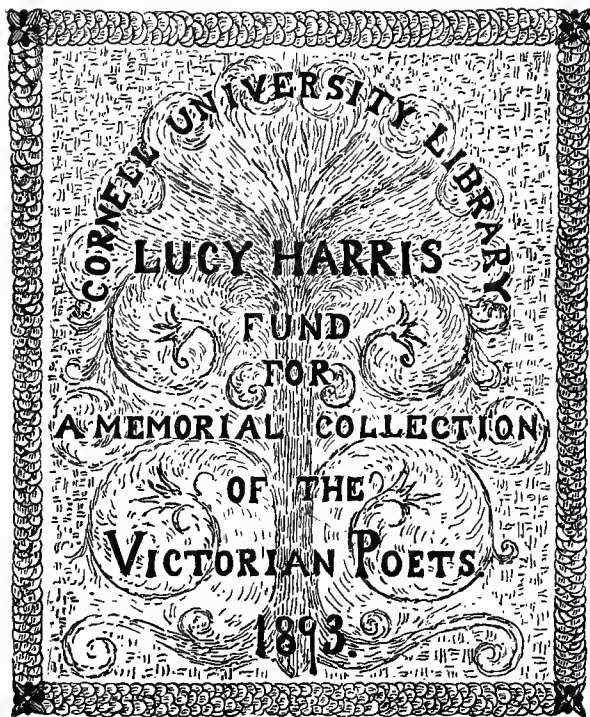


DAISIES  
OF  
THE DAWN



L. CRANMER-BYNG  
(PAGANUS)



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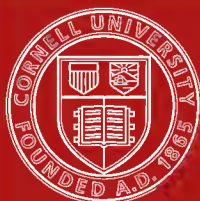
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DAISIES  
OF  
THE  
DAWN



# DAISIES OF THE DAWN.

BY

L. CRANMER-BYNG,

AUTHOR OF

"POEMS OF PAGANISM," ETC.



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VERLAINE.

AN IN MEMORIAM DEDICATION TO  
VINCENT O'SULLIVAN.

*THE chasms of companionless despair  
Yawn round the watcher as the sentry fire  
Dies out ; so died the beacon of his lyre,  
And left us lonelier in the midnight air.*

*Yet greater than our grief that does him wrong,  
Crowned with the fadeless tribute of the bays,  
The name of him who gathers all his days  
Trailing behind him, as a meteor, song.*

*You who have shed for France the bitterest tears,  
The tears unshed, that mock unmanly grief,  
Have seen a living drama past belief—  
The dark affliction of his numbered years:*

*You who have stood beside the envious grave,  
That silent partner of his future fame,  
Take from the sheltering harbour of his name  
The frail-blown fancies that I proudly gave*

*Here in a land I love, because my own,  
And more because her virtues are so small  
(For greed has cast a glamour over all),  
And all her sons she needs who stands alone :*

*Here, where the Rachel of the nations weeps  
Her scattered pearls beneath unpitying skies,  
Too sad to smile, too weary to be wise,  
An English singer starless vigil keeps.*

*Yet what avails the conquering death to greet  
With tears the tomb so powerless to unseal ?  
When to the Hades of his lost ideal  
Another Orpheus turns his faltering feet ?*

*The grandest music is the song unsung,  
The greatest bard the child as yet unborn ,  
And, in a world whose motive is to mourn,  
What lives beyond the passion to be young ?*

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## THE DAISIES OF THE DAWN.

THE daisies of the dawn  
In their pink apparel sing  
Of the bridals of the summer  
And the wooing of the spring.  
They have seen her distant tresses,  
And her white feet wandering.

The daisies of the dawn  
Are the pilgrims of afar ;  
They were mothered in the mountains,  
And begotten of a star :  
But they smile on earth to teach us  
How fair God's fancies are.

The daisies of the dawn  
Are the songs a poet sows  
As he struggles to the summit  
Of his little world of woes ;  
And where he drops the daisy  
Some day will bloom the rose.

## LOVE S MESSENGER.

BLOW, tender spirit, of the purple West—  
Blow from the haven of our sunset years.  
Ah ! bring me tiding of her heart's unrest,  
And breathe me all her tears.

Tell me upon what dim and distant strand  
She takes the twilight to her seaward eyes ;  
Send me her white thoughts winging from  
the land,  
Where sight to memory dies.

Tell me amid soft intervals of sleep  
What maiden dream goes stealing out to sea.  
Ah ! say that love has launched upon the  
deep,  
And follows after me.

## GARDEN SCANDAL.

GREY Pan was piping to his myrmidons,  
The Stone Achilles and a dancing faun,  
Under the shadow of a ruined shrine  
All ivy-kissed and covered. And there leapt  
A merry twinkle to his mad old eye,  
As from the reed he gave his Satyr soul  
To bubble in the sunshine. And he piped  
Fully many a naughty tale of former years,  
Of all the frailties of a farthingale,  
The strange adventures of Sir Robert's ruff,  
And how my Lady's slipper—— But the  
dusk

Came creeping through the trellis overhead :  
Achilles yawned. The tale was very old,  
And, like his moss-grown niche, monotonous :  
Three centuries at least the hoary god  
Had vexed the innocent air with like refrain  
Of mouldy peccadilloes. So he yawned ;  
And as the folds of vesper fluttered down  
The faun's impatient feet were beating time

To many an old-world measure ; and they  
    stamped  
A challenge to the gods to come and dance.  
Then from quaint nooks and many a cool  
    recess  
A medley of queer beings, motley-clad—  
Low Satyrs, merry Nymphs, and lusty  
    goats—  
Came prancing down the sward. Then  
    suddenly  
Pan's heart went piping to the Bacchic reel.



TO A BLACKBIRD.

SING ! ah, sing ! .

For all thy heart is worth,  
Now winter's given birth  
To the blackbird's darling—spring—  
A birthday ode, thou laureate of the wing.

Cleave ! ah, cleave  
Out in the laughing blue  
Thy path of wonders new,  
And bid the grey clouds weave  
No marriage-veil where Phœbus comes to  
woo.

Hide ! ah, hide  
Under some haven green.  
Music is best unseen  
When the lover claims his bride :  
No eyes save his should light upon their  
queen.

Sweet ! ah, sweet

Are those impassioned strains

Ere the weary daylight wanes,

When sun and shadow meet,

And wandering fancy shakes her loosened  
reins.

Peace ! ah, peace !

For the stars are all aglow

For a song they long to know—

A song that, when your voices cease,

Wakes their cold hearts with its ecstatic woe.

## MY SAILOR-BOY.

*FROM THE FRENCH OF JEAN RICHPIN.*

TAKE me to sea, thou gentle sailor-boy ;  
I long for sunny southern lands with thee,  
Where love is life, and kisses cannot cloy,  
Though the sun droop to sleep in the deep,  
To sleep in the deep, deep sea.

Oh, I am young, my sailor-boy, and fair ;  
Open thy hammock, and my breast shall  
be  
The pillow of thy weary head ; lie there !  
For the sun droops to sleep in the deep,  
To sleep in the deep, deep sea.

Thou gentle boy, make answer to my moan,  
Ere silent waters shroud the heart of me.

\* \* \* \* \*

He vowed to take her, but he went alone,  
And the sun fell asleep in the deep,  
Asleep in the deep, deep sea.

## FRISSON DU MATIN.

DAY through the blinds ; and a sudden sun  
That flaunts at my window his shameless  
beams,  
Whose insolent virtue mocks my dreams  
Of night, and her maiden zone undone.

He sneers away, and a solemn gloom—  
Oh ! not the tender eclipse of night,  
But a horrible twilight black and white—  
Comes deepening down with the chill of  
doom.

