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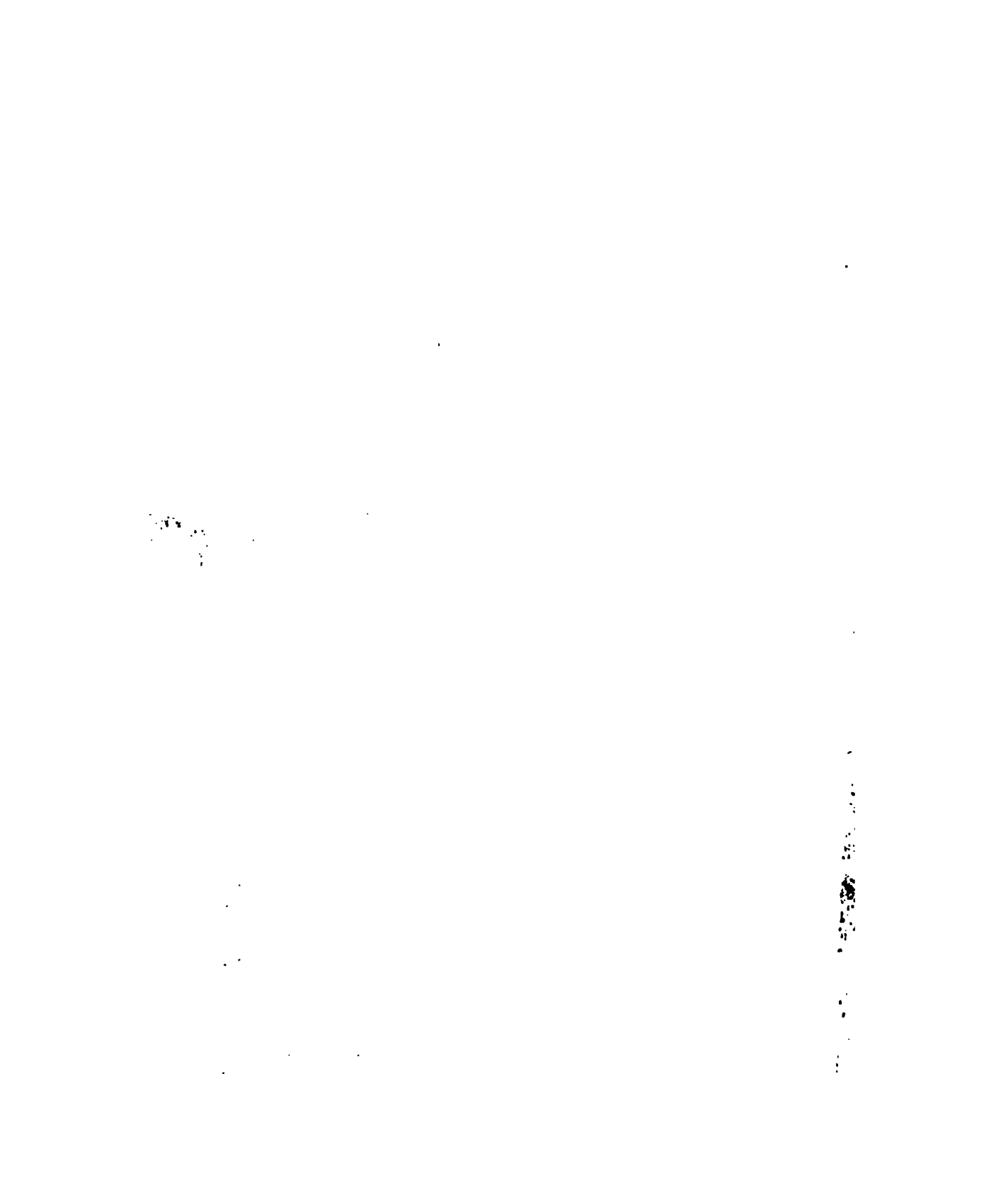




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Paul Hamilton Hayne.





POEMS

OF

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

**Complete Edition**

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS



BOSTON

D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY

32 FRANKLIN STREET, CORNER OF HAWLEY

1882

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

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It had little to do with Byron's success as a poet that he was born in the purple of the English aristocracy; or with the quality of Shelley's genius that he was the son of a Sir Timothy, who prided himself on a descent from a long line of British squires; or that Algernon Swinburne's father was a baronet. And yet if our poets have gentle blood in their veins, other things being equal, we prefer that they should have it.

Good birth, as a general thing, argues good breeding, refinement, education, fixed social position, and a wide margin of generous leisures; all of which have much to do with the outcome of a poet's life.

We do not believe that Tennyson would ever have written as he has, if it had been his fortune to labor for his daily bread. Even had the genius all been there, the wide leisures would have been wanting, and he would have produced his poems, not as Goethe, at his "unhasting ease,"—absolutely free from all exigence,—but under the pressure of a goad, which would have destroyed all their beautiful spontaneity.

It is therefore to the advantage of our poet, PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE, that he had ancestors. It may sound somewhat un-republican perhaps, to hear him wish, as he does in one of his keen sonnets, that these same ancestors had been content to stay in their four-hundred-year-old Shropshire Manor-House, enjoying the positive good England gave them, rather than go sailing over seas in quest of what might be of questionable benefit; but we can forgive him, in view of his antecedents on this side the water, of which he may be proud as well. His English progenitors settled, early in colonial days, in Charleston, South Carolina, and from the first were of importance in the civil affairs of the young State. They furnished noble patriots, who shed their blood in Revolutionary days, for the liberties of their adopted country. The

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name of the renowned statesman and orator, Robert G. Hayne, who was the poet's uncle, has become the possession of the country. While in the Senate of the United States, he was not afraid to match his strength with Webster's, and he was governor of South Carolina when to be governor of the Palmetto State was an honor worth the winning.

The subject of this sketch is the only child of Lieutenant Hayne, a naval officer, who died at sea when his son was an infant; his mother, recently deceased, was a South Carolina lady, of good English and Scotch descent. He was born in Charleston, January 1st, 1830, and educated at Charleston College, from which he ~~was~~ graduated. Inheriting the prestige of a noble name, high position, and a sufficient amount of wealth, the world was before the youth, and he was free to choose his path. From earliest boyhood his fondness for literature, particularly poetry, was pronounced, and there was everything around him to foster this love. The Charleston of thirty-five years ago was a very different place from the Charleston of to-day. The old Huguenot element, with its aristocratic names and associations, was strong, and the large admixture of good English blood helped to make its people just a little exclusive. Boston herself did not gather the mantle of her self-importance in a more queenly manner about her than did this city by the sea. There was a decided literary element, too, among its higher classes. Legarè's wit and scholarship brightened its social circle; Calhoun's deep shadow loomed over it from his plantation at Fort Hill; Gilmore Simms's genial culture broadened its sympathies. The latter was the Macænas to a band of brilliant youths who used to meet for literary suppers at his beautiful home; and here it was that the love for old Elizabethan lore, and the study of the classics of the English tongue, which has always characterized Mr. Hayne, found one of its best stimulants.

No sooner had he graduated than he threw himself actively into literary life. He became connected with the journalism of the city, and when the enthusiastic group of young scholars established a Literary Monthly Magazine (*Russell's*) Mr. Hayne was appointed its editor.

His first volume of Poems was published by the old house of Ticknor & Co., Boston, in 1855, when he was some twenty-five years old, his second in 1857, and his third in 1860. These all met with such success as encouraged him to adopt fully a literary life as his vocation.

In the meantime he had married Miss Mary Middleton Michel, of Charleston, the daughter of an eminent French physician, who received a gold medal from Napoleon the Third, for services under the first Napoleon at the battle of Leipsic. Of the poet's wife it is but the scantest justice to say that she has been the inspiration, the stay, the joy of his life. No poet ever was more blessed in a wife, and she it is, who, by her self-renunciation, her exquisite sympathy, her positive, material help, her bright hopefulness, has made endurable the losses and trials that have crowded Mr. Hayne's life. Those who know how to read between the lines can see everywhere the influence of this irradiating and stimulating presence.

Then came the disasters of the civil war. Mr. Hayne, whose health, delicate from his childhood, would not allow him to take field service, became an aid on Governor Pickens's staff. During the bombardment of his native city, his beautiful home was burned to the ground, and his large, handsome library utterly lost. Even the few valuables, such as the old family silver, which he succeeded in securing and removing to a bank in Columbia for safe-keeping, were swept away in the famous "march to the sea;" and there was nothing left for the homeless and ruined man but exile among the "Pine Barrens" of Georgia. There he established himself, in utter seclusion, in a veritable cottage (or rather *shanty*, dignified at first as "Hayne's Roost"), behind whose screens of vines, among the peaches, melons, and strawberries of his own raising, he has fought the fight of life with uncomplaining bravery, and persisted in being happy.

Here, then, at "Copse Hill," nested amid his greenery and his pines, our poet has lived for fifteen years,—content with little of this world's gear, happy in his chosen work, writing as his frail health would permit, and in manly independence. In 1872, the Lippincotts published his *Legends and Lyrics*, and in 1873 his edition of his friend Henry Timrod's Poems appeared, accompanied by one of the most pathetic biographical memorials of which literature gives an example. In 1875, *The Mountain of the Lovers* was published. A Life of Gilmore Simms (still in MS.) was also written, with Memorial Sketches of Governor Hayne and Mr. Legaré,—so that these years of seclusion have been well filled up with literary labor; and during the past five years the names of not many writers have appeared more frequently, perhaps, in the pages of our current literature, than that of the recluse of "Copse Hill." Here he has interpreted Nature, we think, with as clear an

insight as the poet of Rydal Mount. He has made the melancholy moanings of his Georgia pines sob through his verses. He has given voices to the *Midnight Thunder*; to the *Windless Rain*; to the *Muscadines of the Southern Forests*; to their *Woodland Phases*; to the *Aspects of the Pines*, as has not been heretofore done.

It were superfluous to enter upon any criticism of his poems, nor is this the place for it. They are left with the reader, who, if he cannot, of himself, find therein the aromatic freshness of the woods,—the swaying incense of the cathedral-like aisles of pines,—the sough of dying summer winds,—the glint of lonely pools, and the brooding notes of leaf-hidden mocking-birds,—would not be able to discern them, however carefully the critic might point them out.

MARGARET J. PRESTON.

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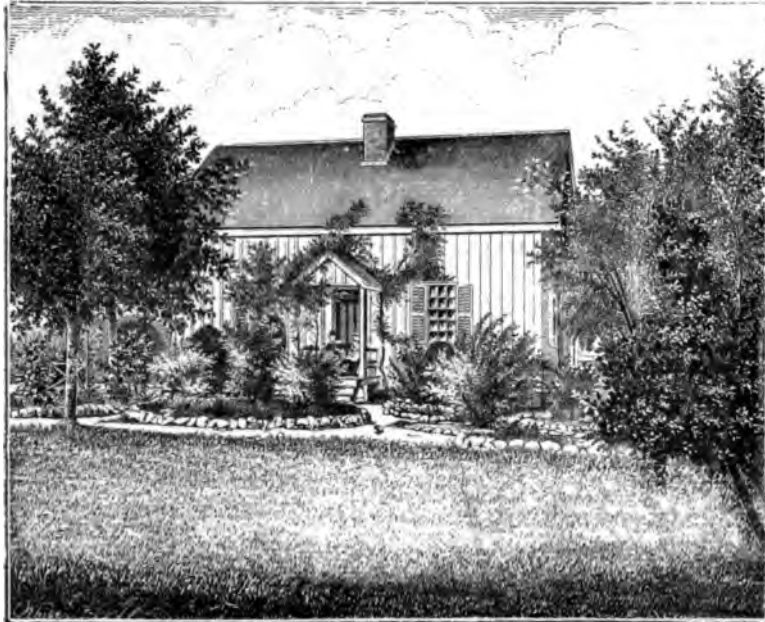
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HOME OF PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE,  
"Copse Hill," Ga.

## YOUTHFUL POEMS.

1850-1860.

### *THE WILL AND THE WING.*

To have the will to soar, but not the  
wings,  
Eyes fixed forever on a starry height,  
Whence stately shapes of grand imagin-  
ings  
Flash down the splendors of imperial  
light;

And yet to lack the charm that makes  
them ours,  
The obedient vassals of that conquering  
spell,  
Whose omnipresent and ethereal powers,  
Encircle Heaven, nor fear to enter Hell;

This is the doom of Tantalus — the  
thirst  
For beauty's balmy fount to quench the  
fires  
Of the wild passion that our souls have  
nurst  
In hopeless promptings — unfulfilled de-  
sires.

Yet would I rather in the outward state  
Of Song's immortal temple lay me  
down,  
A beggar basking by that radiant gate  
Than bend beneath the haughtiest em-  
pire's crown!

For sometimes, through the bars, my  
ravished eyes  
Have caught brief glimpses of a life  
divine,  
And seen a far, mysterious rapture rise  
Beyond the veil that guards the inmost  
shrine.

### *"THE LAUGHING HOURS BEFORE HER FEET."*

THE laughing Hours before her feet,  
Are scattering spring-time roses,  
And the voices in her soul are sweet  
As music's mellowed closes;  
All hopes and passions, heavenly  
born,

In her, have met together,  
And Joy diffuses round her morn  
A mist of golden weather.

As o'er her cheek of delicate dyes,  
The blooms of childhood hover,  
So do the trance and sinless eyes,  
All childhood's heart discover;  
Full of a dreamy happiness,  
With rainbow fancies laden,  
Whose arch of promise grows to bless  
Her spirit's beauteous Adenne.

She is a being born to raise  
Those undefiled emotions,  
That whisper of our sunniest days,  
And most sincere devotions:  
In her, we see renewed and bright,  
That phase of earthly story,  
Which glimmers in the morning light,  
Of God's exceeding glory.

Why, in a life of mortal cares,  
Appear these heavenly faces,  
Why, on the verge of darkened years,  
These clear, celestial graces?  
'Tis but to cheer the soul that faints  
With pure and blest evangels,  
To prove, if Heaven is rich with sain  
That Earth may have her angels.

Enough! 'tis not for me to pray  
That on her life's sweet river,  
The calmness of a virgin day  
May rest, and rest forever;  
I know a guardian Genius stands  
Beside those waters lowly,  
And labors with ethereal hands  
To keep them pure and holy.

— ◆ —

*EVE OF THE BRIDAL.*

Yes! it has come; the strange, o'ermas-  
tering hour,  
When buoyant hopes, and tender, trem-  
ulous fears  
Sway the full heart with a divided power,  
The flush of sunshine, and the touch of  
tears!

