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LAND-IN-HAND

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Verses
by
A Mother
and
Daughter



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HAND IN HAND

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HAND IN HAND
VERSES BY A
MOTHER AND DAUGHTER



LONDON
ELKIN MATHEWS
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& COMPANY

TO
MY DAUGHTER

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Overtaken

WHEN first the waters flowed across her path,
She quickened not at all her measured
pace,
She deemed the summer sea but mimicked wrath,
And smiled to feel the sunshine in her face ;
Her garment's hem raised from the glittering
spray,
Nor ceased her song, nor faltered on her way.

But when the gathering wave, with sullen roar,
Broke at her foot, with sudden startled cry
She turned in haste to quit that fatal shore :
And ever as she strove in vain to fly,
Beneath her trembling steps the shifting sand
Sank as she stood between the sea and land.

What terror of the earth and sea and sky,
What threefold horror seized her as she stood !
What sickening sense of hopeless destiny,
As round her heart she felt the chilling flood !
Great God ! to go down quick, among the dead,
The surging waves of deluge over-head !

Rivals

TO Love's low voice she lent a careless ear,
Her hand within his rosy fingers lay,
A chilling weight. She would not turn nor hear,
But with averted face went on her way ;
His flow'ry wreaths beneath her heedless feet
She crushed, nor cared to breathe his offerings
sweet.

But when pale Death, all featureless and grim,
Lifted his bony hand, and beckoning
Held out his cypress branch, she followed him ;
And Love was left forlorn and wondering
When she, who for his wooing would not stay,
At Death's first whisper rose, and went away.

In the Sunshine

IT was spring-time, but not the early spring ;
April had wept her blue eyes clear again,
And happy children tumbled in the grass,
And little fingers forged a daisy chain,
In whose slight fetters willing captives lay ;
While older children watched the pretty play
With smiling toleration in their eyes,
Who played the same game last year—now too
wise !

The scentless later violets grew by scores,
Untouched, no hand had cared to gather them ;
Wild hyacinths were bluer than the skies,
The wind-flower danced upon its slender stem ;
A foot above the ground the young corn stood,
And over all was poured a golden flood
Of warm May sunshine—in its radiant light
The whole world seemed transfigured to the sight.

Beneath a chestnut, pelted by the shower
Of milk-white blossom, which a gentle breeze
Shook lightly from the branches, over-ripe,
I lay in perfect ecstasy of ease.

I heard the plaintive cawing of the rook,
The pleasant murmur of the rippling brook ;
I heard the cuckoo's oft-repeated call,
And bursts of childish laughter over all.

With eyes half closed, and empty idle hands
That plucked at grass and flowers aimlessly,
I watched the flickering shadow of the leaves
Waving like fans upon the chestnut-trees.
It mattered nothing to me, as I lay,
That Love was gone, and Hope had flown away,
That Life had lost its sweetness and its grace,—
I only felt the sunshine in my face.

A little child came softly to my side,
With buttercups and daisies in its hand ;
Half shy, half bold, it dropped them on my
breast—

An infant's scheme most innocently planned.
This done, it turned, and shouting gleefully,
With tiny hurrying feet fled hastily ;
I never heeded it, but lay at rest,
The sunshine and the flowers upon my breast.

I felt the sunshine in my very heart.
Was yesterday so clouded and so sad,
And would to-morrow be like this, or that ?
What mattered it ? And yet I was not glad.
I only knew the sun shone overhead ;
I only knew that underneath was spread

A perfumed carpet of the soft green grass,
On which I lay, and let the moments pass.

I saw, and saw not; heard, and did not hear;

 But conscious only that a blessed ease

For this one hour took precedence of pain,

 I felt the sunshine, and I was at peace.

I had no thought of past or future years;

I did not vex myself with hopes or fears;

My half-dropped lids hid neither smiles nor tears;

I scarce had found a rest more calm and deep

In that still place where one day I shall sleep.

“When My Ship Comes Home
from Sea”

“O A golden comb for golden hair,
And milk-white pearls for a neck as fair ;
And silver chains, and all for me,
The day my ship comes home from sea !

“O silken 'broideries, green and blue,
And wrought with crimson thro' and thro',
With coral and amber ; all for me,
The day my ship comes home from sea !”

“And where is the good ship sailing from
That brings these brave things safely home ?
And by what name do you hail her free,
And who is her captain on the sea ?”

“My ship comes sailing from the West,
And her name is called ‘The Sailor's Rest’ ;
And the bravest man of all her crew,
Her captain, is my lover true.”

“ O never will that ship come home,
Wherever she be sailing from ;
I warmed my hands beneath the stars,
By a fire made of her broken spars.

“ And three days dead the Captain lay,
But how he died no man may say :
I laid him out by the pale moon-rise,
And made a shroud of the 'broideries.

“ With coral and gold I weighted him,
And still he was light enough to swim,
With silver chains I bound him down,
There was never a corpse so hard to drown.

“ His black hair lines an eagle's nest
On a sea girt cliff in the lonesome west ;
Now, jet for coral there must be,
And instead of amber, ebony.”

Song

I'M lost to joy : I'm lost to love ;
I'm lost to all would make me fain :
I lost my way in the light of day—
God send that I find it soon again !

I'm lost to peace ; I'm lost to ease ;
I'm lost to all would make me blest ;
I lost my way in the light of day,
And I'm weary now and long to rest.

I'm lost to gladness and to mirth ;
I'm lost to all that's good to find :
I lost my way in the light of day,
And left the good things all behind.

I wander West, I wander East,
And know not which is East or West ;
I lost my way in the light of day,
And I seek it still, and never rest.

The Sun went down an hour ago ;
I wonder if I face towards home ?
If I lost my way in the light of day,
How shall I find it now night has come ?

Wind Music

A WIND harp in a garden all year round,
Was fingered by the winds, and each one
found

Within its silver strings an answering sound.

A wind for Summer, and a wind for Spring;
For Autumn, and for Winter,—let them sing
Their own songs in the music that they bring.

The soft South wind came like a lover sighing
Some low sweet song of love that, never dying,
Could still be faithful, though its hope was flying.

The West wind brought a tender, yearning strain,
As of a heart that breathed regret and pain
For something lost and never found again.

The East wind sobbed, and shrieked, and moaned,
and wailed,

In tones like those of shipwrecked men who hailed
Across the storm some ship that safely sailed,

Unhearing and unheeding; their despair
As each one met the death that was his share,
Borne on the East wind shuddered on the air.

The North wind blew one sudden furious blast,
Like a loud battle call, and hurried past.
The harp strings snapt;—that echo was their last.

Wind-Music and the Child

A TUNE that keeps no earthly time or measure,
Rising and falling at the wind's wild pleasure;
Now quick in haste, now slow in languid leisure.

But always very musically sweet
And always sad. No little childish feet
To its soft cadence dance along the street;

No little childish voice breaks into singing,
By a glad impulse, like a wild bird flinging
An echo to the sound the wind is bringing.

Rather the child, altho' scarce knowing why,
Hearing this music, passes slowly by,
And breathes its fear and wonder in a sigh.

A Whisper

THERE was never a day so sad and long
But it wore at length to evensong ;
There was never a life so full of grief,
But death came at last to its relief.

There was never a soul so wholly sad,
But it found some moment to be glad ;
There was never a heart so full of care,
But it had one hope to cheat despair.

There was never a winter, dark and drear,
But it changed to Spring in the early year ;
There was never a Summer,—well-a-day !
But it sloped through Autumn to decay.

Hearts and Faces

CAN you judge by a smile who is gay,
Nor once be misled by the token?
I know that I laughed aloud one day,
From a heart that was almost broken.

But my laughter rang false, do you say?
Or tears followed very soon after.
You are wrong; for I wept not that day,
And my laugh was the merriest laughter.

'That my grief was not deep, you maintain,
Since I found it so easy to cover;
But I tell you I writhed with the pain,
And one writhes not when anguish is over.

For my own part I scarcely believe
That sighing can only mean sadness;
And I wholly misdoubt, you perceive,
That laughter must always prove gladness.

Are you sure it is grief when a tear starts?
Can you trust smiles of mirth in all places?
If aught can be falser than human hearts,
It must surely be human faces!

To Chastelard at a Fancy Ball

(An Acrostic)

CALLED back a season from the shades below
How looks the world in its last phantasy?
Are living women, in their youth's bright glow,
Sweet as your own dead queen in memory?
Tell all true lovers who have wept your woe,
Each poet who has sung your hapless fate,
Let us, whose eyes grow dim with pity know,
Are all life's pleasant paths left desolate?
Remembering afresh your tragic tale,
Does Love seem timid grown, and wan, and pale?