“Come back, thou insolent sun,” I scream,  
“And rend the shroud of my winding  
cares.”  
But the silence suffocates my prayers,  
And the sun has followed my futile dream.

## MY QUEEN.

THOSE eyes changed colour when they met  
my own ;

From winter's grey they deepened into  
green,

The blush of summer, when the sun hath  
been ;

In all her maiden tyranny o'erthrown,

And I have conquered only to condone

The baffled past, and bid thee reign a  
queen—

A queen of flowers and hours—whose  
subjects glean

Their golden harvest for thy hands alone.

Nay ! I have ta'en farewell of all sweet flowers,

For thou art, sweet, the only flower I see,

And all my manhood goes to follow thee—

To ride with thee across the crimson hours,

And taste in pleasure all the pain that dowers

Our souls with strength to front eternity.

## THE TROUBADOUR.

OH! gather round him, ye who long to hear  
A strange new song of peril over seas,  
Of lovers' sighs a-dying down the breeze,  
And murder's muffled feet a-creeping near,  
A start, a challenge, and a shriek of fear,  
The clash of rapiers gleaning the green  
trees,  
The stir of branches where a lady flees,  
The trumpet-call, and rescue's rousing cheer.

Yet who are these, thou gentle troubadour—  
These armed men and their frail captive,  
led  
To the grim scaffold, with its boding block,  
Through lewd, unpitying crowds that loudly  
mock?  
Who lays beneath the avenging axe her  
head,  
And cries for pity and her paramour?

## NIGHTMARE.

THE shining legions of the silver sea  
Sweep, like awakened armies back to war,  
To some red Armageddon in the fore  
Of days to be.

A dim presentiment of doom affrights  
The shrinking moonlight, and it seems to  
press  
My soul into the primal nothingness  
Of rayless nights.

The air is hot, and heavy with the blooms  
That herald dissolution and decay,  
And the foul presence of a bird of prey  
That on me looms.

O'er yonder hill, his shadow vaguely grand,  
Comes flitting down the valley to my side  
Half-beast, half-bat—I watch the monster  
glide  
'Twixt sky and land.

I feel the hot sirocco of his breath,  
The iron claws that clench around my  
throat . . .  
Air! Give me air! I faint! I fade! I  
float  
To death, to death!



### DREAM-SHIP.

O WHITE-MAILED wanderer to lands afar,  
Star of the sea—and fairer than the star,  
    Whose radiant hemisphere thou dost out-  
        shine,  
    Set in a sky of waters opaline—  
One, trampled out of life, whose lonely feet  
Have flown to silence from the roaring street,  
    Not wholly lost, but soiled and sad and  
        tired—  
    A random arrow into being fired—  
Would fain alight upon thy shadowy beams,  
Or flutter through the canvas of his dreams.

## PEACE.

UPON a solemn eve of swarthy June,  
When the sun dazzled into deeper green  
The pale young leaves that panted for the  
    moon ;  
When roses fell into a languorous swoon,  
And told in sleep their scented thoughts  
    between  
The night and noon ;

Ere stars were born and cradled in the bay  
That only shimmered to the hot white  
    shore,  
And silence hovered on the waters grey—  
Whilst the red kisses of the abandoned day  
Still burned the westward skies that slowly  
    wore  
Their shame away ;

Just as the first cool dew came timidly  
A-tremble on the lips of fainting flowers,  
Making an Eden of moist reverie,  
And bringing balm of the calm night to be ;  
So in the parched and palpitating hours  
She came to me.

## THE WINE OF LIFE.

STILL haunted by the fear that I may die  
And leave no tribute of myself to time,  
I seal the old blue vintage of the sky  
In modern rhyme.

I tread the wine-press of a heart that love  
Has filled with burning fruit, whose  
crimson streams  
Are sweetened by a sunlight far above  
My starlight dreams.

In splendid solitudes, 'mid verdurous halls  
And kingless palaces, that backward fling  
The baffled sea that thunders at their walls,  
I learned to sing.

And I have known bright eyes grow brighter  
still,  
And warm hearts quicken to the living lyre,  
And gentle lips that trembled to the thrill  
Of lips afire.

So, in some tomb of minds long gleaned and  
gone,

Some mellow toper of old song may see  
These relics of the past still mouldering on,  
And musingly

Open the leaves, and let the alchemic light  
That love transmuted into gold Tokay  
Raise, to seduce him from December white,  
The ghost of May.

## GUERNSEY LILIES.

*TO GEORGE BARLOW.*

FLOWERS from the home of Hugo, where ye  
grow

Rocked in the cradle of our Norman race,  
Where still song's weary birds find resting-  
place,

And break their sunward passage through the  
blue,

Go, tell the poet of the skies ye knew,

What earth's green mantle and what sea's  
grey face,

Or where the madcap billows leap and chase  
Their wanton sisters round some venturous  
crew.

Go, breathe the incense of an isle remote

O'er him whose life is lonelier amid crowds.

Tell him how bravely we have moored the  
boat ;

Tell him what princes we poor exiles be,  
Whose dreams are canopied by purple clouds,  
Whose feet are cushioned on the sovereign  
sea.

## THE DAISY'S SONG.

OH, hush the thought that speaks of pain,  
And let thy cradled cares be dumb :  
The gods have sent a gracious rain  
To pierce the tomb where love has lain  
So cold and numb.

Not idly Patience whispered "Wait,"  
And Wisdom sealed the lips that strove  
To kiss across the bars that Fate  
So blindly set to separate  
Our lives from Love.

See, through the grass, whereunder lies  
The sum of all my summer years,  
A song of spring and tenderer ties,  
A seraph smiling at the skies,  
The daisy peers.

Oh, dainty token of her choice,  
At thy command I'll take the lute,  
And bid the frozen hours rejoice,  
To melt and mingle with her voice  
Too early mute.

She is not dead whose music springs  
From where I buried long ago  
A heart grown weary of its wings  
And bee-like worship of bright things ;  
She is not dead—because she sings,  
My sweet, below.

## DEAD CHILD OF THE SEA.

MY voice with the moan of the wind  
Doth mingle her misery—  
Ah! pity me: come back to me,  
Dear bride of a heart gone blind;  
Come back, dead child of the sea.

A tap at the window-pane,  
Above the tramp of the tide,  
And the lattice opens wide  
To the fingers, louder than rain,  
Of my cold, invisible bride.

The damp of her sea-salt breath  
Plays over my paling cheek,  
And, oh! that her lips would speak  
Through the kisses, colder than death,  
On the living lips they seek.

And, oh! to be dumb like these  
Adrip with the wet of the wave.  
Ah! they tell of a tombless grave  
Far under the coal-black seas,  
And night that is sorrow's slave.



## MA CHÈRE AMIE.

A THING of music and light and flame,  
Like a humming-bird was she ;  
But she fluttered away when strangers came,  
Ma chère Amie.

Her soft brown eyes, they were lambs dis-  
tressed :  
Oh ! they fled with dread from me ;  
She seemed like a saint, of a sin confessed,  
Ma chère Amie.

Two little pink rosebuds flushed her face,  
And the poets all agree  
No courtly countess could match for grace  
Ma chère Amie.

We lived apart from the haunts of men,  
By field and forest trees ;  
Ah ! we were prodigal lovers then,  
Ma chère Amie !

We spent the weeks as we spent the days,  
And the days like hours did flee ;  
She charmed the spring with her winning ways,  
Ma chère Amie.

The summer dew on the lawn were shed,  
And the linnets sang with glee,  
As the sun poured gold on the golden head  
Of ma chère Amie.