Oh! for a spell to charm away thy  
care,  
As I *could* charm, were I but near thee  
now  
To chide coy flickerings of that half de-  
spair  
Of virginal shame upon thy downcast  
brow;

A fitful gloom 'mid blushes of bright joy,  
Like those transparent clouds in summer  
days,  
That cast their transient shadows of alloy  
Across the noontide's else too dazzling  
blaze;

Yet, from the fair hills of this foreign  
shore,  
I waft thee benedictions on the wind,  
I hope that a peaceful bliss forevermore  
May rule the gracious empire of thy mind.

And blessing thus, the dreary distance  
dies,  
And in a clearer than Agrippa's glass,  
The enamored fancy, — what pale vis-  
ions rise,  
Brightening to shape and beauty ere they  
pass?

A room where sunset's glory deep,  
though dim,  
Girds thy rich chamber with luxurious  
grace,  
Rounds the fair outline of each delicate  
limb,  
And crowns with chastened ray thine elo-  
quent face,

In shimmering folds thy raiments soft  
and rare,  
Swell with the passionate heavings of thy  
breast,  
O'er whose young loveliness, the en-  
tranced air,  
Languidly breathing, seeks voluptuous  
rest.

Thy hand — (in two brief hours no longer  
thine) —  
Gleams near a gossamer curtain, stirred  
with sighs,  
And the full, star-like tears begin to  
shine  
In the blue heaven of thy bewildering  
eyes.

Tears for the girlhood, almost past  
away,  
Its innocent life, its wealth of tender  
lore,  
Tears for the womanhood, whose opening  
day,  
May not reveal the untried scene before.

Not bitter tears! for him thou lov'st is  
true,  
And all thy being quivers into flame,  
A swift delicious flame that thrills thee  
through,  
Whene'er thy memory lingers on his  
name.

Ev'n now I see thee turn thy timid head.  
Luxuriant-locked, towards a dim retreat,  
Where twilight shadows veil thy bridal  
bed,  
And golden gloom and tender silence  
meet.

MY FATHER.

My father! in the vague, mysterious  
past,  
My boyish thoughts have wandered  
o'er and o'er,  
To thy lone grave upon a distant shore,  
The wanderer of the waters, still at last.

Never in childhood have I blithely  
sprung  
To catch my father's voice, or climb  
his knee;  
He was a constant pilgrim of the sea,  
And died upon it when his boy was  
young.

He perished not in conflict nor in  
flame,  
No laurel garland rests upon his  
tomb;  
Yet in stern duty's path he met his  
doom;  
A life heroic, though unwed to fame!

First in vague depths of fancy, scarce-  
defined,  
Love limned his wavering likeness on  
my soul,  
Till through slow growths it waxed a  
perfect whole  
Of clear conceptions, brightening heart  
and mind.

His careless bearing and his manly  
face,  
His cordial eye; his firm-knit, stalwart  
form,  
Fitted to breast the fight, the wreck,  
the storm;  
The sailor's frankness and the soldier's  
grace.

In dreams, in dreams we've mingled, and  
a swell  
Of feeling mightier for the eyes'  
eclipse.  
The music of a blest Apocalypse,  
Thrilled through my spirit with its mystic  
spell:

Ah, then! ofttimes a sadder scene will  
rise,  
A gallant vessel through the mist-  
bound day,  
Lifting her spectral spars above the bay,  
Gloomily swayed against gray glimmer-  
ing skies.

O'er the dim billows thundering, peals a  
boom  
Of the deep gun that bursteth as a  
knell,  
When the brave tender to the brave  
farewell —  
And strong arms bear a comrade to the  
tomb.

The opened sod: a sorrowing band be-  
side —  
One rattling roll of musketry, and  
then,  
A man no more among his fellow-men,  
Darkness his chamber, and the earth his  
bride,

My father sleeps in peace; perchance  
more blest  
Than some he left to mourn him, and  
to know  
The bitter blight of an enduring woe,  
Longing (how oft!) with him to be at  
rest.

SONG.

FLY, swiftly fly  
Through yon fair sky,  
O purple-pinioned Hours!  
And bring once more the balmy night,  
When from her lattice, silvery bright,  
Love's beacon-star — her taper — shines  
Between those dark manorial pines,  
Above the myrtle-bowers.

Fly, breezes, fly,  
And waft my sigh  
With love's warm fondness fraught,  
'Twill stir my lady's languid mood,  
Where, in her verdurous solitude.



She sits and thinks, a moonlight grace  
 Cast o'er her beauteous brow and face,  
 Touched by a passionate thought!

    Glide, rivulet, glide  
     With whispering tide,  
 Through coverts low and deep,  
 To woo her with the airy call,  
 The music faint, the far-off fall,  
 Of fairy streams in fairy climes,  
 Or pleasant lapse of fairy rhymes,  
 Soft as her breath in sleep.

    Fly, swiftly fly  
     Through yon calm sky,  
 O gentle-hearted dove!  
 And pausing on her favorite tree,  
 Murmur your plaint so tenderly,  
 That, born of that sweet tone, a charm  
 Her very heart of hearts may warm  
 With rosy bliss of love.

    Fly, swiftly fly  
     Through yon fair sky,  
 O purple-pinioned Hours!  
 And bring once more the balmy night,  
 When from her lattice, silvery bright,  
 Love's beacon-star — her taper — shines  
 Between those dark manorial pines  
 Above the myrtle-bowers!

—◆—  
 SONG.

Ho! fetch me the winecup! fill up to the  
 brim!  
 For my heart has grown cold, and my  
 vision is dim,  
 And I fain would bring back for a mo-  
 ment the glow,  
 The swift passion that age has long  
 chilled with its snow;  
 Ho! fetch me the winecup! the red  
 liquor gleams,  
 With a promise to waken youth's rapture  
 of dreams,  
 And I'll drain the bright draught for that  
 promise divine,  
 Though Death, Death the spectre, should  
 hand me the wine.

'Tis not life that I live, for the blood-  
 currents glide  
 Through my wan shrunken veins in so  
 sluggish a tide,  
 That my heart droops and withers; what!  
*life* call you this?  
 O! rather, consumed by one keen thrill  
 of bliss,  
 Would I die with youth's glory revived  
 round me,  
 The deep eyes that blessed, and the white  
 arms that bound me;  
 O! rather than brood in this dusk of de-  
 sire,  
 Sink down, like yon marvellous sunset,  
 all fire,  
 The soul clad with wings, and the brain  
 steeped in light;  
 Then come, potent wizard! I call on thy  
 might,  
 Breathe a magical mist o'er the ravage of  
 Time,  
 Roll back the sad years to the flush of my  
 prime,  
 And I'll drain thy bright draught for  
 that vision divine,  
 Though Death, Death the Spectre, should  
 hand me the wine!

—◆—  
 BY THE GRAVE.

[Extract from an unfinished narrative poem.]

THIS is the place — I pray thee, friend,  
 Leave me alone with that dread grief,  
 Whose raven wings o'erarch the grave,  
 Closed on a life how sad and brief!

Already the young violets bloom  
 On the light sod that shrouds her  
 form,  
 And Summer's awful sunshine strikes  
 Incongruous on the spirit's storm.

She died, and did not know that I,  
 Whose heart is breaking in this gloom,  
 Had shrined her love, as pilgrims shrine  
 A blossom from some saintly tomb.

And, ah! indeed, it *was* a tomb,  
The tomb of Hope, so ghastly-gray,  
Whence sprung that flower of love that  
grew  
Serenely on the Hope's decay.

A pallid flower that bloomed alone,  
With no warm light to keep it fair,  
But nurtured by the tears that fell,  
Even from the clouds of our despair.

She perished, and her patient soul  
Passed to God's rest, nor did she know

I kept the faith we could not plight  
In honor, or in peace below.

But, Love! at last, all, all is clear.  
You see the flame of that fierce fate,  
Which blazed between my life, and  
yours,  
And left them both — how desolate!

And well you comprehend that now  
My heart is breaking where I stand,  
But 'mid the ruin, shrines its faith,  
A relic from love's Holy Land.



“Come! come! and seek us here,  
In these cool deeps.”

## SONG OF THE NAIADS.

GAY is our crystal floor,  
Beneath the wave,  
With strange gems flaming o'er  
The Genii gave;  
Sweet is the purple light  
That haunts our happy sight,  
And low and sweet the lulling strains  
that sigh  
While the tides pause, and the faint  
zephyrs die.

Come! come! and seek us here,  
In these cool deeps,  
Where all is calmly fair,  
And sorrow sleeps:  
Thy burning brow shall rest,  
Couched on a tender breast,  
And, charmed to bliss, thy soul shall  
catch the gleams  
Of mystic glories in Elysian dreams.

Come! ere the earth grows drear,  
The tempests rave,  
And the fast-failing year  
Is nigh its grave:  
Thy summer, too, is past,  
Wouldst thou have peace at last?  
O! here she dwells serenely in still caves,  
And waits to woo thee underneath the  
waves.

## LETHE.

A DUMB, dark region through whose  
desolate heart  
Creeps a dull river with a stagnant  
flood;  
Its skies are sombre-hued, and dreary  
clouds,  
No wind hath ever stirred, hang low and  
dim

Above the barren woodlands; all things  
 droop  
 In slumber; the little willow stoops to  
 kiss  
 The waves, but not a ripple murmurs  
 back  
 Its salutation, and wan starlike flowers  
 Yield a white radiance to the failing  
 sense,  
 And odors pregnant with the charms of  
 rest,  
 And glamour of Oblivion; all things  
 droop  
 In slumber; for whate'er hath passed the  
 bounds  
 Of this miraculous kingdom, bird or  
 beast,  
 Men lured from action, or soul-sick of  
 life,  
 Weary and heartsore, maids in love's  
 despair,  
 Or mothers stricken by their first-born's  
 crime—  
 All sink without a struggle to deep  
 peace.  
 Prone in the gleam the river casts abroad,  
 A gleam more pallid than the light of  
 Hades,  
 Lie those who sought this region ages  
 since;  
 Their upturned brows are smooth, and  
 tranced with calm.

And on their shadowy lips a waning  
 smile  
 Flitfully glimmers; round them rest the  
 forms  
 Of savage beasts; the lion all unnerved,  
 Drowsy and passionless, his huge limbs  
 relaxed,  
 And curved to lines of languor: the fierce  
 pard  
 Tamed to a breathless quiet, whilst afar,  
 Gloom the gaunt shapes of mighty brutes  
 of eld,  
 The world's primeval tenants; all things  
 droop  
 In slumber; even the sluggish river's  
 flow

Sounds like the dying surges of the sea  
 To ears far inland, or the feeblest sigh  
 Of winds that faint on lofty mountain-  
 tops.

This is the realm — "Oblivion" — this  
 the stream

Which mortals have called — "Lethe!"

◆◆◆  
 THE REALM OF REST.

In the realm that Nature boundeth  
 Are there balmy shores of peace,  
 Where no passion-torrent soundeth,  
 And no storm-wind seeks release?  
 Rest they 'mid the waters golden,  
 Of some strange untravelled sea,  
 Where low, halcyon airs have stolen,  
 Lingering round them slumbrously?

Shores begirt with purple hazes,  
 Mellowed by gray twilight's beams,  
 Whose weird curtains shroud the mazes,  
 Wandering through a realm of dreams;  
 Shores, where Silence woves Devotion,  
 Action faints, and echo dies,  
 And each peace-entranced emotion  
 Feeds on quiet mysteries.

If there be, O guardian Master,  
 Genius of my life and fate,  
 Bear me from the world's disaster,  
 Through that kingdom's shadowy gate;  
 Let me lie beneath its willows,  
 On the fragrant, flowering strand,  
 Lulled to rest by breezeless billows,  
 Thrilled with airs of Elfin-land.

Slumber, flushed with faintest dreamings;  
 Deep that knows no answering deep,  
 Unprofaned by phantom-seemings,  
 — Mockeries of Protéan sleep; —  
 Noiseless, timeless, *half* forgetting,  
 May that sleep Elysian be,  
 While serener tides are setting,  
 Inward, from the roseate sea.

Hark! to mine a voice is calling,  
 Sweet as tropic winds at night,  
 Gently dying, faintly falling  
 From some marvellous mystic height,

Troubled Thought's unhallowed riot  
By its wandering glamour kissed,  
Feels a charm of sacred quiet  
Fold it, like enchanted mist.

"There's a realm, thy footsteps nearing,"  
[Thus the voice to mine replies,]  
"Where the heavy heart despairing,  
Breathes no more its life in sighs;  
'Tis a realm, imperial, stately,  
Refuge of dethroned Years,  
Calm as midnight, towering greatly,  
Through a moonlit veil of tears.

"Though an empire, freedom reigneth,  
Kingly brow, and subject knee.  
Each with what to each pertaineth,  
Slumbering in equality;  
'Tis a sleep, divorced from dreamings,  
Deep that knows no answering deep,  
Unprofaned by phantom-seemings—  
Noiseless, wondrous, timeless sleep.

"On its shores are weeping willows,  
Action faints, and Echo dies,  
And the languid edge of billows,  
Lulls with opiate symphonies;  
But beside that murmurous ocean  
All whic rest, repose in sooth,  
And no more the stilled emotion  
Stirs to joy, or wakens ruth.

"Thou *shalt* gain these blest dominions,  
Thou *shalt* find this peaceful ground,  
Shaded by Oblivion's pinions,  
Startled by no mortal sound;  
Noiseless, timeless, ALL forgetting,  
Shall thy sleep Elysian be,  
While eternal tides are setting  
Inward from that mystic sea."

◆◆◆

THE ISLAND IN THE SOUTH.

THE ship went down at noonday in a  
calm,  
When not a zephyr broke the crystal sea.  
We two escaped alone: we reached an  
isle  
Whereon the water settled languidly

In a long swell of music; luminous skies  
O'erarched the place, and lazy, broad  
lagoons

Swept inland, with the boughs of plan-  
tain trees

Trailing cool shadows through the dense  
repose;

All round about us floated gentle airs,  
And odors that crept upward to the  
sense

Like delicate pressures of voluptuous  
thought.

I, with a long bound, leapt upon the  
shore

Shouting, but she, pavilioned in dark  
locks,

Sobbed out thanksgiving; 'twixt the  
world and us,

Distance that seemed Eternity outrolled  
Its terrible barriers; on the waste a Fate  
Stood up, and stretching its blank hands  
abroad

Muttered of desolation. Did we weep,  
And groaning cast our foreheads in the  
dust?

So it *had* been, but in each other's eyes  
Smiled a new world, dearer than that  
which rose

Beneath the lost stars of the faded West.  
That very morn the white-stoled priest of  
God

Had blessed us with the church's choicest  
prayers,

And these did gird us like a sapphire  
wall

When the floods threatened, and the  
ghastly doom

Moaned itself impotent; free we were to  
love

To the full scope of passion; a few suns,  
And in the deep recesses of the woods  
We built ourselves a cabin; the dim spot  
Was fortified by the tropic's giant  
growths,

Luxuriant Titans of a hundred years;  
And the vines, laced and interlaced be-  
tween,

Drooped with a flowery largess many-  
hued.