Joy Cometh in the Morning

I HAD hoped that the morning sun would rise
To scatter the night of weeping,
And I rose to watch the dawning skies
While the world lay round me sleeping.

But alas for my hope; from his cloudy bed
He rose with a sullen glare,
And over the waiting earth he shed
A cold light everywhere.

In pitiless gusts came the driving rain
From the leaden-coloured skies;
Thro' the blinding mist on the window pane
I saw the sad sun rise.

And I said to my heart as I turned away,
"Tho' tears have endured for a night,
Yet be still, my heart, there comes to-day
No joy with the morning light!"

Doomed

I THOUGHT I stood at the gate of Heaven,
But, ah me, I found too late,
When the opened door had admittance given,
I had knocked at Perdition's gate!

I listened awhile, and I thought to hear
The music of heavenly choirs,
But alas, there fell on my startled ear
The roar of infernal fires!

I thought to bathe in seraphic light,
And gladly my free soul came,
But alas! for the bitter, burning blight,
I leaped into scorching flame!

Life

LIFE, once a perfumed flower, a luscious fruit,
Sweet to each sense with sweetness still un-
cloying,
A growing tree from leafy crown to root,
Is now a withered bough, an empty husk ;
No sunbeam cheers it, and no breezes toying
Make music in its leaves from dawn to dusk.

Life, once a stormy sea whose gathering waves
Beat high against the sullen cliffs of Fate,
And thundered in the depth of ocean caves,
Now sinks to silence,—hushed the angry roar—
And leaves the raging waters far flung spate
An ebbing tide upon a lonely shore.

When I Was Young

WHEN I was young I talked and sang of
Love,
Lifted the veil that shrouded his sweet eyes,
Defied the power I rashly sought to prove,
And, light of heart, made jest of mysteries ;
And thus it was, and never once I thought
That Love, dear Love, could be too dearly
bought.

Grown older now, and wiser, sadder too,
I sing of Love no more ; yet is my heart
Love's dwelling place, and shall be safe and true
Until the day that life and I must part ;
And thus it is, although full well I know
Who live for Love may chance to die for Woe.

Spring

HOW the old Earth is young this sunny day!
Spring wrapt in her green mantle newly
 donned,
And shod with flowers, comes smiling on her way;
 To her soft whisper all the groves respond,
While I alone, what time the woods are gay,
Fade as a leaf, and wither and decay.

Mocked by returning Spring, I turn aside
 To my grey cloister. Never more for me
Will her blythe message in my heart abide
 To cheer me with its green felicity.
Hers is the voice of youth, of hope new born,
And wakes no echo in a life outworn.

Early Snowdrops

NO snow had fallen all the winter thro',
The trees were budding in the early year,
Beguiled by sunshine that was almost Spring.

The thrushes built their nests before the time,
And twittered cheerily the whole day long ;
Buds grew to leaves, as if to shelter them.

February's skies had April's tender grace,
When lo ! the fields were white, as if with snow,
And all the woods and gardens and hedgerows.

Single, in clusters, opened flower and bud,
The snowdrops bloomed: the world was white
with them,
Half hidden in a snowstorm of snowdrops.

O pleasant Winter ! when in place of storms
Of sudden snow, by cruel North winds driven,
There fell a tender rain of snow-white flowers.

For rather they seemed thrown down from above,
A gracious gift, bestowed by angel hands,
Than grown up from the dark and wintry earth.

Playing with Fire

IDLY she stirred the ashes at her feet,
The burnt-out embers of a by-gone day,
Thinking how bright that fire had burned—
what heat
Glowed once, where now she found all cold
and grey.

Then, idly still, scarce knowing what she did,
Fanned the pale ashes with her gentle breath,
Nor thought of fire within the embers hid,
Nor dreamed of life where all lay cold as
death.

Sudden a light where all before was dark,
Shone in her dazzled eyes, and dimmed her
sight,
A tongue of flame that, kindled by some spark
Undreamed of, made a noonday of the night.

She stood one moment, stunned, then in amaze
She fled, for all her world was in a blaze !

Love's Hypocrisy

HER lips said "Go"; her shining eyes said
"Stay."

How tell which was her meaning, which her
will?

How read the riddle of her yea and nay,

And disentangle each, bewildered still?

Hearing her chilling tone, all hope expired;

Seeing her glowing eyes, despair took heart;

One moment certain of the good desired;

One moment turning, hopeless, to depart.

Then, as she stood, with half averted face,

From head to feet veiled from his ardent eyes,

Sudden she changed, and with triumphant grace

Flung off the mantle of her soul's disguise!

Sweet hypocrite! how false was all her feigning,

Turning for flight, yet, while she turned, re-
maining!

The Fate of Beauty

OLD Age to Beauty doth more fatal prove
Than Death in Beauty's bloom and blossoming,
Which, snatching loveliness from arms of love,
Sets all the world a moment sorrowing.

That, like a subtle forger, whose base art
Defiles, defaces, desecrates at will,
And leaving all, yet changes every part,
And makes all valueless with knavish skill;—

This, like a thief who steals a diadem,
But, knowing not to change the treasure's worth,
In guilty haste hides deep the radiant gem,
A flawless jewel still, beneath the earth:—

And yet, 'twixt this and that, how hard to say,
Which better is—swift death or slow decay?

Inconstancy

WHEN from afar I saw your beauty shine,
I thought that my whole life were fitly
given,
If by such gift I made your beauty mine,
If by such loss I gained the highest heaven.

But when I stood beside you, and your eyes
Were raised to mine, their brightness all un-
veiled,
The charm had vanished ; with a sad surprise
I found with nearness all desire had failed.

If you had changed, or I had witless grown,
Blind to your beauty, deaf to your sweet
speech,
I knew not, when as cold as any stone,
I turned from all that seemed within my
reach.

Now near, nor far, no longer I desire
That which of late set all my heart on fire.

At the Dawn

WHEN the sad sun with scanty gleam of
light,
Like a dull sluggard, rising slow and late,
Brings a dim dawn to mock my straining sight,
And the new day looms, heavy as a fate :—
I know that in a far-off Eastern land
A splendid morning rises o'er the sea,
Flooding with rainbow light the shining sand,
Before whose brightness all Night's shadows
flee ;
And think how one upon his pillow turns,
And from the sunbeam shades his dreaming
eyes,
And all his heart within his bosom yearns
Towards one who in the distant darkness lies.

For him the burden, and for her the pain
Until this riven life be joined again.

Summer in the Indian Plains

THE fiery feet of Summer march in haste
Across the fields swept bare of ripened
grain,
And all the garden lies a barren waste
Beneath her scorching steps, athirst for rain.

The red rose blossom and the white rose lie
In one pale scentless ruin side by side,
Poor faded queens, that erst in rivalry
For beauty's crown each with the other vied.

With perfume honey-sweet from blossoming
trees
The heavy air turns faint before the noon,
And stagnant odours load the evening breeze
Which 'neath their weight dies ere the day
be done ;

While languidly, with long stems fresh and cool,
The lotus lilies lie upon the pool.

In Captivity

IF these chained feet were free to come and go,
And at their own will wander through this
Isle,
Seeking cool shaded paths, and, fast or slow,
Choose their own pace, none following the
while ;
If I might take the memory of this Sun
To dream upon in cold, dark Winter days,
No more constrained to tell out one by one,
The languid hours beneath his fervent rays—
Then this, my woful place of banishment,
My mournful prison-house of misery,
Being no longer mine in punishment,
Unchanged itself would yet be changed to me ;
And finding sweet what now most bitter is,
My heart would love what once it loathed, I wis.

Three Maidens

I HEARD three maidens laughing merrily,
All three were young and one was very fair;
Except in jest they had not breathed a sigh,
And save the name, they nothing knew of
care.

As I came by they rose and clasped me round:
“Tell us,” they said, “for you have older
years,
What is this love that each of us has found;
Is it a thing for laughter, or for tears?”

One held my hand,—she would not let me go—
The fairest whispered softly, “Answer me.”
The third said lightly, “Ah, she does not know;
Love never came so near that she should see!”

I could not speak the truth—I would not lie—
And so without a word I passed them by.

To Proteus, on Reading his
Love-Sonnets

I

I WILL not tell you which I love the best
Of all your sonnets, for in telling this
I should tell more, and all would be confessed,
That I so long have hidden in my breast,
My soul's sad secret, my heart's poisoned bliss.
Nor will I whisper, though you bend your ear
To catch my murmured word; yet fearing lest
This silence seem ungrateful, you shall hear
That one there is that with regretful pain,
As of a memory wakened from its sleep,
Filled both mine eyes with tears, and once again
I wept, who for so long have ceased to weep.
Take back the book, I am grown calm and sage,
There is no tell-tale tear-drop on the page.