But a gallant came, whose name was Death—  
With autumn's wrath came he,  
And he stole the soul and the gentle breath,  
Of ma chère Amie.

Yet now that she lies where the daisies rise  
That hide the best of me,  
Our hearts still meet. Sleep on, my sweet,  
Ma chère Amie.

## IN THE NOON OF YEARS.

*TO MISS M. ROSE.*

OUT of the mist, the tomb-grey mist,  
With its cold enfolding shroud,  
I have called one heart to follow me,  
One heart from the mocking crowd.

Out of the crowd, the mocking crowd,  
She flutters to my side.  
She leaves a cruel past behind  
And a cruel world defied.

Only to know, only to know,  
Though years have wept away,  
The soft renaissance of delights  
That smiled in mortal May.

Fades in the mist, the tomb-grey mist,  
My blind and blighted noon.  
O sun-gold hair, O song-blown lips,  
Ye have plucked the heart of June.

## THE FOUR GIFTS.

GIVE me your prayers, for mine are un-  
availing ;

Faith means so little, yet so much, to me,  
Who am a vessel without pilot sailing  
Out of the shoals to Life's uncertain sea.

Give me your tears ; I have no power to  
mingle

Sorrow and sympathy, and make them one :  
My own have parched and perished in the  
shingle,  
Or gone to feed the rainbows of the sun.

Give me your mirth ; then part the clouds  
that sever

The rayless noontide from a morn of light :  
Lead back with laughing eyes my lost  
endeavour,  
And send me with a smile to face the  
night.

Yet this I ask : your presence doth reveal me  
A music incomplete, a stricken soul.  
Prayers, tears, and smiles may help—but  
cannot heal—me,  
Ah! give me, then, your heart, and make  
me whole.

## WHEN MUSIC DIES.

THE memory of a chord's enchantment creeps  
Upon the soul, with all its pain implies,  
And Sympathy, most tender-hearted, weeps  
When music dies.

A thousand hopes, a thousand formless fears,  
From one stray inspiration take their rise,  
And melt the charmed silence into tears  
When music dies.

The shadow of a subtle, vague unrest  
Floats, like a mist, between our meeting  
eyes.  
Oh, I would fold thee closer to my breast  
When music dies.

A poet feels the sorrow of the surge  
That gathers, as it ebbs, all human ties,  
And leaves him but the echo of a dirge  
When music dies.

He wanders through a world of fancy dim,  
And steals from stars their voiceless  
    harmonies ;  
But silence seals the murmuring lips of him  
    When music dies.

Will there be one to weep as I have wept  
    When Death has robbed the singer of his  
        sighs,  
And, with the heart that woke and smiled  
        and slept,  
    My music dies ?

## DIANA'S BATH.

THE gods should strike me blind, for I have  
seen

A sight unseemly for these eyes profane,  
As young Actæon in the forest green,  
That looked on Dian, and was rightly slain.

The water-diamonds, dancing in her hair,  
Shone like white Mænads in a wild affright,  
Incredulous that any man should dare  
To view Love's nakedness, nor lose his  
sight.

And though the long dark lashes were drawn  
down,  
As if their naked stars were shamed and  
set,

I caught a quiver in those eyes of brown  
And the flushed sunrise of a faint regret.

Then rose Desire and beckoned to Delight,  
And, like two thieves, they waited for the  
night.



## A GLIMPSE OF OLD WISBY.

BETWEEN the wood and wall a little track  
Goes groping blindly, as if half afraid ;  
Landward there looms the wood's unhallowed  
black,  
Beyond the wall the sea's wild serenade  
Comes howling back.

On either side tall avenues of trees  
Toss their cadaverous arms in gaunt delight,  
Weaving dark spells and breathing mysteries,  
The vague magicians of the vasty night,  
When no man sees,

Save here and there, and ever and anon  
Where through the battlements a wan  
moon peers  
In snaky streaks, now growing and now gone,  
And in the creeping shadow fancy rears  
The Evil One.

Now from the gloom that gathers and appals,  
Far echoed out of centuries ago,  
On living ears dead wassail faintly falls,  
While from his tower, that tops the sea  
below,  
The sentry calls.

## LOVE, THE ROVER.

GREY perilous eyes,  
What danger lies  
Within your soul-seducing deeps ?  
What passion sleeps  
'Mid hulls of sunken hearts that never rise  
Upon the surface of their smiling peace,  
That lures Love's mariner to seek release  
And solace from his woes ?  
Ah ! little knows  
The timid merchant as he tempts the main,  
Hugging his little gain,  
What treasures there repose.  
Not for his paltry wares  
The bold adventurer dares  
The perils of the vast inviolate sea,  
Whose guide the rocking star,  
Whose chants the breezes are,

And groaning timbers strained in savage  
glee.

I am no coward that my heart should shun

The storm or sun

Of you grey oceans that encompass me.

But boldly pirate Love defies

The treacherous challenge of those eyes.

TO ONE FROM OLYMPUS.

CALM prophet of eternal spring,  
No pagan rioting  
Doth rouse thee from thy dim Olympian  
    dream ;  
    The burden of thy lays  
    Is steeped in silver days  
Of twilight grove and happy roving stream.  
Not thine the splendid pageant of the morn :  
Aurora, with her purple curtains torn,  
Pales in her guilty passion from thy sight ;  
    For thee no swoons  
    Of torrid noons  
Proclaim the bridals of the day and night ;  
Demeter yields not to thine eye  
Her tokens of maternity,  
    But ever and anon,  
    When day is done,

The air is tuned to some divine regret,  
A breath of old-world song  
That faints and floats along,  
    And in the hush  
    Of even's blush  
Draws summer's leafy bosom to complain ;  
And, growing bold, in gentle gusts of pain  
Makes all her roses with soft sorrow wet.  
Then Pan's pathetic face  
Peeps from its hiding-place,  
Half-scared, half-mournful at the magic tune  
    That sways and sobs  
    In broken throbs,  
As once o'er White Endymion sobbed the  
    moon.  
She took no solace in the cold caress,  
So hast thou vainly striven in the stress  
Of unmelodious years,  
    Who mad'st immortal moan  
    For Greece and glories flown,  
And found no comfort save the calm of tears.

## A VISION OF LESBOS.

THEN blue-fringed beautiful Lesbos  
Awoke from her marble dream  
To the pleading of dark-haired Atthis,  
Sweet-toned as a silver stream.

It seemed as though earth had never  
Been melted to love before ;  
The winds and the waves were silent—  
And silent the sailor's oar.

Blue sky and blue water mingled,  
Then passion and peace were one,  
And the town, like a tender beauty,  
Smiled up to her lord the sun.

And he murmured, " My Mitylene,  
Whose palaces court the sky,  
A rose for a rose is pining—  
A moth for a star doth sigh."

And he lingered above the terrace  
And over the cypress-tree,  
Where Megara's soul, green-shaded,  
Leaned out to a sapphire sea.

But the voice of the dark-haired Atthis  
Dawned into the sunlight clear,  
And the heart of the maiden dreaming  
Was stirred by a phantom fear.

Was it Love that had sought and found her  
Where, lulled and entranced, she lay,  
White flower on the whiter marble,  
In the gleam of a golden day ?

Was it Love that so warmly whispered,  
"The dark and the blonde shall wed,  
The beautiful cleave to beauty,  
The white rose marry the red" ?

Was the soul of the deathless Sappho  
Enshrined in the living song  
That murmured, "For ever and ever  
The fair to the fair belong" ?



## EXECUTIONER'S EVE.

NOW all was peace in the murderer's cell,  
Save only his heavy breathing,  
As he lay asleep and dreamed of Hell  
And a noose of Satan's wreathing.