It was a place of Faëry; songs of birds  
That glimmered in and out among the  
leaves,  
Like magical dreams embodied, wooed  
the winds  
To gentlest motion of benignant wings;  
And the sun veiled his radiance, and the  
stars  
Peered through the shadowy stillness  
with a light  
So spiritual, the forest seemed to wane  
In tremulous lines waved down the sil-  
very aisles.  
There lived, there loved we, as none else  
have lived  
And loved, I think, since the primeval  
blight  
Rained down its discords, and death  
clinched the curse.  
No shallow mockeries of a worn-out age,  
Effete and helpless, bound young passion  
round  
With the cold fetters of detested forms:  
Civilization was not there to set  
Its specious seal of custom on our hearts,  
Prisoning the bolder virtues; we might  
dare  
To act, speak, think, as the true nature  
moved,  
Untutored and majestic; our souls grew  
To the stature of the spirit, that looks  
down  
From the unpolluted regnancy of heavens  
That hold no curses; the glad universe  
Showered rare benedictions on our path;  
Matter was merged in poesy: the winds  
From the serene Pacific, the quick gales  
From mountainous ridges in the upper-  
most air,  
The eternal chorus of far seas serene,  
The harmony of forests, the small voice  
That trembles from the happy rivulet's  
breast, [ply,  
All touched us with that sweet philoso-  
Which, if we woo the visible world  
aright,  
Blesses experience with new gates of  
sense  
Where through we gain Elysium.

So the years  
Were winged and odorous with a thou-  
sand joys.  
Of which the poor slave to the hollow  
law  
We term society, hath had no dream;  
Our love was comprehensive, full, divine,  
Rounding the perfect orbit wherein life  
Should gravitate to God, even as the  
spheres  
Roll to the central fire; love mastered  
life  
As maelstroms suck still waters, love  
the one  
Electric current through act, reason, will,  
Throbbing like inspiration; no vain  
touch  
Of weak, fantastic passion, no thin glow  
Of morbid longing, fluttering feebly up  
From shallow brains, stirred to a dubious  
flame,  
And tortured with false throes of senti-  
ment—  
(That bastard whimperer to the deity,  
Love—  
As a changeling to the Titans)—no red  
heat  
Of base desire, fusing the delicate  
thought  
To chaos: but a steadfast, genial sun,  
A luminous glory, gentle as intense,  
Making our fate a heaven of warmth,  
light, rest,  
Whose very clouds were halos, and whose  
storms  
Were tempered into music. Thus time  
stole  
On muffled wings through the still air of  
bliss,  
Gathering our ripened hopes, and sowing  
seeds  
Of joy to come. My innocent bud had  
flowered  
To beauty—oh! such beauty as these  
lips,  
Touched though they were with fire,  
might not profane  
With shackles of mean utterance. Oh,  
God! God!

Why didst thou take her from me ? why  
 transform  
 The passionate presence in my shielding  
 arms  
 To this poor phantom of a broken brain,  
 Mocking my woe with shadows ? On a  
 night  
 When the still sea was calmest, the bright  
 stars  
 Most bright, and a warm breathing on  
 the wind  
 Spoke of perpetual summer, a strange  
 voice  
 I scarce could hear, said: " It is evening  
 time,"  
 And a wan hand my eyes were blind to  
 note  
 Beckoned her far away.  
                     The awful grief  
 Closed round me like an ocean. I was  
 mad,  
 And raved my memory from me. When  
 again  
 The world dawned, as a dreary landscape  
 dawns  
 Grotesquely through the sluggish mists  
 of March,  
 I walked once more in a great capital's  
 streets,  
 A savage 'midst the civilized, a man —  
 Shattered and wrecked, I grant you, —  
 still a man  
 Amongst the puppets that usurp the  
 name  
 And act the fraud so basely, that the  
 Fiend  
 Wearies to death the echoes of his hell  
 In laughter at them. I am with you still,  
 Emasculate denizens of the stifling mart,  
 Where heaven's free winds are throttled  
 in the fumes  
 Of furnaces, and the insulted sun  
 Grooms through the crowding vapors at  
 midday,  
 Like a God, re-collecting to himself  
 His immortality; where nerveless limbs  
 Bear nerveless bodies to their separate  
 dens  
 Of torture, and lean, wide-eyed revellers

Foster the hungering worm that never  
 dies,  
 And fan the lurid fire unquenchable;  
 Where stealthy avarice lurks in wait to  
 sack  
 The widow's house ; and license of low  
 minds,  
 Loaded with prurient knowledge, and  
 no hearts  
 (Self-worship having killed them), make  
 the world  
 A Pandemonium. I am with you still;  
 But the hours creep on to a more fortu-  
 nate time;  
 A vessel swells her broad sails in the bay.  
 And the breeze bloweth seaward; I will  
 seek  
 My island in the southern waves again;  
 A thousand memories urge me, tones  
 that slept  
 Waken to invitation; I can feel  
 The Hesperian beauty of that realm of  
 peace  
 Flushing my brain and fancy; but  
 through all  
 The ruddy vision glides a tender shade,  
 And pauses with mute meaning by a  
 grave.

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 ODE.

Delivered on the First Anniversary of the Carolina Art Association, Feb. 10, 1856.

THERE are two worlds wherein our souls  
 may dwell,  
 With discord, or ethereal music fraught.  
 One the loud mart wherein men buy and  
 sell  
 (Too oft the haunt of grovelling moods  
 of Hell),  
 The other, that immaculate realm of  
 thought,  
 In whose bright calm the master-work-  
 men wrought,  
 Where genius lives on light,  
 And faith is lost in sight,  
 Where crystal tides of perfect harmony  
 swell

Up to the heavens that never held a  
cloud,  
And round great altars reverent hosts  
are bowed,  
Altars upreared to love that cannot  
die,  
To beauty that forever keeps its youth,  
To kingly grandeur, and to virginal  
truth,  
To all things wise and pure,  
Whereof our God hath said, "Endure!  
endure!  
Ye are but parts of me,  
The *hath been*, and the evermore *to be*,  
Of my supremest Immortality!"

We falter in the darkness and the dearth  
Which sordid passions and untamed de-  
sires  
Create about us; universal earth  
Groans with the burden of our sensual  
woes;  
The heart heaven gave for homage is  
consumed  
By the wild rages of unhallowed fires;  
The blush of that fine glory which  
illumed  
The earlier ages, hath gone out in gloom;  
There is no joy within us, no repose,  
One creed our beacon, and one god our  
hold,  
The creed, the god, of gold;  
The heavenward wingèd Instinct that  
aspires,  
Like a lost seraph with dishevelled  
plume,  
Pants humbled in the "slough of deep  
Despond;"  
The present binds us, there is no Beyond,  
No glorious Future to the soul content  
With the poor husks and garbage of this  
world;  
And are indeed the wings of worship  
furled  
Forevermore? Is no evangel blent,  
No sweet evangel, with the hiss and  
hum  
Of the century's wheels of progress?  
Science delves

Down to the earth's hot vitals, and ex-  
plores  
Realms arctic and antarctic, the strange  
shores  
Of remote seas, or with raised vision  
stands,  
All undismayed, amidst the starry lands:  
Man too, material man, our baser  
selves,  
She hath unmasked even to the source of  
being;  
Almost she seems a god,  
Deep-searching and far-seeing;  
And yet how oft like some wild funeral  
wail  
Which goes before the burial of our  
hopes,  
Emerging from the starry-blazoned copes  
Of highest firmaments, or darkest vale  
Of the nether earth, or from the burdened  
air  
Of chambers where this mortal frame lies  
bare,  
Probed to the core, her saddening ac-  
cents come;  
"What! call'st thou man a seraph? nay,  
a clod,  
The veriest clod when his frail breath is  
spent,  
Man shows to us who know him;  
what is he?  
A speck! the merest dew-globe 'midst  
the sea  
Of life's infinity;"  
Or, "we have probed, dissected all we  
can,  
But never yet, in any mortal man,  
*Found we the spirit!* thing of time and  
clay,  
Eat, drink, enjoy thy transient insect-  
day!"  
Thus Science; but while still her mock-  
ing voice  
Rings with a cold sharp clearness in our  
ears,  
Her beauteous sister, on whose brow the  
years  
Have left no cankering vestige of de-  
cay,

Eternal Art, she of the fathomless eyes  
 Brimming with light, half worship, half  
 surprise,  
 In whose right hand a branch of fadeless  
 palms,  
 Plucked from the depths of golden shad-  
 owed calms,  
 Points upward to the skies,  
 She answers in a minor, sweet and  
 strange  
 The while, all graces in her aspect meet,  
 And Doubt and Fear shrink shuddering  
 at her feet,  
 "I bring a nobler message! Soul, re-  
 joice!  
 Rise with me from thy troublous toils of  
 sense,  
 Thy bootless struggles, born of impo-  
 tence,  
 Rise to a subtler view, a broader range  
 Of thought and aim;  
 Mine is a sway ideal,  
 But still the works I prompt, alone, are  
 real;  
 Mine is a realm from immemorial time  
 Begirt by deeds and purposes sublime,  
 Whose consecration is faith's quenchless  
 flame,  
 Whose voices are the songs of poet-  
 sages,  
 Whose strong foundations resting on the  
 ages,  
 The throes and crash of empires have  
 not shaken,  
 Nor any futile force of human rages.

"Come! let us enter in!  
 Behold, the portal gates stand open  
 wide!  
 Only, from off thy spirit shake the dust  
 Of any thought of sin,  
 Or sordid pride,  
 For sacred is the kingdom of my trust,  
 By mind, and strength, and beauty sanc-  
 tified."

She spake! and o'er the threshold of a  
 sphere,  
 A marvellous sphere, they passed;

From the deep bosom of the purpling  
 air  
 A lambent glory broke along the  
 vast  
 Horizon line, whence clouds, like incense,  
 rolled  
 Athwart a firmamental arc of gold  
 And sapphire; clouds not vapor-born,  
 But clasping each the radiant seeds of  
 morn,  
 Which suddenly, clear zenith heights at-  
 tained,  
 Burst into light, unfolding like a flower,  
 From out whose quivering heart a mystic  
 shower  
 Of splendor rained:  
 A spell was hers to conquer time and  
 space,  
 For from the desert grandeur of that  
 place  
 A hundred temples rise,  
 The marble poems of the bards of old,  
 Whereon 'twere well to look with rever-  
 ent eyes,  
 Because they body noblest aspirations,  
 Ethereal hopes, and winged imagina-  
 tions,  
 Whether to fabled Jove their walls were  
 raised,  
 Or on their inner altar offerings blazed  
 To wise Athèna, or, in Christian Rome  
 Beneath St. Peter's mighty circling  
 dome,  
 A second Heaven, the golden censers  
 swing,  
 The clear-toned choirs those hymns of  
 rapture sing,  
 Which, on harmonious waves of gratula-  
 tion,  
 The outburst of the sense of deep salva-  
 tion,  
 Uplift the spirit where the Incarnate  
 Word  
 Amid the praise no ear of man hath  
 heard,  
 The peace no mind of man can compre-  
 hend,  
 Awaits to welcome Time's worn wander-  
 ers home!



"But look again!" Art's eager Genius  
cried:

"Thou hast not seen the end,  
Scarce the beginning!" As she spake, a  
tide

Of all the mighty masters, loved, adored,  
From out the shining distant spaces  
poured,

All those who fashioned, through an  
inward dower,  
The concrete forms of beauty and of  
power;

Whether from white Pentelic quarries  
brought,

The voiceless stone uprose, a breathing  
thought,

Or, from the mystic rays of rainbows  
drawn,

And colors of the sunset and the dawn,  
The painter's pencil his ideal fine,

    Iiad clothed in hues divine;

    Or, skilled in living words

Melodious as the natural voice of birds  
(But each a sentient thing, a meaning  
grand,

It is not given to all to understand),  
The poet from the shade of breezy  
woods,

    From barren seaside solitudes,

And from the pregnant quiet of his soul  
Outbreathed the numbers that forever  
roll

Perennial, as the fountains of the sea,  
And deep almost as deep eternity!

Near and yet nearer the bright concourse  
came,

    Their faces all aflame,

As when of yore the quick creative thrill  
Did smite them into utterance, and the  
throng,

Awed by the fiery burden of the song,  
Grew reverent pale and still;

O! solemn and sublime Apocalypse  
That wresteth, from the dreary death-  
eclipse,

The sacred presence of these marvellous  
men!

Yonder the visible Homer moves again,

Moves as he moved below,

    Save that his smitten vision

Rekindled at the fount of fire Elysian,  
Burns with a subtler, grander, deeper  
glow;

And yonder Æschylus, with "thunder-  
ous brow,"

Scarred by the lightning of his own crea-  
tions,

Wrapped in a cloud of sombre medita-  
tions,

Hath seized the tragic muse, as if to  
her

He scorned to bend an humble worship-  
per,

    But would extort her gifts;

    Then Shakespeare mild,

Blessed with the innocent credence of a  
child,

With a child's thoughts and fancies un-  
defiled,

    And yet a Magian strong

To whom the springs of terrible fears  
belong,

Of majesty, and beauty, and delight,

To the weird charm of whose infallible  
sight,

    The heart's emotions,

Though turbid as the tides of darkest  
oceans,

Shone clear as water of the woodland  
brooks—

He passed with wisdom thrond in his  
looks

Attempered by the genial heats of  
wit;

While close beside him, his grand coun-  
tenance lit

By thoughts like those which wrought  
his Judgment Day.

    Grave Michel Angelo

    His massive forehead lifts,

In a strange Titan fashion, unto Heaven;  
Next Raphael comes, with calm and star-  
like mien,

Fresh from the beatific ecstasy,

His face how beautiful, and how serene!  
Since God for him the awful veil had

riven

That shrouds Divinity,  
And rolled before his wondering mind  
and eye  
Visions that we should gaze on but — to  
die!

They passed, and thousands more passed  
by with them;  
Again Art's Genius spake: "Lo! these  
are they

Who, through stern tribulations,  
Have raised to right and truth the sub-  
ject nations;

Lo! these are they,  
Who, were the whole bright concourse  
swept away,  
Their fame's last barrier, built the surge  
to stem

Of chaos and oblivion, whelmed be-  
neath

The pitiless torrent of eternal death,  
Would yet bequeath to races unbegot  
The precepts of a faith which falleth  
not;

Pointing, from troublous toils of time  
and sense,  
From bootless struggles born of impo-  
tence,

To that fair realm of thought,  
In whose bright calm these master-  
workmen wrought,  
Where crystal tides of perfect music  
swell

U'p to the heavens that never held a  
cloud,

And round great altars worshipping  
hosts are bowed—

Altars upreared to love that cannot  
die,

To beauty that forever keeps its youth,  
To kingly grandeur, and to virginal  
truth,

To all things wise and pure,  
Whereof our God hath said: 'Endure!  
endure!