II.

THERE wakes a passionate echo in my heart
To every word of yours; for you have
known
All that I know, and you have skill and art
To tell your story without fret or moan
In musical sweet words. “’Twas thus,” I say
“With me,” and smile as you have smiled
before;
“And thus it was with me another day.”
And through your tears I feel mine own grief
pour.

And I, like you, henceforward stand alone
In silence, where of old Love walked with me,
And laughed and sang and made my youth his
own,
Till Love and I seemed one eternally.

But now we part. The years have brought you
peace;
To me they bring but sorrow’s sharp increase.

Three Singers

YOUTH, Hope, and Love were nestling in
her heart,
Like three sweet birds that cheered the Sum-
mer earth ;
In Life's glad chorus taking equal part,
Filling her days with music and with mirth.

The voice of Youth ceased first, the thievish
years
Stole one by one its sweetness and its grace,
Instead of happy laughter gave her tears,
And left a darkness in the glory's place.

Then Hope was hushed, grew fainter day by
day,
Folded its weary pinions, drooped, and died,
From her lone heart passed silently away,
Its chamber empty, and its portal wide.
Love only of the three still lives and sings,
And lifts her soul to Heaven upon its wings.

“To-day is a King in Disguise.”

A KING, uncrowned and clad in poor attire,
His sceptre and his robes of state laid by,
He comes upon us, and our blinded eyes
See nothing regal in the mean disguise,
And have no power to pierce the mystery,
And find the Monarch in his majesty.

But, passed, our sight is cleared ; all we desire
Of royal pomp and kingly might is shown ;
He straight resumes the sceptre and the throne,
The ermined robes, and reigns triumphantly
A crowned King ! The while a wondering
world,
Unmindful of the new disguised To-day,
Cries out, as wide his banners float unfurled,
“ Behold, a King was with us yesterday ! ”

Thrift

IF you had given me the kiss I craved
At our last parting, placed your hand in
mine,
Or even for one moment laid your head
To rest upon the heart that ached for you,
I should have faced my fate with stouter soul,
And walked with firmer feet to meet my doom.
It was not much I asked ! Not much for you,
So rich in all I lacked, to give or grant,
And I, poor, desolate, and most forlorn,
Should for such grace have blessed you all my
days.

Now, neither kiss, nor tender clasping hand,
Nor e'en the gift of your whole self could save
This wand'rer, shipwrecked on the sea of life ;
Who, passing by your door, says only this—
“ You are no richer, dear, for that day's thrift,
While I am made the poorer for all time.”

The Dole

MAN'S life at best is but a paltry gift
Doled grudgingly by moments, breath on
breath,
Till soon or late, th' inevitable death
Cuts short the dole, and sets the soul adrift.
Time, a sly pilferer, daily steals from youth,
Some scarce-missed trifle, which it deemed its
own,
Secure, inalienable, till, with bitter ruth
We see the radiant bosom, once Love's throne,
A wrinkled horror, hidden from the day ;
The arms full roundness shrunk to lean decay,
The golden tresses changed to ashen grey,
And, one by one Life's compensations flown,
To Death, upon the threshold loitering,
We stretch forth eager hands of welcoming.

A Coward Heart

SUPPOSE that once, and only once, my feet,
Straying from beaten pathways of the plain,
Had scaled forbidden mountain heights, and fleet
To escape pursuit, had scorned fatigue and pain,
And climbing ever higher, reached at length
Some topmost pinnacle, whence, looking down,
I saw no glimmer of the household fire,
And caught no echo of familiar tone,
Light, warmth, and music, all for ever gone!
Should I not swift descend the mountain slope
With eager eyes, and straining ears, in hope
To find again the welcome light and sound,
Thinking no path so smooth as that I left?

I know it. Yet I pace this beaten track
Reluctantly, and with uplifted gaze
'Turned ever to some unknown point o'er head,
Dim in the distance, and all veiled and vague.

TO
MY MOTHER

“Rose Aylmer’s Grave” and “Where Hugli Flows” appeared originally in *Temple Bar*, and “Spion Kop” in *Longman’s Magazine*. I am indebted to the Editors of these magazines for permission to reprint.

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An Invocation

A HARP Eolian
Is on my window-sill,
A box of pulsing melodies,
A wood-and-wire thrill.

Its songs are not its own—
There is no music there ;
But it can phrase in tender tone
The symphonies of air.

So many poets dead !
Is all their power past ?
Think of the songs that might have been
Had not death come too fast !

Why is my hand less skilled
Than wood and wire be ?
Cannot one floating song be willed
To breathe its tune to me ?

Dear bygone poets, then,
Here's paper spread and white ;
I dip for you a silver pen—
Come, guide my hand, and write !

A Rosy Lie

I MET a pretty rosy Lie,
Who looked most truthful:
I had not strength to pass her by,
For I was youthful.

The rosy Lie came home to dine,
And stayed to sup:
I poured for her my life's best wine
In my heart's cup.

The rosy Lie came home to sleep,
And still is near me:
She has no beauty now to keep,
She does not fear me.

The rosy Lie has devil's claws,
A tail and pointed horn:
But since I once have broken laws
She makes my life forlorn.

Friend, if you meet a rosy Lie
With smiling face,
Be wise and swiftly pass her by
And flee the place.

The rosy Lie has demon friends
That storm your city,
And shape your aims to suit their ends,
The more's the pity!

A Little Sin

POOR little lonely Sin !
 He wept before my door,
 His tattered robe was thin,
 His feet were sore.
The night was wild,
He seemed a child.
One little lonely Sin !
 I said, " Come in,
 Yes, enter, little Sin."

We sat in gloom,
 Talking of many things ;
 I heard within my room
 The sound of wings.
It was my Angel leaving
My house, and grieving.
I was alone with Sin,
 Alone at night with Sin,
 With growing Sin.

Two others entered in,
And small Sin grew !
They were not one but two.
Two mighty gloomy shapes,
Like fiends, like apes,
Followed the little Sin.
No longer thin,
No longer lonely,
He rules me only.
I am the thrall of Sin.

He wrecks my home.
All, all against my will
He rules me still.
When will my Angel come?
I am alone with Sin—
The little lonely Sin,
That was so thin,
When first he entered in ;
Now mighty ruling Sin !

A Wayside Shrine

I MAY not touch with a flake of fire
The tall white tapers set in the choir :
And worthier hands than mine keep bright
The golden lamps of the altar light.
Not mine to kindle the glorious blaze
Of the torches carried on festal days.

But, where three ways part, on a stony steep,
I found a shrine there was none to keep.
The Babe and Our Lady were imaged there,
But the lamp was broken, the altar bare,
The flowers had withered to shrivelled sticks.
And a thief had stolen the Crucifix.

I brought the one lamp, that lit my room,
And it shone, like a star, in the evening gloom :
I have a garden where little grows,
But I gave to Our Lady my only rose,
And I hung in the Shrine, though my heart
denied,
The Cross my Dearest held when he died.

My room is dreary, at fall of night,
But the lamp that was mine burns clear on the
height!

I miss the flowers that once were mine,
Yet, my heart is glad for the rose in the Shrine,
And the empty wall brings no sense of loss,
Since I see a Glory, instead of a Cross!

The Grail

SIR PELLENORE with armed bands
Rode out to seek the Grail ;
But though he sought in many lands,
His quest did nought avail.

Sir Pellenore rode home again,
To see his mother dear ;
And coming, found with bitter pain
His mother on her bier.

And on the altar at her head,
All passion-pure and pale,
Abrim with sacred wine rose-red,
He saw the Holy Grail!

God grant this little legend wings
To all who love to roam :
The Holiest and the Dearest things
May still be found at home.

At Your Gate-

WHEN all your beauty's pageant fades,
And all your courtly lovers tire,
And you are left, 'mid gathering shades,
A weary woman by the fire,
I wonder if your thought will tend,
Past all your memories of state,
To one poor loving, faithful friend
In willow cabin at your gate.

Your golden palace gates will close,
On the cold hearth the flame expire,
The thorn succeed your withered rose,
Your face no longer wake desire.
Remember then that one is true,
But no,—the time is long to wait,
Remember *now* my love for you
In willow cabin at your gate.

Love or Fancy

“TELL me, Mother, what this may be,
What is this that has come to me?—

“ I have reasonless joys and causeless fears,
Purposeless pain, and trivial tears.

