doom of all the  
world as well? [aud.

For all the world sees it as well as Eng-  
These meteors came and went before  
our day, [more

Not harming any; it threatens us no  
Than French or Norman. War? the  
worst that follows [mon rut

Things that seem jerk'd out of the com-  
Of Nature is the hot religious fool,  
Who, seeing war in heaven, for hea-  
ven's credit

Makes it on earth: but look where Ed-  
ward draws

A faint foot hither, leaning upon  
Tostig.

He hath learnt to love our Tostig much  
of late. [tiger in him,

*Leof.* And he hath learnt, despite the  
To sleek and supple himself to the  
king's hand. [ceures the evil

*Gurth.* I trust the kingly touch that  
May serve to charm the tiger out of him.

*Leof.* He hath as much of cat as tiger  
in him. [man.

Our Tostig loves the hand and not the  
*Har.* Nay! Better die than lie!

*Enter* King, Queen and Tostig.

*Edw.* In heaven signs!  
Signs upon earth! signs everywhere!  
your Priests

Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearned!  
They scarce can read their Psalter!

and your churches [manland  
Uncouth, unhandsome, while in Nor-  
God speaks thro' abler voices, as He  
dwells [being

In statelier shrines. I say not this, as  
Half Norman-blooded, nor as some  
have held,

Because I love the Norman better—no,  
But dreading God's revenge upon this  
realm [say it

For narrowness and coldness; and I  
For the last time perchance, before I go  
To find the sweet refreshment of the  
Saints.

I have lived a life of utter purity;

I have builded the great church of  
Holy Peter:

I have wrought miracles—to God the glory—

And miracles will in my name be wrought [go—

Hereafter.—I have fought the fight and I see the flashing of the gates of pearl—

And it is well with me, tho' some of you Have scorn'd me—ay—but after I am gone [vision:]

Woe, woe to England! I have had a The seven sleepers in the cave at Ephesus

Have turn'd from right to left.

*Har.* My most dear Master, What matters? let them turn from left to right.

And sleep again.

*Tostig.* Too hardy with thy king! A life of prayer and fasting well may see

Deeper into the mysteries of heaven Than thou, good brother.

*Ald. (aside.)* Sees he into thine, That thou wouldst have his promise for the crown? [art too hard,

*Edw.* Tostig says true; my son, thou Not stagger'd by this ominous earth and heaven; [same loon,

But heaven and earth are threads of the Play into one another, and weave the web

That may confound thee yet.

*Har.* Nay, I trust not. For I have served thee long and honestly.

*Edw.* I know it, son; I am not thankless: thou [me

Hast broken all my foes, lighten'd for The weight of this poor crown, and left me time [me.

And peace for prayer to gain a better Twelve years of service! England loves thee for it.

Thou art the man to rule her!

*Ald. (aside.)* So, not Tostig!

*Har.* And after those twelve years a boon, my King.

Respite, a holiday; thyself wast wont To love the chase: thy leave to set my feet [the seas!

On board, and hunt and hawk'd beyond *Edw.* What, with this flaming horror overhead?

*Har.* Well, when it passes then.

*Edw.* Ay if it pass. Go not to Normandy—go not to Normandy. [to Normandy?

*Har.* And wherefore not, my king, Is not my brother Wulfnoth hostage there

For my dead father's loyalty to thee? I pray thee, let me hence and bring him home. [messenger.

*Edw.* Not thee, my son; some other

*Har.* And why not me, my lord, to Normandy? [and mine?

Is not the Norman Count thy friend

*Edw.* I pray thee, do not go to Normandy. [Normans out

*Har.* Because my father drove the

Of England?—That was many a summer gone— [thee,

Forgotten and forgiven by them and *Edw.* Harold, I will not yield thee leave to go. [hawk and hunt

*Har.* Why then to Flanders. I will In Flanders. [fields

*Edw.* Be there not fair woods and In England? Wilful, wilful. Go—the Saints

Pilot and prosper all thy wandering out And homeward. Tostig, I am faint again.

Son Harold, I will in and pray for thee. [Exit, leaning on Tostig, and followed by Stigand, Morcar, and Courtiers.

*Har.* What lies upon the mind of our good king [mandy?

That he should harp this way on *Nor-Queen.* Brother, the king is wiser than he seems; [King,

And Tostig knows it; Tostig loves the *Har.* And love should know; and—be the king so wise,— [seems.

Then Tostig too were wiser than he I love the man but not his fantasies.

*Re-enter Tostig.*

Well, brother, [umbria?

When didst thou hear from thy North-*Tostig.* When did I hear aught but this "When" from thee?

Leave me alone, brother, with my Northumbria:—

She is my mistress, let me look to her! The King hath made me Earl; make me not fool! [me Earl!

Nor make the King a fool, who made *Har.* No, Tostig—lest I make myself a fool [make thee Earl,

Who made the King who made thee, *Tostig.* Why chafest me then? Thou knowest I soon go wild.

*Gurth.* Come, come! as yet thou art not gone so wild [of us.

But thou canst hear the best and wisest *Har.* So says old Gurth, not I: yet hear! thine earldom. [crown

*Tostig,* hath been a kingdom. Their old Is yet a force among them, a sun set

But leaving light enough for *Alfgar's* house [ghastly glare

To strike thee down by—nay, this May heat their fancies.

*Tostig.* My most worthy brother, That art the quietest man in all the world— [war

Ay, ay and wise in peace and great in Pray God the people choose thee for their king! [win

But all the powers of the house of God—Are not enfram'd in thee.

*Har.* Thank the Saints, no! But thou hast drain'd them shallow by thy toils, [King:

And thou art ever here about the Thine absence well may seem a want of care. [of Godwin

Cling to their love; for, now the sons

Sit topmost in the field of England,  
envy,  
Like the rough bear beneath the tree,  
good brother,  
Waits till the man let go.

*Tostig.* Good counsel truly!  
I heard from my Northumbria yester-  
day. [Northumbria? Well?

*Har.* How goes it then with thy  
*Tostig.* And wouldst thou that it  
went aught else than well?

*Har.* I would it went as well as with  
mine earldom.  
Leofwin's and Gurth's.

*Tostig.* Ye govern milder men.  
*Gurth.* We have made them milder  
by just government.

*Tostig.* Ay, ever give yourselves  
your own good word.

*Leof.* An honest gift by all the  
Saints, if giver  
And taker be but honest! but they  
bribe

Each other, and so often, an honest  
world

Will not believe them.  
*Har.* I may tell thee, Tos-  
tig, [day.

I heard from thy Northumberland, to-  
[my nakedness  
*Tostig.* From spies of thine to spy  
in my poor North!

*Har.* There is a movement there,  
A blind one—nothing yet.

*Tostig.* Crush it at once  
With all the power I have!—I must—I  
will!— [dom there,  
Crush it half-born! Fool still? or wis-  
My wise heal-shaking Harold?

*Har.* Make not thou  
The nothing something. Wisdom when  
in power [but smile  
And wisest, should not frown as Power,  
As kindness, watching all, till the true  
must [when to strike—

Shall make her strike as Power; but  
O *Tostig*, O dear brother—if they  
prance,

Rein in, nor lash them, lest they rear  
and run  
And break both neck and axle.

*Tostig.* Good again!  
Good counsel tho' scarce needed. Four  
not water

In the full vessel running out at top  
To swamp the house.

*Leof.* Nor thou be a wild thing  
Out of the waste, to turn and bite the  
hand

Would help thee from the trap.  
*Tostig.* Thou playest in tune.

*Leof.* To the deaf adder thee, that  
wilt not dance

However wisely charm'd.  
*Tostig.* No more, no more!

*Gurth.* I likewise cry 'no more.'  
Unwholesome talk [hast a tongue!  
For Godwin's house! Leofwin, thou  
*Tostig*, thou lookst as thou wouldst  
spring upon him.

*St. Olaf*, not while I am by! Come,  
come,

Join hands, let brethren dwell in unity;  
Let kith and kin stand close as our  
shield-wall, [a tongue,

Who breaks us then? I say, thou hast  
And *Tostig* is not stout enough to bear it  
Vex him not, Leofwin.

*Tostig.* No, I am not vext,—  
Altho' ye seek to vex me, one and all.  
I have to make report of my good earl-  
dom [you.

To the good king who gave it—not to  
Nor any of you,—I am not vext at all.

*Har.* The king? the king is ever at  
his prayers;

In all that handles matter of the state  
I am the king.

*Tostig.* That shalt thou never be  
If I can thwart thee.

*Har.* Brother, brother!  
*Tostig.* Away!

[Exit *Tostig*.

*Queen.* Spite of this grisly star ye  
Poor *Tostig*. [three must gill

*Leof.* *Tostig*, sister, galls himself,  
He cannot smell a rose but pricks his  
nose [rose.

Against the thorn, and rails against the  
*Queen.* I am the only rose of all the  
stock [him, so

That never thorn'd him; Edward loves  
Ye hate him. Harold always hated him.  
Why—how they fought when boys—  
and, Holy Mary!

How Harold used to beat him!  
*Har.* Why, boys will fight.

Leofwin would often fight me, and I  
beat him. [much ado  
Even old Gurth would fight. I had  
to hold mine own against old Gurth.

Old Gurth, [cause; but *Tostig*—  
We fought like great states for grave  
On a sudden—at a something—for a  
nothing— [we fought

The boy would fist me hard, and when  
I conquer'd, and he loved me none the  
less, [tell him

Till thou wouldst get him all apart, and  
That where he was but worsted, he was  
wron'd. [him too;

Ah! thou hast taught the king to spoil  
Now the spoilt child sways both. Take  
heed, take heed;

Thou art the Queen; ye are boy and  
girl no more;

Side not with *Tostig* in any violence,  
Lest thou be sideways guilty of the vio-  
lence.

*Queen.* Come fall not foul on me. I  
leave thee, brother.

*Har.* Nay, my good sister—

[Exit *Queen*, *Harold*, *Gurth* and  
*Leofwin*.

*Ald.* Gamel, son of Orm,  
What thinkest thou this means?

[Pointing to the comet.  
*Gamel.* War, my dear lady;

War, waste, plague, famine, all malignities. [his earldom.]

*Ald.* It means the fall of Tostig from Gamel. That were too small a matter for a comet! [house of Alfgar.]

*Ald.* It means the lifting of the Gamel. Too small! a comet would not show for that! [compass it.]

*Ald.* Not small for thee if thou canst Gamel. Thy love? [nunn;]

*Ald.* As much as I can give thee, This Tostig is, or like to be, a tyrant; Stir up thy people: oast him!

*Gamel.* And thy love?

*Ald.* As much as thou canst bear.

*Gamel.* I can bear all,

And not be giddy.

*Ald.* No more now: to-morrow.

SCENE II.—*In the Garden. The King's House near London. Sunset.*

*Edith.* Mad for thy mate, passionate nightingale . . . [ment;]  
I love thee for it—ay, but stay a mo-  
He can but stay a moment; he is going.  
I fain would hear him coming! . . . near  
me . . . near,  
Somewhere—To draw him nearer with  
Like thine to thine. [a charm]

(Singing.)

*Love is come with a song and a smile,  
Welcome Love with a smile and a song:  
Love can stay but a little while.  
Why cannot he stay? They call him  
away:  
Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong:  
Love will stay for a whole life long.*

Enter Harold.

*Har.* The nightingales at Havering-  
in-the-bower [ward's prayers]  
Sang out their loves so loud, that Ed-  
Were deafen'd, and he prayed them  
dumb, and thus [gale!]  
I dumb thee too, my wingless nightin-  
[Kissing her.]

*Edith.* Thou art my music! Would  
their wings were mine [go?]  
To follow thee to Flanders! Must thou  
*Har.* Not must, but will. It is but  
for one moon. [ward's hall]

*Edith.* Leaving so many foes in Ed-  
To league against thy weal. The Lady  
[on thee]

*Aldwyth*  
Was here to-day, and when she touch'd  
She stammer'd in her hate; I am sure  
she hates thee,

Pants for thy blood.

*Har.* Well, I have given her cause—  
I fear no woman.

*Edith.* Hate not one who felt  
Some pity for thy hater! I am sure  
Her morning wanted sunlight, she so  
praised [pale—]

The convent and lone life—within the  
Beyond the passion. Nay—she held  
with Edward,

At least methought she held with holy  
Edward,

That marriage was half sin.

*Har.* A lesson worth  
Finger and thumb—thus [snaps his fin-  
gers]. And my answer to it—

See here—an interwoven H and E!

Take thou this ring; I will demand  
his ward [would she?]

From Edward when I come again. Ay,  
She to shut up my blossom in the dark!

Thou art my nun, thy cloister in mine  
arms.

*Edith.* (taking the ring). Yea, but  
Earl Tostig—

*Har.* That's a truer fear!  
For if the North take fire, I should be  
back;

I shall be, soon enough.

*Edith.* Ay, but last night  
A evil dream that ever came and went—

*Har.* A gnat that vext thy pillow!

Had I been by [what was it?]  
I would have spoil'd his horn. My girl,

*Edith.* Oh! that thou wert not going!  
For so methought it was our marriage-  
morn, [nun]

And while we stood together, a dead  
Rose from behind the altar, tore away  
My marriage ring, and rent my bridal  
veil; [all ill'd]

And then I turn'd, and saw the church  
With dead men upright from their  
graves, and all [thee],

The dead men made at thee to murder  
But thou didst back thyself against a  
pillar, [axe—]

And strike among them with thy battle  
There, what a dream

*Har.* Well, well—a dream—no more!  
*Edith.* Did not Heaven speak to men  
in dreams of old? [what, my child;]

*Har.* Ay—well—of old. I tell thee  
Thou hast misread this merry dream of  
thine,

Taken the rifted pillars of the wood  
For smooth stone columns of the sanc-  
tuary,

The shadows of a hundred fat dead deer  
For dead men's ghosts. True, that the  
battle-axe [the bow—]

Was out of place; it should have been  
Come, thou shalt dream no more such  
dreams; I swear it, [phires—these]

By mine own eyes—and these two sap-  
Twin rubies, that are amulets against  
all

The kisses of all kind of womankind  
In Flanders, till the sea shall roll me  
To tumble at thy feet. [back]

*Edith.* That would but shame me,  
Rather than make me vain. The sea  
may roll [ing rock]

Sand, shingle, shore-weed, not the liv-  
Which guards the land.

*Har.* Except it be a soft one,  
And undereaten to the fall. Mine amu-  
let . . .

This last . . . upon thine eyelids, to  
shut in

A happier dream. Sleep, sleep, and  
 thou shalt see  
 My grayhounds fleeing like a beam of  
 light,  
 And hear my peregrine and her bells in  
 heaven; [heaven's];  
 And other bells on earth, which yet are  
 Guess what they be.  
*Edith.* He cannot guess who knows.  
 Farewell, my king.  
*Har.* Not yet, but then—my queen.  
 [Exit.]

*Enter Aldwyth from the thicket.*

*Ald.* The kiss that charms thine eye-  
 lids into sleep, [could love him  
 Will hold mine waking. Hate him? I  
 More, tenfold, than this fearful child  
 can do;  
 Griffyth I hated: why not hate the foe  
 Of England? Griffyth when I saw him  
 dies, [the blood  
 Chased deer-like up his mountains, all  
 That should have only pulsed for Griff-  
 yth beat [love him,  
 For his pursuer. I love him or think I  
 If he were King of England, I his  
 queen,  
 I might be sure of it. Nay, I do love  
 him.— [the king  
 She must be cloister'd somehow, lest  
 Should yield his ward to Harold's  
 will. What harm? [love.—  
 She hath but blood enough to live, not  
 When Harold goes and Tostig, shall I  
 play [upon him?  
 The craftier Tostig with him? fawn  
 Chime in with all? "O thou more  
 saint than king!" [relics!"  
 And that were true enough. "O blessed  
 "O Holy Peter!" If he found me  
 thus,  
 Harold might hate me; he is broad and  
 honest, [like Aldwyth . . .  
 Breathing an easy gladness . . . not  
 For which I strangely love him. Should  
 not England [that part  
 Love Aldwyth, if she stay the feuds  
 The sons of Godwin from the sons of  
 Alfgar [Aldwyth!  
 By such a marrying? Courage, noble  
 Let all thy people bless thee!  
 Our wild Tostig,  
 Edward hath made him Earl: he would  
 be king:— [the bone.—  
 The dog that snapt the shadow, dropt  
 I trust he may do well, this Gamel,  
 whom  
 I play upon, that he may play the note  
 Whereat the dog shall howl and run,  
 and Harold [him,  
 Hear the king's music, all alone with  
 Pronounced his heir of England.  
 I see the goal and half the way to it.—  
 Peace-lover is our Harold for the sake  
 Of England's wholeness—so—to shake  
 the North [division—  
 With earthquake and disruption—some  
 Then fling mine own fair person in the  
 gap

A sacrifice to Harold, a peace-offering,  
 A scape-goat marriage—all the sins of  
 both [life  
 The houses on mine head—then a fair  
 And bless the Queen of England.  
*Morcar* (coming from the thicket).  
 Art thou assured  
 By this, that Harold loves but Edith?  
*Ald.* Morcar!  
 Why creepst thou like a timorous beast  
 of prey  
 Out of the bush by night?  
*Mor.* I follow'd thee.  
*Ald.* Follow my lead, and I will  
 make thee earl.  
*Mor.* What lead then?  
*Ald.* Thou shalt flash it secretly  
 Among the good Northumbrian folk,  
 that I— [ently  
 That Harold loves me—yea, and pres-  
 That I and Harold are betroth'd—and  
 last— [I would not  
 Perchance that Harold wrongs me; tho'  
 That it should come to that.  
*Mor.* I will both flash  
 And thunder for thee.  
*Ald.* I said "secretly;"  
 It is the flash that murders, the poor  
 thunder  
 Never harm'd head.  
*Mor.* But thunder may bring down  
 That which the flash hath stricken  
*Ald.* Down with Tostig!  
 That first of all.—And when dost Har-  
 old go? [then to Flanders.  
*Mor.* To-morrow—first to Bosham,  
*Ald.* Not to come back till Tostig  
 shall have shown [the teeth  
 And redd'n'd with his people's blood  
 That shall be broken by us—yea, and  
 thou [dream thyself  
 Chair'd in his place. Good-night, and  
 Their chosen Earl. [Exit Aldwyth.  
*Mor.* Earl first, and after that  
 Who knows I may not dream myself  
 their king!

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Seashore. Ponthieu, Night.*  
*Harold and his Men, wrecked.*

*Har.* Friends, in that last inhospit-  
 able plunge [are whole;  
 Our boat hath burst her ribs; but ours  
 I have but bark'd my hands.  
*Attendant.* I dug mine into  
 My old fast friend the shore, and cling-  
 ing thus [deep  
 Felt the remorseless outdraught of the  
 Haul like a great strong fellow at my  
 legs, [that came  
 And then I rose and ran. The blast  
 So suddenly hath fallen as suddenly—  
 Put thou the comet and this blast to-  
 gether—  
*Har.* Put thou thyself and mother-  
 wit together.  
 Be not a fool!

*Enter Fishermen with torches, Harold going up to one of them, Rolf.*

Wicked sea-will-o'-the-wisp!  
Wolf of the shore! dog, with thy lying  
lights [thine]  
Thou hast betray'd us on these rocks of  
*Rolf.* Ay, but thou liest as loud as  
the black herring-pond behind thee.  
We be fishermen, I came to see after  
my nets.

*Har.* To drag us into them. Fishermen? devils! [false fires]  
Who, while ye fish for men with your  
Let the great Devil fish for your own  
souls.

*Rolf.* Nay then, we be liker the blessed  
Apostles; they were fishers of men,  
Father Jean says.

*Har.* I had liefer that the fish had  
swallowed me,  
Like Jonah, than have known there  
were such devils.

What's to be done?  
[To his Men—goes apart with them.  
*Fisherman.* Rolf, what fish did swallow  
Jonah?

*Rolf.* A whale!  
*Fish.* Then a whale to a whelk we  
have swallowed the King of England.  
I saw him over there. Look thee, Rolf,  
when I was down in the fever, she was  
down with the hunger, and thou didst  
stand by her and give her thy crabs, and  
set her up again, till now, by the patient  
Saints, she's as crabb'd as ever.

*Rolf.* And I'll give her my crabs  
again, when thou art down again.

*Fish.* I thank thee, Rolf. Run thou  
to Count Guy; he is hard at hand. Tell  
him what hath crept into our creel, and  
he will fee thee as freely as he will  
wrench this outlander's ransom out of  
him—and why not? for what right had  
he to get himself wrecked on another  
man's land?

*Rolf.* Thou art the human-hearted-  
est, Christian-charitiest of all crab-  
catchers! Share and share alike!  
[Exit.]

*Har.* (to Fisherman). Fellow, dost  
thou catch crabs?

*Fish.* As few as I may in a wind,  
and less than I would in a calm. Ay!

*Har.* I have a mind that thou shalt  
*Fish.* How? [catch no more.]

*Har.* I have a mind to brain thee  
with mine axe.

*Fish.* Ay, do, do, and our great  
Count-crab will make his nippers meet  
in thine heart; he'll sweat it out of  
thee, he'll sweat it out of thee. Look,  
he's here! He'll speak for himself!  
Hold thine own, if thou canst!

*Enter Guy, Count of Ponthieu.*

*Har.* Guy, Count of Ponthieu!

*Guy.* Harold, Earl of Wessex!

*Har.* Thy villains with their lying  
lights have wreck'd us!

*Guy.* Art thou not Earl of Wessex?

*Har.* In mine earldom  
A man may hang gold bracelets on a  
bush, [back]  
And leave them for a year, and coming  
Find them again.

*Guy.* Thou art a mighty man  
In thine own earldom!

*Har.* Were such murderous liars  
In Wessex—if I caught them, they  
should hang [mew]  
Cliff-gibbeted for sea-marks; our  
Winging their only wail!

*Guy.* Ay, but my men  
Hold that the shipwreck are accused  
of God;—

What hinders me to hold with mine own  
*Har.* The Christian manhood of the  
man who reigns!

*Guy.* Ay, rave thy worst, but in our  
oublettes

Thou shalt or rot or ransom. Hale him  
hence! [To one of his attendants.  
Fly thou to William; tell him we have  
Harold.]

SCENE II.—Bayeux. Palace. Count  
William and William Malet.

*William.* We hold our Saxon wood-  
cock in the spring,  
But he begins to flutter. As I think  
He was thine host in England when I  
went

To visit Edward.  
*Malet.* Yea, and there, my lord,  
To make allowance for their rougher  
fashions,

I found him all a noble host should be.  
*Will.* Thou art his friend: thou  
know'st my claim on England

Thro' Edward's promise: we have him  
in the toils. [him feel,  
And it were well, if thou shouldst let  
How dense a fold of danger nets him  
round,

So that he bristle himself against my  
will. [I were you?

*Malet.* What would I do, my lord, if  
*Will.* What wouldst thou do?

*Malet.* My lord, he is thy guest.  
*Will.* Nay, by the splendor of God,  
no guest of mine.

He came not to see me, had past me by  
To hunt and hawk elsewhere, save for  
the fate [blast,

Which hunted him when that un-Saxon  
And bolts of thunder moulded in high  
heaven [and crack'd

To serve the Norman purpose, drave  
His boat on Ponthieu beach; where  
our friend Guy [the rack,

Had wrung his ransom from him by  
But that I stept between and purchased  
him,

Translating his captivity from Guy  
To mine own hearth at Bayeux, where  
he sits my ransom'd prisoner.

*Malet.* Well, if not with gold,  
With golden deeds and iron strokes  
that brought

Thy war with Brittany to a goodlier  
close

Than else had been, he paid his ransom  
back. [not like to league

*Will.* So that henceforth they are  
With Harold against me.

*Malet.* A marvel, how  
He from the liquid sands of Coesnon  
Haled thy shore-swallow'd, armor'd  
Normans up

To fight for thee again!

*Will.* Perchance against  
Their savor, save thou save him from  
himself. [again, my lord.

*Malet.* But I should let him home  
*Will.* Simple! let fly the bird with-  
in the hand. [bush!

To catch the bird again within the  
No. [with me;

Smooth thou my way, before he clash  
I want his voice in England for the  
crown. [round;

I want thy voice with him to bring him  
And being brave he must be subtly  
cow'd. [swear

And being truthful wrought upon to  
Vows that he dare not break, England  
our own. [dear friend

Thro' Harold's help, he shall be my  
As well as thine, and thou thyself  
shalt have [ritory.

Large lordship there of lands and ter-  
*Malet.* I know thy purpose; he and  
Wulfnoth never [meet

Have met, except in public; shall they  
in private? I have often talk'd with  
Wulfnoth. [these may act

And stuff'd the boy with fears't that  
On Harold when they meet.

*Will.* Then let them meet!  
*Malet.* I can but love this noble,  
honest, Harold.

*Will.* Love him! why not? thine is  
a loving office. [man:

I have commission'd thee to save the  
Help the good ship, showing the sunk-  
en rock,

Or he is wreckt for ever.

*Enter William Rufus.*

*William Rufus.* Father.

*Will.* Well, boy.

*Will. Ruf.* They have taken away  
the toy thou gavest me,  
The Norman knight.