"To-morrow," he thought, "is New Year's Eve,  
And little luck 'twill bring me ;  
There ain't much time for a bloke to grieve  
When the rascals come to swing me."

Then his gaze alit on a Christmas-tree  
Where murderers hung like cherries,  
And Death was a fearsome sight to see  
As he grinned at the gallows' berries.

"'Tis Executioner's Eve," he screamed,  
"With its bloody consummations."  
And by the door the murderer dreamed  
He saw his dead relations.

Six foolish faces they bleared at him,  
From his mother down to Polly,  
And Tom's white corpse with its severed limb  
Bound up with a wreath of holly.

And in they pranced, a mouldy crowd,  
To join the Devil's ballet,  
And Tom and father shrieked aloud  
When Richard danced with Sally.

So round and round the tree they flew,  
With kicks and tricks unruly,  
Till, ere the candles smouldered blue,  
Death snipped the presents duly.

And he made a grab at the topmost bough  
As an iron bell went clanging,  
Then "Wake," said the warder's minions,  
"now,  
For it wants an hour to hanging."

## BLIND LOVE.

OH, Love is blind,  
And blind am I ;  
Then let me die  
While Love is blind,  
And slumber steep my visionary gleams  
Of mortal rapture with immortal dreams.

### *TO MABEL.*

BEFORE the love of one true woman go  
The minor constellations of the heart ;  
For me my lady hath no counterpart  
In all her shining sisters here below.  
The stars that gave us all that night was able  
Melt in the sun, and morning breaks with  
Mabel.

### *HER EVENING.*

GO, wander among roses,  
Too bright a thing to stay ;  
Of thine eventful day  
How summer-calm the close is !  
So, tired of life and play,  
My butterfly reposes.

TO LESBIA.

*FROM THE LATIN OF CATULLUS.*

LESBIA mine, let's live and love,  
Age's hard opinion scorning.  
Suns may sink, and suns return,  
Yet for us too soon the morning  
Fades to one long night above—  
One eternal night to yearn  
For the sense that slumber misses.  
Give me, then, a thousand kisses,  
Yet another hundred kisses,  
Till, in rapture unabated,  
We shall lose all calculation,  
Lest we find how oft we mated,  
Or some wretch, in emulation,  
When he hears the number stated,  
Ask another consummation.

## THE STAR AND THE SAIL.

ONE star rides out in the sky ;  
One sail glides over the sea ;  
Yet the warm blue silence has laid  
No finger of peace on me.

Yon star and my soul are one,  
Both beautify dusk afar ;  
But the soul I strive to possess  
Is naught but a mocking star.

I follow yon fading sail,  
My fugitive heart's ideal,  
As a bird droops wearily on  
In the wake of a roving keel.

But the years grow yellow and sere,  
For youth has vanished aghast,  
And Hope is a sightless jade  
Whose feet drag sullenly past.

O, star of a distant soul !  
O, sail of a love that flies !  
Will you shun me beyond the grave,  
And mock me beyond the skies ?

## SLEEPER AND SUNBEAM.

A RAY of the rising dawn  
Stole in at the window, red  
With the blood of the sinless dead,  
The lost star-legions of night,  
And the hours sun-conquered and sped.

He dazzled the sentry blind,  
And over the pillow leapt  
Where Rose and her roses slept,  
Dreaming of pearls unpriced—  
The tears that the angels wept.

Why should she dream of tears?  
Ah! why? It is nothing new  
For a flower to dream of the dew;  
But maiden visions should be  
As clear as yon skies of blue.

The lady stirs in her sleep,  
And her lips have uttered a word,  
But only the sunbeam heard;  
And he will only reveal  
Perchance to a passing bird.

But the sunbeam fluttered away,  
Like a butterfly taking flight ;  
Ah ! the bud had bloomed in the night,  
And the lady will weep in vain  
For a soul no longer white.

## MATER DOLOROSA.

UPON yon storm-beat hill, a thing of stone,  
    Stands the impassioned spectre of Despair;  
    Grey speechless agony and sunless care  
Have marked her massy features for their own.  
Too sealed from human sympathy to moan,  
    Too lost to life for aught but vacant stare,  
    She looms through mist against the  
        mountain air,  
A sphinx-like horror from a goddess grown.

Love, they have mocked thee in these idle  
    years,  
    Worms of a world's decay and foetid might;  
    And ghouls, the sexless citizens of night  
Throng at thy desecrated shrine with jeers.  
    Yet take from one who saw thee virgin-white  
This simple tribute of a few sad tears.



## BEFORE THE SHRINE.

THERE is no law by which I may not plead  
For light to her who glorifies the day,  
Whose ardent soul doth brook no chill delay,  
To bear me succour in mine hour of need :  
No harsh commandment bids me intercede  
With the pale Christ, who seems so far away  
From all the passionate woes of mortal clay  
And all the clash of jarring thought and deed.

I lack no reverence to make me kneel  
Before the Saviour of her sheltering eyes,  
Whose passion doth a mystery reveal  
Of love transfigured in ecstatic skies.  
Nay ! God Himself hath let those plancts steal  
Some revelation of His paradise.

“THE CRUCIFIX.”

*FROM THE FRENCH OF VICTOR HUGO.*

COME unto Him, all ye that weep—  
    He weeps to dry your tears.  
Look unto Him, all ye that reap  
    The sorrow that He cheers.  
Fly to Him o'er the perilous deep,  
    Who smiles away your fears.  
Stay with Him, ye that pass to sleep—  
    He sleeps not with the years.

### VOX CONSOLANTIS.

OH, take no thought of the years behind  
thee ;

Look up, dear heart, for the roses bind thee.

Sleep, calm and still,

In the death of care

And the dream of will !

God hath answered thy prayer,

And over the brow of the purple hill

The lady fair,

Thy love, shall find thee.

## TWO SONNETS.

### I.

#### *LOVE.*

OH! you who took me, knowing all my sins  
And all my weakness—you have asked too  
much ;

Think you, the nature of my love is such  
That she will tarry when the frost begins,  
And winter wakes the biting wind that pins  
Her petals of soiled beauty in his clutch.

No, no ! she trembles at the slightest touch  
Whose treasure-heart alone the Zephyr wins.

A banker, lap-dog, and obedient slave—

This is the lot to which I must aspire ;  
The gold of Love you do not care to have—  
The gold of man may take your soul on  
hire.

I'd rather fling Love's carcase to the grave  
Than be the idol of your bought desire.

## II.

*FRIENDSHIP.*

CAN this be merriment that treads so fast  
Upon the heels of languor and decay?  
Surely I needs must laugh my soul away,  
And shriek my mirth upon the wintry blast  
That, like a guilty spirit, shudders past :  
Finished the schools of life, I go to play  
With Death, my jolly mate of yesterday,  
And have our game of mouldy skulls at last.

O friends, you murder me with aching jest !  
Off with those thin grimaces of despair !  
Off with you all, I say, and give me air !  
I want no sympathy from fools confessed :  
Job's maudlin comforters, who stole his rest,  
Were better than such clowns in motley  
wear.

## FAREWELL, MY FANTASY!

FAINT minstrelsy of Lydian harps, farewell !  
Farewell, green bowers, where swallow-  
thoughts went gliding !  
Dead is the dream, and shattered is the spell,  
And in my heart there rules no charm  
abiding.

Out in the grey cold world of mortal things  
I'll take the sweetest echoes I remember ;  
Song shall console me for my captive wings,  
And gild with May the twilight of  
December.

The pain of living shall find recompense  
In loving words that Death has softly  
spoken ;  
And every sunset drowse the aching sense  
With opal visions of a dream unbroken.

