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JOHN
KEATS

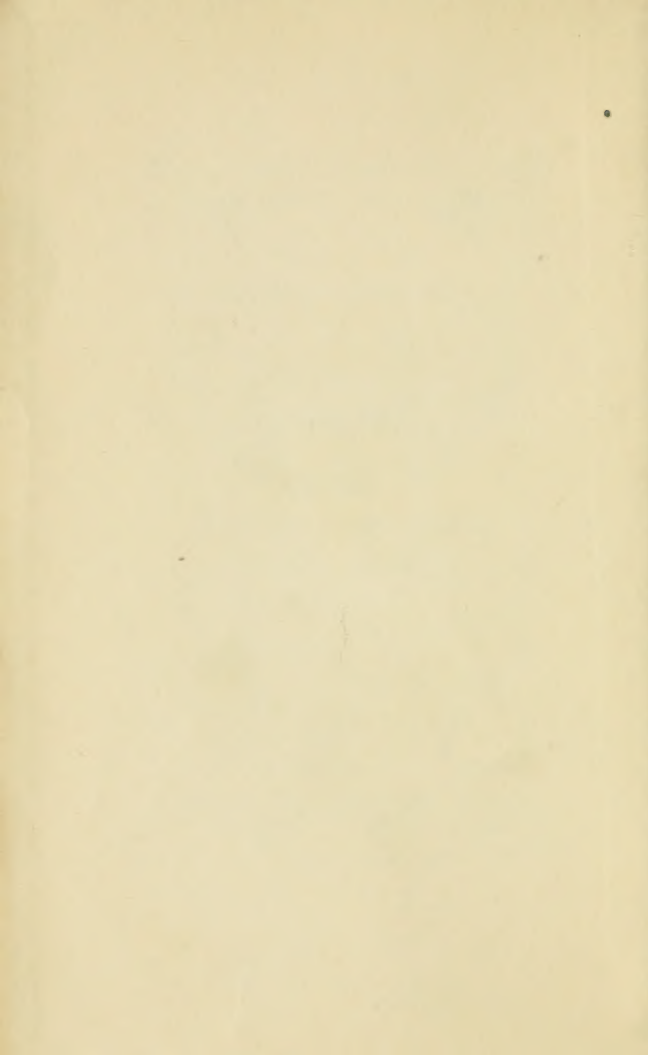
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~~L. L. Jones~~

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SEP 1

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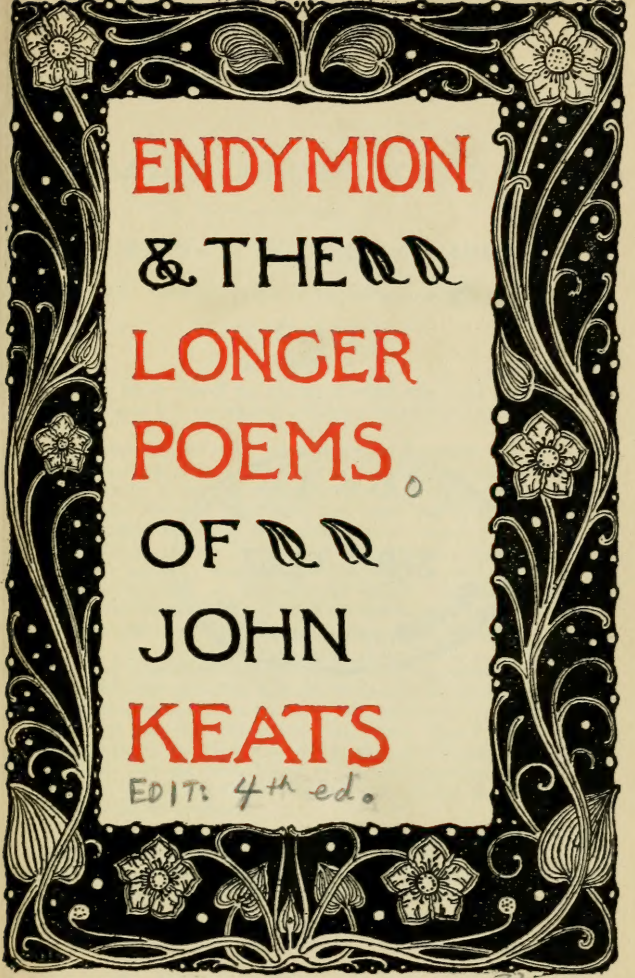
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ENDYMION
& THE
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POEMS
OF
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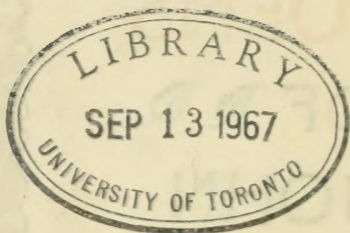
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KEATS'S LONGER POEMS

ENDYMION: A POETIC ROMANCE

“The stretched metre of an antique song”

PREFACE

[*by Keats*]

KNOWING within myself the manner in which this Poem has been produced, it is not without a feeling of regret that I make it public.

What manner I mean, will be quite clear to the reader, who must soon perceive great inexperience, immaturity, and every error denoting a feverish attempt, rather than a deed accomplished. The two first books, and indeed the two last, I feel sensible are not of such completion as warrant their passing the press; nor should they if I thought a year's castigation would do them any good:—it will not: the foundations are too sandy. It is just that this youngster should die away: a sad thought for me, if I had not some hope that while it is dwindling I may be plotting and fitting myself for verses fit to live.

This may be speaking too presumptuously, and may deserve a punishment: but no feeling man will be forward to inflict it: he will leave me alone, with the conviction that there is not a fiercer hell than the failure in a great object. This is not written with the least atom of purpose to forestall criticisms of course, but from the desire I have to conciliate men who are competent to look, and who do look with a zealous eye, to the honour of English literature.

The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of a man is healthy; but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted: thence pro-

Endymion, Be all about me when I make an end.
 Book I. And now at once, adventuresome, I send
 57-86 My herald thought into a wilderness :
 There let its trumpet blow, and quickly dress 60
 My uncertain path with green, that I may speed
 Easily onward, thorough flowers and weed.

Upon the sides of Latmos was outspread
 A mighty forest : for the moist earth fed
 So plenteously all weed-hidden roots
 Into o'erhanging boughs, and precious fruits.
 And it had gloomy shades, sequester'd deep,
 Where no man went ; and if from shepherd's keep
 A lamb stray'd far a-down those inmost glens,
 Never again saw he the happy pens 70
 Whither his brethren, bleating with content,
 Over the hills at every night-fall went.
 Among the shepherds 'twas believed ever,
 That not one fleecy lamb which thus did sever
 From the white flock, but pass'd unworried
 By angry wolf, or pard with prying head,
 Until it came to some unfooted plains
 Where fed the herds of Pan : aye, great his gains
 Who thus one lamb did lose. Paths there were
 many,
 Winding through palmy fern, and rushes fenny,
 And ivy banks ; all leading pleasantly 81
 To a wide lawn, whence one could only see
 Stems thronging all around between the swell
 Of turf and slanting branches : who could tell
 The freshness of the space of heaven above,
 Edg'd round with dark tree tops ? through which
 a dove

Would often beat its wings, and often too
A little cloud would move across the blue.

Endymion,
Book I.
87-116

Full in the middle of this pleasantness
There stood a marble altar, with a tress 90
Of flowers budding newly; and the dew
Had taken fairy phantasies to strew
Daisies upon the sacred sward last eve,
And so the dawned light in pomp receive.
For 'twas the morn: Apollo's upward fire
Made every eastern cloud a silvery pyre
Of brightness so unsullied, that therein
A melancholy spirit well might win
Oblivion, and melt out his essence fine
Into the winds: rain-scented eglantine 100
Gave temperate sweets to that well-wooing sun;
The lark was lost in him: cold springs had
run

To warm their chilliest bubbles in the grass;
Man's voice was on the mountains; and the mass
Of nature's lives and wonders puls'd tenfold,
To feel this sun-rise and its glories old.

Now while the silent workings of the dawn
Were busiest, into that self-same lawn,
All suddenly, with joyful cries, there sped
A troop of little children garlanded; 110
Who gathering round the altar, seem'd to pry
Earnestly round as wishing to espy
Some folk of holiday: nor had they waited
For many moments, ere their ears were sated
With a faint breath of music, which ev'n then
Fill'd out its voice, and died away again.

Endymion, Within a little space again it gave
 Book I. Its airy swellings, with a gentle wave,
 117-146 To light-hung leaves, in smoothest echoes breaking
 Through copse-clad valleys,—e'er their death,
 o'ertaking 120
 The surgy murmurs of the lonely sea.

And now, as deep into the wood as we
 Might mark a lynx's eye, there glimmered light
 Fair faces and a rush of garments white,
 Plainer and plainer showing, till at last
 Into the widest alley they all past,
 Making directly for the woodland altar.
 O kindly muse! let not my weak tongue falter
 In telling of this goodly company,
 Of their old piety, and of their glee : 130
 But let a portion of ethereal dew
 Fall on my head, and presently unmew
 My soul; that I may dare, in wayfaring,
 To stammer where old Chaucer used to sing.

Leading the way, young damsels danc'd along
 Bearing the burden of a shepherd's song;
 Each having a white wicker over-brimm'd
 With April's tender younglings: next, well
 trimm'd,
 A crowd of shepherds with as sunburnt looks
 As may be read of in Arcadian books; 140
 Such as sat listening round Apollo's pipe,
 When the great deity, for earth too ripe,
 Let his divinity o'erflowing die
 In music, through the vales of Thessaly:
 Some idly trail'd their sheep-hooks on the ground,
 And some kept up a shrilly mellow sound

Endymion,
Book I.
147-178

With ebon-tipped flutes : close after these,
Now coming from beneath the forest trees,
A venerable priest full soberly,
Begirt with ministring looks : always his eye 150
Steadfast upon the matted turf he kept,
And after him his sacred vestments swept.
From his right hand there swung a vase, milk-
white,

Of mingled wine, out-sparkling generous light ;
And in his left he held a basket full
Of all sweet herbs that searching eye could cull :
Wild thyme, and valley-lilies whiter still
Than Leda's love, and cresses from the rill.
His aged head, crowned with beechen wreath,
Seem'd like a poll of ivy in the teeth 160
Of winter hoar. Then came another crowd
Of shepherds, lifting in due time aloud
Their share of the ditty. After them appear'd,
Up-follow'd by a multitude that rear'd
Their voices to the clouds, a fair wrought car,
Easily rolling so as scarce to mar
The freedom of three steeds of dapple brown :
Who stood therein did seem of great renown
Among the throng. His youth was fully blown,
Showing like Ganymede to manhood grown ; 170
And, for those simple times, his garments were
A chieftain king's : beneath his breast, half bare,
Was hung a silver bugle, and between
His nervy knees there lay a boar-spear keen.
A smile was on his countenance ; he seem'd,
To common lookers on, like one who dream'd
Of idleness in groves Elysian ;
But there were some who feelingly could scan

Endymion, A lurking trouble in his nether lip,
Book I. And see that oftentimes the reins would slip 180
 179-206 Through his forgotten hands : then would they
 sigh,
 And think of yellow leaves, of owlets' cry,
 Of logs piled solemnly.—Ah, well-a-day,
 Why should our young Endymion pine away !

Soon the assembly, in a circle rang'd,
 Stood silent round the shrine : each look was
 chang'd

To sudden veneration : women meek
 Beckon'd their sons to silence ; while each cheek
 Of virgin bloom pal'd gently for slight fear.
 Endymion too, without a forest peer, 190
 Stood, wan and pale, and with an awed face,
 Among his brothers of the mountain chase.
 In midst of all, the venerable priest
 Eyed them with joy from greatest to the least,
 And, after lifting up his aged hands,
 Thus spake he : “ Men of Latmos ! shepherd
 bands !

Whose care it is to guard a thousand flocks :
 Whether descended from beneath the rocks
 That overtop your mountains ; whether come
 From valleys where the pipe is never dumb ; 200
 Or from your swelling downs, where sweet air stirs
 Blue hare-bells lightly, and where prickly furze
 Buds lavish gold ; or ye, whose precious charge
 Nibble their fill at ocean's very marge,
 Whose mellow reeds are touch'd with sounds
 forlorn

By the dim echoes of old Triton's horn :

Mothers and wives! who day by day prepare *Endymion*⁶
 The scrip, with needments, for the mountain air; *Book I.*
 And all ye gentle girls who foster up *207-236*
 Udderless lambs, and in a little cup 210
 Will put choice honey for a favour'd youth:
 Yea, every one attend! for in good truth
 Our vows are wanting to our great god Pan.
 Are not our lowing heifers sleeker than
 Night-swollen mushrooms? Are not our wide
 plains
 Speckled with countless fleeces? Have not rains
 Green'd over April's lap? No howling sad
 Sickens our fearful ewes; and we have had
 Great bounty from Endymion our lord.
 The earth is glad: the merry lark has pour'd 220
 His early song against yon breezy sky,
 That spreads so clear o'er our solemnity."

Thus ending, on the shrine he heap'd a spire
 Of teeming sweets, enkindling sacred fire;
 Anon he stain'd the thick and spongy sod
 With wine, in honour of the shepherd-god.
 Now while the earth was drinking it, and while
 Bay leaves were crackling in the fragrant pile,
 And gummy frankincense was sparkling bright
 'Neath smothering parsley, and a hazy light 230
 Spread greyly eastward, thus a chorus sang:

"O THOU, whose mighty palace roof doth hang
 From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth
 Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death
 Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness;
 Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress

Endymion, Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels darken ;
Book I. And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and
 237-266 hearken

The dreary melody of bedded reeds—
 In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds
 The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth, 241
 Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth
 Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx—do thou now,
 By thy love's milky brow !
 By all the trembling mazes that she ran,
 Hear us, great Pan !

“O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet, turtles
 Passion their voices cooingly 'mong myrtles,
 What time thou wanderest at eventide 249
 Through sunny meadows, that outskirt the side
 Of thine enmossed realms : O thou, to whom
 Broad-leaved fig-trees even now foredoom
 Their ripen'd fruitage ; yellow-girted bees
 Their golden honeycombs ; our village leas
 Their fairest blossom'd beans and popped corn ;
 The chuckling linnet its five young unborn,
 To sing for thee ; low creeping strawberries
 Their summer coolness ; pent up butterflies
 Their freckled wings ; yea, the fresh budding year
 All its completions—be quickly near, 260
 By every wind that nods the mountain pine,
 O forester divine !

“Thou, to whom every fawn and satyr flies
 For willing service ; whether to surprise
 The squatted hare while in half sleeping fit ;
 Or upward ragged precipices flit

To save poor lambkins from the eagle's maw ;
 Or by mysterious enticement draw
 Bewilder'd shepherds to their path again ;
 Or to tread breathless round the frothy main, 270
 And gather up all fancifullest shells
 For thee to tumble into Naiads' cells,
 And, being hidden, laugh at their out-peeping ;
 Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,
 The while they pelt each other on the crown
 With silvery oak-apples, and fir-cones brown—
 By all the echoes that about thee ring,
 Hear us, O satyr king !

Endymion
Book I.
 267-296

“ O Harkener to the loud-clapping shears,
 While ever and anon to his shorn peers 280
 A ram goes bleating : Winder of the horn,
 When snouted wild-boars routing tender corn
 Anger our huntsman : Breather round our farms,
 To keep off mildews, and all weather harms :
 Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds,
 That come a-swooning over hollow grounds,
 And wither drearily on barren moors :
 Dread opener of the mysterious doors
 Leading to universal knowledge—see,
 Great son of Dryope, 290
 The many that are come to pay their vows
 With leaves about their brows !

“ Be still the unimaginable lodge
 For solitary thinkings ; such as dodge
 Conception to the very bourne of heaven,
 Then leave the naked brain ; be still the
 leaven,

Adymion, That spreading in this dull and clodded earth,
 Book I. Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth ;
 297-326 Be still a symbol of immensity ;
 A firmament reflected in a sea ; 300
 An element filling the space between ;
 An unknown—but no more : we humbly screen
 With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly bending,
 And giving out a shout most heaven-rending,
 Conjure thee to receive our humble pæan,
 Upon thy Mount Lycean ! ”

Even while they brought the burden to a close,
 A shout from the whole multitude arose,
 That linger'd in the air like dying rolls
 Of abrupt thunder, when Ionian shoals 310
 Of dolphins bob their noses through the brine.
 Meantime, on shady levels, mossy fine,
 Young companies nimbly began dancing
 To the swift treble pipe, and humming string.
 Aye, those fair living forms swam heavenly
 To tunes forgotten—out of memory :
 Fair creatures ! whose young children's children
 bred
 Thermopylæ its heroes—not yet dead,
 But in old marbles ever beautiful.
 High genitors, unconscious did they cull 320
 Time's sweet first-fruits—they danc'd to weariness,
 And then in quiet circles did they press
 The hillock turf, and caught the latter end
 Of some strange history, potent to send
 A young mind from its bodily tenement.
 Or they might watch the quoit-pitchers, intent

On either side ; pitying the sad death
 Of Hyacinthus, when the cruel breath
 Of Zephyr slew him,—Zephyr penitent,
 Who now, ere Phoebus mounts the firmament,
 Fondles the flower amid the sobbing rain. 331
 The archers too, upon a wider plain,
 Beside the feathery whizzing of the shaft,
 And the dull twanging bowstring, and the
 raft

Branch down sweeping from a tall ash top,
 Call'd up a thousand thoughts to envelope
 Those who would watch. Perhaps, the tremb-
 ling knee

And frantic gape of lonely Niobe,
 Poor, lonely Niobe ! when her lovely young,
 Were dead and gone, and her caressing tongue
 Lay a lost thing upon her paly lip, 341
 And very, very deadliness did nip
 Her motherly cheeks. Arous'd from this sad
 mood

By one, who at a distance loud halloo'd,
 Uplifting his strong bow into the air,
 Many might after brighter visions stare :
 After the Argonauts, in blind amaze
 Tossing about on Neptune's restless ways,
 Until, from the horizon's vaulted side,
 There shot a golden splendour far and wide, 350
 Spangling those million poutings of the brine
 With quivering ore : 'twas even an awful shine
 From the exaltation of Apollo's bow ;
 A heavenly beacon in their dreary woe.
 Who thus were ripe for high contemplating,
 Might turn their steps towards the sober ring

Endymion,
 Book I.
 327-356

Endymion, Where sat Endymion and the aged priest
 Book I. 'Mong shepherds gone in eld, whose looks in-
 357-386 creas'd

The silvery setting of their mortal star.
 There they discours'd upon the fragile bar 360
 That keeps us from our homes ethereal ;
 And what our duties there : to nightly call
 Vesper, the beauty-crest of summer weather :
 To summon all the downiest clouds together
 For the sun's purple couch ; to emulate
 In ministring the potent rule of fate
 With speed of fire-tail'd exhalations ;
 To tint her pallid cheek with bloom, who cons
 Sweet poesy by moonlight : besides these,
 A world of other unguess'd offices. 370
 Anon they wander'd, by divine converse,
 Into Elysium ; vying to rehearse
 Each one his own anticipated bliss.
 One felt heart-certain that he could not miss
 His quick gone love, among fair blossom'd
 boughs,
 Where every zephyr-sigh pouts, and endows
 Her lips with music for the welcoming.
 Another wish'd, 'mid that eternal spring,
 To meet his rosy child, with feathery sails, 379
 Sweeping, eye-earnestly, through almond vales :
 Who, suddenly, should stoop through the smooth
 wind,
 And with the balmiest leaves his temples bind ;
 And, ever after, through those regions be
 His messenger, his little Mercury.
 Some were athirst in soul to see again
 Their fellow huntsmen o'er the wide champaign

In times long past; to sit with them, and **Endymion,**
talk **Book I.**

Of all the chances in their earthly walk;
Comparing, joyfully, their plenteous stores
Of happiness, to when upon the moors, 390
Benighted, close they huddled from the cold,
And shar'd their famish'd scrips. Thus all out-
told

Their fond imaginations,—saving him
Whose eyelids curtain'd up their jewels dim,
Endymion: yet hourly had he striven
To hide the cankering venom, that had riven
His fainting recollections. Now indeed
His senses had swoon'd off: he did not heed
The sudden silence, or the whispers low,
Or the old eyes dissolving at his woe, 400
Or anxious calls, or close of trembling palms,
Or maiden's sigh, that grief itself embalms:
But in the self-same fixed trance he kept,
Like one who on the earth had never stept.
Aye, even as dead-still as a marble man,
Frozen in that old tale Arabian.

Who whispers him so pantingly and close?
Peona, his sweet sister: of all those,
His friends, the dearest. Hushing signs she
made
And breath'd a sister's sorrow to persuade 410
A yielding up, a cradling on her care.
Her eloquence did breathe away the curse:
She led him, like some midnight spirit nurse
Of happy changes in emphatic dreams,
Along a path between two little streams,—

Endymion, Guarding his forehead, with her round elbow,
Book I. From low-grown branches, and his footsteps slow
416-447 From stumbling over stumps and hillocks small ;
 Until they came to where these streamlets fall,
 With mingled bubblings and a gentle rush, 420
 Into a river, clear, brimful, and flush
 With crystal mocking of the trees and sky.
 A little shallop, floating there hard by,
 Pointed its beak over the fringed bank ;
 And soon it lightly dipt, and rose, and sank,
 And dipt again, with the young couple's weight,
 Peona guiding, through the water straight,
 Towards a bowery island opposite ;
 Which gaining presently, she steered light
 Into a shady, fresh, and ripply cove, 430
 Where nested was an arbour, overwove
 By many a summer's silent fingering ;
 To whose cool bosom she was used to bring
 Her playmates, with their needle broidery,
 And minstrel memories of times gone by.

So she was gently glad to see him laid
 Under her favourite bower's quiet shade,
 On her own couch, new made of flower leaves,
 Dried carefully on the cooler side of sheaves
 When last the sun his autumn tresses shook, 440
 And the tann'd harvesters rich armfuls took.
 Soon was he quieted to slumbrous rest :
 But, ere it crept upon him, he had prest
 Peona's busy hand against his lips,
 And still, a-sleeping, held her finger-tips
 In tender pressure. And as a willow keeps
 A patient watch over the stream that creeps

Windingly by it, so the quiet maid
 Held her in peace : so that a whispering blade
 Of grass, a wailful gnat, a bee bustling 450
 Down in the blue-bells, or a wren light rustling
 Among sere leaves and twigs, might all be heard.

Endymion,
 Book I.
 448-479

O magic sleep ! O comfortable bird,
 That broodest o'er the troubled sea of the mind
 Till it is hush'd and smooth ! O unconfin'd
 Restraint ! imprison'd liberty ! great key
 To golden palaces, strange minstrelsy,
 Fountains grotesque, new trees, bespangled caves,
 Echoing grottoes, full of tumbling waves
 And moonlight ; aye, to all the mazy world 460
 Of silvery enchantment !—who, upfurl'd
 Beneath thy drowsy wing a triple hour,
 But renovates and lives ?—Thus, in the bower,
 Endymion was calm'd to life again.
 Opening his eyelids with a healthier brain,
 He said : “ I feel this thine endearing love
 All through my bosom : thou art as a dove
 Trembling its closed eyes and sleeked wings
 About me ; and the pearliest dew not brings
 Such morning incense from the fields of May, 470
 As do those brighter drops that twinkling stray
 From those kind eyes,—the very home and haunt
 Of sisterly affection. Can I want
 Aught else, aught nearer heaven, than such tears ?
 Yet dry them up, in bidding hence all fears
 That, any longer, I will pass my days
 Alone and sad. No, I will once more raise
 My voice upon the mountain-heights ; once more
 Make my horn parley from their foreheads hoar :

Endymion, Again my trooping hounds their tongues shall loll
Book I. Around the breathed boar : again I'll poll 481
480-511 The fair-grown yew-tree, for a chosen bow :
 And, when the pleasant sun is getting low,
 Again I'll linger in a sloping mead
 To hear the speckled thrushes, and see feed
 Our idle sheep. So be thou cheered, sweet !
 And, if thy lute is here, softly entreat
 My soul to keep in its resolved course."

Hereat Peona, in their silver source, 489
 Shut her pure sorrow-drops with glad exclaim,
 And took a lute, from which there pulsing came
 A lively prelude, fashioning the way
 In which her voice should wander. 'Twas a lay
 More subtle-cadenced, more forest wild
 Than Dryope's lone lulling of her child ;
 And nothing since has floated in the air
 So mournful strange. Surely some influence rare
 Went, spiritual, through the damsel's hand ;
 For still, with Delphic emphasis, she spann'd
 The quick invisible strings, even though she saw
 Endymion's spirit melt away and thaw 501
 Before the deep intoxication.
 But soon she came, with sudden burst, upon
 Her self-possession—swung the lute aside,
 And earnestly said: " Brother, 'tis vain to hide
 That thou dost know of things mysterious,
 Immortal, starry ; such alone could thus
 Weigh down thy nature. Hast thou sinn'd in aught
 Offensive to the heavenly powers? Caught
 A Paphian dove upon a message sent? 510
 Thy deathful bow against some deer-herd bent,

Sacred to Dian? Haply, thou hast seen
 Her naked limbs among the alders green;
 And that, alas! is death. No, I can trace
 Something more high perplexing in thy face!"

Endymion,
 Book I.
 512-539

Endymion look'd at her, and press'd her hand,
 And said, "Art thou so pale, who wast so
 bland

And merry in our meadows? How is this?
 Tell me thine ailment: tell me all amiss!—
 Ah! thou hast been unhappy at the change 520
 Wrought suddenly in me. What indeed more
 strange?

Or more complete to overwhelm surmise?
 Ambition is no sluggard: 'tis no prize,
 That toiling years would put within my grasp,
 That I have sigh'd for: with so deadly gasp
 No man e'er panted for a mortal love.
 So all have set my heavier grief above
 These things which happen. Rightly have they
 done:

I, who still saw the horizontal sun
 Heave his broad shoulder o'er the edge of the
 world, 530

Out-facing Lucifer, and then had hurl'd
 My spear aloft, as signal for the chase—
 I, who, for very sport of heart, would race
 With my own steed from Araby; pluck down
 A vulture from his towery perching; frown
 A lion into growling, loth retire—
 To lose, at once, all my toil-breeding fire,
 And sink thus low! but I will ease my breast
 Of secret grief, here in this bowery nest.

Endymion, "This river does not see the naked sky, 540
Book I. Till it begins to progress silverly
 540-569 Around the western border of the wood,
 Whence, from a certain spot, its winding flood
 Seems at the distance like a crescent moon :
 And in that nook, the very pride of June,
 Had I been used to pass my weary eyes ;
 The rather for the sun unwilling leaves
 So dear a picture of his sovereign power,
 And I could witness his most kingly hour,
 When he doth tighten up the golden reins, 550
 And paces leisurely down amber plains
 His snorting four. Now when his chariot last
 Its beams against the zodiac-lion cast,
 There blossom'd suddenly a magic bed
 Of sacred dittany, and poppies red :
 At which I wonder'd greatly, knowing well
 That but one night had wrought this flowery
 spell ;
 And, sitting down close by, began to muse
 What it might mean. Perhaps, thought I,
 Morpheus,
 In passing here, his owlet pinions shook ; 560
 Or, it may be, ere matron Night uptook
 Her ebon urn, young Mercury, by stealth,
 Had dipp'd his rod in it : such garland wealth
 Came not by common growth. Thus on I
 thought,
 Until my head was dizzy and distraught.
 Moreover, through the dancing poppies stole
 A breeze most softly lulling to my soul ;
 And shaping visions all about my sight
 Of colours, wings, and bursts of spangly light ;

The which became more strange, and strange, **Endymion,**
 and dim, 570 **Book I.**
 And then were gulph'd in a tumultuous swim: **570-601**
 And then I fell asleep. Ah, can I tell
 The enchantment that afterwards befel?
 Yet it was but a dream: yet such a dream
 That never tongue, although it overteem
 With mellow utterance, like a cavern spring,
 Could figure out and to conception bring
 All I beheld and felt. Methought I lay
 Watching the zenith, where the milky way
 Among the stars in virgin splendour pours; 580
 And travelling my eye, until the doors
 Of heaven appear'd to open for my flight,
 I became loth and fearful to alight
 From such high soaring by a downward glance:
 So kept me steadfast in that airy trance,
 Spreading imaginary pinions wide.
 When, presently, the stars began to glide,
 And faint away, before my eager view:
 At which I sigh'd that I could not pursue,
 And dropt my vision to the horizon's verge; 590
 And lo! from opening clouds, I saw emerge
 The loveliest moon, that ever silver'd o'er
 A shell for Neptune's goblet; she did soar
 So passionately bright, my dazzled soul
 Commingling with her argent spheres did roll
 Through clear and cloudy, even when she went
 At last into a dark and vapoury tent—
 Whereat, methought, the lidless-eyed train
 Of planets all were in the blue again. 599
 To commune with those orbs, once more I rais'd
 My sight right upward: but it was quite daz'd

Endymion, By a bright something, sailing down apace,
Book I. Making me quickly veil my eyes and face :
602-631 Again I look'd, and, O ye deities,
 Who from Olympus watch our destinies !
 Whence that completed form of all completeness ?
 Whence came that high perfection of all sweet-
 ness ?
 Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me where, O
 where
 Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair ?
 Not oat-sheaves drooping in the western sun ; 610
 Not—thy soft hand, fair sister ! let me shun
 Such follying before thee—yet she had,
 Indeed, locks bright enough to make me mad ;
 And they were simply gordian'd up and braided,
 Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded,
 Her pearl-round ears, white neck, and orb'd brow ;
 The which were blended in, I know not how,
 With such a paradise of lips and eyes,
 Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and faintest sighs,
 That, when I think thereon, my spirit clings 620
 And plays about its fancy, till the stings
 Of human neighbourhood envenom all.
 Unto what awful power shall I call ?
 To what high fane ?—Ah ! see her hovering feet,
 More bluely vein'd, more soft, more whitely
 sweet
 Than those of sea-born Venus when she rose
 From out her cradle-shell. The wind outblows
 Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion ;
 'Tis blue, and over-spangled with a million
 Of little eyes, as though thou wert to shed, 630
 Over the darkest, lushest blue-bell bed,

Handfuls of daisies."—"Endymion, how strange!
 Dream within dream!"—"She took an airy
 range, Endymion,
Book I.
632-661

And then, towards me, like a very maid,
 Came blushing, waning, willing, and afraid,
 And press'd me by the hand: Ah! 'twas too
 much;

Methought I fainted at the charmed touch,
 Yet held my recollection, even as one
 Who dives three fathoms where the waters run
 Gurgling in beds of coral: for anon, 640
 I felt upmounted in that region

Where falling stars dart their artillery forth,
 And eagles struggle with the buffeting north
 That balances the heavy meteor-stone;—
 Felt too, I was not fearful, nor alone,
 But lapp'd and lull'd along the dangerous sky.
 Soon, as it seem'd, we left our journeying high,
 And, straightway into frightful eddies swoop'd;
 Such as aye muster where grey time has scoop'd
 Huge dens and caverns in a mountain's side: 650
 There hollow sounds arous'd me, and I sigh'd
 To faint once more by looking on my bliss—
 I was distracted; madly did I kiss

The wooing arms which held me, and did give
 My eyes at once to death: but 'twas to live,
 To take in draughts of life from the gold fount
 Of kind and passionate looks; to count, and
 count

The moments, by some greedy help that seem'd
 A second self, that each might be redeem'd
 And plunder'd of its load of blessedness. 660
 Ah, desperate mortal! I even dar'd to press

Endymion, Her very cheek against my crowned lip,
 Book I. And, at that moment, felt my body dip
 662-693 Into a warmer air : a moment more,
 Our feet were soft in flowers. There was store
 Of newest joys upon that alp. Sometimes
 A scent of violets, and blossoming limes,
 Loiter'd around us ; then of honey cells,
 Made delicate from all white-flower bells ;
 And once, above the edges of our nest, 670
 An arch face peep'd,—an Oread as I guess'd.

“ Why did I dream that sleep o'er-power'd me
 In midst of all this heaven ? Why not see,
 Far off, the shadows of his pinions dark,
 And stare them from me ? But no, like a spark
 That needs must die, although its little beam
 Reflects upon a diamond, my sweet dream
 Fell into nothing—into stupid sleep.
 And so it was, until a gentle creep,
 A careful moving caught my waking ears, 680
 And up I started : Ah ! my sighs, my tears,
 My clenched hands ;—for lo ! the poppies hung
 Dew-dabbled on their stalks, the ouzel sung
 A heavy ditty, and the sullen day
 Had chidden herald Hesperus away,
 With leaden looks : the solitary breeze
 Bluster'd, and slept, and its wild self did tease
 With wayward melancholy ; and I thought,
 Mark me, Peona ! that sometimes it brought
 Faint fare-thee-wells, and sigh-shrilled adieus !
 Away I wander'd—all the pleasant hues 691
 Of heaven and earth had faded : deepest shades
 Were deepest dungeons ; heaths and sunny glades

Were full of pestilent light; our taintless rills **Endymion,**
 Seem'd sooty, and o'erspread with upturn'd gills **Book I.**
 Of dying fish; the vermeil rose had blown **694-721**
 In frightful scarlet, and its thorns outgrown
 Like spiked aloe. If an innocent bird
 Before my heedless footsteps stirr'd, and stirr'd
 In little journeys, I beheld in it 700
 A disguis'd demon, missioned to knit
 My soul with under darkness; to entice
 My stumblings down some monstrous precipice:
 Therefore I eager follow'd, and did curse
 The disappointment. Time, that aged nurse,
 Rock'd me to patience. Now, thank gentle
 heaven!

These things, with all their comfortings, are given
 To my down-sunken hours, and with thee,
 Sweet sister, help to stem the ebbing sea
 Of weary life."

 Thus ended he, and both 710
 Sat silent: for the maid was very loth
 To answer; feeling well that breathed words
 Would all be lost, unheard, and vain as swords
 Against the enchased crocodile, or leaps
 Of grasshoppers against the sun. She weeps,
 And wonders; struggles to devise some blame;
 To put on such a look as would say, *Shame*
On this poor weakness! but, for all her strife,
 She could as soon have crush'd away the life
 From a sick dove. At length, to break the
 pause, 720
 She said with trembling chance: "Is this the
 cause?