Ye are but parts of me,  
The HATH BEEN, and the evermore TO  
BE,  
Of my supremest Immortality!'"

QUEEN GALENA, OR THE SULTANA  
BETRAYED.

HOLD! let the heartless perjurer go!  
Speak not! strike not! he is *my* foe,  
From me, me only, comes the blow —  
I will repay him woe for woe;  
Look in my eyes! my eyes are dry,  
I breathe no plaint, I heave no sigh,  
But — will avenge me ere I die.

Think you that I shall basely rest,  
And know the bosom mine hath prest,  
Is couched upon a colder breast?  
Think you that I shall yield the West,  
The Orient soul *my* nature nurst,  
Till the black seed of treachery burst  
And blossomed to this deed accurst?

My rival! O! her glance is meek,  
Her faltering presence wan, and weak  
As the faint flush that tints her cheek.  
'Tis not on *her* that I would wreak  
My vengeance — sooner would I wring  
Life from an insect-birth of spring  
Than palter with so poor a thing.

But he — I tell you if he flew,  
As it was once his wont to do,  
Repentant — pleading — quick to woo,  
With all his wild heart flaming through  
The glance of passion — it were sweet,  
Yea, more! 'twere righteous, just, and  
meet,

To slay him kneeling at my feet!

He *shall not* wed her; by Heaven's light  
He shall not; o'er my lurid sight  
Throbs a thick fire; the ancient might  
Of a stern race is stirred to-night;  
*My* sovereign claim annul — disown!  
I will repay him groan for groan,  
Or — stab him at the altar-stone!

THE POET'S TRUST IN HIS SORROW.

O God! how sad a doom is mine,  
To human seeming:  
Thou hast called on me to resign  
So much — much! — *all* — but the divine  
Delights of dreaming.

I set my dreams to music wild,  
 A wealth of measures;  
 My lays, thank Heaven! are undefiled,  
 I sport with Fancy as a child  
 With golden leisures.

And long as fate, not wholly stern,  
 But this shall grant me,  
 Still with perennial faith to turn  
 Where Song's unsullied altars burn  
 Nought, nought shall daunt me!

What though my worldly state be low  
 Beyond redressing;  
 I own an inner flame whose glow  
 Makes radiant all the outward show;  
 My last great blessing!

—◆—  
*THE BROOK.*

BUT yesterday this brook was bright,  
 And tranquil as the clear moonlight,  
 That woos the palms on Orient shores,  
 But now, a hoarse, dark stream, it pours  
 Impetuous o'er its bed of rock,  
 And almost with a thunder-shock  
 Boils into eddies, fierce and fleet,  
 That dash the white foam round our  
 feet,  
 A raging whirl of waters, rent  
 As if with angry discontent!

A tempest in the night swept by,  
 Born of a murk and fiery sky,  
 And while the solid woodlands shook,  
 It wreaked its fury on the brook.  
 The evil genius of the blast  
 Within its quiet bosom passed,  
 And therefore this transfigured tide,  
 Which used as lovingly to glide  
 As thought through spirits sanctified,  
 Rolls now a whirl of waters, rent  
 As if with angry discontent.

I knew, of late, a creature, bright  
 And gentle as the clear moonlight,  
 The tenderest and the kindest heart  
 That ever played Love's selfless part,

Across whose unperturbed life,  
 A sudden passion swept, in strife,  
 With wild, unhallowed forces rife,  
 It stirred her nature's inmost deep,  
 That nevermore shall rest or sleep,  
 Remorse, its rugged bed of rock,  
 O'er which for aye, with thunder-shock,  
 The tides of feeling, fierce and fleet,  
 Are dashed to foam or icy sleet,  
 A raging whirl of waters, rent  
 By something worse than discontent!

—◆—  
*NATURE THE CONSOLER.*

GLADLY I hail these solitudes, and  
 breathe  
 The inspiring breath of the fresh wood-  
 land air,  
 Most gladly to the past alone bequeath  
 Doubt, grief, and care;  
 I feel a new-born freedom of the mind,  
 Nursed at the breast of Nature, with the  
 dew  
 Of glorious dawns; I hear the mountain  
 wind,  
 Clear as if elfin trumpets loudly blew,  
 Peal through the dells, and scale the  
 lonely height,  
 Rousing the echoes to a quick delight,  
 Bending the forest monarchs to its  
 will,  
 'Till all their pond'rous branches shake  
 and thrill  
 In the wide-wakening tumult; far above  
 The heavens stretch calm and blessing;  
 far below  
 The mellowing fields are touched with  
 evening's glow,  
 And many a pleasant sight and sound I  
 love  
 Would gently woo me from all thoughts  
 of woe:  
 Sunlighted meadows, music in the  
 grove,  
 From happy bird-throats, and the fairy  
 rills  
 That lapse in silvery murmurs through  
 the hills;

Great circles of rich foliage, rainbow-crowned  
 By autumn's liberal largess, whilst around  
 Grave sheep lie musing on the pastoral ground,  
     Or sending a mild bleat  
     To other flocks afar,  
 The fleecy comrades they are wont to meet  
 Homeward returning 'neath the vesper star!

Oh, genial peace of Nature! divine calm  
 Thatallest on the spirit, like the rain  
 Of Eden, bearing melody and balm  
 To soothe the troubled heart and heal its pain,  
 Thy influence lifts me to a realm of joy,  
 A moonlight happiness, intense but mild,  
 Unvisited by shadow of alloy,  
 And flushed with tender dreams and fancies undefiled.

The universe of God is still, not dumb,  
 For many voices in sweet undertone  
     To reverent listeners come;  
 And many thoughts, with truth's own honey laden,  
 Into the watcher's wakeful brain have flown,  
     Charming the inner ear  
 With harmonies so low, and yet so clear,  
 So undefined, yet pregnant with a feeling,  
 An inspiration of sublime revealing,  
 That they whose being the strong spell shall hold,  
     Do look on earthly things  
 Through atmospheres of rich imaginings,  
     And find, in all they see,  
     A meaning manifold;  
 The forces of divine vitality  
 Break through the sensual gloom  
     About them furled,  
 All instinct with the radiant grace and bloom  
 Caught from the glories of a lovelier world.

A lovelier world! in the thronged space  
     on high,  
 Dwells there indeed a fairer star than ours,  
 Circled by sunsets of more gorgeous dye,  
 And gifted with an ampler wealth of flowers?  
 Can heavenly bounty lavish richer stores  
 Of color, fragrance, beauty, and delight  
     On mortal or immortal sight,  
 In any sphere that rolls around the sun?  
 See what a splendor from the dying day  
 Through the grand forest pours!  
 Now, lighting up its veteran-crests with glory,  
 Now, slanting down the shadows dim and hoary,  
 Till, in the long-drawn gloom of leafy glades,  
 At the far close of their impervious shades,  
 The purple splendor softly melts away!

Now, overarched by dewy canopies,  
 And awed by dimness that is hardly gloom,  
     [lips,  
 We stand amidst the silence with hushed  
 Watching the dubious glimmer of the skies  
 Paled by the foliage to a half-eclipse,  
     And struggling for full room,  
 With intermittent gleams, that quickly die  
 In throbs and tremors, waning suddenly  
 To the mere ghosts of flame, to apparitions  
 Impalpable as star-beams in deep seas.  
 Lost in the dark below the surface-ruffling breeze.  
     [tions,  
 Latest of all these marvellous transi-  
 And crowning all with their ineffable grace,  
 The eyes of the night's empress, witching sweet,  
 Scatter the shadows in each secret place,  
 So that, where'er her beamy glances fleet,

Shot through and through, as if with  
 arrowy might,  
 The dusky gloaming falls before her  
 shafts of light.

—◆—  
*THE SOUL-CONFLICT.*

DEFEATED! but never disheartened!  
 Repulsed! but unconquered in will,  
 Upon dreary discomfitures building  
 Her virtue's strong battlements still,  
 The soul, through the siege of tempta-  
 tions,  
 Yields not unto fraud, nor to might,  
 Unquelled by the rush of the passions,  
 Serene 'mid the tumults of fight.

She sees a grand prize in the distance,  
 She hears a glad sound of acclaims,  
 The crown wrought of blooms amaran-  
 thine,  
 The music far sweeter than Fame's.  
 And so, 'gainst the rush of the passions  
 She lifts the broad buckler of right,  
 And so, through the glooms of tempta-  
 tion,  
 She walks in a splendor of light.

—◆—  
*THE PRESENTIMENT.*

OVER her face, so tender and meek,  
 The light of a prophecy lies,  
 That has silvered the red of the rose on  
 her cheek,  
 And chastened the thought in her eyes!  
 Beautiful eyes, with an inward glance,  
 To the spirit's mystical deep;  
 Lost in the languid gleam of a trance,  
 More solemn and saintly than sleep.  
 And, forever and ever, she seems to hear  
 The voice of a spirit implore,  
 "Come! enter the life that is noble and  
 clear;  
 Come! grow to my heart once more."  
 And, forever and ever, she mutely turns  
 From a mortal lover's sighs;

And fainter the red of the rose-flush  
 burns,  
 And deeper the thought in her eyes.

The seeds are warm of the churchyard  
 flowers,  
 That will blossom above her rest,  
 And a bird that shall sing by the old  
 church towers,  
 Is already fledged in its nest!

And so, when a blander summer shall  
 smile,  
 On some night of soft July,  
 We will lend to the dust her beauty  
 awhile,  
 In the hush of a moonless sky.

And later still, shall the churchyard  
 flowers,  
 Gleam nigh with a white increase;  
 And a bird outpour, by the old church  
 towers,  
 A plaintive poem of peace.

—◆—  
*THE TWO SUMMERS.*

THERE is a golden season in our year,  
 Between October's hale and lusty cheer,  
 And the hoar frost of winter's empire  
 drear;

Which, like a fairy flood of mystic tides,  
 Whereon divine tranquillity abides,  
 The kingdom of the sovereign months  
 divides;

The wailing autumn winds their requiems  
 cease,  
 Ere winter's sturdier storms have gained  
 release,  
 And heaven and earth alike are bright  
 with peace.

O soul! thou hast thy golden season  
 too!

A blissful interlude of birds and dew,  
 Of balmy gales, and skies of deepest blue!

That second summer, when thy work is done,  
The harvest hoarded, and the mellow sun  
Gleams on the fruitful fields thy toil has won;

Which, also, like a fair mysterious tide,  
Whereon calm thoughts like ships at anchor ride,  
Doth the broad empire of thy years divide.

This passed, what more of life's brief path remains,  
Winds through unlighted vales, and dismal plains,  
The haunt of chilling blight, or fevered pains.

Pray, then, ye happy few, along whose way  
Life's Indian summer pours its purpling ray,  
That ye may die ere dawns the evil day.

Sink on that season's kind and genial breast,  
While peace and sunshine rule the cloudless west,  
The elect of God, whom life and death have blessed!

◆  
LINES.

"Though dowered with instincts keen and high."

"I weep  
My youth, and its brave hopes, all dead and gone,  
In tears which burn." — PARACELUS.

THOUGH dowered with instincts keen and high,  
With burning thoughts that wooed the light,  
The scornful world hath passed him by,  
And left him lonelier than the night.

Yes! cold and hopeless, one by one  
The stars of faith have quenched their flame,  
And like a waning polar sun,  
Declines the latest hope of fame.

He longed to sing one noble song,  
To thrill, with passion's living breath,  
The fools whose scorn had worked him wrong,  
And baffle fate, and conquer death.

Dear God! dost thou endow with powers,  
Whose aspirations mock the bars  
Of time and sense, whose vision towers  
Irradiate 'mid thy sovereign stars,

Only to furnish some faint gleams  
Of loftier beauty, quick withdrawn,  
Leaving a frenzied hell of dreams,  
And wailings for the vanished dawn?

The oracles of fancy mute,  
Ambition's priests dethroned and fled,  
He wanders with a tuneless lute,  
Through dreary regions of the dead.

But from that place of bale uploom  
The phantoms of unburied years,  
The haunting care, the grief, the gloom,  
The treacherous hopes, the pale-eyed fears

That stormed his spirit's brave design,  
That clogged its wings, betrayed its trust,  
Defaced its creed, and dashed the wine  
In song's bright chalice, to the dust.

Ah, Heaven! could he retrace his life  
From out this realm of doubt and dearth,  
He would not court thought's eagle strife,  
But clasp the calm that clings to earth.

Above, the threatening thunders wait  
For dauntless souls that dare aspire,  
But lowly lives are safe from hate,  
And peace is wed to meek desire.

Yet, birds that breast the turbulent air  
Are worthier than the things that creep,  
And nobler is a high despair  
Than weak content, or sluggish sleep.

## SONG.

O! your eyes are deep and tender,  
 O! your charmed voice is low,  
 But I've found your beauty's splendor  
 All a mockery and a show;  
 Slighted heart and broken promise  
 Follow wheresoe'er you go.

All your words are fair and golden,  
 All your actions false and wrong,  
 Not the noblest soul's beholden  
 To your weak affections long;  
 Only true in — lover's fancy,  
 Only constant in — his song.

## ON A PORTRAIT.

A widower muses over the likeness of his dead  
 wife.

THE face, the beautiful face,  
 In its living flush and glow,  
 The perfect face in its peerless grace  
 That I worshipped long ago;  
 That I worshipped when youth was  
 strong and bold,  
 That I worship now,  
 Though the pulse of youth grows faint  
 and low,  
 And the ashes of hope are cold.

The face, the beautiful face,  
 Ever haunting my heart and brain,  
 Bringing oftentimes a dream of heaven,  
 Ofttimes the pang of a pain  
 Which darteth down like a lightning  
 flash  
 To the dreadful deeps,  
 Where the gems of a shipwrecked life  
 are cast,  
 And its dead cold promise sleeps.

Sweet face! shall I meet thee again.  
 In the passionless land of palms,  
 By the verge of Heaven's enchanted  
 streams  
 In the hush of its perfect calms;  
 Or, forever and ever, and evermore,  
 While the years depart,  
 While the ages roll,

Walk the glooms of a ghostly shore,  
 Made wild by a phantom-haunted  
 brain,  
 And a cloud-encircled soul;  
 By a haunted brain and a cheerless  
 heart,  
 While the years and the ages roll?

No answer comes to my cry,  
 Though out of the depths I call:  
 Not the faintest gleam of a hopeful  
 beam  
 Shines over the shroud and pall.  
 My soul is clothed with sackcloth and  
 dust,  
 And I look from my widowed hearth  
 With a vacant eye on the tumult  
 and stir  
 Of this weary, dreary earth;  
 For my soul is dead and its hopes are  
 dust,  
 And the joy of passion, the strength of  
 trust,  
 These passed from the world with  
 her.