*Will.* Why, boy?

*Will. Ruf.* Because I broke  
The horse's leg—it was mine own to  
break;

I like to have my toys, and break them  
too.

*Will.* Well, thou shalt have another  
Norman knight!

*Will. Ruf.* And may I break his legs?

*Will.* Yea,—get thee gone!

*Will. Ruf.* I'll tell them I have had  
my way with thee. [Exit.

*Malet.* I never knew thee check thy  
will for ought

Save for the prattling of thy little ones.

*Will.* Who shall be kings of Eng-  
land. I am heir

Of England by the promise of her king.

*Malet.* But there the great Assembly  
choose their king, [England.

The choice of England is the voice of  
*Will.* I will be king of England by  
the laws,

The choice, and voice of England.

*Malet.* Can that be?  
*Will.* The voice of any people is the  
sword [beats them down.

That guards them, or the sword that  
Here comes the would-be what I will  
be . . . kinglike . . . [es break,

Tho' scarce at ease: for, save our mesh-  
More kinglike he than like to prove a  
king.

[Enter Harold, musing, with his eyes  
on the ground. [me.

He sees me not—and yet he dreams of  
Earl, wilt thou fly my falcons this fair  
day? [against the wind.

They are of the best, strong-wing'd  
*Har.* [looking up suddenly, having  
caught but the last word.] Which  
way does it blow?

*Will.* Blowing for England, ha?  
Not yet. Thou hast not learnt thy  
quarters here. [these towers.

The winds so cross and jostle among  
*Har.* Count of the Normans, thou  
hast ransom'd us,

Maintain'd, and entertained us royally!

*Will.* And thou for us hast fought  
as loyally, [ever!

Which binds us friendship-fast for  
*Har.* Good!

But lest we turn the scale of courtesy  
By too much pressure on it, I would  
fain, [home with us,

Since thou hast promised Wulfnoth  
Be home again with Wulfnoth.

*Will.* Stay—as yet  
Thou hast but seen how Norman hands  
can strike,

But walk'd our Norman field, scarce  
touch'd or tasted,

The splendors of our Court.

*Har.* I am in no mood;  
I should be as the shadow of a cloud  
Crossing your light.

*Will.* Nay, rest a week or two,  
And we will fill thee full of Norman  
sun, [mists

And send thee back among thine island  
With laughter.

*Har.* Count, I thank thee, but had  
rather [Saxon downs,

Breathe the free wind from off our  
Tho' charged with all the wet of all the  
west. [thou shalt.

*Will.* Why if thou wilt, so let it be—  
That were a graceless hospitality

To chain the free guest to the ban-  
quet-board; [Harfeur,

To-morrow we will ride with thee to  
And see thee shipt, and pray in thy  
behalf [which crach'd

For happier homeward winds than that

Thy bark at Ponthien,—yet to us in  
 faith, [know  
 A happy one—whereby we came to  
 Thy valor and thy value, noble earl.  
 Ay, and perchance a happy one for  
 thee, [row—  
 Provided—I will go with thee to-mor-  
 Nay—but there be conditions, easy  
 ones, [easily.  
 So thou, fair friend, will take them

*Enter Page.*

*Page.* My lord, there is a post from  
 over seas

With news for thee. [*Exit Page.*

*Will.* Come, Malet, let us hear!

[*Exeunt Count William and Malet.*

*Har.* Conditions? What conditions?  
 pay him back [may—  
 His ransom? “easy”—that were easy—  
 No money-lover he! What said the  
 King?

“I pray you do not go to Normandy.”  
 And fate hath blown me hither, bound  
 me too

With bitter obligation to the Count—  
 Have I not fought it out? What did  
 he mean? [his eyes,

There lodged a gleaming grimness in  
 Gave his shorn smile the lie. The  
 walls oppress me, [the heaven,  
 And you huge keep that hinders half  
 Free air! free field!

[*Moves to go out. A Man-at-Arms  
 follows him.*

*Har.* (to the Man-at-Arms.) I need  
 thee not. Why dost thou follow  
 me?

*Man-at-Arms.* I have the Count's  
 commands to follow thee.

*Har.* What then? Am I in danger  
 in this court?

*Man-at-Arms.* I cannot tell. I have  
 the Count's commands.

*Har.* Stand out of earshot then, and  
 in eyeshot. [keep me still

*Man-at-Arms.* Yea, lord Harold.  
 [*Withdraws.*

*Har.* And arm'd men  
 Ever keep watch beside my chamber  
 door,

And if I walk within the lonely wood,  
 There is an arm'd man ever glides be-  
 hind!

*Enter Malet.*

Why am I follow'd, haunted, harass'd,  
 See yonder! [watch'd?

[*Pointing to Man-at-Arms.*  
*Malet.* 'Tis the good Count's care  
 for thee! [the Normans,  
 The Normans love thee not, nor thou  
 Or—so they deem.

*Har.* But wherefore is the wind,  
 Which way soever the vane-arrow  
 swing,

Not ever fair for England? Why but  
 now [not hence  
 He said (thou hearst him) that I must  
 Save on conditions.

*Malet.* So in truth he said.  
*Har.* Malet, thy mother was an  
 Englishwoman;

There somewhere beats an English  
 pulse in thee!

*Malet.* Well—for my mother's sake  
 I love your England,

But for my father I love Normandy.

*Har.* Speak for thy mother's sake,  
 and tell me true.

*Malet.* Then for my mother's sake,  
 and England's sake

That suffers in the daily want of thee,  
 Obey the Count's conditions, my good  
 friend. [honorable!

*Har.* How, Malet, if they be not  
*Malet.* Seem to obey them.

*Har.* Better die than lie!

*Malet.* Choose therefore whether  
 thou wilt have thy conscience

White as a maiden's hand, or whether  
 England

Be shatter'd into fragments.

*Har.* News from England?

*Malet.* Morcar and Edwin have  
 stirr'd up the Thanes [nauce;  
 Against thy brother Tostig's govern-  
 And all the North of Humber is one  
 storm. [should be there!

*Har.* I should be there, Malet, I  
*Malet.* And Tostig in his own hall  
 on suspicion [his guest,

Hath massacred the Thane that was  
 Gamel, the son of Orm: and there be  
 As villainously slain. [more

*Har.* The wolf! the beast!  
 All news for guests, ha, Malet! More?  
 What more? [of this?

What do they say? did Edward know  
*Malet.* They say, his wife was know-  
 ing and abetting.

*Har.* They say, his wife!—To marry  
 and have no husband [be there,  
 Makes the wife fool. My God, I should  
 I'll hack my way to the sea.

*Malet.* Thou canst not, Harold;  
 Our Duke is all between thee and the  
 sea,

Our Duke is all about thee like a God;  
 All passes block'd. Obey him, speak  
 him fair,

For he is only debonair to thee  
 That follow where he leads, but stark  
 as death [here is Wulfnoth!

To those that cross him.—Look thou,  
 I leave thee to thy talk with him alone;  
 How wan, poor lad! how sick and sad  
 for home! [*Exit Malet.*

*Har.* (muttering.) Go not to Nor-  
 mandy—go not to Normandy!

*Enter Wulfnoth.*

Poor brother! still a hostage!

*Wulfnoth.* Yea, and I  
 Shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no  
 more [tall cliffs,

Make blush the maiden-white of our  
 Nor mark the sea-bird rouse himself  
 and hover [sky

Above the windy ripple, and fill the

With free sea-laughter—never—save indeed [mooded Duke  
Thou canst make yield this iron—  
To let me go.

*Har.* Why, brother, so he will ;  
But on conditions. Canst thou guess  
at them. [corridor,

*Wulf.* Draw nearer.—I was in the  
I saw him coming with his brother Odo  
The Bayeux bishop, and I hid myself.

*Har.* They did thee wrong who  
made thee hostage ; thou  
Wast ever fearful.

*Wulf.* And he spoke—I heard him—  
“This Harold is not of the royal blood,  
Can have no right to the crown,” and

Odo said, [might ; he is here,  
“Thine is the right, for thine the  
And yonder is thy keep.”

*Har.* No, Wulfnoth, no.  
*Wulf.* And William laugh'd and  
swore that might was right,

Far as he knew in this poor world of  
ours— [with us,  
“Marry, the Saints must go along  
And, brother, we will find a way,”

said he—  
Yea, yea, he would be king of England.

*Har.* Never !  
*Wulf.* Yea, but thou must not this  
way answer him. [the truth ?

*Har.* Is it not better still to speak  
*Wulf.* Not here, or thou wilt never  
hence nor I : [goal

For in the racing toward this golden  
He turns not right or left, but tramples  
[at

Whatever thwarts him ; hast thou  
His savagery at Alençon.—the town  
Hung out raw hides along their walls,  
and cried

“Work for the tanner.”  
*Har.* That had anger'd me  
Had I been William.

*Wulf.* Nay, but he had prisoners,  
He tore their eyes out, sliced their  
hands away, [battlements

And flung them streaming o'er the  
Upon the heads of those who walk'd  
within— [own sake,

O speak him fair, Harold, for thine  
*Har.* Your Welshman says, “The  
Truth against the World,”

Much more the truth against myself.  
*Wulf.* Thyself ?

But for my sake, oh brother ! oh ! for  
my sake !

*Har.* Poor Wulfnoth ! do they not  
entreat thee well ? [dungeon loom

*Wulf.* I see the blackness of my  
Across their lamps of revel, and beyond  
The merriest murmurs of their ban-  
quet clank [wall,

The shackles that will bind me to the  
*Har.* Too fearful still !  
*Wulf.* Oh no, no—speak him fair !  
Call it to temporize ; and not to lie ;  
Harold, I do not counsel thee to lie.  
The man that hath to foil a murderous  
May, surely, play with words. [aim

*Har.* Words are the man.  
Not ev'n for thy sake, brother, would I

*Wulf.* Then for thine Edith ? [lie.

*Har.* There thou prickest me deep.  
*Wulf.* And for our Mother Eng-  
land ?

*Har.* Deeper still.  
*Wulf.* And deeper still the deep-  
down oubliette. [day—

Down thirty feet below the smiling  
In blackness—dogs' food thrown upon  
thy head.

And over thee the suns arise and set,  
And the lark sings, the sweet stars  
come and go, [their fields

And men are at their markets, in  
And woo their loves and have forgot-  
ten thee ; [grave,

And thou are upright in thy living  
Where there is barely room to shift  
thy side. [thee ;

And all thine England hath forgotten  
And he our lazy-pious Norman King,  
With all his Normans round him once  
again, [thee,

Counts his old beads, and hath forgot-  
*Har.* Thou art of my blood, and so  
methinks, my boy, [Peace !

Thy fears infect me beyond reason.  
*Wulf.* And then our fiery Tostig,  
while thy hands [rise

Are palsied here, if his Northumbrians  
And hurl him from them,—I have  
heard the Normans [not make

Count upon this confusion—may he  
A league with William, so to bring  
him back ? [of the chance.

*Har.* That lies within the shadow  
*Wulf.* And like a river in flood  
thro' a burst dam [good King

Descends the ruthless Norman—our  
Kneels mumbling some old bone—our  
helpless folk [own blood—

Are wash'd away, wailing, in their  
*Har.* Wailing ! not warring ? Boy,  
thou hast forgotten

That thou art English.  
*Wulf.* Then our modest women—  
I know the Norman license—thine own  
Edith— [—William comes,

*Har.* No more ! I will not hear thee  
*Wulf.* I dare not well be seen in  
talk with thee. [with thee,

Make thou not mention that I spake  
[Moves away to the back of the stage.

*Enter* William, Malet, and Officer.  
*Officer.* We have the man that rail'd  
against thy birth.

*Will.* Tear out his tongue.  
*Officer.* He shall not rail again ;  
He said that he should see confusion  
fall

On thee and on thine house.  
*Will.* Tear out his eyes,  
And plunge him into prison.

*Officer.* It shall be done.  
[Exit Officer.

*Will.* Look not amazed, fair earl !  
Better leave undone

Than do by halves—tongueless and  
eyeless, prison'd— [man at once!

*Har.* Better methinks have slain the

*Will.* We have respect for man's  
immortal soul, [war;

We seldom take man's life, except in  
it frights the traitor more to main and  
blind. [have scorn'd the man,

*Har.* In mine own land I should  
Or lash'd his rascal back, and let him

go.

*Will.* And let him go? To slander  
thee again! [day

Yet in thine own land in thy father's  
They blinded my young kinsman, Al-

fred—ay,

Some said it was thy father's deed.  
*Har.* They lied.

*Will.* But thou and he—whom at

thy word, for thou  
Art known a speaker of the truth, I

free

From this foul charge—

*Har.* Nay, nay, he freed himself  
By oath and compurgation from the

charge. [him of it.

The king, the lords, the people clear'd  
*Will.* But thou and he drove our

good Normans out [yet.

From England, and this rankles in us  
Archbishop Robert hardly scaped with

life. [the Archbishop!

*Har.* Archbishop Robert! Robert  
Robert of Jumièges, he that—

*Malet.* Quiet! quiet!

*Har.* Count! if there sat within thy  
Norman chair

A ruler all for England—one who fill'd  
All offices, all bishoprics with English—

We could not move from Dover to the  
Humber

Saying thro' Norman bishoprics—I say  
Ye would applaud that Norman who

should drive  
The stranger to the fiends!

*Will.* Why, that is reason!  
Warrior thou art, and mighty wise

withal! [lords

Ay, ay, but many among our Norman  
Hate thee for this, and press upon me

—saying [hands—  
God and the sea have given thee to our

To plunge thee into life-long prison  
here:—

Yet I hold out against them, as I may,  
Yea—would hold out, yea, tho' they

should revolt— [cause;

For thou hast done the battle in my  
I am thy fastest friend in Normandy.

*Har.* I am doubly bound to thee, . . .  
if this be so. [and would myself

*Will.* And I would bind thee more,  
Be bounden to thee more.

*Har.* Then let me hence  
With Wulfnoth to King Edward.

*Will.* So we will.  
We hear he hath not long to live.

*Har.* It may be.  
*Will.* Why then the heir of England,  
who is he?

*Har.* The Atheling is nearest to the  
throne.

*Will.* But sickly, slight, half-witted  
and a child,

Will England have him king?

*Har.* It may be, no.  
*Will.* And hath King Edward not

pronounced his heir?

*Har.* Not that I know.  
*Will.* When he was here in Nor-

mandy, [found him  
He loved us and we him because we  
A Norman of the Normans.

*Har.* So did we.  
*Will.* A gentle, gracious, pure and

saintly man! [him,  
And grateful to the hand that shielded  
He promised that if ever he were king

in England, he would give his kindly  
voice [this?

To me as his successor. Knowest thou  
*Har.* I learn it now.

*Will.* Thou knowest I am his cousin,  
And that my wife descends from Al-

fred?

*Har.* Ay.  
*Will.* Who hath a better claim then

to the crown  
So that ye will not crown the Athe-

ling?

*Har.* None that I know . . . if that  
King Edward's will. [but hung upon

*Will.* Wilt thou uphold my claim?

*Malet* (*aside to Harold*). Be careful  
of thine answer, my good friend.

*Wulf* (*aside to Harold*). Oh! Har-  
old, for my sake and for thine own!

*Har.* Ay . . . if the king have not  
revoked his promise.

*Will.* But hath he done it then?

*Har.* Not that I know.  
*Will.* Good, good, and thou wilt help

me to the crown.  
*Har.* Ay . . . if the Witan will con-

sent to this. [in England, man,  
*Will.* Thou art the mightiest voice

Thy voice will lead the Witan—shall I  
have it?

*Wulf* (*aside to Harold*). Oh! Harold,  
if thou love thine Edith, ay.

*Har.* Ay, if—  
*Malet* (*aside to Harold*). Thine 'ifs'

will sear thine eyes out—ay.  
*Will.* I ask thee, wilt thou help me

to the crown?  
And I will make thee my great Earl of

Earls,  
Foremost in England and in Nor-

mandy;  
Thou shalt be verily king—all but the

name—  
For I shall most sojourn in Normandy;

And thou be my vice-king in England.  
Speak.

*Wulf* (*aside to Harold*). Ay, brother  
—for the sake of England—ay.

*Har.* My lord. [now,  
*Malet* (*aside to Harold*). Take heed

*Har.* Ay.  
*Will.* I am content.

For thou art truthful, and thy word  
thou bond. [Harfleur.

To-morrow will we ride with thee to  
[Exit William.

*Malet.* Harold, I am thy friend, one  
life with thee, [mine,  
And even as I should bless thee saving  
I thank thee now for having saved  
thyself. [Exit Malet.

*Har.* For having lost myself to save  
myself, [a lad

said 'ay' when I meant 'no,' lied like  
That dreads the pendent scourge, said  
'ay' for 'no'! [oath—

'Ay! No!—he hath not bound me by an  
Is 'ay' an oath? is 'ay' strong as an  
oath?

Or is it the same sin to break my word  
As break mine oath? He call'd my  
word my bond!

He is a liar who knows I am a liar,  
And makes believe that he believes my  
word— [—no.

The crime be on his head—not bounden

*Suddenly doors are flung open, discov-  
ering in an inner hall Count Wil-  
liam in his state robes, seated upon  
his throne, between two Bishops,  
Odo of Bayeux being one; in the  
centre of the hall an ark covered  
with cloth of gold; and on either  
side of it the Norman barons.*

*Enter a Jailer before William's throne.*

*Will.* (to Jailer). Knave, hast thou  
let thy prisoner scape?

*Jailer.* Sir Count,  
He had but one foot, he must have  
hopt away, help'd him.

Yea, some familiar spirit must have  
*Will.* Woe knave to thy familiar  
and to thee!

Give me thy keys. [*They fall clashing.*  
Nay let them lie. Stand there and wait  
my will. [*The Jailer stands aside.*

*Will.* (to Harold.) Hast thou such  
trustless jailors in thy North?

*Har.* We have few prisoners in  
mine earldom there,  
So less chance for false keepers.

*Will.* We have heard  
Of thy just, mild and equal govern-  
ance;

Honor to thee! thou art perfect in all  
honor! [now

Thy naked word thy bond! confirm it  
Before our gather'd Norman baronage,  
For they will not believe thee—as I  
believe.

[*Descends from his throne and stands  
by the ark.* [bond!

Let all men here bear witness of our  
[*Beckons to Harold who advances.*

*Enter Malet behind him.*

Lay thou thy hand upon this golden  
pall!

Behold the jewel of St. Pancratius  
Woven into the gold. Swear thou on  
this!

*Har.* What should I swear? Why  
should I swear on this?

*Will.* (*savagely*). Swear thou to help  
me to the crown of England.

*Malet* (*whispering to Harold*). My  
friend, thou hast gone too far to  
palter now.

*Wulf.* (*whispering to Harold*). Swear  
thou to-day, to-morrow is thine own.

*Har.* I swear to help thee to the  
crown of England . . .

According as King Edward promises.  
*Will.* Thou must swear absolutely,  
noble Earl.

*Malet* (*whispering*). Delay is death  
to thee, ruin to England.

*Wulf.* (*whispering*). Swear, dearest  
brother, I beseech thee, swear!

*Harold* (*putting his hand on the jewel*).  
I swear to help thee to the crown of  
England. [not doubt thy word.

*Will.* Thanks, truthful Earl; I did  
But that my barons might believe thy  
word,

And that the holy Saints of Normandy,  
When thou art home in England, with  
thine own, [thy word,

Might strengthen thee in keeping of  
I made thee swear. Show him by  
whom he hath sworn.

*The two Bishops advance and raise  
the cloth of gold. The bodies and  
bones of Saints are seen lying in the  
ark.*

The holy bones of all the Canonized  
From all the holiest shrines in Nor-  
*Har.* Horrible! [mandy,

[*They let the cloth fall again.*

*Will.* Ay, for thou hast sworn an  
oath [hard earth rive

Which, if not kept, would make the  
To the very Devil's horns, the bright  
sky cleave [hosts

To the very feet of God, and send her  
Of injured Saints to scatter sparks of  
plague [dash

Thro' all your cities, blast your infants,  
The torch of war among your standing  
corn, [blood.—Enough!

Dabble your hearths with your own  
Thou wilt not break it! I, the Count  
—the King— [est oath,

Thy friend—am grateful for thine hon-  
Not coming fiercely like a conqueror,  
now.

But softly as a bridegroom to his own.  
For I shall rule according to your laws,  
And make your ever-jarring Earldoms  
move

To music and in order—Angle, Jute,  
Dane, Saxon, Norman, help to build a  
throne [wind is fair

Out-towering hers of France. . . .  
For England now. . . . To-night we will  
be merry. [leur.

To-morrow will I ride with thee to Har-  
[*Exit William and all the Norman  
barons, &c.*

*Har.* To-night we will be merry—and  
[to-morrow—

Juggler and bastard—bastard—he hates  
 that most—  
 William the tanner's bastard! Would  
 he heard me!  
 O God, that I were in some wide, waste  
 field [him  
 With nothing but my battle-axe and  
 To spatter his brains! Why let  
 earth rive, gulf in [own self.  
 These cursed Normans—yea and mine  
 Cleave heaven, and send thy saints that  
 I may say [William  
 Ev'n to their faces, 'If ye side with  
 Ye are not noble.' How their pointed  
 fingers [son  
 Glared at me! Am I Harold, Harold,  
 Of our great Godwin? Lo! I touch  
 mine arms, [a liar's—  
 My limbs—they are not mine—they are  
 I mean to be a liar—I am not bound—  
 Stigand shall give me absolution for it—  
 Did the chest move? did it move? I  
 am utter craven [hast betray'd me!  
 O Wulfnoth, Wulfnoth, brother, thou  
 Wulf. Forgive me, brother, I will  
 live here and die.

*Enter Page.*

*Page.* My lord! the Duke awaits  
 thee at the banquet.

*Har.* Where they eat dead men's  
 flesh, and drink their blood.

*Page.* My lord— [is so spiced,  
*Har.* I know your Norman cookery  
 It masks all this. [death.

*Page.* My lord! thou art white as  
*Har.* With looking on the dead. Am I  
 so white? [I follow.

Thy Duke will seem the darker. Hence,  
 [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The King's Palace.* Lon-  
 don. King Edward *dying on a couch,*  
 and by him *standing* the Queen,  
 Harold, Archbishop Stigand, Gurth,  
 Leofwin, Archbishop Aldred, Ald-  
 wyth, and Edith.

*Stig.* Sleeping or dying there? If  
 this be death, [thee King—  
 Then our great Council wait to crown  
 Come hither, I have a power; [to Harold  
 They call me near, for I am close to  
 thee. [I,  
 And England—I, old shrivell'd Stigand,  
 Dry as an old wood-fungus on a dead  
 I have a power! [tree,  
 See here this little key about my neck!  
 There lies a treasure buried down in  
 Ely:

If e'er the Norman grow too hard for  
 Ask me for this at thy most need, son  
 At thy most need—not sooner. [Harold,  
*Har.* So I will.

*Stig.* Red gold—a hundred purses—  
 yea, and more! [these  
 If thou canst make a wholesome use of  
 To chink against the Norman, I do be-  
 lieve

My old crook'd spine would bud out  
 two young wings  
 To fly to heaven straight with.

*Har.* Thank thee, father!  
 Thou art English, Edward too is Eng-  
 lish now, [ism.  
 He hath clean repented of his Norman-  
*Stig.* Ay, as the libertine repents  
 who cannot [ing sense  
 Make done undone, when thro' his dy-  
 Shrills 'lost thro' thee.' They have  
 built their castle here; [adder  
 Our priories are Norman; the Norman  
 Hath bitten us; we are poison'd: our  
 Is demi-Norman. He!—[dear England  
 [Pointing to King Edward, sleeping.

*Har.* I would I were  
 As holy and as passionless as he! [him,  
 That I might rest as calmly! Look at  
 The rosy face, and long down-silvering  
 beard, [mere.—  
 The brows unwrinkled as a summer

*Stig.* A summer mere with sudden  
 wreckful gusts [he flamed  
 From a side-gorge. Passionless? How  
 When Tostig's anger'd earldom flung  
 him, nay,

He fain had calmed all Northumbria  
 To one black ash, but that thy patriot  
 passion [Tostig,  
 Sliding with our great Council against  
 Out-passion'd his! Holy? ay, ay, for-  
 sooth, [realm;]

A conscience for his own soul, not his  
 A twilight conscience lighted thro' a  
 chink; [be,  
 Thine by the sun; nay, by some sun to  
 When all the world hath learnt to  
 speak the truth, [state  
 And lying were self-murder by that  
 Which was the exception.

*Har.* That sun may God speed!  
*Stig.* Come, Harold, shake the cloud  
 off!

*Har.* Can I, father?  
 Our Tostig parted curing me and  
 England;

Our sister hates us for his banishment;  
 He hath gone to kindle Norway against  
 England,  
 And Wulfnoth is alone in Normandy.

For when I rode with William down to  
 Harfleur, [follow;]  
 'Wulfnoth is sick,' he said; 'he cannot  
 Then with that friendly-fiendly smile  
 of his, [little longer

'We have learnt to love him, let him a  
 Remain a hostage for the loyalty  
 Of Godwin's house.' As far as touches  
 Wulfnoth,  
 I that so prized plain word and naked  
 truth

Have sinn'd against it—all in vain.  
*Leof.* Good brother,  
 By all the truths that ever priest hath  
 preach'd,

Of all the lies that ever men have lied,  
 Thine is the pardonablest.