Endymion, This all? Yet it is strange, and sad, alas!
Book I. That one who through this middle earth should
 722-753 pass

Most like a sojourning demi-god, and leave
 His name upon the harp-string, should achieve
 No higher bard than simple maidenhood,
 Singing alone, and fearfully,—how the blood
 Left his young cheek; and how he used to stray
 He knew not where: and how he would say, *no*,
 If any said 'twas love: and yet 'twas love, 730
 What could it be but love? How a ring-dove
 Let fall a sprig of yew-tree in his path
 And how he died: and then, that love doth scathe
 The gentle heart, as northern blasts do roses;
 And then the ballad of his sad life closes
 With sighs, and an alas!—Endymion!
 Be rather in the trumpet's mouth,—anon
 Among the winds at large—that all may hearken!
 Although, before the crystal heavens darken,
 I watch and dote upon the silver lakes 740
 Pictur'd in western cloudiness, that takes
 The semblance of gold rocks and bright gold sands,
 Islands, and creeks, and amber-fretted strands
 With horses prancing o'er them, palaces
 And towers of amethyst,—would I so tease
 My pleasant days, because I could not mount
 Into those regions? The Morphean fount
 Of that fine element that visions, dreams,
 And fitful whims of sleep are made of, streams
 Into its airy channels with so subtle, 750
 So thin a breathing, not the spider's shuttle,
 Circl'd a million times within the space
 Of a swallow's nest-door, could delay a trace,

A tinting of its quality : how light
 Must dreams themselves be ; seeing they're more
 slight

Endymion,
 Book I.
 754-783

Than the mere nothing that engenders them !
 Then wherefore sully the entrusted gem
 Of high and noble life with thoughts so sick ?
 Why pierce high-fronted honour to the quick
 For nothing but a dream ? ” Hereat the youth
 Look'd up : a conflicting of shame and ruth 761
 Was in his plaited brow : yet, his eyelids
 Widen'd a little, as when Zephyr bids
 A little breeze to creep between the fans
 Of careless butterflies : amid his pains
 He seem'd to taste a drop of manna-dew,
 Full palatable ; and a colour grew
 Upon his cheek, while thus he lifeful spake.

“ Peona ! ever have I long'd to slake 769
 My thirst for the world's praises : nothing base,
 No merely slumberous phantasm, could unlace
 The stubborn canvas for my voyage prepar'd—
 Though now 'tis tatter'd ; leaving my bark bar'd
 And sullenly drifting : yet my higher hope
 Is of too wide, too rainbow-large a scope,
 To fret at myriads of earthly wrecks.
 Wherein lies happiness ? In that which beck
 Our ready minds to fellowship divine,
 A fellowship with essence ; till we shine,
 Full alchemized, and free of space. Behold 780
 The clear religion of heaven ! Fold
 A rose-leaf round thy finger's taperness,
 And soothe thy lips : hist ! when the airy
 stress

Endymion, Of music's kiss impregnates the free winds,
Book I. And with a sympathetic touch unbinds
784-816 Æolian magic from their lucid wombs :
 Then old songs waken from enclouded tombs ;
 Old ditties sigh above their father's grave ;
 Ghosts of melodious prophesyings rave
 Round every spot where trod Apollo's foot ; 790
 Bronze clarions awake, and faintly bruit,
 Where long ago a giant battle was ;
 And, from the turf, a lullaby doth pass
 In every place where infant Orpheus slept.
 Feel we these things?—that moment have we stept
 Into a sort of oneness, and our state
 Is like a floating spirit's. But there are
 Richer entanglements, enthralmments far
 More self-destroying, leading, by degrees,
 To the chief intensity : the crown of these 800
 Is made of love and friendship, and sits high
 Upon the forehead of humanity.
 All its more ponderous and bulky worth
 Is friendship, whence there ever issues forth
 A steady splendour ; but at the tip-top,
 There hangs by unseen film, an orb'd drop
 Of light, and that is love : its influence
 Thrown in our eyes genders a novel sense,
 At which we start and fret : till in the end,
 Melting into its radiance, we blend, 810
 Mingle, and so become a part of it,—
 Nor with aught else can our souls interknit
 So wingedly : when we combine therewith,
 Life's self is nourish'd by its proper pith,
 And we are nurtured like a pelican brood.
 Aye, so delicious is the unsating food,

That men, who might have tower'd in the van **Endymion,**
 Of all the congregated world, to fan **Book I.**
 And winnow from the coming step of time **817-846**
 All chaff of custom, wipe away all slime 820
 Left by men-slugs and human serpentry,
 Have been content to let occasion die,
 Whilst they did sleep in love's Elysium.
 And, truly, I would rather be struck dumb,
 Than speak against this ardent listlessness :
 For I have ever thought that it might bless
 The world with benefits unknowingly ;
 As does the nightingale, up-perched high,
 And cloister'd among cool and bunched leaves—
 She sings but to her love, nor e'er conceives 830
 How tiptoe Night holds back her dark-grey
 hood.

Just so may love, although 'tis understood
 The mere commingling of passionate breath,
 Produce more than our searching witnesseth :
 What I know not : but who, of men, can tell
 That flowers would bloom, or that green fruit
 would swell

To melting pulp, that fish would have bright mail,
 The earth its dower of river, wood, and vale,
 The meadows runnels, runnels pebble-stones,
 The seed its harvest, or the lute its tones, 840
 Tones ravishment, or ravishment its sweet,
 If human souls did never kiss and greet ?

“ Now, if this earthly love has power to make
 Men's being mortal, immortal ; to shake
 Ambition from their memories, and brim
 Their measure of content ; what merest whim,

Endymion, Seems all this poor endeavour after fame,
Book I. To one, who keeps within his steadfast aim
847-878 A love immortal, an immortal too. 849
 Look not so wilder'd; for these things are true,
 And never can be born of atomies
 That buzz about our slumbers, like brain-flies,
 Leaving us fancy-sick. No, no, I'm sure,
 My restless spirit never could endure
 To brood so long upon one luxury,
 Unless it did, though fearfully, espy
 A hope beyond the shadow of a dream.
 My sayings will the less obscured seem
 When I have told thee how my waking sight 859
 Has made me scruple whether that same night
 Was pass'd in dreaming. Harken, sweet Peona!
 Beyond the matron-temple of Latona,
 Which we should see but for these darkening
 boughs,
 Lies a deep hollow, from whose ragged brows
 Bushes and trees do lean all round athwart,
 And meet so nearly, that with wings outtraught,
 And spreaded tail, a vulture could not glide
 Past them, but he must brush on every side.
 Some moulder'd steps lead into this cool cell,
 Far as the slabbed margin of a well, 870
 Whose patient level peeps its crystal eye
 Right upward, through the bushes, to the sky.
 Oft have I brought thee flowers, on their stalks set
 Like vestal primroses, but dark velvet
 Edges them round, and they have golden pits:
 'Twas there I got them, from the gaps and slits
 In a mossy stone, that sometimes was my seat,
 When all above was faint with mid-day heat.

And there in strife no burning thoughts to heed, **Endymion,**
 I'd bubble up the water through a reed ; 880 **Book I.**
 So reaching back to boyhood : make me ships **879-910**
 Of moulted feathers, touchwood, alder chips,
 With leaves stuck in them ; and the Neptune be
 Of their petty ocean. Oftener, heavily,
 When love-lorn hours had left me less a child,
 I sat contemplating the figures wild
 Of o'er-head clouds melting the mirror through.
 Upon a day, while thus I watch'd, by flew
 A cloudy cupid, with his bow and quiver ;
 So plainly character'd, no breeze would shiver
 The happy chance : so happy, I was fain 891
 To follow it upon the open plain,
 And, therefore, was just going ; when, behold !
 A wonder, fair as any I have told—
 The same bright face I tasted in my sleep,
 Smiling in the clear well. My heart did leap
 Through the cool depth.—It moved as if to flee—
 I started up, when lo ! refreshfully,
 There came upon my face, in plenteous showers,
 Dew-drops, and dewy buds, and leaves, and
 flowers, 900
 Wrapping all objects from my smother'd sight,
 Bathing my spirit in a new delight.
 Aye, such a breathless honey-feel of bliss
 Alone preserv'd me from the drear abyss
 Of death, for the fair form had gone again.
 Pleasure is oft a visitant ; but pain
 Clings cruelly to us, like the gnawing sloth
 On the deer's tender haunches : late, and loth,
 'Tis scared away by slow-returning pleasure. 909
 How sickening, how dark the dreadful leisure,

Endymion, Of weary days, made deeper exquisite,
Book I. By a fore-knowledge of unslumbrous night !
911-942 Like sorrow came upon me, heavier still,
 Than when I wander'd from the poppy hill :
 And a whole age of lingering moments crept
 Sluggishly by, ere more contentment swept
 Away at once the deadly yellow spleen.
 Yes, thrice have I this fair enchantment seen ;
 Once more been tortured with renewed life.
 When last the wintry gusts gave over strife 920
 With the conquering sun of spring, and left the
 skies
 Warm and serene, but yet with moisten'd eyes
 In pity of the shatter'd infant buds,—
 That time thou didst adorn, with amber studs,
 My hunting-cap, because I laugh'd and smil'd,
 Chatted with thee, and many days exil'd
 All torment from my breast ;—'twas even then,
 Straying about, yet, coop'd up in the den
 Of helpless discontent,—hurling my lance 929
 From place to place, and following at a chance,
 At last, by hap, through some young trees it struck,
 And, plashing among bedded pebbles, stuck
 In the middle of a brook,—whose silver ramble
 Down twenty little falls, through reeds and bramble,
 Tracing along, it brought me to a cave,
 Whence it ran brightly forth, and white did lave
 The nether sides of mossy stones and rock,—
 'Mong which it gurgled blithe adieus, to mock
 Its own sweet grief at parting. Overhead, 939
 Hung a lush screen of drooping weeds, and spread
 Thick, as to curtain up some wood-nymph's home.
 ' Ah ! impious mortal, whither do I roam ? '

Said I, low voic'd : ' Ah, whither ! 'Tis the grot Endymion,
 ' Of Proserpine, when Hell, obscure and hot, Book I.
 ' Doth her resign : and where her tender hands 943-974
 ' She dabbles, on the cool and sluicy sands :
 ' Or 'tis the cell of Echo, where she sits,
 ' And babbles thorough silence, till her wits
 ' Are gone in tender madness, and anon,
 ' Faints into sleep, with many a dying tone 950
 ' Of sadness. O that she would take my vows,
 ' And breathe them sighingly among the boughs,
 ' To sue her gentle ears for whose fair head,
 ' Daily, I pluck sweet flowerets from their bed,
 ' And weave them dyingly—send honey-whispers
 ' Round every leaf, that all those gentle lispers
 ' May sigh my love unto her pitying !
 ' O charitable Echo ! hear, and sing
 ' This ditty to her !—tell her,'—so I stay'd
 My foolish tongue, and listening, half afraid, 960
 Stood stupefied with my own empty folly,
 And blushing for the freaks of melancholy.
 Salt tears were coming, when I heard my name
 Most fondly lipp'd, and then these accents came :
 ' Endymion ! the cave is secreter
 ' Than the isle of Delos. Echo hence shall stir
 ' No sighs but sigh-warm kisses, or light noise
 ' Of thy combing hand, the while it travelling cloys
 ' And trembles through my labyrinthine hair.'
 At that oppress'd, I hurried in. Ah ! where 970
 Are those swift moments ? Whither are they
 fled ?
 I'll smile no more, Peona ; nor will wed
 Sorrow, the way to death ; but patiently
 Bear up against it : so farewell, sad sigh ;

Endymion, And come instead demurest meditation,
 Book I. To occupy me wholly, and to fashion
 975-992; My pilgrimage for the world's dusky brink.
 Book II. No more will I count over, link by link,
 1-8 My chain of grief: no longer strive to find
 A half-forgetfulness in mountain wind 980
 Blustering about my ears: aye, thou shalt see,
 Dearest of sisters, what my life shall be;
 What a calm round of hours shall make my days.
 'There is a paly flame of hope that plays
 Where'er I look: but yet, I'll say 'tis naught—
 And here I bid it die. Have not I caught,
 Already, a more healthy countenance?
 By this the sun is setting; we may chance
 Meet some of our near-dwellers with my car."

This said, he rose, faint-smiling like a star 990
 Through autumn mists, and took Peona's hand:
 They stept into the boat, and launch'd from
 land.

 BOOK II

O SOVEREIGN power of love! O grief! O balm!
 All records, saving thine, come cool, and calm,
 And shadowy, through the mist of passed years:
 For others, good or bad, hatred and tears
 Have become indolent; but touching thine,
 One sigh doth echo, one poor sob doth pine,
 One kiss brings honey-dew from buried days.
 The woes of Troy, towers smothering o'er their
 blaze,

Stiff-holden shields, far-piercing spears, keen blades,
 Struggling, and blood, and shrieks—all dimly fades

Endymion,
 Book II.

9-38

10

Into some backward corner of the brain ;
 Yet, in our very souls, we feel amain
 The close of Troilus and Cressid sweet.
 Hence, pageant history ! hence, gilded cheat !
 Swart planet in the universe of deeds !
 Wide sea, that one continuous murmur breeds
 Along the pebbled shore of memory !
 Many old rotten-timber'd boats there be
 Upon thy vaporous bosom, magnified
 To goodly vessels ; many a sail of pride,
 And golden-keel'd, is left unlaunch'd and dry.
 But wherefore this ? What care, though owl
 did fly

20

About the great Athenian admiral's mast ?
 What care, though striding Alexander past
 The Indus with his Macedonian numbers ?
 Though old Ulysses tortured from his slumbers
 The glutton Cyclops, what care ?—Juliet leaning
 Amid her window-flowers,—sighing,—weaning
 Tenderly her fancy from its maiden snow,
 Doth more avail than these : the silver flow
 Of Hero's tears, the swoon of Imogen,
 Fair Pastorella in the bandit's den,
 Are things to brood on with more ardency
 Than the death-day of empires. Fearfully
 Must such conviction come upon his head,
 Who, thus far, discontent, has dar'd to tread,
 Without one muse's smile, or kind behest,
 The path of love and poesy. But rest,

30

Endymion, In chafing restlessness, is yet more drear
 Book II. Than to be crush'd, in striving to uprear 40
 39-68 Love's standard on the battlements of song.
 So once more days and nights aid me along,
 Like legion'd soldiers.

Brain-sick shepherd prince,
 What promise hast thou faithful guarded since
 The day of sacrifice? Or, have new sorrows
 Come with the constant dawn upon thy morrows?
 Alas! 'tis his old grief. For many days
 Has he been wandering in uncertain ways:
 Through wilderness, and woods of mossed oaks;
 Counting his woe-worn minutes, by the strokes
 Of the lone woodcutter; and listening still, 51
 Hour after hour, to each lush-leav'd rill.
 Now he is sitting by a shady spring,
 And elbow-deep with feverous fingering
 Stems the upbursting cold: a wild-rose tree
 Pavilions him in bloom, and he doth see
 A bud which snares his fancy: lo! but now
 He plucks it, dips its stalk in the water: how!
 It swells, it buds, it flowers beneath his sight;
 And, in the middle, there is softly pight 60
 A golden butterfly; upon whose wings
 There must be surely character'd strange things,
 For with wide eye he wonders, and smiles oft.

Lightly this little herald flew aloft,
 Follow'd by glad Endymion's clasped hands:
 Onward it flies. From languor's sullen bands
 His limbs are loos'd, and eager, on he hies
 Dazzled to trace it in the sunny skies.

It seemed he flew, the way so easy was ;
 And like a new-born spirit did he pass
 Through the green evening quiet in the sun,
 O'er many a heath, through many a woodland dun,
 Through buried paths, where sleepy twilight
 dreams

Endymion,
 Book II.
 69-100

The summer time away. One track unseams
 A wooded cleft, and far away, the blue
 Of ocean fades upon him ; then, anew,
 He sinks adown a solitary glen,
 Where there was never sound of mortal men,
 Saving, perhaps, some snow-light cadences
 Melting to silence, when upon the breeze 80
 Some holy bark let forth an anthem sweet,
 To cheer itself to Delphi. Still his feet
 Went swift beneath the merry-winged guide,
 Until it reached a splashing fountain's side
 That, near a cavern's mouth, for ever pour'd
 Unto the temperate air : then high it soar'd,
 And, downward, suddenly began to dip,
 As if, athirst with so much toil, 'twould sip
 The crystal spout-head : so it did, with touch
 Most delicate as though afraid to smutch 90
 Even with mealy gold the waters clear.
 But, at that very touch, to disappear
 So fairy-quick, was strange ! Bewildered,
 Endymion sought around, and shook each bed
 Of covert flowers in vain ; and then he flung
 Himself along the grass. What gentle tongue,
 What whisperer disturb'd his gloomy rest ?
 It was a nymph uprisen to the breast
 In the fountain's pebbly margin, and she stood
 'Mong lilies, like the youngest of the brood. 100

Endymion, To him her dripping hand she softly kist,
Book II. And anxiously began to plait and twist
 101-132 Her ringlets round her fingers, saying: "Youth!
 Too long, alas, hast thou starv'd on the ruth,
 The bitterness of love: too long indeed,
 Seeing thou art so gentle. Could I weed
 Thy soul of care, by heavens, I would offer
 All the bright riches of my crystal coffer
 To Amphitrite; all my clear-eyed fish,
 Golden, or rainbow-sided, or purplish, 110
 Vermilion-tail'd, or finn'd with silvery gauze;
 Yea, or my veined pebble-floor, that draws
 A virgin-light to the deep; my grotto-sands,
 Tawny and gold, ooz'd slowly from far lands
 By my diligent springs: my level lilies, shells,
 My charming-rod, my potent river spells;
 Yes, everything, even to the pearly cup
 Meander gave me,—for I bubbled up
 To fainting creatures in a desert wild.
 But woe is me, I am but as a child 120
 To gladden thee: and all I dare to say,
 Is, that I pity thee; that on this day
 I've been thy guide; that thou must wander far
 In other regions, past the scanty bar
 To mortal steps, before thou canst be ta'en
 From every wasting sigh, from every pain,
 Into the gentle bosom of thy love.
 Why it is thus, one knows in heaven above;
 But, a poor Naiad, I guess not. Farewell!
 I have a ditty for my hollow cell." 130

Hereat, she vanish'd from Endymion's gaze,
 Who brooded o'er the water in amaze:

The dashing fount pour'd on, and where its pool Endymion,
 Lay, half asleep, in grass and rushes cool, Book II.
 Quick waterflies and gnats were sporting still, 133-165
 And fish were dimpling, as if good nor ill
 Had fallen out that hour. The wanderer,
 Holding his forehead, to keep off the burr
 Of smothering fancies, patiently sat down; 139
 And, while beneath the evening's sleepy frown
 Glowworms began to trim their starry lamps,
 Thus breath'd he to himself: "Whoso encamps
 To take a fancied city of delight,
 O what a wretch is he! and when 'tis his,
 After long toil and travelling, to miss
 The kernel of his hopes, how more than vile!
 Yet, for him there's refreshment even in toil:
 Another city doth he set about,
 Free from the smallest pebble-bead of doubt
 That he will seize on trickling honey-combs: 150
 Alas! he finds them dry; and then he foams
 And onward to another city speeds.
 But this is human life: the war, the deeds,
 The disappointment, the anxiety,
 Imagination's struggles, far and nigh,
 All human; bearing in themselves this good,
 That they are still the air, the subtle food,
 To make us feel existence, and to show
 How quiet death is. Where soil is men grow,
 Whether to weeds or flowers; but for me, 160
 There is no depth to strike in: I can see
 Nought earthly worth my compassing; so stand
 Upon a misty, jutting head of land—
 Alone! No, no; and by the Orphean lute,
 When mad Eurydice is listening to 't,

Endymion, I'd rather stand upon this misty peak,
 Book II. With not a thing to sigh for, or to seek,
 166-195 But the soft shadow of my thrice-seen love,
 Than be—I care not what. O meekest dove
 Of heaven! O Cynthia, ten-times bright and
 fair! 170

From thy blue throne, now filling all the air,
 Glance but one little beam of temper'd light
 Into my bosom, that the dreadful might
 And tyranny of love be somewhat scar'd ;
 Yet do not so, sweet queen ; one torment spar'd,
 Would give a pang to jealous misery,
 Worse than the torment's self: but rather tie
 Large wings upon my shoulders, and point out
 My love's far dwelling. Though the playful rout
 Of Cupids shun thee, too divine art thou, 180
 Too keen in beauty, for thy silver prow
 Not to have dipp'd in love's most gentle stream.
 O be propitious, nor severely deem
 My madness impious ; for, by all the stars
 That tend thy bidding, I do think the bars
 That kept my spirit in are burst—that I
 Am sailing with thee through the dizzy sky !
 How beautiful thou art ! The world how deep !
 How tremulous-dazzlingly the wheels sweep
 Around their axle ! Then these gleaming reins,
 How lithe ! When this thy chariot attains 191
 Its airy goal, haply some bower veils
 Those twilight eyes ? Those eyes!—my spirit
 fails—

Dear goddess, help ! or the wide-gaping air
 Will gulph me—help ! ”—At this, with mad-
 den'd stare,

And lifted hands, and trembling lips he stood ;
 Like old Deucalion mountain'd o'er the flood,
 Or blind Orion hungry for the morn.

Endymion,
 Book II.
 196-223

And, but from the deep cavern there was borne
 A voice, he had been froze to senseless stone ; 200
 Nor sigh of his, nor plaint, nor passion'd moan
 Had more been heard. Thus swell'd it forth :

“ Descend,

Young mountaineer ! descend where alleys bend
 Into the sparry hollows of the world !

Oft hast thou seen bolts of the thunder hurl'd
 As from thy threshold ; day by day hast been
 A little lower than the chilly sheen
 Of icy pinnacles, and dipp'dst thine arms
 Into the deadening ether that still charms

Their marble being : now, as deep profound 210

As those are high, descend ! He ne'er is crown'd
 With immortality, who fears to follow

Where airy voices lead : so through the hollow,
 The silent mysteries of earth, descend ! ”

He heard but the last words, nor could contend
 One moment in reflection : for he fled
 Into the fearful deep, to hide his head
 From the clear moon, the trees, and coming
 madness.

'Twas far too strange, and wonderful for sad-
 ness ;

Sharpening, by degrees, his appetite 220

To dive into the deepest. Dark, nor light,

The region ; nor bright, nor sombre wholly,

But mingled up ; a gleaming melancholy ;

Endymion, A dusky empire and its diadems ;
Book II. One faint eternal eventide of gems.
 224-255 Aye, millions sparkled on a vein of gold,
 Along whose track the prince quick footsteps told,
 With all its lines abrupt and angular :
 Out-shooting sometimes, like a meteor-star,
 Through a vast antre ; then the metal woof, 230
 Like Vulcan's rainbow, with some monstrous roof
 Curves hugely ; now, far in the deep abyss,
 It seems an angry lightning, and doth hiss
 Fancy into belief : anon it leads
 Through winding passages, where sameness breeds
 Vexing conceptions of some sudden change ;
 Whether to silver grots, or giant range
 Of sapphire columns, or fantastic bridge
 Athwart a flood of crystal. On a ridge
 Now fareth he, that o'er the vast beneath 240
 Towers like an ocean-cliff, and whence he seeth
 A hundred waterfalls, whose voices come
 But as the murmuring surge. Chilly and numb
 His bosom grew, when first he, far away,
 Descried an orb'd diamond, set to fray
 Old darkness from his throne ; 'twas like the
 sun
 Uprisen o'er chaos : and with such a stun
 Came the amazement, that, absorb'd in it,
 He saw not fiercer wonders—past the wit
 Of any spirit to tell, but one of those 250
 Who, when this planet's sphering time doth close,
 Will be its high remembrancers : who they ?
 The mighty ones who have made eternal day
 For Greece and England. While astonishment
 With deep-drawn sighs was quieting, he went

Endymion,
Book II.
256-285

Into a marble gallery, passing through
A mimic temple, so complete and true
In sacred custom that he well nigh fear'd
To search it inwards ; whence far off appear'd
Through a long pillar'd vista, a fair shrine, 260
And, just beyond, on light tiptoe divine,
A quiver'd Dian. Stepping awfully,
The youth approach'd ; oft turning his veil'd eye
Down sidelong aisles, and into niches old :
And, when more near against the marble cold
He had touch'd his forehead, he began to thread
All courts and passages, where silence dead,
Rous'd by his whispering footsteps, murmur'd
faint :

And long he traversed to and fro, to acquaint
Himself with every mystery, and awe ; 270
Till, weary, he sat down before the maw
Of a wide outlet, fathomless and dim,
To wild uncertainty and shadows grim.
There, when new wonders ceas'd to float before,
And thoughts of self came on, how crude and
sore

The journey homeward to habitual self !
A mad-pursuing of the fog-born elf,
Whose flitting lantern, through rude nettle-briar,
Cheats us into a swamp, into a fire,
Into the bosom of a hated thing. 280

What misery most drowningly doth sing
In lone Endymion's ear, now he has caught
The goal of consciousness ? Ah, 'tis the thought,
The deadly feel of solitude : for lo !
He cannot see the heavens, nor the flow

Endymion, Of rivers, nor hill-flowers running wild
Book II. In pink and purple chequer, nor, up-pil'd,
 286-317 The cloudy rack slow journeying in the west,
 Like herded elephants; nor felt, nor prest
 Cool grass, nor tasted the fresh slumberous air;
 But far from such companionship to wear 291
 An unknown time, surcharg'd with grief, away,
 Was not his lot. And must he patient stay,
 Tracing fantastic figures with his spear?
 "No!" exclaim'd he, "why should I tarry
 here?"

No! loudly echoed times innumerable.
 At which he straightway started, and 'gan tell
 His paces back into the temple's chief;
 Warming and glowing strong in the belief
 Of help from Dian: so that when again 300
 He caught her airy form, thus did he plain,
 Moving more near the while. "O Haunter chaste
 Of river sides, and woods, and heathy waste,
 Where with thy silver bow and arrows keen
 Art thou now forested? O woodland Queen,
 What smoothest air thy smoother forehead woos?
 Where dost thou listen to the wide haloos
 Of thy departed nymphs? Through what dark tree
 Glimmers thy crescent? Wheresoe'er it be,
 'Tis in the breath of heaven: thou dost taste 310
 Freedom as none can taste it, nor dost waste
 Thy loveliness in dismal elements;
 But, finding in our green earth sweet contents,
 There livest blissfully. Ah, if to thee
 It feels Elysian, how rich to me,
 An exil'd mortal, sounds its pleasant name!
 Within my breast there lives a choking flame—

O let me cool it the zephyr-boughs among !
 A homeward fever parches up my tongue—
 O let me slake it at the running springs ! 320
 Upon my ear a noisy nothing rings—
 O let me once more hear the linnet's note !
 Before mine eyes thick films and shadows float—
 O let me 'noint them with the heaven's light !
 Dost thou now lave thy feet and ankles white ?
 O think how sweet to me the freshening sluice !
 Dost thou now please thy thirst with berry-juice ?
 O think how this dry palate would rejoice !
 If in soft slumber thou dost hear my voice, 329
 O think how I should love a bed of flowers !—
 Young goddess ! let me see my native bowers !
 Deliver me from this rapacious deep ! ”

Endymion,
 Book II.
 318-347

Thus ending loudly, as he would o'erleap
 His destiny, alert he stood : but when
 Obstinate silence came heavily again,
 Feeling about for its old couch of space
 And airy cradle, lowly bow'd his face,
 Desponding, o'er the marble floor's cold thrill.
 But 'twas not long ; for, sweeter than the rill
 To its old channel, or a swollen tide 340
 To margin shallows, were the leaves he spied,
 And flowers, and wreaths, and ready myrtle
 crowns
 Up heaping through the slab : refreshment
 drowns
 Itself, and strives its own delights to hide—
 Nor in one spot alone ; the floral pride
 In a long whispering birth enchanted grew
 Before his footsteps ; as when heav'd anew

Endymion, Old ocean rolls a lengthened wave to the shore,
 Book II. Down whose green back the short-liv'd foam,
 348-376 all hoar,
 Bursts gradual, with a wayward indolence. 350

Increasing still in heart, and pleasant sense,
 Upon his fairy journey on he hastes ;
 So anxious for the end, he scarcely wastes
 One moment with his hand among the sweets :
 Onward he goes—he stops—his bosom beats
 As plainly in his ear, as the faint charm
 Of which the throbs were born. This still alarm,
 This sleepy music, forc'd him walk tiptoe :
 For it came more softly than the east could blow
 Arion's magic to the Atlantic isles ; 360
 Or than the west, made jealous by the smiles
 Of thron'd Apollo, could breathe back the lyre
 To seas Ionian and Tyrian.

O did he ever live, that lonely man,
 Who lov'd—and music slew not ? 'Tis the pest
 Of love, that fairest joys give most unrest ;
 That things of delicate and tenderest worth
 Are swallow'd all, and made a seared dearth,
 By one consuming flame : it doth immerse
 And suffocate true blessings in a curse. 370
 Half-happy, by comparison of bliss,
 Is miserable. 'Twas even so with this
 Dew-dropping melody, in the Carian's ear ;
 First heaven, then hell, and then forgotten clear,
 Vanish'd in elemental passion.

And down some swart abysm he had gone,

Had not a heavenly guide benignant led
 To where thick myrtle branches, 'gainst his head
 Brushing, awaken'd: then the sounds again
 Went noiseless as a passing noontide rain 380
 Over a bower, where little space he stood;
 For as the sunset peeps into a wood,
 So saw he panting light, and towards it went
 Through winding alleys; and lo, wonderment!
 Upon soft verdure saw, one here, one there,
 Cupids a-slumbering on their pinions fair.

Endymion,
 Book II.
 377-408

After a thousand mazes overgone,
 At last, with sudden step, he came upon
 A chamber, myrtle-wall'd, embower'd high,
 Full of light, incense, tender minstrelsy, 390
 And more of beautiful and strange beside:
 For on a silken couch of rosy pride,
 In midst of all, there lay a sleeping youth
 Of fondest beauty; fonder, in fair sooth,
 Than sighs could fathom, or contentment reach:
 And coverlids gold-tinted like the peach,
 Or ripe October's faded marigolds,
 Fell sleek about him in a thousand folds—
 Not hiding up an Apollonian curve 399
 Of neck and shoulder, nor the tenting swerve
 Of knee from knee, nor ankles pointing light;
 But rather, giving them to the fill'd sight
 Officially. Sideway his face repos'd
 On one white arm, and tenderly unclos'd,
 By tenderest pressure, a faint damask mouth
 To slumbery pout; just as the morning south
 Disparts a dew-lipp'd rose. Above his head,
 Four lily stalks did their white honours wed

Endymion, To make a coronal ; and round him grew
 Book II. All tendrils green, of every bloom and hue, 410
 409-439 Together interwin'd and trammell'd fresh :
 The vine of glossy sprout ; the ivy mesh,
 Shading its Ethiop berries ; and woodbine,
 Of velvet leaves and bugle-blooms divine ;
 Convolvulus in streaked vases flush ;
 The creeper, mellowing for an autumn blush ;
 And virgin's bower, trailing airily ;
 With others of the sisterhood. Hard by,
 Stood serene Cupids watching silently.
 One, kneeling to a lyre, touch'd the strings, 420
 Muffling to death the pathos with his wings ;
 And, ever and anon, uprose to look
 At the youth's slumber ; while another took
 A willow bough, distilling odorous dew,
 And shook it on his hair ; another flew
 In through the woven roof, and fluttering-wise
 Rain'd violets upon his sleeping eyes.

At these enchantments, and yet many more,
 The breathless Latmian wonder'd o'er and o'er ;
 Until impatient in embarrassment, 430
 He forthright pass'd, and lightly treading went
 To that same feather'd lyrist, who straightway,
 Smiling, thus whisper'd : " Though from upper
 day

Thou art a wanderer, and thy presence here
 Might seem unholy, be of happy cheer !
 For 'tis the nicest touch of human honour,
 When some ethereal and high-favouring donor
 Presents immortal bowers to mortal sense ;
 As now 'tis done to thee, Endymion. Hence

Was I in no wise startled. So recline 440 Endymion,
 Upon these living flowers. Here is wine, Book II.
 Alive with sparkles—never I aver, 440-471
 Since Ariadne was a vintager,
 So cool a purple : taste these juicy pears,
 Sent me by sad Vertumnus, when his fears
 Were high about Pomona : here is cream,
 Deepening to richness from a snowy gleam ;
 Sweeter than that nurse Amalthea skimm'd
 For the boy Jupiter : and here, undimm'd
 By any touch, a bunch of blooming plums 450
 Ready to melt between an infant's gums :
 And here is manna picked from Syrian trees,
 In starlight, by the three Hesperides.
 Feast on, and meanwhile I will let thee know
 Of all these things around us." He did so,
 Still brooding o'er the cadence of his lyre ;
 And thus : " I need not any hearing tire
 By telling how the sea-born goddess pin'd
 For a mortal youth, and how she strove to bind
 Him all in all unto her doting self. 460
 Who would not be so prison'd ? but, fond elf,
 He was content to let her amorous plea
 Faint through his careless arms ; content to see
 An unseiz'd heaven dying at his feet ;
 Content, O fool ! to make a cold retreat,
 When on the pleasant grass such love, lovelorn,
 Lay sorrowing ; when every tear was born
 Of diverse passion ; when her lips and eyes
 Were clos'd in sullen moisture, and quick sighs
 Came vex'd and pettish through her nostrils
 small. 470
 Hush ! no exclaim—yet, justly might'st thou call

Endymion, Curses upon his head,—I was half glad,
 Book II. But my poor mistress went distract and mad,
 472-501 When the boar tusk'd him : so away she flew
 To Jove's high throne, and by her plainings drew
 Immortal tear-drops down the thunderer's beard ;
 Whereon, it was decreed he should be rear'd
 Each summer-time to life. Lo ! this is he,
 That same Adonis, safe in the privacy
 Of this still region all his winter-sleep. 480
 Aye, sleep ; for when our love-sick queen did
 weep

Over his waned corse, the tremulous shower
 Heal'd up the wound, and, with a balmy power,
 Medicin'd death to a lengthen'd drowsiness :
 The which she fills with visions, and doth dress
 In all this quiet luxury ; and hath set
 Us young immortals, without any let,
 To watch his slumber through. 'Tis well nigh
 pass'd,

Even to a moment's filling up, and fast
 She scuds with summer breezes, to pant through
 The first long kiss, warm firstling, to renew 491
 Embower'd sports in Cytherea's isle.
 Look, how those winged listeners all this while
 Stand anxious : see ! behold !"—This clamant
 word

Broke through the careful silence : for they heard
 A rustling noise of leaves, and out there flutter'd
 Pigeons and doves : Adonis something mutter'd
 The while one hand, that erst upon his thigh
 Lay dormant, moved convuls'd and gradually
 Up to his forehead. Then there was a hum 500
 Of sudden voices, echoing, "Come ! come !

Arise! awake! Clear summer has forth walk'd **Endymion,**
 Unto the clover-sward, and she has talk'd **Book II.**
 Full soothingly to every nested finch : **502-529**
 Rise, Cupids! or we'll give the blue-bell pinch
 To your dimpled arms. Once more sweet life
 begin! "

At this, from every side they hurried in,
 Rubbing their sleepy eyes with lazy wrists,
 And doubling over head their little fists
 In backward yawns. But all were seen alive :
 For as delicious wine doth, sparkling, dive **511**
 In nectar'd clouds and curls through water fair,
 So from the arbour roof down swell'd an
 air

Odorous and enlivening ; making all
 To laugh, and play, and sing, and loudly call
 For their sweet queen : when lo ! the wreathed
 green

Disparted, and far upward could be seen
 Blue heaven, and a silver car, air-borne,
 Whose silent wheels, fresh wet from clouds of
 morn,

Spun off a drizzling dew,—which falling chill
 On soft Adonis' shoulders, made him still **521**
 Nestle and turn uneasily about.