## THE SHADOW.

THE pathway of his mournful life hath  
 wound  
 Beneath a shadow; just beyond it play  
 The genial breezes, and the cool brooks  
 stray  
 Into melodious gushings of sweet sound,  
 Whilst ample floods of mellow sunshine  
 fall  
 Like a mute rain of rapture over all.  
 Oft hath he deemed the spell of darkness  
 lost,  
 And shouted to the dayspring: a full  
 glow [woe,  
 Hath rushed to clasp him; but the subtle  
 Unvanquished ever, with the might of  
 frost,  
 Regains its sad realm, and with voice  
 malign  
 Saith to the dawning joy: "This life is  
 mine!"

Still smiles the brave soul, undivorced  
from hope!  
And, with unwavering eye and warrior  
mien,  
Walks in the shadow, dauntless and  
serene,  
To test, through hostile years, the ut-  
most scope  
Of man's endurance — constant to essay  
All heights of patience free to feet of  
clay.

Still smiles the brave soul, undivorced  
from hope!  
But now, methinks, the pale hope gath-  
ers strength;  
Glad winds invade the silence; streams,  
at length,  
Flash through the desert; 'neath the  
sapphire cope  
Of deepening heavens he hails a happier  
day,  
And the spent shadow mutely wanes  
away.

— ◆ —  
THE WINTER WINDS MAY WILDLY  
RAVE.

THE winter winds may wildly rave,  
How wildly o'er thy place of rest!  
But, love! thou hast a holier grave,  
Deep in a faithful human breast.

There, the embalmer, Memory, bends,  
Watching, with softly-breathed sighs,  
The mystic light her genius lends  
To fadeless cheeks and tender eyes.

There in a fathomless calm, serene,  
Thy beauty keeps its saintly trace,  
The radiance of an angel mien,  
The rapture of a heavenly grace.

And there, O gentlest love! remain  
(No stormy passion round thee raves),  
Till, soul to soul, we meet again,  
Beyond this ghostly realm of graves.

UNDER SENTENCE.

PLACE — Scotland. TIME — Thirteenth  
Century.

OFF! off! No treacherous priest for me!  
What's Heaven? what's Hell? Eternity!  
It hath no meaning to *mine* ear,  
Unless — Stay, father! Canst thou  
swear

By holy Rood, that I shall meet  
*Him* there, whose crime made murder  
sweet?

*Him* whose black soul I've hurled be-  
fore?

He's gone! How cold my dungeon  
floor!

And the rack wrenches still! This hand,  
Which stiffened to a fire-hot band  
Of steel, crushing his base breath out,  
They've foully mangled! See that gout  
Of blood there — there, too! What  
care I?

It did its work well: let it lie!

I'd give ten mortal lives, I trow,  
As full of sweets as mine of woe,  
To feel that quivering throat once more;  
To view the blue-tinged, strangling gore  
Spout from his lips! To watch the dim  
Film o'er those cruel eyeballs swim,  
And the black anguish of his stare,  
Dashed blind with horror! Lords! be-  
ware

Much trifling! We are dogs, ye ken,  
Who yet may rise, and smite like men.

What's this? Ah, yes! the flower I took  
From *her*! I think her dying look  
Baptized it, for it keeps so fair.  
I wonder if they decked her hair  
With other flowers like this, ere yet  
They lowered her beauty to the wet,  
Dark mould? If maiden dust to flowers  
(Some say so) turns, not all the bowers  
This spring shall warm will equal those  
To blossom from her pure repose!

My nuptial night! God's blood! what  
right

Had I to nuptials? To the bright



Keen joy that burns on wedded lips ?  
 My life-star could not break the eclipse  
 Wherein 'twas born! So that dark doom  
 Which hounds me to a shameful tomb,  
 Ordained that the fiend's trick they  
 used  
 Should trap me! Faith, love, peace  
 abused,

I woke to find my heart bereft  
 Of its *one* treasure! What was left ?  
 What, but that mandate Vengeance,  
 hissed  
 With hot tongue thro' a seething mist  
 Of passion; the fierce mandate, "Kill?"  
 Aye! but *she*, too, lay blanched and  
 still.

Blanched on the couch I dreamed would  
 be

My wedding couch! Oh, infamy!  
 His outrage smote her to the heart;  
 It crashed the gates of life apart,  
 Where through her shuddering soul took  
 flight!

But ere the death-dew dimmed her sight,  
 She gave me, as I said, this flower,  
 And — one long smile! To my last hour  
 I've shrined her smile! If, if some-  
 where

There *be* a heaven, benign and fair,  
 Its saints, I feel, must smile so there!

Dread God! couldst thou have marked  
 my wrong,

Yet sheathed thy lightning? I was  
 strong

And lusty as the hillside roe;  
 Could wield the brand and bend the  
 bow

So deftly, that his lordship deigned  
 To show me favor! Was it feigned?  
 I know not! His *last* kindness took  
 A strange shape truly; for it shook  
 My hopes to atoms! Yet *he* fell  
 Prone with them! Shall we meet in  
 hell?

I ask again. Ha! if we do  
 And there's a single nerve, or thew,

Or muscle left to naked soul,  
 I'll strangle him once more; enroll  
 My ruthless arms round breast and  
 throat,

And wring from out his gorge that note  
 Of palsied fear! I'll do 't, tho' all  
 The devils should pull me back, and  
 call

Fresh torments on my anguished head:  
 Doubtless they'll take *his* part instead.

Of *mine*, being devils, and he the worst;  
 A prince amongst their tribes accurst  
 By this time; for a month has sped.  
 Beshrew me, since he joined the dead,  
 The damned dead! Full time I trow.  
 For all the bounds of hell to know  
 That Satan's rivalled! Hark without!  
 The gathering tramp, the approaching  
 shout

Of thousands! Well, their scaffold's  
 high;

Fair chance for all to see me die!

—◆—  
 THE VILLAGE BEAUTY.

THE glowing tints of a tropic eve,  
 Burn on her radiant cheek,  
 And we know that her voice is rich and  
 low,

Though we never have heard her speak;  
 So full are those gracious eyes of light,  
 That the blissful flood runs o'er,  
 And wherever her tranquil pathway  
 tends

A glory flits on before!

O! very grand are the city belles,  
 Of a brilliant and stately mien.  
 As they walk the steps of the languid  
 dance,

And flirt in the pauses between;  
 But beneath the boughs of the hoary  
 oak,

When the minstrel fountains play,  
 I think that the artless village girl  
 Is sweeter by far than they.

O! very grand are the city belles,  
But their hearts are worn away  
By the keen-edged world, and their lives  
have lost

The beauty and mirth of May;  
They move where the sun and the starry  
dews

Reign not; they are haughty and bold,  
And they do not shrink from the cursed  
mart,

Where faith is the slave of gold.

But the starry dew and the genial sun  
Have gladdened *her* guileless youth;  
And her brow is bright with the flush of  
hope,

Her soul with the seal of truth;  
Her steps are beautiful on the hills  
As the steps of an Orient morn,  
And Ruth was never more fair to see  
In the midst of the autumn corn.



## AFTER DEATH.

THE passionate sobs of the dear friends  
that came

To look their last upon my living frame,  
And catch the fainting accents of my  
breath,

That fluttered in the atmosphere of  
death,

Were hushed to silence, and the uncer-  
tain light,

That flickered o'er the arras to my sight,  
Grew paler and more tremulous, as life  
Sunk 'neath the power of that unequal  
strife,

Which pits humanity against the spell  
Of one all flesh hath found invincible!

I could not see my foe: but the whole  
space

Was redolent of pestilence, and grace  
Of all things beautiful, and grand and  
free,

Seemed lost in darkness evermore to  
me:

I struggled with the invisible arm that  
wound

So sternly round me, but could give no  
sound

To the great agony that whelmed my  
soul

In surges wilder than the eternal roll  
Of a world's waters, thundering round  
the Pole.

Downward, still downward, the relent-  
less hand

Pressed on my being, and the iron wand  
Of his malign enchantment struck my  
heart

With a dull force that made the life-blood  
start

Forever from its courses; then a sense  
Of coming rest, more dreamless and in-  
tense

Than ever wrapped mortality in still  
And throbless freedom from all thoughts  
of ill,

Stole o'er the vanquished form and glim-  
mering sight,

Till silence ruled, with nothingness and  
night!





SONNETS.



## SONNETS.

### OCTOBER.

THE passionate summer's dead! the sky's  
aglow  
With roseate flushes of matured desire,  
The winds at eve are musical and low,  
As sweeping chords of a lamenting  
lyre,  
Far up among the pillared clouds of fire,  
Whose pomp of strange procession up-  
ward rolls,  
With gorgeous blazonry of pictured  
scrolls,  
To celebrate the summer's past renown;  
Ah, me! how regally the heavens look  
down,  
O'ershadowing beautiful autumnal woods  
And harvest fields with hoarded in-  
crease brown,  
And deep-toned majesty of golden floods,  
That raise their solemn dirges to the  
sky,  
To swell the purple pomp that floateth by.

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### LIFE AND DEATH.

#### I. — LIFE.

SUFFERING! and yet majestic in pain;  
Mysterious! yet, like spring-showers in  
the sun,  
Veiling the light with their melodious  
rain,  
Life is a warp of gloom and glory spun;  
Its darkling phases are as clouds that  
mourn  
Beneath the loftier splendors of an arch  
Where deathless orbs in golden daylight  
burn,

And God's great pulses beat their music  
march.  
The heaven we worship dimly girt with  
tears,  
The spirit-heaven, what is it but a life,  
Lifting its soul beyond our mortal years  
That oft begin, and ever end with strife:  
Strife we must pass to win a happier  
height,  
Nature but travails to reveal us — light.

#### II. — DEATH.

THEN whence, O Death! thy dreariness?  
We know  
That every flower the breeze's flattering  
breath  
Wooes to a blush, and love-like mur-  
muring low,  
Dies but to multiply its bloom in death:  
The rill's glad, prattling infancy, that  
fills  
The woodlands with its song of innocent  
glee,  
Is passing through the heart of shadowy  
hills,  
To swell the eternal manhood of the  
sea;  
And the great stars, Creation's minstrel-  
fires  
Are rolling toward the central source  
of light,  
Where all their separate glory but ex-  
pires  
To merge into one world's unbroken  
might;  
There is no death but change, soul  
claspeth soul,  
And all are portion of the immortal  
whole.

## SHELLEY.

BECAUSE they thought his doctrines  
 were not just,  
 Mankind assumed for him the chastening  
 rod,  
 And tyrants reared in pride, and strong  
 in lust,  
 Wounded the noblest of the sons of  
 God;  
 The heart's most cherished benefactions  
 riven,  
 Basely they strove to humble and  
 malign  
 A soul whose charities were wide as  
 heaven,  
 Whose *deeds*, if not his *doctrines*, were  
 divine;  
 And in the name of Him, whose sun-  
 shine warms  
 The evil as the righteous, deemed it  
 good  
 To wreak their bigotry's relentless  
 storms  
 On one whose nature was not under-  
 stood.  
 Ah, well! God's ways are wondrous; it  
 may be  
 His seal hath not been set to man's  
 decree.

## POETS OF THE OLDEN TIME.

THE brave old poets sing of nobler  
 themes  
 Than those weak griefs which harass  
 craven souls;  
 The torrent of their lusty music rolls  
 Not through dark valleys of distempered  
 dreams,  
 But murmurous pastures lit by sunny  
 streams;  
 Or, rushing from some mountain height  
 of thought,  
 Swells to strange meaning that our  
 minds have sought  
 Vainly to gather from the doubtful  
 gleams

Of our more gross perceptions. Oh,  
 their strains  
 Nerve and ennoble manhood! no shrill  
 cry,  
 Set to a treble, tells of querulous woe;  
 Yet numbers deep-voiced as the mighty  
 main's  
 Merge in the ringdove's plaining, or the  
 sigh  
 Of lovers whispering where sweet rivu-  
 lets flow.

## "NOW, WHILE THE REAR-GUARD."

Now, while the rear-guard of the flying  
 year,  
 Rugged December on the season's verge  
 Marshals his pale days to the mournful  
 dirge  
 Of muffled winds in far-off forests drear,  
 Good friend! turn with me to our in-door  
 cheer;  
 Draw nigh; the huge flames roar upon  
 the hearth,  
 And this sly sparkler is of subtlest birth,  
 And a rich vintage, poet souls hold  
 dear;  
 Mark how the sweet rogue woos us!  
 Sit thee down,  
 And we will quaff, and quaff, and drink  
 our fill,  
 Topping the spirits with a Bacchanal  
 crown,  
 Till the funereal blast shall wail no more,  
 But silver-throated clarions seem to  
 thrill,  
 And shouts of triumph peal along the  
 shore.

## "PENT IN THIS COMMON SPHERE."

PENT in this common sphere of sensual  
 shows,  
 I pine for beauty; beauty of fresh mien,  
 And gentle utterance, and the charm  
 serene,  
 Wherewith the hue of mystic dream-land  
 glows;

I pine for lulling music, the repose  
 Of low-voiced waters, in some realm be-  
 tween  
 The perfect Adenne, and this clouded  
 scene  
 Of love's sad loss, and passion's mourn-  
 ful throes;  
 A pleasant country, girt with twilight  
 calm,

In whose fair heaven a moon of shadowy  
 round  
 Wades through a fading fall of sunset  
 rain; [balm,  
 Where drooping lotos-flowers, distilling  
 Gleam by the drowsy streamlets sleep  
 hath crown'd,  
 While Care forgets to sigh, and Peace  
 hath balsamed Pain.



"BETWEEN THE SUNKEN SUN AND THE NEW MOON."

BETWEEN the sunken sun and the new  
 moon,  
 I stood in fields through which a rivulet  
 ran  
 With scarce perceptible motion, not a  
 span  
 Of its smooth surface trembling to the  
 tune  
 Of sunset breezes: "O delicious boon,"  
 I cried, "of quiet! wise is Nature's  
 plan,  
 Who, in her realm, as in the soul of  
 man,

Alternates storm with calm, and the loud  
 noon  
 With dewy evening's soft and sacred  
 lull:  
 Happy the heart that keeps *its* twilight  
 hour,  
 And, in the depths of heavenly peace  
 reclined,  
 Loves to commune with thoughts of  
 tender power;  
 Thoughts that ascend, like angels beau-  
 tiful,  
 A shining Jacob's ladder of the mind."



*ANCIENT MYTHS.*

YE pleasant myths of Eld, why have ye fled?  
 The earth has fallen from her blissful prime  
 Of summer years, the dews of that sweet time  
 Are withered on its garlands sere and dead.  
 No longer in the blue fields overhead  
 We list the rustling of immortal wings,  
 Or hail at eve the kindly visitings  
 Of gentle Genii to fair fortunes wed:  
 The seas have lost their Nereids, the sad streams  
 Their gold-haired habitants, the mountains lone  
 Those happy Oreads, and the blithesome tone  
 Of Pan's soft pipe melts only in our dreams;  
 Fitfully fall the old faith's broken gleams  
 On our dull hearts, cold as sepulchral stone.