## NIGHT THOUGHTS.

GIVE the night to the gods ;  
They will ask you no more.  
When the shadows come round you  
And barred is the door,  
Let your thought seek the gods.

In the gloom of the dusk  
And the grey of the dawn,  
While fear goes a-creeping  
And sepulchres yawn,  
Let your thought seek the gods.

While a phantasy lurks  
Where the wainscotting groans,  
And the wind, like a martyr,  
Incessantly moans,  
Let your thought seek the gods.

As they ride through the sky  
On the back of the storm,  
And the lightnings illumine  
Each vanishing form,  
Let your thought seek the gods.

They are bringers of balm,  
They are pilots of peace,  
They will steer you through sorrow  
To shores of release,  
If you follow the gods.

In the hurry and rush  
Of your decadent years  
They have come to console you  
And banish your tears,  
The all-merciful gods.

By the Asgard of dream  
You may follow their flight  
To the heaven that welcomes  
Each son of the night,  
To the home of the gods.



And your soul shall drink deep  
Of their mystical lore,  
For your friend shall be Baldur,  
Your guide shall be Thor,  
To the joys of the gods.

Falls the twilight of death  
On your life's little day,  
Father Odin shall bear you,  
Rejoicing, away  
To feast with the gods.

## LOVE'S PENITENT.

Go by, go by, old ghost of sin,  
In the shroud of a gilded past ;  
Kiss sorrow dumb  
And say I'll come,  
Love's penitent, all pure within,  
To claim my own at last ;  
That care shall drown  
When kisses meet,  
When eyes of brown  
Have owned defeat,  
And the rosy secrets ripple down.  
Go, tell my sweet of other places  
Where twilight covers conscious faces—  
Not in this world of ours,  
But far away,  
Where lies the amaranth land of flowers,  
And no decay,  
Nor any mortal pain  
Save love, abides again.

## COMING HOME.

OUT of the open window, leaning on to a blue  
world

Born of the marriage of blue in the sky with  
the blue of the sea,

Dreamily floating away, my soul wings out to  
a new world,

Mocking the maiden air agleam with her  
glittering tresses,

And shimmering over the waves with a sea-  
gull's venturous glee.

Over the wine-dark waters a bird comes  
wearily winging,

Tired of chasing the sunbeams and scared of  
the sombre light.

O soul, thou hast had thy day—thou hast  
done with soaring and singing,

Come out of the quivering shades! Come  
home to thy mate's caresses!

Then droop with the dying sun, and give to  
the world "Good-night."

## LA FIN DES DIEUX.

*TO MY FRIEND HENRI MAZEL.*

DEAD cities of my dream, gigantic walls,  
Red smoking ruins, lakes of amber hue,  
Dim pinnacles that cloud and cap the blue,  
Grey minarets, and thunder's ebon halls,  
What awful voice of desolation falls  
Upon your wind-swept wilderness anew !  
What dirge for deities the Christian slew  
Moans in the troubled sleep of meaner thralls !

There stalks a phantom down abandoned  
streets,  
Through empty thoroughfares he wends  
his way,  
And fans his embered eyeballs with decay  
Of mouldering stoles and saints' deserted  
seats.  
Gone are the gods, and Christ has had His  
day ;  
Now death with desecration here competes.

## THE NEW PROMETHEUS.

As yon green ivy clings  
About the crumbled wall,  
So the living on dead things  
Hold thoughtless festival ;  
And oft a poet sings  
From a wasting heart in thrall.

The harp's hushed pulsings rise  
When night bestrews the seas  
With the riddles of the skies  
And moonlight's mysteries ;  
But a harp that dreams and dies  
Hath little joy in these.

She tells no moving tale  
Of lovers in distress,  
Nor strokes the cradled gale  
With sorrow's soft caress ;  
But she moves, a spirit pale,  
In her own wild wilderness.

The sombre centuries glide ;  
The lean years, tottering, go ;  
And the tourist winds deride  
The rapt and ragged show  
Of a god's unbending pride  
And a man's unwithering woe.

If the night could pine for the day,  
Or the sea cry out for the land,  
Or a soul for its vanished clay,  
You would shudder and understand  
A Titan desire, grown grey,  
Fulfilled by a master-hand.

## THE TRAIN-FIEND.

HE follows in the wake of rushing wheels,  
With long colossal stride to overtake  
The shrieking terror and its human freight  
Of fragile lives. Now roaring o'er the bridge,  
Now crashing through the dark tremendous  
tomb

Of tunnels, now again, grown timorous,  
Soft gliding into sunlight, goes the Fiend.  
By day I dread the coming of his feet,  
At dusk I close my ears and strive to shun  
The echo of his merciless pursuit—  
But vainly. In the spectral silences  
I hear the phantom of his Phantom flight,  
And sweat to see Death's awful lineaments  
Upon his palsied front, and catch a gleam  
Of grey hair streaming down the gulfs of  
gloom.

The windy vastness of old Mother Night  
Bears me the shudder of his faint approach,  
And louder in his mad monotony  
He tramps the railroads of eternity.

## DESOLATION.

AH ! who will weep my stricken love,  
And watch the coming feet of Death ?  
Ah ! who will tend my tired dove  
Till God redeems her gentle breath ?

Nay, though the sun for ever shine,  
And though the stars for ever sleep,  
His Comforter shall ne'er be mine,  
Nor any bear me to the deep,

Till o'er faint harps invisible  
Angelic hands have swept a dirge  
In gardens of gold asphodel  
Beyond the moaning of the surge.



## WIND IN SAVILE ROW.

WEARILY, wearily the wind sings through the  
wires ;

Drearily, drearily he wanders to and fro,  
And hisses at the unresponsive fires  
That in the lamps' pale forehead dimly  
glow.

Lashing his lusts, unkennelling desires,  
He scares the stars that reel o'er Savile  
Row.

## THE TOILET OF CONSTANCE.

*FROM THE FRENCH OF CASIMIR DE LA VIGNE.*

QUICK, Anna, quick ! the mirror, girl !

Move faster, Anna ; the hours advance,  
And I must join the joyous whirl  
At the ambassador's of France.

Ah ! faded are those ribbons fair  
I bought but lately for the ball ;  
See, from the meshes of my hair  
How gracefully the tassels fall !

Too low ! What will you understand ?  
The crescent's place is on my brow.  
You prick me, clumsy ! Ah, that's grand.  
There, Anna dear, I'm lovely now.

He whom I vainly would forget  
(My bodice !) he'll be there, I hope.  
(Ah, stupid ! where's the necklace set  
With trinkets hallowed by the Pope ? )

He will be there ! And if he press  
My hand ?—I stifle at the thought,  
To-morrow I must needs confess :  
How should I tell Père Ambrose aught ?

Quick ! one more vision of delight—  
The last, a long and lingering glance.  
How they will worship me to-night  
At the ambassador's of France !

Upon the hearth she stands elate,  
Heavens ! on her dress a spark has sprung.  
Fire ! Fire ! When hopes intoxicate,  
To lose her life ! so fair, so young !

The terrible flame licks up with greed  
Her arms, her bosom, and higher gleams  
In its pitiless course, and gives no heed  
To her eighteen years and her maiden  
dreams.

Good-bye to the ball ! To love good-bye !  
They say " Poor girl ! " and they let her lie ;  
Then on, and into the day they dance  
At the ambassador's of France.

## AT END OF DAY.

*FROM BAUDELAIRE'S "LES FLEURS DU MAL."*

LIFE, impudent and shrill,  
Leaps in a light bizarre ;  
And mad contortions are  
The antics of her will.

Then, night's voluptuous breath  
Strokes the warm cheeks of shame,  
Quells even hunger's flame,  
" At length ! " the poet saith.