*Har.* May be so!  
 I think it so, I think I am a fool

To think it can be otherwise than so.

*Stig.* Tut, tut, I have absolved thee :  
dost thou scorn me,  
Because I had my Canterbury pallium  
From one whom they dispooped ?

*Har.* No, Stigand, no !  
*Stig.* Is naked truth actable in true  
life ?

I have heard a saying of thy father  
Godwin,

That, were a man of state nakedly true,  
Men would but take him for the craft-  
ier liar. [Devil himself ?

*Leaf.* Be men less delicate than the  
I thought that naked truth would  
shame the Devil,  
The Devil is so modest.

*Garth.* He never said it !

*Leaf.* Be thou not stupid-honest,  
brother Gurth ! [hold

*Har.* Better to be a liar's dog, and  
My master honest, than believe that  
lying [cannot

And rulling men are fatal twins that  
Move one without the other. Ed-  
ward wakes !—

Dazed—he hath seen a vision.

*Edw.* The green tree !

Then a great Angel past along the  
highest [once

Crying 'the doom of England,' and at  
Hestood beside me, in his grasp a sword  
Of lightnings, wherewithal he cleft  
the tree [it from him

From off the bearing trunk, and hurl'd  
Three fields away, and then he dash'd  
and drench'd, [human blood,

He dyed, he soak'd the trunk with  
And brought the sunder'd tree again,  
and set it [tized in blood

Straight on the trunk, that thus bay-  
Grew ever high and higher, beyond my  
seeing, [the deep

And shof out sidelong boughs across  
That dropt themselves, and rooted in  
far isles [rose

Beyond my seeing : and the great Angel  
And past again along the highest crying  
'The doom of England !'—Fostig, raise  
my head ! [Falls back senseless.

*Har.* (raising him). Let Harold serve  
for Tostig !

*Queen.* Harold served  
Tostig so ill, he cannot serve for Tos-  
tig !

Ay, raise his head, for thou has laid  
it low !

The sickness of our saintly king, for  
whom

My prayers go up as fast as my tears  
fall,

I well believe, hath mainly drawn itself  
From lack of Tostig—thou hast banish'd  
him. [king himself !

*Har.* Nay—but the Council, and the  
*Queen.* Thou hatest him, hatest him.

*Har.* (coldly). Ay—Stigand, unriddle  
This vision, canst thou ?

*Stig.* Dofage !

*Edw.* (starting up). It is fini h'd.

I have built the Lord a house—the

Lord hath dwelt [house—  
In darkness. I have built the Lord a

Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden  
cherubim [wall—

With twenty-cubit wings from wall to  
I have built the Lord a house—sing,  
Asaph ! clash [et priest !

The cymbal, Heman ! blow the trump-  
Fall, cloud, and fill the house—lo ! my  
Jachin and Boaz !— [two pillars,

[Seeing Harold and Gurth.  
Harold, Gurth,—where am I ?

Where is the charter of our Westmin-  
ster ? [thy bed.

*Stig.* It lies beside thee, king, upon  
*Edw.* Sign, sign at once—take, sign  
it, Stigand, Aldred ! and Leafwin,

Sign it, my good son Harold, Gurth,  
Sign it, my queen !

*All.* We have sign'd it.

*Edw.* It is finish'd !

The kingliest Abbey in all Christian  
lands,

The lordliest, loftiest minster ever built  
To Holy Peter in our English isle !

Let me be buried there, and all our  
kings,

And all our just and wise and holy men  
That shall be born hereafter. It is fin-  
ish'd !

Hast thou had absolution for thine  
oath ? [To Harold.

*Har.* Stigand hath given me absolu-  
tion for it. [enough

*Edw.* Stigand is not canonical  
To save thee from the wrath of Norman  
Saints. [Saints of England

*Stig.* Norman enough ! Be there no  
To help us from their brethren yonder ?

*Edw.* Prelate,

The Saints are one, but those of Nor-  
manland [Aldred.

Are mightier than our own. Ask it of  
[To Harold.

*Aldred.* It shall be granted him, my  
king ; for he [mother

Who vows a vow to strangle his own  
Is guiltier keeping this, than breaking  
it.

*Edw.* O friends, I shall not overlive  
the day.

*Stig.* Why then the throne is empty.  
Who inherits ?

For tho' we be not bound by the king's  
voice [voice

In making of a king, yet the king's  
Is much toward his making. Who in-  
Edgar the Atheling ? [herits ?

*Edw.* No, no, but Harold.  
I love him : he hath served me : none  
but he

Can rule all England. Yet the curse  
is on him

For swearing falsely by those blessed  
bones ;

He did not mean to keep his vow.

*Har.* Not mean  
To make our England No-man.

*Edw.* There spake Godwila,

Who hated all the Normans; but their  
I have heard thee, Harold. [Saints

*Edith.* Oh! my lord, my king!  
He knew not whom he swore by.

*Edw.* Yea, I know  
He knew not, but those heavenly ears  
have heard, [another,  
Their curse is on him; with thou bring  
Edith, upon his head?

*Edith.* No, no, not I.  
*Edw.* Why then, thou must not wed  
him.

*Har.* Wherefore, wherefore?  
*Edw.* O'son, when thou didst tell  
me of thine oath, [given  
I sorrow'd for my random promise  
To you fox-lion. I did not dream then  
I should be king.—My son, the Saints  
are virgins;

They love the white rose of virginity,  
The cold, white lily blowing in her  
cell;

I have been myself a virgin; and I  
swore  
to consecrate my virgin here to  
heaven—

The silent, cloister'd, solitary life,  
A life of life-long prayer against the  
curse  
That lies on thee and England.

*Har.* No, no, no.  
*Edw.* Treble denial of the tongue  
of flesh, [have  
Like Peter's when he fell, and thou wilt  
To wait for it like Peter. O my son!

Are all oaths to be broken then, all  
promises [heaven?  
Made in our agony for help from  
Son, there is one who loves thee: and a  
wife,

What matters who, so she be serviceable  
In all obedience, as mine own hath  
been:  
God bless thee, wedded daughter.

[*Laying his hand on the Queen's head.*  
*Queen.* Bless thou too

That brother whom I love beyond the  
My banish'd Tostig. [rest.

*Edw.* All the sweet saints bless him!  
Spare and forbear him, Harold, if he  
comes! [me, Harold!  
And let him pass unscathed; he loves  
Be kindly to the Normans left among  
us. [son, swear

Who follow'd me for love! and dear  
When thou art king, to see my solemn  
Accomplish'd! [vow

*Har.* Nay, dear lord, for I have sworn  
Not to swear falsely twice.

*Edw.* Thou wilt not swear?  
*Har.* I cannot. [curse,

*Edw.* Then on thee remains the  
Harold, if thou embrace her: and on  
Edith, if thou abide it,— [thee

[*The King swoons; Edith falls and  
kneels by the couch.*

*Stig.* He hath swoon'd!  
Death? . . . no, as yet a breath.

*Har.* Look up! look up!  
Edith!

*Aldred.* Confuse her not; she hath  
begun

Her life-long prayer for thee.  
*Ald.* O noble Harold,  
I would thou couldst have sworn.

*Har.* For thine own pleasure?  
*Ald.* No, but to please our dying

king, and those [England, Earl,  
Who make thy good their own—all

*Aldred.* I would thou couldst have  
sworn. Our holy king [Church  
Hath given his virgin lamb to Holy  
To save thee from the curse.

*Har.* Alas! poor man,  
His promise brought it on me.

*Aldred.* O good son!  
That knowledge made him all the care-  
fuller [might glance  
To find a means whereby the curse  
From thee and England.

*Har.* Father, we so loved—  
*Aldred.* The more the love, the  
mightier is the prayer;

The more the love, the more acceptable  
The sacrifice of both your loves to  
heaven. [heaven;

No sacrifice to heaven, no help from  
That runs thro' all the faiths of all the  
world.

And sacrifice there must be, for the  
king

Is holy, and hath talk'd with God, and  
seen [heaven—

A shadowing horror; there are signs in  
*Har.* Your comet came and went.

*Aldred.* And signs on earth!  
Knowest thou Senlac hill?

*Har.* I know all Sussex;  
A good entrenchment for a perilous  
hour! [denly! There is one

*Aldred.* Pray God that come not sud-  
Who passing by that hill three nights  
ago— [with it—

He shook so that he scarce could out  
Heard, heard—

*Har.* The wind in his hair?  
*Aldred.* A ghostly horn

Blowing continually, and faint battle-  
hymns, [of men;

And cries, and clashes, and the groans  
And dreadful shadows strove upon the  
hill, [the marsh—

And dreadful lights crept up from out  
Corp e-candles gliding over nameless  
graves—

*Har.* At Senlac?  
*Aldred.* Senlac.

*Edw.* [*waking*]. Senlac! Sanguelac,  
The Lake of Blood!

*Stig.* This lightning before death  
Plays on the word,—and Normanizes  
too!

*Har.* Hush, father hush!  
*Edw.* Thou uncanonical fool,

Wilt thou play with the thunder? North  
and South [are blown

Thunder together, showers of blood  
Before a never-ending blast, and lies

Against the blaze they cannot quench  
—a lake,

A sea of blood—we are drown'd in blood  
—for God  
Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has  
drawn the bow—  
Sanguelac! Sanguelac! the arrow! the  
arrow!  
*Stig.* It is the arrow of death in his  
own heart— [the King.  
And our great Council wait to crown  
SCENE II.—*In the Garden. The King's  
House near London.*  
*Edith.* Crown'd, crown'd and lost,  
crown'd King—and lost to me!

*Singing.*

*Two young lovers in winter weather,  
None to guide them,  
Walk'd at night on the misty heather,  
Night, as black as a raven's feather;  
Both were lost and found together,  
None beside them.*

That is the burthen of it—lost and  
found  
Together in the cruel river Swale  
A hundred years ago; and there's an-  
other,

*Lost, lost, the light of day,*

To which the lover answers lovingly

*"I am beside thee."*

*Lost, lost, we have lost the way.*

*"Love, I will guide thee."*

*Whither, O whither? into the river,  
Where we two may be lost together,  
And lost for ever? "Oh! never, oh!  
never,  
Tho' we be lost and be found together."*

Some think they loved within the pale  
forbidden [the truth  
By Holy Church: but who shall say?  
Was lost in that fierce North, where  
they were lost, [Tostig lost  
Where all good things are lost, where  
The good hearts of his people. It is  
Harold!

*Enter Harold.*

Harold the King!

*Har.* Call me not King, but Harold.

*Edith.* Nay, thou art King!

*Har.* Thine, thine, or King or churl!  
My girl, thou hast been weeping: turn  
not thou

Thy face away, but rather let me be  
King of the moment to thee, and com-  
mand [will make  
That kiss my due when subject, which  
My Kingship kingly to me than to  
reign

King of the world without it.

*Edith.* Ask me not,

Lest I should yield it, and the second  
curse [only  
Descend upon thine head, and thou be  
King of the moment over England.

*Har.* Edith,

Tho' somewhat less a king to my true  
self

Than ere they crown'd me one, for I  
have lost  
Somewhat of upright stature thro' mine  
oath, [thou  
Yet thee I would not lose, and sell not  
Our living passion for a dead man's  
dream; [spake  
Stigand believed he knew not what he  
Oh God! I cannot help it, but at times  
They seem to me too narrow, all the  
faiths [eye  
Of this grown world of ours, whose baby  
Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise, I  
fear [light!—

This curse, and scorn it. But a little  
And on it falls the shadow of the priest;  
Heaven yield us more! for better, Woden,  
all [Walhalla,  
Our cancell'd warrior-gods, our grim  
Eternal war, than that the Saints at  
peace [be  
The Holiest of our Holiest one should  
This William's fellow tricksters;—bet-  
ter die [else  
Than credit this, for death is death, or  
Lifts us beyond the lie. Kiss me—thou  
art not

A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear  
There might be more than brother in  
my kiss,

And more than sister in thine own.

*Edith.* I dare not.

*Har.* Scared by the church—Love  
for a whole life long!

When was that sung?

*Edith.* Here to the nightingales.

*Har.* Their anthems of no church,  
how sweet they are! [cross

Nor kingly priest, nor priestly king to  
Their billings ere they nest.

*Edith.* They are but of spring,  
They fly the winter change—not so  
with us—

No wings to come and go.

*Har.* But wing'd souls flying  
Beyond all change and in the eternal  
distance

To settle on the Truth.

*Edith.* They are not so true,  
They change their mates.

*Har.* Do they? I did not know it.

*Edith.* They say thou art to wed the  
Lady Aldwyth.

*Har.* They say, they say.

*Edith.* If this be politic,  
And well for thee and England—and for  
Care not for me who love thee. [her—

*Gurth (calling).* Harold, Harold!

*Har.* The voice of Gurth! [*Enter  
Gurth.*] Good even, my good brother!

*Gurth.* Good even, gentle Edith.

*Edith.* Good even, Gurth.

*Gurth.* Ill news hath come! Our  
hapless brother, Tostig—  
He, and the giant King of Norway, Har-  
old

Hardrada—Scotland, Ireland, Iceland,  
Orkney,  
Are landed North of Humber, and in a  
field

So packt with carnage that the dykes  
and brooks [have overthrown  
Were bridged and damm'd with dead,  
Morcar and Edwin.

*Har.* Well then, we must fight.  
How blows the wind?

*Gurth.* Against St. Valery  
And William.

*Har.* Well then, we will to the North.

*Gurth.* Ay, but worse news; this  
William sent to Rome, [Saints:  
Swearing thou swarest falsely by his  
The Pope and that Archdeacon Hilde-  
brand [him back

His master, heard him, and have sent  
A holy gonfalon, and a blessed hair  
Of Peter, and all France, all Burgundy,  
Poitou, all Christendom is raised  
against thee; [fight for thee,  
He hath cursed thee, and all those who  
And given thy realm of England to the  
bastard

*Har.* Ha! ha!

*Edith.* Oh! laugh not! . . . Strange  
and ghastly in the gloom [cloud  
And shadowing of this double thunder-  
That lours on England—laughter!

*Har.* No, not strange!  
This was old human laughter in old  
Rome [which reign'd

Before a Pope was born, when that  
Call'd itself God.—A kindly rendering  
Of 'Render unto Cæsar.' . . . The Good  
Shepherd!

Take this, and render that.

*Gurth.* They have taken York.  
*Har.* The Lord was God and came  
as man—the Pope

Is man and comes as God.—York taken?  
*Gurth.* Yea,

Tostig hath taken York!

*Har.* To York then. Edith,  
Hadst thou been braver, I had better  
braved [that  
All—but I love thee and thou me—and  
Remains beyond all chances and all  
And that thou knowest. [churches,  
*Edith.* Ay, but take back thy ring.  
It burns my hand—a curse to thee and  
I dare not wear it. [me.

[*Proffers Harold the ring, which he  
takes.*

*Har.* But I dare. God with thee!  
[*Exeunt Harold and Gurth.*

*Edith.* The King hath cursed him,  
if he marry me; [or no!  
The Pope hath cursed him, marry me  
God help me! I know nothing—can  
but pray [but prayer,  
For Harold—pray, pray, pray—no help  
A breath that fleets beyond this iron  
world,  
And touches Him that made it.

## ACT IV.

SCENE I.—In Northumbria. Arch-  
bishop Aldred, Morcar, Edwin, and  
Forces.

*Enter Harold.* The standard of the  
golden Dragon of Wessex preced-  
ing him.

*Har.* What! are thy people sullen  
from defeat? [Humber,  
Our Wessex dragon flies beyond the  
No voice to greet it.

*Edwin.* Let not our great king  
Believe us sullen—only shamed to the  
quick [brüised

Before the king—as having been so  
By Harold, king of Norway; but our  
help [us, thou!

Is Harold king of England. Pardon  
Our silence is our reverence for the  
king! [truth be gall,

*Har.* Earl of the Mercians! if the  
Cram me not thou with honey, when  
our good live

Needs every sting to save it.

*Voices.* Aldwyth! Aldwyth!

*Har.* Why cry thy people on thy  
sister's name. [thro' her beauty,

*Mor.* She hath won upon our people  
And pleasantness among them.

*Voices.* Aldwyth, Aldwyth!

*Har.* They shout as they would  
have her for a queen.

*Mor.* She hath followed with our  
host, and suffer'd all.

*Har.* What would ye, men?

*Voice.* Our old Northumbrian crown,  
And kings of our own choosing.

*Har.* Your old crown  
Were little help without our Saxon  
Against Hardrada. [carles

*Voice.* Little! we are Danes,  
Who conquer'd what we walk on, our  
own field.

*Har.* They have been plotting here!

*Voice.* He calls us little!  
*Har.* The kingdoms of this world  
began with little. [hand

A hill, a fort, a city—that reach'd a  
Down to the field beneath it, 'Be thou  
mine,' [field

Then to the next, 'Thou also—' if the  
Cried out 'I am mine own;' another  
hill

Or fort, or city, took it, and the first  
Fell, and the next became an Empire.

*Voice.* Yet  
Thou art but a West Saxon; we are  
Danes! [English;

*Har.* My mother is a Dane and I am  
There is a pleasant fable in old books,  
Ye take a stick, and break it; bind a  
score

All in one faggot, snap it over knee,  
Ye cannot. [true!

*Voice.* Hear King Harold! he says  
*Har.* Would ye be Norsemen?

*Voices.* No!  
*Har.* Or Norman?

*Voices.* No!  
*Har.* Snap not the faggot-band then.

*Voice.* That is true!

*Voice.* Ay, but thou art not kingly  
only grandson

To Wulfnoth; a poor cow-herd.  
*Har.* This old Wulfnoth  
 Would take me on his knees and tell  
 me tales  
 Of Alfred and of Athelstan the Great  
 Who drove you Danes; and yet he  
 held that Dane,  
 Jute, Angle, Saxon, were or should be  
 One England, for this cow-herd, like  
 my father, [the throne,  
 Who shook the Norman scoundrels off  
 Had in him kingly thoughts—a king of  
 men,  
 Not made but born, like the great king  
 A light among the oxen. [of all,  
*Voice.* That is true!  
*Voice.* Ay, and I love him now, for  
 mine own father  
 Was great, and cobbled.  
*Voice.* Thou art Tostig's brother,  
 Who wastes the land.  
*Har.* This brother comes to save  
 Your land from waste; I saved it once  
 before, [hence,  
 For when your people banish'd Tostig  
 And Edward would have sent a host  
 against you, [king  
 Then I, who loved my brother, bade the  
 Who doted on him sanction your de-  
 cree  
 Of Tostig's banishment, and choice of  
 Morcar,  
 To help the realm from scattering.  
*Voice.* King! thy brother,  
 If one may dare to speak the truth,  
 was wrong'd, [against him  
 Wild was he, born so: but the plots  
 Had madden'd tamer men.  
*Mor.* Thou art one of those  
 Who brake into Lord Tostig's treasure-  
 house  
 And slew two hundred of his following,  
 And now, when Tostig hath come back  
 with power,  
 Art frightened back to Tostig.  
*Old Thane.* Ugh! Plots and feuds!  
 This is my ninetieth birthday. Can ye  
 not Alfgar,  
 Be brethren? Godwin still at feud with  
 And Alfgar hates King Harold. Plots  
 and feuds!  
 This is my ninetieth birthday!  
*Har.* Old man, Harold  
 Hates nothing; not his fault, if our two  
 Be less than brothers. [houses  
*Voices.* Aldwyth, Harold, Aldwyth!  
*Har.* Again! Morcar! Edwin!  
 What do they mean?  
*Edwin.* So the good king would  
 deign to lend an ear [perchance—  
 Not overscornful, we might chance—  
 To guess their meaning.  
*Mor.* Their own meaning, Harold,  
 To make all England one, to close all  
 feuds, [may rise  
 Mixing our bloods, that thence a king  
 Half-Godwin and half Alfgar, one to  
 rule  
 All England beyond question, beyond  
 quarrel.

*Har.* Who sow'd this fancy here  
 among the people?  
*Mor.* Who knows what sows itself  
 among the people?  
 A goodly flower at times.  
*Har.* The Queen of Wales?  
 Why, Morcar, it is all but duty in her  
 To hate me; I have heard she hates  
 me.  
*Mor.* No!  
 For I can swear to that, but cannot  
 swear [Norsemen,  
 That these will follow thee against the  
 If thou deny them this.  
*Har.* Morcar and Edwin,  
 When will ye cease to plot against my  
 house? [that we, who know  
*Edwin.* The king can scarcely dream  
 His prowess in the mountains of the  
 West, [North,  
 Should care to plot against him in the  
*Har.* Who dares arraign us, king, of  
 such a plot? [now.  
*Har.* Ye heard one witness even  
*Har.* The craven!  
 There is a faction risen again for Tos-  
 tig,  
 Since Tostig came with Norway—fright  
 not love. [yield,  
*Har.* Morcar and Edwin, will ye, if I  
 Follow against the Norsemen?  
*Har.* Surely, surely!  
*Har.* Morcar and Edwin, will ye  
 upon oath,  
 Help us against the Norman?  
*Har.* With good will;  
 Yea, take the Sacrament upon it, king.  
*Har.* Where is thy sister?  
*Har.* Somewhere hard at hand,  
 Call and she comes.  
 [One goes out, then enter Aldwyth.  
*Har.* I doubt not but thou knowest  
 Why thou art summon'd.  
*Ald.* Why?—I stay with these,  
 Lest thy fierce Tostig spy me out alone,  
 And slay me all alive.  
*Har.* Canst thou love one  
 Who did discredit thine husband, un-  
 queen thee?  
 Didst thou not love thine husband?  
*Ald.* Oh! my lord,  
 The nimble, wild, red, wiry, savage  
 king—  
 That was, my lord, a match of policy.  
*Har.* Was it?  
 I knew him brave; he loved his land:  
 he fain  
 Had made her great: his finger on her  
 harp  
 (I heard him more than once) had in it  
 Wales. [been his,  
 Her floods, her woods, her hills: had I  
 I had been all Welsh.  
*Ald.* Oh, ay—all Welsh—and yet  
 I saw thee drive him up his hills—and  
 women [more;  
 Cling to the conquer'd if they love, the  
 If not, they cannot hate the conqueror.  
 We never—oh! good Morcar, speak for  
 His conqueror conquer'd Aldwyth. [us,

*Har.* Goodly news !  
*Mor.* Doubt it not thou ! Since Grif-  
 fyth's head was sent  
 To Edward, she hath said it.

*Har.* I had rather  
 She would have loved her husband.

Aldwyth, Aldwyth, [where I love ?  
 Canst thou love me, thou knowing  
*Ald.* I can, my lord, for mine own  
 sake, for thine, [who flutters  
 For England, for thy poor white dove,  
 Between thee and the porch, but then  
 would find

Her nest within the cloister, and be  
 still.

*Har.* Canst thou love one, who can-  
 not love again ? [answer love.

*Ald.* Full hope have I that love will

*Har.* Then in the name of the great  
 God, so be it ! [the hosts,  
 Come, Aldred, join our hands before  
 That all may see.

[Aldred joins the hands of Harold  
 and Aldwyth and blesses them.

*Voices.* Harold, Harold and Aldwyth !  
*Har.* Set forth our golden Dragon,  
 let him flap

The wings that beat down Wales !  
 Advance our Standard of the Warrior,  
 Dark among gems and gold ; and thou,  
 brave banner,

Blaze like a night of fatal stars on  
 those

Who read their doom and die.  
 Where lie the Norsemen ? on the Der-  
 went ? ay

At Stamford-bridge.  
*Morcar,* collect thy men ; Edwin, my  
 friend—

Thou lingerest.—Gurth,—  
 Last night King Edward came to me  
 in dreams—

The rosy face and long down-silvering  
 beard—

He told me I should conquer :—  
 I am no woman to put faith in dreams.

(To his army.)

Last night King Edward came to me  
 in dreams,

And told me we should conquer.  
*Voices.* Forward ! Forward !  
 Harold and Holy Cross !

*Ald.* The day is won !

SCENE II.—A Plain. Before the  
 Battle of Stamford-bridge. Harold  
 and his Guard.

*Har.* Who is it comes this way ?  
*Tostig ?* (Enter Tostig with a small  
 force.) O brother,

What art thou doing here ?  
*Tostig.* I am foraging  
 For Norway's army.

*Har.* I could take and slay thee.  
 Thou art in arms against us.

*Tostig.* Take and slay me,  
 For Edward loved me.

*Har.* Edward bade me spare thee.

*Tostig.* I hate King Edward for he  
 join'd with thee [me, I say,  
 To drive me outlaw'd. Take and slay  
 Or I shall count thee fool.

*Har.* Take thee, or free thee,  
 Free thee or slay thee, Norway will  
 have war : [for Norway.

No man would strike with Tostig, save  
 Thou art nothing in thine England,  
 save for Norway [thou here,

Who loves not thee but war. What dost  
 Trampling thy mother's bosom into  
 blood ? [with such bitterness.