“ For one footstep I listen all day,
When I hear it I turn away.

“ Flutters my heart like a wounded dove,
Tell me, Mother, can this be love? ”

“ Sooth, it is hard for a maid to say
If Love or Fancy has passed her way :

“ Close akin, of the self-same mother,
Fancy, indeed, is Love's twin-brother.

“ Fancy's an imp and a pixie elf,
And yet he can change to Love's true self.

- “ Frequently, too, such powers move,
That Love turns Fancy, and Fancy Love.
- “ Once I turned to bid Fancy flee,
Oh, it was Love had come to me.
- “ Once I had sworn that Love was true,
Wings were fluttered, and Fancy flew.
- “ Only by this can a maiden say
If Love or Fancy has passed her way.
- “ Fancy is fickle, and will not stay,
Love will last for ever and aye.
- “ Time alone will full surely prove,
If it be Fancy or golden Love.”

Love the Potter

WHAT will Love make of me,
I, who am clay ?
How will Love bake of me
On firing day ?

How will Love take me,
Shape me and mould ?
And will Love break me,
When I grow old ?

Take thy clay, Potter Love,
(Round runs the wheel !)
Ah, 'tis ordained above,
Man's clay must feel !

One for high honour made,
One for dishonour,
One in the churchyard laid,
Roses upon her.

Break thy clay, Potter, then,
(Round runs the wheel !)
Woe for poor clay o' men,
Always to feel !

Peden's Grave

“ A man of God, Peden the Prophet was his name. Ye'll have heard tell of Prophet Peden. There was never the wale of him sinsyne, and it's a question wi' mony if there was ever his like afore. He was wild's a peat-hag, fearsome to look at, fearsome to hear, his face like the day of judgment. The voice of him was like a solan's and dinneled in folk's lugs, and the words of him like coals of fire.”—R. L. S.

WHEN Peden the Prophet, the outlaw, was
dying,
He said to the friends that were weeping at
hand:
“ Ye'll tak' me to Ayremoss; I fain would be
lying
Where Ritchie is resting, at peace in the land.
But when and wherever my grave may be maken,
My weary auld body will find but small rest,
By the force of the wicked my bones will be
taken
To swing on a gibbet, the enemy's jest.”

The Boswells of Auchinleck, blessing befall them,
Did give him entombment within their own
vault :

By night and in secret, with much to appal them,
Of outrage and insult, and mocking assault.
For forty days later, a rabble unruly,
Of poor hired fellows, the soldiers of Sorn,
Broke open the coffin, a sacrilege truly,
And from the dead body the shroud sheet was
torn !

They buried him then at the foot of the gallows,
The grave of the felon, high up on the steep,
Mid thistles and nettles, and docken and mallows,
They laid down great Peden the Prophet to
sleep.

But mark you, his people, his own loving people,
The people of Cumnock, they followed him
still :

They left the kirkyard in the shade of the steeple,
And the graveyard is now on the dark Gallows
Hill !

The hill once dishonoured is now their "God's
Acre,"

The people have followed their minister there,
And roses and white thorn breathe praise to their
Maker

Where once stood the gallows, all grimly and
bare.

And sweet is the spot where the Prophet is
biding
In the "lap o' the mantle" his Master has
cast,
For the ban, the barred pulpit, the prison, and
hiding
Have all been forgotten in peace at the last.

The Flower of Pain

WHERE Mary set her bonny foot
Throughout the North Countree,
No English roses e'er took root,
No foreign fleur-de-lys.

Round palace tower and prison wall
('Tis vain to cut them down),
The Scottish thistles cluster tall :
The thorns of Mary's crown.

Where'er she lived Scotch thistle grows,
Her Flower of Pain is seen :
More loyal than the Southern rose,
Its purple mourns the Queen.

Jeanie's Fetch

IT was na' day, it was na' night,
But the hour atween them baith,
The first time Jeanie saw the sight—
The silent flitting wraith!

It came fra oot the milking place,
It wore her gown o' blue,
The face o' it was Jeanie's face,
The een were Jeanie's too!

The next time Jeanie saw the sight,
It passed her close and clear.
Her very self in broad daylight,
And Jeanie shook wi' fear.

But for the once, and for the twice,
She would na' trust her een,
And she maun test wi' some device
The what this thing may mean.

A crimson kerchief round her head,
A staff for walking lame,
If it be summons to the dead,
The fetch maun hae the same.

The wraith that called her to the dead,
At her next step it came!
A crimson kerchief round its head,
A staff for walking lame!

Circumstances Alter Places

I KNOW a garden, dainty sweet,
A trysting place for birds to meet ;
Over the mossy fern-plumed wall
The roses nod, they grow so tall.
Strong sunflowers, with their flaming rays,
Stand sentinel in narrow ways,
And Mary lilies gleam a-row,
Pure golden hearts enshrined in snow.
Sweet shadowed by the flowering pea,
The mignonette enthralls the bee,
And pansies, with their kitten graces,
Raise purple, blue and golden faces.
So green, so still, it well might seem,
The perfect garden of a dream !
Yet, if I think what Hell may be,
That garden's picture comes to me !

I know a cave, a rocky shelf,
The sea has hollowed for itself ;
Bitten it out in time bygone,
It still appears a wound in stone.

And at its mouth is heaped and tossed
A tangle of old rubbish lost,
Poor refuse of a sordid sort,
The fickle waves' rejected sport.
A thin green ooze exudes and drips
Over the sea-shells gaping lips,
And through all speech the grey-gull's cry
Comes, like a strident misery.
Who enter there stand side by side,
There is no room for hate or pride.
And I were glad my Heaven should be
That little cave beside the sea!

On Sonnet Structure

A SONNET may prove difficult to write,
Always supposing that you keep the rules :
These be a decalogue, and many fools
The world terms "sonneteers" disdain them quite,
Scorn to chime octave or scan sestet right.
Poor unskilled workmen, gibing at their tools !
Their rhyme sounds ring, like those bedizened
mules
Whose bells send jangling cadence down the
height.

A sonnet should have one idea, complete
And perfect, penned in fourteen noble lines :
Pacing with music on ten stately feet :
And when the octave worthily enshrines
Jewels of phrase, and sestet brightly shines
With golden words, the sonnet stands concrete.

The Exactions of Time

A SKILFUL weaver in the days of old
Designed a fabric for a king to wear ;
And gathered to him costliest and rare
Tyrian-empurpled silks, and burnished gold,
That warp and woof might glitter manifold
With colours like the rainbow-tinted air.
And then misfortune gripped him unaware,
And all the treasure-store for bread was sold.

I sell the glorious fancies of my dreams,
My hope, my faith, the love I won and gave,
And dull bare life, wherein no glory gleams,
Is all that I have now the power to save:
A weary toiler at ignoble themes.
Dead Weaver, can you pity from your grave?

The Power of Time

TIME'S power is infinite: there was a day
When I, in wild abasement, wept and
prayed,
Petitioning that it might pass away
This grief, which now I bear most undismayed.

The very stones where once I bleeding strayed
Now fit themselves to my accustomed feet.
Look you, I laugh, who was so sore afraid,
The first time I and my great grief did meet.

The bitterest potion grows by custom, sweet,
Or loathing may be hidden with a smile:
I have subdued the anguish that did beat
About my heart, a weary weary while.

And yet, methinks it proves but little gain,
That pain itself should dull my sense of pain!

To Tezcatlepoca

“Soul of the World”

TO God Tezcatlepoca, the “world’s soul,”
They offered sacrifices long ago.
One year of all the pleasures man may know
The victim had. Then came the folded scroll,
The world’s farewell: the long-expected goal
That block of jasper where they stretched him low,
The flint-edged knife, the measured ripping blow,
The hand that wrenched his heart out through
the hole.

My feasting-time is over, and I see
The world receding. Friendship, love, and art,
The singing-women, flowers, revelry,
Have vanished; I lie naked, set apart:
This is the death-stone. What remains for me?
The grasping fingers that shall tear my heart.

To a Would-be Confidante

I AM not fond of pity: if I weep
I do it secretly, as others pray.
My lips have jest and laughter for the day;
My eyes have tears while others' eyes have sleep.
Faint sympathy, that harvest many reap,
Gives me no comfort. Let me go my way.
I guess the kindly words your heart would say,
And thank you; but my secret's mine to keep.
One can wear smiles like jewels, clasp them fast,
Find pride and pleasure in their glittering.
Why should the shadow of my sorrowing
Darken your present with my hopeless past?
No, friend, the sun shines, therefore laugh and
sing,
Neither glad day, nor night of tears will last.