Soon were the white doves plain, with necks
 stretch'd out,

And silken traces lighten'd in descent .
 And soon, returning from love's banishment,
 Queen Venus leaning downward open-arm'd :
 Her shadow fell upon his breast, and charm'd
 A tumult to his heart, and a new life
 Into his eyes. Ah, miserable strife,

Endymion, But for her comforting ! unhappy sight, 530
 Book II. But meeting her blue orbs ! Who, who can write
 530-561 Of these first minutes ? The unchariest muse
 To embracements warm as theirs makes coy excuse.

O it has ruffled every spirit there,
 Saving love's self, who stands superb to share
 The general gladness : awfully he stands ;
 A sovereign quell is in his waving hands ;
 No sight can bear the lightning of his bow ;
 His quiver is mysterious, none can know 539
 What themselves think of it ; from forth his eyes
 There darts strange light of varied hues and dies :
 A scowl is sometimes on his brow, but who
 Look full upon it feel anon the blue
 Of his fair eyes run liquid through their souls.
 Endymion feels it, and no more controls
 The burning prayer within him : so, bent low,
 He had begun a plaining of his woe.
 But Venus, bending forward, said : " My child,
 Favour this gentle youth ; his days are wild
 With love—he—but alas ! too well I see 550
 Thou know'st the deepness of his misery.
 Ah, smile not so, my son : I tell thee true,
 That when through heavy hours I used to rue
 The endless sleep of this new-born Adon',
 This stranger eye I pitied. For upon
 A dreary morning once I fled away
 Into the breezy clouds, to weep and pray
 For this my love : for vexing Mars had teas'd
 Me even to tears ; thence, when a little eas'd,
 Down-looking, vacant, through a hazy wood,
 I saw this youth as he despairing stood : 561

Those same dark curls blown vagrant in the wind ; **Endymion,**
 Those same full fringed lids a constant blind **Book II.**
 Over his sullen eyes : I saw him throw **562-591**
 Himself on wither'd leaves, even as though
 Death had come sudden ; for no jot he mov'd,
 Yet mutter'd wildly. I could hear he lov'd
 Some fair immortal, and that his embrace
 Had zoned her through the night. There is no
 trace

Of this in heaven : I have mark'd each cheek,
 And find it is the vainest thing to seek ; 571
 And that of all things 'tis kept secretest.
 Endymion ! one day thou wilt be blest :
 So still obey the guiding hand that fends
 Thee safely through these wonders for sweet ends.
 'Tis a concealment needful in extreme :
 And if I guess'd not so, the sunny beam
 Thou shouldst mount up to with me. Now adieu !
 Here must we leave thee."—At these words up
 flew

The impatient doves, up rose the floating car, 580
 Up went the hum celestial. High afar
 The Latmian saw them minish into nought ;
 And, when all were clear vanish'd, still he caught
 A vivid lightning from that dreadful bow.
 When all was darken'd, with Ætnean throe
 The earth clos'd—gave a solitary moan—
 And left him once again in twilight lone.

He did not rave, he did not stare aghast,
 For all those visions were o'ergone, and past,
 And he in loneliness : he felt assur'd 590
 Of happy times, when all he had endur'd

Endymion, Would seem a feather to the mighty prize.
 Book II. So, with unusual gladness, on he hies
 592-623 Through caves, and palaces of mottled ore,
 Gold dome, and crystal wall, and turquoise floor,
 Black polish'd porticos of awful shade,
 And, at the last, a diamond balustrade,
 Leading afar past wild magnificence,
 Spiral through ruggedest loopholes, and thence
 Stretching across a void, then guiding o'er 600
 Enormous chasms, where, all foam and roar,
 Streams subterranean tease their granite beds ;
 Then heighten'd just above the silvery heads
 Of a thousand fountains, so that he could dash
 The waters with his spear ; but at the splash,
 Done heedlessly, those spouting columns rose
 Sudden a poplar's height, and 'gan to inclose
 His diamond path with fretwork streaming round
 Alive, and dazzling cool, and with a sound, 609
 Haply, like dolphin tumults, when sweet shells
 Welcome the float of Thetis. Long he dwells
 On this delight ; for every minute's space,
 The streams with changed magic interlace :
 Sometimes like delicatest lattices,
 Cover'd with crystal vines ; then weeping trees,
 Moving about as if in a gentle wind,
 Which, in a wink, to watery gauze refin'd,
 Pour'd into shapes of curtain'd canopies,
 Spangled, and rich with liquid broideries
 Of flowers, peacocks, swans, and naiads fair. 620
 Swifter than lightning went these wonders
 rare ;
 And then the water, into stubborn streams
 Collecting, mimick'd the wrought oaken beams,

Endymion,
Book II.
624-653

Pillars, and frieze, and high fantastic roof.
Of those dusk places in times far aloof
Cathedrals call'd. He bade a loth farewell
To these founts Protean, passing gulph, and dell,
And torrent, and ten thousand jutting shapes,
Half seen through deepest gloom, and griesly
gapes,

Blackening on every side, and overhead 630

A vaulted dome like Heaven's, far bespread
With starlight gems: aye, all so huge and strange,
The solitary felt a hurried change

Working within him into something dreary,---

Vex'd like a morning eagle, lost and weary,

And purblind amid foggy, midnight wolds.

But he revives at once: for who beholds

New sudden things, nor casts his mental slough?

Forth from a rugged arch, in the dusk below,

Came mother Cybele! alone—alone— 640

In sombre chariot; dark foldings thrown

About her majesty, and front death-pale,

With turrets crown'd. Four maned lions hale

The sluggish wheels; solemn their toothed maws,

Their surly eyes brow-hidden, heavy paws

Uplifted drowsily, and nervy tails

Cowering their tawny brushes. Silent sails

This shadowy queen athwart, and faints away

In another gloomy arch.

Wherefore delay,

Young traveller in such a mournful place? 650

Art thou wayworn, or canst not further trace

The diamond path? And does it indeed end

Abrupt in middle air? Yet earthward bend

Endymion, Thy forehead, and to Jupiter cloud-borne
 Book II. Call ardently! He was indeed wayworn;
 654-683 Abrupt, in middle air, his way was lost;
 To cloud-borne Jove he bowed, and there crost
 Towards him a large eagle, 'twixt whose wings,
 Without one impious word, himself he flings,
 Committed to the darkness and the gloom: 660
 Down, down, uncertain to what pleasant doom,
 Swift as a fathoming plummet down he fell
 Through unknown things; till exhal'd asphodel,
 And rose, with spicy fannings interbreath'd,
 Came swelling forth where little caves were
 wreath'd
 So thick with leaves and mosses, that they seem'd
 Large honey-combs of green, and freshly teem'd
 With airs delicious. In the greenest nook
 The eagle landed him, and farewell took.

It was a jasmine bower, all bestrown 670
 With golden moss. His every sense had grown
 Ethereal for pleasure; 'bove his head
 Flew a delight half-graspable; his tread
 Was Hesperean; to his capable ears
 Silence was music from the holy spheres;
 A dewy luxury was in his eyes;
 The little flowers felt his pleasant sighs
 And stir'd them faintly. Verdant cave and
 cell
 He wander'd through, oft wondering at such swell
 Of sudden exaltation: but, "Alas!" 680
 Said he, "will all this gush of feeling pass
 Away in solitude? And must they wane,
 Like melodies upon a sandy plain,

Endymion,
Book II.
684-713

Without an echo? Then shall I be left
So sad, so melancholy, so bereft!
Yet still I feel immortal! O my love,
My breath of life, where art thou? High above,
Dancing before the morning gates of heaven?
Or keeping watch among those starry seven, 689
Old Atlas' children? Art a maid of the waters,
One of shell-winding Triton's bright-hair'd
daughters?

Or art, impossible! a nymph of Dian's,
Weaving a coronal of tender scions
For very idleness? Where'er thou art,
Methinks it now is at my will to start
Into thine arms; to scare Aurora's train,
And snatch thee from the morning; o'er the main
To scud like a wild bird, and take thee off
From thy sea-foamy cradle; or to doff
Thy shepherd vest, and woo thee 'mid fresh
leaves. 700

No, no, too eagerly my soul deceives
Its powerless self: I know this cannot be.
O let me then by some sweet dreaming flee
To her entrancements: hither sleep awhile!
Hither most gentle sleep! and soothing foil
For some few hours the coming solitude."

Thus spake he, and that moment felt endued
With power to dream deliciously; so wound
Through a dim passage, searching till he found
The smoothest mossy bed and deepest, where 710
He threw himself, and just into the air
Stretching his indolent arms, he took, O bliss!
A naked waist: "Fair Cupid, whence is this?"

Endymion, A well-known voice sigh'd, "Sweetest, here am
Book II. I!"

714-745

At which soft ravishment, with doting cry
They trembled to each other.—Helicon!
O fountain'd hill! Old Homer's Helicon!
That thou wouldst spout a little streamlet o'er
These sorry pages; then the verse would soar
And sing above this gentle pair, like lark 720
Over his nested young: but all is dark
Around thine aged top, and thy clear fount
Exhales in mists to heaven. Aye, the count
Of mighty Poets is made up; the scroll
Is folded by the Muses; the bright roll
Is in Apollo's hand: our dazed eyes
Have seen a new tinge in the western skies:
The world has done its duty. Yet, oh yet,
Although the sun of poesy is set,
These lovers did embrace, and we must weep
That there is no old power left to steep 731
A quill immortal in their joyous tears.
Long time in silence did their anxious fears
Question that thus it was; long time they lay
Fondling and kissing every doubt away;
Long time ere soft caressing sobs began
To mellow into words, and then there ran
Two bubbling springs of talk from their sweet lips.
"O known Unknown! from whom my being sips
Such darling essence, wherefore may I not 740
Be ever in these arms? in this sweet spot
Pillow my chin for ever? ever press
These toying hands and kiss their smooth excess?
Why not for ever and for ever feel
That breath about my eyes: Ah, thou wilt steal

Away from me again, indeed, indeed—
 Thou wilt be gone away, and wilt not heed
 My lonely madness. Speak, delicious fair!
 Is—is it to be so? No! Who will dare 749
 To pluck thee from me? And, of thine own will,
 Full well I feel thou wouldst not leave me. Still
 Let me entwine thee surer, surer—now
 How can we part? Elysium! Who art thou?
 Who, that thou canst not be for ever here,
 Or lift me with thee to some starry sphere?
 Enchantress! tell me by this soft embrace,
 By the most soft complexion of thy face,
 Those lips, O slippery blisses! twinkling eyes,
 And by these tenderest, milky sovereignties—
 These tenderest, and by the nectar-wine, 760
 The passion ”——“ O do’ d Ida the divine!
 Endymion! dearest! Ah, unhappy me!
 His soul will ’scape us—O felicity!
 How he does love me! His poor temples beat
 To the very tune of love—how sweet, sweet, sweet!
 Revive, dear youth, or I shall faint and die;
 Revive, or these soft hours will hurry by
 In tranced dulness; speak, and let that spell
 Affright this lethargy! I cannot quell
 Its heavy pressure, and will press at least 770
 My lips to thine, that they may richly feast
 Until we taste the life of love again.
 What! dost thou move? dost kiss? O bliss! O
 pain!
 I love thee, youth, more than I can conceive;
 And so long absence from thee doth bereave
 My soul of any rest: yet must I hence:
 Yet, can I not to starry eminence

Endymion,
 Book II.
 746-777

Endymion, Uplift thee; nor for very shame can own
 Book II. Myself to thee. Ah, dearest! do not groan,
 778-809 Or thou wilt force me from this secrecy, 780
 And I must blush in heaven. O that I
 Had done 't already! that the dreadful smiles
 At my lost brightness, my impassion'd wiles,
 Had waned from Olympus' solemn height,
 And from all serious Gods; that our delight
 Was quite forgotten, save of us alone!
 And wherefore so asham'd?—'Tis but to atone
 For endless pleasure, by some coward blushes:
 Yet must I be a coward!—Horror rushes
 Too palpable before me—the sad look 790
 Of Jove—Minerva's start—no bosom shook
 With awe of purity—no Cupid pinion
 In reverence veil'd—my crystalline dominion
 Half lost, and all old hymns made nullity!
 But what is this to love? Oh! I could fly
 With thee into the ken of heavenly powers,
 So thou wouldst thus, for many sequent hours,
 Press me so sweetly. Now I swear at once
 'That I am wise, that Pallas is a dunce—
 Perhaps her love like mine is but unknown— 800
 Oh! I do think that I have been alone
 In chastity! yes, Pallas has been sighing,
 While every eve saw me my hair uptying
 With fingers cool as aspen leaves. Sweet love!
 I was as vague as solitary dove,
 Nor knew that nests were built. Now a soft
 kiss—
 Aye, by that kiss, I vow an endless bliss,
 An immortality of passion's thine:
 Ere long I will exalt thee to the shine

Of heaven ambrosial ; and we will shade 810 **Endymion,**
 Ourselves whole summers by a river glade ; **Book II.**
 And I will tell thee stories of the sky, **810-839**
 And breathe thee whispers of its minstrelsy.
 My happy love will overwing all bounds !
 O let me melt into thee ! let the sounds
 Of our close voices marry at their birth ;
 Let us entwine hoveringly—O dearth
 Of human words ! roughness of mortal speech !
 Lispings empyrean will I sometime teach
 Thine honey'd tongue—lute-breathings, which
 I gasp 820
 To have thee understand, now while I clasp
 Thee thus, and weep for fondness—I am pain'd,
 Endymion : woe ! woe ! is grief contain'd
 In the very deeps of pleasure, my sole life ? ”
 Hereat, with many sobs, her gentle strife
 Melted into a languor. He return'd
 Entranced vows and tears.

Ye who have yearn'd

With too much passion, will here stay and pity,
 For the mere sake of truth ; as 'tis a ditty,
 Not of these days, but long ago 'twas told 830
 By a cavern wind unto a forest old ;
 And then the forest told it in a dream
 To a sleeping lake, whose cool and level gleam
 A poet caught as he was journeying
 To Phœbus' shrine ; and in it he did fling
 His weary limbs, bathing an hour's space,
 And after, straight in that inspired place
 He sang the story up into the air,
 Giving it universal freedom. There

Endymion, Has it been ever sounding for those ears 840
Book II. Whose tips are glowing hot. The legend cheers
 840-870 Yon centinel stars; and he who listens to it
 Must surely be self-doom'd or he will rue it :
 For quenchless burnings come upon the heart,
 Made fiercer by a fear lest any part
 Should be engulfed in the eddy wind.
 As much as here is penn'd doth always find
 A resting-place, thus much comes clear and plain :
 Anon the strange voice is upon the wane—
 And 'tis but echo'd from departing sound, 850
 That the fair visitant at last unwound
 Her gentle limbs, and left the youth asleep.—
 Thus the tradition of the gusty deep.

Now turn we to our former chroniclers.—
 Endymion awoke, that grief of hers
 Sweet paining on his ear : he sickly guess'd
 How lone he was once more, and sadly press'd
 His empty arms together, hung his head,
 And most forlorn upon that widow'd bed
 Sat silently. Love's madness he had known :
 Often with more than tortured lion's groan 861
 Moanings had burst from him; but now that
 rage
 Had pass'd away : no longer did he wage
 A rough-voic'd war against the dooming stars.
 No, he had felt too much for such harsh jars :
 The lyre of his soul Æolian tun'd
 Forgot all violence, and but commun'd
 With melancholy thought : O he had swoon'd
 Drunken from pleasure's nipple! and his love 869
 Henceforth was dove-like.—Loth was he to move

From the imprinted couch, and when he did,
 'Twas with slow, languid paces, and face hid
 In muffling hands. So temper'd, out he stray'd
 Half seeing visions that might have dismay'd
 Alecto's serpents; ravishments more keen
 Than Hermes' pipe, when anxious he did lean
 Over eclipsing eyes: and at the last
 It was a sounding grotto, vaulted, vast,
 O'er-studded with a thousand, thousand pearls,
 And crimson mouthed shells with stubborn curls,
 Of every shape and size, even to the bulk 881
 In which whales harbour close, to brood and sulk
 Against an endless storm. Moreover too,
 Fish-semblances, of green and azure hue,
 Ready to snort their streams. In this cool wonder
 Endymion sat down, and 'gan to ponder
 On all his life: his youth, up to the day
 When 'mid acclaim, and feasts, and garlands gay,
 He stept upon his shepherd throne: the look
 Of his white palace in wild forest nook, 890
 And all the revels he had lorded there:
 Each tender maiden whom he once thought fair,
 With every friend and fellow-woodlander—
 Pass'd like a dream before him. Then the spur
 Of the old bards to mighty deeds: his plans
 To nurse the golden age 'mong shepherd clans:
 That wondrous night: the great Pan-festival:
 His sister's sorrow; and his wanderings all,
 Until into the earth's deep maw he rush'd:
 Then all its buried magic, till it flush'd 900
 High with excessive love. "And now,"
 thought he,
 "How long must I remain in jeopardy

Endymion,
 Book II.
 871-902

Endymion, Of blank amazements that amaze no more ?
Book II. Now I have tasted her sweet soul to the core
 903-935 All other depths are shallow : essences,
 Once spiritual, are like muddy lees,
 Meant but to fertilize my earthly root,
 And make my branches lift a golden fruit
 Into the bloom of heaven : other light,
 Though it be quick and sharp enough to blight
 The Olympian eagle's vision, is dark, 911
 Dark as the parentage of chaos. Hark !
 My silent thoughts are echoing from these shells ;
 Or they are but the ghosts, the dying swells
 Of noises far away ?—list ! ”—Hereupon
 He kept an anxious ear. The humming tone
 Came louder, and behold, there as he lay,
 On either side outgush'd, with misty spray,
 A copious spring ; and both together dash'd 919
 Swift, mad, fantastic round the rocks, and lash'd
 Among the conchs and shells of the lofty grot,
 Leaving a trickling dew. At last they shot
 Down from the ceiling's height, pouring a noise
 As of some breathless racers whose hopes poise
 Upon the last few steps, and with spent force
 Along the ground they took a winding course.
 Endymion follow'd—for it seem'd that one
 Ever pursu'd, the other strove to shun—
 Follow'd their languid mazes, till well-nigh
 He had left thinking of the mystery,— 930
 And was now rapt in tender hoverings
 Over the vanish'd bliss. Ah ! what is it sings
 His dream away ? What melodies are these ?
 They sound as through the whispering of trees,
 Not native in such barren vaults. Give ear !

Endymion,
Book II.
936-968

“O Arethusa, peerless nymph! why fear
Such tenderness as mine? Great Dian, why,
Why didst thou hear her prayer? O that I
Were rippling round her dainty fairness now,
Circling about her waist, and striving how 940
To entice her to a dive! then stealing in
Between her luscious lips and eyelids thin.
O that her shining hair was in the sun,
And I distilling from it thence to run
In amorous rillets down her shrinking form!
To linger on her lily shoulders, warm
Between her kissing breasts, and every charm
Touch raptured!—See how painfully I flow:
Fair maid, be pitiful to my great woe.
Stay, stay thy weary course, and let me lead, 950
A happy wooer, to the flowery mead
Where all that beauty snar’d me.”—“Cruel god,
Desist! or my offended mistress’ nod
Will stagnate all thy fountains:—tease me not
With syren words—Ah, have I really got
Such power to madden thee? And is it true—
Away, away, or I shall dearly rue
My very thoughts: in mercy then away,
Kindest Alpheus, for should I obey
My own dear will, ’twould be a deadly bane. 960
O, Oread-Queen! would that thou hadst a pain
Like this of mine, then would I fearless turn
And be a criminal. Alas, I burn,
I shudder—gentle river, get thee hence.
Alpheus! thou enchanter! every sense
Of mine was once made perfect in these woods.
Fresh breezes, bowery lawns, and innocent floods,
Ripe fruits, and lonely couch, contentment gave;

Endymion, But ever since I heedlessly did lave
Book II. In thy deceitful stream, a panting glow 970
969-1000 Grew strong within me : wherefore serve me so,
 And call it love ? Alas ! 'twas cruelty.
 Not once more did I close my happy eye
 Amid the thrushes' song. Away ! Avaunt !
 O 'twas a cruel thing."—" Now thou dost taunt
 So softly, Arethusa, that I think
 If thou wast playing on my shady brink,
 Thou wouldst bathe once again. Innocent maid !
 Stifle thine heart no more ;—nor be afraid
 Of angry powers : there are deities 980
 Will shade us with their wings. Those fitful sighs
 'Tis almost death to hear : O let me pour
 A dewy balm upon them !—fear no more,
 Sweet Arethusa ! Dian's self must feel,
 Sometimes, these very pangs. Dear maiden, steal
 Blushing into my soul, and let us fly
 These dreary caverns for the open sky.
 I will delight thee all my winding course,
 From the green sea up to my hidden source
 About Arcadian forests ; and will show 990
 The channels where my coolest waters flow
 Through mossy rocks ; where, 'mid exuberant green,
 I roam in pleasant darkness, more unseen
 Than Saturn in his exile ; where I brim
 Round flowery islands, and take thence a skim
 Of mealy sweets, which myriads of bees
 Buzz from their honey'd wings : and thou
 shouldst please
 Thyself to choose the richest, where we might
 Be incense-pillow'd every summer night.
 Doff all sad fears, thou white deliciousness, 1000

And let us be thus comforted ; unless
 Thou couldst rejoice to see my hopeless stream
 Hurry distracted from Sol's temperate beam,
 And pour to death along some hungry sands."—
 "What can I do, Alpheus? Dian stands
 Severe before me : persecuting fate !
 Unhappy Arethusa ! thou wast late
 A huntress free in"—At this, sudden fell
 Those two sad streams adown a fearful dell.
 The Latmian listen'd, but he heard no more,
 Save echo, faint repeating o'er and o'er 1011
 The name of Arethusa. On the verge
 Of that dark gulph he wept, and said : "I urge
 Thee, gentle Goddess of my pilgrimage,
 By our eternal hopes, to soothe, to assuage,
 If thou art powerful, these lovers' pains ;
 And make them happy in some happy plains."

Endymion,
 Book II.
 1001-1023
 Book III.
 1-4

He turn'd—there was a whelming sound—he
 stept,
 There was a cooler light ; and so he kept
 Towards it by a sandy path, and lo ! 1020
 More suddenly than doth a moment go,
 The visions of the earth were gone and fled—
 He saw the giant sea above his head.

 BOOK III

THERE are who lord it o'er their fellow-men
 With most prevailing tinsel : who unpen
 Their baaing vanities, to browse away
 The comfortable green and juicy hay

Endymion, From human pastures; or, O torturing fact!

Book III. Who, through an idiot blink, will see un-
5-34 pack'd

Fire-branded foxes to sear up and singe
Our gold and ripe-ear'd hopes. . With not one
tinge

Of sanctuary splendour, not a sight
Able to face an owl's, they still are dight 10
By the blear-eyed nations in empurpled vests,
And crowns, and turbans. With unladen breasts,
Save of blown self-applause, they proudly mount
To their spirit's perch, their being's high account,
Their tiptop nothings, their dull skies, their
thrones—

Amid the fierce intoxicating tones
Of trumpets, shoutings, and belabour'd drums,
And sudden cannon. Ah! how all this hums,
In wakeful ears, like uproar past and gone —
Like thunder-clouds that spake to Babylon, 20
And set those old Chaldeans to their tasks.—

Are then regalities all gilded masks?
No, there are throned seats unscalable
But by a patient wing, a constant spell,
Or by ethereal things that, unconfin'd,
Can make a ladder of the eternal wind,
And poise about in cloudy thunder-tents
To watch the abysm-birth of elements.
Aye, 'bove the withering of old-lipp'd Fate
A thousand Powers keep religious state, 30
In water, fiery realm, and airy bourne;
And, silent as a consecrated urn,
Hold spherey sessions for a season due.
Yet few of these far majesties, ah, few!

Have bared their operations to this globe—
 Few, who with gorgeous pageantry enrobe
 Our piece of heaven—whose benevolence
 Shakes hand with our own Ceres ; every sense
 Filling with spiritual sweets to plenitude,
 As bees gorge full their cells. And by the
 feud 40

Endymion,
 Book III.
 35-66

'Twixt Nothing and Creation, I here swear,
 Eterne Apollo ! that thy Sister fair
 Is of all these the gentlier-mightiest.
 When thy gold breath is misting in the west,
 She unobserved steals unto her throne,
 And there she sits most meek and most alone ;
 As if she had not pomp subservient ;
 As if thine eye, high Poet ! was not bent
 Towards her with the Muses in thine heart ;
 As if the minist'ring stars kept not apart, 50
 Waiting for silver-footed messages.
 O Moon ! the oldest shades 'mong oldest trees
 Feel palpitations when thou lookest in :
 O Moon ! old boughs lisp forth a holier din
 The while they feel thine airy fellowship.
 Thou dost bless every where, with silver lip
 Kissing dead things to life. The sleeping kine,
 Couch'd in thy brightness, dream of fields divine :
 Innumerable mountains rise, and rise,
 Ambitious for the hallowing of thine eyes ; 60
 And yet thy benediction passeth not
 One obscure hiding-place, one little spot
 Where pleasure may be sent : the nested wren
 Has thy fair face within its tranquil ken,
 And from beneath a sheltering ivy leaf
 Takes glimpses of thee ; thou art a relief

Endymion, To the poor patient oyster, where it sleeps
 Book III. Within its pearly house. The mighty deeps,
 67-96 The monstrous sea is thine—the myriad sea!
 O Moon! far spooming Ocean bows to thee, 70
 And Tellus feels his forehead's cumbrous load.

Cynthia! where art thou now? What far abode
 Of green or silvery bower doth enshrine
 Such utmost beauty? Alas, thou dost pine
 For one as sorrowful: thy cheek is pale
 For one whose cheek is pale: thou dost bewail
 His tears who weeps for thee! Where dost thou
 sigh?

Ah! surely that light peeps from Vesper's eye,
 Or, what a thing is love! 'Tis She, but lo! 79
 How changed, how full of ache, how gone in woe!
 She dies at the thinnest cloud; her loveliness
 Is wan on Neptune's blue: yet there's a stress
 Of love-spangles, just off yon cape of trees,
 Dancing upon the waves, as if to please
 The curly foam with amorous influence.
 O, not so idle! for down-glancing thence
 She fathoms eddies, and runs wild about
 O'erwhelming water-courses; scaring out
 The thorny sharks from hiding-holes, and fright-
 'ning 89

Their savage eyes with unaccustom'd lightning.
 Where will the splendour be content to reach?
 O love! how potent hast thou been to teach
 Strange journeyings! wherever beauty dwells,
 In gulph or aerie, mountains or deep dells,
 In light, in gloom, in star or blazing sun,
 Thou pointest out the way, and straight 'tis won.

Amid his toil thou gav'st Leander breath ;
 Thou leddest Orpheus through the gleams of
 death ;

Endymion,
 Book III.
 97-124

Thou madest Pluto bear thin element ; 99
 And now, O winged Chieftain ! thou hast sent
 A moon-beam to the deep, deep water-world,
 To find Endymion.

On gold sand impearl'd
 With lily shells, and pebbles milky white,
 Poor Cynthia greeted him, and sooth'd her light
 Against his pallid face : he felt the charm
 To breathlessness, and suddenly a warm
 Of his heart's blood : 'twas very sweet ; he stay'd
 His wandering steps, and half-entranced laid
 His head upon a tuft of straggling weeds,
 To taste the gentle moon, and freshening beads,
 Lash'd from the crystal roof by fishes' tails. 111
 And so he kept, until the rosy veils
 Mantling the east, by Aurora's peering hand
 Were lifted from the water's breast, and fann'd
 Into sweet air ; and sober'd morning came
 Meekly through billows :—when like taper-flame
 Left sudden by a dallying breath of air,
 He rose in silence, and once more 'gan fare
 Along his fated way.

Far had he roam'd,
 With nothing save the hollow vast, that foam'd
 Above, around, and at his feet ; save things 121
 More dead than Morpheus' imaginings :
 Old rusted anchors, helmets, breast-plates large
 Of gone sea-warriors ; brazen beaks and targe ;

Endymion, Rudders that for a hundred years had lost
 Book III. The sway of human hand ; gold vase emboss'd
 125-154 With long-forgotten storj; and wherein
 No reveller had ever dipp'd a chin
 But those of Saturn's vintage ; mouldering scrolls,
 Writ in the tongue of heaven, by those souls 130
 Who first were on the earth ; and sculptures rude
 In ponderous stone, developing the mood
 Of ancient Nox ;—then skeletons of man,
 Of beast, behemoth, and leviathan,
 And elephant, and eagle, and huge jaw
 Of nameless monster. A cold leaden awe
 These secrets struck into him ; and unless
 Dian had chac'd away that heaviness,
 He might have died : but now, with cheered feel,
 He onward kept ; wooing these thoughts to steal
 About the labyrinth in his soul of love. 141

“ What is there in thee, Moon ! that thou
 shouldst move
 My heart so potently ? When yet a child
 I oft have dried my tears when thou hast smil'd.
 Thou seem'dst my sister : hand in hand we
 went
 From eve to morn across the firmament.
 No apples would I gather from the tree,
 Till thou hadst cool'd their cheeks deliciously :
 No tumbling water ever spake romance, 149
 But when my eyes with thine thereon could dance :
 No woods were green enough, no bower divine,
 Until thou lifted'st up thine eyelids fine :
 In sowing-time ne'er would I dibble take,
 Or drop a seed, till thou wast wide awake ;

Endymion,
Book III.
155-184

And, in the summer-tide of blossoming,
No one but thee hath heard me blithely sing
And mesh my dewy flowers all the night.

No melody was like a passing spright
If it went not to solemnize thy reign.

Yes, in my boyhood, every joy and pain 160

By thee were fashion'd to the self-same end ;

And as I grew in years, still didst thou blend

With all my ardours : thou wast the deep
glen ;

Thou wast the mountain-top—the sage's pen—

The poet's harp—the voice of friends—the
sun ;

Thou wast the river—thou wast glory won ;

Thou wast my clarion's blast—thou wast my
steed—

My goblet full of wine—my topmost deed :—

Thou wast the charm of women, lovely Moon !

O what a wild and harmonized tune 170

My spirit struck from all the beautiful !

On some bright essence could I lean, and lull

Myself to immortality : I prest

Nature's soft pillow in a wakeful rest.

But, gentle Orb ! there came a nearer bliss—

My strange love came—Felicity's abyss !

She came, and thou didst fade, and fade away—

Yet not entirely ; no, thy starry sway

Has been an under-passion to this hour.

Now I begin to feel thine orby power 180

Is coming fresh upon me : O be kind !

Keep back thine influence, and do not blind

My sovereign vision.—Dearest love, forgive

That I can think away from thee and live !—

Endymion, Pardon me, airy planet, that I prize
 Book III. One thought beyond thine argent luxuries!
 185-215 How far beyond!" At this a surpris'd start
 Frosted the springing verdure of his heart;
 For as he lifted up his eyes to swear
 How his own goddess was past all things fair,
 He saw far in the concave green of the sea 191
 An old man sitting calm and peacefully.
 Upon a weeded rock this old man sat,
 And his white hair was awful, and a mat
 Of weeds were cold beneath his cold thin feet;
 And, ample as the largest winding-sheet,
 A cloak of blue wrapp'd up his aged bones,
 O'erwrought with symbols by the deepest groans
 Of ambitious magic: every ocean-form 199
 Was woven in with black distinctness; storm,
 And calm, and whispering, and hideous roar
 Quicksand, and whirlpool, and deserted shore,
 Were emblem'd in the woof; with every shape
 That skims, or dives, or sleeps, 'twixt cape and
 cape.
 The gulphing whale was like a dot in the spell,
 Yet look upon it, and 'twould size and swell
 To its huge self; and the minutest fish
 Would pass the very hardest gazer's wish,
 And show his little eye's anatomy.
 Then there was pictur'd the regality 210
 Of Neptune; and the sea-nymphs round his
 state,
 In beauteous vassalage, look up and wait.
 Beside this old man lay a pearly wand,
 And in his lap a book, the which he conn'd
 So steadfastly, that the new denizen

Had time to keep him in amazed ken,
To mark these shadowings, and stand in awe.

Endymion,
Book III.
216-243

The old man rais'd his hoary head and saw
The wilder'd stranger—seeming not to see,
His features were so lifeless. Suddenly 220
He woke as from a trance; his snow-white brows
Went arching up, and like two magic ploughs
Furrow'd deep wrinkles in his forehead large,
Which kept as fixedly as rocky marge,
Till round his wither'd lips had gone a smile.
Then up he rose, like one whose tedious toil
Had watch'd for years in forlorn hermitage,
Who had not from mid-life to utmost age
Eas'd in one accent his o'erburden'd soul,
Even to the trees. He rose: he grasp'd his
stole, 230
With convuls'd clenches waving it abroad,
And in a voice of solemn joy, that aw'd
Echo into oblivion, he said:—

“Thou art the man! Now shall I lay my
head

In peace upon my watery pillow: now
Sleep will come smoothly to my weary brow.
O Jove! I shall be young again, be young!
O shell-borne Neptune, I am pierc'd and stung
With new-born life! What shall I do? Where
go, 239
When I have cast this serpent-skin of woe?—
I'll swim to the syrens, and one moment listen
Their melodies, and see their long hair glisten;
Anon upon that giant's arm I'll be,

Endymion, That writhes about the roots of Sicily :
 Book III. To northern seas I'll in a twinkling sail,
 244-274 And mount upon the snortings of a whale
 To some black cloud ; thence down I'll madly
 sweep
 On forked lightning, to the deepest deep,
 Where through some sucking pool I will be hurl'd
 With rapture to the other side of the world !
 O, I am full of gladness ! Sisters three, 251
 I bow full-hearted to your old decree !
 Yes, every god be thank'd, and power benign,
 For I no more shall wither, droop, and pine.
 Thou art the man ! ” Endymion started back
 Dismay'd ; and, like a wretch from whom the
 rack
 Tortures hot breath, and speech of agony,
 Mutter'd : “ What lonely death am I to die
 In this cold region ? Will he let me freeze,
 And float my brittle limbs o'er polar seas ? 260
 Or will he touch me with his searing hand,
 And leave a black memorial on the sand ?
 Or tear me piecemeal with a bony saw,
 And keep me as a chosen food to draw
 His magian fish through hated fire and flame ?
 O misery of hell ! resistless, tame,
 Am I to be burn'd up ? No, I will shout,
 Until the gods through heaven's blue look out !—
 O Tartarus ! but some few days ago
 Her soft arms were entwining me, and on 270
 Her voice I hung like fruit among green leaves :
 Her lips were all my own, and—ah, ripe sheaves
 Of happiness ! ye on the stubble droop,
 But never may be garner'd. I must stoop

My head, and kiss death's foot! Love! love, **Endymion,**
farewell! **Book III.**

Is there no hope from thee? This horrid spell ²⁷⁵⁻³⁰⁴
Would melt at thy sweet breath.—By Dian's hind
Feeding from her white fingers, on the wind
I see thy streaming hair! and now, by Pan,
I care not for this old mysterious man!" 280

He spake, and walking to that aged form,
Look'd high defiance. Lo! his heart 'gan warm
With pity, for the grey-hair'd creature wept.
Had he then wrong'd a heart where sorrow kept?
Had he, though blindly contumelious, brought
Rheum to kind eyes, a sting to human thought,
Convulsion to a mouth of many years?
He had in truth; and he was ripe for tears.
The penitent shower fell, as down he knelt 289
Before that care-worn sage, who trembling felt
About his large dark locks, and faltering spake:

"Arise, good youth, for sacred Phœbus' sake!
I know thine inmost bosom, and I feel
A very brother's yearning for thee steal
Into mine own: for why? thou openest
The prison-gates that have so long opprest
My weary watching. Though thou know'st it not,
Thou art commission'd to this fated spot
For great enfranchisement. O weep no more!
I am a friend to love, to loves of yore: 300
Aye, hadst thou never lov'd an unknown power,
I had been grieving at this joyous hour.
But even now, most miserable old,
I saw thee, and my blood no longer cold

Endymion, Gave mighty pulses: in this tottering case
 Book III. Grew a new heart, which at this moment plays
 305-334 As dancingly as thine. Be not afraid,
 For thou shalt hear this secret all display'd,
 Now as we speed towards our joyous task."