*Tostig.* She hath wean'd me from it  
 I come for mine own Earldom, my  
 Northumbria ; [house.

Thou hast given it to the enemy of our  
*Har.* Northumbria threw thee off,  
 she will not have thee, [ing crime!

Thou hast misused her : and, O crown-  
 Hast murder'd thine own guest, the son  
 Gamel, at thine own hearth. [of Orm,

*Tostig.* The slow, fat fool !  
 He draw'd and prated so, I smote him  
 I knew not what I did. [suddenly,

*Har.* Come back to us,  
 Know what thou dost, and we may find  
 for thee,

So thou be chasten'd by thy banish-  
 ment,

Some easier Earldom.

*Tostig.* What for Norway then ?  
 He looks for land among you, he and  
 his.

*Har.* Seven feet of English land, or  
 Seeing he is a giant, [something more,  
*Tostig.* O brother, brother,

O Harold—  
*Har.* Nay, then come thou back to us !  
*Tostig.* Never shall any man say that  
 I, that Tostig [North

Conjured the mightier Harold from his  
 To do the battle for me here in England,  
 Then left him for the meaner ! thee !—  
 Thou has no passion for the House of  
 Godwin—king—

Thou hast but cared to make thyself a  
 Thou hast sold me for a cry.—  
 Thou gavest thy voice against me in  
 Council— [thee.

I hate thee, and despise thee, and defy  
 Farewell for ever ! [Exit.

*Har.* On to Stamford-bridge.

SCENE III.—After the battle of Stam-  
 ford-bridge. Banquet. Harold and  
 Aldwyth. Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar,  
 Edwin, and other Earls and Thanes.

*Voices.* Hail ! Harold ! Aldwyth !  
 hail, bridegroom and bride !  
*Aldwyth* (talking with Harold).

Answer them thou ! [the wines  
 Is this our marriage-banquet ? Would  
 Of wedding had been dash'd into the  
 cups [glory

Of victory, and our marriage and thy  
 Been drunk together ! these poor hands  
 but sew, [man's to have held  
 Spin, broider—would that they were  
 The battle axe by thee !

*Har.* There was a moment  
When being forced aloof from all my  
guard, [men  
And striking at Hardrada and his mad-  
I had wish'd for any weapon.

*Ald.* Why art thou sad ?

*Har.* I have lost the boy who play'd  
at ball with me, [this  
With whom I fought another fight than  
Of Stamford-bridge.

*Ald.* Ay ! ay ! thy victories  
Over our own poor Wales, when at thy  
He conquer'd with thee. [side

*Har.* No—the childish fist  
That cannot strike again.

*Ald.* Thou art too kindly.  
Why didst thou let so many Norsemen  
hence ? [pirate hides  
Thy fierce forekings had clench'd their  
To the bleak church doors, like kites  
upon a barn. [thee why ?

*Har.* Is there so great a need to tell

*Ald.* Yea, am I not thy wife ?

*Voices.* Hail, Harold, Aldwyth !  
Bridegroom and bride !

*Ald.* Answer them ! [To Harold.]

*Harold* [To all]. Earls and Thanes !  
Full thanks for your fair greeting of  
my bride ! [the day,

Earls, Thanes, and all our countrymen !  
Our day beside the Derwent will not  
shine [hours

Less than a star among the goldenest  
Of Alfred, or of Edward his great son,  
Or Athelstan, or English Ironside

Who fought with Knut, or Knut who  
coming Dane [king

Died English. Every man about his  
Fought like a king ; the king like his  
own man,

No better ; one for all, and all for one,  
One soul ! and therefore have we shat-  
ter'd back [yet

The hugest wave from Norseland ever  
Surged on us, and our battle-axes  
broken

The Raven's wing, and dumb'd his car-  
rion croak [gone—

From the gray sea for ever. Many are  
Drink to the dead who died for us, the  
living [happier lived,

Who fought and would have died, but  
If happier be to live ; they both have  
life [voice

In the large mouth of England, till her  
Die with the world. Hail—hail !

*Hor.* May all invaders perish like

Hardrada ! [but Harold.

All traitors fall like Tostig ! [All drink.

*Ald.* Thy cup's full !

*Har.* I saw the hand of Tostig cover  
it. [him

Our dear, dead, traitor-brother, Tostig,  
Reverently we buried. Friends, had I  
been here, [bold

Without too large self-landing I must  
The sequel had been other than his  
league

With Norway, and this battle. Peace  
be with him !

He was not of the worst. If there be  
those [me—

At banquet in this hall, and hearing  
For there be those I fear who prick'd  
the lion [fish blood

To make him spring, that sight of Dan-  
Might serve an end not English—peace  
be with them [what

Likewise, if they can be at peace with  
God gave us to divide us from the wolf !

*Ald.* [aside to Harold]. Make not our  
Morcar sullen : it is not wise.

*Har.* Hail to the living who fought,  
the dead who fell !

*Voices.* Hail, hail !

1 *Thane.* How ran that answer  
which King Harold gave

To his dead namesake, when he ask'd  
for England ?

*Leaf.* Seven feet of English earth,  
or something more,

Seeing he is a giant !

1 *Thane.* Then for the bastard  
Six feet and nothing more !

*Leaf.* Ay, but belike  
Thou hast not learnt his measure.

1 *Thane.* By St. Edmund  
I over-measure him. Sound sleep to the  
man [dawn !

Here by dead Norway without dream or

2 *Thane.* What, is he bragging still  
that he will come [under him ?

To thrust our Harold's throne from  
My nurse would tell me of a molehill  
crying [for me !

To a mountain ' Stand aside and room

1 *Thane.* Let him come ! let him  
come. Here's to him, sink or swim !  
[Drinks.

2 *Thane.* God sink him !

1 *Thane.* Cannot hands which had  
the strength [shores,

To shove that stranded iceberg off our  
And send the shattered North again to  
sea, [nanburg

Scuttle his cockle-shell ? What's Bru-  
to Stamford-bridge ? a war-crash, and  
so hard, [Thor—

So loud, that, by St. Dunstan, old St.  
By God, we thought him dead—but our  
old Thor [and came

Heard his own thunder again, and woke  
Among us again, and mark'd the sons of  
those [the North :  
Who made this Britain England, break

Mark'd how the war-axe swung,  
Heard how the war-horn sang

Mark'd how the spear-head sprang,  
Heard how the shield-wall rang,

Iron on iron clang,  
Anvil on hammer bang—

2 *Thane.* Hammer on anvil, hammer  
on anvil. Old dog,

Thou art drunk, old dog ! [thee !

1 *Thane.* Too drunk to fight with

2 *Thane.* Fight thou with thine own  
double, not with me.

Keep that for Norman William !

- 1 *Thane.* Down with William!  
 3 *Thane.* The washerwoman's brat!  
 4 *Thane.* The tanner's bastard!  
 5 *Thane.* The Falaise byblow!

*Enter a Thane, from Pevensey, spatter'd with mud.*

*Har.* Ay, but what late guest,  
 As haggard as a fast of forty days,  
 And caked and plaster'd with a hundred mires,

Hath stumbled on our cups?  
*Thane from Pevensey.* My lord the King!

*William the Norman,* for the wind had  
*Har.* I felt it in the middle of that fierce fight

At Stamford-bridge. *William hath Thane from Pevensey.* Landed at Pevensey—I am from Pevensey—

Hath wasted all the land at Pevensey—  
 Hath harried mine own cattle—God confound him!

I have ridden night and day from Pevensey—  
 A thousand ships, a hundred thousand men—

Thousands of horses, like as many lions  
 Neighing and roaring as they leapt to land—

*Har.* How oft in coming hast thou  
*Thane from Pevensey.* Some thrice, or so.

*Har.* Bring not thy hollowness  
 On our full feast. Famine's fear, were it but

Of being starved. Sit down, sit down  
 And, when again red-blooded, speak again;

The men that guarded England to the South  
 Were scattered to the harvest . . . No To hold their force together . . . Many

are fallen  
 At Stamford-bridge . . . the people Sleep like their swine . . . in South and I could not be.

*Aloud.*  
 Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar, Edwin!  
 (*Pointing to revellers.*) The curse of England!

These are drowned in wassail,  
 And cannot see the world but thro' their wines!

And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black Cram thy crop full, but come when thou art call'd.

Thou art call'd.  
 (*Turning round to his attendants.*) Break the banquet up . . . Ye four!

And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black Cram thy crop full, but come when thou art call'd.

Thou art call'd.  
 (*Exit Harold.*)

## ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A tent on a mound, from which can be seen the field of Senlac. Harold, sitting; by him standing Hugh Margot the Monk, Gurth, Leofwin.*

*Har.* Refer my cause, my crown to Rome! . . . The wolf

Mudded the brook, and predetermined Monk,  
 Thou hast said thy say, and had my con- For all but instant battle. I hear no more.

*Har.* Hear me again for the last Scatter thy people home, descend the hill,

Lay hands of full allegiance in thy Lord's

And crave his mercv. for the Holy Father  
 Hath given this realm of England to

*Har.* Then for the last time, monk, I ask again

When had the Lateran and the Holy To do with England's choice of her own king?

*Har.* Earl, the first Christian Caesar To leave the Pope dominion in the West,

He gave him all the kingdoms of the mind to play

*Har.* So!—did he?—Earl—I have a mind to play  
 The William with thine eyesight and Earl—ay—thou art but a messenger of God,

*Har.* Mock-king, I am the messenger of God,  
 His Norman Daniel! Mene, Mene, Is thy wrath Hell, that I should spare to cry,

Yon Heaven is wroth with thee? Hear me again!

Our Saints have moved the Church that moves the world,

And all the Heavens and very God: they They know King Edward's promise and thine—thine.

*Har.* Should they not know free England crowns herself?

Not know that he nor I had power to Not know that Edward cancell'd his own promise?

And for my part—herein—Back to that Tell him the Saints are nobler than he dreams,

Tell him that God is nobler than he And tell him we stand armed on Senlac And bide the doom of God.

*Har.* Hear it thro' me.  
 The realm for which thou art forsworn is cursed,

The babe enwomb'd and at the breast The corpse thou whelmeest with thine earth is cursed,

The soul who fighteth on thy side is The seed thou sowest in thy field is cursed,

The steer wherewith thou plowest thy The fowl that fleeth o'er thy field is And thou, usurper, liar—

*Har.* Out, beast monk!  
 (*Lifting his hand to strike him.*) Gurth stops the blow.  
 I ever hated monks.

*Har.* I am but a voice

Among you : murder, martyr me if ye will— [silent, selfless man]

Har. Thanks, Gurth! The simple Is worth a world of tonguesters. (To Margot.) Get thee gone!

He means the thing he says. See him out safe! [as fire with curses.]

Leaf. He hath blown himself as red An honest fool! Follow me, honest fool, [folk,

But if thou blurt thy curse among our I know not—I may give that egg-bald The tap that silences. [head

Har. See him out safe.

[Exit Leofwin and Margot.]

Gurth. Thou hast lost thine even temper, brother Harold!

Har. Gurth, when I past by Waltham, my foundation [themselves, For men who serve their neighbor, not I cast me down prone, praying; and, when I rose, [lean'd

They told me that the Holy Rood had And bow'd above me; whether that which held it [bound

Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself were To that necessity which binds us down; Whether it bow'd at all but in their fancy;

Or if it bow'd, whether it symbol'd ruin Or glory, who shall tell? but they were And somewhat sadden'd me. [sad

Gurth. Yet if a fear, Or shadow of a fear, lest the strange Saints [power to balk

By whom thou swarest, should have Thy puissance in this fight with him, who made [not sworn—

And heard thee swear—brother—I have If the king fall, may not the kingdom fall?

But if I fall, I fall, and thou art king; And, if I win, I win, and thou art king; Draw thou to London, there make strength to breast [me.

Whatever chance, but leave this day to Leaf. (entering). And waste the land about thee as thou goest,

And be thy hand as winter on the field, To leave the foe no forage.

Har. Noble Gurth! Best son of Godwin! If I fall, I fall— The doom of God! How should the people fight [thou mad?

When the king flies? And, Leofwin, art How should the King of England waste the fields [glance yet

Of England, his own people?—No Of the Northumbrian helmet on the heath? [the heath,

Leaf. No, but a shoal of wives upon And some one saw thy willy-nilly nun Vying a tress against our golden fern.

Har. Vying a tear with our cold dews, a sigh [her be fetch'd.

With these low-moaning heavens. Let We have parted from our wife without reproach, [fices;

Tho' we have dived thro' all her prac— And that is well.

Leaf. I saw her even now : She hath not left us.

Har. Nought of Morcar then? Gurth. Nor seen, nor heard; thine, William's or his own

As wind blows, or tide flows : belike he watches,

If this war-storm in one of its rough rolls [land-

Wash up that old crown of Northumber-

Har. I married her for Morcar—a sin against [seems,

The truth of love. Evil for good, it Is oft as childless of the good as evil For evil. [times

Leaf. Good for good hath borne at A bastard false as William.

Har. Ay, if Wisdom Pair'd not with Good. But I am some- what worn, [God.

A snatch of sleep were like the peace of Gurth, Leofwin, go once more about the hill— [lae,

What did the dead man call it—Sanguine The lake of blood?

Leaf. A lake that dips in William As well as Harold.

Har. Like enough. I have seen The trenches dug, the palisades up-rear'd [wands;

And wattled thick with ash and willow-Yea, wrought at them myself. Go round once more; [man horse

See all be sound and whole. No Norcan shatter England, standing shield Tell that again to all. [by shield;

Gurth. I will, good brother.

Har. Our guardsman hath but toil'd his hand and foot;

I hand, foot, heart and head. Some wine! (One pours wine into a goblet, which he hands to Harold.)

Too much!

What? we must use our battle-axe to-day. [we came in?

Our guardsmen have slept well, since Leaf. Ay, slept and snored. Your second-sighted man [king,

That scared the dying conscience of the Misheard their snores for groans. They are up again [burg

And chanting that old song of Brunan-Where England conquer'd.

Har. That is well. The Norman, What is he doing?

Leaf. Praying for Normandy; Our scouts have heard the tinkle of their bells. [for England too!

Har. And our old songs are prayers But by all Saints—

Leaf. Barring the Norman!

Har. Nay.

Were the great trumpet blowing dooms-day dawn, [man moves—

I needs must rest. Call when the Nor- Execut all, but Harold.

No horse—thousands of horses—our shield wall—

Wall—break it not—break not—break— [Sleeps.

*Vision of Edw.* Son Harold, I thy  
king, who came before [ford-bridge  
To tell thee thou should'st win at Stan-  
Come yet once more, from where I am  
at peace,

Because I loved thee in my mortal day,  
To tell thee thou shalt die on Senlac  
Sanguelac! [hill—

*Vision of Wulf.* O brother, from my  
[seas—  
ghastly oubliette  
I send my voice across the narrow  
No more, no more, dear brother, never-  
Sanguelac! [more—

*Vision of Tostig.* O brother, most  
[life,  
unbrotherlike to me,  
Thou gavest thy voice against me in my  
I give my voice against thee from the  
Sanguelac! [grave—

*Vision of Norman Saints.* O hapless  
Harold! King but for an hour!  
Thou swarest falsely by our blessed  
bones, [heaven!  
We give our voice against thee out of  
Sanguelac! Sanguelac! The arrow, the  
arrow!

*Har.* (starting up battle-axe in hand).

My battle-axe against your voices.  
Peace! [shall die—  
The king's last word—'the arrow!' I  
I die for England then, who lived for  
England—

What nobler? men must die.  
I cannot fall into a falsèr world—  
I have done no man wrong. Tostig,  
Art thou so anger'd? [poor brother,  
Fain had I kept thine earldom in thy  
hands [wrench'd

Save for thy wild and violent will that  
All hearts of freemen from thee. I could  
do

No other than this way advise the king  
Against the race of Godwin. Is it possible  
[earthly hates

That mortal men should bear their  
Into yon bloodless world, and threaten  
us thence [art revenged—

Unschool'd of Death! Thus then thou  
I left our England naked to the South  
To meet thee in the North. The Norse-  
man's raid [of Godwin

Hath helpt the Norman, and the race  
Hath ruin'd Godwin. No—our waking  
thoughts [pools

Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the  
Of sullen slumber, and arise again  
Disjointed: only dreams—where mine  
own self [a spark

Takes part against myself! Why? For  
Of self-disdain born in me when I swear  
Falsely to him, the falsèr Norman, over  
His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by  
whom

I knew not that I swear,—not for my  
For England—yet not wholly— [self—

*Enter Edith.*

Edith, Edith,  
Get thou into my cloister as the king

Will'd it: be safe: the perjury-monger-  
ing Count  
Hath made too good an use of Holy  
Church

To break her close! There the great  
God of truth [ing devi.  
Fill all thine hours with peace!—A ly-  
Hath haunted me—mine oath—my wife  
—I fain [could not:

Had made my marriage not a lie; I  
Thou art my bride! and thou in after  
years [mine  
Praying perchance for this poor soul of  
In cold, white cells beneath an icy  
moon— [England,

This memory to thee!—and this to  
My legacy of war against the Pope  
From child to child, from Pope to  
Pope, from age to age, [shores,  
Till the sea wash her level with her  
Or till the Pope be Christ's.

*Enter Aldwyth.*

*Ald.* (to Edith). Away from him!

*Edith.* I will . . . I have not spoken  
to the king  
One word; and one I must. Farewell!  
[Going.

*Har.*

Not yet.

*Stay.*

*Edith.* To what use?

*Har.* The king commands thee,  
woman!

(To Aldwyth.)

Have thy two brethren sent their  
forces in?

*Ald.* Nay, I fear not.

*Har.* Then there's no force in thee!  
Thou didst possess thyself of Edward's  
ear [loved!

To part me from the woman that I  
Thou didst arouse the fierce Northum-  
brians! [to me!—

Thou hast been false to England and  
As . . . in some sort . . . I have been  
false to thee. [sides—Go!

Leave me. No more—Pardon on both

*Ald.* Alas, my lord, I loved thee.

*Har.* (bitterly). With a love  
Passing thy love for Griffyth! where-  
fore now [Go!

Obey my first and last commandment.

*Ald.* O Harold! husband! Shall we  
meet again? [tle. Go.

*Har.* After the battle—after the bat-  
*Ald.* I go. (Aside.) That I could  
stab her standing there!

[Exit Aldwyth.

*Edith.* Alas, my lord, she loved thee.

*Har.* Never! never!

*Edith.* I saw it in her eyes!

*Har.* I see it in thine.

And not on thee—nor England—fall  
God's doom!

*Edith.* On thee? on me. And thou  
art England! Alfred [England

Was England. Ethelred was nothing.  
Is but her king, and thou art Harold!

*Har.*

Edith,

The sign in heaven—the sudden blast  
at sea— [dark dreams—

My fatal oath—the dead Saints—the  
The Pope's Anathema—the Holy Rood  
That bow'd to me at Waltham—Edith,  
if

I, the last English King of England—  
Edith, No,

First of a line that coming from the  
people,

And chosen by the people—

Har. And fighting for  
And dying for the people—

Edith. Living! living!

Har. Yea so, good cheer! thou art  
Harold, I am Edith!

Look not thus wan!

Edith. What matters how I look?

Have we not broken Wales and Norse-  
land? slain, [war,  
Whose life was all one battle, incarnate  
Their giant-king, a mightier man-in-  
Than William. [arms

Har. Ay, my girl, no tricks in him—  
No bastard he! when all was lost, he  
yell'd, [ground,

And bit his shield, and dash'd it on the  
And swaying his two-handed sword  
about him. [upon us

Two deaths at every swing, ran in  
And died so, and I loved him as I hate  
This liar who made me liar. If Hate  
can kill, [axe—

And Loathing wield a Saxon battle-  
Edith. Waste not thy might before  
the battle!

Har. No,

And thou must hence. Stigand will  
see thee safe,  
And so—Farewell.

[He is going, but turns back.

The ring thou darest not wear,  
I have had it fashion'd, see, to meet  
my hand.

[Harold shows the ring which is  
on his finger.

Farewell!

[He is going, but turns back again.

I am dead as Death this day to aught  
of earth's

Save William's death or mine.

Edith. Thy death!—to-day!  
Is it not thy birthday?

Har. Ay, that happy day!  
A birthday welcome! happy days and  
many!

One—this! [They embrace.  
Look, I will bear thy blessing into the  
battle

And front the doom of God.

Norman cries (heard in the distance).  
Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

Enter Gurth.

Gurth. The Norman moves!

Har. Harold and Holy Cross!  
[Exeunt Harold and Gurth.

Enter Stigand.

Stig. Our Church in arms—the lamb  
the lion—not

Speak into pruning-hook—the counter  
why—

Cowl, helm; and crozier, battle-axe.  
Abbot Alfwig, [boro'

Leofric, and all the monks of Peter-  
Strike for the king, but I, old wretch,  
old Stigand, —and yet

With hands too limp to brandish iron  
I have a power—would Harold ask me  
I have a power. [for it—

Edith. What power, holy father?  
Stig. Power now from Harold to  
command thee hence

And see thee safe from Senlac.

Edith. I remain!  
Stig. Yea, so will I, daughter, until  
I find [see it

Which way the battle balance. I can  
From where we stand: and, live or die,  
I would I were among them?

Canons from Waltham (singing with-  
out).

Salva patriam,

Sancti Pater,

Salva Fili,

Salva Spiritus,

Salva patriam,

Sancta Mater.\*

Edith. Are those the blessed angels  
quiring, father?

Stig. No, daughter, but the canons  
out of Waltham, [low'd him.

The king's foundation, that have fol-  
Edith. O God of battles, make their  
wall of shields [isades!

Firm as thy cliffs, strengthen their pal-  
What is that whirring sound?

Stig. The Norman arrow!  
Edith. Look out upon the battle—is  
he safe? [between his banners.

Stig. The king of England stands  
He glitters on the crowning of the hill.  
God save king Harold!

Edith. —chosen by his people  
And fighting for his people!

Stig. There is one  
Come as Goliath came of yore—he  
flings

His braud in air and catches it again,  
He is chanting some old warsong.

Edith. And no David  
To meet him? [him,

Stig. Ay, there springs a Saxon on  
Falls—and another falls

Edith. Have mercy on us!  
Stig. Lo! our good Gurth hath  
smitten him to the death.

Edith. So perish all the enemies of  
Harold!

Canons (singing).

Hostis in Angliam

Ruit pradator,

Illorum, Domine,

Scutum scindatur!

Hostis per Angliæ

Plagas bacchatur;

\* The a throughout these hymns should be  
sounded broad, as in "father."

*Casa crematur,  
Pastor fugatur  
Grex trucidatur—*

*Stig.* Illos truida, Domine.  
*Edith.* Ay, good father.  
*Canons* (singing).

*Illorum scelera  
Pana sequatur!*

*English cries.* Harold and Holy  
Cross! Out! out!

*Stig.* Our javelins  
Answer their arrows. All the Norman  
foot [of knights  
Are storming up the hill. The range  
Sit, each a statue on his horse, and  
wait. [mighty!

*Eng. cries.* Harold and God Al-  
Norman cries. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!  
*Canons* (singing).

*Eques cum equite  
Præcipitatur!  
Illorum in lacrymas  
Cruor fundatur!  
Pereant, pereant,  
Anglia precatur.*

*Stig.* Look, daughter, look.  
*Edith.* Nay, father, look for me!  
*Stig.* Our axes lighten with a single  
flash [heads  
About the summit of the hill, and  
And arms are sliver'd off and splin-  
ter'd by [Norman flies.  
Their lightning—and they fly—the  
*Edith.* Stigand, O father, have we  
won the day? [behind the horse—  
*Stig.* No, daughter, no—they fall  
Their horse are thronging to the bar-  
ricades;

I see the gonfanon of Holy Peter  
Floating above their helmets—ha! he  
is down!

*Edith.* He down! Who down?

*Stig.* The Norman Count is down.  
*Edith.* So perish all the enemies of  
England!

*Stig.* No, no, he hath risen again—  
he bares his face— [all their horse  
Shouts something—he points onward—  
Swallow the hill locust-like, swarming  
up. [battle-axe keen

*Edith.* O God of battles, make his  
As thine own sharp-dividing justice,  
heavy [ful heads  
As thine own bolts that fall on crime-  
Charged with the weight of heaven  
wherefrom they fall!

*Canons* (singing).

*Jacta tonitrua  
Deus bellator!  
Surgas e tenebris,  
Sis vindicator!  
Fulmina, fulmina  
Deus vastator!*

*Edith.* O God of battles, they are  
three to one, [them down!  
Make thou one man as three to roll  
*Canons* (singing).

*Equus cum equite  
Dejiciatur!  
Acies, Acies  
Frona sternatur!  
Illorum lanceas  
Frangit Creator!*

*Stig.* Yea, yea, for how their lances  
snap and shiver [axe!  
Against the shifting blaze of Harold's  
War-woodman of old Woden, how he  
fells [there!  
The mortal copsis of faces! There! And  
The horse and horsemen cannot meet  
the shield. [cleaves the horse,  
The blow that brains the horseman  
The horse and horsemen roll along the  
hill, [flies!  
They fly once more, they fly, the Nor-  
man.