“ Heartlessness ”

I AM not used to sorrow. Until now
I have lain softly, lulled in happy years.
My eyes are puzzled by the smart of tears ;
Pain finds no throne made ready on my brow.
I have not learnt yet how the head should bow
When the sad heart is weighted with its fears ;
Grey Grief walks near me, but she still appears
As one apart from me: I know not how.

All flowers do not die in Winter's frost,
Some few live bravely till the Spring shall come :
Pale Christmas rose and faint chrysanthemum
Survive, sometimes, the highest snowdrift tost.
Let me still smile: since Death cannot benumb
Remembered Love, and Love was never lost.

At Port Said

HOW the sun beat upon that barren land,
And lit the glass and gilt and tawdryness
Of "The Saloon": a haunt of wickedness,
From whose wide windows blared a jangling band.
There was a heap of refuse on the sand,
And in community of wretchedness,
A woman and a pig, in hunger's stress
Rooted among the filth with snout and hand.
"Seeking their meat from God." Pitiless Lord,
This woman's life Thy gift? Mad, hopeless, wild,
Herding with swine: abandoned and defiled:
A terror in the sun, a sight abhorred.
Our silver coins unheeded near her lay,
And the pig nosed them as we turned away.

Love's Derelict

I WHO was once full freighted for the sea,
Strong timbered, with my ivory canvas
gleaming,
Now drift a battered hulk, all aimlessly,
Sun-shrivelled waveworn, useless tackle
streaming.

The water washes, like dull sobs in dreaming,
Across soaked planks that were the deck of me ;
I keep no course, who steered so faithfully,
And bear no cargo, who had riches teeming.

Love's Derelict am I, Love's Derelict,
Wrecked by his hand, by him flung to disaster ;
Drifting alone, through merciless edict,
Alone, cast out, forgotten of my master.

Strong prows of purpose pity as ye pass
Love's Derelict, Love's Derelict, alas !

Love's Murderer

SINCE Love is dead, stretched here between
us, dead,
Let us be sorry for the quiet clay:
Hope and offence alike have passed away.
The glory long had left his vanquished head,
Poor shadowed glory of a distant day!
But can you give no pity in its stead?
I see your hard eyes have no tears to shed,
But has your heart no kindly word to say?

Were you his murderer, or was it I?
I do not care to ask, there is no need.
Since gone is gone, and dead is dead indeed,
What use to wrangle of the how and why?
I take all blame, I take it. Draw not nigh!
Ah, do not touch him, lest Love's corpse should
bleed!

In the Duomo

IT was a Festa and a busy throng
Filled the Duomo, whose white arches rise
Like a great lily under Tuscan skies,
Where Giotto's Tower stands erect and strong,
The Duomo's slender throat and silver tongue,
Built, when men's faith shone out without dis-
guise:
More sure of right, more confident of wrong
Than in our twentieth century subtleties.

The incense rose like heavy music hymned,
I watched an old man praying on his knee,
"Fiat lux, Domine" his only plea;
I wondered, till I saw blind eyes, red-rimmed.
Blind! Yet the light of Faith shone radiantly
And he, in darkness, left my vision dimmed.

Mine Enemy

"The coppersmith did me much evil."

TONK! Tonk! Tonk! Tonk! From his
retreat,
Unwearying through the noonday heat,
The Coppersmith maintains his song,
A constant cadence like a gong,
A changeless hard metallic beat.
Tonk! Tonk! Tonk! Tonk!

I would that he and I might meet,
I think he would not then repeat
That one remark the whole day long—
Tonk! Tonk! Tonk! Tonk!

To-day, I dreamt of you, my Sweet:
I sped to you on eager feet,
Forgotten pain, forgiven wrong,
Since Love was lord, enthroned and strong!
What woke me from that dear deceit?
Tonk! Tonk! Tonk! Tonk!

Shahjehanpore, N.W.P.

In Camp

UNDER green mango boughs
They pitch my little house;
Earth is the floor at my feet,
My walls are a canvas fold
To screen me from the heat
And to keep me from the cold.
Free from taxes and rents,
I am a dweller in tents.

Under the open sky
My simple stables lie—
Leaves and the sky are the roof
Whereunder my ponies chew,
Fidget, and paw the hoof
All the warm day through.
They have thick wadded coats for night,
Looking like armadilloes!
How they sleep till the morning light
With straw for their beds and pillows.

At the edge of my kingdom scurry
Creatures in feathers and furs—
Crows in a furtive hurry—
Hungry and cringing curs—
I have birds as petitioners,
Squirrels for pensioners,
Monkeys are bold marauders
Making raids on my borders!

Nature is so much nearer
Than ever she seemed before.
Nature is so much dearer
Than when one looks through a door.
Sunshine and air are given
Straight and direct from heaven.
And the days come fresh and new,
With no walls to filter through.
Brother to gipsy and tramp,
I am a dweller in camp.

Camp, Kheri, Oudh.

The Strength of the Hills

THE pines are the shafts of the temple,
The wild rose burns incense on high,
The wind's voice is chanting an anthem,
The roof is the infinite sky.
Now life has grown glad for the living,
We see them, we gain them at length,
Our help, and our shelter, health-giving,
The hills in their strength!

A respite have we from the furnace,
A rest from the toil and the heat:
Before we return to our harness
The calm and the coolness are sweet.
Drinking deep of the pure air, redressed by
Its peace for our manifold ills:
We are gladdened, and heartened, and blessed by
The strength of the hills!

Mussoorie, N.W.P.

When He Left Simla

His Thoughts

I DID not know when first we met,
That parting would be half so bitter,
That Time brings love, and then regret
I did not know,—when first we met.
I wonder will she soon forget.
Was it a tear that I saw glitter?
I did not know when first we met
That parting would be half so bitter.

Her Thoughts

I *shall* miss him, at first, I know:
But still, he *had* grown rather silly.
Poor boy! How grieved he was to go!
I shall miss him *at first* I know.
No one could say I *flirted* though;
I always was *quite* stiff and chilly!
I shall miss him at first I know,
But still he had grown *rather* silly.

Where Hugli Flows

WHERE Hugli flows, her city's banks beside
White domes and towers rise on a glittering
plain :

The strong, bright sailing-ships at anchor ride,
Waiting to float their cargoes to the main,
Where Hugli flows.

Brown waters, treacherous currents whirling by
The painted fishing-boats haste to and fro,
Brown sails, brown sailors, crimsoned curiously,
Under the all-transfiguring sunset glow,
Where Hugli flows.

Where Hugli flows, our English eyes are weary
Our hearts are sometimes very far away.
Needs must, that exile should be long and dreary
How slow the hours, how lagging long the day,
Where Hugli flows.

Yet, years hence, when the steamer's screw shall
beat
The homeward track, for us without return,
Our bitter bread, by custom almost sweet,
We shall look back, perhaps through tears that
burn,
Where Hugli flows.

Calcutta.

Rose Aylmer's Grave

Rose Aylmer died in Calcutta on March 2nd, 1800, and is buried in the old South Park Street Cemetery.

AN English grave 'neath Indian skies,
Marked by a sullen stone:
And this is where Rose Aylmer lies,
Far, flowerless, and alone.
Rose Aylmer was a poet's love,
Sweet, beautiful, and young.
Her elegy, in melody,
The poet-lover sung.

About her grave no flowers grow,
No pleasant boughs are stirred:
No gentle sun, no quiet snow,
No English bee or bird.
The suns of springtime scorch the stone,
In summer, storm and rave
The winds that herald the cyclone,
The rains that lash the grave.

Rose Aylmer's sister-flowers should spring
In whitest bloom above:
The roses Landor could not bring,
Far distant from his love.
But now, a snake lies near her bed,
The crows perch on the rail,
A kite sweeps past, and overhead
The unclean vultures sail.

*“ Ah what avails the sceptred race,
Ah what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.”*

Ah, why regret the gloomy hearse,
The land of banishment?
This is her grave: but Landor's verse
Rose Aylmer's monument.
Rose Aylmer, on thy namestone lies
Love's rose immortally,
The rose of memories and of sighs
Once consecrate to thee.

Pieces of Eight

(A Garden Series)

SUNRISE

I'M in your secret Day, to-day,
I watched your morning break:
The cloud-buds bloomed to rose from grey
I heard the birds awake.
Now, through your noon-tide's molten gold,
Your evening shadows pearly,
I share with you the secret told
This morning, O! so early.