—◆—

*O GOD! WHAT GLORIOUS SEASONS  
 BLESS THY WORLD!*

O God! what glorious seasons bless thy world!  
 See! the tranced winds are nestling on the deep,  
 The guardian heavens unclouded vigil keep  
 O'er the mute earth; the beach birds' wings are furled  
 Ghost-like and gray, where the dim billows curled  
 Lazily up the sea-strand, sink in sleep,  
 Save when the random fish with lightning leap  
 Flashes above them, the far sky's impearled  
 Inland, with lines of silvery smoke that gleam  
 Upward from quiet homesteads, thin and slow:

The sunset girds me like a gorgeous dream  
 Pregnant with splendors, by whose marvellous spell,  
 Senses and soul are flushed to one deep glow,  
 The golden mood of thoughts ineffable!

—◆—

*"ALONG THE PATH THY BLEEDING  
 FEET."*

ALONG the path thy bleeding feet have trod,  
 O Christian Mother! do the martyr-years,  
 Crownèd with suffering through the mist of tears [God;  
 Uplift their brows, thorn-circled, unto  
 Most bitterly our Father's chastening rod  
 Hath ruled within thy term of mortal days,  
 Yet in thy soul spring up the tones of praise,  
 Freely as flowers from out a burial-sod:  
 Nor hath a tireless faith essayed in vain  
 To win from sorrow that diviner rest,  
 Which, like a sunset, purpling through the rain  
 Of dying storms, maketh the darkness blest;  
 Grief is transfigured, and dethronèd Fears,  
 Pale in the glory beckoning from the West.

—◆—

*"TOO OFT THE POET IN ELABORATE  
 VERSE."*

Too oft the poet in elaborate verse,  
 Flushed with quaint images and gorgeous tropes,  
 Casteth a doubtful light, which is not hope's,  
 On the dark spot where Death hath sealed his curse  
 In monumental silence. Nature starts  
 Indignant from the sacrilege of words  
 That ring so hollow, and forlornly girds  
 Her great woe round her; there's no trick of Art's,

But shows most ghastly by a new-made  
tomb.  
I see no balm in Gilead; he is lost,  
The beautiful soul that loved thee, thy  
life's bloom,  
Is withered by the sudden blighting  
frost;  
O Grief! how mighty; Creeds! how  
vain ye are:  
Earth presses closely, — Heaven is cold  
and far.

—○—  
MOUNTAIN SONNETS.

[Written on one of the Blue Ridge range of  
Mountains.]

HERE let me pause by the lone eagle's  
nest,  
And breathe the golden sunlight and  
sweet air,  
Which gird and gladden all this region  
fair  
With a perpetual benison of rest;  
Like a grand purpose that some god hath  
blest,  
The immemorial mountain seems to rise,  
Yearning to overtop diviner skies,  
Though monarch of the pomps of East  
and West;  
And pondering here, the genius of the  
height  
Quickens my soul as if an angel spake,  
And I can feel old chains of custom  
break, [light;  
And old ambitions start to win the  
A calm resolve born with them, in whose  
might  
I thank thee, Heaven! that noble  
thoughts awake.

Here, friend! upon this lofty ledge sit  
down,  
And view the beauteous prospect spread  
below,  
Around, above us; in the noonday glow  
How calm the landscape rests! yon dis-  
tant town,  
Enwreathed with clouds of foliage like a  
crown

Of rustic honor; the soft, silvery flow  
Of the clear stream beyond it, and the  
show  
Of endless wooded heights, circling the  
brown  
Autumnal fields, alive with billowy  
grain;  
Say! hast thou ever gazed on aught more  
fair  
In Europe, or the Orient? What do-  
main  
(From India to the sunny slopes of  
Spain)  
Hath beauty, wed to grandeur 'n the air,  
Blessed with an ampler charm a more  
benignant reign?

The rainbows of the heaven are not more  
rare,  
More various and more beautiful to view,  
Than these rich forest rainbows, dipped  
in dew  
Of morn and evening, glimmering every-  
where  
From wooded dell to dark-blue moun-  
tain mere;  
O Autumn! wondrous painter! every  
hue  
Of thy immortal pencil is steeped  
through  
With essence of divinity; how bare  
Beside thy coloring the poor shows of  
Art,  
Though Art were thrice inspired; in  
dreams alone  
(The loftiest dreams wherein the soul  
takes part)  
Of jasper pavements, and the sapphire  
throne  
Of Heaven, hath such unearthly bright-  
ness shone  
To flush and thrill the visionary heart!

—○—  
COMPOSED IN AUTUMN.

WITH these dead leaves stripped from a  
withered tree,  
And slowly fluttering round us, gentle  
friend,

Some faithless soul a sad presage might  
blend;  
To me they bring a happier augury;  
Lives that shall bloom in genial sun-  
shine free,  
Nursed by the spell Love's dew and  
breezes send,  
And when a kindly Fate shall speak the  
end,  
Down dropping in Time's autumn si-  
lently;  
All hopes fulfilled, all passions duly  
blessed,  
Life's cup of gladness drained, except  
the lees,  
No more to fear or long for, but the  
rest  
Which crowns existence with its dream-  
less ease;  
Thus when our days are ripe, oh! let us  
fall  
Into that perfect Peace which waits for  
all!

—●—  
*GREAT POETS AND SMALL.*

SHALL I not falter on melodious wing,  
In that my notes are weak and may not  
rise  
To those world-wide entrancing harmo-  
nies,  
Which the great poets to the ages sing?  
Shall my thought's humble heaven no  
longer ring  
With pleasant lays, because the empyreal  
height  
Stretches beyond it, lifting to the light  
The anointed pinion of song's radiant  
king? | flight  
Ah! a false thought! the thrush her fitful  
Ventures in vernal dawns; a happy note  
Trills from the russet linnet's gentle  
throat,  
Though far above the eagle soars in  
might,  
And the glad skylark — an ethereal  
mote —  
Sings in high realms that mock our  
straining sight.

*MY STUDY.* ✓

THIS is my world! within these narrow  
walls,  
I own a princely service; the hot care  
And tumult of our frenzied life are  
here  
But as a ghost, and echo; what befalls  
In the far mart to me is less than  
naught;  
I walk the fields of quiet Arcadies,  
And wander by the brink of hoary  
seas,  
Calmed to the tendance of untroubled  
thought:  
Or if a livelier humor should enhance  
The slow-timed pulse, 'tis not for present  
strife,  
The sordid zeal with which our age is  
rife.  
Its mammon conflicts crowned by fraud  
or chance,  
But gleamings of the lost, heroic life,  
Flashed through the gorgeous vistas of  
romance.

—●—  
*TO —.*

BELOVED! in this holy hush of night,  
I know that thou art looking to the  
South,  
Fair face and cordial brow bathed in the  
light  
Of tender Heavens, and o'er thy deli-  
cate mouth  
A dewy gladness from thy dark eyes  
shed;  
O eloquent eyes! that on the evening  
spread  
The glory of a radiant world of dreams  
(The inner moonlight of the soul that  
dims  
This moonlight of the sense), and o'er  
thy head,  
Thrown back, as listening to a voice of  
hymns,  
Perchance in thine own spirit, violet  
gleams

From modest flowers that deck the  
window-bars,  
While the winds sigh, and sing the far-  
off streams,  
And a faint bliss seems dropping from  
the stars.  
O! pour thine inmost soul upon the air  
And trust to heaven the secrets that  
recline  
In the sweet nunnery of thy virgin  
breast;  
Speak to the winds that wander every-  
where, —  
And sure must wander hither — the  
divine  
Contentment, and the infinite, deep  
rest  
That sway thy passionate being, and lift  
high  
To the calm realm of Love's eternity,  
The passive ocean of thy charmed  
thought;  
And tell the aerial element to bear  
The burden of thy whispered heart to  
me,  
By fairy alchemy of distance wrought  
To something sacred as a saintly prayer,  
A spell to set my nobler nature free.

—◆—  
TO W. H. H.

How like a mighty picture, tint by tint,  
This marvellous world is opening to thy  
view!  
Wonders of earth and heaven; shapes  
bright and new,  
Strength, radiance, beauty, and all things  
that hint  
Most of the primal glory, and the print  
Of angel footsteps; from the globe of  
dew  
Tiny, but luminous, to the encircling  
blue,  
Unbounded, thou drink'st knowledge  
without stint;  
Like a pure blossom nursed by genial  
winds,  
Thy innocent life, expanding day by day,

Upsprings, spontaneous, to the perfect  
flower;  
Lost Eden-splendors round thy path-  
way play,  
While o'er it rise and burn the starry  
signs  
Which herald hope and joy to souls of  
power.

I pray the angel in whose hands the sum  
Of mortal fates in mystic darkness lies,  
That to the soul which fills these deep-  
ening eyes,  
Sun-crowned and clear, the spirit of  
Song may come;  
That strong-winged fancies, with melo-  
dious hum  
Of plumèd vans, may touch to sweet sur-  
prise  
His poet nature, born to glow and rise,  
And thrill to worship though the world  
be dumb;  
That love, and will, and genius, all may  
blend  
To make his soul a guiding star of time,  
True to the purest thought, the noblest  
end,  
Full of all richness, gentle, wise, com-  
plete,  
In whose still heights and most ethereal  
clime,  
Beauty, and faith, and plastic passion  
meet.

—◆—  
LINES.

YE cannot add by any pile ye raise,  
One jot or tittle to the statesman's  
fame;  
That the world knows; to the far future  
days  
Belongs his glory, and its radiant flame  
Will burn, when ye are dead, decayed,  
forgot;  
Therefore, your opposition matters not;  
The thin-masked jealousies of present  
time,  
Unburied in his grave, survive to keep

Rampant the hate he deemed his highest  
 praise,  
 And the rude clash of discord o'er his  
 sleep;  
 But for his great, wise acts, his faith  
 sublime,  
 All that the soul of genius sanctifies,  
*These* mount where viler passions cannot  
 climb,  
*These* live where palsied malice faints  
 and dies.

Still must the common voice denounce  
 the deed,  
 The common heart swell with an out-  
 raged pride,  
 That the poor purchase of that paltry  
 meed  
 His country owed him should be thus  
 denied;  
 Shame on the Senate! shame on every  
 hand  
 Which did not falter when recording  
 there,  
 The basest act achieved for many a year,  
 To fire the scorn of the whole Southern  
 land;  
 Nor the South only, for our foes will cry  
 Out on your petty pasteboard chivalry!  
 The people who refuse to crown the  
 great  
 And good with honor, do themselves  
 eclipse,  
 And doubly shameless is the recreant  
 State,  
 Whose condemnation comes from her  
 own lips.

—◆—  
 "AN IDLE POET DREAMING."

AN idle poet, dreaming in the sun,  
 One given to much unhallowed va-  
 grancy  
 Of thought and step; who, when he  
 comes to die,

In the broad world can point to nothing  
 done;  
 No chartered corporations, no streets  
 paved  
 With very princely stone-work, no vast  
 file  
 Of warehouses, no slowly-hoarded pile  
 Of priceless treasure, no proud sceptre  
 waved  
 O'er potent realms of stock, no magic  
 art  
 Lavished on curious gins, or works of  
 steam;  
 Only a few wild songs that melt the  
 heart,  
 Only the glow of some unearthly dream,  
 Embodied and immortal; what are these?  
 Sneers the sage world; chaff, smoke,  
 vain phantasies!

Yet stock depreciates, even banks decay,  
 Merchant and architect are lowly laid  
 In purple palls, and the shrewd lords of  
 trade  
 Lament, for they were wiser in their  
 day  
 Than the clear sons of light; but prithee,  
 how  
 Doth stand the matter, when the years  
 have fled;  
 What means yon concourse thronging  
 where the dead  
 Old singer sleeps; say! do they seek him  
 now?  
 Now that his dust is scattered on the  
 breath  
 Of every wind that blows; what meaneth  
 this?  
 It means, thou sapient citizen, that  
 death  
 Heralds the bard's true life, as with a  
 kiss,  
 Wakens two immortalities; then bow  
 To the world's scorn, O poet, with calm  
 brow.

**DRAMATIC SKETCHES.**



## DRAMATIC SKETCHES.

### ANTONIO MELIDORI.

[AMONG the heroes of the modern Greek revolution, none, perhaps, were so distinguished for acts of individual daring, and a spirit of romantic and chivalrous adventure, as Captain Antonio Melidori, a native of Candia. He waged against the Turks a partisan conflict, which was often eminently successful. His own deeds of strength, and reckless hardihood, made him terrible to the foe, who were persuaded finally to look upon him as one whose life was "charmed."

It did not prove so, however, as he fell a victim to the rage and jealousy of some of his own company. Having been invited by the malcontents to a feast, Rousso (the chief of the conspirators, whom Antonio appears to have rivalled successfully both in love and war), whilst in the very act of embracing the patriot, plunged a dagger into his bosom.

There is a tradition that Antonio loved a beautiful maiden, Philota, whom in the stirring and anxious scenes of the revolution he was ultimately led to neglect, if not to forsake. A writer in "Chambers' Journal" has from this episode in the private career of the Greek partisan taken the material for a touching and graphic narrative, which has been closely, often literally followed in the composition of the ensuing "sketch."]

#### SCENE I.

[A place not far from the summit of Mount Psiloriti, in the Isle of Candia. Philota discovered with a basket of grapes upon her head; she looks eagerly upward. Time, a little before sunset.]

#### PHILOTA.

WHY comes he not? Here on this emerald sward,  
Close to the cool shade of these ancient rocks,  
We have met, and fondly lingered in the sunset,  
Eve after eve, since first he said, "I love thee!"  
Never, Antonio, hast thou been ere now  
A loiterer! wherefore should my heart  
beat fast,  
And my breath thicken, and the dew of fear  
Stand chill upon my forehead? Is't an omen?

[At this moment Antonio is seen bounding quickly down the mountain; he reaches Philota and embraces her.]

#### ANTONIO.

Thou hast waited long, Philota, hast thou not?

#### PHILOTA.

'Tis true, Antonio! but thou know'st an hour,  
Nay, a bare minute, drags the weariest length  
When thou art from me!

#### ANTONIO.

Thanks, dearest, and, forgive me,  
I did but dream upon the hill-top yonder  
And, dreaming thus, forgot thee.

#### PHILOTA.

Forgot me!

#### ANTONIO.

Nay, nay, I mean not that! thy face, thy smiles,  
Thy deep devotion, in my heart of hearts,  
I keep them shrined forever, but my thoughts  
Turned truant; who can hold his thoughts, Philota,  
In a leash always? prithee reascend



The mountain with me, I would show  
the place  
Which tempted my weak thoughts to  
wander thus.