*Equus cum equite  
Præcipitatur.*

*Edith.* O God, the God of truth hath  
heard my cry. [to the sea!  
Follow them, follow them, drive them

*Illorum scelera  
Pana sequatur!*

*Stig.* Truth! no; a lie; a trick, a  
Norman trick!  
They turn on the pursuer, horse against  
They murder all that follow. [foot,

*Edith.* Have mercy on us!

*Stig.* Hot-headed fools—to burst the  
wall of shields! [of the king!  
They have broken the commandment

*Edith.* His oath was broken—O holy

Norman saints, [beyond  
Ye that are now of heaven, and see  
Your Norman shrines, pardon it, par-  
don it, [loved,  
That he forswore himself for all he  
Me, me and all! Look out upon the  
battle! [barriades.

*Stig.* They thunder again upon the  
My sight is eagle, but the strife so  
thick— [hold, willow!

This is the hottest of it: hold, ash!  
*Eng. cries.* Out, out!

*Nor. cries.* Ha Rou!

*Stig.* Ha! Gurth hath leapt upon  
him.

And slain him: he hath fallen.

*Edith.* And I am heard.  
Glory to God in the Highest! fallen,  
fallen! [another—wields

*Stig.* No, no, his horse—he mounts  
His war-club, dashes it on Gurth, and  
Gurth,

Our noble Gurth is down!

*Edith.* Have mercy on us!  
O Thou that knowest, let not my strong  
prayer  
Be weakened in thy sight, because I  
love

The husband of another!

*Nor. cries.* Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

*Edith.* I do not hear our English  
war-cry.

*Stig.* No.  
*Edith.* Look out upon the battle—is he safe?

*Stig.* He stands between the banners with the dead

So piled about him he can hardly move.

*Edith* (takes up the war-cry). Out! out!

*Nor. cries.* Ha Rou!  
*Edith* (cries out). Harold and Holy Cross!

*Nor. cries.* Ha Rou! Ha Rou!  
*Edith.* What is that whirring sound?

*Stig.* The Norman sends his arrows up to Heaven,

They fall on those within the palisade!

*Edith.* Look out upon the hill— is Harold there?

*Stig.* Sanguelac—Sanguelac—the arrow—the arrow!—away!

SCENE II.—Field of the dead. Night.  
Aldwyth and Edith.

*Ald.* O Edith, art thou here? O Harold, Harold— [more.]

Our Harold—we shall never see him

*Edith.* For there was more than sister in my kiss, [not love them,

And so the saints were wroth. I can- For they are Norman saints—and yet I should—

They are so much holier than their har- lot's son

With whom they play'd their game against the king!

*Ald.* The king is slain, the kingdom overthrown!

*Edith.* No matter!

*Ald.* How no matter, Harold slain?—I cannot find his body. O help me thou!

O Edith, if I ever wrought against thee, Forgive me thou, and help me here!

*Edith.* No matter!

*Ald.* Not help me, nor forgive me?

*Edith.* So thou saidest.

*Ald.* I say it now, forgive me!

*Edith.* Cross me not!

I am seeking one who wedded me in secret. [Ha!

Whisper! God's angels only know it. What art thou doing here among the dead?

[naked yonder,

They are stripping the dead bodies And thou art come to rob them of their rings!

*Ald.* O Edith, Edith, I have lost both crown

And husband.

*Edith.* So have I.

*Ald.* I tell thee, girl,

I am seeking my dead Harold.

*Edith.* And I mine!

The Holy Father strangled him with a hair

Of Peter, and his brother Tostig help;

The wicked sister clapt her hands and laugh'd;

Then all the dead fell on him.

*Ald.* Edith, Edith—

*Edith.* What was he like, this husband? like to thee? [not.

Call not for help from me. I knew him He lies not here; not close beside the standard. [England.

Here fell the truest, manliest hearts of Go farther hence and find him.

*Ald.* She is crazed!

*Edith.* That doth not matter either.

Lower the light.

He must be here.

*Enter two Canons, Osgod and Athelric, with torches. They turn over the dead bodies and examine them as they pass.*

*Osgod.* I think that this is Thurkill.

*Athelric.* More likely Godric.

*Osgod.* I am sure this body

Is Alfwig, the king's uncle.

*Ath.* So it is!

No, no—brave Gurth, one gash from brow to knee!

*Osgod.* And here is Leafwin.

*Edith.* And here is He!

*Ald.* Harold? Oh no—nay, if it were—my God, [his face

They have so main'd and murder'd all There is no man can swear to him.

*Edith.* But one woman!

Look you, we never mean to part again.

I have found him, I am happy.

Was there not some one ask'd me for forgiveness?

I yield it freely, being the true wife

Of this dead King, who never bore re- venge.

*Enter Count William and William Malet.*

*Will.* Who be these women? And what body is this?

*Edith.* Harold, thy better!

*Will.* Ay, and what art thou?

*Edith.* His wife!

*Malet.* Not true, my girl, here is the Queen. [Pointing out Aldwyth.]

*Will.* (to Aldwyth). Wast thou his Queen?

*Ald.* I was the Queen of Wales.

*Will.* Why then of England. Madam, fear us not.

(To Malet.)

Knowest thou this other?

*Malet.* When I visited England,

Some held she was his wife in secret—some— [mour.

Well—some believed she was his para- *Edith.* Norman, thou liest! liars all

of you, [and she—

You Saints and all! I am his wife!

For look, our marriage ring!

[She draws it off the finger of Harold.

I lost it somehow—

I lost it, playing with it when I was wild.

That bred the doubt! but I am wiser now. . . I am too wise. . . Will none among you all

Bear me true witness—only for this  
once—

That I have found it here again ?

[*She puts it on.*]

And thou,

Thy wife am I for ever and evermore.

[*Falls on the body and dies.*]

*Will.* Death !—and enough of death  
for this one day,

The day of St. Calixtus, and the day,  
My day, when I was born.

*Malet.* And this dead king's,  
Who, king or not, hath kinglike fought  
and fallen, [even

His birthday, too. It seems but yester-  
I held it with him in his English halls,  
His day, with all his rooftree ringing  
'Harold,'

Before he fell into the snare of Guy ;  
When all men counted Harold would  
be king,

And Harold was most happy.

*Will.* Thou art half English.  
Take them away !

*Malet,* I vow to build a church to God  
Here on this hill of battle ; let our high  
altar [where these two lie.

Stand where their standard fell . . .  
Take them away, I do not love to see  
them. [Malet !

Pluck the dead woman off the dead man,  
*Malet.* Faster than ivy. Must I hack  
her arms off ?

How shall I part them ?  
*Will.* Leave them. Let them be !

Bury him and his paramour together.  
He that was false in oath to me, it seems  
Was false to his own wife. We will not  
give him [rior,

A Christian burial : yet he was a war-  
And wise, yea truthful, till that blight-  
ed vow

Which God avenged to-day.

Wrap them together in a purple cloak  
And lay them both upon the waste sea-  
shore [which

At Hastings, there to guard the land for  
He did forswear himself—a warrior—  
ay,

And but that Holy Peter fought for us,  
And that the false Northumbrian held  
aloof, [the Saints

And save for that chance arrow which  
Sharpen'd and sent against him—who  
can tell ?— [twice

Three horses had I slain beneath me :  
I thought that all was lost. Since I  
knew battle, [yet

And that was from my boyhood, never  
No, by the splendor of God—have I  
fought men [guard

Like Harold and his brethren, and his  
Of English. Every man about his king  
Fell where he stood. They loved him :  
and, pray God [with me

My Normans may but move as true  
To the door of death. Of one self-stock  
at first, [English ;

Make them again one people—Norman,  
And English, Norman :—we should  
have a hand

To grasp the world with, and a foot to  
stamp it . . .

Flat. Praise the Saints. It is over.  
No more blood !

I am king of England, so they thwart  
me not,

And I will rule according to their laws.

(*To Aldwyth.*)

Madam, we will entreat thee with all  
honor.

*Ald.* My punishment is more than I  
can bear.

## 'THE REVENGE.'

### A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

I.

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Gren-  
ville lay,

And a pinnace like a flutter'd bird, came  
flying from far away ;

'Spanish ships of war at sea ! we have  
sighted fifty-three !'

Then sware Lord Thomas Howard : 'Fore  
God I am no coward !

But I cannot meet them here, for my  
ships are out of gear.

And the half my men are sick. I must  
fly, but follow quick.

We are six ships of the line ; can we fight  
with fifty-three ?'

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville : 'I  
know you are no coward ;

You fly them for a moment to fight with  
them again.

But I've ninety men and more that are  
lying sick ashore.

I should count myself the coward if I left  
them, my Lord Howard,

To these Inquisition dogs and the devil-  
doms of Spain.'

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five ships  
of war that day,

Till he melted like a cloud in the silent  
summer heaven ;

But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick  
men from the land

Very carefully and slow,  
Men of Bideford in Devon,

And we laid them on the ballast down below;  
For we brought them all aboard,  
And they blest him in their pain, that  
they were 'not left to Spain,  
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the  
glory of the Lord.

## IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work  
the ship and to fight,  
And he sail'd away from Flores till the  
Spaniard came in sight,  
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon  
the weather bow,  
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?  
Good Sir Richard, let us know,  
For to flight is but to die!  
There'll be little of us left by the time this  
sun be set.'  
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all  
good English men.  
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the  
children of the devil,  
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or  
devil yet.'

## V.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we  
roared a hurrah, and so  
The little 'Revenge' ran on sheer into  
the heart of the foe,  
With her hundred fighters on deck, and  
her ninety sick below;  
For half of their fleet to the right and  
half to the left were seen,  
And the little 'Revenge' ran on thro' the  
long sea-lane between.

## VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down  
from their decks and laugh'd,  
Thousands of their seamen made mock at  
the mad little craft  
Running on and on, till delay'd  
By their mountain-like 'San Philip' that,  
of fifteen hundred tons,  
And up-shadowing high above us with  
her yawning tiers of guns,  
Took the breath from our sails, and we  
stay'd.

## VII.

And while now the great 'San Philip'  
hung above us like a cloud  
Whence the thunderbolt will fall  
Long and loud,  
Four galleons drew away  
From the Spanish fleet that day,  
And two upon the larboard and two upon  
the starboard lay,  
And the battle-thunder broke from them  
all.

## VIII.

But anon the great 'San Philip,' she be-  
thought herself and went  
Having that within her womb that had  
left her ill-content;

And the rest they came aboard us, and  
they fought us hand to hand,  
For a dozen times they came with their  
pikes and musqueteers,  
And a dozen time we shook 'em off as a  
dog that shakes his ears  
When he leaps from the water to the  
land,

## IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars  
came out far over the summer sea,  
But never a moment ceased the fight of  
the one and the fifty-three.  
Ship after ship, the whole night long,  
their high-built galleons came,  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with  
her battle-thunder and flame;  
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew  
back with her dead and her shame,  
For some were sunk and many were shat-  
ter'd, and so could fight us no more—  
God of battles, was ever a battle like this  
in the world before?

## X.

For he said, 'Fight on! fight on!'  
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck,  
And it chanced that, when half of the  
summer night was gone,  
With a grisly wound to be drest he had  
left the deck,  
But a bullet struck him that was dressing  
it suddenly dead,  
And himself he was wounded again in the  
side and the head,  
And he said, 'Fight on! fight on!'

## XI.

And the night went down, and the sun  
smiled out far over the summer sea,  
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides  
lay round us all in a ring;  
But they dared not touch us again, for  
they fear'd that we still could sting,  
So they watch'd what the end would be.  
And we had not fought them in vain,  
But in perilous plight were we,  
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were  
slain,  
And half of the rest of us main'd for life  
In the crash of the cannonades and the  
desperate strife;  
And the sick men down in the hold were  
most of them stark and cold,  
And the pikes were all broken or bent,  
and the powder was all of it spent;  
And the masts and the rigging were lying  
over the side;  
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,  
'We have fought such a fight for a day  
and a night  
As may never be fought again!  
We have won great glory, my men!  
Am I a day less or more  
A sea or shore,  
We die—does it matter when?

Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink  
her, split her in twain!  
Fall into the hands of God, not into the  
hands of Spain!

## XII.

And the gunner said 'Ay, ay,' but the  
seamen made reply:  
'We have children, we have wives,  
And the Lord hath spared our lives,  
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we  
yield, to let us go;  
We shall live to fight again and to strike  
another blow.'  
And the lion there lay dying, and they  
yielded to the foe,

## XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their flag-  
ship bore him then,  
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir  
Richard caught at last,  
And they praised him to his face with  
their courtly foreign grace;  
But he rose upon their decks, and he  
cried:  
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like  
a valiant man and true;  
I have only done my duty as a man is  
bound to do:  
With a cheerful spirit I Sir Richard Gren-  
ville die!'  
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

## XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had  
been so valiant and true,  
And had holden the power and glory of  
Spain so cheap  
That he dared her with one little ship and  
his English few;  
Was he devil or man? He was devil for  
aught they knew,  
But they sank his body with honor down  
into the deep,  
And they mann'd the 'Revenge' with a  
swarthier alien crew,  
And away she sail'd with her loss and  
long'd for her own;  
When a wind from the lands they had  
ruin'd awoke from sleep,  
And the water began to heave and the  
weather to moan,  
And or ever that evening ended a great  
gale blew,  
And a wave like the wave that is raised  
by an earthquake grew,  
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails  
and their masts and their flags,  
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the  
shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,  
And the little 'Revenge' herself went  
down by the island crags  
To be lost evermore in the main,

## DEDICATORY POEM

TO

## 'THE PRINCESS ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that,  
which lived  
True life, live on—and if the fatal kiss,  
Born of true life and love, divorce thee  
not  
From earthly love and life—if what we  
call  
The spirit flash not all at once from out  
This shadow into Substance—then per-  
haps  
The mellow'd murmur of the people's  
praise  
From thine own State, and all our breadth  
of realm,  
Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds  
in light,  
Ascends to thee; and this March morn  
that sees

Thy Soldier-brother's bridal-orange bloom  
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy  
grave,  
And thine Imperial mother smile again,  
May send one ray to thee! and who can  
tell—  
Thou—England's England-loving daugh-  
ter—thou  
Dying so English thou wouldst have her  
flag  
Borne on thy coffin—where is he can sweat  
But that some broken gleam from our poor  
earth  
May touch thee, while remembering thee,  
I lay  
At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds  
Of England, and her banner in the  
East?

## THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

## I.

BANNER of England, not for a season, O  
 banner of Britain, hast thou  
 Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the  
 battle-cry!  
 Never with mightier glory than when we  
 had rear'd thee on high  
 Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly  
 siege of Lucknow—  
 Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but  
 ever we raised thee anew,  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our banner  
 of England blew.

## II.

Frail were the works that defended the  
 hold that we held with our lives—  
 Women and children among us, God help  
 them, our children and wives!  
 Hold it we might—and for fifteen days or  
 for twenty at most.  
 'Never surrender, I charge you, but every  
 man die at his post!'  
 Voice of the dead whom we loved, our  
 Lawrence the best of the brave;  
 Cold were his brows when we kiss'd him—  
 we laid him that night in his grave.  
 'Every man die at his post!' and there  
 hail'd on our houses and halls  
 Death from their rifle-bullets, and death  
 from their cannon-balls,  
 Death in our innermost chamber, and  
 death at our slight barricade,  
 Death while we stood with the musket, and  
 death while we stoop to the spade,  
 Death to the dying, and wounds to the  
 wounded, for often there fell  
 Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro'  
 it, their shot and their shell,  
 Death—for their spies were among us,  
 their marksmen were told of our best,  
 So that the brute bullet broke thro' the  
 brain that could think for the rest;  
 Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and  
 bullets would rain at our feet—  
 Fire from ten thousand at once of the  
 rebels that girdled us round—  
 Death at the glimpse of a finger from over  
 the breadth of a street,  
 Death from the heights of the mosque and  
 the palace, and death in the ground!  
 Mine! yes, a mine! Countermine! down!  
 down! and creep thro' the hole!  
 Keep the revolver in hand! You can  
 hear him—the murderous mole.  
 Quiet, ah! quiet—wait till the point of  
 the pickaxe be thro'!  
 Click with the pick, coming nearer and  
 nearer again than before—  
 Now let it speak, and you fire, and the  
 dark pioneer is no more;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our banner  
 of England blew.

## III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many  
 times, and it chanced on a day  
 Soon as the blast of that underground  
 thunderclap echo'd away,  
 Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like  
 so many fiends in their hell—  
 Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on vol-  
 ley, and yell upon yell—  
 Fiercely on all the defences our myriad  
 enemy fell.  
 What have they done? where is it? Out  
 yonder. Guard the Redan!  
 Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the  
 Bailey-gate! storm, and it rai  
 Surging and swaying all round us, as  
 ocean on every side  
 Plunges and heaves at a bank that is  
 daily drown'd by the tide—  
 So many thousands that if they be bold  
 enough, who shall escape?  
 Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall  
 know we are soldiers and men!  
 Ready! take aim at their leaders—their  
 masses are gapp'd with our grape—  
 Backward they reel like the wave, like the  
 wave flinging forward again,  
 Flying and foild at the last by the hand-  
 ful they could not subdue;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our banner  
 of England blew.

## IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were Eng-  
 lish in heart and in limb,  
 Strong with the strength of the race to  
 command, to obey, to endure,  
 Each of us fought as if hope for the garri-  
 son hung but on him;  
 Still—could we watch at all points? we  
 were every day fewer and fewer.  
 There was a whisper among us, but only a  
 whisper that pass'd;  
 'Children and wives—if the tigers leap  
 into the fold unawares—  
 Every man die at his post—and the foe  
 may outlive us at last—  
 Better to fall by the hands that they love,  
 than to fall into theirs!  
 Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by  
 the enemy sprung  
 Clove into perilous chasms our walls and  
 our poor palisades,  
 Rifeman, true is your heart, but be sure  
 that your hand be as true!  
 Sharp is the fire of assault, better aim'd  
 are your flank fu-illades—  
 Twice do we hurl them to earth from the  
 ladders to which they had cling'd,  
 Twice from the ditch where they shelter  
 we drive them with hand-grenades;  
 And ever upon the topmost roof our banner  
 of England blew.

## v.

Then on another wild morning another  
wild earthquake out-tore  
Clean from our lines of defence ten or  
twelve good paces or more.  
Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there  
from the light of the sun—  
One has leapt up on the breach, crying  
out: 'Follow me, follow me!'—  
Mark him—he falls! then another, and  
*him* too, and down goes he.  
Had they been bold enough then, who can  
tell but the traitors had won?  
Boardings and rafters and doors—an em-  
brasure! make way for the gun!  
Now double-charge it with grape! It is  
charged and we fire, and they run.  
Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the  
dark face have his due!  
Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought  
with us, faithful and few,  
Fought with the bravest among us, and  
drove them, and smote them, and  
slew,  
That ever upon the topmost roof our ban-  
ner in India blew.

## VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and not  
what we do. We can fight;  
But to be soldier all day and be sentinel  
all thro' the night—  
Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their  
lying alarms.  
Bugles and drums in the darkness, and  
shoutings and soundings to arms.  
Ever the labour of fifty that had to be  
done by five,  
Ever the marvel among us that one should  
be left alive.  
Ever the day with its traitorous death from  
the loop-holes around,  
Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to  
be laid in the ground,  
Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge  
of cataract skies,  
Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite  
torment of flies,  
Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing  
over an English field,

Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that  
*would* not be heal'd,  
Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-  
pitiless knife,—  
Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never  
could save us a life,  
Valour of delicate women who tended the  
hospital bed,  
Horror of women in travail among the  
dying and dead,  
Grief for our perishing children, and never  
a moment for grief,  
Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering  
hopes of relief,  
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd  
for all that we knew—  
Then day and night, day and night, com-  
ing down on the still-shatter'd walls  
Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands  
of cannon-balls—  
But ever upon the topmost roof our ban-  
ner of England blew.

## VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true what  
was told by the scout?  
Outram and Havelock breaking their way  
thro' the fell mutineers!  
Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing  
again in our ears!  
All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubi-  
lant shout,  
Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer  
with conquering cheers,  
Forth from their holes and their hidings  
our women and children come out,  
Blessing the wholesome white faces of  
Havelock's good fusileers,  
Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the  
Highlander wet with their tears!  
Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we are  
saved!—is it you? is it you?  
Saved by the valour of Havelock, saved  
by the blessing of Heaven!  
'Hold it for fifteen days!' we have held  
it for eighty-seven!  
And ever aloft on the palace roof the old  
banner of England blew.

## THE LOVER'S TALE.

THE original preface to "The Lover's Tale" states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends, however, who, boy-like, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light, accompanied with a reprint of the sequel,—a work of my mature life,—“The Golden Supper”?

May, 1879.

## ARGUMENT.

Julian, whose cousin and foster sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavors to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

## I.

HERE far away, seen from the topmost cliff,

Filling with purple gloom the vacancies  
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas  
Hung in mid-heaven, and half way down  
rare sails,

White as white clouds, floated from sky to sky.

Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet bay,  
Like to a quiet mind in the loud world,  
Where the chafed breakers of the outer sea  
Sank powerless, as anger falls aside  
And withers on the breast of peaceful love;  
Thou didst receive the growth of pines  
that fledge

The hills that watched thee, as Love  
watcheth Love,

In thine own essence, and delight thyself  
To make it wholly thine on sunny days.  
Keep thou thy name of "Lover's Bay."

See, sirs,  
Even now the Goddess of the Past, that  
takes

The heart, and sometimes touches but one  
string

That quivers, and is silent, and sometimes  
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd  
chords

To some old melody, begins to play  
That air which pleased her first. I feel  
thy breath:

I come, great Mistress of the car and eye;  
Thy breath is of the pine wood; and tho'  
years

Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy strait  
Betwixt the native land of Love and me,  
Breathes but a little on me, and the sail  
Will draw me to the rising of the sun,

The lucid chambers of the morning star,  
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prithee,

To pass my hand across my brows, and  
nose  
On those dear hills, that never more will  
meet

The sight that throbs and aches beneath  
my touch,

As tho' there beat a heart in either eye;  
For when the outer lights are darken'd  
thus,

The memory's vision hath a keener edge.  
It grows upon me now—the semicircle  
Of dark blue waters and the narrow fringe  
Of curving beach—its wreaths of dripping  
green—

Its pale pink shells—the summer-house  
aloft

That open'd on the pines with doors of  
glass,

A mountain nest—the pleasure-boat that  
rock'd

Light green with its own shadow, keel to  
keel,

Upon the dappled dimplings of the wave,  
That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope!  
They come, they crowd upon me all at  
once—

Moved from the cloud of unforgotten  
things,

That sometimes on the horizon of the  
mind

Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in  
storm—

Flash upon flash they lighten thro' me—  
days

Of dewy dawning and the amber eyes

When thou and I, Camilla, thou and I  
Were borne about the bay or safely moor'd  
Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where the  
tide  
Flash'd, sapping its worn ribs; and all  
without  
The slowly ridging rollers on the cliffs  
Clash'd, calling to each other, and thro'  
the arch  
Down those loud waters, like a setting star,  
Mixt with the gorgeous west the light-  
house shone,  
And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell  
Would often loiter in her balmy blue,  
To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love  
Waver'd at anchor with me, when day  
hung  
From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy halls;  
Gleams of the water-circles, as they broke,  
Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about her  
lips,  
Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,  
Leapt like a passing thought across her  
eyes;  
And mine with one that will not pass, till  
earth  
And heaven pass too, dwelt on my heaven,  
a face  
Mo't starry-fair, but kindled from within  
As 'twere with dawn. She was dark-  
haired, dark-eyed:  
Oh, such dark eyes! a single glance of  
them  
Will govern a whole life from birth to  
death,  
Careless of all things else, led on with light  
In trances and in visions: look at them,  
You lose yourself in utter ignorance;  
You cannot find their depth; for they go  
back,  
And farther back, and still withdraw them-  
selves  
Quite into the deep soul, that evermore  
Fresh springing from her fountains in the  
brain,  
Still pouring thro', floods with redundant  
life  
Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago  
I should have died, if it were possible  
To die in gazing on that perfectness  
Which I do bear within me: I had died,  
But from my farthest lapse, my latest  
ebb,  
Thine image, like a charm of light and  
strength  
Upon the waters, push'd me back again  
On these deserted sands of barren life,  
Tho' from the deep vault where the heart  
of Hope  
Fell into dust, and crumbled in the dark—  
Forgetting how to render beautiful  
Her countenance with quick and healthful  
blood—  
Thou didst not sway me upward; could I  
perish  
While thou, a meteor of the sepulchre,

Didst swathe thyself all round Hope's  
quiet urn  
Forever? He, that snith it, hath o'erstep'd  
The slippery footing of his narrow wit,  
And fall'n away from judgment. Thou  
art light,

To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,  
And length of days, and immortality  
Of thought, and freshness ever self-re-  
new'd.

For Time and Grief abode too long with  
Life,  
And, like all other friends i' the world, at  
last

They grew weary of her fellowship:  
So Time and Grief did beckon unto Death,  
And Death drew nigh and beat the doors  
of Life;

But thou didst sit alone in the inner house,  
A wakeful portress, and didst parle with  
Death,—

“This is a charm'd dwelling which I  
hold;”

So Death gave back, and would no further  
come.