IN AND OUT

I'N the house it's very late,
Out of doors it's very early;
In the house the gloom is great,
Out of doors the light is pearly.
Curtained windows, silent floors,
Shuttered house, with darkness in it;
Song and sweetness out of doors,
Roses, sunrise, and a linnet.

WASTED TIME

I GRUDGE the time that I must spend
On things that do not matter,
Visiting and the notes I send,
Shopping, and dress, and chatter.
Could I lie on the grass all day,
For one long perfect season,
I might learn what the linnets say
And how the roses reason.

FLOWER APPLES

THE swaying boughs of guelder rose
Some unseen presence grapples,
Perhaps a ghost has come, who knows?
To gather flower-apples.
And will it not feel light and good
That flesh-freed hour?
When all that we shall need for food
Will be a flower!

A GLIMPSE OF THE MOON

ON the lawn a white ghost lingers,
Just beyond the pansy bed,
And it beckons with long fingers,
And it motions with its head.
It's a pear tree in the noonlight,
But the snowy blossomed tree
Turns a spectre in the moonlight,
And it beckons, beckons me!

AFTER MIDNIGHT

MY window gives on the quiet park,
There is never a soul in sight :
I lean and look through the scented dark,
In the second half of the night.
I'll pack my cares in a strap and buckle,
Throw them aside and forget them all,
While all that I smell is the honeysuckle,
And all that I hear is the waterfall.

THE GREAT MINSTER

MY friend has a Chapel with incense spiced,
A shrine and an altar fit,
But I kneel at the feet of the carven Christ,
And I cannot pray a bit.
At another altar I make my prayer,
At the foot of a living tree,
In God's Great Minster, the open air,
With Heaven spread over me.

FRIENDSHIP

MY life is very free from private cares,
But friends a-many
Divide with me their sorrows and despairs,
To the last penny!
Poor friends, confiding and unhappy ones,
I crave your pardon,
But need you always range your skeletons
About my garden?

A MAN'S THOUGHT

I SOUGHT one snare that might enmesh,
One spell to sway the perfect whole;
The rose and lily of her flesh,
The dew and fire of her soul.
Poor finite Love! that still must crave,
And vainly crave the full control:
This rose has blossomed on her grave,
That star is brighter for her soul.

A WOMAN'S THOUGHT

I AM stained by all your sin,
I must drink your deadly wine.
When you lose I cannot win,
Since I suffer for your sin.
In your human, my divine
Must be lost for ever;
My pure pearl flung to your swine,
Ever and for ever!

A GIRL'S THOUGHT

I THOUGHT we had a lifetime at the least
To spend together :
And so I sat me laughing at my feast
While my Love faced bad weather.
There would be time to recompense all sorrow,
He should be sad to-day, and glad tomorrow ;
So he set forth, unkissed, upon his way,
And he died, yesterday.

A CHILD'S THOUGHT

THE world is full of happy words,
And kind and pleasant people,
The forests have their trees and birds,
The churches have their steeple.
The steeples have their silver bells,
That chime for brides and parted,
And cities have their crystal wells,
Where drink the thirsty-hearted.

A PASSING THOUGHT

JUST that man in the street,
With his commonplace face;
But, could one woman meet
Just that man in the street,
All her life would grow sweet,
Full of glory and grace.
Just that man in the street,
With his commonplace face!

A FREQUENT THOUGHT

I WENT to gather roses, but could not find a
flower,
I sought my orchard closes, but all the fruit was
sour,
A cold wind nips my posies, when comes the
blossom-hour?
Ah, my grief!

The wind is blowing chilly, when will the fruit
be riper?
My feet dance willy-nilly, but who's to pay the
piper?
I stooped to pluck a lily, my fingers met a viper!
What relief?

A DREAM THOUGHT

THESE words in dream I knew,—
“Flesh shrinks from Spirit, true,
Yet may not Soul in you
Speak to my Soul?
While your faint body dreams,
Meet me by mystic streams,
Learn all that is, but seems.
Seeming is still the whole.”

A NIGHT THOUGHT

SO many deeds undone,
Of worth and good,
A noble race unrun,
Sin not withstood.
So many gifts of grace,
Dully denied:
Choose then the outer place,
Stand then aside.

ECHOES OF ROUMANIAN FOLK SONG

At Star-Rise

*THE night comes fast, I hear the oxen chewing,
The stars are very white and very little.
My mother cries "Come, girl, spin off thy distaff."*

Before I fill my pitcher
I stoop to ask the water,
Whether my face be fair.
I know my eyes are shining,
I see my lips are crimson,
I hear my silver necklace
Make music round my throat.
But it is nothing to him, he cares not:
The maize is golden in the sunshine,
My hair is golden in the sunshine,
He looks at the maize!

I have a keepsake, but not one that he gave
me.
A little flower, a withered flower, I wear it
in my breast:

But he did not give it to me, his hand has
not touched it,
 Only his foot has touched it.
 He trod on it and broke it,
 The flower is like my heart.

*The night comes fast, I hear the oxen chewing,
The stars are very white and very little.
My mother cries "Come, girl, spin off thy distaff."*

I watch to see him passing ;
The night has grown so dark
I shall not see him coming,
But I shall hear his footstep,
That crushes down the flowers
That crushes down my heart.
 He will not see me waiting,
 He will not hear me sobbing,
 I listen in the dark.

*The night comes fast, I hear the oxen chewing,
The stars are very white and very little.
My mother cries "Come, girl, spin off thy distaff."*

Secrets

*THE rain has beaten the tall maize down ;
Oh proud maize, with the golden crown,
Broken thou liest at my feet.*

The woman had a secret,
That cradled in her heart,
"None else have such a secret,"
She said, "save I, accursed!"
She journeyed through the world,
The secret in her heart,
And Oh, each one she met,

The women spinning at their sunny doorsills,
The reapers toiling where the corn was thickest,
The maidens with full pitchers by the streamlet,
Each had a secret,
She was afraid.

She saw their eyes,
And through them, saw their hearts,
Wherein the secrets lay.
And some were white as moonlight,

And some were black as night,
And some were red as roses,
And some were grey as doves.
She was afraid.

She bent to ask her heart,
Wherein her secret nestled,
“Tell me their names, and thine.”
And her secret answered, laughing,
“The names of some are Sorrows, the names of
some are Sins,
And the colours tell thee whether they be Sorrows
or be Sins.”
And the woman questioned, trembling,
“What colour then art thou?”
And her secret answered, laughing,
“That thou shalt never know,
Though thy heart must house me warmly,
And thy breast must rock me softly,
All thy life.”
She was afraid.

*The rain has beaten the tall maize down;
Oh proud maize, with the golden crown,
Broken thou liest at my feet.*

From the Valley

*D*AY sees her smiling, smiling,
But when the sun has set,
Night hears her weeping, weeping.

The mountains are dear to me,
I was young in the mountains,
I had a golden chain and a silver necklace,
My feet were light in the dance, and my heart
was lighter yet,
I love the mountains!

Every evening now my heart says to me,—
“Where are thy light feet?
“The feet that bore me so swiftly, when I
throbbed in the dance!”
I make no answer.

Every evening now my heart says to me,—
“Where is thy sweet voice?
“The voice that sang my songs, my sweetest
songs of gladness!”
I make no answer.

My feet move slowly, no one dances in the valley,
My voice is very low and quiet, for those who
sob sing not ;

I love the mountains, but I live in the valley ;
Some day I will teach my heart to be content,
I know that I must live in the valley,
My lot has fallen to me in the valley,
But I love the mountains,
I was young in the mountains !

Though I live to be old, I shall never see them
again.

I have a golden chain and a silver necklace,
Every night they are wet with my tears.

*Day sees her smiling, smiling,
But when the sun has set,
Night hears her weeping, weeping.*

Dreaming True

“*M*Y sister of the cross,* why look'st thou pale?”

“I had a dream, a dream that came at midnight,
When dreams are true;
I saw the youth I love, and one was with him.”

“*My sister of the cross, why look'st thou pale?*”

“The hair of the one with him was bright yellow,
Yellow like mine.
Her girdle was wound six times round her waist,
Even as mine is wound;
She wore a silver chain, and scarlet flowers
Glowed in her girdle.
The flowers in my girdle are all withered.”

“*My sister of the cross, why look'st thou pale?*”

“They walked together in the wood like lovers,
But I saw he did not love her,
For all her yellow hair,
Nor for all her slender girdle,
Nor for all its scarlet flowers,
Nor the music of her chain,

* An elective relationship, hallowed by a special service in church.

For, as they walked, he hardly looked at her,
And sometimes when she spoke, he did not
answer.