My spirit frets her clay,  
My heart is full of grey  
Funereal fancies grim.  
I will lie down and close  
Your curtains of repose,  
O darkness, cool and dim.

POUR ANDRÉ LEBEY.

THE cold white stars o'er the far blue gloom  
that freeze

May sigh for the sun they flee in the dim  
grey dawn,

To melt in his arms and drop down gulfs  
that yawn,

Or drift as derelict ships ablaze in the breeze.

And I, like the cold white stars, may shiver  
and sigh

For the love and the friends that I never  
may quite possess ;

But in the dawn of our dreams the stars and I  
Must pass, alas ! into cold white loneliness.

## THE EARTH-GODDESS.

*FROM THE FRENCH OF ANDRÉ LEBEY.*

My threads of golden hair  
    Forgotten suns reveal ;  
And twilights rosy-fair  
    Have dyed my coat of steel.

Throbs in my shadow-lips  
    The blood of trampled blooms :  
Mine eyes are sunken ships  
    Engulfed in shadow-glooms.

My flesh, the tinted foam  
    That glimmers ere the night  
Is shot with rays that roam  
    From purple into white.

Upon my pallid arms  
Dead opals, one by one,  
Display their spirit-charms,  
Snatched from a cindered sun.

Ho ! passer, whence thy bliss ?  
Doom's muffled feet grow loud :  
Light withers at my kiss,  
And—thou dost weave thy shroud.

## IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

So he went where his fancy carried him,  
And sleeps where the starfish gleam ;  
For the dark-eyed odalisk married him  
In the blue-green grottoes of dream.

No sultan of fabled history  
Had slave so faithful and fair  
As the maiden whose source was mystery,  
Whose dower was her sunbeam hair.

Though the stalactite fingers are mocking him,  
'Tis little their spite he'll mind  
With his sea-love soothing and rocking him,  
And her white arms around him twined.

And now that his vision is verified,  
And now that desire hath gone,  
Will he start from satiety terrified,  
Or slumber and slumber on ?



For the worm of the cave is awaiting them,  
And closer their lips will meet  
In the coils of the monster mating them  
With a death-grip silent and sweet.

## THE WATCHER.

THE lean, grey man with the sugar-loaf head,  
And his arms like feelers thrown  
Through the frightened twilight, menacing me,  
Looms under the firs alone.

For the birds take flight when his billowy  
shape  
Grows dark by the darkened tree ;  
He comes like a kite to the frightened birds,  
But he looks like Death to me.

When night floats down and the shutters are  
closed,  
I can see his face no more ;  
But the flop ! flop ! flop ! of his wet,web feet  
Draws nigh to the creaking door.

And I hear him moan through my long, black  
dreams,  
Outside, in the cursèd calm ;  
I would give whole years for a wind to rise  
Or a snatch of the storm's deep psalm.

For I know what he craves—this lean, grey  
man

With the seaweed locks, that flow  
From the palsied peak of his sugar-loaf head,  
And his eyeballs' mad red glow—

He whines and pines for the priceless gems  
That lighten this lonely place,  
For the sea-green eyes of the strange white  
girl  
I stole from the sea's embrace.

## LOVE'S LULLABY.

OH, close your eyes, for Love is blind :  
Take the fruit, but spare the rind ;  
Now that we have done with play,  
Let our thoughts keep holiday :  
Close your eyes,  
Oh, close your eyes.

All my being, love-inspired,  
Like a little tyrant tired,  
Droops to lullaby, and rest,  
Cradled on the beloved breast :  
Close your eyes,  
Oh, close your eyes.

Let no black remorse appear ;  
Eden's only serpent, Fear,  
Keeps the iron hand of Fate  
Clanging at the morrow's gate :  
Close your eyes,  
Oh, close your eyes.

May Lethean waters claim  
Every deed of rosy shame ;  
Or, while stars above you gleam,  
Dream it only was a dream :  
Close your eyes,  
Oh, close your eyes.

May their moon-bewildered gaze  
Wander into wavering haze,  
And the wash of oceans dim  
Lap each drowse-anointed limb :  
Close your eyes,  
Oh, close your eyes—  
Sleep shall bring you memories.

## THE PASSING OF SPRING.

DEEP in delicious green the pale young  
Spring  
Goes loitering,  
And everywhere her subjects, gold and  
green,  
Adore their queen ;  
And everywhere her plummy divas sing.

Heard she no tremor of prophetic bells  
That faintly wells  
From the blue throats of hyacinths that  
greet  
Her dew-bright feet ?  
No chant of marriage in secluded dells ?

Was there no note in the orchestral wind  
Her heart divined ?  
No stifled love-sonata of a bliss  
Beyond May's kiss,  
To work soft havoc in her maiden mind ?

Oh, hush ! no blush of shame upon her set :  
Not yet ! Not yet !  
    She is too young to yield her tender mouth  
    To summer's drouth,  
And taste the bitter-sweet of sweet regret.

## AN EXILE'S REASON.

THE passing fantasy  
Of winged ephemeræ  
Whirls in the golden haze  
Of mine ephemeral days ;  
And naught to break my reverie,  
Save the complaining, straining sea  
That chides me with the fret  
Of cares I ne'er forget,  
Of many withered years  
And many woeful tears.  
“ Why hast thou fled ? ” her voices moan.  
“ O dreary voices monotone,”  
My heart replies,  
“ A dreamer flies  
To some far isle  
To dream awhile,  
And loose his caged melodies  
To lighten in the stormless skies.”



## A CHANGE OF RELIGION.

AROUND the cavern that we called our own,  
The temple of our love that used to be,  
Roars the dull thunder, hoarsely monotone,  
The war-chant of the sacrilegious sea.

His white, encroaching robes have trailed the  
floor,  
And swept your plundered limpets from  
the shrine ;  
Yet, though the goddess fills the place no  
more,  
Some pagan touches keep the cult divine.

For on a summer's eve the gentle West  
Assumes the crimson vestments of her  
creed,  
And purple waters chant themselves to rest,  
Where Love's young acolytes were wont to  
plead.

And there I found, a tribute from the waves,  
    This golden token of a drowned romance—  
A sea-worn trinket from the silent graves  
    Of days when Aphrodite led the dance.

Golden and gone, their sweets are out of  
    reach ;  
    'Twere folly, dear, to wish them otherwise ;  
Yet will the Sunday God we now beseech  
    Blot out the memory of our Paradise.

The overflowings of the artist soul—  
    Alas ! for love—are bounded by restraint,  
So I am colder than the Southern pole,  
    And you the very idyll of a saint.

## THE FUGITIVES.

UNDER a twilight of prophetic boughs  
That spake oracular to the curious breeze,  
A wounded fugitive of Cybele's  
Desire, lies marble in the moony drowse  
Of breathless midnight, broken by carouse  
And the faint hum of men across the trees ;  
When the leaves part, the dreamer starts  
and sees  
A priestess of the cult his blood endows.  
What butcherous knives had carved that  
bosom white,  
And wiped their black lips in her clotted  
hair?  
Away ! away ! the goddess leaves her lair ;  
Her tiger-hounds are baying into sight ;  
Down the calamitous foreboding night  
A howl of hungry vengeance shakes the air.

TO —————

WOULD I could wear the dewdrops as you  
wear

Those frozen tears, the diamonds, in your  
hair !

For if the symbol of each heart were known,  
Love's ocean would obliterate the stone.

## BECAUSE SHE MAY NOT HEAR.

BEAR me away, thou fairy boat ;  
I only ask to sail  
Away and away to a land remote,  
To a violet-scented vale,  
Where poets are kings,  
And their songs have wings ;  
Where harp-strings cannot fail—

For mine are mute, that gaily swelled  
To the gaily-dancing day,  
And the life-blood of their music welled  
Till it welled their life away.  
Why should I wait  
The hand of Fate  
To hush me to decay ?