Yet is my life nor in the present time,  
Nor in the present place. To me alone,  
Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,  
The Present is the vassal of the Past:  
So that, in that I *have* lived, do I live,  
And cannot die, and am, in having been,  
A portion of the pleasant yesterday,  
Thrust forward on to-day and out of place;  
A body journeying onward, sick with toil,  
The weight as if of age upon my limbs,  
The grasp of hopeless grief about my heart,  
And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,  
Which long ago they had glean'd and gar-  
ner'd up

Into the granaries of memory—  
The clear brow, bulwark of the precious  
brain,

Chink'd as you see, and seam'd—and all  
the while

The light soul twines and mingles with  
the growths

Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,  
Married, made one with, molten into all  
The beautiful in Past of act or place,  
And like the all-enduring camel, driven  
Far from the diamond fountain by the  
palms,

Who toils across the middle moon-lit  
nights,

Or when the white heats of the blinding  
noons

Beat from the concave sand; yet in him  
keeps

A draught of that sweet fountain that he  
loves,

To stay his feet from falling, and his spirit  
From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,  
When I began to love. How should I tell  
you?

Or from the after-fullness of my heart,  
Flow back again unto my slender spring  
And first of love, tho' every turn and depth  
Between is clearer in my life than all

Its present flow. Ye know not what ye ask,

How should the broad and open flower tell  
What sort of bud it was, when, prest to-  
gether

In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken  
folds,

It seem'd to keep its sweetness to itself,  
Yet was not the less sweet for that it  
seem'd?

For young Life knows not when young  
Life was born,

But takes it all for granted: neither Love,  
Warm in the heart, his cradle, can re-  
member

Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,  
Looking on her that brought him to the  
light:

Or as men know not when they fall asleep  
Into delicious dreams, our other life,  
So know I not when I began to love.

This is my sum of knowledge—that my  
love

Grew with myself—say rather, was my  
growth,

My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,  
My outward circling air wherewith I  
breathe,

Which yet upholds my life, and evermore  
Is to me daily life and daily death:

For how should I have lived and not have  
loved?

Can ye take off the sweetness from the  
flower,

The color and the sweetness from the rose,  
And place them by themselves; or set  
apart

Their motions and their brightness from  
the stars,

And then point out the flower or the star?  
Or build a wall betwixt my life and love,

And tell me where I am? 'T is even thus:

In that I live I love; because I love  
I live: whate'er is fountain to the one

Is fountain to the other; and whene'er  
Our God unknots the riddle of the one,

There is no shade or fold of mystery  
Swathing the other.

Many, many years

(For they seem many and my most of life,  
And well I could have linger'd in that  
porch,

So unproportion'd to the dwelling-place),  
In the May dews of childhood, opposite  
The flush and dawn of youth, we lived to-  
gether,

Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father died,  
And he was happy that he saw it not;

But I and the first daisy on his grave  
From the same clay came into light at  
once.

As Love and I do number equal years,  
So she, my love, is of an age with me.

How like each other was the birth of each!  
On the same morning, almost the same  
hour,

Under the selfsame aspect of the stars

(O falsehood of all starcraft!), we were  
born.

How like each other was the birth of each!  
The sister of my mother—she that bore

Camilla close beneath her beating heart,  
Which to the imprison'd spirit of the child,

With its true-touch'd pulses in the dow  
And hourly visitation of the blood,

Sent notes of preparation manifold,  
And mellow'd echoes of the outer world—

My mother's sister, mother of my love,  
Who had a twofold claim upon my heart,

One twofold mightier than the other was,  
In giving so much beauty to the world,

And so much wealth as God had charged  
her with—

Loathing to put it from herself forever,  
Left her own life with it; and dying thus,

Crown'd with her highest act the placid  
face

And breathless body of her good deeds  
past.

So we were born, so orphan'd. She was  
motherless

And I without a father. So from each  
Of those two pillars which from earth up-  
hold

Our childhood, one had fallen away, and  
all

The careful burden of our tender years  
Trembled upon the other. He that gave

Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd  
All loving-kindnesses, all offices

Of watchful care and trembling tender-  
ness.

He waked for both: he pray'd for both:  
he slept

Dreaming of both: nor was his love the  
less

Because it was divided, and shot forth  
Boughs on each side, laden with whole-  
some shade,

Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,  
And sang aloud the matin-song of life,

She was my foster-sister: on one arm  
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies

Wander'd, the while we rested: one soft  
lap

Pillow'd us both: a common light of eyes  
Was on us as we lay: our baby lips,

Kissing one bosom, ever drew from thence  
The stream of life, one stream, one life,

one blood,  
One sustenance, which, still as thought

grew large,  
Still larger moulding all the house of  
thought,

Made all our tastes and fancies like, per-  
haps—

All—all but one; and strange to me, and  
sweet,

Sweet thro' strange years to know that  
whatsoe'er

Our general mother meant for me alone,  
Our mutual mother dealt to both of us:

So what was earliest mine in earliest life,  
I shared with her in whom myself re-  
mains.

As was our childhood, so our infancy,  
 They tell me, was a very miracle  
 Of fellow-feeling and communion.  
 They tell me that we would not be alone—  
 We cried when we were parted; when I  
 wept,  
 Her smile lit up the rainbow on my tears,  
 Staid on the cloud of sorrow; that we  
 loved  
 The sound of one another's voices more  
 Than the gray cuckoo loves his name, and  
 learnt  
 To lisp in tune together; that we slept  
 In the same cradle always, face to face,  
 Heart beating time to heart, lip pressing  
 lip,  
 Folding each other, breathing on each  
 other,  
 Dreaming together (dreaming of each  
 other  
 They should have added), till the morning  
 light  
 Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy pane  
 Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we woke  
 To gaze upon each other. If this be true,  
 At thought of which my whole soul lan-  
 guishes  
 And faints, and hath no pulse, no breath  
 —as tho'

A man in some still garden should infuse  
 Rich attar in the bosom of the rose,  
 Till, drunk with its own wine, and overfull  
 Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself,  
 It fall on its own thorns—if this be true,—  
 And that way my wish leads me evermore  
 Still to believe it, 't is so sweet a thought,—  
 Why in the utter stillness of the soul  
 Doth question'd memory answer not, nor  
 tell  
 Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,  
 Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest har-  
 mony?

O blossom'd portal of the lonely house,  
 Green prelude, April promise, glad new-  
 year  
 Of Being, which with earliest violets  
 And lavish carol of clear-throated larks  
 Fill'd all the March of life!—I will not  
 speak of thee;  
 These have not seen thee, these can never  
 know thee,  
 They cannot understand me. Pass we  
 then  
 A term of eighteen years. Ye would but  
 laugh  
 If I should tell you how I hoard in thought  
 The faded rhymes and scraps of ancient  
 crones,  
 Gray relics of the nurseries of the world,  
 Which are as gems set in my memory,  
 Because she learnt them with me; or what  
 use  
 To know her father left us just before  
 The daffodil was blown? or how we found  
 The dead man cast upon the shore? All  
 this  
 Seems to the quiet daylight of your minds  
 But cloud and smoke, and in the dark of  
 mine

Is traced with flame. Move with me to  
 the event.

There came a glorious morning, such a  
 one  
 As dawns but once a season. Mercury  
 On such a morning would have flung him-  
 self  
 From cloud to cloud, and swum with bal-  
 anced wings  
 To some tall mountain: when I said to  
 her,  
 "A day for Gods to stoop," she answered,  
 "Ay,  
 And men to soar:" for as that other  
 gazed,  
 Shading his eyes till all the fiery cloud,  
 The prophet and the chariot and the  
 steeds,  
 Suck'd into oneness like a little star  
 Were drunk into the inmost blue, we  
 stood,  
 When first we came from out the pines at  
 noon.  
 With hands for caves, uplooking and al-  
 most  
 Waiting to see some blessed shape in  
 heaven,  
 So bathed we were in brilliance. Never  
 yet

Before or after have I known the spring  
 Pour with such sudden deluges of light  
 Into the middle summer; for that day  
 Love, rising, shook his wings, and charged  
 the winds  
 With spiced May-sweets from bound to  
 bound, and blew  
 Fresh fire into the sun, and from within  
 Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his  
 soul  
 Into the songs of birds, and touch'd far off  
 His mountain-altars, his high hills, with  
 flame  
 Milder and purer.

Thro' the rocks we wound:  
 The great pine shook with lonely sounds  
 of joy  
 That came on the sea-wind. As mountain  
 streams  
 Our bloods ran free: the sunshine seem'd  
 to brood  
 More warmly on the heart than on the  
 brow.  
 We often paused, and, looking back, we  
 saw  
 The clefts and openings in the mountains  
 fill'd  
 With the blue valley and the glistening  
 brooks,  
 And all the low dark groves, a land of love!  
 A land of promise, a land of memory,  
 A land of promise flowing with the milk  
 And honey of delicious memories!  
 And down to sea, and far as eye could ken,  
 Each way from verge to verge a Holy  
 Land.  
 Still growing holier as you near'd the bay,  
 For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd  
 The grassy platform on some hill, I stoop'd,

I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her  
brows  
And mine made garlands of the selfsame  
flower,  
Which she took smiling, and with my work  
thus  
Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or twice  
she told me

(For I remember all things) to let grow  
The flowers that run poison in their veins.  
She said, "The evil flourish in the world."  
Then playfully she gave herself the lie—  
"Nothing in nature is unbeautiful;  
So, brother, pluck, and spare not." So I  
wove

Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem, "whose  
flower,  
Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sunrise,  
Like to the wild youth of an evil prince,  
Is without sweetness, but who crowns him-  
self

Above the secret poisons of his heart  
In his old age." A graceful thought of  
hers

Grav'n on my fancy! And oh, how like  
a nymph,  
A stately mountain nymph, she look'd!  
how native

Unto the hills she trod on! While I gazed,  
My coronal slowly disentwined itself  
And fell between us both; tho' while I  
gazed

My spirit leap'd as with those thrills of  
bliss

That strike across the soul in prayer, and  
show us

That we are surely heard. Methought a  
light

Burst from the garland I had wov'n, and  
stood

A solid glory on her bright black hair;  
A light methought broke from her dark,  
dark eyes.

And shot itself into the singing winds;  
A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her white  
robe

As from a glass in the sun, and fell about  
My footsteps on the mountains.

Last we came  
To what our people call "The Hill of Woe."  
A bridge is there, that, look'd at from be-  
neath,

Seems but a cobweb filament to link  
The yawning of an earthquake-cloven  
chasm.

And thence one night, when all the winds  
were loud,

A woful man (for so the story went)  
Had thrust his wife and child and dash'd  
himself

Into the dizzy depth below. Below,  
Fierce in the strength of far descent, a  
stream

Flies with a shatter'd foam along the  
chasm.

The path was perilous, loosely strewn  
with crags:

We mounted slowly; yet to both there  
came

The joy of life in steepness overcome,  
And victories of ascent, and looking down  
On all that had look'd down on us; and  
joy

In breathing nearer heaven; and joy to  
me,

High over all the azure-circled earth,  
To breathe with her as if in heaven itself;  
And more than joy that I to her became  
Her guardian and her angel, raising her  
Still higher, past all peril, until she saw  
Beneath her feet the region far away,  
Beyond the nearest mountain's bosky  
brows,

Burst into open prospect—heath and hill,  
And hollow lined and wooded to the lips,  
And steep-down walls of battlemented  
rock

Gilded with broom, or shatter'd into spires,  
And glory of broad waters interfused.  
Whence rose as it were breath and steam  
of gold,

And over all the great wood rioting  
And climbing, streak'd or starr'd at inter-  
vals

With falling brook or blossom'd bush—  
and last,

Framing the mighty landscape to the west,  
A purple range of mountain-cones, be-  
tween

Whose interspaces gush'd in blinding  
bursts

The incorporate blaze of sun and sea.

At length  
Descending from the point and standing  
both,

There on the tremulous bridge, that from  
beneath

Had seem'd a gossamer filament up in air,  
We paused amid the splendor. All the  
west

And e'en unto the middle south was ribb'd  
And barr'd with bloom on bloom. The  
sun below,

Held for a space 'twixt cloud and wave,  
shower'd down

Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over  
That various wilderness a tissue of light  
Unparallel'd. On the other side, the moon,

Half melted into thin blue air, stood still,  
And pale and fibrous as a wither'd leaf,  
Nor yet endured in presence of His eyes  
To induce his lustre; most unlover-like,  
Since in his absence full of light and joy,  
And giving light to others. But this most,  
Next to her pre-ence whom I loved so well,  
Spoke loudly even into my inmost heart  
As to my outward hearing: the loud  
stream,

Forth issuing from his portals in the frag  
(A visible link unto the home of my heart),  
Ran amber toward the west, and nigh the  
sea

Parting my own loved mountains was re-  
ceived.

Shorn of its strength, into the sympathy  
Of that small bay, which out to open main  
Glow'd intermingling close beneath the  
sun,

Spirit of Love! that little hour was bound

Shut in from Time, and dedicate to thee:  
Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it, and  
the earth  
They fell on became hallow'd evermore,

We turn'd: our eyes met: hers were bright, and mine  
Were dim with floating tears, that shot the sunset

In lightnings round me; and my name was borne  
Upon her breath. Henceforth my name has been

A hallow'd memory like the names of old,  
A centred, glory-circled memory,  
And a peculiar treasure, brooking not  
Exchange or currency: and in that hour  
A hope flow'd round me, like a golden mist  
Charm'd amid eddies of melodious airs,  
A moment, ere the onward whirlwind  
shatter it,

Waver'd and floated—which was less than  
Hope,

Because it lack'd the power of perfect  
Hope;

But which was more and higher than all  
Hope,

Because all other Hope had lower aim;  
Even that this name to which her gracious  
lips

Did lend such gentle utterance, this one  
name,

In some obscure hereafter, might in-  
wreath

(How lovelier, nobler then!) her life, her  
love,

With my life, love, soul, spirit, and heart  
and strength.

"Brother," she said, "let this be call'd  
henceforth

The Hill of Hope;" and I replied, "O  
sister,

My will is one with thine; the Hill of  
Hope."

Nevertheless, we did not change the name.

I did not speak; I could not speak my  
love.

Love lieth deep: Love dwells not in lip-  
depths.

Love wraps his wings on either side the  
heart,

Constraining it with kisses close and warm,  
Absorbing all the incense of sweet thoughts  
So that they pass not to the shrine of  
sound.

Else had the life of that delighted hour  
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance  
Of Love; but how should Earthly meas-  
ure mete

The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimited  
Love,

Who scarce can tune his high majestic  
sense

Unto the thunder-song that wheels the  
spheres,

Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,  
And flowing odor of the spacious air,

Scarce housed within the circle of this  
Earth,

Be cabin'd up in words and syllables,  
Which pass with that which breathes  
them? Sooner Earth

Might go round Heaven, and the strait  
girth of Time

Inswathe the fullness of Eternity,  
Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy  
hour,

Thou art blessed in the years, divinest  
day!

O Genius of that hour which dost uphold  
Thy coronal of glory like a God,

Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,  
Who walk before thee, ever turning round

To gaze upon thee till their eyes are dim  
With dwelling on the light and depth of  
thine,

Thy name is ever worshipp'd among  
hours!

Had I died then, I had not seem'd to die,  
For bliss stood round me like the light of  
Heaven—

Had I died then, I had not known the  
death;

Yea had the Power from whose right  
hand the light

Of Life issueth, and from whose left hand  
floweth

The Shadow of Death, perennial efflu-  
ences,

Whereof to all that draw the wholesome  
air

Somewhile the one must overflow the  
other;

Then had he stemm'd my day with night,  
and driven

My current to the fountain whence it  
sprang,—

Even his own abiding excellence—  
On me, methinks, that shock of gloom  
had fall'n

Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged  
The other, like the sun I gazed upon,

Which seeming for the moment due to  
death,

And dipping his head low beneath the  
verge,

Yet bearing round about him his own day,  
In confidence of unabated strength,

Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven, from  
light to light,

And holdeth his undimmed forehead far  
Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the downward  
hill;

We past from light to dark. On the other  
side

Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain hall,  
Which none have fathom'd. If you go  
far in

(The country people rumor) you may hear  
The moaning of the woman and the child,  
Shut in the secret chambers of the rock.

I too have heard a sound—perchance of  
streams

Running far on within its inmost halls,  
The home of darkness; but the cavern-  
mouth,

Half overtrilled with a wanton weed,  
Gives birth to a brawling brook, that  
passing lightly

Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,  
Is presently received in a sweet grave  
Of eglantines, a place of burial  
Far lovelier than its cradle; for unseen,  
But taken with the sweetness of the place,  
It makes a constant bubbling melody  
That drowns the nearer echoes. Lower  
down

Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding,  
leaves

Low banks of yellow sand; and from the  
woods

That belt it rise three dark, tall cypresses,—  
Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe,  
That men plant over graves.

Hither we came,  
And sitting down upon the golden moss,  
Held converse sweet and low—low con-  
verse sweet,

In which our voices bore least part. The  
wind

Told a love tale beside us, how he woo'd  
The waters, and the waters answering  
lisp'd

To kisses of the wind, that, sick with love,  
Fainted at intervals, and grew again  
To utterance of passion. Ye cannot shape  
Fancy so fair as is this memory.

Methought all excellence that ever was  
Had drawn herself from many thousand  
years,

And all the separate Edens of this earth,  
To centre in this place and time. I  
listen'd,

And her words stole with most prevailing  
sweetness

Into my heart, as thronging fancies come  
To boys and girls when summer days are  
new,

And soul and heart and body are all at  
ease;

What marvel my Camilla told me all?  
It was so happy an hour, so sweet a place,  
And I was as the brother of her blood,  
And by that name I moved upon her  
breath;

Dear name, which had too much of near-  
ness in it  
And heralded the distance of this time!

At first her voice was very sweet and low,  
As if she were afraid of utterance;

But in the onward current of her speech  
(As echoes of the hollow-banked brooks  
Are fashion'd by the channel which they  
keep),

Her words did of their meaning borrow  
sound,

Her cheek did catch the color of her words,  
I heard and trembled, yet I could but hear;  
My heart paused—my raised eyelids would  
not fall,

But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.  
I seem'd the only part of Time stood still,  
And saw the motion of all other things;

While her words, syllable by syllable,  
Like water, drop by drop, upon my ear  
Fell; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not to  
speak;

But she spake on, for I did name no wish.  
What marvel my Camilla told me all  
Her maiden dignities of Hope and Love—  
"Perchance," she said, "return'd." Even  
then the stars

Did tremble in their stations as I gazed;  
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,  
No wish—no hope. Hope was not wholly  
dead,

But breathing hard at the approach of  
Death,—

Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine  
No longer in the dearest sense of mine—  
For all the secret of her inmost heart,  
And all the maiden empire of her mind,  
Lay like a map before me, and I saw

There, where I hoped myself to reign as  
king,

There, where that day I crown'd myself  
as king,

I here in my realm and even on my throne,  
*Another!* Then it seem'd as tho' a link  
Of some tight chain within my inmost  
frame

Was riven in twain: that life I heeded not  
Flow'd from me, and the darkness of the  
grave,

The darkness of the grave and utter night,  
Did swallow up my vision; at her feet,  
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell.  
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

Then had the earth beneath me yawning  
cloven

With such a sound as when an iccbe g  
splits

From cope to base—had Heaven from all  
her doors,

With all her golden thresholds clashing,  
roll'd

Her heaviest thunder—I had lain as dead,  
Mute, blind and motionless as then I lay;  
Dead, for henceforth there was no life for  
me!

Mute, for henceforth what use were words  
to me!

Blind, for the day was as the night to  
me!

The night to me was kinder than the day;  
The night in pity took away my day,

Because my grief as yet was newly born  
Of eyes too weak to look upon the light;  
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear  
Frail Life was startled from the tender  
love

Of him she brooded over. Would I had  
lain

Until the plaited ivy-trees had wound  
Round my worn limbs, and the wild brier

had driven  
Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining  
brows,

Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.  
The wind had blown above me, and the  
rain

Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded snake

Had nestled in this bosom-throne of Love,  
But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me. All  
too soon  
Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,  
Who will not *bear* denial, vain and rude  
With proffer of unwished for services)  
Entering all the avenues of sense  
Past thro' into his citadel, the brain,  
With hated warmth of apprehensiveness,  
And first the chillness of the sprinkled  
brook  
Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd to  
hear  
Its murmur, as the drowning seaman  
hears,  
Who with his head below the surface  
dropt  
Listens the muffled booming indistinct  
Of the confused floods, and dimly knows  
His head shall rise no more; and then  
came in  
The white light of the weary moon above,  
Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.  
Was my sight drunk that it did shape to me  
Him who should own that name? Were  
it not well  
If so be that the echo of that name  
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn  
A fa-h on and a phantasm of the form  
It should attach to? Phantom!—had the  
ghastliest  
That ever lusted for a body, sucking  
The foul steam of the grave to thicken by  
it,  
There in the suddering moonlight brought  
its face  
And what it has for eyes as close to mine  
As he did—better that than his, than he  
The friend, the neighbor, Lionel, the be-  
loved,  
The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,  
The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,  
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.  
Oh how her choice did leap forth from his  
eyes!  
Oh how her love did clothe itself in smiles  
About his lips! and—not one moment's  
grace—  
Then when the effect weigh'd seas upon  
my head  
To come my way! to twilt me with the  
cause!

Was not the land as free thro' all her  
ways  
To him as me? Was not his wont to walk  
Between the going light and growing  
night?  
Had I not learnt my loss before he came?  
Could that be more because he came my  
way?  
Why should he not come my way if he  
would?  
And yet to-night, to-night—when all my  
wealth  
Flash'd from me in a moment and I fell  
Beggard forever—why *should* he come  
my way

Robed in those robes of light I must not  
wear,  
With that great crown of beams about  
his brows—  
Come like an angel to a damned soul,  
To tell him of the bliss he had with God—  
Come like a careless and a greedy heir  
That scarce can wait the reading of the  
will  
Before he takes possession? Was mine a  
mood  
To be invaded rudely, and not rather  
A sacred, secret, unapproached woe,  
Unspeakable? I was shut up with Grief;  
She took the body of my past delight,  
Narded and swathed and balm'd it for  
herself,  
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock  
Never to rise again. I was led mute  
Into her temple like a sacrifice;  
I was the High Priest in her holiest place,  
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

O friend, thoughts deep and heavy as  
these well nigh  
O'erbore the limits of my brain; but he  
Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm up-  
stay'd.  
I thought it was an adder's fo'd, and once  
I strove to d'engage myself, but fail'd,  
Being so feeble: she bent above me, too;  
Wan was her cheek; for whatsoever of  
blight  
Lives in the dewy touch of it; had made  
The red rose there a pale one—and her  
eyes—  
I saw the moonlight glitter on their  
tears—  
And some few drops of that distressful  
rain  
Fell on my face, and her long ringlets  
moved,  
Drooping and beaten by the breeze, and  
brush'd  
My fallen forehead in their t' and fro,  
For in the sudden anguish of her heart  
Loosed from their simple thrall they had  
flow'd abroad.  
And floated on and parted round her neck,  
Mantling her form half way. She, when  
I woke,  
Something she ask'd, I know not what,  
and ask'd,  
Unanswer'd, since I spake not; for the  
sound  
Of that dear voice so musically low,  
And now first heard with any sense of  
pain,  
As it had taken life away before,  
Choked all the syllables, that strove to rise  
From my full heart.

The blissful lover, too,  
From his great hoard of happiness distill'd  
Some drops of solace; like a vain rich  
man,  
That, having always prosper'd in the  
world,  
Folding his hands, deals comfortable  
words  
To hearts wounded forever; yet, in truth,

Fair speech was his and delicate of phrase,  
Falling in whispers on the sense, address'd  
More to the inward than the outward ear,  
As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,  
Scarce heard, recalling fragrance and the  
ereen

Of the dead spring : but mine was wholly  
dead,

No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for  
me.

Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd  
wrong ?

And why was I to darken their pure love,  
If, as I found, they two did love each  
other,

Because my own was darken'd ? Why  
was I

To cross between their happy star and  
them ?

To stand a shadow by their shining doors,  
And vex them with my darkness ? Did I  
love her ?

Ye know that I did love her ; to this pre-  
sent

My full-orb'd love has waned not. Did I  
love her,

And could I look upon her tearful eyes ?  
What had she done to weep ? Why should  
she weep ?

O innocent of spirit—let my heart  
Break rather—whom the gentlest airs of  
Heaven

Should kiss with an unwonted gentleness.  
Her love did murder mine ? What then ?

She deem'd

I wore a brother's mind : she call'd me  
brother :

She told me all her love : she shall not  
weep.

The brightness of a burning thought,  
awhile

In battle with the glooms of my dark  
will,

Moon-like emerged, and to it-self lit up  
There on the depth of an unfathom'd woe

Reflex of action. Starting up at once,  
As from a dismal dream of my own death,

I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love :  
I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she  
lov'd,

And laid it in her own, and sent my cry  
Thro' the blank night to Him who loving  
made

The happy and the unhappy love, that He  
Would hold the hand of blessing over  
them,

Lionel, the happy, and her, and her, his  
bride !