So saying, this young soul in age's mask 310
 Went forward with the Carian side by side:
 Resuming quickly thus; while ocean's tide
 Hung swollen at their backs, and jewell'd sands
 Took silently their foot-prints.

"My soul stands

Now past the midway from mortality,
 And so I can prepare without a sigh
 To tell thee briefly all my joy and pain.
 I was a fisher once, upon this main,
 And my boat danc'd in every creek and bay;
 Rough billows were my home by night and day,—
 The sea-gulls not more constant; for I had 321
 No housing from the storm and tempests mad,
 But hollow rocks,—and they were palaces
 Of silent happiness, of slumberous ease:
 Long years of misery have told me so.
 Aye, thus it was one thousand years ago.
 One thousand years!—Is it then possible
 To look so plainly through them? to dispel
 A thousand years with backward glance sublime?
 To breathe away as 'twere all scummy slime 330
 From off a crystal pool, to see its deep,
 And one's own image from the bottom peep?
 Yes: now I am no longer wretched thrall,
 My long captivity and moanings all

Are but a slime, a thin-pervading scum,
 The which I breathe away, and thronging come
 Like things of yesterday my youthful pleasures.

Endymion,
 Book III.
 335-366

“ I touch’d no lute, I sang not, trod no measures :
 I was a lonely youth on desert shores. 339
 My sports were lonely, ’mid continuous roars,
 And craggy isles, and sea-mews’ plaintive cry
 Plaining discrepant between sea and sky.
 Dolphins were still my play-mates ; shapes unseen
 Would let me feel their scales of gold and green,
 Nor be my desolation ; and, full oft,
 When a dread water-spout had rear’d aloft
 Its hungry hugeness, seeming ready ripe
 To burst with hoarsest thunderings, and wipe
 My life away like a vast sponge of fate,
 Some friendly monster, pitying my sad state, 350
 Has div’d to its foundations, gulph’d it down,
 And left me tossing safely. But the crown
 Of all my life was utmost quietude :
 More did I love to lie in cavern rude,
 Keeping in wait whole days for Neptune’s voice,
 And if it came at last, hark, and rejoice !
 There blush’d no summer eve but I would steer
 My skiff along green shelving coasts, to hear
 The shepherd’s pipe come clear from aëry steep,
 Mingled with ceaseless bleatings of his sheep :
 And never was a day of summer shine, 361
 But I beheld its birth upon the brine :
 For I would watch all night to see unfold
 Heaven’s gates, and Æthon snort his morning gold
 Wide o’er the swelling streams : and constantly
 At brim of day-tide, on some grassy lea,

Endymion, My nets would be spread out, and I at rest.
 Book III. The poor folk of the sea-country I blest
 367-398 With daily boon of fish most delicate : 369
 They knew not whence this bounty, and elate
 Would strew sweet flowers on a sterile beach.

“ Why was I not contented ? Wherefore reach
 At things which, but for thee, O Latmian !
 Had been my dreary death ! Fool ! I began
 To feel distemper'd longings : to desire
 The utmost privilege that ocean's sire
 Could grant in benediction : to be free
 Of all his kingdom. Long in misery
 I wasted, ere in one extremest fit
 I plung'd for life or death. To interknit 380
 One's senses with so dense a breathing stuff
 Might seem a work of pain ; so not enough
 Can I admire how crystal-smooth it felt,
 And buoyant round my limbs. At first I dwelt
 Whole days and days in sheer astonishment ;
 Forgetful utterly of self-intent ;
 Moving but with the mighty ebb and flow.
 Then, like a new-fledg'd bird that first doth show
 His spreaded feathers to the morrow chill,
 I tried in fear the pinions of my will. 390
 'Twas freedom ! and at once I visited
 The ceaseless wonders of this ocean-bed.
 No need to tell thee of them, for I see
 That thou hast been a witness—it must be—
 For these I know thou canst not feel a drouth,
 By the melancholy corners of that mouth.
 So I will in my story straightway pass
 To more immediate matter. Woe, alas !

That love should be my bane! Ah, Scylla fair! **Endymion,**
 Why did poor Glaucus ever—ever dare 400 **Book III.**
 To sue thee to his heart? Kind stranger-youth! **399-430**
 I lov'd her to the very white of truth,
 And she would not conceive it. Timid thing!
 She fled me swift as sea-bird on the wing,
 Round every isle, and point, and promontory,
 From where large Hercules wound up his story
 Far as Egyptian Nile. My passion grew
 The more, the more I saw her dainty hue
 Gleam delicately through the azure clear:
 Until 'twas too fierce agony to bear; 410
 And in that agony, across my grief
 It flash'd, that Circe might find some relief—
 Cruel enchantress! So above the water
 I rear'd my head, and look'd for Phœbus' daughter.
 Ææa's isle was wondering at the moon:—
 It seem'd to whirl around me, and a swoon
 Left me dead-drifting to that fatal power.

“ When I awoke, 'twas in a twilight bower;
 Just when the light of morn, with hum of bees,
 Stole through its verdurous matting of fresh trees.
 How sweet, and sweeter! for I heard a lyre, 421
 And over it a sighing voice expire.
 It ceas'd—I caught light footsteps; and anon
 The fairest face that morn e'er look'd upon
 Push'd through a screen of roses. Starry Jove!
 With tears, and smiles, and honey-words she wove
 A net whose thraldom was more bliss than all
 The range of flower'd Elysium. Thus did fall
 The dew of her rich speech: ‘ Ah! art awake?
 ‘ O let me hear thee speak, for Cupid's sake! 430

Endymion, ' I am so oppress'd with joy ! Why, I have shed
 Book III. ' An urn of tears, as though thou wert cold dead ;
 431-460 ' And now I find thee living, I will pour
 ' From these devoted eyes their silver store,
 ' Until exhausted of the latest drop,
 ' So it will pleasure thee, and force thee stop
 ' Here, that I too may live : but if beyond
 ' Such cool and sorrowful offerings, thou art fond
 ' Of soothing warmth, of dalliance supreme ;
 ' If thou art ripe to taste a long love-dream ; 440
 ' If smiles, if dimples, tongues for ardour mute,
 ' Hang in thy vision like a tempting fruit,
 ' O let me pluck it for thee ! ' Thus she link'd
 Her charming syllables, till indistinct
 Their music came to my o'er-sweeten'd soul ;
 And then she hover'd over me, and stole
 So near, that if no nearer it had been
 This furrow'd visage thou hadst never seen.

" Young man of Latmos ! thus particular
 Am I, that thou may'st plainly see how far 450
 This fierce temptation went : and thou may'st
 not
 Exclaim, How then, was Scylla quite forgot ?

" Who could resist ? Who in this universe ?
 She did so breathe ambrosia ; so immerse
 My fine existence in a golden clime.
 She took me like a child of suckling time,
 And cradled me in roses. Thus condemn'd,
 The current of my former life was stemn'd,
 And to this arbitrary queen of sense
 I bow'd a tranced vassal : nor would thence 460

Have moved, even though Amphion's harp had
woo'd

Endymion,
Book III.
461-488

Me back to Scylla o'er the billows rude.
For as Apollo each eve doth devise
A new appareling for western skies ;
So every eve, nay every spendthrift hour
Shed balmy consciousness within that bower,
And I was free of haunts umbrageous ;
Could wander in the mazy forest-house
Of squirrels, foxes shy, and antler'd deer,
And birds from coverts innermost and drear 470
Warbling for very joy mellifluous sorrow—
To me new-born delights !

“ Now let me borrow,
For moments few, a temperament as stern
As Pluto's sceptre, that my words not burn
These uttering lips, while I in calm speech tell
How specious heaven was changed to real hell.

“ One morn she left me sleeping : half àwake
I sought for her smooth arms and lips, to slake
My greedy thirst with nectarous camel-draughts ;
But she was gone. Whereat the barbed shafts
Of disappointment stuck in me so sore, 481
That out I ran and search'd the forest o'er.
Wandering about in pine and cedar gloom
Damp awe assail'd me ; for their 'gan to boom
A sound of moan, an agony of sound,
Sepulchral from the distance all around.
Then came a conquering earth-thunder, and
rumbled
That fierce complain to silence : while I stumbled

Endymion, Down a precipitous path, as if impell'd.
 Book III. I came to a dark valley.—Groanings swell'd
 489-520 Poisonous about my ears, and louder grew, 491
 The nearer I approach'd a flame's gaunt blue,
 That glar'd before me through a thorny brake
 This fire, like the eye of gordian snake,
 Bewitch'd me towards; and I soon was near
 A sight too fearful for the feel of fear:
 In thicket hid I curs'd the haggard scene—
 The banquet of my arms, my arbour queen,
 Seated upon an uptorn forest root; 499
 And all around her shapes, wizard and brute,
 Laughing, and wailing, groveling, serpentine,
 Showing tooth, tusk, and venom-bag, and sting!
 O such deformities! Old Charon's self,
 Should he give up awhile his penny pelf,
 And take a dream 'mong rushes Stygian,
 It could not be so phantasied. Fierce, wan,
 And tyrannizing was the lady's look,
 As over them a gnarled staff she shook.
 Oft-times upon a sudden she laugh'd out,
 And from a basket emptied to the rout 510
 Clusters of grapes, the which they raven'd quick
 And roar'd for more; with many a hungry
 lick
 About their shaggy jaws. Avenging, slow,
 Anon she took a branch of mistletoe,
 And emptied on't a black dull-gurgling phial:
 Groan'd one and all, as if some piercing trial
 Was sharpening for their pitiable bones.
 She lifted up the charm: appealing groans
 From their poor breasts went suing to her ear
 In vain; remorseless as an infant's bier 520

She whisk'd against their eyes the sooty oil.
 Whereat was heard a noise of painful toil,
 Increasing gradual to a tempest rage,
 Shrieks, yells, and groans of torture-pilgrimage ;
 Until their grieved bodies 'gan to bloat
 And puff from the tail's end to stifled throat :
 Then was appalling silence : then a sight
 More wildering than all that hoarse affright ;
 For the whole herd, as by a whirlwind writhen,
 Went through the dismal air like one huge Python
 Antagonizing Boreas,—and so vanish'd. 531
 Yet there was not a breath of wind : she banish'd
 These phantoms with a nod. Lo ! from the
 dark

Endymion,
 Book III.
 521-552

Came waggish fauns, and nymphs, and satyrs stark,
 With dancing and loud revelry,—and went
 Swifter than centaurs after rapine bent.—
 Sighing an elephant appear'd and bow'd
 Before the fierce witch, speaking thus aloud
 In human accent : ' Potent goddess ! chief
 ' Of pains resistless ! make my being brief, 540
 ' Or let me from this heavy prison fly :
 ' Or give me to the air, or let me die !
 ' I sue not for my happy crown again ;
 ' I sue not for my phalanx on the plain ;
 ' I sue not for my lone, my widow'd wife :
 ' I sue not for my ruddy drops of life,
 ' My children fair, my lovely girls and boys !
 ' I will forget them ; I will pass these joys ;
 ' Ask nought so heavenward, so too—too high ;
 ' Only I pray, as fairest boon, to die, 550
 ' Or be deliver'd from this cumbrous flesh,
 ' From this gross, detestable, filthy mesh,

Endymion, ' And merely given to the cold bleak air.
 Book III. ' Have mercy, Goddess! Circe, feel my prayer!'
 553-584

“ That curst magician's name fell icy numb
 Upon my wild conjecturing : truth had come
 Naked and sabre-like against my heart.
 I saw a fury whetting a death-dart ;
 And my slain spirit, overwrought with fright,
 Fainted away in that dark lair of night. 560
 Think, my deliverer, how desolate
 My waking must have been ! disgust, and hate,
 And terrors manifold divided me
 A spoil amongst them. I prepar'd to flee
 Into the dungeon core of that wild wood :
 I fled three days—when lo ! before me stood
 Glaring the angry witch. O Dis, even now,
 A clammy dew is beading on my brow,
 At mere remembering her pale laugh, and curse.
 ' Ha ! ha ! Sir Dainty ! there must be a nurse 570
 ' Made of rose-leaves and thistle-down, express,
 ' To cradle thee, my sweet, and lull thee : yes,
 ' I am too flinty-hard for thy nice touch :
 ' My tenderest squeeze is but a giant's clutch.
 ' So, fairy-thing, it shall have lullabies
 ' Unheard of yet ; and it shall still its cries
 ' Upon some breast more lily-feminine.
 ' Oh, no—it shall not pine, and pine, and pine
 ' More than one pretty, trifling thousand years ;
 ' And then 'twere pity, but fate's gentle shears
 ' Cut short its immortality. Sea-flirt ! 581
 ' Young dove of the waters ! truly I'll not hurt
 ' One hair of thine : see how I weep and sigh,
 ' That our heart-broken parting is so nigh.

' And must we part? Ah, yes, it must be so. Endymion,
 ' Yet ere thou leavest me in utter woe, Book III.
 ' Let me sob over thee my last adieus, 585-614
 ' And speak a blessing: Mark me! Thou hast
 thews
 ' Immortal, for thou art of heavenly race:
 ' But such a love is mine, that here I chase 590
 ' Eternally away from thee all bloom
 ' Of youth, and destine thee towards a tomb.
 ' Hence shalt thou quickly to the watery vast;
 ' And there, ere many days be overpast,
 ' Disabled age shall seize thee; and even then
 ' Thou shalt not go the way of aged men;
 ' But live and wither, cripple and still breathe
 ' Ten hundred years: which gone, I then be-
 queath
 ' Thy fragile bones to unknown burial. 599
 ' Adieu, sweet love, adieu!—As shot stars fall,
 She fled ere I could groan for mercy. Stung
 And poison'd was my spirit: despair sung
 A war-song of defiance 'gainst all hell.
 A hand was at my shoulder to compel
 My sullen steps; another 'fore my eyes
 Moved on with pointed finger. In this guise
 Enforced, at the last by ocean's foam
 I found me; by my fresh, my native home,
 Its tempering coolness, to my life akin,
 Came salutary as I waded in: 610
 And, with a blind voluptuous rage, I gave,
 Battle to the swollen billow-ridge, and drave
 Large froth before me, while there yet remain'd
 Hale strength, nor from my bones all marrow
 drain'd.

Endymion, " Young lover, I must weep—such hellish spite
 Book III. With dry cheek who can tell? While thus my
 615-645 might

Proving upon this element, dismay'd,
 Upon a dead thing's face my hand I laid ;
 I look'd—'twas Scylla! Cursed, cursed Circe !
 O vulture-witch, hast never heard of mercy ? 620
 Could not thy harshest vengeance be content,
 But thou must nip this tender innocent
 Because I lov'd her ?—Cold, O cold indeed
 Were her fair limbs, and like a common weed
 'The sea-swell took her hair. Dead as she was
 I clung about her waist, nor ceas'd to pass
 Fleet as an arrow through unfathom'd brine,
 Until there shone a fabric crystalline,
 Ribb'd and inlaid with coral, pebble, and pearl,
 Headlong I darted ; at one eager swirl 630
 Gain'd its bright portal, enter'd, and behold !
 'Twas vast, and desolate, and icy-cold ;
 And all around—But wherefore this to thee
 Who in few minutes more thyself shalt see ?—
 I left poor Scylla in a niche and fled.
 My fever'd parchings up, my scathing dread
 Met palsy half way : soon these limbs became
 Gaunt, wither'd, sapless, feeble, cramp'd, and lame.

" Now let me pass a cruel, cruel space, 639
 Without one hope, without one faintest trace
 Of mitigation, or redeeming bubble
 Of colour'd phantasy ; for I fear 'twould trouble
 Thy brain to loss of reason : and next tell
 How a restoring chance came down to quell
 One half of the witch in me.

Endymion,
Book III.
646-674

“On a day,
Sitting upon a rock above the spray,
I saw grow up from the horizon’s brink
A gallant vessel: soon she seem’d to sink
Away from me again, as though her course
Had been resum’d in spite of hindering force—
So vanish’d: and not long, before arose 651
Dark clouds, and muttering of winds morose.
Old Æolus would stifle his mad spleen,
But could not: therefore all the billows green
Toss’d up the silver spume against the clouds.
The tempest came: I saw that vessel’s shrouds
In perilous bustle; while upon the deck
Stood trembling creatures. I beheld the wreck;
The final gulphing; the poor struggling souls:
I heard their cries amid loud thunder-rolls. 660
O they had all been sav’d but crazed eld
Annull’d my vigorous cravings: and thus quell’d
And curb’d, think on’t, O Latmian! did I sit
Writhing with pity, and a cursing fit
Against that hell-born Circe. The crew had
gone,
By one and one, to pale oblivion:
And I was gazing on the surges prone,
With many a scalding tear and many a groan,
When at my feet emerged an old man’s hand, 669
Grasping this scroll, and this same slender wand.
I knelt with pain—reach’d out my hand—had
grasp’d
These treasures—touch’d the knuckles—they
unclasp’d—
I caught a finger: but the downward weight
O’erpower’d me—it sank. Then ’gan abate

Endymion, The storm, and through chill aguish gloom out-
Book III. burst

675-705 The comfortable sun. I was athirst
To search the book, and in the warming air
Parted its dripping leaves with eager care.
Strange matters did it treat of, and drew on
My soul page after page, till well-nigh won 680
Into forgetfulness; when, stupefied,
I read these words, and read again, and tried
My eyes against the heavens, and read again.
O what a load of misery and pain
Each Atlas-line bore off!—a shine of hope
Came gold around me, cheering me to cope
Strenuous with hellish tyranny. Attend!
For thou hast brought their promise to an end.

*“ In the wide sea there lives a forlorn wretch,
Doom'd with enfeebled carcase to outstretch 690
His loath'd existence through ten centuries,
And then to die alone. Who can devise
A total opposition? No one. So
One million times ocean must ebb and flow,
And he oppressed. Yet he shall not die,
These things accomplish'd :—If he utterly
Scans all the depths of magic, and expounds
The meanings of all motions, shapes, and sounds ;
If he explores all forms and substances
Straight homeward to their symbol-essences ; 700
He shall not die. Moreover, and in chief,
He must pursue this task of joy and grief
Most piously ;—all lovers tempest-tost,
And in the savage overwhelming lost,
He shall deposit side by side, until*

*Time's creeping shall the dreary space fulfil :
Which done, and all these labours ripened,
A youth, by heavenly power lov'd and led,
Shall stand before him ; whom he shall direct
How to consummate all. The youth elect 710
Must do the thing, or both will be destroy'd."*

Endymion,
Book III.
706-734

"Then," cried the young Endymion, over-joy'd,

"We are twin brothers in this destiny !
Say, I entreat thee, what achievement high
Is, in this restless world, for me reserv'd.
What ! if from thee my wandering feet had
swerv'd,
Had we both perish'd ?"—"Look !" the sage
replied,

"Dost thou not mark a gleaming through the tide,
Of diverse brilliances ? 'tis the edifice
I told thee of, where lovely Scylla lies ; 720
And where I have enshrined piously
All lovers, whom fell storms have doom'd to die
Throughout my bondage." Thus discoursing, on
They went till unobscur'd the porches shone ;
Which hurryingly they gain'd, and enter'd straight.
Sure never since king Neptune held his state
Was seen such wonder underneath the stars.
Turn to some level plain where haughty Mars
Has legion'd all his battle ; and behold 729
How every soldier, with firm foot, doth hold
His even breast ; see, many steeled squares,
And rigid ranks of iron—whence who dares
One step ? Imagine further, line by line
These warrior thousands on the field supine :—

Endymion, So in that crystal place, in silent rows,
 Book III. Poor lovers lay at rest from joys and woes.—
 735-762 The stranger from the mountains, breathless, trac'd
 Such thousands of shut eyes in order plac'd ;
 Such ranges of white feet, and patient lips
 All ruddy,—for here death no blossom nips. 740
 He mark'd their brows and foreheads ; saw their
 hair
 Put sleekly on one side with nicest care ;
 And each one's gentle wrists, with reverence,
 Put cross-wise to its heart.

“ Let us commence,”
 Whisper'd the guide, stuttering with joy, “ even
 now.”

He spake, and, trembling like an aspen-bough,
 Began to tear his scroll in pieces small,
 Uttering the while some mumblings funeral.
 He tore it into pieces small as snow 749
 That drifts unfeather'd when bleak northerns blow ;
 And having done it, took his dark blue cloak
 And bound it round Endymion : then struck
 His wand against the empty air times nine.—
 “ What more there is to do, young man, is thine :
 But first a little patience ; first undo
 This tangled thread, and wind it to a clue.
 Ah, gentle ! 'tis as weak as spider's skein ;
 And shouldst thou break it—What, is it done so
 clean ?

A power overshadows thee ! O, brave !
 The spite of hell is tumbling to its grave. 760
 Here is a shell ; 'tis pearly blank to me,
 Nor mark'd with any sign or character—

Canst thou read aught? O read for pity's
 sake! Endymion,
 Book III.
 763-791
 Olympus! we are safe! Now, Carian, break
 This wand against yon lyre on the pedestal."

'Twas done: and straight with sudden swell
 and fall

Sweet music breath'd her soul away, and sigh'd
 A lullaby to silence.—“ Youth! now strew
 These minced leaves on me, and passing through
 Those files of dead, scatter the same around, 770

And thou wilt see the issue.”—'Mid the sound
 Of flutes and viols, ravishing his heart,
 Endymion from Glaucus stood apart,
 And scatter'd in his face some fragments light.
 How lightning-swift the change! a youthful wight
 Smiling beneath a coral diadem,

Out-sparkling sudden like an up-turn'd gem,
 Appear'd, and, stepping to a beauteous corse,
 Kneel'd down beside it, and with tenderest force
 Press'd its cold hand, and wept,—and Scylla
 sigh'd! 780

Endymion, with quick hand, the charm applied—
 The nymph arose: he left them to their joy,
 And onward went upon his high employ,
 Showering those powerful fragments on the dead.
 And, as he pass'd, each lifted up its head,
 As doth a flower at Apollo's touch.

Death felt it to his inwards; 'twas too much:
 Death fell a-weeping in his charnel-house.
 The Latmian persever'd along, and thus
 All were re-animated. There arose 790
 A noise of harmony, pulses and throes

Endymion, Of gladness in the air—while many, who
 Book III. Had died in mutual arms devout and true,
 792-819 Sprang to each other madly ; and the rest
 Felt a high certainty of being blest.
 They gaz'd upon Endymion. Enchantment
 Grew drunken, and would have its head and
 bent.

Delicious symphonies, like airy flowers,
 Budded, and swell'd, and, full-blown, shed full
 showers

Of light, soft, unseen leaves of sounds divine. 800
 The two deliverers tasted a pure wine
 Of happiness, from fairy-press ooz'd out.
 Speechless they eyed each other, and about
 The fair assembly wander'd to and fro,
 Distracted with the richest overflow
 Of joy that ever pour'd from heaven.

——“ Away ! ”

Shouted the new-born god ; “ Follow, and pay
 Our piety to Neptunus supreme ! ”
 Then Scylla, blushing sweetly from her dream,
 They led on first, bent to her meek surprise, 810
 Through portal columns of a giant size
 Into the vaulted, boundless emerald.
 Joyous all follow'd, as the leader call'd,
 Down marble steps ; pouring as easily
 As hour-glass sand,—and fast, as you might see
 Swallows obeying the south summer's call,
 Or swans upon a gentle waterfall.

Thus went that beautiful multitude, nor far
 Ere from among some rocks of glittering spar,

Just within ken, they saw descending thick 820
 Another multitude. Whereat more quick *Endymion,*
 Mov'd either host. On a wide sand they met, *Book III.*
 And of those numbers every eye was wet; *820-849*
 For each their old love found. A murmuring
 rose,

Like what was never heard in all the throes
 Of wind and waters: 'tis past human wit
 To tell; 'tis dizziness to think of it.

This mighty consummation made, the host
 Mov'd on for many a league; and gain'd, and
 lost

Huge sea-marks; vanward swelling in array,
 And from the rear diminishing away,— 831
 Till a faint dawn surpris'd them. Glaucus cried,
 "Behold! behold, the palace of his pride!
 God Neptune's palaces!" With noise increas'd,
 They shoulder'd on towards that brightening east.
 At every onward step proud domes arose
 In prospect,—diamond gleams and golden glows
 Of amber 'gainst their faces levelling.
 Joyous, and many as the leaves in spring,
 Still onward; still the splendour gradual swell'd.
 Rich opal domes were seen, on high upheld 841
 By jasper pillars, letting through their shafts
 A blush of coral. Copious wonder-draughts
 Each gazer drank; and deeper drank more near:
 For what poor mortals fragment up, as mere
 As marble was there lavish, to the vast
 Of one fair palace, that far, far surpass'd,
 Even for common bulk, those olden three,
 Memphis, and Babylon, and Nineveh.

Endymion, As large, as bright, as colour'd as the bow
 Book III. Of Iris, when unfading it doth show 851
 850-879 Beyond a silvery shower, was the arch
 Through which this Paphian army took its march,
 Into the outer courts of Neptune's state :
 Whence could be seen, direct, a golden gate,
 To which the leaders sped ; but not half raught
 Ere it burst open swift as fairy thought,
 And made those dazzled thousands veil their
 eyes
 Like callow eagles at the first sunrise.
 Soon with an eagle nativeness their gaze 860
 Ripe from hue-golden swoons took all the blaze,
 And then, behold ! large Neptune on his throne
 Of emerald deep : yet not exalt alone ;
 At his right hand stood winged Love, and on
 His left sat smiling Beauty's paragon.

 Far as the mariner on highest mast
 Can see all round upon the calmed vast,
 So wide was Neptune's hall : and as the blue
 Doth vault the waters, so the waters drew
 Their dooming curtains, high, magnificent, 870
 Aw'd from the throne aloof ;—and when storm-
 rent
 Disclos'd the thunder-gloomings in Jove's air ;
 But sooth'd as now, flash'd sudden everywhere,
 Noiseless, sub-marine cloudlets, glittering
 Death to a human eye : for there did spring
 From natural west, and east, and south, and north,
 A light as of four sunsets, blazing forth
 A gold-green zenith 'bove the Sea-God's head.
 Of lucid depth the floor, and far outspread

As breezeless lake, on which the slim canoe 880
 Of feather'd Indian darts about, as through Endymion,
 The delicatest air : air verily, Book III.
 But for the portraiture of clouds and sky : 880-907
 This palace floor breath-air,—but for the amaze
 Of deep-seen wonders motionless,—and blaze
 Of the dome pomp, reflected in extremes,
 Globing a golden sphere.

They stood in dreams

Till Triton blew his horn. The palace rang ;
 The Nereids danc'd ; the Syrens faintly sang :
 And the great Sea-King bow'd his dripping
 head. 890

Then Love took wing, and from his pinions shed
 On all the multitude a nectarous dew.
 The ooze-born Goddess beckoned and drew
 Fair Scylla and her guides to conference ;
 And when they reach'd the throned eminence
 She kist the sea-nymph's cheek,—who sat her
 down
 A toying with the doves. Then,—“ Mighty
 crown
 And sceptre of this kingdom ! ” Venus said,
 “ Thy vows were on a time to Nais paid : 899
 Behold ! ”—Two copious tear-drops instant fell
 From the God's large eyes ; he smil'd delectable,
 And over Glaucus held his blessing hands.—
 “ Endymion ! Ah ! still wandering in the bands
 Of love ? Now this is cruel. Since the hour
 I met thee in earth's bosom, all my power
 Have I put forth to serve thee. What, not yet
 Escap'd from dull mortality's harsh net ?

Endymion, A little patience, youth! 'twill not be long,
Book III. Or I am skillless quite: an idle tongue,
 908-936 A humid eye, and steps luxurious, 910
 Where these are new and strange, are ominous.
 Aye, I have seen these signs in one of heaven,
 When others were all blind; and were I given
 To utter secrets, haply I might say
 Some pleasant words:—but Love will have his
 day.

So wait awhile expectant. Pr'ythee soon,
 Even in the passing of thine honey-moon,
 Visit thou my Cythera: thou wilt find
 Cupid well-natured, my Adonis kind;
 And pray persuade with thee—Ah, I have done,
 All blisses be upon thee, my sweet son!" 921
 Thus the fair goddess: while Endymion
 Knelt to receive those accents halcyon.

Meantime a glorious revelry began
 Before the Water-Monarch. Nectar ran
 In courteous fountains to all cups outreach'd:
 And plunder'd vines, teeming exhaustless, pleach'd
 New growth about each shell and pendant lyre;
 The which, in disentangling for their fire,
 Pull'd down fresh foliage and coverture
 For dainty toying. Cupid, empire-sure, 930
 Flutter'd and laugh'd, and oft-times through the
 throng
 Made a delighted way. Then dance and song,
 And garlanding grew wild; and pleasure reign'd.
 In harmless tendrils they each other chain'd,
 And strove who should be smother'd deepest in
 Fresh crush of leaves.

O 'tis a very sin
 For one so weak to venture his poor verse
 In such a place as this. O do not curse,
 High Muses! let him hurry to the ending. 940

Endymion,
 Book III.
 936-967

All suddenly were silent. A soft blending
 Of dulcet instruments came charmingly;
 And then a hymn.

“ King of the stormy sea!

Brother of Jove, and co-inheritor
 Of elements! Eternally before
 Thee the waves awful bow. Fast, stubborn rock,
 At thy fear'd trident shrinking, doth unlock
 Its deep foundations, hissing into foam.
 All mountain-rivers, lost in the wide home
 Of thy capacious bosom, ever flow. 950
 Thou frownest, and old Æolus thy foe
 Skulks to his cavern, 'mid the gruff complaint
 Of all his rebel tempests. Dark clouds faint
 When, from thy diadem, a silver gleam
 Slants over blue dominion. Thy bright team
 Gulphs in the morning light, and scuds along
 To bring thee nearer to that golden song
 Apollo singeth, while his chariot
 Waits at the doors of heaven. Thou art not 959
 For scenes like this: an empire stern hast thou;
 And it hath furrow'd that large front: yet now,
 As newly come of heaven, dost thou sit
 To blend and interknit
 Subdued majesty with this glad time.
 O shell-borne King sublime!
 We lay our hearts before thee evermore—
 We sing, and we adore!

Endymion, " Breathe softly, flutes ;
Book III. Be tender of your strings, ye soothing lutes ;
 968-997 Nor be the trumpet heard ! O vain, O vain ! 970
 Not flowers budding in an April rain,
 Nor breath of sleeping dove, nor river's flow,—
 No, nor the Æolian twang of Love's own bow,
 Can mingle music fit for the soft ear
 Of goddess Cytherea !
 Yet deign, white Queen of Beauty, thy fair eyes
 On our soul's sacrifice.

 " Bright-winged Child !
 Who has another care when thou hast smil'd ?
 Unfortunates on earth, we see at last 980
 All death-shadows, and glooms that overcast
 Our spirits, fann'd away by thy light pinions.
 O sweetest essence ! sweetest of all minions !
 God of warm pulses, and dishevell'd hair,
 And panting bosoms bare !
 Dear unseen light in darkness ! eclipser
 Of light in light ! delicious poisoner !
 Thy venom'd goblet will we quaff until
 We fill—we fill !
 And by thy Mother's lips———"

 Was heard no more
 For clamour, when the golden palace-door 991
 Open'd again, and from without, in shone
 A new magnificence. On oozy throne
 Smooth-moving came Oceanus the old,
 To take a latest glimpse at his sheep-fold,
 Before he went into his quiet cave
 To muse for ever—Then a lucid wave,

Scoop'd from its trembling sisters of mid- **Endymion,**
 sea, **Book III.**
 998-1025

Afloat, and pillowing up the majesty
 Of Doris, and the Ægean seer, her spouse—
 Next, on a dolphin, clad in laurel boughs, 1001
 Theban Amphion leaning on his lute,
 His fingers went across it—All were mute
 To gaze on Amphitrite, queen of pearls,
 And Thetis pearly too.—

The palace whirls

Around giddy Endymion; seeing he
 Was there far strayed from mortality.
 He could not bear it—shut his eyes in vain;
 Imagination gave a dizzier pain.
 “O I shall die! sweet Venus, be my stay! 1010
 Where is my lovely mistress? Well-away!
 I die—I hear her voice—I feel my wing—”
 At Neptune's feet he sank. A sudden ring
 Of Nereids were about him, in kind strife
 To usher back his spirit into life:
 But still he slept. At last they interwove
 Their cradling arms, and purpos'd to convey
 Towards a crystal bower far away.

Lo! while slow carried through the pitying
 crowd, 1019
 To his inward senses these words spake aloud;
 Written in star-light on the dark above:
Dearest Endymion! my entire love!
How have I dwelt in fear of fate: 'tis done—
Immortal bliss for me too hast thou won.
Arise then! for the hen-dove shall not hatch

Endymion, *Her ready eggs, before I'll kissing snatch*
 Book III. *Thee into endless heaven. Awake! awake!*

1026-1032

Book IV.

1-20

The youth at once arose: a placid lake
 Came quiet to his eyes; and forest green,
 Cooler than all the wonders he had seen, 1030
 Lull'd with its simple song his fluttering breast.
 How happy once again in grassy nest!