They crossed the brook, he did not say,—“Be
heedful,

Wet not thy little feet.”

He did not bend the branches of the hazel,
Lest they should bar her way.

I watched, and told myself, “This maiden truly
Is one he does not love.”

“My sister of the cross, why look'st thou pale?”

I could not see her face, I longed to see it,
I crept through tangled ways, I bent the bushes,
The sharp thorns tore my hands. I saw her face!
I saw the face that he whom I love, loves not,
I saw myself!

“My sister of the cross, why look'st thou pale?”

I saw myself! It was my face I saw!
And I am she that he whom I love loves not.
My yellow hair, my chain, my slender girdle!
I saw myself!
This was a dream, a dream that came at midnight,
When dreams are true!”

“My sister of the cross, why look'st thou pale?”

A Shadow

HE was standing in the sunshine,
But still he stood in shadow;
A shadow clung about him, and kept the sun
aloof.

And I thought,—“Has he been wicked?
Is it sin that casts the shadow?”
But his eyes were free from sin.
Then I wondered,—“Is it sorrow?”
But his laugh was full of mirth.

And even as I wondered
At the following, haunting shadow,
(That was cast by nothing living, the shadow of
a shade.)

I saw it was a woman's,
The shadow of a woman,
Of the woman who is dead.
And then I understood.

Memory

I AM she who forgets not,
The other women forget, and so they can
be happy,
But I am always wretched, because I must re-
member,
And Memory is so sad.

I had a dream of Memory,
Her two hands held two sorrows:
One sorrow was a sword,
A sword to pierce my heartstrings,
The memory of my daughter, the little one who
died.
One sorrow was a snake,
A snake to sting my bosom,
The memory of the woman, who stole my
husband's love.

I am she who forgets not,
And Memory is so sad!

The Woman's Child

*L*ET not thy hands be idle, since that brings
Pain to the heart. Spin off thy distaff quickly,

While I sit alone at my distaff, I hear the voices
of children,

The voices of the children who are passing ;
I hear their laughter too, and the sound of their
feet,

The little feet that run into other cottages ;
But there is no one to run into mine.

My house is as silent as the grave,
As silent as the grave in the churchyard,
Where my little one is lying.

O little son, who only lived an hour,
If thou lived now, thou would'st be eight years old,
The garden would be full of sunshine for thee,
Thy father's cold heart full of gladness for thee,
Thy mother's sad heart full of pleasure for thee,
But thou art very far !

Yet tell me why thou would'st but live an hour?
Did life not promise happy years to thee
That thou did'st turn to death?
There had been many, many happy years,
Yet thou but lived an hour.
And I never saw thee living,
And I never saw thine eyes!

When I see a brown-eyed lad, I wonder
If thou art like him;
And if I see a blue-eyed lad, my heart says,
"Thy child is such an one."
Yet I know not the colour of thine eyes,
And though I should travel as far as the moon
does,
There is no one who can tell me, even at the end
of the world!

*Let not thy hands be idle, since that brings
Pain to the heart. Spin off thy distaff quickly.*

The Woman's Share

SURE it looks the same, but 'tis all different
too,
I spin, an' knit, an' sing, in the way I used to do:
But the spindle pricks my finger, an' my voice
dies down,
For where's the use o' watchin' at the road from
the town?

Sunrise, sunset,
Slow goes the day,
'Tis here he was, an' I am here,
An' he is gone away.

Violets at the brookside, I smell them when I
pass,
But where's the boy that picked them as we
laughed along the grass?
"No bluer than your two eyes." How soon do
eyes grow dim?
Mine have learnt the tear-sting since last they
looked on him.

Sunrise, sunset,
Long night and day!
'Tis here he was, an' I am here,
An' he is gone away.

Winds in the autumn, to lash the waves to roar,
He is on the sea, maybe, I am on the shore.
Tossing mat o' sea-wrack, tangle-weed afloat,
Have you been the lucky one, did ye touch his
boat?

Sunrise, sunset,
Ah, the weary day!
'Tis here he was, an' I am here,
An' he is gone away.

Winter comes at long last, an' the snow is spread
Cold an' white an' even, like a face that's dead,
Women love a lifetime, that's not the way with
men,
'Tis I'll be old an' ugly, an' will he love me
then?

Sunrise, sunset,
Slow goes the day.
'Tis here he was, an' I am here,
An' he is gone away.

Dream Sorrow

DEAR heart, shed all your tears in dreams,
In Shadow Land:
One could not laugh by mystic streams
On Slumber Strand.
You'll waken with your lashes dry
For all your weeping.
How happy that you only cry
When you are sleeping.

Smile, happy lady, all the day,
We need your laughter.
Your tears shall have their chosen way
When sleep comes after:
There is a willow by the stream,
A weeping-willow,
And you shall weep in pensive dream,
On a dry pillow.

“ Better Dream than Weep ”

LAY your head down on your bed,
Hark the dreams come singing :
Move, by gentle music led,
Like a far bell ringing.
Dream, and dream, and sweetly sleep,
Dreams are free from sorrow,
Dream, Ah! better dream than weep,
Dream until to-morrow.

Close your eyes on evening skies :
See the dreams come flying,
Circle where your body lies,
Like a south wind sighing.
Dream, and dream, and sweetly sleep,
Dreams are free from sinning :
Dream, Ah! better dream than weep,
Dream of better winning.

Unsent Letters

I'VE a box of my own, for myself, and no one
has the key,
It is filled with the trifles that matter, and
thoughts without end ;
With the loves I have lost, and the joys that
were taken from me,
And there, in a pile, are the letters I never
shall send.

There are letters to you, and there's many a
letter to him,
Full of fancies forgotten, and follies once dear
to a friend.
I look at them seldom, but always with eyes that
are dim,
And I dare not re-read them, the letters I
never shall send.

I wish I had sent them, for life might have given
me much,
Which now is denied, had I had but the
courage to spend,

But the words rest unread, since I shrank from
the definite touch
Putting fate to the proof, in the letters I never
shall send.

And you ask for your share, in surprise, as you
see my tears fall.

But there isn't a sentence to spare, or a line I
would lend :

They shall go 'neath the daisy quilt with me,
each letter and all,
For Death must still leave me the letters I
never shall send !

To One More Fortunate

“ I have a room whereinto no one enters
Save I myself alone :
There sits a blessed memory on a throne,
There my life centres.”

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

AH happy soul, since Life cannot estrange
One blessed memory,
In your calm haven, safe from chance and change,
I pray you pity me !

I, too, had once a memory in a shrine,
My treasure, guarded fast :
And while I deemed it deathless, wholly mine,
The Present killed the Past.

I had borne all without a tear or moan,
My accolade of pain ;
All bitterness, all sorrow I have known,
Were not that memory slain.

I should not once have thought my life was sad,
 My pathway lonely,
I should have toiled on singing, had I had
 That memory only.

Now sometimes when the evening turns to night
 Before the stars arise,
The memory flits a ghost, and charnel light
 Glowes out of empty eyes.

There is a place, a place I needs must haunt,
 While all the world's asleep:
There lies a murdered memory, stark and gaunt,
 There my heart stays to weep.

The Changed Tree

I DREAMT last night of Eden—
The Eden early made :
Where saints await their guerdon
Till all on earth shall fade.
The lambkin and the lion
Lay couched in happy sleep,
And all the songs of Zion
Were echoing true and deep.

The centre of the Garden
Was filléd by the Tree :
The Tree of Human Pardon
That grew on Calvary.
It bore no Burden of Divine,
No type of Heaven's Loss,
But branches of the Only Vine
Were wreathed about the Cross.

The leaves for healing nations
Were clustered on the boughs :
With laurel of salvations,
That grows for martyr brows.

I saw the Sharon roses,
And Mary lilies pale,
Pure cup that never closes,
The Vessel of the Grail.

The happy saints were winging
To their deserved joys:
I heard the angels singing,
And, 'mid the martyr boys
I saw, ere vision left me,
The dearly-loved dark head
Of one so late bereft me;
I knew not he was dead!

Christmas Eve

ONE night there is in the whole year through,
When the cattle may speak as men can do.

Horses and oxen and donkeys stood,
A weary and suffering multitude.

Said the ox, "To-day I fell in the road,
My master helped me with whip and goad."

And the horse, "With spurring my sides are red,
My master laughed at the wounds that bled!

"Surely the hearts of men do harden
Since Adam named us all in the garden."

Each had a tale of hurt to tell,
The blow, the curse, and the lash that fell,

Save the little ass, with the patient face,
Quietly munching there in his place.