Bring me a crown—an ivy crown—  
And place me at the prow ;  
Let sorrow sink and kisses drown—  
I shall not need them now,  
But only sleep  
To come and keep  
Smooth vigil o'er my brow.

Give me the verses that I made,  
The songs she may not heed ;  
Perchance in some more happy glade  
The harp shall intercede,  
And buy me rest  
Upon her breast  
To whom I vainly plead.

## ODETTE.

I LEAVE and love you for a while. What,  
then !

The sun will not stand still because we met,  
And made an hour of all most memorable—  
Because an English singer kissed Odette.

Odette ! there lurks a magic in that name,  
And in the oceans of her Spanish eyes  
Are gleams of gold Armadas, that allure  
My pirate heart to their wild enterprise.

Yet, like an ancestor that once recoiled  
From doomed Minorca, lacking men and  
ships,  
I, that lack confidence to conquer all,  
Must shun the sweet encounter of our lips.

So try me, Venus, for my fell offence  
Upon some Cyprian galley, and condemn  
My traitor-life to pay the penalty,  
And bid thy ring-doves coo my requiem.

But, O divine, adorable dark eyes,  
Whose native freedom is my one regret,  
Would I had fallen in your escalade,  
And breathed my last adieu to you, Odette !



## TO CYBELE.

ALL the futility of fruitless years,  
The blight of life, the vanity of praise,  
That brings no recognition to my days,  
Nor crowns the urn that holds my tuneful  
tears  
With aught save dust and ashes, disappears  
When at the summons of thy voice I raise  
Mine ancient self, transfigured in the blaze  
Of thy white deity and frenzied fears.

Oh, thou that bidest in the forest dim,  
Whose bridal couch is littered among caves  
Wet with the blood-embraces of thy slaves,  
I top the mountains, and the torrents swim,  
To know thee in the shadow of their graves  
Ere I be rent asunder limb from limb.

## SONG'S LEMAN.

UNDER the windy tumuli  
Of sad and sandy dunes  
Slumbers the hidden treasury  
Of vanished picaroons,  
Where moidores upon ducats lie  
And ducats on doubloons.

No foot has pattered on the beach  
Two centuries and more ;  
Still in the palms the parrots screech,  
The turtles rove the shore.  
But the schooner skurries out of reach  
Of the hungry shoals in store.

And I am older than the isle,  
Older than treasure-trove—  
Ay! fairer than the frowning pile  
That knows nor creek nor cove.  
Yet never mortal eyes shall smile  
Upon my buried love.

## THE HERMIT SINGER OF THE SEA.

MY days are like dreams as they glide down  
the banks of the morrow,  
I have gathered strange joys as the fruit of  
my vision austere,  
Learned a peace that is not of the towns nor  
the regions of sorrow,  
Whose memory bides but the space of a  
crystalline tear.

I am old with the prophets of eld and the  
splendid recluses  
Who clamoured to God from the deeps of  
their desolate souls—  
Song's anchorite, crying for light at the shrine  
of the muses,  
And her prodigal fain of the husks that her  
charity doles.

96 *THE HERMIT SINGER OF THE SEA.*

I am wearied of men ; I have palled of their  
    shallow pretences,  
    Of the life and the strife and the lusts of  
    the civilised world ;  
I have built me a bulwark of sea, and my  
    frowning defences  
    Are of gaunt imperturbable granite by  
    Titans uphurled.

In the sound of the surge, in the warfare of  
    waters tremendous,  
    That crash at the base of my barren life's  
    harbour and home,  
We wander, my spirit and I, till eternity  
    end us  
    Or cast us like flotsam adrift, the débris of  
    the foam.

## PAST AND PRESENT.

THE heavy day drags slowly to an end,  
A sullen captive in the hulks of time,  
Still wearing tatters of the robe sublime  
That snared the hours when Psyche was her  
friend  
And the fair sun, her lover, sought to rend  
The frail-bound girdle of her maiden rime ;  
Like human cyphers that have outworn  
crime,  
Life's cadence and her lifeless footfalls blend.

Mine be the songs begotten of the grace  
Of Attic tears ; the dead, the pagan day,  
When Aphrodite and her doves found place,  
And halcyon summers smiled themselves  
away ;  
Warm with the sunlight of her Sappho's face,  
Treading the wine-press of Anacræon's lay.

## MÔTI, THE BAYADERE.

TREE grappled tree; the encountering branches  
clashed

Like bulls embattled for the patient mate  
That bides the gory victor's love elate ;  
And loud the Maruts in their fury lashed  
The fury of the combatants, till groaned  
The bruised sapling as a love disowned.

Deep in some island dell, whose grassy  
spears,

Like hearse-plumes nodding to the sepulchre,  
A phantom multitude, made fitful stir,  
Lay Môti brightest of the Bayaderes  
Who lived and loved and suffered for the  
Khonds,  
A captive in the grip of Kali's bonds.

The Vindyha mountains knew her for their  
child ;  
The far blue mountains and their rocky  
steeps,  
Where now no more her light foot glancing  
leaps  
From crag to crag, from peak to passes wild ;  
The forest chains her with its pathless maze,  
And out of sight she labours through long  
days.

From love to love; this is the Merieh's doom—  
Untiring passion in the shade of Death ;  
The intermingling of enamoured breath,  
And then—the cold repulsion of the tomb ;  
Tears, agonising tokens of despair,  
Red tears for life so fugitively fair.

Throughout the parchéd night no lullaby  
But thirsty kisses still unsatisfied,  
And with the morn new ecstasies untried,  
Or ever she invoke the burning sky  
To come and crush her with his gold  
embrace,  
Or try his manhood in her trysting-place.

But Môti's heart unlocked to one alone—

A Brahman boy, whose sire, the bearded  
priest,

Presided at the blood-begotten feast,  
When in the spring dread Kali claimed her  
own ;

And his the frenzied knife that gashed the  
nude

Girl-victim for the howling multitude.

Now, when night lulled the village, love arose

Wide-lidded from the purple shores of sleep,

And, gliding like a thief, he went to reap

The secret fruit that fond impatience sows

On lips that wait the long-delayed caress,

And bear new roses in their loneliness.

And through the fringe of dark foreshowing  
leaves

That murmured, boding of some pallid ill,

Ghostly and glinting in the moonlight chill,

That with its loomed tapestries achieves

Dim dramas to appal the shaking sense

That founders in the night's omnipotence ;



And by the haunt of many a stealthy sin  
That bloomed unheeded in the filtering light  
Where Rapture's feet were sandalled with  
affright,  
And Silence watched the carnival begin,  
While Death, the shrouded reveller of bliss,  
Lurked in the dance and came between the  
kiss ;

O'er many a tangled track and privy way  
He rustled, like a pale moth seeking rest  
On some far star-enamelled mead, whose  
quest,  
Unending, unattained, for ever lay  
For ever onward to that happy field  
That lies beyond all empires, unrevealed.

The spent winds die around him as he flees ;  
The curtained shadows close upon his form ;  
And, like the flash of some faint thunder-  
storm,  
He whirls into a womb of sullen seas,  
Whose branchy billows heave against the  
sky,  
Emblazoned by the lightning's heraldry.

It seemed as though the white limbs never tired  
Of speeding under wavy canopies  
And the dim arches of cathedral trees,  
As though the nymph beyond them had  
inspired  
Their course for ever down the violet  
gloom,  
And drew the impassioned athlete until  
doom.