Let them so love that men and boys may  
say,

"Lo ! how they love each other !" till  
their love

Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all  
Known, when their faces are forgot in the  
land—

One golden dream of love, from which  
may death

Awake them with heaven's music in a life  
More living to some happier happiness,

Swallowing its precedent in victory.

And as for me, Camilla, as for me,—

The dew of tears is an unwholesome dew,  
They will but sicken the sick plant the  
more.

Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,  
So shalt thou love me still as sisters do ;

Or if thou dream aught farther, dream  
but how

I could have loved thee, had there been  
none else

To love as lovers, loved again by thee.

Or this, or somewhat like to this, I  
spake,

When I beheld her weep so ruefully ;  
For sure my love should ne'er indue the  
front

And mask of Hate, who lives on others'  
moans.

Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter  
draughts,

And batten on her poisons ? Love forbid !  
Love passeth not the threshold of cold  
Hate,

And Hate is strange beneath the roof of  
Love.

O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these  
tears

Shed for the love of Love ; for tho' mine  
image,

The subject of thy power, be cold in her,  
Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the  
source

Of these sad tears, and feeds their down-  
ward flow.

So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to  
death,

Received unto himself a part of blame,  
Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,  
Who, when the woful sentence hath been  
past,

And all the clearness of his fame hath  
gone

Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,  
First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom  
awaked,

And looking round upon his tearful  
friends,

Forthwith and in his agony conceives  
A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime—  
For whence without some guilt should  
such grief be ?

So died that hour, and fell into the  
abysm

Of forms outworn, but not to me outworn,  
Who never hail'd another—was there one ?  
There might be one—one other, worth the  
life

That made it sensible. So that hour died  
Like odor rapt into the winged wind  
Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built, that  
they,

They—when their love is wreck'd—if Love  
can wreck—

On that sharp ridge of utmost doom ride  
highly

Above the perilous seas of Change and  
 Chance;  
 Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheer-  
 fulness;  
 As the tall ship, that many a dreary year  
 Knit to some dismal sand-bank far at sea,  
 All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark,  
 Showers slanting light upon the dolorous  
 wave.  
 For me—what light, what gleam on the e  
 black ways  
 Where Love could walk with banish'd  
 Hope no more?

It was ill done to part you, Sisters fair:  
 Love's arms were wreath'd about the  
 neck of Hope,  
 And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew in  
 her breath  
 In that close kiss, and drank her whisper'd  
 tales.  
 They said that Love would die when Hope  
 was gone,  
 And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd  
 after Hope;  
 At last she sought out Memory, and they  
 trod  
 The same old paths where Love had  
 walk'd with Hope  
 And Memory fed the soul of Love with  
 tears.

## II.

From that time forth I would not see her  
 more;  
 But many weary moons I lived alone—  
 Alone, and in the heart of the great for-  
 est.  
 Sometime upon the hills beside the sea  
 All day I watch'd the floating isles of  
 shade,  
 And sometimes on the shore, upon the  
 sands  
 Insensibly I drew her name, until  
 The meaning of the letters shot into  
 My brain; anon the wanton billow wash'd  
 Them over, till they faded like my love.  
 The hollow caverns heard me—the black  
 brooks  
 Of the mid-forest heard me—the soft  
 winds,  
 Laden with thistle down and seeds of  
 flowers,  
 Paused in their course to hear me, for my  
 voice  
 Was all of thee: the merry linnet knew  
 me,  
 The squirrel knew me, and the dragon-  
 fly,  
 Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.  
 The rough brier tore my bleeding palms;  
 the hemlock  
 Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I  
 past;  
 Yet trod I not the wild flower in my path,  
 Nor bruised the wild bird's egg.  
 Was this the end?  
 Why grew we then together in one plot?

Why fed we from one fountain? drew one  
 sun?  
 Why were our mothers branches of one  
 stem?  
 Why were we one in all things, save in  
 that  
 Where to have been one had been the cope  
 and crown  
 Of all I hoped and fear'd?—if that same  
 nearness  
 Were father to this distance, and that  
 one  
 Vauntcourier to this double? if Affection  
 Living slew Love, and Sympathy hew'd  
 out  
 The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the hill  
 Where last we roam'd together, for the  
 sound  
 Of the loud stream was pleasant, and the  
 wind  
 Came wooingly with woodbine smells,  
 Sometimes  
 All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,  
 Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-  
 cones  
 That spired above the wood; and with  
 mad ha d  
 Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-screen,  
 I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,  
 And watch'd them till they vanish'd from  
 my sight  
 Beneath the bower of wreathed eglan-  
 tines;  
 And all the fragments of the living rock  
 (Huge blocks, which some old trembling  
 of the world  
 Had lo sen'd from the mountain, till they  
 fell  
 Half digging their own graves) these in  
 my agony  
 Did I make bare of all the golden moss,  
 Wherewith the dashing runnel in the  
 spring  
 Had liveried them all over. In my brain  
 The spirit seem'd to flag from thought to  
 thought,  
 As moonlight wandering thro' a mist: my  
 blood  
 Crept like marsh drains thro' all my lan-  
 guid limbs;  
 The motions of my heart seem'd far with-  
 in me,  
 Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its pulses;  
 And yet it shook me, that my frame would  
 shudder,  
 As if 't were drawn asunder by the rack,  
 But over the deep graves of Hope and  
 Fear,  
 And all the broken palaces of the Past,  
 Brooded one master-passion evermore,  
 Like to a low hung and a fiery sky  
 Above some fair metropolis, earth-  
 shock'd,—  
 Hung round with ragged rims and burn-  
 ing folds,—  
 Embrathing all with wild and woful hues,  
 Great hills of ruins, and collaps'd masses  
 Of thunder-shaken columns indistinct,

And fused together in the tyrannous  
light—  
Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me!

Sometimes I thought Camilla was no  
more,  
Some one had told she was dead, and ask'd  
me

If I would see her burial; then I seem'd  
To rise, and through the forest-shadow  
borne

With more than mortal swiftness, I ran  
down

The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon  
The rear of a procession, curving round  
The silver-sheeted bay: in front of which  
Six stately virgins, all in white, upbare  
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest  
lawn,

Wreathed round the bier with garlands:  
in the distance,

From out the yellow woods upon the hill  
Look'd forth the summit and the pinnacles  
Of a gray steeple—thence at intervals  
A low bell tolling. All the pageantry,  
Save those six virgins which upheld the  
bier,

Were staked from head to foot in flowing  
black:

One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd  
his brow,

And he was loud in weeping and in praise  
Of her he follow'd: a strong sympathy  
Shook all my soul: I flung myself upon  
him

In tears and cries: I told him all my love.  
How I had loved her from the first;  
whereat

He shrank and howl'd, and from his brow  
drew back

His hand to push me from him; and the  
face,

The very face and form of Lionel  
Flash'd thro' my eyes into my innermost  
brain,

And at his feet I seemed to faint and fall,  
To fall and die away. I could not rise  
Albeit I strove to follow. They past on,  
The lordly Phantasms! in their floating  
folds

They past and were no more: but I had  
fallen

Prone by the dashing runnel on the grass.

Alway the inaudible invisible thought  
Artificer and subject, lord and slave,  
Shaped by the audible and visible,  
Moulded the audible and visible;

All crisp'd sounds of wave and leaf and  
wind

Flatter'd the fancy of my fading brain;  
The cloud-pavilion'd element, the wood,  
The mountain, the three cypresses, the  
cave,

Storm, sunset, glows and glories of the  
moon

Below black firs, when silent-creeping  
winds

Laid the long night in silver streaks and  
bars,

Were wrought into the tissue of my  
dream:

The moanings in the forest, the loud  
brook,

Cries of the partridge like a rusty key  
Turn'd in a lock, owl-whoop and dor-  
hawk-whirl

Awoke me not, but were a part of sleep,  
And voices in the distance calling to me  
And in my vision bidding me dream on,  
Like sounds without the twilight realm of  
dreams,

Which wander round the bases of the  
hills,

And murmur at the low-dropt eaves of  
sleep,

Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes  
The vision had fair prelude, in the end  
Opening on darkness, state-y vestibules  
To caves and shows of Death: whether  
the mind,

With some revenge,—even to itself un-  
known,—

Made strange division of its suffering  
With her, whom to have suffering view'd  
had been

Extremest pain; or that the clear-eyed  
Spirit,

Being blunted in the Present, grew at  
length

Prophetic and prescient of what'er  
The Future had in store: or that which  
most

Enchains belief, the sorrow of my spirit  
Was of so wide a compass it took in  
All I had loved, and my dull agony,  
Ideally to her transferr'd, became  
Anguish intolerable.

The day waned;  
Alone I sat with her: about my brow  
Her warm breath floated in the utterance  
Of silver-chorded tones: her lips were  
sunder'd

With smiles of tranquil bliss, which  
broke in light

Like morning from her eyes—her elo-  
quent eyes

(As I have seen them many a hundred  
times),

Filled all with pure clear fire, thro' mine  
down rain'd

Their spirit-searching splendors. As a  
vision

Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd  
In damp and dismal dungeons under-  
ground,

Confined on points of faith, when strength  
is shock'd

With torment, and expectancy of worse  
Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged walls,  
All unawares before his half-shut eyes,  
Comes in upon him in the dead of night,  
And with the excess of sweetness and of  
awe,

Makes the heart tremble, and the sight  
run over

Upon his steely gyves; so those fair eyes  
Shone on my darkness, forms which ever  
stood  
Within the magic cirque of memory,

Invisible but deathless, waiting still  
 The edict of the will to re-assume  
 The semblance of those rare realities  
 Of which they were the mirrors. Now the  
 light  
 Which was their life bursts through the  
 cloud of thought  
 Keen, irrepressible.

It was a room  
 Within the summer-house of which I  
 spake,  
 Hung round with paintings of the sea,  
 and one  
 A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved prow  
 Clambering, the mast bent and the ravin  
 wind  
 In her sail roaring. From the outer day,  
 Betwixt the close-set ivies came a broad  
 And solid beam of isolated light,  
 Crowded with driving atoms, and fell  
 Slanting upon that picture, from prime  
 youth  
 Well known well loved. She drew it long  
 ago  
 Forth-gazing on the waste and open sea,  
 One morning when the upblown billow  
 ran  
 Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I had  
 pour'd  
 Into the shadowing pencil's naked forms  
 Color and life: it was a bond and seal  
 Of friendship, spoken of with tearful  
 smiles:  
 A monument of childhood and of love;  
 The poesy of childhood; my lost love  
 Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it to-  
 gether  
 In mute and glad remembrance, and each  
 heart  
 Grew closer to the other, and the eye  
 Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing like  
 The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low  
 couch'd—  
 A beauty which is death; when all at  
 once  
 That painted vessel, as with inner life,  
 Began to heave upon that painted sea;  
 An earthquake, my loud heart-beats,  
 made the ground  
 Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life  
 And breath and motion, past and flow'd  
 away  
 To those unreal billows: round and round  
 A whirlwind caught and bore us; mighty  
 gyres  
 Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-  
 driven  
 Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she  
 shriek'd:  
 My heart was cloven with pain; I wound  
 my arms  
 About her: we whirl'd giddily; the wind  
 Sung; but I claspt her without fear: her  
 weight  
 Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim  
 eyes,  
 And parted lips which drank her breath,  
 down hung  
 The jaws of Death: I, groaning from me  
 hung

Her empty phantom: all the sway and  
 whirl  
 Of the storm dropt to windless calm, and I  
 Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and  
 ever.

## III.

I CAME one day and sat among the stones  
 Strown in the entry of the moaning cave:  
 A morning air, sweet after rain, ran over  
 The rippling levels of the lake, and blew  
 Coolness and moisture and all smells of  
 bud  
 And foliage from the dark and dripping  
 woods  
 Upon my fever'd brows that shook and  
 throbb'd  
 From temple unto temple. To what  
 height  
 The day had grown I know not. Then  
 came on me  
 The hollow tolling of the bell, and all  
 The vision of the bier. As heretofore  
 I walk'd behind with one who veil'd his  
 brow.  
 Methought by slow degrees the sullen bell  
 Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on the  
 shore  
 Sloped into louder surf; those that went  
 with me,  
 And those that held the bier before my  
 face,  
 Moved with one spirit round about the  
 bay,  
 Trod swifter steps; and while I walk'd  
 with these  
 In marvel at that gradual change, I  
 thought  
 Four bells instead of one began to ring,  
 Four merry bells, four merry marriage  
 bells,  
 In clanging cadence jangling peal on  
 peal—  
 A long loud clash of rapid marriage bells.  
 Then those who led the van, and those in  
 rear,  
 Rush'd into dance, and like wild Baccha-  
 nals  
 Fled onward to the steeple in the woods:  
 I, too, was borne along and felt the blast  
 Beat on my heated eyelids: all at once  
 The front rank made a sudden halt; the  
 bells  
 Lapsed into frightful stillness; the surge  
 fell  
 From thunder into whispers; those six  
 maids  
 With shrieks and ringing laughter on the  
 sand  
 Threw down the bier; the woods upon  
 the hill  
 Waved with a sudden gust that sweeping  
 down  
 Took the edges of the pall, and blew it far  
 Until it hung, a little silver cloud  
 Over the sounding seas: I turn'd: my  
 heart  
 Shrank in me, like a snow-flake in the  
 hand,

Waiting to see the settled countenance  
Of her I lov'd, adorn'd with fading flowers.

But she from out her death-like chrysalis,  
She from her bier, as into fresher life,  
My sister, and my cousin, and my love,  
Leapt lightly clad in bridal white—her

hair  
Studded with one rich Provence rose—a  
light  
Of smiling welcome round her lips—her  
eyes

And cheeks as bright as when she climb'd  
the hill.

One hand she reach'd to those that came  
behind,

And while I mus'd nor yet endured to  
take

So rich a prize, the man who stood with  
me

Stept gayly forward, throwing down his  
robes,

And clasp'd her hand in his: again the  
bells

Jangled and clang'd: again the stormy  
surf

Crash'd in the shingle: and the whirling  
rout

Led by those two rush'd into dance, and  
fed

Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods,  
Till they were swallow'd in the leafy  
bowers.

And I stood sole beside the vacant bier.

There, there, my latest vision—then the  
event!

## IV.

## THE GOLDEN SUPPER.

(Another speaks.)

He flies the event: he leaves the event to  
me:

Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the  
bells,

Those marriage bells, echoing in ear and  
heart—

But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,  
As who should say "Continue." Well, he  
had

One golden hour—of triumph shall I say?  
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour of  
his!

He moved thro' all of it majestically—  
Restrained himself quite to the close—but  
now—

Whether they were his lady's marriage  
bells,

Or prophets of them in his fantasy,  
I never asked: but Lionel and the girl

Were wedded, and our Julian came again  
Back to his mother's house among the  
pines.

But these, their gloom, the mountains and  
the bay

The whole land weigh'd him down as  
Ætna does

The Giant of Mythology: he would go,  
Would leave the land forever, and had  
gone

Surely, but for a whisper. "Go not yet,"  
Some warning—sent divinely, as it seem'd  
By that which follow'd, but of this I deem  
As of the visions that he told—the event  
Glanced back upon them in his after-life,  
And partly made them, tho' he knew it  
not.

And thus he stayed and would not look  
at her—

No, not for months; but, when the elev-  
enth moon

After their marriage lit the lover's bay,  
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and  
said,

Would you could toll me out of life, but  
found—

All softly as his mother broke it to him—  
A crueller reason than a crazy ear,

For that low knell tolling his lady dead—  
Dead—and had lain three days without a  
pulse;

All that look'd on her had pronounced her  
dead.

And so they bore her (for in Julian's land  
They never nail a dumb head up in elm),  
Bore her free faced to the free airs of  
heaven,

And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then? not die: he is here  
and hale

Not plunge head-foremost from the moun-  
tain there,

And leave the name of Lover's Leap: not  
he:

He knew the meaning of the whisper now,  
Thought that he knew it. "This, I stayed  
for this;

O love, I have not seen you for so long.  
Now, now, will I go down into the grave,  
I will be all alone with all I love,  
And kiss her on the lips. She is his no  
more:

The deal returns to me, and I go down  
To kiss the dead."

The fancy stirr'd him so

He rose and went, and entering the dim  
vault,

And, making there a sudden light, beheld  
All round about him that which all will  
be.

The light was but a flash, and went again.  
Then at the far end of the vault he saw  
His lady with the moonlight on her face;  
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars  
Of black and bands of silver, which the  
moon

Struck from an open grating overhead  
High in the wall, and all the rest of her  
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the  
vault.

"It was my wish," he said, "to pass,  
to sleep,

To rest, to be with her—till the great day  
 Peal'd on us with that music which rights  
 all,  
 And raised us hand in hand." And kneeling  
 in there  
 Down in the dreadful dust that once was  
 man,  
 Dust, as he said, that once was loving  
 hearts,  
 Hearts that had beat with such a love as  
 mine—  
 Not such as mine, no, nor for such as  
 her—  
 He softly put his arm about her neck  
 And kissed her more than once, till help-  
 less death  
 And silence made him bold—nay, but I  
 wrong him,  
 He revered his dear lady even in  
 death;  
 But, placing his true hand upon her heart,  
 "O you warm heart," he moaned, "not  
 even death  
 Can chill you all at once:" then, starting,  
 thought  
 His dreams had come again. "Do I wake  
 or sleep?  
 Or am I made immortal, or my love  
 Mortal once more?" It beat—the heart  
 —it beat:  
 Faint—but it beat: at which his own be-  
 gan  
 To pulse with such a vehemence that it  
 drowned  
 The feeble motion underneath his hand.  
 But when at last his doubts were satisfied,  
 He raised her softly from the sepulchre,  
 And, wrapping her all over with the cloak  
 He came in, and now striding fast, and now  
 Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore  
 Holding his golden burden in his arms,  
 So bore her thro' the solitary land  
 Back to the mother's house where she was  
 born.

There the good mother's kindly minis-  
 tering,  
 With half a night's appliances, recall'd  
 Her fluttering life: she raised an eye that  
 ask'd  
 "Where?" till the things familiar to her  
 youth  
 Had made a silent answer: then she  
 spoke:  
 "Here! and how came I here?" and  
 learning it  
 (They told her somewhat rashly as I think)  
 At once began to wander and to wail,  
 "Ay, but you know that you must give me  
 back:  
 Send! bid him come;" but Lionel was  
 away—  
 Stung by his loss had vanished, none  
 knew where,  
 "He casts me out," she wept, "and goes"  
 —a wail  
 That seeming something, yet was nothing,  
 born  
 Not from believing mind, but shatter'd  
 nerve,

Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof  
 At some precipitance in her burial.  
 Then, when her own true spirit had re-  
 turn'd,  
 "Oh yes, and you," she said, "and none  
 but you.  
 For you have given me life and love again,  
 And none but you yourself shall tell him  
 of it,  
 And you shall give me back when he re-  
 turns."  
 "Stay then a little," answered Julian,  
 "here,  
 And keep yourself, none knowing, to your-  
 self;  
 And I will do your will. I may not stay,  
 No, not an hour; but send me notice of  
 him  
 When he returns, and then will I return,  
 And I will make a solemn offering of you  
 To him you love." And faintly she re-  
 plied,  
 "And I will do *your* will, and none shall  
 know."

Not know? with such a secret to be  
 known!  
 But all their house was old and loved them  
 both,  
 And all the house had known the loves of  
 both;  
 Had died almost to serve them any way;  
 And all the land was waste and solitary:  
 And then he rode away; but after this,  
 An hour or two, Camilla's travail came  
 Upon her, and that day a boy was born,  
 Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,  
 And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,  
 There fever seized upon him: myself was  
 then  
 Traveling that land, and meant to rest an  
 hour;  
 And sitting down to such a base repast  
 It makes me angry yet to speak of it,  
 I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd  
 The moulder'd stairs (for everything was  
 vile),  
 And in a loft, with none to wait on him,  
 Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,  
 Raving of dead men's dust and beating  
 hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,  
 A flat malarian world of reed and rush!  
 But there from fever and my care of him  
 Sprang up a friendship that may help us  
 yet.  
 For while we roam'd along the dreary  
 coast,  
 And waited for her message, piece by piece  
 I learnt the drearier story of his life;  
 And, tho' he loved and honor'd Lionel,  
 Found that the sudden wail his lady made  
 Dwelt in his fancy, did he know her  
 worth,  
 Her beauty even? should he not be taught,  
 Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,  
 The value of that jewel he had to guard?

Suddenly came her notice, and we past,  
I with our lover, to his native bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the  
soul;

That makes the sequel pure; tho' some of  
us

Beginning at the sequel know no more.  
Not such am I; and yet I say, the bird  
That will not hear my call, however sweet,  
But if my neighbor whistle answers him—  
What matter? there are others in the  
wood.

Yet when I saw her (and I thought him  
crazed,

Tho' not with such a craziness as needs  
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of  
hers—

Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes  
alone,  
But all from these to where she touch'd on  
earth—

For such a craziness as Julian's look'd  
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came  
To greet us, her young hero in her arms!  
"Kiss him," she said. "You gave me  
life again.

He, but for you, had never seen it once.  
His other father you! Kiss him, and  
then

Forgive him, if his name be Julian too."

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart!  
his own

Sent such a flame into his face, I knew  
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,  
And sent at once to Lionel, praying him,  
By that great love they both had borne  
the dead,

To come and revel for one hour with him  
Before he left the land for evermore;  
And then to friends—they were not many  
—who lived

Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,  
And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I  
never

Sat at a costlier: for all round his hall  
From column on to column, as in a wood,  
Not such as here—an equatorial one,  
Great garlen is swung and blossom'd; and  
beneath,

Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,  
Chalice and salver, wines that Heaven  
knows when,

Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten sun,  
And kept it thro' a hundred years of  
gloom.

Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups  
Where nymph and god ran ever round in  
gold—

Others of glass as costly—some with gems  
Movable and resettable at will,  
And trembling all the rest in value—Ah  
heavens!

Why need I tell you all?—suffice to say  
That whatsoever such a house as his,  
And his was old, has in it rare or fair  
Was brought before the guest: and they,  
the guests,

Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's  
eyes

(I told you that he had his golden hour),  
And such a feast, ill suited as it seem'd  
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his,  
And that resolved self-exile from a land  
He never would revisit, such a feast  
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n than  
rich—

But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall  
Two great funereal curtains, looping  
down,

Parted a little ere they met the floor,  
About a picture of his lady, taken  
Some years before, and falling hid the  
frame.

And just above the parting was a lamp:  
So the sweet figure folded round with night  
Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a  
smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate  
and drank,

And might—the wines being of such no-  
bleness—

Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,  
And something weird and wild about it  
all;

What was it? for our lover seldom spoke,  
Scarce touch'd the meats; but ever and  
anon

A priceless goblet with a priceless wine  
Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use;  
And when the feast was near an end, he  
said:

"There is a custom in the Orient,  
friends—

I read of it in Persia—when a man  
Will honor those who feast with him, he  
brings

And shows them whatsoever he accounts  
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,  
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.  
This custom"

Pausing here a moment, all  
The guests broke in upon him with meet-  
ing hands

And cries about the banquet—"Beauti-  
ful!

Who could desire more beauty at a  
feast?"

The lover answer'd, "There is more  
than one

Here sitting who desires it. Laud me  
not

Before my time, but hear me to the close.  
This custom steps yet further when the  
guest

Is loved and honor'd to the uttermost,  
For after he hath shown him gems or  
gold,

He brings and sets before him in rich  
guise  
That which is thrice as beautiful as these,  
The beauty that is dearest to his heart—  
'O my heart's lord, would I could show  
you,' he says,  
'Ev'n my heart, too.' And I propose to-  
night  
To show you what is dearest to my heart,  
And my heart to—

But solve me first a doubt.  
I knew a man, nor many years ago :  
He had a faithful servant, one who loved  
His master more than all on earth beside.  
He falling sick, and seeming close on  
death,  
His master would not wait until he died,  
But bade his menials bear him from the  
door,  
And leave him in the public way to die.  
I knew another, not so long ago ;  
Who found the dying servant, took him  
home,  
And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved  
his life.  
I ask you now, should this first master  
claim  
His service, whom does it belong to ? him  
Who thrust him out, or him who saved  
his life ? "

This question, so flung down before the  
guests,  
And balanced either way by each, at  
length  
When some were doubtful how the law  
would hold,  
Was handed over by consent of all  
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of  
phrase.  
And he beginning languidly—his loss  
Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he  
went,  
Glanced at the point of law, to pass it  
by.  
Affirming that as long as either lived,  
By all the laws of love and gratefulness,  
The service of the one so saved was due  
All to the saver—adding, with a smile,  
The first for many weeks—a semi-smile  
As at a strong conclusion—" body and  
soul  
And life and limbs, all his to work his  
will."