No word had he of complaint to make,
Though every bone in his hide did ache.

A glorious light shone through the stall,
And Christ the Lord stood among them all.

There gleamed on His Hands, and Feet, and Side,
The Holy Wounds of the Crucified.

The beasts feared man, but they loved their God,
And bent glad heads to the earth He trod.

“Wailings swept over the glassy sea,
The cry of God’s beasts came up to Me.

“Truly I know that your stripes be sore—
Have ye forgotten the stripes I bore ?

“Yet it is written, ‘Twixt birth and death
The whole of Creation travaileth.’

“These men do evil unwittingly.
Shall we not pity them—I and ye ?”

And the dear Christ’s eyes were filled with tears
As He touched the donkey’s velvet ears,

And saw on the rope-galled, blow-scarred back,
The Sign of Redemption traced in black.

(Given because, on that Blessed Day,
When the Holy Babe in the manger lay,

The ass had knelt at the Christ Child's feet
While the ox and the horse did nought but eat).

“ Creature of God, thy silent plaint
Is louder than psalm of sage or saint.

“ Long since did I and a little ass
Into an earthly city pass.

“ Thy work is prayer ; and thou art of them
That shall enter the New Jerusalem ! ”

New Year's Eve

A Man and Woman speak.

“WHAT did Old Year bring us, dear?
 Much of good, and some of bad,
 Hours merry, moments sad.
Brought us love, and brought us laughter,
With a touch of sorrow after,
 And an armful of hope, and a handful of fear.
Good-bye, and bless you then, Old Year !”

A Woman speaks.

“What did Old Year bring to me ?
 Brought me months of bitter sorrow,
 Black the day, and dark the morrow,
Brought a hope that soon was gone,
Left a grave to weep upon,
 And a grief to endure through the time still
 to be.
Old Year, I have no thanks for thee !”

A Child speaks.

“ I’ll be better in New Year.
This year’s toys were quickly broken,
Bad cross words so soon were spoken.
Now, I’ll think before I say things,
And I’ll take care of my playthings,
And I’ll answer the minute that nurse calls
“ Come here.”
Oh, do make haste and go, Old Year !”

The Old Year speaks.

“ I must pass to-night beyond life and light,
For the New Year comes apace.
The bell strikes One. ’Tis the chime begun
That tolls me to my place.
The strokes come fast : in the time that’s past,
For a weary and thankless crew,
I did my best and I go to my rest,
Saddened yet joyful too.
It strikes Eleven ! One instant even,
My end comes and I die :
The joy bells ring for the coming King !
Twelve ! Twelve ! I go. Good-bye.”

The New Year speaks.

“ I come as a child, a king, a hope,
A promise of good to be ;

Though no man may cast my horoscope,
And fathom futurity.
Plenty and ease, a garnered store,
And the wealth of the fruitful earth,
I may give perchance,—or famine-sore
And the pitiful pinch of dearth.
I am the bringer to young and old,
Of gifts that they shun and crave:
Change, and sorrow, and love, and gold,
And to some the gift of a grave.
But to all the comfort of hope new-born.
Of a sunrise dawning clear,
That makes men smile on my First Day's morn,
And speak of "A Happy New Year."

A Ballad of an Old Churchyard

THEIR narrow houses lie a-row,
 Crumbling and silent at my feet :
The sound floats to me from below
 Of laughing voices in the street.
They care no more to clothe or eat,
 They take no heed when tempests blow,
Safe from all sorrow, all deceit,
 These are the Dead of Long Ago !

Of their past lives I cannot know,
 Or if their days were sad or sweet,
And yet they once were glad, I trow,
 With laughing voices in the street.
For them the years were full and fleet ;
 Seems this world now an empty show ?
Or do they rest in calm complete,
 The Dead of Very Long Ago ?

Some lives were checked in fullest flow,
 And some bore all the stress and heat,
And some were called in youth's first glow
 From laughing voices in the street.

Yet the end came, as it was meet,
The self-same end for friend and foe,
Nor wrath, nor love makes dead hearts beat;
These are the Dead of Long Ago !

Envoy.

Oh, ye who join with singing sweet
The laughing voices in the street !
How ye forget them, here laid low,
The Dead of very Long Ago !

Spion Kop

(JANUARY 24, 1900.)

YOUNG Never-Grow-Old, with your heart
of gold,
And the dear boy's face upon you;
It's hard to tell, though we know it well,
That the grass is growing upon you.
Flowers and grass, and the graveyard mould,
Over the eyes of you, Never-Grow-Old,
Over the heart of you, over each part of you,
All your dear body, our Never-Grow-Old.

Never-Grow-Old, the theft of Time,
His daily stealthy robbing,
Is not for you—slain in your prime:
This one thought stays my sobbing.
Never for you the flagging strength,
The warm young heart grown cold,
You earn your child pet-name at length,
We called you "Never-Grow-Old";
Kissed curls, and called you "Young Never-
Grow-Old."

Never-Grow-Old, your curly head
Will never streak with grey ;
Young Always-Young, your springing tread
Will never pass away.
The morning glory of your eyes
Will light you now and ever ;
You keep your boyhood in the skies,
The other side the River ;
River that flows by the City of Gold,
River of Healing, dear Never-Grow-Old.

Never-Grow-Old, your rosy dawn
Outlives our weary even ;
Young Always-Young, so lately drawn
Up to the highest heaven ;
The youngest 'mid the angel bands
That shout among the stars,
And wing to work their Lord's commands
Beyond our prison bars.
God's soldier still, through the streets of gold,
In your shining harness, Never-Grow-Old.

Young Never-Grow-Old, with your heart of
gold,
And the dear boy's face upon you,
It's hard to tell, though we know it well,
That the grass is growing upon you ;
But the trials of earth are a tale that's told,
And your pain is over, Never-Grow-Old.

Peace and long rest for you—maybe its best for
you,
Only remember us, Never-Grow-Old,
One whose love aches for you, one whose heart
breaks for you
Missing you daily, dear Never-Grow-Old.

In the Solent.

(FEBRUARY 1ST, 1901.)

HALF the English Fleet lies ranged
Still and dark against the sky,
But their bunting is all changed,
For the flags are half-mast high :
See, the Ship of Death goes by,
Bearing one who was our Queen.

Listen ! Portsmouth bells are telling,
Now the great Queen leaves her dwelling.
Toll ! Toll ! The Queen ! The Queen !
Comes between.
And her Navy gives salute,
Muffled, mute,
To the Queen !

Hark ! Amongst the cannon's thunder
And the music's heavy notes,
Come the bells, the bells come under,
With a note that mounts and floats,
In a knell
For farewell
To the Queen.

As a Viking of old fame,
Passed in fire,
 With a barque of builded flame
For his pyre,
 So our Sovereign Lady lies
Under sunset English skies,
 With the snowy flowers above her,
'Mid the family that love her,
 King and Queen.
Hark, the bells toll out between,
 Victoria! Victoria!
 Who has been!

The Silent Crowd

(FEBRUARY 2ND, 1901.)

FOR a pageant do you wait?
 Quiet crowd, mourning crowd.
For a solemn Hearse of State,
With a velvet pall and plumes,
Sable splendour of the tombs,
 For the Queen.
 Victoria! Victoria!
See! The carriage of a gun,
And a Coffin set thereon,
 Comes the Queen!
 Ave Regina Gloria!
Solemn silence for the Queen.

'Neath this Flag a sailor dies,
 On the wave;
'Neath this Flag a soldier lies,
 For his grave.
And the Queen of both was she,
As she willed, so let it be;

In her great simplicity,
And her spotless purity,
Comes the Queen,
Empress-Queen !

The Sailor's Queen went through her Fleet,
Her Last Review :
The cannon rent the sky,
The flags were half-mast high.
There were no cheers,
But only tears,
As she went by.

The Soldier's Queen goes to her grave,
In simplest state.
See ! The carriage of a gun,
With a Coffin set thereon,
Grave and great,
And a pure white gleaming Pall.

A white Pall for the Woman,
And a gold Crown for the Queen,
And a Coffin for the Human,
To hide the fleshly screen.

So simple ! This is all,
Our great Queen's Funeral.

But the Kings of many lands,
And the Emperors from afar,
Mourners are.
Solemn silence for the Queen.

Toll the bells, let music play
To the pulse of muffled drums.
See! The white Crowned Coffin comes,
And the cannon say their say.
Tears in silence for our Queen
On her way.
On her path without returning,
Living silence for our Queen.
Through our bitter tears and burning,
Let us pray,
Ave Regina Gloria!
Victoria! Victoria!
Loved for aye!



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