The goddess moves abroad. Ye cannot hear  
Her vasty footfall breaking through the  
swoon  
Of midnight drowse and phosphorescent  
moon ;  
But over mortal knees a palsied fear  
Comes creeping, and a horror, undefined,  
Of Death before and devilment behind.

And, like an arrow as the lover sped,  
This keen presentiment sped after him  
Of crimson doom, the apparitions grim  
Of Khond and Kali and a victim led,  
The frantic crowd that clamoured for a life,  
The sire, the shambles, and the accursed  
knife.

\* \* \* \* \*

His quest is at an end. The lover comes  
Within the circle of that island glade,  
Nor eye could tell the lover from the maid,  
So close they intermingle ; then the drums  
Roll in the distance ; the avenger beats  
A bloody consummation to Love's sweets.

Alas, for Love ! so foully overthrown.  
Pale from her pent-up kisses Môti springs,  
And boy and Bayadere, two hunted things,  
Flit through the bosom of the black unknown,  
When—ah, what fresh recoil the forest  
hath !—  
The goddess flings a python in their path.

Thou shalt not ever sever from her arms,  
Poor fettered fugitive ! content to die  
Stealing from lips beloved the last warm  
sigh,  
To mingle, breast to breast, dissolving charms.  
The serpent winds them in a living grave,  
The high-born Brahman and the lowly  
slave.

## A MODERN VIGIL.

To guard the armour of a spotless trust  
He keeps his soul untarnished from the rust,  
And hears undaunted, amid twilight glooms,  
The dull reverberation of the tombs ;  
And sudden footfalls, palpitating near,  
Raise in the dusk the spectre of his fear.  
About the altar of his high belief  
Contending phantoms and their shadowy chief  
Draw from the organ of his dreaming soul  
Notes of despair and many a thunder-roll  
Of barren hate against the powers that be.  
But, ever bowed upon his bended knee,  
The knight keeps vigil o'er the virgin shrine  
Till dawn has flushed the darkened hills with  
    wine,  
And, in the peace that follows after prayers,  
He yearns to God, who greets him unawares,  
And sheds upon the white ascetic face  
The ministering sunlight of His grace.

## THE NEW SAPPHO.

I HAD a message to the men of old,  
When laughter triumphed over lust of gold ;  
When sorrow bloomed to song, and music  
    reigned

From queenly dawn till white Selene waned.

Mine was the rapture of Ægean seas

Breathing to Lesbian shores soft messages,

The melting azure of Ægean skies

Leaning to Lesbos for my lullabies.

Mine was the heart of flame that never tired

Till Sappho sang to Love the thing desired.

Mine was the music of the sunny south,

Of warm-blown kisses on a wanton mouth ;

And—oh ! so tenderly—I soothed distress

From timid lips, that trembled to confess

How Eros through the sacred shrine had  
    strayed

And taught a sweeter worship to the maid ;

For Pain's high-priestess was the queen of  
love,

Who sang to rest the weary turtle-dove,  
Who, healing others, strove not to conceal  
The scars Time brought no anodyne to heal.  
So down the years that, ghost-like, flit away,  
Star conquering night and sun redeeming  
day,

Lonely through life and death goes sorrowing  
A mateless maid, a queen without a king.

Yet, leaving soft Sicilian fields behind,  
My spirit wanders northward, till I find  
Another Sappho in another land,  
Whose lips shall meet my lips and under-  
stand

The fadeless and unfathomable bliss  
Of beauty meeting beauty in a kiss.  
And all my songs, that perished to endure,  
Shall find an echo in her heart, more sure,  
More soul-entrancing than her burning  
daughters

Set once afloat on Mitylene's waters ;  
And man shall know the summits and the  
deeps

Of woman's heart, that wearies not, nor sleeps,  
But, like some hushed volcano silently

That bares impassioned secrets to the sky,  
Awaits the mystic moment to deliver  
The lava-stream of love's impetuous river,  
Till, as the torrent sweeps the mountain-side,  
No bars can set a limit to the tide.  
Peace with the grave ! Alas, there is no  
peace

For those who love as I did ; never cease  
Their battles with Despair, their loyal strife  
For love in bitter death and bitterer life.  
Peace with the past ! Alas, I cannot rest  
Till song finds echo in another breast ;  
Till from another's heart mine own outsprings,  
And men acknowledge that a goddess sings,  
Till from his giant bergs loom grandly forth,  
Self of myself, the Sappho of the North.

MORNING DREAMS IN FERMAIN  
BAY.

OVER the bay the waters flash,  
Like a floor bestrewn with a thousand  
gems,  
And morning smiles on my shelving lawn,  
Wearing her dimples and diadems.

A choir of thrushes floods the air  
With careless carol and tireless hymn ;  
Over my hedge the blackbirds dive  
As into the golden haze they swim.

The sunlight catches a spider's thread,  
And burns the delicate gossamer blue ;  
Now, as a dream of a world remote,  
The fairy chain floats out from view.

And I, like the spider, weave my web  
Of rainbow vision and fairy thought.  
Shall the breeze that scatters her silken toil  
Bring all my gossamer dreams to naught ?



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"Au moment où l'on pourrait se sentir las et comme vraiment un peu obsédé des Scandinaves que l'on nous sert après les Slaves, eux-mêmes précédés dans cette voie de l'admiration badaude (snobisme, si j'en crois mon dictionnaire boulevardier, qui consiste en la lecture de quelques journaux boulevardiers) par tels Anglo-Saxons et Saxo-Anglais franchement, mais, eux, simplement ennuyeux—c'est une douceur, c'est un charme, c'est mieux encore, c'est la rentrée dans la nature pour un artiste sincèrement épris de son art, que de lire d'outre-Manche des poèmes clairs comme du Byron, exquis comme du Tennyson, un peu élevés aussi à l'école de notre Gautier, de notre Baudelaire, et de notre Banville. Non sans que la nécessaire, j'allais dire la légendaire, la traditionnelle ou si, comme moi, vous préférez, la belle, la noble, l'essentielle mélancolie de ce pays de rêve . . . et de réalité, n'ait là pris place."

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"Et j'ai pris en exemple de belle clarté et de verve vaillante ces deux jeunes poètes, parce qu'ils me semblent, d'entre leurs d'ailleurs remarquables et très remarquables compatriotes et rivaux dans l'Art divin, rendre le mieux, le plus énergiquement, la tendance bien caractérisée des écrivains actuels anglais, rimeurs ou rythmeurs en tête,—comme toujours, et comme partout—vers un art de plus en plus défini, plus plastique, plus sonore aussi, et, parallèlement, en un mot, se rapprochant de notre effort latin à nous tous de bonne volonté, de ce côté-ci de la Manche, dans le cher, français resté lumineux, direct qu'y écrivent et lisent encore ceux de l'Élite."

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"Et j'aime encore la *Prière pour la Paix*, où le poète se rêve et se crée un ossuaire parmi les pavots, pour y reposer enfin sa tête fatiguée et son cœur las, où il puisse tout de même, au bout de tant de vie et de pensée, dormir du vrai, vrai sommeil. Non, ce livre n'a rien qui nous ennuie, qui nous décourage surtout. Moyennant des conclusions qui ne sont pas miennes puisque je suis chrétien, il fait son livre *humain* et glorifié d'intensité, tout en souhaitant le repos, avec le regret, je le répète, *tout de même*, de la vie,—en païen effectivement, en épicurien, ajouterai-je, dans l'acception noble de l'épithète. Ce repos n'est pas celui auquel j'aspire, qui est l'éternel éveil dans l'éternelle Charité, mais il est, il fut celui de bien des grandes âmes. . . ."

*From the "Revue Littéraire," by Paul Verlaine.*

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