BOOK IV

MUSE of my native land! loftiest Muse!
 O first-born on the mountains! by the hues
 Of heaven on the spiritual air begot;
 Long didst thou sit alone in northern grot,
 While yet our England was a wolfish den;
 Before our forests heard the talk of men;
 Before the first of Druids was a child;—
 Long didst thou sit amid our regions wild,
 Rapt in a deep prophetic solitude. 9
 There came an eastern voice of solemn mood:—
 Yet wast thou patient. Then sang forth the Nine,
 Apollo's garland:—yet didst thou divine
 Such home-bred glory, that they cried in vain,
 "Come hither, Sister of the Island!" Plain
 Spake fair Ausonia; and once more she spake
 A higher summons:—still didst thou betake
 Thee to thy native hopes. O thou hast won
 A full accomplishment! The thing is done,
 Which undone, these our later days had risen
 On barren souls. Great Muse, thou know'st
 what prison, 20

Of flesh and bone, curbs, and confines, and frets
 Our spirit's wings: despondency besets
 Our pillows; and the fresh to-morrow morn
 Seems to give forth its light in very scorn
 Of our dull, uninspir'd, snail-paced lives.
 Long have I said, how happy he who shrives
 To thee! But then I thought on poets gone,
 And could not pray:—nor can I now—so on
 I move to the end in lowliness of heart.—

Endymion,
 Book IV.
 21-48

“ Ah, woe is me! that I should fondly part 30
 From my dear native land! Ah, foolish maid!
 Glad was the hour, when, with thee, myriads
 bade

Adieu to Ganges and their pleasant fields!
 To one so friendless the clear feshet yields
 A bitter coolness; the ripe grape is sour:
 Yet I would have, great gods! but one short hour
 Of native air—let me but die at home.”

Endymion to heaven's airy dome
 Was offering up a hecatomb of vows,
 When these words reach'd him. Whereupon he
 bows 40
 His head through thorny-green entanglement
 Of underwood, and to the sound is bent,
 Anxious as hind towards her hidden fawn.

“ Is no one near to help me? No fair dawn
 Of life from charitable voice? No sweet saying
 To set my dull and sadden'd spirit playing?
 No hand to toy with mine? No lips so sweet
 That I may worship them? No eyelids meet

Endymion, To twinkle on my bosom? no one dies
 Book IV. Before me, till from these enslaving eyes 50
 49-76 Redemption sparkles!—I am sad and lost.”

Thou, Carian lord, hadst better have been
 tost
 Into a whirlpool. Vanish into air,
 Warm mountaineer! for canst thou only bear
 A woman's sigh alone and in distress?
 See not her charms! Is Phœbe passionless?
 Phœbe is fairer far—O gaze no more:—
 Yet if thou wilt behold all beauty's store,
 Behold her panting in the forest grass!
 Do not those curls of glossy jet surpass 60
 For tenderness the arms so idly lain
 Amongst them? Feelest not a kindred pain,
 To see such lovely eyes in swimming search
 After some warm delight, that seems to perch
 Dovelike in the dim cell lying beyond
 Their upper lids?—Hist!

“O for Hermes' wand,
 To touch this flower into human shape!
 That woodland Hyacinthus could escape
 From his green prison, and here kneeling down
 Call me his queen, his second life's fair crown! 70
 Ah me, how I could love!—My soul doth melt
 For the unhappy youth—Love! I have felt
 So faint a kindness, such a meek surrender
 To what my own full thoughts had made too
 tender,
 That but for tears my life had fled away!—
 Ye deaf and senseless minutes of the day,

And thou, old forest, hold ye this for true,
 There is no lightning, no authentic dew
 But in the eye of love : there's not a sound,
 Melodious howsoever, can confound 80
 The heavens and earth in one to such a death
 As doth the voice of love : there's not a breath
 Will mingle kindly with the meadow air,
 Till it has panted round, and stolen a share
 Of passion from the heart ! ”—

Endymion,
 Book IV.
 77-105

Upon a bough

He leant, wretched. He surely cannot now
 Thirst for another love : O impious,
 That he can even dream 'upon it thus !
 Thought he, “ Why am I not as are the dead,
 Since to a woe like this I have been led 90
 Through the dark earth, and through the wondrous
 sea ?

Goddess ! I love thee not the less : from thee
 By Juno's smile I turn not—no, no, no—
 While the great waters are at ebb and flow.—
 I have a triple soul ! O fond pretence—
 For both, for both my love is so immense,
 I feel my heart is cut for them in twain.”

And so he groan'd, as one by beauty slain.
 The lady's heart beat quick, and he could see
 Her gentle bosom heave tumultuously. 100
 He sprang from his green covert : there she lay,
 Sweet as a muskrose upon new-made hay ;
 With all her limbs on tremble, and her eyes
 Shut softly up alive. To speak he tries :
 “ Fair damsel, pity me ! forgive that I

Endymion,
Book IV.
106-136

Thus violate thy bower's sanctity !
 O pardon me, for I am full of grief—
 Grief born of thee, young angel ! fairest thief !
 Who stolen hast away the wings wherewith
 I was to top the heavens. Dear maid, sith 110
 Thou art my executioner, and I feel
 Loving and hatred, misery and weal,
 Will in a few short hours be nothing to me,
 And all my story that much passion slew me ;
 Do smile upon the evening of my days ;
 And, for my tortur'd brain begins to craze,
 Be thou my nurse ; and let me understand
 How dying I shall kiss that lily hand.—
 Dost weep for me ! Then should I be content.
 Scowl on, ye fates ! until the firmament 120
 Outblackens Erebus, and the full-cavern'd earth
 Crumbles into itself. By the cloud-girth
 Of Jove, those tears have given me a thirst
 To meet oblivion."—As her heart would burst
 The maiden sobb'd awhile, and then replied :
 " Why must such desolation betide
 As that thou speak'st of ? Are not these green
 nooks
 Empty of all misfortune ? Do the brooks
 Utter a gorgon voice ? Does yonder thrush,
 Schooling its half-fledg'd little ones to brush 130
 About the dewy forest, whisper tales ? "
 Speak not of grief, young stranger, or cold snails
 Will slime the rose to-night. Though if thou wilt,
 Methinks 'twould be a guilt—a very guilt—
 Not to companion thee, and sigh away
 The light—the dusk—the dark—till break of
 day ! "

"Dear lady," said Endymion, "'tis past :
 I love thee ! and my days can never last.
 That I may pass in patience still speak :
 Let me have music dying, and I seek 140
 No more delight—I bid adieu to all.
 Didst thou not after other climates call,
 And murmur about Indian streams ?"—Then she,
 Sitting beneath the midmost forest tree,
 For pity sang this roundelay—

Endymion,
 Book IV.
 137-166

"O Sorrow !
 Why dost borrow
 The natural hue of health from vermeil lips ?—
 To give maiden blushes
 To the white rose bushes ? 150
 Or is it thy dewy hand the daisy tips ?

"O Sorrow !
 Why dost borrow
 The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye ?—
 To give the glow-worm light ?
 Or, on a moonless night,
 To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spry ?

"O Sorrow !
 Why dost borrow
 The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue ?—
 To give at evening pale 161
 Unto the nightingale,
 That thou mayst listen the cold dews among ?

"O Sorrow !
 Why dost borrow
 Heart's lightness from the merriment of May ?—

Endymion,
Book IV.
167-196

A lover would not tread
A cowslip on the head,
Though he should dance from eve till peep of
day—
Nor any drooping flower 170
Held sacred for thy bower,
Wherever he may sport himself and play.

“To Sorrow
I bade good morrow,
And thought to leave her far away behind ;
But cheerly, cheerly,
She loves me dearly ;
She is so constant to me, and so kind :
I would deceive her,
And so leave her, 180
But ah ! she is so constant and so kind.

“Beneath my palm-trees, by the river side,
I sat a weeping : in the whole world wide
There was no one to ask me why I wept,—
And so I kept
Brimming the water-lily cups with tears
Cold as my fears.

“Beneath my palm-trees, by the river side,
I sat a weeping : what enamour'd bride,
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,
But hides and shrouds 191
Beneath dark palm-trees by a river side ?

“And as I sat, over the light blue hills
There came a noise of revellers : the rills
Into the wide stream came of purple hue—
’Twas Bacchus and his crew !

The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills
 From kissing cymbals made a merry din—
 'Twas Bacchus and his kin!

Endymion,
 Book IV.
 197-227

Like to a moving vintage down they came, 200
 Crown'd with green leaves, and faces all on flame;
 All madly dancing through the pleasant valley,
 To scare thee, Melancholy!

O then, O then, thou wast a simple name!
 And I forgot thee, as the berried holly
 By shepherds is forgotten, when in June,
 Tall chesnuts keep away the sun and moon;—
 I rush'd into the folly!

“Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,
 Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood, 210
 With sidelong laughing;

And little rills of crimson wine imbrued
 His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough white
 For Venus' pearly bite;

And near him rode Silenus on his ass,
 Pelted with flowers as he on did pass
 Tipsily quaffing.

“Whence came ye, merry Damsels! whence
 came ye,

So many, and so many, and such glee?
 Why have ye left your bowers desolate, 220
 Your lutes, and gentler fate?

‘We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing,
 A conquering!

Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill betide,
 We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide:—
 Come hither, lady fair, and joined be
 To our wild minstrelsy!’

Endymion, “ Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence came
Book IV. ye,
 228-256

So many, and so many, and such glee? 229

Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left
 Your nuts in oak-tree cleft?—

‘ For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree ;

For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,
 And cold mushrooms ;

For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth ;

Great god of breathless cups and chirping mirth!—

Come hither, lady fair, and joined be

To our mad minstrelsy ! ’

“ Over wide streams and mountains great we
 went,

And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent, 240

Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,

With Asian elephants :

Onward these myriads—with song and dance,

With zebras strip’d, and sleek Arabians’ prance,

Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,

Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,

Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil

Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers’ toil :

With toying oars and silken sails they glide,

Nor care for wind and tide.

250

“ Mounted on panthers’ furs and lions’ manes,

From rear to van they scour about the plains ;

A three days’ journey in a moment done ;

And always, at the rising of the sun,

About the wilds they hunt with spear and horn,

On spleenful unicorn.

"I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown
 Before the vine-wreath crown !
 I saw parch'd Abyssinia rouse and sing
 To the silver cymbals' ring ! 260
 I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce
 Old Tartary the fierce !
 The kings of Ind their jewel-sceptres vail,
 And from their treasures scatter pearled hail ;
 Great Brahma from his mystic heaven groans,
 And all his priesthood moans,
 Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning pale.—
 Into these regions came I, following him,
 Sick-hearted, weary—so I took a whim
 To stray away into these forests drear, 270
 Alone, without a peer :
 And I have told thee all thou mayest hear.

Endymion,
 Book IV.
 257-287

" Young Stranger !
 I've been a ranger
 In search of pleasure throughout every clime ;
 Alas ! 'tis not for me :
 Bewitch'd I sure must be,
 To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

" Come then, Sorrow !
 Sweetest Sorrow ! 280
 Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast :
 I thought to leave thee,
 And deceive thee,
 But now of all the world I love thee best

" There is not one,
 No, no, not one
 But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid ;

Endymion,
Book IV.
288-318

Thou art her mother,
And her brother, 289
Her playmate, and her wooer in the shade."

O what a sigh she gave in finishing,
And look, quite dead to every worldly thing!
Endymion could not speak, but gaz'd on her:
And listen'd to the wind that now did stir
About the crisped oaks full drearily,
Yet with as sweet a softness as might be
Remember'd from its velvet summer song.
At last he said: "Poor lady! how thus long
Have I been able to endure that voice?
Fair Melody! kind Syren! I've no choice; 300
I must be thy sad servant evermore:
I cannot choose but kneel here and adore.
Alas, I must not think—by Phœbe, no!
Let me not think, soft Angel! shall it be
so?

Say, beautifullest, shall I never think?
O thou couldst foster me beyond the brink
Of recollection! make my watchful care
Close up its bloodshot eyes, nor see despair!
Do gently murder half my soul, and I
Shall feel the other half so utterly!— 310
I'm giddy at that cheek so fair and smooth;
O let it blush so ever! let it soothe
My madness! let it mantle rosy-warm
With the tinge of love, panting in safe alarm.
This cannot be thy hand, and yet it is;
And this is sure thine other softling—this
Thine own fair bosom, and I am so near!
Wilt fall asleep? O let me sip that tear!

And whisper one sweet word that I may know *Endymion,*
 This is this world—sweet dewy blossom! ”— *Book IV.*
Woe! 319-348

Woe! woe to that Endymion! Where is he?—
 Even these words went echoing dimly 322
 Through the wide forest—a most fearful tone,
 Like one repenting in his latest moan;
 And while it died away a shade pass'd by,
 As of a thunder-cloud. When arrows fly
 Through the thick branches, poor ring-doves sleek
 forth

Their timid necks and tremble; so these both
 Leant to each other trembling, and sat so
 Waiting for some destruction—when lo, 330
 Foot-feather'd Mercury appear'd sublime
 Beyond the tall tree tops; and in less time
 Than shoots the slanted hail-storm, down he
 dropt

Towards the ground; but rested not, nor stopt
 One moment from his home: only the sward
 He with his wand light touch'd, and heavenward
 Swifter than sight was gone—even before
 The teeming earth a sudden witness bore
 Of his swift magic. Diving swans appear
 Above the crystal circlings white and clear; 340
 And catch the cheated eye in wild surprise,
 How they can dive in sight and unseen rise—
 So from the turf outsprang two steeds jet-black,
 Each with large dark blue wings upon his back.
 The youth of Caria plac'd the lovely dame
 On one, and felt himself in spleen to tame
 The other's fierceness. Through the air they flew,
 High as the eagles. Like two drops of dew

Endymion, Exhal'd to Phœbus' lips, away they are gone,
Book IV. Far from the earth away —unseen, alone, 350
349-378 Among cool clouds and winds, but that the free
 The buoyant life of song can floating be
 Above their heads, and follow them untir'd.
 Muse of my native land! am I inspir'd?
 This is the giddy air, and I must spread
 Wide pinions to keep here; nor do I dread
 Or height, or depth, or width, or any chance
 Precipitous: I have beneath my glance
 Those towering horses and their mournful freight.
 Could I thus sail, and see, and thus await 360
 Fearless for power of thought, without thine aid?

There is a sleepy dusk, an odorous shade
 From some approaching wonder, and behold
 Those winged steeds, with snorting nostrils bold
 Snuff at its faint extreme, and seem to tire,
 Dying to embers from their native fire!

There curl'd a purple mist around them; soon,
 It seem'd as when around the pale new moon
 Sad Zephyr droops the clouds like weeping
 willow: 369
 'Twas Sleep slow journeying with head on pillow.
 For the first time, since he came nigh dead-born
 From the old womb of night, his cave forlorn
 Had he left more forlorn; for the first time,
 He felt aloof the day and morning's prime—
 Because into his depth Cimmerian
 There came a dream, showing how a young man,
 Ere a lean bat could plump its wintery skin,
 Would at high Jove's empyreal footstool win

An immortality, and how espouse 379
 Jove's daughter, and be reckon'd of his house. *Endymion,*
 Now was he slumbering towards heaven's gate, *Book IV.*
 That he might at the threshold one hour wait 379-408
 To hear the marriage melodies, and then
 Sink downward to his dusky cave again :
 His litter of smooth semiluculent mist,
 Diversely ting'd with rose and amethyst,
 Puzzled those eyes that for the centre sought ;
 And scarcely for one moment could be caught
 His sluggish form reposing motionless. 389
 Those two on winged steeds, with all the stress
 Of vision search'd for him, as one would look
 Athwart the shallows of a river nook
 To catch a glance at silver-throated eels,—
 Or from old Skiddaw's top, when fog conceals
 His rugged forehead in a mantle pale,
 With an eye-guess towards some pleasant vale
 Descry a favourite hamlet faint and far.

These raven horses, though they foster'd are
 Of earth's splenetic fire, dully drop
 Their full-vein'd ears, nostrils blood wide, and
 stop ; 400
 Upon the spiritless mist have they outspread
 Their ample feathers, are in slumber dead,—
 And on those pinions, level in mid-air,
 Endymion sleepeth and the lady fair.
 Slowly they sail, slowly as icy isle
 Upon a calm sea drifting : and meanwhile
 The mournful wanderer dreams. Behold ! he
 walks
 On heaven's pavement, brotherly he talks

Endymion, To divine powers : from his hand full fain
 Book IV. Juno's proud birds are pecking pearly grain : 410
 409-439 He tries the nerve of Phœbus' golden bow,
 And asketh where the golden apples grow :
 Upon his arm he braces Pallas' shield,
 And strives in vain to unsettle and wield
 A Jovian thunderbolt : arch Hebe brings
 A full-brimm'd goblet, dances lightly, sings
 And tantalizes long ; at last he drinks,
 And lost in pleasure at her feet he sinks,
 Touching with dazzled lips her starlight hand.
 He blows a bugle,—an ethereal band 420
 Are visible above : the Seasons four,—
 Green-kyrtled Spring, flush Summer, golden store
 In Autumn's sickle, Winter frosty hoar,
 Join dance with shadowy Hours ; while still the
 blast,
 In swells unmitigated, still doth last
 To sway their floating morris. " Whose is this ?
 Whose bugle ? " he inquires : they smile—" O Dis !
 Why is this mortal here ? Dost thou not know
 Its mistress' lips ? Not thou ?—'Tis Dian's : lo !
 She rises crescented ! " He looks, 'tis she, 430
 His very goddess : good-bye earth, and sea,
 And air, and pains, and care, and suffering ;
 Good-bye to all but love ! Then doth he spring
 Towards her, and awakes—and, strange, o'er-
 head,
 Of those same fragrant exhalations bred,
 Beheld awake his very dream : the gods
 Stood smiling ; merry Hebe laughs and nods ;
 And Phœbe bends towards him crescented.
 O state perplexing ! On the pinion bed,

Too well awake, he feels the panting side 440 Endymion,
 Of his delicious lady. He who died Book IV.
 For soaring too audacious in the sun, 440-469
 When that same treacherous wax began to run,
 Felt not more tongue-tied than Endymion.
 His heart leapt up as to its rightful throne,
 To that fair shadow'd passion puls'd its way—
 Ah, what perplexity! Ah, well-a-day!
 So fond, so beauteous was his bed-fellow,
 He could not help but kiss her: then he grew
 Awhile forgetful of all beauty save 450
 Young Phœbe's, golden hair'd; and so 'gan crave
 Forgiveness: yet he turn'd once more to look
 At the sweet sleeper,—all his soul was shook,—
 She press'd his hand in slumber; so once more
 He could not help but kiss her and adore.
 At this the shadow wept, melting away.
 The Latmian started up: "Bright goddess, stay!
 Search my most hidden breast! By truth's own
 tongue,
 I have no dædale heart: why is it wrung
 To desperation? Is there nought for me, 460
 Upon the bourn of bliss, but misery?"

These words awoke the stranger of dark tresses:
 Her dawning love-look rapt Endymion blesses
 With 'haviour soft. Sleep yawn'd from under-
 neath.

"Thou swan of Ganges, let us no more breathe
 This murky phantasm! thou contented seem'st
 Pillow'd in lovely idleness, nor dream'st
 What horrors may discomfort thee and me.
 Ah, should'st thou die from my heart-treachery!—

Endymion, Yet did she merely weep—her gentle soul 470
Book IV. Hath no revenge in it ; as it is whole
 470-497 In tenderness, would I were whole in love !
 Can I prize thee, fair maid, all price above,
 Even when I feel as true as innocence ?
 I do, I do.—What is this soul then ? Whence
 Came it ? It does not seem my own, and I
 Have no self-passion or identity.
 Some fearful end must be ; where, where is it ?
 By Nemesis ! I see my spirit flit
 Alone about the dark—Forgive me, sweet: 480
 Shall we away ?” He rous’d the steeds ; they
 beat
 Their wings chivalrous into the clear air,
 Leaving old Sleep within his vapoury lair.

The good-night blush of eve was waning slow,
 And Vesper, risen star, began to throe
 In the dusk heavens silverly, when they
 Thus sprang direct towards the Galaxy.
 Nor did speed hinder converse soft and strange—
 Eternal oaths and vows they interchange,
 In such wise, in such temper, so aloof 490
 Up in the winds, beneath a starry roof,
 So witless of their doom, that verily
 ’Tis well nigh past man’s search their hearts to
 see ;
 Whether they wept, or laugh’d, or griev’d, or
 toy’d—
 Most like with joy gone mad, with sorrow cloy’d.

Full facing their swift flight, from ebon streak,
 The moon put forth a little diamond peak,

No bigger than an unobserved star,
 Or tiny point of fairy scymetar ;
 Bright signal that she only stoop'd to tie 500
 Her silver sandals, ere deliciously
 She bow'd into the heavens her timid head.
 Slowly she rose, as though she would have fled,
 While to his lady meek the Carian turn'd,
 To mark if her dark eyes had yet discern'd
 This beauty in its birth—Despair ! despair !
 He saw her body fading gaunt and spare
 In the cold moonshine. Straight he seiz'd her
 wrist,
 It melted from his grasp ; her hand he kiss'd,
 And, horror ! kiss'd his own—he was alone.
 Her steed a little higher soar'd, and then 511
 Dropt hawkwise to the earth.

Endymion,
 Book IV.
 498-527

There lies a den,

Beyond the seeming confines of the space
 Made for the soul to wander in and trace
 Its own existence, of remotest glooms.
 Dark regions are around it, where the tombs
 Of buried griefs the spirit sees, but scarce
 One hour doth linger weeping, for the pierce
 Of new-born woe it feels more inly smart :
 And in these regions many a venom'd dart 520
 At random flies ; they are the proper home
 Of every ill : the man is yet to come
 Who hath not journeyed in this native hell.
 But few have ever felt how calm and well
 Sleep may be had in that deep den of all.
 There anguish does not sting, nor pleasure pall :
 Woe-hurricanes beat ever at the gate,

Endymion, Yet all is still within and desolate.
Book IV. Beset with plainful gusts, within ye hear
 528-560 No sound so loud as when on curtain'd bier 530
 The death-watch tick is stifled. Enter none
 Who strive therefore: on the sudden it is won.
 Just when the sufferer begins to burn,
 Then it is free to him: and from an urn,
 Still fed by melting ice, he takes a draught—
 Young Semele such richness never quaff
 In her maternal longing. Happy gloom!
 Dark Paradise! where pale becomes the bloom
 Of health by due; where silence dreariest
 Is most articulate; where hopes infest; 540
 Where those eyes are the brightest far that keep
 Their lids shut longest in a dreamless sleep.
 O happy spirit-home! O wondrous soul!
 Pregnant with such a den to save thee whole
 In thine own depth. Hail, gentle Carian!
 For, never since thy griefts and woes began,
 Hast thou felt so content: a grievous feud
 Hath led thee to this Cave of Quietude.
 Aye, his lull'd soul was there, although upborne
 With dangerous speed: and so he did not mourn
 Because he knew not whither he was going. 551
 So happy was he, not the aërial blowing
 Of trumpets at clear parley from the east
 Could rouse from that fine relish, that high feast.
 They stung the feather'd horse; with fierce alarm
 He flapp'd towards the sound. Alas! no charm
 Could lift Endymion's head, or he had view'd
 A skyey mask, a pinion'd multitude,—
 And silvery was its passing: voices sweet
 Warbling the while as if to lull and greet 560

The wanderer in his path. Thus warbled they, **Endymion,**
 While past the vision went in bright array. **Book IV.**
 561-590

“ Who, who from Dian’s feast would be away ?
 For all the golden bowers of the day
 Are empty left ? Who, who away would be
 From Cynthia’s wedding and festivity ?
 Not Hesperus : lo ! upon his silver wings
 He leans away for highest heaven and sings,
 Snapping his lucid fingers merrily !—
 Ah, Zephyrus ? art here, and Flora too ! 570
 Ye tender bibbers of the rain and dew,
 Young playmates of the rose and daffodil,
 Be careful, ere ye enter in, to fill
 Your baskets high
 With fennel green, and balm, and golden pines,
 Savory, latter-mint, and columbines,
 Cool parsley, basil sweet, and sunny thyme :
 Yea every flower and leaf of every clime,
 All gather’d in the dewy morning : hie
 Away ! fly, fly !— 580
 Crystalline brother of the belt of heaven,
 Aquarius ! to whom king Jove has given
 Two liquid pulse streams ’stead of feather’d
 wings,
 Two fan-like fountains,— thine illuminings
 For Dian play :
 Dissolve the frozen purity of air ;
 Let thy white shoulders silvery and bare
 Show cold through watery pinions ; make more
 bright
 The Star-Queen’s crescent on her marriage night,
 Haste, haste away !— 590

Endymion, Castor has tam'd the planet Lion, see!
 Book IV. And of the Bear has Pollux mastery:
 591-618 A third is in the race! who is the third,
 Speeding away swift as the eagle bird?
 The ramping Centaur!
 The Lion's mane's on end: the Bear how fierce!
 The Centaur's arrow ready seems to pierce
 Some enemy: far forth his bow is bent
 Into the blue of heaven. He'll be shent,
 Pale unrelentor, 600
 When he shall hear the wedding lutes a playing.—
 Andromeda! sweet woman! why delaying
 So timidly among the stars: come hither!
 Join this bright throng, and nimbly follow whither
 They all are going.
 Danæ's Son, before Jove newly bow'd,
 Has wept for thee, calling to Jove aloud,
 Thee, gentle lady, did he disenthral:
 Ye shall for ever live and love, for all
 Thy tears are flowing.— 610
 By Daphne's fright, behold Apollo!—”

More

Endymion heard not: down his steed him bore,
 Prone to the green head of a misty hill.

His first touch of the earth went nigh to
 kill.

“Alas!” said he, “were I but always borne
 Through dangerous winds, had but my footsteps
 worn

A path in hell, for ever would I bless
 Horrors which nourish an uneasiness

For my own sullen conquering ; to him 619 **Endymion,**
 Who lives beyond earth's boundary, grief is dim, **Book IV.**
 Sorrow is but a shadow : now I see 619-650
 The grass ; I feel the solid ground—Ah, me !
 It is thy voice—divinest ! Where ?—who ? who
 Left thee so quiet on this bed of dew ?
 Behold upon this happy earth we are ;
 Let us aye love each other ; let us fare
 On forest-fruits, and never, never go
 Among the abodes of mortals here below,
 Or be by phantoms dup'd. O destiny !
 Into a labyrinth now my soul would fly, 630
 But with thy beauty will I deaden it.
 Where didst thou melt to ? By thee will I sit
 For ever : let our fate stop here—a kid
 I on this spot will offer : Pan will bid
 Us live in peace, in love and peace among
 His forest wildernesses. I have clung
 To nothing, lov'd a nothing, nothing seen
 Or felt but a great dream ! Oh, I have been
 Presumptuous against love, against the sky,
 Against all elements, against the tie 640
 Of mortals each to each, against the blooms
 Of flowers, rush of rivers, and the tombs
 Of heroes gone ! Against his proper glory
 Has my own soul conspired : so my story
 Will I to children utter, and repent.
 There never lived a mortal man, who bent
 His appetite beyond his natural sphere,
 But starv'd and died. My sweetest Indian, here,
 Here will I kneel, for thou redeemed hast
 My life from too thin breathing : gone and
 past 650

Endymion, Are cloudy phantasms. Caverns lone, farewell !
Book IV. And air of visions, and the monstrous swell
 651-682 Of visionary seas ! No, never more
 Shall airy voices cheat me to the shore
 Of tangled wonder, breathless and aghast.
 Adieu, my daintiest Dream ! although so vast
 My love is still for thee. The hour may come
 When we shall meet in pure elysium.
 On earth I may not love thee ; and therefore
 Doves will I offer up, and sweetest store 660
 All through the teeming year : so thou wilt shine
 On me, and on this damsel fair of mine,
 And bless our simple lives. My Indian bliss !
 My river-lily bud ! one human kiss !
 One sigh of real breath—one gentle squeeze,
 Warm as a dove's nest among summer trees,
 And warm with dew at ooze from living blood !
 Wither didst melt ? Ah, what of that !—all good
 We'll talk about—no more of dreaming.—Now,
 Where shall our dwelling be ? Under the brow
 Of some steep mossy hill, where ivy dun 671
 Would hide us up, although spring leaves were
 none ;
 And where dark yew-trees, as we rustle through,
 Will drop their scarlet berry cups of dew ?
 O thou wouldst joy to live in such a place ;
 Dusk for our loves, yet light enough to grace
 Those gentle limbs on mossy bed reclin'd :
 For by one step the blue sky shouldst thou find,
 And by another, in deep dell below,
 See, through the trees, a little river go 680
 All in its mid-day gold and glimmering.
 Honey from out the gnarled hive I'll bring,

And apples, wan with sweetness, gather thee,— **Endymion,**
 Cresses that grow where no man may them see, **Book IV.**
 And sorrel untorn by the dew-claw'd stag : **683-714**
 Pipes will I fashion of the syrinx flag,
 That thou mayst always know whither I roam,
 When it shall please thee in our quiet home
 To listen and think of love. Still let me speak ;
 Still let me dive into the joy I seek,— **690**
 For yet the past doth prison me. The rill,
 Thou haply mayst delight in, will I fill
 With fairy fishes from the mountain tarn,
 And thou shalt feed them from the squirrel's
 barn.

Its bottom will I strew with amber shells,
 And pebbles blue from deep enchanted wells.
 Its sides I'll plant with dew-sweet eglantine,
 And honeysuckles full of clear bee-wine.
 I will entice this crystal rill to trace
 Love's silver name upon the meadow's face. **700**
 I'll kneel to Vesta, for a flame of fire ;
 And to god Phœbus, for a golden lyre ;
 To Empress Dian, for a hunting-spear ;
 To Vesper, for a taper silver-clear,
 That I may see thy beauty through the night ;
 To Flora, and a nightingale shall light
 Tame on thy finger ; to the River-gods,
 And they shall bring thee taper fishing-rods
 Of gold, and lines of Naiads' long bright tress.
 Heaven shield thee for thine utter loveliness ! **710**
 Thy mossy footstool shall the altar be
 'Fore which I'll bend, bending, dear love, to thee :
 Those lips shall be my Delphos, and shall speak
 Laws to my footsteps, colour to my cheek,

Endymion, Trembling or steadfastness to this same voice,
 Book IV. And of three sweetest pleasurings the choice :
 715-743 And that affectionate light, those diamond things,
 Those eyes, those passions, those supreme pearl
 springs,
 Shall be my grief, or twinkle me to pleasure.
 Say, is not bliss within our perfect seizure? 720
 O that I could not doubt ! ”

The mountaineer

Thus strove by fancies vain and crude to clear
 His briar'd path to some tranquillity.
 It gave bright gladness to his lady's eye,
 And yet the tears she wept were tears of sorrow ;
 Answering thus, just as the golden morrow
 Beam'd upward from the valleys of the east :
 “ O that the flutter of this heart had ceas'd,
 Or the sweet name of love had pass'd away !
 Young feather'd tyrant ! by a swift decay 730
 Wilt thou devote this body to the earth :
 And I do think that at my very birth
 I lisp'd thy blooming titles inwardly ;
 For at the first, first dawn and thought of
 thee,
 With uplift hands I blest the stars of heaven.
 Art thou not cruel ? Ever have I striven
 To think thee kind, but ah, it will not do !
 When yet a child, I heard that kisses drew
 Favour from thee, and so I kisses gave
 To the void air, bidding them find out love ; 740
 But when I came to feel how far above
 All fancy, pride, and fickle maidenhood
 All earthly pleasure, all imagin'd good,

Endymion,
Book IV.
744-772

Was the warm tremble of a devout kiss,—
Even then that moment, at the thought of this,
Fainting I fell into a bed of flowers,
And languish'd there three days. Ye milder
powers,

Am I not cruelly wrong'd? Believe, believe
Me, dear Endymion, were I to weave
With my own fancies garlands of sweet life, 750
Thou shouldst be one of all. Ah, bitter strife!
I may not be thy love: I am forbidden—
Indeed I am—thwarted, affrighted, chidden,
By things I trembled at, and gorgon wrath.
Twice hast thou ask'd whither I went: henceforth
Ask me no more! I may not utter it,
Nor may I be thy love. We might commit
Ourselves at once to vengeance; we might die:
We might embrace and die; voluptuous thought!
Enlarge not to my hunger, or I'm caught 760
In trammels of perverse deliciousness.
No, no, that shall not be: thee will I bless,
And bid a long adieu."

The Carian

No word return'd: both lovelorn, silent, wan,
Into the valleys green together went.
Far wandering, they were perforce content
To sit beneath a fair lone beechen tree;
Nor at each other gaz'd, but heavily
Por'd on its hazel cirque of shedded leaves.

Endymion! unhappy! it nigh grieves 770
Me to behold thee thus in last extreme:
Enskied ere this, but truly that I deem

Endymion, Truth the best music in a first-born song.
 Book IV. Thy lute-voic'd brother will I sing ere long,
 773-801 And thou shalt aid—hast thou not aided me?
 Yes, moonlight Emperor! felicity
 Has been thy meed for many thousand years;
 Yet often have I, on the brink of tears,
 Mourn'd as if yet thou wert a forester;—
 Forgetting the old tale.

He did not stir 780

His eyes from the dead leaves, or one small pulse
 Of joy he might have felt. The spirit culls
 Unfaded amaranth, when wild it strays
 Through the old garden-ground of boyish days.
 A little onward ran the very stream
 By which he took his first soft poppy dream;
 And on the very bark 'gainst which he leant
 A crescent he had carved, and round it spent
 His skill in little stars. The teeming tree 789
 Had swollen and green'd the pious character,
 But not ta'en out. Why, there was not a slope
 Up which he had not fear'd the antelope;
 And not a tree, beneath whose rooty shade
 He had not with his tamed leopards play'd:
 Nor could an arrow light, or javelin,
 Fly in the air where his had never been—
 And yet he knew it not.

O treachery!

Why does his lady smile, pleasing her eye
 With all his sorrowing? He sees her not.
 But who so stares on him? His sisters sure!
 Peona of the woods!—Can she endure— 801

Impossible—how dearly they embrace !
 His lady smiles ; delight is in her face ;
 It is no treachery.

Endymion,
 Book IV.
 802-831

“ Dear brother mine !

Endymion, weep not so ! Why shouldst thou pine
 When all great Latmos so exalt will be ?

Thank the great gods, and look not bitterly ;
 And speak not one pale word, and sigh no more.
 Sure I will not believe thou hast such store
 Of grief, to last thee to my kiss again. 810

Thou surely canst not bear a mind in pain,
 Come hand in hand with one so beautiful.

Be happy both of you ! for I will pull
 The flowers of autumn for your coronals.

Pan's holy priest for young Endymion calls ;
 And when he is restor'd, thou, fairest dame,
 Shalt be our queen. Now, is it not a shame
 To see ye thus,—not very, very sad ?

Perhaps ye are too happy to be glad :
 O feel as if it were a common day ; 820

Free-voic'd as one who never was away.