[*They reach the most elevated portion of the mountain, whence a wide circuit of land and sea becomes visible.*]

PHILOTA.

How beautiful! how glorious! see, my  
love,  
There's not a cloud, or shadow of cloud  
in heaven;  
Even here, the winds breathe faintly,  
and afar  
O'er the broad circuit of the watery  
calm,  
Peace broods upon the ocean, rules the  
air,  
And up the sunset's dazzling pathway  
walks  
Like a saint entering Paradise.  
'Twere sweet,  
How sweet, Antonio, amid scenes like  
these,  
To live and love forever!

ANTONIO [*absently*].

Dost thou think so?

Ay!—well—perhaps—

PHILOTA.

He heeds me not, his eye  
Is cold and stern; what troubles thee,  
Antonio?

ANTONIO.

Trouble! I am not troubled.

PHILOTA.

But thou art,

I know thou art; would'st thou deceive  
Philota?

ANTONIO.

Now by the saints, not so; dismiss the  
fear

Which, like a tremulous shadow, breaks  
the calm

Of those soft eyes! [*after a pause*]

The matter, in brief, is this:

Tracking our mountain paths at early  
dawn,

Rousso—thou knowest him—hailed me  
from the rocks,

With words that sounded like the battle  
trumpets;

“It comes!” he cried; “the war-cloud  
rolls this way;

We too shall hear its thunders”——

PHILOTA.

Ay! and feel  
Its bolts perchance.—there's lightning  
in such clouds!

ANTONIO.

What if there be! who would not brave  
them all,—

All, for a cause like ours? Believe me,  
Love,

We stand upon the brink of troublous  
times:

All shall be changed here: men.—brave  
Grecian men,—

The blood of heroes in them.—cannot  
pause,

Storing the honey, harvesting the olive,  
Or humbly following the tame herds-  
man's trade.

Whilst Freedom calls to conflict.

Look, Philota!

Dost mark yon lurid flash across the bay?  
Our soldiers test their cannon! hark,  
below,

The drums of Affendouli—how they  
ring!

Already thousands of bold mountaineers  
Have formed beneath his banners; dost  
thou hear me?

PHILOTA.

And wouldst thou wish to join them?

Ah! I see,

I see it all!—a trouble on thy brow,  
Borne upward from the restless gloom  
within,

Hath clouded o'er thy peace. I,—a  
frail girl,

And gifted only with the wealth of love,  
How can I satisfy the burning need

Of a strong man's ambition? Yes, tis so,  
'Tis even so!—love is the woman's  
heaven,

Her hope, her god, her life-blood! yet  
to man,

What is it but a pastime?

ANTONIO.  
 Speak not thus  
**Oh, speak not thus, Philota!** I have  
 loved  
**Thee, only thee,** — so help me, Virgin  
 Mother!  
 But comrades from whose lips a taunt is  
 bitter,  
 Have dared to hint ——

PHILOTA.  
 What!

ANTONIO.  
 That I chose to stay,  
 Delving, like some base slave, our bar-  
 ren soil,  
 When not a Sphakiote that can carry  
 arms  
 Has failed to seize them. Liars! pesti-  
 lent liars,  
 I would have proved the falsehood were  
 it not ——

PHILOTA.  
 For me — Philota! — well! I love thee  
 dearly,  
 Deeply, — God knows, — but I would  
 have this love  
 To crown thee as a garland, — not as a  
 chain  
 To bind and fetter — thou art free, An-  
 tonio! —

ANTONIO.  
 But hast thou thought of all which fol-  
 lows this?  
 Thou shalt be left alone, no bridal feast  
 Can cheer the olive harvest!

PHILOTA.  
 I have thought,  
**And am determined;** — thou art free,  
 Antonio!

ANTONIO.  
 Oh, thanks, thanks, thanks! — lift up  
 thy hopes, Philota,  
 Up to the height of mine! our cause is  
 just,  
 And a just Fate shall guard it; where-  
 soe'er  
**Free thought finds utterance, and the**  
 patriot-soul

Thrills at the deeds of heroes, — we may  
 look  
 For a “God speed!” The prayers of  
 noble men,  
 The tears of women, — the whole world’s  
 applause  
 Do wait upon us!

                  Methinks I see the end,  
 A free, grand Commonwealth of Gre-  
 cian States,  
 Built upon chartered rights, — each  
 sealed with blood!

PHILOTA.  
 Enough! enough! Antonio, thou shalt  
 go!  
 Greece is thy mistress, now.

## SCENE II.

[The cottage of Philota, at the foot of Mount  
 Psiloriti. Philota discovered at the window,  
 looking out upon the night, which is bleak  
 and stormy.]

PHILOTA.  
 Hark! how those lusty trumpeters, the  
 winds,  
 Urge on the black battalions of the  
 clouds;  
 And see! the swollen rivulets rushing  
 down  
 The sides of Psiloriti! Yesterday,  
 'Neath the clear calm of the serenest  
 morn  
 Earth ever stole from Paradise, they  
 swept,  
 Bright curves of laughing silver in the  
 sunshine;  
 But now, an overmastering rush of  
 floods,  
 They thunder to the heavens, that an-  
 swer back  
 From the wild depths of gloom, — an  
 awful tempest!

[Enter ANTONIO hastily.]

ANTONIO.  
 Where is the priest, Philota? where is  
 Andreas?  
 Was he not here to-night?

PHILOTA.  
**Ay!** but left some half hour since!

ANTONIO.

What say you?

Oh, the poor father! — then 'twas him I  
saw

Pent 'twixt the mountain torrents; he is  
lost!

The good old man! — and yet, not so,  
not so!

Give me yon oaken staff, — and, hold: a  
flask

Of the best vintage; I'll be back anon,  
And the dear father with me: —

[Exit Antonio. Philota kneels before an image  
of the Virgin, and prays for the safety of her  
lover. After the lapse of some minutes, enter  
Roussou stealthily, wrapped in a cloak, which  
partly conceals his features.]

ROUSSO [aside].

Faith! a pretty picture!

Now, were I what fools call poetical,  
I'd worship her, whilst she adores the  
saint, —

A lovelier saint herself, and nearer truly  
To the just standard of divinity  
Than yonder painted image; there's the  
curve,

The old Greek curve, in the voluptuous  
swell

Of those full lips; the passion in her eyes  
Is shadowed off to melancholy meaning,  
Only to waken to meridian life,  
When a like passion touches it to flame.

PHILOTA [praying].

Oh, merciful Mother! save him, — save  
Antonio!

ROUSSO [aside].

Oh, potent Devil! claim him, — claim  
Antonio!

What! shall this malapert boy dispute  
my love?

[Philota, rising, discovers Roussou, towards  
whom (mistaking him for Antonio), she rushes,  
as if about to cast herself into his arms, but  
discovering her error, she shrinks back.]

PHILOTA.

You here!

ROUSSO [advancing].

I crave protection, shelter, — may I stay?

PHILOTA.

At a safe distance, Sir!

ROUSSO.

Why, what means this?

I looked for kindlier welcome!

PHILOTA.

Wherefore, Roussou?

What thou hast asked, I grant, — pro-  
tection, shelter;

Durst thou claim more than these?

ROUSSO.

I' faith thy temper is most strange and  
wayward!

Because, some months ago, not quite  
myself,

I ventured at the harvest of the olive,  
Upon one innocent liberty —

PHILOTA.

No liberty,

With me, at least, bold man! is rated  
thus!

ROUSSO.

I do repeat, that I was not myself;  
Blame the hot wine of Cyprus; spare  
your slave! [Kneeling.]

PHILOTA.

A slave, indeed! —

ROUSSO.

[lota;

But one who stoops to conquer, fair Phi-  
If I have knelt, 'tis only that I may  
Rise thus, and clasp thee! Hold, no  
foolish cries,

No weak, vain strugglings! Think'st  
thou that the storm

Peeling adown the mountain's rugged  
steeps

Can bear these feeble wailings to thy  
friends?

Come, come, Philota! — if thou could'st  
believe it,

I am the very worthiest of thy vassals;  
List for an instant, while I paint the  
beauty

Of a far Eden waiting for the light,  
The sundawn of thine eyes: —

Amid the waves

Of the Ægean, bosomed in the calm  
Of ever-during summer, sleeps an isle  
Whereon the ocean ripples into music;  
Through whose luxuriant wilderness of  
blooms,

The soft winds sigh their breath away in  
dreams,  
Where — (the deuce take me! I forget  
my part) —  
Where — where — where — i' sooth, a  
place  
To live, to love, to die in, and revisit  
From the sad vale of shadows, with a  
touch  
Of mortal fondness, overmastering death:  
Wilt thou go thither with me? Nay,  
thou must!

*[As Rousso attempts to carry Philota from  
the apartment, she recovers, and, by a sudden  
effort, releases herself from his arms.]*

ROUSSO.

Pardon, Philota! 'tis my eager love  
Which thus hath urged me on; thou  
tremblest! what?  
I would not make thee fear me.

PHILOTA.

Fear! fear!  
If my cheek pales, it is not cowardice  
That plays the tyrant to the exiled  
blood;  
If my frame trembles, there are other  
moods  
Than that thou speak'st of, to unstring  
its firmness;  
Thy presence brings no terrors; dost thou  
talk  
Of fear to a Greek woman?

ROUSSO.

No! no! not fear, but love!

PHILOTA.

Man, man! I pray thee  
Blaspheme not thus! what canst thou  
know of love?  
'Tis true thou speak'st it boldly; from  
thy lips  
The word falls with a rounded fullness  
off,  
And yet, believe me, thou hast used a  
phrase,  
(A sacred phrase, and wretchedly pro-  
faned),  
Which, were thy years thrice lengthened  
out beyond

The general limit of our mortal lives,  
And thou be made to pass through all  
extremes  
Of multiform experience, it could never  
Enter thy sordid soul to comprehend!

ROUSSO.

Bravely delivered! by my soul, I think  
We both make good declaimers! Where  
did'st learn

That pretty speech, Philota?

PHILOTA.

Wilt thou leave me?

ROUSSO.

Pshaw! thou art less than courteous.  
Leave thee? no!

I will not leave thee! Hark ye, my proud  
damsel,

I am not one with whom 'tis safe to  
trifle,

Thou knowest, or shalt know this; so,  
mark my words,

Long have I wooed thee fairly, would  
have won thee,

Yea, and endowed thee with both wealth  
and station;

Twice hast thou heard my proffer, twice  
with loathing

Spurned it, and me; I shall not woo thee  
thrice

With honeyed words; no, 'tis the strong  
arm now.

I am prepared for all; come on!

*[He seizes Philota a second time, but enter on  
the instant Antonio, with the Monk Andreas  
leaning upon him.]*

PHILOTA *[faintly]*.

Saved! saved!

ANTONIO.

Ha, Rousso, I have heard it whispered  
oft

Amongst thy watchful brethren in this  
isle,

That underneath that smooth and flatter-  
ing front

There lurked a mine of blackest villany!  
Faith! I denied it once; what shall I

say  
When next the public voice decries you,  
sir?

ROUSSO.

A jest! I do assure you but a jest!  
This cloak, which in your self-devoted  
flight  
To rescue the dear father, Andreas  
(How glad I am to see his saintship  
safe),  
You dropped some furlongs from the  
mountain's base,  
I cast, in sportive fashion, on my person,  
And deeming that Philota would rejoice  
To hear that thou had'st so far braved  
the force  
O' th' treacherous elements, I called  
upon her;  
She did me the vast honor to confound  
Your humble servant with Antonio,  
And 'ere I was aware, sprang to my  
arms,  
With such a blinded ecstasy of rapture,  
That I had wellnigh sunk into the earth,  
From the mere stress of native modesty!  
A jest, a jest, and nothing but a jest.

ANTONIO.

Such jesting may be dangerous, — be-  
ware!

SCENE III.

[A year is supposed to have elapsed. The town of Sphakia after nightfall. Enter confusedly a band of Sphakiote soldiers, with Roussos amongst them. The streets are crowded with women, many of whom are heard lamenting the death of Antonio Melidori.]

ROUSSO [*in a disguised voice*].

Why will ye clamor thus, ye foolish  
jades?  
Your handsome favorite, your renowned  
commander,  
Is no more dead than I am!

A WOMAN.

Say'st thou so?  
Where then is Melidori?

ROUSSO [*still disguising his voice*].

Would'st thou learn?  
Women of Sphakia, your immaculate  
captain,  
He for whose welfare, upon bended  
knees,

Ye nightly pray to heaven, whose name  
your infants  
Lisp in their very slumbers, hath be-  
trayed us!  
Hold! hear me out! I am no dubious  
witness;  
Thrice, whilst the battle raged along our  
front,  
I saw the traitor creeping like a dog  
Between the Turkish outposts!

[Antonio appears in the rear, with a child in his arms.]

ANTONIO.

It is false!  
Here is your leader, Sphakiotes; what  
base slanderer  
Dares to pronounce me traitor? I but  
paused  
To save this weeping innocent, whose  
mother  
Fell by some coward's sword!

ROUSSO.

Ha, Sphakiotes, see,  
The noble Melidori waxes tender,  
Soft as a woman! he must love the  
Moslem,  
Who fosters thus their offspring! by the  
saints  
A lusty brat! He'll thrive, good friends,  
believe me,  
And grow betimes, to cut our infants'  
throats!

ANTONIO.

Let him who speaks stand forth; I would  
confront  
My bold accuser. What! he clings to  
the dark!  
Fit place for lies and liars!

Friends, I scorn  
To parley with this viper; there's a way,  
One only way, to deal with reptiles,  
crush them,  
Thus, thus, and thus,  
When they have crawled too near us;

[Stamping violently upon the earth.]

Till then, why let the ugly beasts hiss  
on,  
And spit their harmless venom.

[Turning to the women.]

Mothers, wives,  
Maidens of Sphakia, are there none  
amongst ye  
Ready to take this poor unfortunate?  
Just for my sake, fair countrywomen,  
list,  
List to the blessèd word: — “The merci-  
ful  
Shall obtain mercy!”

ROUSSO.

Heed him not, I say,  
But seize the infidel whelp, and let him  
rock  
On a steel bayonet! What! have we re-  
pelled  
The invading foe, exterminated wholly  
His forces and his empire, that we dare  
Cherish his cubs among us? — and for  
what?  
“Just for his sake, fair countrywomen,  
— his,  
And mercy’s!” Who showed mercy to  
our children,  
When the Turk ravaged Scio? The  
young devil, —  
Hear how he shrieks! ho! send him  
down to hell!  
Down to his father! he’s a grateful  
spirit,  
And thankful for small favors!

[The crowd begin to murmur, and move threat-  
eningly towards ANTONIO.]

ANTONIO.