Then Julian made a secret sign to me  
To bring Camilla down before them all,  
And crossing her own picture as she came,  
And looking as much lovelier as herself  
Is lovelier than all others—on her head  
A diamond circlet, and from under this  
A veil, that seemed no more than gilded  
air,  
Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze  
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace of  
hers,  
Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,  
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—

And bearing high in arms the mighty  
babe,  
The younger Julian, who himself was  
crown'd  
With roses, none so rosy as himself—  
And over all her babe and her the jewels  
Of many generations of his house  
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked  
them out  
As for a solemn sacrifice of love—  
So she came in !—I am long in telling it,  
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,  
Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated  
in—  
While all the guests in mute amazement  
rose—  
And slowly pacing to the middle hall,  
Before the board, there paused and stood,  
her breast  
Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,  
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel,  
But him she carried, him nor lights nor  
feast  
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men ; who  
cared  
Only to use his own, and staring wide  
And hungering for the gilt and jewel'd  
world  
About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,  
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

" My guests," said Julian : " you are  
honor'd now  
Ev'n to the uttermost : in her behold  
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,  
Of all things upon earth the dearest to  
me."  
Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,  
Led his dear lady to a chair of state,  
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face  
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again  
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,  
And heard him muttering, " So like, so  
like ;  
She never had a sister. I knew none.  
Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so  
like !"  
And then he suddenly ask'd her if she  
were,  
She shook, and cast her eyes down, and  
was dumb.  
And then some other question'd if she  
came  
From foreign lands, and still she did not  
speak  
Another, if the boy were hers : but she  
To all their queries answer'd not a word,  
Which made the amazement more, till one  
of them  
Said, shuddering, " Her spectre ! " But  
his friend  
Replied, in half a whisper, " Not at least  
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.  
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful  
Prove, as I almost dread to find her,  
dumb ! "

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all :  
" She is but dumb, because in her you  
see

That faithful servant whom we spoke  
about,  
Obedient to her second master now ;  
Which will not last. I have here to-night  
a guest  
So bound to me by common love and loss—  
What ! shall I bind him more ? in his be-  
half,  
Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him  
That which of all things is the dearest to  
me,  
Not only showing ? and he himself pro-  
nounced  
That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

“ Now all be dumb, and promise all of  
you  
Not to break in on what I say by word  
Or whisper, while I show you all my heart.”  
And then began the story of his love  
As here to-day, but not so wordily—  
The passionate moment would not suffer  
that—  
Past thro' his visions to the burial ; thence  
Down to this last strange hour in his own  
hall ;  
And then rose up, and with him all his  
guests  
Once more as by enchantment ; all but he,  
Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again,  
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said :

“ Take my free gift, my cousin, for your  
wife ;  
And were it only for the giver's sake,

And tho' she seem so like the one you lost,  
Yet cast her not away so suddenly,  
Lest there be none left here to bring her  
back :  
I leave this land forever.” Here he ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one hand,  
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,  
He slowly brought them both to Lionel,  
And there the widower husband and dead  
wife

Rush'd each at each with a cry, that rather  
seem'd

For some new death than for a life re-  
new'd ;

Whereat the very babe began to wail ;  
At once they turn'd, and caught and

brought him in  
To their charm'd circle, and, half killing  
him

With kisses, round him closed and clasp'd  
again.

But Lionel, when at last he freed himself  
From wife and child, and lifted up a face

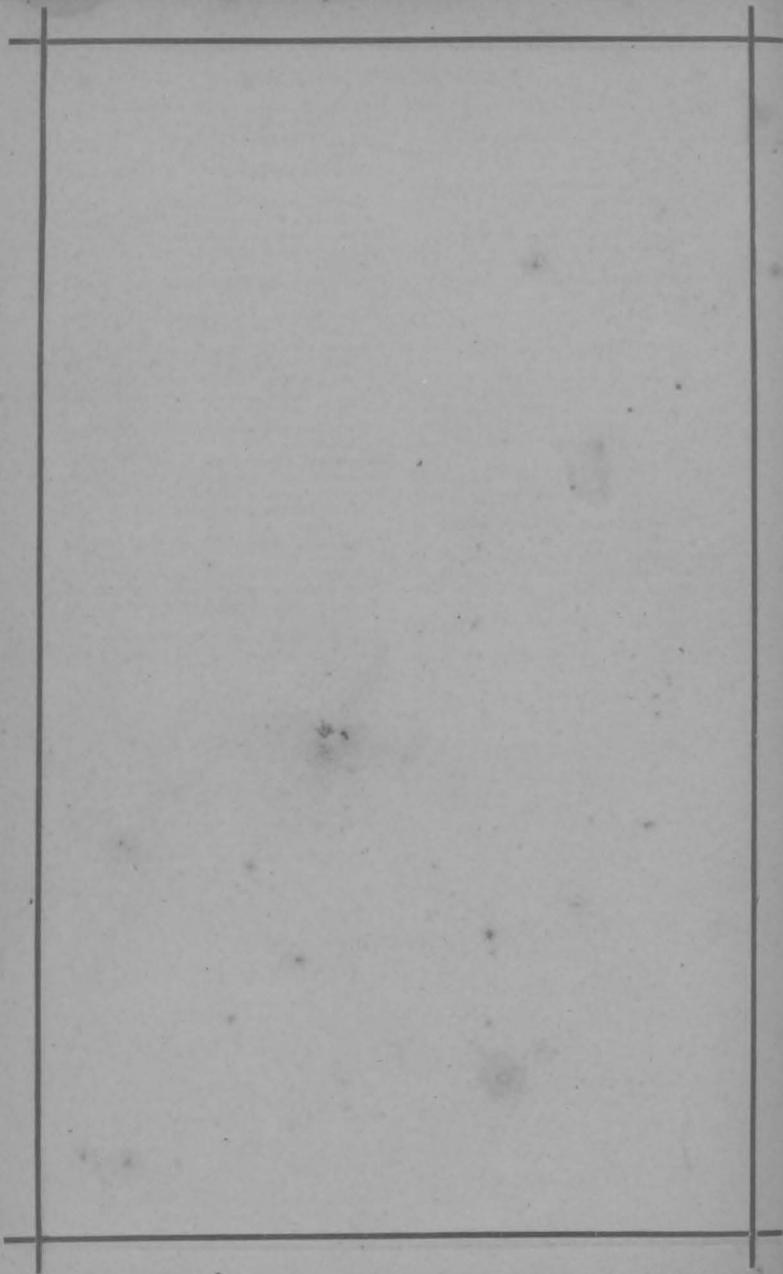
All over glowing with the sun of life,  
And love, and boundless thanks—the sight

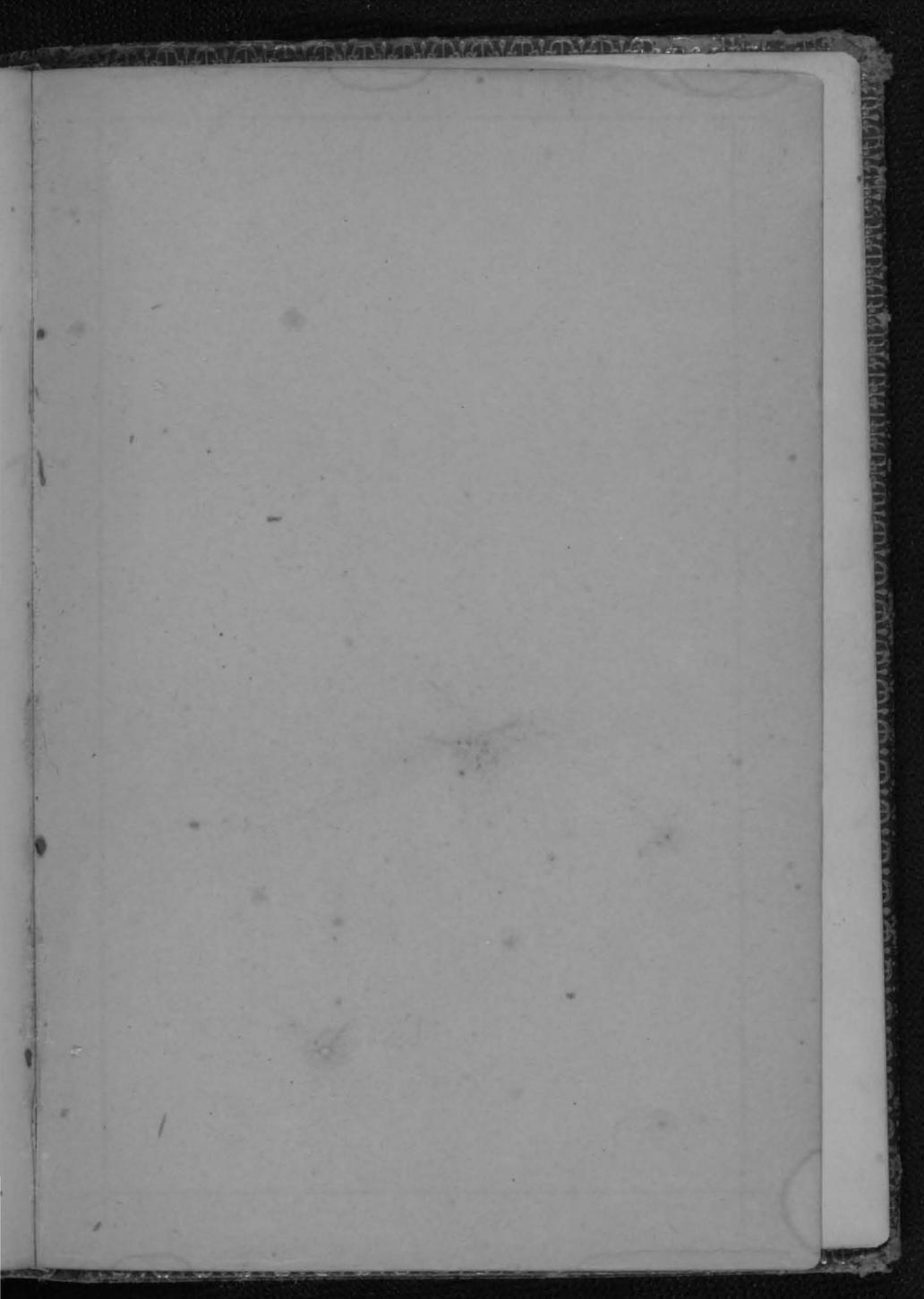
of this  
So frighted our good friend, that, turning  
to me

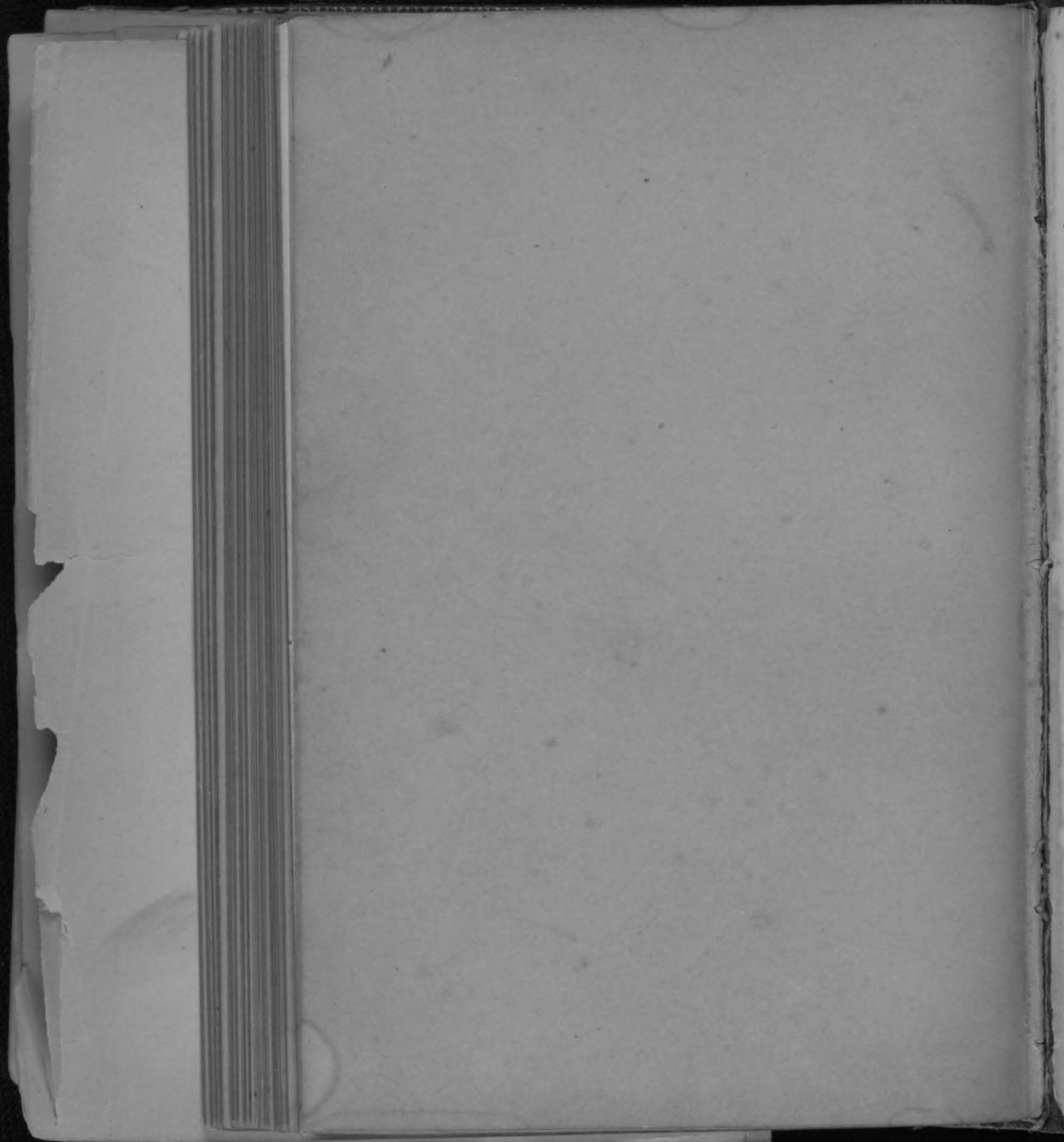
And saying, “ It is over : let us go ”—  
There were our horses ready at the doors—

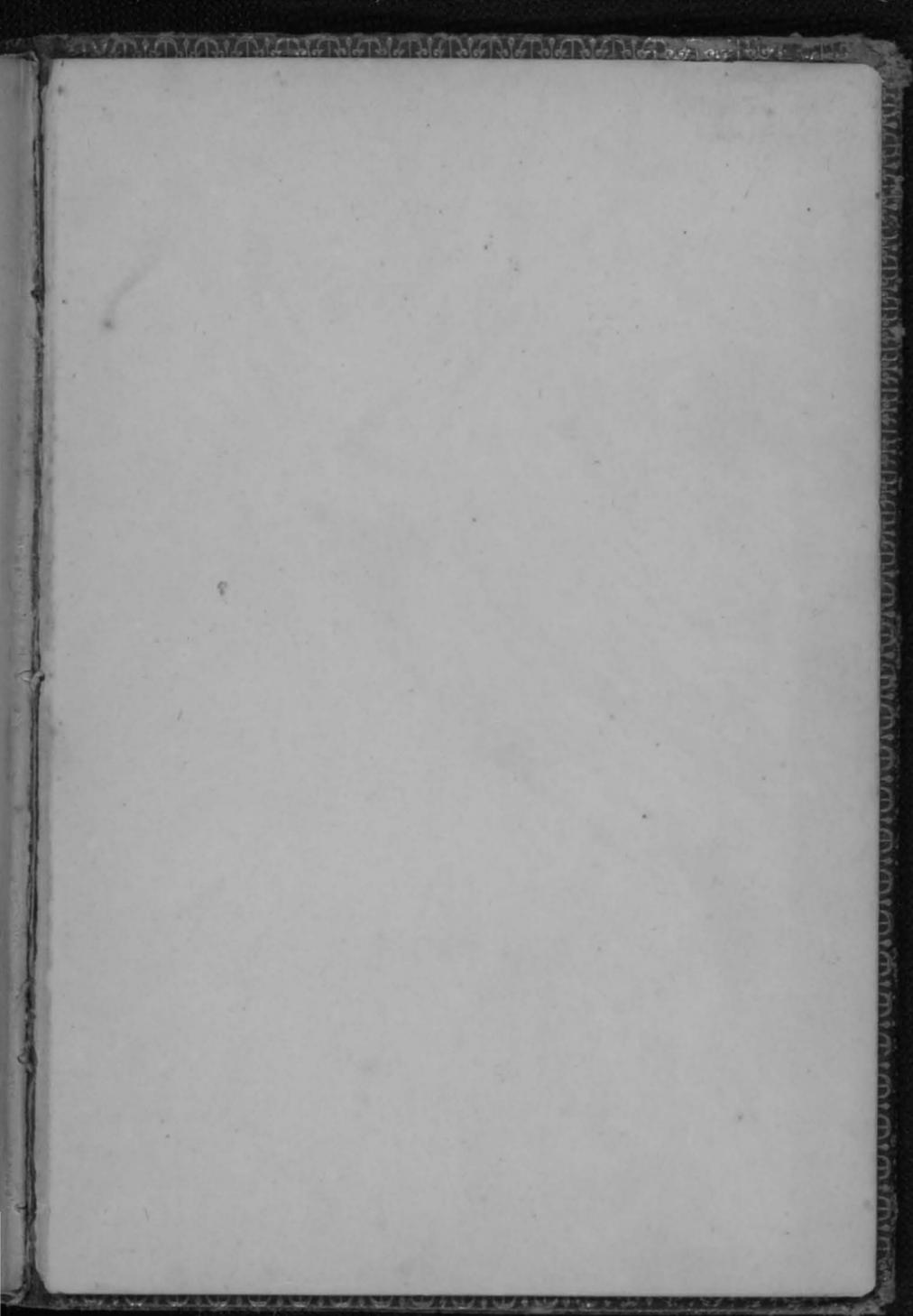
We bade them no farewell, but mounting  
these

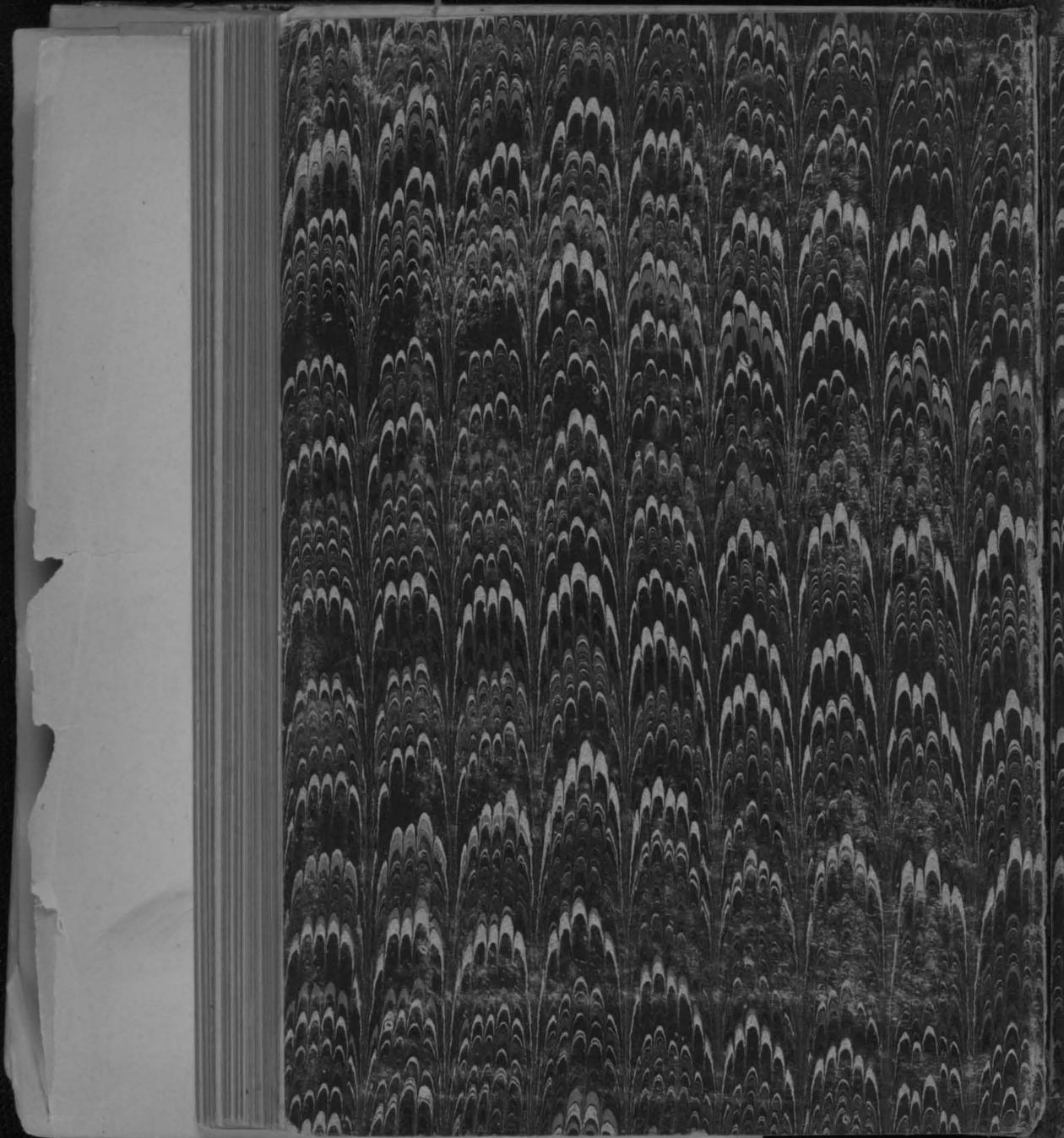
He part forever from his native land ;  
And I with him, my Ju'ian, back to mine.

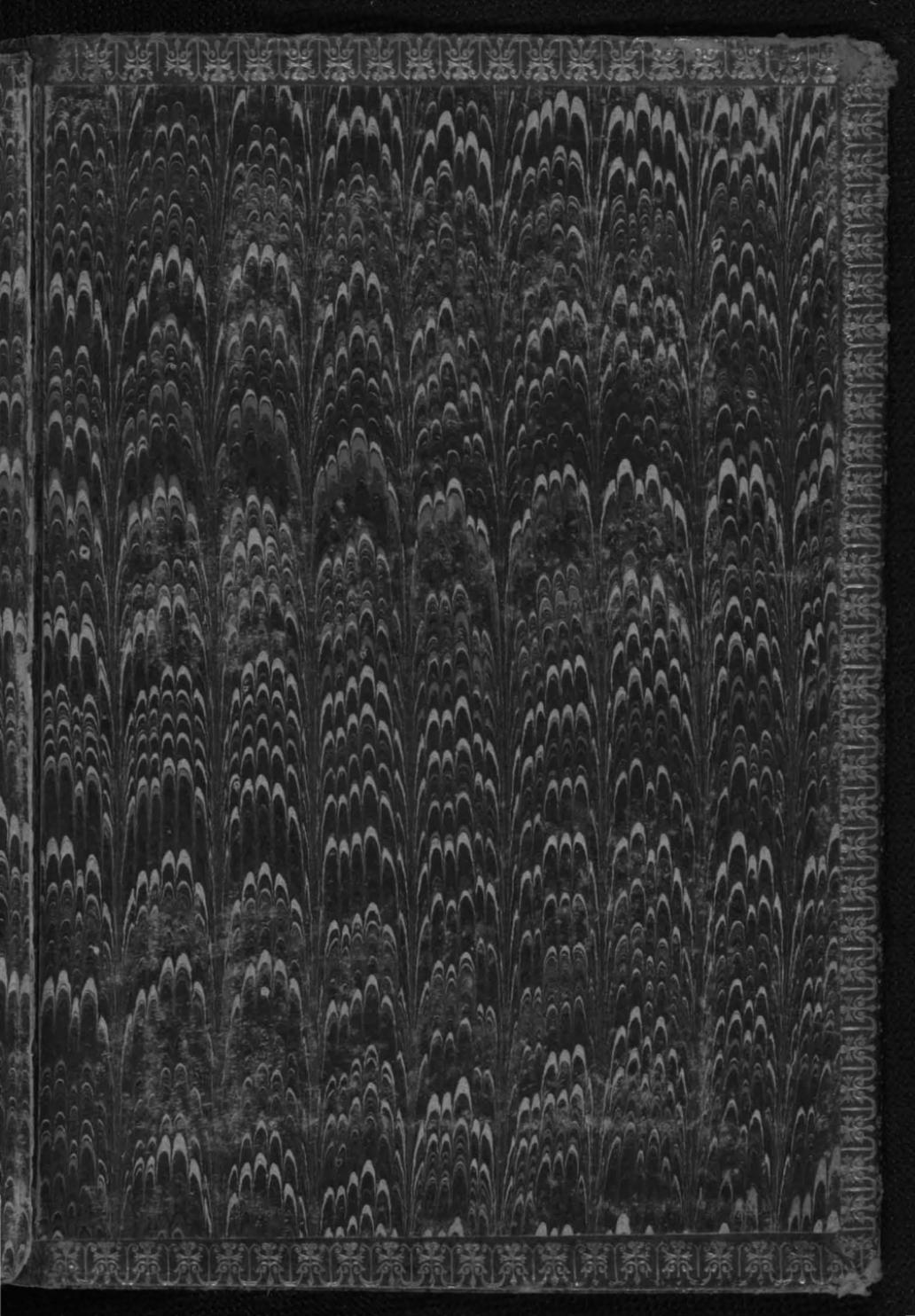












LC ACQUISITIONS



0 040 926 838 9