No tongue shall ask, whence come ye ? but ye
 shall

Be gods of your own rest imperial.

Not even I, for one whole month, will pry
 Into the hours that have pass'd us by,
 Since in my arbour I did sing to thee.

O Hermes ! on this very night will be
 A hymning up to Cynthia, queen of light ;
 For the soothsayers old saw yesternight
 Good visions in the air,—whence will befall, 830
 As say these sages, health perpetual

Endymion, To shepherds and their flocks ; and furthermore,
Book IV. In Dian's face they read the gentle lore :
 832-863 Therefore for her these vesper-carols are.
 Our friends will all be there from nigh and far.
 Many upon thy death have ditties made ;
 And many, even now, their foreheads shade
 With cypress, on a day of sacrifice.
 New singing for our maids shalt thou devise,
 And pluck the sorrow from our huntsmen's brows.
 Tell me, my lady-queen, how to espouse 841
 This wayward brother to his rightful joys !
 His eyes are on thee bent, as thou didst poise
 His fate most goddess-like. Help me, I pray,
 To lure—Endymion, dear brother, say
 What ails thee ? ” He could bear no more, and so
 Bent his soul fiercely like a spiritual bow,
 And twang'd it inwardly, and calmly said :
 “ I would have thee my only friend, sweet maid !
 My only visitor ! not ignorant though, 850
 That those deceptions which for pleasure go
 'Mong men, are pleasures real as real may be :
 But there are higher ones I may not see,
 If impiously an earthly realm I take.
 Since I saw thee, I have been wide awake
 Night after night, and day by day, until
 Of the empyrean I have drunk my fill.
 Let it content thee, Sister, seeing me
 More happy than betides mortality.
 A hermit young, I'll live in mossy cave, 860
 Where thou alone shalt come to me, and lave
 Thy spirit in the wonders I shall tell.
 Through me the shepherd realm shall prosper
 well ;

For to thy tongue will I all health confide.
 And for my sake, let this young maid abide
 With thee as a dear sister. Thou alone,
 Peona, mayst return to me. I own
 This may sound strangely: but when, dearest
 girl,

Thou seest it for my happiness, no pearl
 Will trespass down those cheeks. Companion
 fair! 870

Wilt be content to dwell with her, to share
 This sister's love with me?" Like one resign'd
 And bent by circumstances, and thereby blind
 In self-commitment, thus that meek unknown:
 "Aye, but a buzzing by my ears has flown,
 Of jubilee to Dian:—truth I heard!
 Well then, I see there is no little bird,
 Tender soever, but is Jove's own care.
 Long have I sought for rest, and, unaware,
 Behold I find it! so exalted too! 880

So after my own heart! I knew, I knew
 There was a place untenanted in it;
 In that same void white Chastity shall sit,
 And monitor me nightly to lone slumber.
 With sanest lips I vow me to the number
 Of Dian's sisterhood; and, kind lady,
 With thy good help, this very night shall see
 My future days to her fane consecrate."

As feels a dreamer what doth most create
 His own particular fright, so these three felt:
 Or like one who, in after ages, knelt 891
 To Lucifer or Baal, when he'd pine
 After a little sleep: or when in mine

Endymion,
 Book IV.
 864-893

Endymion, Far under-ground, a sleeper meets his friends
 Book IV. Who know him not. Each diligently bends
 894-925 Tow'rd's common thoughts and things for very
 fear ;

Striving their ghastly malady to cheer,
 By thinking it a thing of yes and no,
 That housewives talk of. But the spirit-blow 899
 Was struck, and all were dreamers. At the last
 Endymion said : " Are not our fates all cast ?
 Why stand we here ? Adieu, ye tender pair ;
 Adieu ! " Whereat those maidens, with wild stare,
 Walk'd dizzily away. Pained and hot
 His eyes went after them, until they got
 Near to a cypress grove, whose deadly maw,
 In one swift moment, would what then he saw
 Engulph for ever. " Stay ! " he cried, " ah, stay !
 Turn, damsels ! hist ! one word I have to say.
 Sweet Indian, I would see thee once again. 910
 It is a thing I dote on : so I'd fain,
 Peona, ye should hand in hand repair,
 Into those holy groves that silent are
 Behind great Dian's temple. I'll be yon,
 At vesper's earliest twinkle—they are gone—
 But once, once, once again—" At this he press'd
 His hands against his face, and then did rest
 His head upon a mossy hillock green
 And so remain'd as he a corpse had been 919
 All the long day ; save when he scantly lifted
 His eyes abroad, to see how shadows shifted
 With the slow move of time,—sluggish and weary
 Until the poplar tops, in journey dreary,
 Had reach'd the river's brim. Then up he rose,
 And, slowly as that very river flows,

Walk'd tow'ards the temple-grove with his lament : **Endymion,**
 " Why such a golden eve ? The breeze is sent **Book IV.**
 Careful and soft, that not a leaf may fall **926-957**

Before the serene father of them all 929

Bows down his summer head below the west.

Now am I of breath, speech, and speed possest,

But at the setting I must bid adieu

To her for the last time. Night will strew

On the damp grass myriads of lingering leaves,

And with them shall I die ; nor much it grieves

To die, when summer dies on the cold sward.

Why, I have been a butterfly, a lord

Of flowers, garlands, love-knots, silly posies,

Groves, meadows, melodies, and arbour-roses ;

My kingdom's at its death, and just it is 940

That I should die with it : so in all this

We miscall grief, bale, sorrow, heart-break, woe,

What is there to plain of ? By Titan's foe

I am but rightly serv'd." So saying, he

Tripp'd lightly on, in sort of deathful glee ;

Laughing at the clear stream and setting sun,

As though they jests had been : nor had he
 done

His laugh at nature's holy countenance,

Until that grove appear'd, as if perchance,

And then his tongue with sober seemlihed 950

Gave utterance as he enter'd : " Ha ! I said,

" King of the butterflies ; but by this gloom,

And by old Rhadamanthus' tongue of doom,

This dusk religion, pomp of solitude,

And the Promethean clay by thief endued,

By old Saturnus' forelock, by his head

Shook with eternal palsy, I did wed

Endymion, Myself to things of light from infancy ;
Book IV. And thus to be cast out, thus lorn to die,
 958-989 Is sure enough to make a mortal man 960
 Grow impious." So he inwardly began
 On things for which no wording can be found ;
 Deeper and deeper sinking, until drown'd
 Beyond the reach of music : for the choir
 Of Cynthia he heard not, though rough briar
 Nor muffling thicket interpos'd to dull
 The vesper hymn, far swollen, soft and full,
 Through the dark pillars of those sylvan aisles.
 He saw not the two maidens, nor their smiles,
 Wan as primroses gather'd at midnight 970
 By chilly-finger'd spring. " Unhappy wight !
 Endymion ! " said Peona, " we are here !
 What wouldst thou ere we all are laid on
 bier ? "

Then he embrac'd her, and his lady's hand
 Press'd, saying : " Sister, I would have command,
 If it were heaven's will, on our sad fate."
 At which that dark-eyed stranger stood elate
 And said, in a new voice, but sweet as love,
 To Endymion's amaze : " By Cupid's dove,
 And so thou shalt ! and by the lily truth 980
 Of my own breast thou shalt, beloved youth ! "
 And as she spake, into her face there came
 Light, as reflected from a silver flame :
 Her long black hair swell'd ampler, in display
 Full golden ; in her eyes a brighter day
 Dawn'd blue and full of love. Aye, he beheld
 Phœbe, his passion ! joyous she upheld
 Her lucid bow, continuing thus : " Drear, drear
 Has our delaying been ; but foolish fear

Withheld me first; and then decrees of fate; 990
And then 'twas fit that from this mortal state
Thou shouldst, my love, by some unlook'd-for
change

Endymion,
Book IV.
990-1003

Be spiritualiz'd. Peona, we shall range
These forests, and to thee they safe shall be
As was thy cradle; hither shalt thou flee
To meet us many a time." Next Cynthia bright
Peona kiss'd, and bless'd with fair good night:
Her brother kiss'd her too, and knelt adown
Before his goddess, in a blissful swoon.
She gave her fair hands to him, and behold,
Before three swiftest kisses he had told, 1001
They vanish'd far away!—Peona went
Home through the gloomy wood in wonderment.

LAMIA

PART I

Lamia, UPON a time, before the faëry broods
Part I. Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous
1-22 woods,

Before King Oberon's bright diadem,
Sceptre, and mantle, clasp'd with dewy gem,
Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns
From rushes green, and brakes, and cowslip'd
lawns,

The ever-smitten Hermes empty left
His golden throne, bent warm on amorous theft :
From high Olympus had he stolen light,
On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the sight
Of his great summoner, and made retreat 11
Into a forest on the shores of Crete.

For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt
A nymph, to whom all hoofed Satyrs knelt ;
At whose white feet the languid Tritons poured
Pearls, while on land they wither'd and adored.
Fast by the springs where she to bathe was wont,
And in those meads where sometime she might
haunt,

Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any Muse,
Though Fancy's casket were unlock'd to choose.
Ah, what a world of love was at her feet ! 21
So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat

Burnt from his winged heels to either ear,
 That from a whiteness, as the lily clear,
 Blush'd into roses 'mid his golden hair,
 Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders bare.

Lamia,
 Part I.
 23-52

From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he flew,
 Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,
 And wound with many a river to its head,
 To find where this sweet nymph prepar'd her
 secret bed : 30

In vain ; the sweet nymph might nowhere be found,
 And so he rested, on the lonely ground,
 Pensive, and full of painful jealousies
 Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.
 There as he stood, he heard a mournful voice,
 Such as once heard, in gentle heart, destroys
 All pain but pity : thus the lone voice spake :
 " When from this wreathed tomb shall I awake !
 When move in a sweet body fit for life,
 And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife 40
 Of hearts and lips ! Ah, miserable me ! "

The God, dove-footed, glided silently
 Round bush and tree, soft-brushing, in his speed,
 The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,
 Until he found a palpitating snake,
 Bright, and cirque-couchant in a dusky brake.

She was a gordian shape of dazzling hue,
 Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue ;
 Strip'd like a zebra, freckled like a pard, 49
 Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barr'd ;
 And full of silver moons, that, as she breathed,
 Dissolved, or brighter shone, or interwreathed

Lamia, Their lustres with the gloomier tapestries—

Part I. So rainbow-sided, touch'd with miseries,

53-79 She seem'd, at once, some penanc'd lady elf,

Some demon's mistress, or the demon's self.

Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire

Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar :

Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet !

She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls
complete : 60

And for her eyes : what could such eyes do there
But weep, and weep, that they were born so
fair ?

As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air.

Her throat was serpent, but the words she spake

Came, as through bubbling honey, for Love's sake,

And thus ; while Hermes on his pinions lay,

Like a stoop'd falcon ere he takes his prey.

“ Fair Hermes ! crown'd with feathers, flutter-
ing light,

I had a splendid dream of thee last night :

I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold, 70

Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,

The only sad one ; for thou didst not hear

The soft, lute-finger'd Muses chaunting clear,

Nor even Apollo when he sang alone

Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long melodious
moan.

I dreamt I saw thee, rob'd in purple flakes,

Break amorous through the clouds, as morning
breaks,

And, swiftly as a bright Phœbean dart,

Strike for the Cretan isle ; and here thou art !

Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the maid ?” **Lamia,**
 Whereat the star of Lethe not delay’d 81 **Part I.**
 His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired : 80-109

“Thou smooth-lipp’d serpent, surely high-inspired!
 Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy eyes,
 Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise,
 Telling me only where my nymph is fled,—
 Where she doth breathe !” “Bright planet, thou
 hast said,”

Return’d the snake, “but seal with oaths, fair
 God !”

“I swear,” said Hermes, “by my serpent rod,
 And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown !” 90
 Light flew his earnest words, among the blossoms
 blown.

Then thus again the brilliance feminine :

“Too frail of heart ! for this lost nymph of thine,
 Free as the air, invisibly, she strays

About these thornless wilds ; her pleasant days
 She tastes unseen ; unseen her nimble feet

Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet :

From weary tendrils, and bow’d branches green,
 She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes unseen :

And by my power is her beauty veil’d 100

To keep it unaffronted, unassail’d

By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,
 Of Satyrs, Fauns, and blear’d Silenus’ sighs.

Pale grew her immortality, for woe

Of all these lovers, and she grieved so

I took compassion on her, bade her steep

Her hair in weird syrops, that would keep

Her loveliness invisible, yet free

To wander as she loves, in liberty.

Lamia, Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou alone, 110
 Part I. If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my boon! ”

110-141 Then once again the charmed God began
 An oath, and through the serpent's ears it ran
 Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.
 Ravish'd, she lifted her Circean head,
 Blush'd a live damask, and swift-lipping said,
 “ I was a woman, let me have once more
 A woman's shape, and charming as before.
 I love a youth of Corinth—O the bliss! 119
 Give me my woman's form, and place me where he is.
 Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy brow,
 And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even now.”
 The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,
 She breath'd upon his eyes, and swift was seen
 Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on the
 green.

It was no dream ; or say a dream it was,
 Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly pass
 Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.
 One warm, flush'd moment, hovering, it might seem
 Dash'd by the wood-nymph's beauty, so he burn'd ;
 Then, lighting on the printless verdure, turn'd 131
 To the swoon'd serpent, and with languid arm,
 Delicate, put to proof the lithe Caducean charm.
 So done, upon the nymph his eyes he bent
 Full of adoring tears and blandishment,
 And towards her stept : she, like a moon in wane,
 Faded before him, cower'd, nor could restrain
 Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower
 That faints into itself at evening hour :
 But the God fostering her chilled hand, 140
 She felt the warmth, her eyelids open'd bland,

And, like new flowers at morning song of bees,
 Bloom'd, and gave up her honey to the bees.
 Into the green-recessed woods they flew ;
 Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do.

Lamia,
 Part I.
 142-170

Left to herself, the serpent now began
 To change ; her elfin blood in madness ran,
 Her mouth foam'd, and the grass, therewith be-
 sprent,

Wither'd at dew so sweet and virulent ;
 Her eyes in torture fix'd, and anguish drear, 150
 Hot, glaz'd, and wide, with lid-lashes all sear,
 Flash'd phosphor and sharp sparks, without one
 cooling tear.

The colours all inflam'd throughout her train,
 She writh'd about, convuls'd with scarlet pain :
 A deep volcanian yellow took the place
 Of all her milder-mooned body's grace ;
 And, as the lava ravishes the mead,
 Spoilt all her silver mail, and golden brede ;
 Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks and bars,
 Eclips'd her crescents, and lick'd up her stars :
 So that, in moments few, she was undrest 161
 Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,
 And rubious-argent : of all these bereft,
 Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.
 Still shone her crown ; that vanish'd, also she
 Melted and disappear'd as suddenly ;
 And in the air, her new voice luting soft,
 Cried, " Lycius ! gentle Lycius ! " — Borne aloft
 With the bright mists about the mountains hoar
 These words dissolv'd : Crete's forests heard no
 more.

Lamia, Whither fled Lamia, now a lady bright,
Part I. A full-born beauty new and exquisite?
171-201 She fled into that valley they pass o'er
 Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas' shore;
 And rested at the foot of those wild hills,
 The rugged founts of the Peræan rills,
 And of that other ridge whose barren back
 Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,
 South-westward to Cleone. There she stood
 About a young bird's flutter from a wood, 180
 Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,
 By a clear pool, wherein she passioned
 To see herself escap'd from so sore ills,
 While her robes flaunted with the daffodils.

 Ah, happy Lycius!—for she was a maid
 More beautiful than ever twisted braid,
 Or sigh'd, or blush'd, or on spring-flowered lea
 Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy:
 A virgin purest lipp'd, yet in the lore
 Of love deep learned to the red heart's core:
 Not one hour old, yet of sciential brain 191
 To unperplex bliss from its neighbour pain;
 Define their pettish limits, and estrange
 Their points of contact, and swift counterchange;
 Intrigue with the specious chaos, and dispart
 Its most ambiguous atoms with sure art;
 As though in Cupid's college she had spent
 Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,
 And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment.

 Why this fair creature chose so faëriily 200
 By the wayside to linger, we shall see;

But first 'tis fit to tell how she could muse
 And dream, when in the serpent prison-house,
 Of all she list, strange or magnificent :
 How, ever, where she will'd, her spirit went ;
 Whether to faint Elysium, or where
 Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids fair
 Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly
 star ;

Lamia,
 Part I.
 202-232

Or where God Bacchus drains his cups divine,
 Stretch'd out, at ease, beneath a glutinous pine ;
 Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine 211
 Mulciber's columns gleam in far piazzian line.
 And sometimes into cities she would send
 Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend ;
 And once, while among mortals dreaming thus,
 She saw the young Corinthian Lycius
 Charioting foremost in the envious race,
 Like a young Jove with calm uneager face,
 And fell into a swooning love of him.

Now on the moth-time of that evening dim 220
 He would return that way, as well she knew,
 To Corinth from the shore ; for freshly blew
 The eastern soft wind, and his galley now
 Grated the quay-stones with her brazen prow
 In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle
 Fresh anchor'd ; whither he had been awhile
 To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there
 Waits with high marble doors for blood and
 incense rare.

Jove heard his vows, and better'd his desire ;
 For by some freakful chance he made retire 230
 From his companions, and set forth to walk,
 Perhaps grown wearied of their Corinth talk :

Lamia, Over the solitary hills he fared,
Part I. Thoughtless at first, but ere eve's star appeared
 233-262 His phantasy was lost, where reason fades,
 In the calm'd twilight of Platonic shades.
 Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near—
 Close to her passing, in indifference drear,
 His silent sandals swept the mossy green ;
 So neighbour'd to him, and yet so unseen 240
 She stood : he pass'd, shut up in mysteries,
 His mind wrapp'd like his mantle, while her eyes
 Follow'd his steps, and her neck regal white
 Turn'd—syllabing thus, “ Ah, Lycius bright,
 And will you leave me on the hills alone ?
 Lycius look back ! and be some pity shown.”
 He did ; not with cold wonder fearingly,
 But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice ;
 For so delicious were the words she sung,
 It seem'd he had lov'd them a whole summer
 long : 250
 And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up,
 Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,
 And still the cup was full,—while he, afraid
 Lest she should vanish ere his lip had paid
 Due adoration, thus began to adore ;
 Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain so
 sure :
 “ Leave thee alone ! Look back ! Ah, Goddess,
 see
 Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee !
 For pity do not this sad heart belie—
 Even as thou vanishest so I shall die. 260
 Stay ! though a Naiad of the rivers, stay !
 To thy far wishes will thy streams obey :

Stay! though the greenest woods be thy domain, Lamia,
 Alone they can drink up the morning rain; Part I.
 Though a descended Pleiad, will not one 263-293
 Of thine harmonious sisters keep in tune
 Thy spheres, and as thy silver proxy shine?
 So sweetly to these ravish'd ears of mine
 Came thy sweet greeting, that if thou shouldst
 fade,

Thy memory will waste me to a shade :— 270
 For pity do not melt! ”—“ If I should stay,”
 Said Lamia, “ here, upon this floor of clay,
 And pain my steps upon these flowers too rough,
 What canst thou say or do of charm enough
 To dull the nice remembrance of my home?
 Thou canst not ask me with thee here to roam
 Over these hills and vales, where no joy is,—
 Empty of immortality and bliss!
 Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know
 That finer spirits cannot breathe below 280
 In human climes, and live: Alas! poor youth,
 What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe
 My essence? What serener palaces,
 Where I may all my many senses please,
 And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts
 appease;

It cannot be—Adieu! ” So said, she rose
 Tiptoe with white arms spread. He, sick to lose
 The amorous promise of her lone complain,
 Swoon'd murmuring of love, and pale with pain.
 The cruel lady, without any show 290
 Of sorrow for her tender favourite's woe,
 But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,
 With brighter eyes and slow amenity,

Lamia, Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh
Part I. The life she had so tangled in her mesh :
294-323 And as he from one trance was wakening
 Into another, she began to sing,
 Happy in beauty, life, and love, and every thing,
 A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres,
 While, like held breath, the stars drew in their
 panting fires. 300
 And then she whisper'd in such trembling tone,
 As those who, safe together met alone
 For the first time through many anguish'd days,
 Use other speech than looks ; bidding him raise
 His drooping head, and clear his soul of doubt,
 For that she was a woman, and without
 Any more subtle fluid in her veins
 Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same
 pains
 Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his. 309
 And next she wonder'd how his eyes could miss
 Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,
 She dwelt but half retir'd, and there had led
 Days happy as the gold coin could invent
 Without the aid of love ; yet in content
 Till she saw him, as once she pass'd him by,
 Where 'gainst a column he leant thoughtfully
 At Venus' temple porch, 'mid baskets heap'd
 Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reap'd
 Late on that eve, as 'twas the night before 319
 The Adonian feast ; whereof she saw no more,
 But wept alone those days, for why should she
 adore ?
 Lycius from death awoke into amaze,
 To see her still, and singing so sweet lays ;

Then from amaze into delight he fell
 To hear her whisper woman's lore so well ;
 And every word she spake entic'd him on
 To unperplex'd delight and pleasure known.
 Let the mad poets say whate'er they please
 Of the sweets of Faëries, Peris, Goddesses,
 There is not such a treat among them all, 330
 Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall,
 As a real woman, lineal indeed
 From Pyrrha's pebbles or old Adam's seed.
 Thus gentle Lamia judg'd, and judg'd aright,
 That Lycius could not love in half a fright,
 So threw the goddess off, and won his heart
 More pleasantly by playing woman's part,
 With no more awe than what her beauty gave,
 That, while it smote, still guaranteed to save.
 Lycius to all made eloquent reply, 340
 Marrying to every word a twin-born sigh ;
 And last, pointing to Corinth, ask'd her sweet,
 If 'twas too far that night for her soft feet.
 The way was short, for Lamia's eagerness
 Made, by a spell, the triple league decrease
 To a few paces ; not at all surmised
 By blinded Lycius, so in her comprized.
 They pass'd the city gates, he knew not how,
 So noiseless, and he never thought to know.

Lamia,
 Part I.
 324-355

As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all, 350
 Throughout her palaces imperial,
 And all her populous streets and temples lewd,
 Mutter'd, like tempest in the distance brew'd,
 To the wide-spreaded night above her towers.
 Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool hours,

Lamia, Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,
Part I. Companion'd or alone ; while many a light
356-385 Flar'd, here and there, from wealthy festivals,
 And threw their moving shadows on the walls,
 Or found them cluster'd in the cornic'd shade 360
 Of some arch'd temple door, or dusky colonnade.

Muffling his face, of greeting friends in fear,
 Her fingers he press'd hard, as one came near
 With curl'd grey beard, sharp eyes, and smooth
 bald crown,
 Slow-stepp'd, and rob'd in philosophic gown :
 Lycius shrank closer, as they met and past,
 Into his mantle, adding wings to haste,
 While hurried Lamia trembled : " Ah," said he,
 " Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully ? 369
 Why does your tender palm dissolve in dew ?" —
 " I'm wearied," said fair Lamia : " tell me who
 Is that old man ? I cannot bring to mind
 His features : — Lycius ! wherefore did you blind
 Yourself from his quick eyes ?" Lycius replied,
 " 'Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide
 And good instructor ; but to-night he seems
 The ghost of folly haunting my sweet dreams."

While yet he spake they had arriv'd before
 A pillar'd porch, with lofty portal door, 379
 Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor glow
 Reflected in the slabbed steps below,
 Mild as a star in water ; for so new,
 And so unsullied was the marble's hue,
 So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,
 Ran the dark veins, that none but feet divine

Could e'er have touch'd there. Sounds Æolian Lamia,
 Breath'd from the hinges, as the ample span Part I.
 Of the wide doors disclos'd a place unknown 386-397 ;
 Some time to any, but those two alone, Part II.
 And a few Persian mutes, who that same year 390 1-15
 Were seen about the markets : none knew where
 They could inhabit ; the most curious
 Were foil'd, who watch'd to trace them to their
 house :
 And but the flitter-winged verse must tell,
 For truth's sake, what woe afterwards befel,
 'Twould humour many a heart to leave them
 thus,
 Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.

PART II.

LOVE in a hut, with water and a crust,
 Is—Love, forgive us !—cinders, ashes, dust ;
 Love in a palace is perhaps at last
 More grievous torment than a hermit's fast :—
 That is a doubtful tale from faëry land,
 Hard for the non-elect to understand.
 Had Lycius lived to hand his story down,
 He might have given the moral a fresh frown,
 Or clench'd it quite : but too short was their bliss
 To breed distrust and hate, that make the soft
 voice hiss. 10

Besides, there, nightly, with terrific glare,
 Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,
 Hover'd and buzz'd his wings, with fearful roar,
 Above the lintel of their chamber door,
 And down the passage cast a glow upon the floor.

Lamia, For all this came a ruin : side by side
Part II. They were enthroned, in the even tide,
16-45 Upon a couch, near to a curtaining
 Whose airy texture, from a golden string,
 Floated into the room, and let appear 20
 Unveil'd the summer heaven, blue and clear,
 Betwixt two marble shafts :—there they reposed,
 Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids closed,
 Saving a tythe which love still open kept,
 That they might see each other while they almost
 slept ;
 When from the slope side of a suburb hill,
 Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a thrill
 Of trumpets—Lycius started—the sounds fled,
 But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.
 For the first time, since first he harbour'd in 30
 That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,
 His spirit pass'd beyond its golden bourn
 Into the noisy world almost forsworn.
 The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,
 Saw this with pain, so arguing a want
 Of something more, more than her empery
 Of joys ; and she began to moan and sigh
 Because he mus'd beyond her, knowing well
 That but a moment's thought is passion's passing
 bell : 39
 “Why do you sigh, fair creature ?” whisper'd he :
 “Why do you think ?” return'd she tenderly :
 “You have deserted me ; where am I now ?
 Not in your heart while care weighs on your
 brow :
 No, no, you have dismiss'd me ; and I go
 From your breast houseless : aye, it must be so.”

He answer'd, bending to her open eyes,
 Where he was mirror'd small in paradise,
 "My silver planet, both of eve and morn!
 Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,
 While I am striving how to fill my heart 50
 With deeper crimson, and a double smart?
 How to entangle, trammel up and snare
 Your soul in mine, and labyrinth you there,
 Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose?
 Aye, a sweet kiss—you see your mighty woes.
 My thoughts! shall I unveil them? Listen then!
 What mortal hath a prize, that other men
 May be confounded and abash'd withal,
 But lets it sometimes pace abroad majestic,
 And triumph, as in thee I should rejoice 60
 Amid the hoarse alarm of Corinth's voice.
 Let my foes choke, and my friends shout afar,
 While through the thronged streets your bridal car
 Wheels round its dazzling spokes."—The lady's
 cheek

Trembled; she nothing said, but, pale and meek,
 Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain
 Of sorrows at his words; at last with pain
 Beseeching him, the while his hand she wrung,
 To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,
 Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim 70
 Her wild and timid nature to his aim;
 Besides, for all his love, in self despite,
 Against his better self, he took delight
 Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.
 His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue
 Fierce and sanguineous as 'twas possible
 In one whose brow had no dark veins to swell.

Lamia,
 Part II.
 46-77

Lamia, Fine was the mitigated fury, like
Part II. Apollo's presence when in act to strike
 78-107 The serpent—Ha, the serpent! certes, she 80
 Was none. She burnt, she lov'd the tyranny,
 And, all subdued, consented to the hour
 When to the bridal he should lead his paramour.
 Whispering in midnight silence, said the youth,
 "Sure some sweet name thou hast, though, by
 my truth,
 I have not ask'd it, ever thinking thee
 Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,
 As still I do. Hast any mortal name,
 Fit appellation for this dazzling frame?
 Of friends or kinsfolk on the citted earth, 90
 To share our marriage feast and nuptial mirth?"
 "I have no friends," said Lamia, "no, not one;
 My presence in wide Corinth hardly known:
 My parents' bones are in their dusty urns
 Sepulchred, where no kindred incense burn,
 Seeing all their luckless race are dead, save
 me,
 And I neglect the holy rite for thee.
 Even as you list invite your many guests;
 But if, as now it seems, your vision rests
 With any pleasure on me, do not bid 100
 Old Apollonius—from him keep me hid."
 Lycius, perplex'd at words so blind and blank,
 Made close inquiry; from whose touch she shrank,
 Feigning a sleep; and he to the dull shade
 Of deep sleep in a moment was betray'd.

It was the custom then to bring away
 The bride from home at blushing shut of day,

Lamia,
Part II.
108-137

Veil'd, in a chariot, heralded along
By strewn flowers, torches, and a marriage song,
With other pageants: but this fair unknown 110

Had not a friend. So being left alone,
(Lycius was gone to summon all his kin)
And knowing surely she could never win
His foolish heart from its mad pompousness,
She set herself, high-thoughted, how to dress
The misery in fit magnificence.

She did so, but, 'tis doubtful how and whence
Came, and who were her subtle servitors.

About the halls, and to and from the doors,
There was a noise of wings, till in short space 120
The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-
arched grace.

A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone
Supportress of the faëry-roof, made moan
Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might
fade.

Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade
Of palm and plantain, met from either side,
High in the midst, in honour of the bride:
Two palms and then two plantains, and so on,
From either side their stems branch'd one to one
All down the aisled place; and beneath all 130
There ran a stream of lamps straight on from
wall to wall.

So canopied, lay an untasted feast
Teeming with odours. Lamia, regal drest,
Silently pac'd about, and as she went,
In pale contented sort of discontent,
Mission'd her viewless servants to enrich
The fretted splendour of each nook and niche.

Lamia, Between the tree-stems, marbled plain at first,
Part II. Came jasper panels ; then, anon, there burst
 138-166 Forth creeping imagery of slighter trees, 140
 And with the larger wove in small intricacies.
 Approving all, she faded at self-will,
 And shut the chamber up, close, hush'd and still,
 Complete and ready for the revels rude,
 When dreadful guests would come to spoil her
 solitude.

The day appear'd and all the gossip rout
 O senseless Lycius ! Madman ! wherefore flout
 The silent-blessing fate, warm cloister'd hours,
 And show to common eyes these secret bowers ?
 The herd approach'd ; each guest, with busy
 brain, 150
 Arriving at the portal gaz'd amain,
 And enter'd marvelling : for they knew the street,
 Remember'd it from childhood all complete
 Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen
 That royal porch, that high-built fair demesne ;
 So in they hurried all, maz'd, curious and keen :
 Save one, who look'd thereon with eye severe,
 And with calm-planted steps walk'd in austere ;
 'Twas Apollonius : something too he laugh'd,
 As though some knotty problem, that had daft 160
 His patient thought, had now begun to thaw,
 And solve and melt :—'twas just as he foresaw.

He met within the murmurous vestibule
 His young disciple. "'Tis no common rule,
 Lycius," said he, "for uninvited guest
 To force himself upon you, and infest

With an unbidden presence the bright throng
 Of younger friends ; yet must I do this wrong,
 And you forgive me." Lycius blush'd, and led
 The old man through the inner doors broad-
 spread ;

Lamia,
 Part II
 167-196

170

With reconciling words and courteous mien
 Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.

Of wealthy lustre was the banquet-room,
 Fill'd with pervading brilliance and perfume :
 Before each lucid panel fuming stood
 A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,
 Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,
 Whose slender feet wide-swerv'd upon the soft
 Wool-woofed carpets : fifty wreaths of smoke
 From fifty censers their light voyage took 180
 To the high roof, still mimick'd as they rose
 Along the mirror'd walls by twin clouds odorous.
 Twelve sphered tables, by silk seats inspher'd,
 High as the level of a man's breast rear'd
 On libbard's paws, upheld the heavy gold
 Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told
 Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels, wine
 Came from the gloomy tun with merry shine.
 Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood, 189
 Each shrining in the midst the image of a God.

When in an antichamber every guest
 Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure press'd,
 By minist'ring slaves, upon his hands and feet,
 And fragrant oils with ceremony meet
 Pour'd on his hair, they all mov'd to the feast
 In white robes, and themselves in order plac'd

Lamia, Around the silken couches, wondering
 Part II. Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of wealth
 197-222 could spring.

Soft went the music the soft air along,
 While fluent Greek a vowel'd undersong 200
 Kept up among the guests, discoursing low
 At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow ;
 But when the happy vintage touch'd their brains,
 Louder they talk, and louder come the strains
 Of powerful instruments :—the gorgeous dyes,
 The space, the splendour of the draperies,
 The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,
 Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,
 Now, when the wine has done its rosy deed,
 And every soul from human trammels freed, 210
 No more so strange ; for merry wine, sweet
 wine,
 Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too divine.
 Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height ;
 Flush'd were their cheeks, and bright eyes double
 bright :
 Garlands of every green, and every scent
 From vales deflower'd, or forest-trees branch-
 rent,
 In baskets of bright osier'd gold were brought
 High as the handles heap'd, to suit the thought
 Of every guest ; that each, as he did please,
 Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillow'd at his
 ease. 220

What wreath for Lamia ? What for Lycius ?
 What for the sage, old Apollonius ?

Upon her aching forehead he there hung
 The leaves of willow and of adder's tongue ;
 And for the youth, quick, let us strip for him
 The thyrsus, that his watching eyes may swim
 Into forgetfulness ; and, for the sage,
 Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage
 War on his temples. Do not all charms fly
 At the mere touch of cold philosophy ? 230
 There was an awful rainbow once in heaven :
 We know her woof, her texture ; she is given
 In the dull catalogue of common things.
 Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,
 Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,
 Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine—
 Unweave a rainbow, as it erewhile made
 The tender-person'd Lamia melt into a shade.

Lamia,
Part II.
223-252

By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,
 Scarce saw in all the room another face, 240
 Till, checking his love trance, a cup he took
 Full brimm'd, and opposite sent forth a look
 'Cross the broad table, to beseech a glance
 From his old teacher's wrinkled countenance,
 And pledge him. The bald-head philosopher
 Had fix'd his eye, without a twinkle or stir
 Full on the alarmed beauty of the bride,
 Brow-beating her fair form, and troubling her
 sweet pride.
 Lycius then press'd her hand, with devout touch,
 As pale it lay upon the rosy couch ; 250
 'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his
 veins ;
 Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains

Lamia, Of an unnatural heat shot to his heart.

Part II. "Lamia, what means this? Wherefore dost thou
253-280 start?

Know'st thou that man?" Poor Lamia answer'd
not.

He gaz'd into her eyes, and not a jot
Own'd they the lovelorn piteous appeal;
More, more he gaz'd: his human senses reel:
Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs;
There was no recognition in those orbs. 260

"Lamia!" he cried—and no soft-toned reply.
The many heard, and the loud revelry
Grew hush; the stately music no more breathes;
The myrtle sicken'd in a thousand wreaths.
By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure ceased;
A deadly silence step by step increased,
Until it seem'd a horrid presence there,
And not a man but felt the terror in his hair.

"Lamia!" he shriek'd; and nothing but the
shriek

With its sad echo did the silence break. 270

"Begone, foul dream!" he cried, gazing again
In the bride's face, where now no azure vein
Wander'd on fair-spac'd temples; no soft bloom
Misted the cheek; no passion to illumine
The deep-recessed vision:—all was blight;
Lamia, no longer fair, there sat a deadly white.
"Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruthless
man!

Turn them aside, wretch! or the righteous
ban

Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images
Here represent their shadowy presences, 280

Lamia,
Part II.
281-309

May pierce them on the sudden with the thorn
Of painful blindness; leaving thee forlorn,
In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright
Of conscience, for their long offended might,
For all thine impious proud-heart sophistries,
Unlawful magic, and enticing lies.

Corinthians! look upon that grey-beard wretch!
Mark how, possess'd, his lashless eyelids stretch
Around his demon eyes! Corinthians, see!
My sweet bride withers at their potency." 290
"Fool!" said the sophist, in an under-tone
Gruff with contempt; which a death-nighing
moan

From Lycius answer'd, as heart-struck and lost,
He sank supine beside the aching ghost.
"Fool! Fool!" repeated he, while his eyes
still

Relented not, nor mov'd; "from every ill
Of life have I preserv'd thee to this day,
And shall I see thee made a serpent's prey?"
Then Lamia breath'd death breath; the sophist's
eye,

Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly, 300
Keen, cruel, perçant, stinging: she, as well
As her weak hand could any meaning tell,
Motion'd him to be silent; vainly so,
He look'd and look'd again a level—No!
"A Serpent!" echoed he; no sooner said,
Than with a frightful scream she vanished:
And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,
As were his limbs of life, from that same night.
On the high couch he lay!—his friends came
round—

Lamia, Supported him—no pulse, or breath they found,
 Part II. And, in its marriage robe, the heavy body
 310-311 wound.* 311
 Extract

from
 Burton's
 "Anatomy of
 Melan-
 choly"

* "Philostratus, in his fourth book *de Vita Apollonii*, hath a memorable instance in this kind, which I may not omit, of one Menippus Lycius, a young man twenty-five years of age, that going betwixt Cenchreas and Corinth, met such a phantasm in the habit of a fair gentlewoman, which taking him by the hand, carried him home to her house, in the suburbs of Corinth, and told him she was a Phœnician by birth, and if he would tarry with her, he should hear her sing and play, and drink such wine as never any drank, and no man should molest him; but she, being fair and lovely, would live and die with him, that was fair and lovely to behold. The young man, a philosopher, otherwise staid and discreet, able to moderate his passions, though not this of love, tarried with her awhile to his great content, and at last married her, to whose wedding, amongst other guests, came Apollonius; who, by some probable conjectures, found her out to be a serpent, a lamia; and that all her furniture was, like Tantalus' gold, described by Homer, no substance, but mere illusions. When she saw herself descried, she wept, and desired Apollonius to be silent, but he would not be moved, and thereupon she, plate, house, and all that was in it, vanished in an instant; many thousands took notice of this fact, for it was done in the midst of Greece."—BURTON'S *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part 3, Sect. 2, Memb. I. Subs. I.

ISABELLA, OR THE POT OF
BASIL ;

A STORY FROM BOCCACCIO

I

FAIR Isabel, poor simple Isabel!

Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's eye!
They could not in the self-same mansion dwell
Without some stir of heart, some malady ;
They could not sit at meals but feel how well
It soothed each to be the other by ;
They could not, sure, beneath the same roof
sleep
But to each other dream, and nightly weep.

II

With every morn their love grew tenderer,
With every eve deeper and tenderer still ;
He might not in house, field, or garden stir,
But her full shape would all his seeing fill ;
And his continual voice was pleasanter
To her, than noise of trees or hidden rill ;
Her lute-string gave an echo of his name,
She spoilt her half-done broidery with the same.

L.

161

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

III

He knew whose gentle hand was at the latch,
Before the door had given her to his eyes ;
And from her chamber-window he would catch
Her beauty farther than the falcon spies ;
And constant as her vespers would he watch,
Because her face was turn'd to the same skies ;
And with sick longing all the night outwear,
To hear her morning-step upon the stair.

IV

A whole long month of May in this sad plight
Made their cheeks paler by the break of June :
"To-morrow will I bow to my delight,
To-morrow will I ask my lady's boon."--
"O may I never see another night,
Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not love's tune."--
So spake they to their pillows ; but, alas,
Honeyless days and days did he let pass ;

V

Until sweet Isabella's untouch'd cheek
Fell sick within the rose's just domain,
Fell thin as a young mother's, who doth seek
By every lull to cool her infant's pain :
"How ill she is," said he, "I may not speak,
And yet I will, and tell my love all plain :
If looks speak love-laws, I will drink her tears,
And at the least 'twill startle off her cares."

A story
from
Boccaccio

VI

So said he one fair morning, and all day
His heart beat awfully against his side ;
And to his heart he inwardly did pray
For power to speak ; but still the ruddy tide
Stifled his voice, and puls'd resolve away—
Fever'd his high conceit of such a bride,
Yet brought him to the meekness of a child :
Alas ! when passion is both meek and wild !

VII

So once more he had wak'd and anguished
A dreary night of love and misery,
If Isabel's quick eye had not been wed
To every symbol on his forehead high ;
She saw it waxing very pale and dead,
And straight all flush'd ; so, lisped tenderly,
“ Lorenzo ! ”—here she ceas'd her timid quest,
But in her tone and look he read the rest.

VIII

“ O Isabella, I can half perceive
That I may speak my grief into thine ear ;
If thou didst ever any thing believe,
Believe how I love thee, believe how near
My soul is to its doom : I would not grieve
Thy hand by unwelcome pressing, would not
fear
Thine eyes by gazing ; but I cannot live
Another night, and not my passion thrive.

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

IX

“ Love ! thou art leading me from wintry cold,
Lady ! thou leadest me to summer clime,
And I must taste the blossoms that unfold
In its ripe warmth this gracious morning time.”
So said, his erewhile timid lips grew bold,
And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme :
Great bliss was with them, and great happiness
Grew, like a lusty flower in June’s caress.

X

Parting they seem’d to tread upon the air,
Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart
Only to meet again more close, and share
The inward fragrance of each other’s heart.
She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair
Sang, of delicious love and honey’d dart ;
He with light steps went up a western hill,
And bade the sun farewell, and joy’d his fill.

XI

All close they met again, before the dusk
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,
All close they met, all eves, before the dusk
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,
Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,
Unknown of any, free from whispering tale.
Ah ! better had it been for ever so,
Than idle ears should pleasure in their woe.

XII

A story
from
Boccaccio

Were they unhappy then?—It cannot be—
Too many tears for lovers have been shed,
Too many sighs give we to them in fee,
Too much of pity after they are dead,
Too many doleful stories do we see,
Whose matter in bright gold were best be read ;
Except in such a page where Theseus' spouse
Over the pathless waves towards him bows.

XIII

But, for the general award of love,
The little sweet doth kill much bitterness ;
Though Dido silent is in under-grove,
And Isabella's was a great distress,
Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian clove
Was not embalm'd, this truth is not the less—
Even bees, the little almsmen of spring-bowers,
Know there is richest juice in poison-flowers.

XIV

With her two brothers this fair lady dwelt,
Enriched from ancestral merchandize,
And for them many a weary hand did swelt
In torched mines and noisy factories,
And many once proud-quiver'd loins did melt
In blood from stinging whip ;—with hollow eyes
Many a day in dazzling river stood,
To take the rich-ored driftings of the flood.

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

xv

For them the Ceylon diver held his breath,
And went all naked to the hungry shark ;
For them his ears gush'd blood ; for them in death
The seal on the cold ice with piteous bark
Lay full of darts ; for them alone did seethe
A thousand men in troubles wide and dark :
Half-ignorant, they turn'd an easy wheel,
They set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

xvi

Why were they proud? Because their marble founts
Gush'd with more pride than do a wretch's
tears?—
Why were they proud? Because fair orange-
mounts
Were of more soft ascent than lazar stairs?—
Why were they proud? Because red-lin'd accounts
Were richer than the songs of Grecian years?—
Why were they proud? again we ask aloud,
Why in the name of Glory were they proud?

xvii

Yet were these Florentines as self-retired
In hungry pride and gainful cowardice,
As two close Hebrews in that land inspired,
Pal'd in and vineyarded from beggar-spies ;
The hawks of ship-mast forests—the untired
And pannier'd mules for ducats and old lies —
Quick cat's-paws on the generous stray-away,—
Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and Malay.

XVIII

A story
from
Boccaccio

How was it these same ledger-men could spy
Fair Isabella in her downy nest?
How could they find out in Lorenzo's eye
A straying from his toil? Hot Egypt's pest
Into their vision covetous and sly!
How could these money-bags see east and
west?—
Yet so they did—and every dealer fair
Must see behind, as doth the hunted hare.

XIX

O eloquent and famed Boccaccio!
Of thee we now should ask forgiving boon,
And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow,
And of thy roses amorous of the moon,
And of thy lilies, that do paler grow
Now they can no more hear thy ghittern's tune,
For venturing syllables that ill beseem
The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

XX

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the tale
Shall move on soberly, as it is meet;
There is no other crime, no mad assail
To make old prose in modern rhyme more sweet:
But it is done—succeed the verse or fail—
To honour thee, and thy gone spirit greet;
To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,
An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

XXI

These brethren having found by many signs
What love Lorenzo for their sister had,
And how she lov'd him too, each unconfines
His bitter thoughts to other, well nigh mad
That he, the servant of their trade designs,
Should in their sister's love be blithe and glad,
When 'twas their plan to coax her by degrees
To some high noble and his olive-trees.

XXII

And many a jealous conference had they
And many times they bit their lips alone,
Before they fix'd upon a surest way
To make the youngster for his crime atone ;
And at the last, these men of cruel clay
Cut Mercy with a sharp knife to the bone ;
For they resolved in some forest dim
To kill Lorenzo, and there bury him.

XXIII

So on a pleasant morning, as he leant
Into the sun-rise, o'er the balustrade
Of the garden-terrace, towards him they bent
Their footing through the dews ; and to him
said,
" You seem there in the quiet of content,
Lorenzo, and we are most loth to invade
Calm speculation ; but if you are wise,
Bestride your steed while cold is in the skies.

XXIV

A story
from
Boccaccio

“To-day we purpose, aye, this hour we mount
To spur three leagues towards the Apennine ;
Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot sun count
His dewy rosary on the eglantine.”
Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,
Bow'd a fair greeting to these serpents' whine ;
And went in haste, to get in readiness,
With belt, and spur, and bracing huntsman's dress.

XXV

And as he to the court-yard pass'd along,
Each third step did he pause, and listen'd oft
If he could hear his lady's matin-song,
Or the light whisper of her footstep soft ;
And as he thus over his passion hung,
He heard a laugh full musical aloft ;
When, looking up, he saw her features bright
Smile through an in-door lattice, all delight.

XXVI

“Love, Isabel ! ” said he, “ I was in pain
Lest I should miss to bid thee a good morrow :
Ah ! what if I should lose thee, when so fain
I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow
Of a poor three hours' absence ? but we'll gain
Out of the amorous dark what day doth borrow.
Good bye ! I'll soon be back.” — “ Good bye ! ”
said she :—
And as he went she chaunted merrily.

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

XXVII

So the two brothers and their murder'd man
Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's stream
Gurgles through straiten'd banks, and still doth fan
Itself with dancing bulrush, and the bream
Keeps head against the freshets. Sick and wan
The brothers' faces in the ford did seem,
Lorenzo's flush with love.—They pass'd the water
Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

XXVIII

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,
There in that forest did his great love cease ;
Ah ! when a soul doth thus its freedom win,
It aches in loneliness—is ill at peace
As the break-covert blood-hounds of such sin :
They dipp'd their swords in the water, and
did tease
Their horses homeward, with convulsed spur,
Each richer by his being a murderer.

XXIX

They told their sister how, with sudden speed,
Lorenzo had ta'en ship for foreign lands,
Because of some great urgency and need
In their affairs, requiring trusty hands.
Poor Girl ! put on thy stifling widow's weed,
And 'scape at once from Hope's accursed bands ;
To-day thou wilt not see him, nor to-morrow,
And the next day will be a day of sorrow.

A story
from
Boccaccio

XXX

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be ;
Sorely she wept until the night came on,
And then, instead of love, O misery !
She brooded o'er the luxury alone :
His image in the dusk she seem'd to see,
And to the silence made a gentle moan,
Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,
And on her couch low murmuring, " Where ?
O where ? "

XXXI

But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not long
Its fiery vigil in her single breast ;
She fretted for the golden hour, and hung
Upon the time with feverish unrest—
Not long—for soon into her heart a throng
Of higher occupants, a richer zest,
Came tragic ; passion not to be subdued,
And sorrow for her love in travels rude.

XXXII

In the mid days of autumn, on their eyes
The breath of Winter comes from far away,
And the sick west continually bereaves
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay
Of death among the bushes and the leaves,
To make all bare before he dares to stray
From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel
By gradual decay from beauty fell,

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

XXXIII

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes
She ask'd her brothers, with an eye all pale,
Striving to be itself, what dungeon climes
Could keep him off so long? They spake a tale
Time after time, to quiet her. Their crimes
Came on them, like a smoke from Hinnom's
vale ;
And every night in dreams they groan'd aloud,
To see their sister in her snowy shroud.

XXXIV

And she had died in drowsy ignorance,
But for a thing more deadly dark than all ;
It came like a fierce potion, drunk by chance,
Which saves a sick man from the feather'd pall
For some few gasping moments ; like a lance,
Waking an Indian from his cloudy hall
With cruel pierce, and bringing him again
Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and brain.

XXXV

It was a vision.—In the drowsy gloom,
The dull of midnight, at her couch's foot
Lorenzo stood, and wept : the forest tomb
Had marr'd his glossy hair which once could
shoot
Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom
Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute
From his lorn voice, and past his loamed ears
Had made a miry channel for his tears.

XXXVI

A story
from
Boccaccio

Strange sound it was, when the pale shadow spake ;
For there was striving, in its piteous tongue,
To speak as when on earth it was awake,
And Isabella on its music hung :
Languor there was in it, and tremulous shake,
As in a palsied Druid's harp unstrung ;
And through it moan'd a ghostly under-song,
Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars among.

XXXVII

Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy bright
With love, and kept all phantom fear aloof
From the poor girl by magic of their light,
The while it did unthread the horrid woof
Of the late darken'd time,—the murderous spite
Of pride and avarice,—the dark pine roof
In the forest,—and the sodden turfed dell,
Where, without any word, from stabs he fell.

XXXVIII

Saying moreover, " Isabel, my sweet !
Red whortle-berries droop above my head,
And a large flint-stone weighs upon my feet ;
Around me beeches and high chesnuts shed
Their leaves and prickly nuts ; a sheep-fold bleat
Comes from beyond the river to my bed :
Go, shed one tear upon my heather-bloom,
And it shall comfort me within the tomb.

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

XXXIX

“ I am a shadow now, alas ! alas !
 Upon the skirts of human-nature dwelling
 Alone : I chaunt alone the holy mass,
 While little sounds of life are round me kneeling,
 And glossy bees at noon do fieldward pass,
 And many a chapel bell the hour is telling,
 Paining me through : those sounds grow strange
 to me,
 And thou art distant in Humanity.

XL

“ I know what was, I feel full well what is,
 And I should rage, if spirits could go mad ;
 Though I forget the taste of earthly bliss,
 That paleness warms my grave, as though I had
 A Seraph chosen from the bright abyss
 To be my spouse : thy paleness makes me glad ;
 Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel
 A greater love through all my essence steal.”

XLI

The Spirit mourn'd “ Adieu ! ” —dissolved, and
 left
 The atom darkness in a slow turmoil ;
 As when of healthful midnight sleep bereft,
 Thinking on rugged hours and fruitless toil,
 We put our eyes into a pillowy cleft,
 And see the spangly gloom froth up and boil :
 It made sad Isabella's eyelids ache,
 And in the dawn she started up awake ;

XLII

A story
from
Boccaccio

“Ha! ha!” said she, “I knew not this hard life,
I thought the worst was simple misery;
I thought some Fate with pleasure or with strife
Portion’d us—happy days, or else to die;
But there is crime—a brother’s bloody knife!
Sweet Spirit, thou hast school’d my infancy:
I’ll visit thee for this, and kiss thine eyes,
And greet thee morn and even in the skies.”

XLIII

When the full morning came, she had devised
How she might secret to the forest hie;
How she might find the clay, so dearly prized,
And sing to it one latest lullaby;
How her short absence might be unsurmized,
While she the inmost of the dream would try.
Resolv’d, she took with her an aged nurse,
And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

XLIV

See, as they creep along the river side,
How she doth whisper to that aged Dame,
And, after looking round the champaign wide,
Shows her a knife.—“What feverous hectic
flame
Burns in thee, child?—What good can thee betide,
That thou shouldst smile again?”—The
evening came,
And they had found Lorenzo’s earthy bed;
The flint was there, the berries at his head.

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

XLV

Who hath not loiter'd in a green church-yard,
And let his spirit, like a demon-mole,
Work through the clayey soil and gravel hard,
To see skull, coffin'd bones, and funeral stole ;
Pitying each form that hungry Death hath marr'd,
And filling it once more with human soul ?
Ah ! this is holiday to what was felt
When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt.

XLVI

She gaz'd into the fresh-thrown mould, as though
One glance did fully all its secrets tell ;
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know
Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well ;
Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to grow,
Like to a native lily of the dell :
Then with her knife, all sudden, she began
To dig more fervently than misers can.

XLVII

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon
Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies,
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than stone,
And put it in her bosom, where it dries
And freezes utterly unto the bone
Those dainties made to still an infant's cries :
Then 'gan she work again ; nor stay'd her care,
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.

XLVIII

A story
from
Boccaccio

That old nurse stood beside her wondering,
 Until her heart felt pity to the core
 At sight of such a dismal labouring,
 And so she kneeled, with her locks all hoar,
 And put her lean hands to the horrid thing :
 Three hours they labour'd at this travail sore ;
 At last they felt the kennel of the grave,
 And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

XLIX

Ah ! wherefore all this wormy circumstance ?
 Why linger at the yawning tomb so long ?
 O for the gentleness of old Romance,
 The simple plaining of a minstrel's song !
 Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,
 For here, in truth, it doth not well belong
 To speak :—O turn thee to the very tale,
 And taste the music of that vision pale.

L

With duller steel than the Perséan sword
 They cut away no formless monster's head,
 But one, whose gentleness did well accord
 With death, as life. The ancient harps have
 said,
 Love never dies, but lives, immortal Lord :
 If Love impersonate was ever dead,
 Pale Isabella kiss'd it, and low moan'd.
 'Twas love ; cold,—dead indeed, but not de-
 thron'd.

M

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

LI

In anxious secrecy they took it home,
And then the prize was all for Isabel :
She calm'd its wild hair with a golden comb,
And all around each eye's sepulchral cell
Pointed each fringed lash ; the smeared loam
With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,
She drench'd away :—and still she comb'd, and
kept
Sighing all day—and still she kiss'd, and wept.

LII

Then in a silken scarf,—sweet with the dews
Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,
And divine liquid come with odorous ooze
Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully,—
She wrapp'd it up ; and for its tomb did choose
A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by,
And cover'd it with mould, and o'er it set
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

LIII

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,
And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze ;
She had no knowledge when the day was done,
And the new morn she saw not : but in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core,

LIV

A story
from
Boccaccio

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,
 Whence thick, and green, and beautiful it grew,
 So that it smelt more balmy than its peers
 Of Basil-tufts in Florence ; for it drew
 Nurture besides, and life, from human fears,
 From the fast mouldering head there shut from
 view :
 So that the jewel, safely casketed,
 Came forth and in perfumed leafits spread.

LV

O Melancholy, linger here awhile !
 O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !
 O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,
 Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh !
 Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and smile ;
 Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits, heavily,
 And make a pale light in your cypress glooms,
 Tinting with silver wan your marble tombs.

LVI

Moan hither, all ye syllables of woe,
 From the deep throat of sad Melpomene !
 Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,
 And touch the strings into a mystery :
 Sound mournfully upon the winds and low ;
 For simple Isabel is soon to be
 Among the dead : She withers, like a palm
 Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil ;

LVII

O leave the palm to wither by itself ;
Let not quick Winter chill its dying hour !—
It may not be—those Bæalites of pelf,
Her brethren, noted the continual shower
From her dead eyes ; and many a curious elf,
Among her kindred, wonder'd that such dower
Of youth and beauty should be thrown aside
By one mark'd out to be a Noble's bride.

LVIII

And, furthermore, her brethren wonder'd much
Why she sat drooping by the Basil green,
And why it flourish'd, as by magic touch ;
Greatly they wonder'd what the thing might
mean :
They could not surely give belief, that such
A very nothing would have power to wean
Her from her own fair youth, and pleasures gay,
And even remembrance of her love's delay.

LIX

Therefore they watch'd a time when they might sift
This hidden whim ; and long they watch'd in
vain ;
For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,
And seldom felt she any hunger-pain ;
And when she left, she hurried back, as swift
As bird on wing to breast its eggs again ;
And, patient as a hen-bird, sat her there
Beside her Basil, weeping through her hair.

LXI

A story
from
Boccaccio

Yet they contriv'd to steal the Basil-pot,
And to examine it in secret place :
The thing was vile with green and livid spot,
And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's face :
The guerdon of their murder they had got,
And so left Florence in a moment's space,
Never to turn again.—Away they went,
With blood upon their heads, to banishment.

LXII

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away !
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !
O Echo, Echo, on some other day,
From isles Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh !
Spirits of grief, sing not your " Well-a-way ! "
For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die ;
Will die a death too lone and incomplete,
Now they have ta'en away her Basil sweet.

LXIII

Piteous she look'd on dead and senseless things,
Asking for her lost Basil amorously ;
And with melodious chuckle in the strings
Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes would cry
After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,
To ask him where her Basil was ; and why
'Twas hid from her : " For cruel 'tis," said she,
" To steal my Basil-pot away from me."

Isabella,
or the Pot
of Basil

LXIII

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,
Imploring for her Basil to the last.
No heart was there in Florence but did mourn
In pity of her love, so overcast.
And a sad ditty of this story borne
From mouth to mouth through all the country
pass'd:
Still is the burthen sung—"O cruelty,
To steal my Basil-pot away from me!"

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

I

ST AGNES' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was !
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold ;
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen
grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold :
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer
he saith.

II

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man ;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees :
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to
freeze,
Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails :
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by ; and his weak spirit frails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and
mails.

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

III

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden
tongue
Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor ;
But no—already had his deathbell rung ;
The joys of all his life were said and sung :
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve :
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to
grieve.

IV

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft ;
And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide :
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests :
The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,
Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise
on their breasts.

V

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting faërially
The brain, new stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs
gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,

And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there, **The**
 Whose heart had brooded all that wintry day, **Eve of**
 On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care, **St. Agnes**
 As she had heard old dames full many times
 declare.

VI

They told her, how upon St. Agnes' Eve,
 Young virgins might have visions of delight,
 And soft adorings from their loves receive
 Upon the honey'd middle of the night,
 If ceremonies due they did aright ;
 As, supperless to bed they must retire,
 And couch supine their beauties, lily white ;
 Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
 Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they
 desire.

VII

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline :
 The music, yearning like a God in pain,
 She scarcely heard : her maiden eyes divine,
 Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
 Pass by—she heeded not at all : in vain
 Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
 And back retir'd ; not cool'd by high disdain,
 But she saw not : her heart was elsewhere ;
 She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of
 the year.

VIII

She danc'd along, with vague, regardless eyes,
 Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short :
 The hallow'd hour was near at hand : she sighs
 Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

Of whisperers in anger, or in sport ;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwink'd with faëry fancy ; all amorr,
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

IX

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She linger'd still. Meantime, across the moors,
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and
implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all unseen ;
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth
such things have been.

X

He ventures in : let no buzz'd whisper tell :
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel :
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage : not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

XI

Ah, happy chance ! the aged creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,

To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,
 Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond
 The sound of merriment and chorus bland :
 He startled her ; but soon she knew his face,
 And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied hand,
 Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro ! hie thee from
 this place ;
 They are all here to-night, the whole blood-
 thirsty race !

The
 Eve of
 St. Agnes

XII

"Get hence ! get hence ! there's dwarfish
 Hildebrand ;
 He had a fever late, and in the fit
 He cursed thee and thine, both house and land :
 Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit
 More tame for his grey hairs—Alas me ! flit !
 Flit like a ghost away."—"Ah Gossip dear,
 We're safe enough ; here in this arm-chair sit,
 And tell me how"—"Good Saints ! not
 here, not here ;
 Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy
 bier."

XIII

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,
 Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume,
 And as she mutter'd "Well-a—well-a-day !"
 He found him in a little moonlight room,
 Pale, lattic'd, chill, and silent as a tomb.
 "Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,
 "O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
 Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
 When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously."

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

XIV

“ St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes’ Eve—
Yet men will murder upon holy days :
Thou must hold water in a witch’s sieve,
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,
To venture so : it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro!—St. Agnes’ Eve!
God’s help! my lady fair the conjuror plays
This very night : good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile, I’ve mickle time to
grieve.”

XV

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon.
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
Who keepeth clos’d a wondrous riddle-book,
As spectacl’d she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told
His lady’s purpose ; and he scarce could brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

XVI

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart
Made purple riot : then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start :
“ A cruel man and impious thou art :
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep and dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go!—I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst
seem.”

XVII

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

“I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,”
Quoth Porphyro: “O may I ne'er find grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last
prayer,

In one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:
Good Angela, believe me by these tears;
Or I will, even in a moment's space,

Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,
And beard them, though they be more fang'd
than wolves and bears.”

XVIII

“Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,
Were never miss'd.” Thus plaining, doth she
bring

A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;
So woeful, and of such deep sorrowing,
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

XIX

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

While legion'd fairies pac'd the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.
Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous
debt.

XX

“It shall be as thou wishest,” said the Dame :
“All cates and dainties shall be stored there
Quickly on this feast-night : by the tambour
frame
Her own lute thou wilt see : no time to spare,
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
Wait here, my child, with patience kneel in
prayer
The while : Ah ! thou must needs the lady
wed,
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead.”

XXI

So saying she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd ;
The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear
To follow her ; with aged eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd and
chaste ;
Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her
brain.

XXII

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
 Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
 When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,
 Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware :
 With silver taper's light, and pious care,
 She turn'd and down the aged gossip led
 To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
 Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed ;
 She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd
 and fled.

The
 Eve of
 St. Agnes

XXIII

Out went the taper as she hurried in ;
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died :
 She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide :
 No utter'd syllable, or, woe betide !
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side ;
 As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

XXIV

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was
 All garlanded with carven imageries
 Offruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
 And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
 As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings ;
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
 A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of
 queens and kings.

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

XXV

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal
taint.

XXVI

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

XXVII

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain;
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

XXVIII

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
 Porphyro gaz'd upon her empty dress,
 And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced
 To wake into a slumberous tenderness ;
 Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
 And breath'd himself: then from the closet crept,
 Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
 And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,
 And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo!—
 how fast she slept.

XXIX

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
 Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
 A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon
 A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet:—
 O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
 The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
 The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,
 Affray his ears, though but in dying tone:—
 The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

XXX

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
 In blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd,
 While he from forth the closet brought a heap
 Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd ;
 With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
 And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon ;
 Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
 From Fez ; and spiced dainties, every one,
 From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Labanon.

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

XXXI

These delicacies he heap'd with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathed silver : sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—
“ And now, my love, my seraph fair awake !
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite :
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache.”

XXXII

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as iced stream :
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam ;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies :
It seem'd he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes ;
So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed phantasies.

XXXIII

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be,
He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence call'd, “ La belle dame sans
mercy : ”
Close to her ear touching the melody ;—
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft moan :
He ceas'd—she panted quick—and suddenly
Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone :
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured
stone.

XXXIV

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Nor wide awake, the vision of her sleep :
There was a painful change, that night expell'd
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many a
sigh ;
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep ;
Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dreamingly.

XXXV

“ Ah, Porphyro ! ” said she, “ but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow ;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear ;
How chang'd thou art ! how pallid, chill, and
drear !
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings
dear !
Oh, leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where
to go.”

XXXVI

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star
Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose ;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

Blendeth its odour with the violet,—
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon
hath set.

XXXVII

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:
"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"
'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—
Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

XXXVIII

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil
dyed?
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famish'd pilgrim,—sav'd by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest
Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel."

XXXIX

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faëry land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—
The bloated wassailers will never heed:—

Let us away, my love, with happy speed ;
 There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
 Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead :
 Awake ! arise ! my love, and fearless be,
 For o'er the southern moors I have a home for
 thee."

The
 Eve of
 St. Agnes

XL

She hurried at his words, beset with tears,
 For there were sleeping dragons all around,
 At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—
 Down the wide stairs a darkling way they
 found.—
 In all the house was heard no human sound.
 A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each
 door ;
 The arras, rich with horsemen, hawk, and
 hound,
 Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar ;
 And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

XLI

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall ;
 Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide ;
 Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
 With a huge empty flagon by his side :
 The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his
 hide,
 But his sagacious eye an inmate owns :
 By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide :—
 The chains lay silent on the footworn stones ;—
 The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans

The
Eve of
St. Agnes

XLII

And they are gone : aye, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform ;
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold.

HYPERION

BOOK I

DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
Sat grey-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair ;
Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,
Not so much life as on a summer's day
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest. 10
A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more
By reason of his fallen divinity
Spreading a shade : the Naiad 'mid her reeds
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went,
No further than to where his feet had stay'd,
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,
Unscptred ; and his realmless eyes were closed ;
While his bow'd head seem'd listening to the
Earth, 20
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him from his
place ;

Hyperion, But there came one, who with a kindred hand
 Book I. Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending low
 23-53 With reverence, though to one who knew it not.
 She was a Goddess of the infant world ;
 By her in stature the tall Amazon
 Had stood a pigmy's height : she would have
 ta'en
 Achilles by the hair and bent his neck ;
 Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel. 30
 Her face was large as that of Memphian sphinx,
 Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,
 When sages look'd to Egypt for their lore.
 But oh ! how unlike marble was that face :
 How beautiful, if sorrow had not made
 Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.
 There was a listening fear in her regard,
 As if calamity had but begun ;
 As if the vanward clouds of evil days
 Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear 40
 Was with its stored thunder labouring up.
 One hand she press'd upon that aching spot
 Where beats the human heart, as if just there,
 Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain :
 The other upon Saturn's bended neck
 She laid, and to the level of his ear
 Leaning with parted lips, some words she spake
 In solemn tenour and deep organ tone :
 Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue
 Would come in these like accents ; O how frail
 To that large utterance of the early Gods ! 51
 " Saturn, look up !—though wherefore, poor old
 King ?
 I have no comfort for thee, no not one :

I cannot say, 'O wherefore sleepest thou?'
 For heaven is parted from thee, and the earth
 Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God ;
 And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,
 Has from thy sceptre pass'd ; and all the air
 Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.
 Thy thunder, conscious of the new command,
 Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house ; 61
 And thy sharp lightning in unpractis'd hands
 Scorches and burns our once serene domain.
 O aching time ! O moments big as years !
 All as ye pass swell out the monstrous truth,
 And press it so upon our weary griefs
 That unbelief has not a space to breathe.
 Saturn, sleep on :—O thoughtless, why did I
 Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude ?
 Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes ? 70
 Saturn, sleep on ! while at thy feet I weep."

Hyperion,
 Book I.
 54-84

As when, upon a tranced summer-night,
 Those green-rob'd senators of mighty woods,
 Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,
 Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,
 Save from one gradual solitary gust
 Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,
 As if the ebbing air had but one wave ;
 So came these words and went ; the while in
 tears 79
 She touch'd her fair large forehead to the ground,
 Just where her falling hair might be outspread
 A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.
 One moon, with alteration slow, had shed
 Her silver seasons four upon the night,

Hyperion, And still these two were postured motionless,
Book I. Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern ;
85-116 The frozen God still couchant on the earth,
 And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet :
 Until at length old Saturn lifted up
 His jaded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone, 90
 And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,
 And that fair kneeling Goddess ; and then spake
 As with a palsied tongue, and while his beard
 Shook horrid with such aspen-malady :
 " O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,
 Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face ;
 Look up, and let me see our doom in it ;
 Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape
 Is Saturn's ; tell me, if thou hear'st the voice
 Of Saturn ; tell me, if this wrinkling brow, 100
 Naked and bare of its great diadem,
 Peers like the front of Saturn. Who had power
 To make me desolate ? whence came the strength ?
 How was it nurtur'd to such bursting forth,
 While Fate seem'd strangled in my nervous grasp ?
 But it is so ; and I am smother'd up,
 And buried from all godlike exercise
 Of influence benign on planets pale,
 Of admonitions to the winds and seas,
 Of peaceful sway above man's harvesting, 110
 And all those acts which Deity supreme
 Doth ease its heart of love in.—I am gone
 Away from my own bosom : I have left
 My strong identity, my real self,
 Somewhere between the throne, and where I sit
 Here on this spot of earth. Search, Thea,
 search !

Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them round **Hyperion,**
 Upon all space : space starr'd, and lorn of light ; **Book I.**
 Space region'd with life-air ; and barren void ; **117-147**
 Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.— 120
 Search, Thea, search ! and tell me, if thou seest
 A certain shape or shadow, making way
 With wings or chariot fierce to repossess
 A heaven he lost erewhile : it must—it must
 Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be a King.
 Yes, there must be a golden victory ;
 There must be Gods thrown down, and trumpets
 blown
 Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival
 Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,
 Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir 130
 Of strings in hollow shells ; and there shall be
 Beautiful things made new, for the surprise
 Of the sky-children ; I will give command :
 Thea ! Thea ! Thea ! where is Saturn ?”

This passion lifted him upon his feet,
 And made his hands to struggle in the air,
 His Druid locks to shake and ooze with sweat,
 His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.
 He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing deep ;
 A little time, and then again he snatch'd 140
 Utterance thus.—“ But cannot I create ?
 Cannot I form ? Cannot I fashion forth
 Another world, another universe,
 To overbear and crumble this to nought ?
 Where is another chaos ? Where ?” —That word
 Found way unto Olympus, and made quake
 The rebel three.—Thea was startled up,

Hyperion, And in her bearing was a sort of hope,
 Book I. As thus she quick-voic'd spake, yet full of awe.
 148-177

“This cheers our fallen house: come to our
 friends, 150

O Saturn! come away, and give them heart;
 I know the covert, for thence came I hither.”
 Thus brief; then with beseeching eyes she went
 With backward footing through the shade a space:
 He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the way
 Through aged boughs, that yielded like the mist
 Which eagles cleave, upmounting from their nest.

Meanwhile in other realms big tears were shed,
 More sorrow like to this, and such like woe, 159
 Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of scribe:
 The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison-bound,
 Groan'd for the old allegiance once more,
 And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's voice.
 But one of the whole mammoth-brood still kept
 His sov'reignty, and rule, and majesty;—
 Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire
 Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming up
 From man to the sun's God; yet unsecure:
 For as among us mortals omens drear
 Fright and perplex, so also shuddered he,— 170
 Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated screech,
 Or the familiar visiting of one
 Upon the first toll of his passing-bell,
 Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp;
 But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve,
 Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace bright,
 Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,

And touch'd with shade of bronzed obelisks,
 Glar'd a blood-red through all its thousand courts,
 Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries ; 180
 And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds
 Flush'd angrily : while sometimes eagle's wings,
 Unseen before by Gods or wondering men,
 Darken'd the place ; and neighing steeds were
 heard,
 Not heard before by Gods or wondering men.
 Also, when he would taste the spicy wreaths
 Of incense, breathed aloft from sacred hills,
 Instead of sweets, his ample palate took
 Savour of poisonous brass and metal sick :
 And so, when harbour'd in the sleepy west, 190
 After the full completion of fair day,—
 For rest divine upon exalted couch,
 And slumber in the arms of melody,
 He pac'd away the pleasant hours of ease
 With stride colossal, on from hall to hall ;
 While far within each aisle and deep recess,
 His winged minions in close clusters stood,
 Amaz'd and full of fear ; like anxious men
 Who on wide plains gather in panting troops, 199
 When earthquakes jar their battlements and towers.
 Even now, while Saturn, rous'd from icy trance,
 Went step for step with Thea through the woods,
 Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,
 Came slope upon the threshold of the west ;
 Then, as was wont, his palace-door flew ope
 In smoothest silence, save what solemn tubes,
 Blown by the serious Zephyrs, gave of sweet
 And wandering sounds, slow-breathed melodies ;
 And like a rose in vermeil tint and shape,

Hyperion,
 Book I.
 178-209

Hyperion, In fragrance soft, and coolness to the eye, 210
Book I. That inlet to severe magnificence
 210-240 Stood full blown, for the God to enter in.

He enter'd, but he enter'd full of wrath ;
 His flaming robes stream'd out beyond his heels,
 And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire,
 That scared away the meek ethereal Hours
 And made their dove-wings tremble. On he
 flared,

From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault,
 Through bowers of fragrant and enwreathed light,
 And diamond-paved lustrous long arcades, 220

Until he reach'd the great main cupola ;
 There standing fierce beneath, he stamp'd his foot,
 And from the basements deep to the high towers
 Jarr'd his own golden region ; and before

The quavering thunder thereupon had ceas'd,
 His voice leapt out, despite of godlike curb,
 To this result : " O dreams of day and night !

O monstrous forms ! O effigies of pain !
 O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom ! 229

O lank-ear'd Phantoms of black-weeded pools !
 Why do I know ye ? why have I seen ye ? why
 Is my eternal essence thus distraught

To see and to behold these horrors new ?
 Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall ?

Am I to leave this haven of my rest,
 This cradle of my glory, this soft clime,
 This calm luxuriance of blissful light,
 These crystalline pavilions, and pure fanes,
 Of all my lucent empire ? It is left
 Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine. 240

The blaze, the splendour, and the symmetry,
 I cannot see—but darkness, death and darkness.
 Even here, into my centre of repose,
 The shady visions come to domineer,
 Insult, and blind, and stifle up my pomp.—
 Fall!—No, by Tellus and her briny robes!
 Over the fiery frontier of my realms
 I will advance a terrible right arm
 Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel Jove, 249
 And bid old Saturn take his throne again.”—
 He spake, and ceas'd, the while a heavier threat
 Held struggle with his throat, but came not forth;
 For as in theatres of crowded men
 Hubbub increases more they call out “Hush!”
 So at Hyperion's words the Phantoms pale
 Bestir'd themselves, thrice horrible and cold;
 And from the mirror'd level where he stood
 A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.
 At this, through all his bulk an agony
 Crept gradual, from the feet unto the crown, 260
 Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular
 Making slow way, with head and neck convuls'd
 From over-strained might. Releas'd, he fled
 To the eastern gates, and full six dewy hours
 Before the dawn in season due should blush,
 He breath'd fierce breath against the sleepy portals,
 Clear'd them of heavy vapours, burst them wide
 Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.
 The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode 269
 Each day from east to west the heavens through,
 Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds;
 Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold, and hid,
 But ever and anon the glancing spheres,

Hyperion,
Book I.
 241-273

Hyperion, Circles, and arcs, and broad-belting colure,
 Book I. Glow'd through, and wrought upon the muffling
 274-304 dark

Sweet-shaped lightnings from the nadir deep
 Up to the zenith,—hieroglyphics old,
 Which sages and keen-eyed astrologers
 Then living on the earth, with labouring thought
 Won from the gaze of many centuries : 280
 Now lost, save what we find on remnants huge
 Of stone, or marble swart ; their import gone,
 Their wisdom long since fled.—Two wings this orb
 Possess'd for glory, two fair argent wings,
 Ever exalted at the God's approach :
 And now, from forth the gloom their plumes
 immense

Rose, one by one, till all outspreaded were ;
 While still the dazzling globe maintain'd eclipse,
 Awaiting for Hyperion's command. 289
 Fain would he have commanded, fain took throne
 And bid the day begin, if but for change.
 He might not :—No, though a primeval God :
 The sacred seasons might not be disturb'd.
 Therefore the operations of the dawn
 Stay'd in their birth, even as here 'tis told.
 Those silver wings expanded sisterly,
 Eager to sail their orb ; the porches wide
 Open'd upon the dusk demesnes of night ;
 And the bright Titan, frenzied with new woes,
 Unus'd to bend, by hard compulsion bent 300
 His spirit to the sorrow of the time ;
 And all along a dismal rack of clouds,
 Upon the boundaries of day and night,
 He stretch'd himself in grief and radiance faint.

Hyperion,
Book I.
305-337

There as he lay, the Heaven with its stars
 Look'd down on him with pity, and the voice
 Of Cœlus, from the universal space,
 Thus whispered low and solemn in his ear.
 "O brightest of my children dear, earth-born
 And sky-engender'd, Son of Mysteries 310
 All unrevealed even to the powers
 Which met at thy creating; at whose joys
 And palpitations sweet, and pleasures soft,
 I, Cœlus, wonder, how they came and whence;
 And at the fruits thereof what shapes they be,
 Distinct, and visible; symbols divine,
 Manifestations of that beauteous life
 Diffus'd unseen throughout eternal space:
 Of these new-form'd art thou, oh brightest child!
 Of these, thy brethren and the Goddesses! 320
 There is sad feud among ye, and rebellion
 Of son against his sire. I saw him fall,
 I saw my first-born tumbled from his throne!
 To me his arms were spread, to me his voice
 Found way from forth the thunders round his head!
 Pale wox I, and in vapours hid my face.
 Art thou, too, near such doom? vague fear there is:
 For I have seen my sons most unlike Gods.
 Divine ye were created, and divine
 In sad demeanour, solemn, undisturb'd, 330
 Unruffled, like high Gods, ye liv'd and ruled:
 Now I behold in you fear, hope, and wrath;
 Actions of rage and passion; even as
 I see them, on the mortal world beneath,
 In men who die.—This is the grief, O Son!
 Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and fall!
 Yet do thou strive; as thou art capable,

Hyperion, As thou canst move about, an evident God ;
Book I. And canst oppose to each malignant hour
 338-357 ; Ethereal presence :—I am but a voice ; 340
Book II. My life is but the life of winds and tides,
 1-9 No more than winds and tides can I avail :—
 But thou canst.—Be thou therefore in the van
 Of circumstance ; yea, seize the arrow's barb
 Before the tense string murmur.—To the earth !
 For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his woes.
 Meantime I will keep watch on thy bright sun,
 And of thy seasons be a careful nurse."—
 Ere half this region-whisper had come down,
 Hyperion arose, and on the stars 350
 Lifted his curved lids, and kept them wide
 Until it ceas'd ; and still he kept them wide :
 And still they were the same bright, patient stars.
 Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,
 Like to a diver in the pearly seas,
 Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore,
 And plung'd all noiseless into the deep night.

BOOK II

Just at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings
 Hyperion slid into the rustled air,
 And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad place
 Where Cybele and the bruised Titans mourn'd.
 It was a den where no insulting light
 Could glimmer on their tears ; where their own
 groans
 They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar
 Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,
 Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.

Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd **Hyperion,**
 Ever as if just rising from a sleep, **11** **Book II.**
 Forehead to forehead held their monstrous horns; **10-41**
 And thus in thousand hugest phantasies
 Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.
 Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon,
 Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge
 Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled:
 Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering
 Cœus, and Gyges, and Briareüs,
 Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyriön, **20**
 With many more, the brawniest in assault,
 Were pent in regions of laborious breath;
 Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep
 Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all their
 limbs
 Lock'd up like veins of metal, cramped and screw'd;
 Without a motion, save of their big hearts
 Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd
 With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of pulse.
 Mnemosyne was straying in the world;
 Far from her moon had Phœbe wandered; **30**
 And many else were free to roam abroad,
 But for the main, here found they covert drear.
 Scarce images of life, one here, one there,
 Lay vast and edgeways; like a dismal cirque
 Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,
 When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,
 In dull November, and their chancel vault,
 The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.
 Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbour gave
 Or word, or look, or action of despair. **40**
 Creüs was one; his ponderous iron mace

Hyperion, Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock
Book II. T'old of his rage, ere he thus sank and pined.
42-73 Iäpetus another ; in his grasp,
 A serpent's plashy neck ; its barbed tongue
 Squeeze'd from the gorge, and all its uncurl'd
 length
 Dead ; and because the creature could not spit
 Its poison in the eyes of conquering Jove.
 Next Cottus : prone he lay, chin uppermost,
 As though in pain ; for still upon the flint 50
 He ground severe his skull, with open mouth
 And eyes at horrid working. Nearest him
 Asia, born of most enormous Caf,
 Who cost her mother Tellus keener pangs,
 Though feminine, than any of her sons :
 More thought than woe was in her dusky face,
 For she was prophesying of her glory ;
 And in her wide imagination stood
 Palm-shaded temples, and high rival fanes,
 By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles. 60
 Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,
 So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk
 Shed from the broadest of her elephants.
 Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelve,
 Upon his elbow rais'd, all prostrate else,
 Shadow'd Enceladus ; once tame and mild
 As grazing ox unworried in the meads ;
 Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted, wroth,
 He meditated, plotted, and even now
 Was hurling mountains in that second war, 70
 Not long delay'd, that scar'd the younger Gods
 To hide themselves in forms of beast and bird.
 Not far hence Atlas ; and beside him prone

Phorcus, the Sire of Gorgons. Neighbour'd close **Hyperion,**
 Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap **Book II.**
 Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair. **74-104**

In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet
 Of Ops the queen all clouded round from sight ;
 No shape distinguishable, more than when
 Thick night confounds the pine-tops with the
 clouds : 80

And many else whose names may not be told.
 For when the Muse's wings are air-ward spread,
 Who shall delay her flight ? And she must chaunt
 Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had climb'd
 With damp and slippery footing from a depth
 More horrid still. Above a sombre cliff
 Their heads appear'd, and up their stature grew
 Till on the level height their steps found ease :
 Then Thea spread abroad her trembling arms
 Upon the precincts of this nest of pain, 90
 And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's face ;
 There saw she direst strife ; the supreme God
 At war with all the frailty of grief,
 Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,
 Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all despair.
 Against these plagues he strove in vain ; for Fate
 Had pour'd a mortal oil upon his head,
 A disanointing poison : so that Thea,
 Affrighted, kept her still, and let him pass
 First onwards in, among the fallen tribe. 100

As with us mortal men, the laden heart
 Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,
 When it is nighing to the mournful house
 Where other hearts are sick of the same bruise ;

Hyperion, So Saturn, as he walk'd into the midst,
Book II. Felt faint, and would have sunk among the rest,
105-134 But that he met Enceladus's eye,
 Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at once
 Came like an inspiration ; and he shouted,
 "Titans, behold your God!" at which some
 groan'd ; 110
 Some started on their feet ; some also shouted ;
 Some wept, some wail'd, all bow'd with rever-
 ence ;
 And Ops, uplifting her black folded veil,
 Show'd her pale cheeks, and all her forehead wan,
 Her eye-brows thin and jet, and hollow eyes.
 There is a roaring in the bleak-grown pines
 When Winter lifts his voice ; there is a noise
 Among immortals when a God gives sign,
 With hushing finger, how he means to load
 His tongue with the full weight of utterless
 thought, 120
 With thunder, and with music, and with pomp :
 Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown pines ;
 Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd world,
 No other sound succeeds ; but ceasing here,
 Among these fallen, Saturn's voice therefrom
 Grew up like organ, that begins anew
 Its strain, when other harmonies, stop short,
 Leave the dinn'd air, vibrating silverly.
 Thus grew it up—"Not in my own sad breast,
 Which is its own great judge and searcher out,
 Can I find reason why ye should be thus : 131
 Not in the legends of the first of days,
 Studied from that old spirit-leaved book
 Which starry Uranus with finger bright

Sav'd from the shores of darkness, when the waves **Hyperion,**
 Low-ebb'd still hid it up in shallow gloom ;— **Book II.**
 And the which book ye know I ever kept **135-164**
 For my firm-based footstool :—Ah, infirm !
 Not there, nor in sign, symbol, or portent
 Of element, earth, water, air, and fire,— **140**
 At war, at peace, or inter-quarrelling
 One against one, or two, or three, or all,
 Each several one against the other three,
 As fire with air loud warring when rain-floods
 Drown both, and press them both against earth's
 face,
 Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple wrath
 Unhinges the poor world ; not in that strife,
 Wherefrom I take strange lore, and read it deep,
 Can I find reason why ye should be thus :
 No, nowhere can unriddle, though I search, **150**
 And pore on Nature's universal scroll
 Even to swooning, why ye, Divinities,
 The first-born of all shap'd and palpable Gods,
 Should cower beneath what, in comparison,
 Is untremendous might. Yet ye are here,
 O'erwhelm'd, and spurn'd, and batter'd ye are
 here !
 O Titans, shall I say ' Arise ! '—Ye groan :
 Shall I say ' Crouch ! '—Ye groan. What can
 I then ?
 O Heaven wide ! O unseen parent dear ! **159**
 What can I ? Tell me, all ye brethren Gods,
 How we can war, how engine our great wrath !
 O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's ear
 Is all a-hunger'd. Thou, Oceanus,
 Ponderest high and deep ; and in thy face

Hyperion, I see, astonished, that severe content
 Book II. Which comes of thought and musing: give us
 165-194 help ! ”

So ended Saturn ; and the God of the Sea,
 Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,
 But cogitation in his watery shades,
 Arose, with locks not oozy, and began, 170
 In murmurs, which his first-endeavouring tongue
 Caught infant-like from the far-foamed sands.
 “ O ye, whom wrath consumes ! who, passion-
 stung,
 Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies !
 Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears,
 My voice is not a bellows unto ire.
 Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring proof
 How ye, perforce, must be content to stoop :
 And in the proof much comfort will I give,
 If ye will take that comfort in its truth. 180
 We fall by course of Nature’s law, not force
 Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn, thou
 Hast sifted well the atom-universe ;
 But for this reason, that thou art the King,
 And only blind from sheer supremacy,
 One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,
 Through which I wander’d to eternal truth.
 And first, as thou wast not the first of powers,
 So art thou not the last ; it cannot be.
 Thou art not the beginning nor the end. 190
 From chaos and parental darkness came
 Light, the first fruits of that intestine broil,
 That sullen ferment, which for wondrous ends
 Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour came,

Hyperion,
Book II.
195-226

And with it light, and light, engendering
Upon its own producer, forthwith touch'd
The whole enormous matter into life
Upon that very hour, our parentage,
The Heavens and the Earth, were manifest:
Then thou first-born, and we the giant-race, 200
Found ourselves ruling new and beauteous realms.
Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain;
O folly! for to bear all naked truths,
And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
That is the top of sovereignty. Mark well!
As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far
Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once
chiefs;

And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth
In form and shape compact and beautiful,
In will, in action free, companionship, 210
And thousand other signs of purer life;
So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,
A power more strong in beauty, born of us
And fated to excel us, as we pass
In glory that old Darkness: nor are we
Thereby more conquer'd than by us the rule
Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull soil
Quarrel with the proud forests it hath fed,
And feedeth still, more comely than itself?
Can it deny the chieftom of green groves? 220
Or shall the tree be envious of the dove
Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings
To wander wherewithal and find its joys?
We are such forest-trees, and our fair boughs
Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves,
But eagles golden-feather'd, who do tower

Hyperion, Above us in their beauty, and must reign
Book II. In right thereof; for 'tis the eternal law
 227-258 That first in beauty should be first in might :
 Yea, by that law, another race may drive 230
 Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.
 Have ye beheld the young God of the Seas,
 My dispossessor? Have ye seen his face?
 Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along
 By noble winged creatures he hath made?
 I saw him on the calmed waters scud,
 With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,
 That it enforc'd me to bid sad farewell
 To all my empire: farewell sad I took,
 And hither came, to see how dolorous fate 240
 Had wrought upon ye; and how I might best
 Give consolation in this woe extreme.
 Receive the truth, and let it be your balm."

Whether through pos'd conviction, or disdain,
 They guarded silence, when Oceanus
 Left murmuring, what deepest thought can tell?
 But so it was, none answer'd for a space,
 Save one whom none regarded, Clymene:
 And yet she answer'd not, only complain'd,
 With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking mild, 250
 Thus wording timidly among the fierce:
 "O father! I am here the simplest voice,
 And all my knowledge is that joy is gone,
 And this thing woe crept in among our hearts,
 There to remain for ever, as I fear:
 I would not bode of evil, if I thought
 So weak a creature could turn off the help
 Which by just right should come of mighty Gods;

Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell 259
 Of what I heard, and how it made me weep,
 And know that we had parted from all hope.
 I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore,
 Where a sweet clime was breathed from a land
 Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and flowers.
 Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief;
 Too full of joy and soft delicious warmth;
 So that I felt a movement in my heart
 To chide, and to reproach that solitude
 With songs of misery, music of our woes;
 And sat me down, and took a mouthed shell 270
 And murmur'd into it, and made melody—
 O melody no more! for while I sang,
 And with poor skill let pass into the breeze
 The dull shell's echo, from a bowery strand
 Just opposite, an island of the sea,
 There came enchantment with the shifting wind,
 That did both drown and keep alive my ears.
 I threw my shell away upon the sand,
 And a wave fill'd it, as my sense was fill'd
 With that new blissful golden melody. 280
 A living death was in each gush of sounds,
 Each family of rapturous hurried notes,
 That fell, one after one, yet all at once,
 Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their string:
 And then another, then another strain,
 Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,
 With music wing'd instead of silent plumes,
 To hover round my head, and make me sick
 Of joy and grief at once. Grief overcame,
 And I was stopping up my frantic ears, 290
 When, past all hindrance of my trembling hands,

Hyperion,
 Book II.
 259-291

Hyperion, A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all tune,
 Book II. And still it cried, 'Apollo! young Apollo!
 292-323 The morning-bright Apollo! young Apollo!'
 I fled, it follow'd me, and cried 'Apollo!'
 O father, and O Brethren! had ye felt
 Those pains of mine! O Saturn, hadst thou felt,
 Ye would not call this too indulged tongue
 Presumptuous, in thus venturing to be heard!"

So far her voice flow'd on, like timorous brook
 That, lingering along a pebbled coast, 301
 Doth fear to meet the sea: but sea it met,
 And shudder'd; for the overwhelming voice
 Of huge Enceladus swallow'd it in wrath:
 The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves
 In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks,
 Came booming thus, while still upon his arm
 He lean'd; not rising, from supreme contempt.
 "Or shall we listen to the over-wise,
 Or to the over-foolish giant, Gods? 310
 Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all
 That rebel Jove's whole armoury were spent,
 Not world on world upon these shoulders piled,
 Could agonize me more than baby-words
 In midst of this dethronement horrible.
 Speak! roar! shout! yell! ye sleepy Titans all.
 Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile?
 Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm?
 Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the Waves,
 Thy scalding in the seas? What! have I rous'd 320
 Your spleens with so few simple words as these?
 O joy! for now I see you are not lost:
 O joy! for now I see a thousand eyes

Wide glaring for revenge! ”—As this he said, **Hyperion,**
 He lifted up his stature vast, and stood, **Book II.**
 Still without intermission speaking thus : **324-355**
 “ Now ye are flames, I’ll tell you how to burn,
 And purge the ether of our enemies ;
 How to feed fierce the crooked stings of fire,
 And singe away the swollen clouds of Jove, 330
 Stifling that puny essence in its tent.
 O let him feel the evil he hath done ;
 For though I scorn Oceanus’s lore,
 Much pain have I for more than loss of realms :
 The days of peace and slumberous calm are fled ;
 Those days, all innocent of scathing war,
 When all the fair Existences of heaven
 Came open-eyed to guess what we would speak :—
 That was before our brows were taught to frown,
 Before our lips knew else but solemn sounds : 340
 That was before we knew the winged thing,
 Victory, might be lost, or might be won.
 And be ye mindful that Hyperion,
 Our brightest brother, still is undisgraced—
 Hyperion, lo ! his radiance is here ! ”

All eyes were on Enceladus’s face,
 And they beheld, while still Hyperion’s name
 Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks,
 A pallid gleam across his features stern :
 Not savage, for he saw full many a God 350
 Wroth as himself. He look’d upon them all,
 And in each face he saw a gleam of light,
 But splendor in Saturn’s, whose hoar locks
 Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel
 When the prow sweeps into a midnight cove.

Hyperion, In pale and silver silence they remain'd,
Book II. Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn,
 356-387 Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,
 All the sad spaces of oblivion,
 And every gulph, and every chasm old, 360
 And every height, and every sullen depth,
 Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented streams :
 And all the everlasting cataracts,
 And all the heading torrents far and near,
 Mantled before in darkness and huge shade,
 Now saw the light and made it terrible.
 It was Hyperion :—a granite peak
 His bright feet touch'd, and there he stay'd to
 view
 The misery his brilliance had betray'd
 To the most hateful seeing of itself. 370
 Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,
 Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade
 In midst of his own brightness, like the bulk
 Of Memnon's image at the set of sun
 To one who travels from the dusking East :
 Sighs, too, as mournful as that Memnon's harp,
 He utter'd, while his hands, contemplative,
 He press'd together, and in silence stood.
 Despondence seiz'd again the fallen Gods
 At sight of the dejected King of Day, 380
 And many hid their faces from the light :
 But fierce Enceladus sent forth his eyes
 Among the brotherhood ; and, at their glare
 Uprose Iäpetus, and Creüs too,
 And Phorcus, sea-born, and together strode
 To where he towered on his eminence.
 There those four shouted forth old Saturn's name ;

Hyperion from the peak loud answered, "Saturn!" Hyperion,
Book II.
 Saturn sat near the Mother of the Gods 388-391 ;
 In whose face was no joy, though all the Gods Book III.
 Gave from their hollow throats the name of 1-24
 "Saturn!"

BOOK III

THUS in alternate uproar and sad peace,
 Amazed were those Titans utterly.
 O leave them, Muse! O leave them to their woes;
 For thou art weak to sing such tumults dire:
 A solitary sorrow best befits
 Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.
 Leave them, O Muse! for thou anon wilt find
 Many a fallen old Divinity
 Wandering in vain about bewildered shores.
 Meantime touch piously the Delphic harp, 10
 And not a wind of heaven but will breathe
 In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute;
 For lo! 'tis for the Father of all verse.
 Flush everything that hath a vermeil hue,
 Let the rose glow intense and warm the air,
 And let the clouds of even and of morn
 Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills;
 Let the red wine within the goblet boil,
 Cold as a bubbling well; let faint-lipp'd shells,
 On sands or in great deeps, vermilion turn 20
 Through all their labyrinths; and let the maid
 Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss surpris'd.
 Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,
 Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,

Hyperion, And poplars, and lawn-shading palms, and beech,
 Book III. In which the Zephyr breathes the loudest song,
 25-55 And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath the
 shade :

Apollo is once more the golden theme !
 Where was he, when the Giant of the Sun
 Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his peers ? 30
 Together had he left his mother fair
 And his twin-sister sleeping in their bower,
 And in the morning twilight wander'd forth
 Beside the osiers of a rivulet,
 Full ankle-deep in lilies of the vale.
 The nightingale had ceas'd, and a few stars
 Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush
 Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle
 There was no covert, no retired cave
 Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves, 40
 Though scarcely heard in many a green recess.
 He listen'd, and he wept, and his bright tears
 Went trickling down the golden bow he held.
 Thus with half-shut suffused eyes he stood,
 While from beneath some cumbrous boughs
 hard by

With solemn step an awful Goddess came,
 And there was purport in her looks for him,
 Which he with eager guess began to read
 Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said :
 " How camest thou over the unfooted sea ? 50
 Or hath that antique mien and robed form
 Mov'd in these vales invisible till now ?
 Sure I have heard those vestments sweeping o'er
 The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone
 In cool 'mid forest. Surely I have traced

The rustle of those ample skirts about
 These grassy solitudes, and seen the flowers
 Lift up their heads, as still the whisper pass'd.
 Goddess! I have beheld those eyes before,
 And their eternal calm, and all that face, 60
 Or I have dream'd."—"Yes," said the supreme
 shape,

"Thou hast dream'd of me; and awaking up
 Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side,
 Whose strings touch'd by thy fingers, all the vast
 Unwearied ear of the whole universe
 Listen'd in pain and pleasure at the birth
 Of such new tuneful wonder. Is't not strange
 That thou shouldst weep, so gifted? Tell me,
 youth,

What sorrow thou canst feel; for I am sad
 When thou dost shed a tear: explain thy griefs 70
 To one who in this lonely isle hath been
 The watcher of thy sleep and hours of life,
 From the young day when first thy infant hand
 Pluck'd witless the weak flowers, till thine arm
 Could bend that bow heroic to all times.
 Show thy heart's secret to an ancient Power
 Who hath forsaken old and sacred thrones
 For prophecies of thee, and for the sake
 Of loveliness new-born."—Apollo then,
 With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes, 80
 Thus answer'd, while his white melodious throat
 Throbb'd with the syllables:—"Mnemosyne!
 Thy name is on my tongue, I know not how;
 Why should I tell thee what thou so well seest?
 Why should I strive to show what from thy lips
 Would come no mystery? From me, dark, dark,

Hyperion,
 Book III.
 56-86

Hyperion, And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes :
 Book III. I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,
 87-117 Until a melancholy numbs my limbs ;
 And then upon the grass I sit, and moan, 90
 Like one who once had wings.—O why should I
 Feel curs'd and thwarted, when the liegeless air
 Yields to my step aspirant ? why should I
 Spurn the green turf as hateful to my feet ?
 Goddess benign, point forth some unknown
 thing :
 Are there not other regions than this isle ?
 What are the stars ? There is the sun, the sun !
 And the most patient brilliance of the moon !
 And stars by thousands ! Point me out the way
 To any one particular beauteous star, 100
 And I will flit into it with my lyre,
 And make its silvery splendour pant with bliss.
 I have heard the cloudy thunder : Where is
 power ?
 Whose hand, whose essence, what divinity
 Makes this alarum in the elements,
 While I here idle listen on the shores
 In fearless yet in aching ignorance ?
 O tell me, lonely Goddess, by thy harp,
 That waileth every morn and eventide,
 Tell me why thus I rave, about these groves ! 110
 Mute thou remainest—Mute ! yet I can read
 A wondrous lesson in thy silent face :
 Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.
 Names, deeds, grey legends, dire events, rebellions,
 Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,
 Creations and destroyings, all at once
 Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,

Hyperion,
Book III.
118-136

And deify me, as if some blithe wine
Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,
And so become immortal."—Thus the God, 120
While his enkindled eyes, with level glance
Beneath his white soft temples, steadfast kept
Trembling with light upon Mnemosyne.
Soon wild commotions shook him, and made flush
All the immortal fairness of his limbs:
Most like the struggle at the gate of death;
Or liker still to one who should take leave
Of pale immortal death, and with a pang
As hot as death's is chill, with fierce convulse
Die into life; so young Apollo anguish'd; 130
His very hair his golden tresses famed
Kept undulation round his eager neck.
During the pain Mnemosyne upheld
Her arms as one who prophesied.—At length
Apollo shriek'd;—and lo! from all his limbs
Celestial * * * *
 * * * * *

This issue of "The Longer Poems of Keats" has been edited by Mr H BUXTON FORMAN, Keats's editor par excellence. In his "Bibliographical Epilogue," Mr FORMAN has pointed out the basis of the text of the present volume

I. G.

November 12th, 1898.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL EPILOGUE

A SHORT poem finished by Keats in the winter of 1816 was originally called *Endymion*: it was published in 1817 without a title in his first little volume of poems, issued by Charles and James Ollier, in which it occupies the place of honour. The first line is

“I stood tip-toe upon a little hill.”

The ultimate *Endymion* he began to write at Margate in the spring of 1817; and he finished the draft at Burford Bridge on the 28th of November 1817. The complete quarto manuscript from which the types were set up is still extant. The first book shows a great deal of alteration; and of it no other manuscript is known. The other three books were written out in a large blank book, and afterwards copied on to the quarto sheets in an amended form, so that the sheets of that part of the manuscript show far less correction than those of Book I. The copy of Book IV was completed for the printer by the 14th of March 1818. The body of the volume had passed through the press by about the end of that month; and a preface had been written for it as early as the 19th. This, however, was rejected; and the preface dated the 10th of April was sent in

manuscript from Teignmouth on that date. The book was published in the course of April; and on the 27th Keats wrote to his publisher-friend (Taylor) to express his satisfaction with its exterior. It was a handsomely printed octavo volume in thick drab boards, with a back-label reading "Keats's Endymion, Lond. 1818." The half-title reads "Endymion: a Romance"—the full title thus:—

ENDYMION:

A Poetic Romance.

BY JOHN KEATS.

"THE STRETCHED METRE OF AN ANTIQUE SONG"

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY,

93, FLEET-STREET.

1818.

The third leaf bears the words:—

INSCRIBED

TO THE MEMORY

OF

THOMAS CHATTERTON

The preface is on two leaves (pp. vii to ix): there is a fourth leaf bearing on the recto in the earliest copies one *erratum* in others five *errata*; and the text occupies 207 pages (including blanks

and half-titles to the books). At the end is a list of Taylor & Hessey's publications,—four pages,—dated May 1818. The printer was T. Miller of Noble Street (London).

Lamia is stated by Charles Armitage Brown to have "been in hand some time" and to have been written "with great care, after much study of Dryden's versification." Keats was very busy with it off and on in the summer of 1819, and had finished by the 5th of September a folio manuscript of twenty-six leaves from which it was printed. This is still extant, as are also two leaves of a draft of Part II.

Of *Isabella* only a few stanzas seem to have been written before Keats joined his brothers at Teignmouth early in March 1818. At that place he finished the draft of the poem by the 27th of April; and two fragments (stanzas xxx, xxxi, and xxxiii to xl) are extant. A fair copy, probably made with much amendment of the draft, and completed just before Keats started with Brown on the Scotch tour in June 1818, exists in a book with other Keats holographs and copies. And Richard Woodhouse made a transcript of *Isabella* which is extant, and which Keats himself amended.

The Eve of St Agnes was written at Chichester in January 1819, and revised at Winchester in September 1819. The manuscript wanting the first seven stanzas is still preserved; and a transcript of the whole by Woodhouse stands us in stead for the missing part of the original.

There is some doubt whether *Hyperion* was

begun in September or October 1818, or a few weeks later. It was taken up and laid down again more than once in 1819, and abandoned in September.

The four pieces mentioned above were published in the summer of 1820, with nine minor poems including the best of the Odes, in a volume of which the half-title reads: "Lamia, Isabella, etc.," and the title as follows:

LAMIA,
ISABELLA,
THE EVE OF ST AGNES,
AND
OTHER POEMS.

BY JOHN KEATS,
Author of *Endymion*.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY,
FLEET-STREET,
1820.

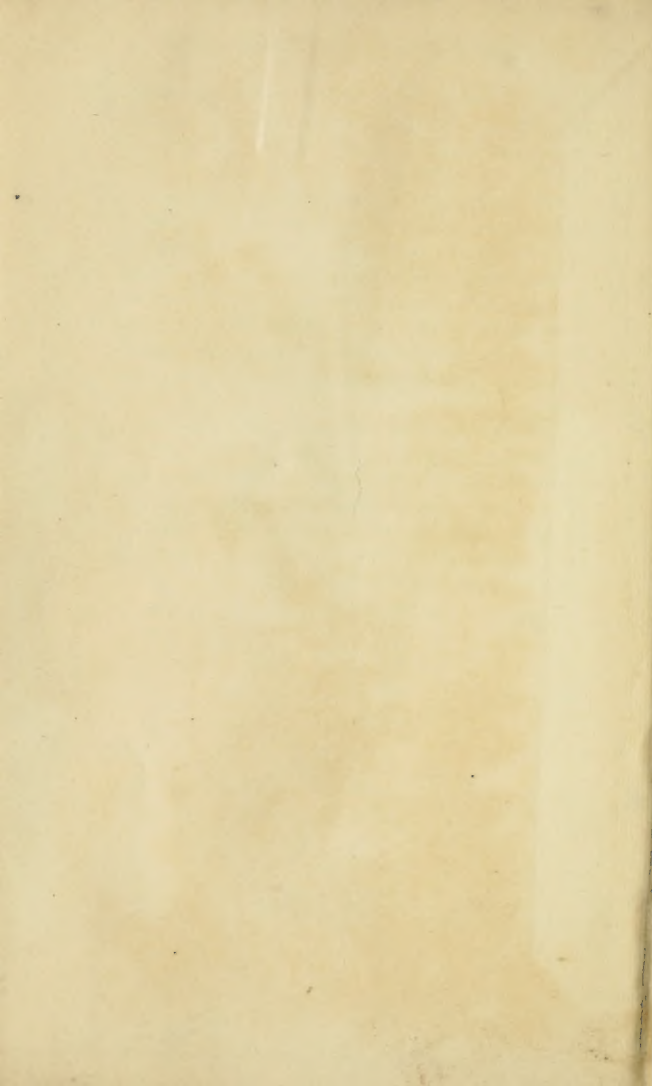
It is a duodecimo volume, put up like *Endymion*, in stout drab paper boards, back-labelled "Lamia, Isabella, etc., 7s. 6d." There are two preliminary leaves besides the half-title and title, —one bearing an "Advertisement" and the other a table of contents. The body of the book

consists of 200 pages, including sectional half-titles and blanks. The printer was Thomas Davison of Whitefriars (London). The "Advertisement" is as follows :

"If any apology be thought necessary for the appearance of the unfinished poem of *Hyperion*, the publishers beg to state that they alone are responsible, as it was printed at their particular request, and contrary to the wish of the author. The poem was intended to have been of equal length with *Endymion*, but the reception given to that work discouraged the author from proceeding."

The two printed volumes described above supply the basis of the text of the present edition of Keats's longer poems; but the manuscripts, and one or two corrected copies of *Endymion*, are responsible for the very considerable amount of revision of which Keats's own published text stood in need.





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