Shame upon you!  
Though the poor boy were fifty times a  
Moslem,  
I’ll rear him as my own; he shall not  
perish;  
Perchance, who knows, when I have died  
for you,  
For you, and Grecian liberty, this babe,  
Reared as a Greek, may yet avenge my  
death,  
As none of you, false brethren, dare  
avenge it!  
Once more I say, — Mothers, wives,  
maids of Sphakia,

Is there not one amongst ye to whose  
tendance  
I may commit this trembling casta-  
way?

PHILOTA [veiled].

Give me the child, — I’ll nurture him  
with love,  
And gentlest usage.

ANTONIO [starting].

Heavens! what voice is that?  
You here, Philota? I had hoped you  
dwelt  
Safely within the close heart of the  
mountains!

PHILOTA.

The mountains are not safe.

ANTONIO.

Why then did’st thou  
Keep such strict silence? Answer me,  
Philota,  
How hast thou lived. This peasant’s  
dress —

PHILOTA.

Is fittest

For me, Antonio, — by my handiwork,  
And daily labor, I now earn my bread, —  
For was it meet an unknown peasant  
girl  
Should claim, as her betrothed, great  
Melidori,  
Captain of Sphakia?

ANTONIO.

O, thou generous heart!  
But stay, — the rabble must not catch  
our words;  
Take thou the babe, — under the city-  
walls  
I’ll meet thee in the gloaming,

SCENE IV.

[A place under the city walls, — time, an hour  
after sunset.]

ANTONIO, [embracing PHILOTA con-  
strainedly].

How kind thou art!

PHILOTA.

I but obeyed your mandate!

ANTONIO.  
Nay, why so cold? my truth is thine,  
Philota, —  
Dost thou remember?

PHILOTA.  
Would'st thou have me do so?  
Methought that dream was over, — by  
thy wish.

ANTONIO.  
By heaven! I never said so!

PHILOTA.  
Yet thy heart,  
Thy heart, Antonio, spake the keen de-  
sire,  
Although thy lips kept silence; — I have  
learned  
To read thy spirit like an open book,  
And cannot be deceived; — all's changed  
with us;

Never again, as in the time that's past,  
Shall we, hand linked in hand, explore  
the vales,  
Or walk the shining hill-tops; thou hast  
risen

Far, far above my level; a great man,  
Among the greatest, — thou wert mad  
t' espouse

A humble girl like me; I ask it not;  
My love but burdens thy aspiring hopes,  
So, I beseech thee, dwell no more upon  
it:

Antonio, for thy welfare I would give  
My soul's life; shall I then refuse to  
yield

A personal joy, that thou may'st win  
and wed

The immortal virgin — Glory? Dream  
it not!

Oh! dream it not!

ANTONIO.  
Now, gracious God, forgive me!  
It were presumption, should I kiss thy  
feet.

Thou pure, unselfish woman! yet thy  
words

Are true, too true, and I dare not gain-  
say them.

One thing believe, Philota, I am  
wretched,

Yes, far more so than thou art:

[After a pause.]

— Did'st thou know  
The terrible life I lead in this dread war-  
fare,

Through what an atmosphere of blood  
and carnage

It is my doom to move, as through the  
air

Of some plague-stricken city, thick with  
curses;

Did'st know the numberless dangers,  
that like demons

(Many unseen, — and therefore doubly  
fearful),

Which hover 'round the soldier, hour by  
hour

O'ershadowing life with the black gloom  
of death;

Did'st know the coarse companions, the  
rude manners

Of vile extortioners, bent alone on prey,  
And personal profit, and the thousand  
evils

Gendered of strife, and strife's unhal-  
lowed passions,

O, thou would'st shrink from following  
such base courses,

Even as an angel from the brink of hell!

PHILOTA.

Thou wrong'st my love, and hast de-  
ceived thyself;

Where'er thou art, to me that place is  
heaven;

Antonio, God alone, God and my soul  
Know what I might, and would have  
been to thee!

I would have shared thy fortunes, joined  
my fate

For weal or woe, for honor or disgrace,  
For life or death to thine; have tracked  
thy steps,

(If need it were,) through seas of blood  
and carnage,

Strengthened thy weakness, buoyed thy  
sinking hopes,

Nor, at the worst, have shed one wo-  
man's tear

To shake thy manhood. Had heaven  
blessed thy cause,  
I would have striven to make my spirit  
worthy  
To mount with thee; so, when the orbèd  
glory  
Shone like the fire of sunrise round thy  
brow,  
No man dare say that with that lustre  
mingled  
One blush of shame for Melidori's wife!  
This might have been, and this shall  
never be. [*Willly.*]  
I th' name of mercy, by thy mother's  
soul,  
And the dear past, I pray thee leave me  
now,  
While still thou lov'st me (dost thou  
not?) a little.

ANTONIO.

And thou — and thou, Philota? —

PHILOTA.

I shall dwell

In peace; [*aside*] ay! broken hearts are  
peaceful!

ANTONIO.

But where? —

PHILOTA.

What matter where, so that I live in  
peace?Grieve not, Antonio. In my humble  
stationOne thought shall bring content; — “he  
was not false,”

No mortal maiden stole Antonio's heart!

ANTONIO.

Blessèd words!

'Tis true I love but thee!

PHILOTA.

Then do not sorrow.

Love, I forgive thee; thou hast wronged  
me not.And for the child — ah, I shall dream it  
thine;Tend it as thine, and when the years  
have ripenedThat infant soul, 'tis mine to lead to  
virtue,

I'll teach the boy how noble was the act

Whereby Antonio saved him; I'll be  
happy.Oh, trust me, Love! so very, very  
happy!

ANTONIO.

Then be it so, Philota. I would bless  
thee,But am not worthy; still, thou shalt be  
blessed.

PHILOTA.

And thou, too, if the Virgin hear my  
prayers;And now that we are friends, *but* friends,  
though firm ones,Beseech thee, list my tidings. There's  
a foe,A deadly, treacherous foe in thine own  
camp,And one who vows thy ruin; it is Rousso;  
Thou knowest how first his envious, bitter  
temperWas stung to hatred; since that time,  
thy willHath often clashed with his; besides,  
thy fameIn these fierce wars hath far o'ertopped  
his credit;So he has sworn thy death; the voice  
was his,That goaded on thy soldiers to rebellion;  
And, as I threaded my uncertain path-  
way,A short hour since, through the dark  
streets of Sphakia,I heard thy name in whispers; two dim  
forms(Men, as I knew by their hoarse tones,)  
conferredWith hurried, stealthy gestures, and one  
sentenceStartled me like a knell: — “His tomb  
is open.”A deep voice said; “Antonio's tomb is  
open!”Oh, then, beware. As lowly as thou  
deem'st me,I'll watch above thy safety; the soft dove  
May warn the eagle of the midnight  
spoiler!



ANTONIO.  
And thy own life and safety —

PHILOTA.  
I am here  
To spend them both for thee. But hark!  
thy name  
Is shouted by thy comrades in the valley.  
The hour has come that parts us. Fare  
thee well!

[*She gives him her hand.*]

ANTONIO.  
'Twas not our wont to part in this cold  
fashion;  
Come, one more kiss, Philota! let me feel  
We were indeed betrothed; one last, last  
kiss! [*They embrace and part.*]

SCENE V.

[An apartment in the house of Affendouli, the Governor-General of Candia. Enter Antonio, and Affendouli, conversing.]

AFFENDOULLI.  
These private bickerings are the fruitful  
cause  
Of all disgrace and failure; let us end  
them!

ANTONIO.  
Most willingly! I have no feud with  
any,  
Saving one quarrel, forced upon me,  
chief!

AFFENDOULLI.  
True, true! but even now a courier waits,  
Charged with a special message of good  
will,  
From Rousso, and his brother, Anag-  
nosti;  
They say, "We plead for peace! all per-  
sonal hate  
Henceforth be quelled between us; we  
would join  
Our troop to Melidori's, and our banners  
Wave side by side with his." Accept  
their proffer!

ANTONIO.  
I will!  
AFFENDOULLI.  
To show thou art sincere, fail not to test  
Their hospitality.

ANTONIO.  
As how?  
AFFENDOULLI.  
They give  
A solemn feast of unity and friendship,  
To which thou art invited. Go, I charge  
thee.

ANTONIO.  
Trust me, I shall be there, what day's  
appointed  
Whereon to hold this festival of love?

AFFENDOULLI.  
This very day; thou knowest the camp  
of Rousso?

ANTONIO.  
Ay! I'll be there anon!

[*Exit Antonio. Enter, after a brief interval, Philota, with a hurried and anxious mien.*]

PHILOTA.  
Oh, pardon, pardon!  
Most gracious Governor! but I come to  
seek  
Ant — Ant —, that is, the Captain  
Melidori,  
With tidings of grave import.

AFFENDOULLI.  
Ha!  
Thou luckless messenger! he has de-  
parted.  
Gone —

PHILOTA [*wildly*].  
Where, where?

AFFENDOULLI.  
To feast with Rousso.  
PHILOTA [*rushing out*].  
Then is he lost! O merciful God, pro-  
tect us!

SCENE VI.

[An open space in a wood, — tables arranged for a banquet, — Rousso, Anagnosti, Antonio Melidori, and their followers, discovered feasting.]

ANAGNOSTI.  
A soldier's life forever! free to pass  
In feast or fray! how glorious this wild  
banquet  
Compared to those dull, formal feasts of  
old,

Held at the olive harvest! Speak, Antonio,  
Give us thy thought upon it: what! art silent?

ROUSSO.

Urge him no more; perchance Antonio pines  
For the sweet quiet of that mountain life,  
Which thou hast called so dull; its days  
of dream,  
Its nights of warm voluptuous dalliance!

ANTONIO.

No, no, by heaven! those times are dead to me;  
They had their pleasures, but not one to match  
The keen delights of glory, the true honor  
Which follows patriot service.

ROUSSO.

Gallant words,  
Brave, and high-sounding; but for me and mine,  
We do not fight for shadows!

ANTONIO [*coldly*].

I'm at fault,  
Not clearly comprehending, sir, your meaning.

ROUSSO.

Oh! thou dost well to speak of glory, honors,  
We know what rich rewards await thee, chief,  
When the war's ended; spoils, and wealth and beauty.  
But yesternorn, I saw thy winsome lady,  
The bride to be, old Affendouli's daughter.  
Nay, shrink not, man, she is a lovely maid,  
Fair as her father's generous; what an eye!  
Half arch, half languishing; and what a breast!  
That heaves as 'twould burst outward to the day,

And strike men mad with its white panting passion!

No lovelier woman lives, unless, unless—  
It be that poor young thing who doted on thee,

Before the war, — what was her name? Philota?

ANTONIO.

Thy thoughts run on fair damsels; let us talk

Like soldiers, not like brain-sick boys in love.

ROUSSO.

With all my heart; only, one pledge to thee,

And Affendouli's daughter!

ANTONIO.

I have borne  
This jesting with the patience of a saint,  
But now 'tis stretched to license. Prithee, cease!

ROUSSO.

God; how he winces! if Philota —

ANTONIO.

Villain!  
Utter that sacred name again —

rousso [*rising suddenly and drawing his dagger*].

Oh, ho!

Wilt fight, wilt fight! I'm ready for thee; come.

ANTONIO [*aside*].

(He shall not trap me thus.) Thou art my host;

'Twere shame, yea, bitter shame, this brawl should end

In blows and bloodshed! when the time befits,

[*To Rousso*].

Doubt not that I shall call thee to account

For this day's work; meanwhile I leave a board

Where clownish insult poisons all your cups!

[*As he is about to depart, Anagnosti approaches, with an air of conciliation.*]

ANAGNOSTI.

Well spoken, noble captain, thou wert wronged;

But Rousso is so hasty! He repents;  
Let not this solemn feast of unity  
Break up in discord.

ROUSSO.

No, no, no, Antonio!  
I do repent! Prithee embrace me, friend,  
In sign of reconciliation.

[*Rousso approaches Melidori with an unsteady step: while in the act of embracing, he stabs him in the side. Philota rushes upon the scene, with a cry of agony, and throws herself beside Antonio, whose head she supports.*]

PHILOTA.

Too late! O God, too late! He faints,  
he dies!

Why stare ye thus upon us, cruel men?  
Wine, wine, another cup, how slow ye  
move!

My scarf is drenched with blood,—ye  
pitiless fools!

Will not a creature loan me wherewithal  
To bind his wretched wound up? There,  
'tis stanch'd,

And he revives! Antonio, speak to me,  
I am Philota!

ANTONIO [*his mind wandering*].

Where hast thou been, my love, this  
weary time?

Am I not true? I charge thee, heed  
them not!

The girl is nothing to me; Rousso's  
tongue,

His sharp false tongue first joined our  
names together;

She loves another, and I love but thee;  
Draw nearer, let me whisper. I have  
dreamed,

Oh, such a dream! the valleys flowed  
with blood,

And ruin compassed all our island round,  
And every town was sacked, and, hark  
ye, nearer!

I saw a mother murdered by a knave,  
A coward knave, because she would not  
yield

Her body to him; but I saved her child,

And here he is, a pretty, pretty boy!  
Take him, Philota. Ah, my heart, my  
heart!

It pains me sorely; 'twas a terrible  
dream,

But now, thank Heaven, 'tis over! Thou  
art pale;

What makes thee pale? Bear up, my  
dearest love!

This morn we shall be wedded, and I  
think

We will not part again. I had a foe,  
His name is Rousso; but we are so  
happy,

Let us forgive all foes; invite him thither,  
PHILOTA [*weeping*].

He breaks my heart—

ANTONIO.

How keen the wind is!  
Keen, keen, and chill; it was not wont  
to blow

So coldly at this season: I am sick,  
Yea, sick of very joy; but joy kills not;  
My lids are heavy; I would sleep,  
Philota.

Wake me at early dawn; I told my  
mother,

That I would bring thee home, to-mor-  
row morn.

[*He dies.*]

## ALLAN HERBERT.

SCENE I.

[The hall of a country house in Westmoreland, surrounded with portraits of the M. . . family. Allan Herbert, and Jocelyn, an old domestic, are seen standing before the likeness of a lady, young, and wonderfully fair.]

HERBERT.

The canvas speaks!

JOCELYN.

Ay, sir, 'tis very like;  
Was she not beautiful?

HERBERT.

Was; yes, and is;  
She had not lost one bloom when late I  
saw her.

JOCELYN.  
Sir, she is dead!

HERBERT.  
Ay, so they say, old man;  
And yet I see her nightly,—in my  
dreams;  
I tell you that her cheek is round and  
fair  
As summer's fulness, that her eyes are  
lustrous,  
And she, a perfect presence clasped in  
light!  
Thus will she look, on resurrection  
morning.

JOCELYN [*aside*].  
Alas, poor gentleman! how many loved  
her,  
And loved her vainly! Pardon, sir, your  
name?

HERBERT.  
My name is Allan Herbert.

JOCELYN.  
Herbert, Herbert!  
Where have I heard that dainty name  
before? (*musings*)  
Oh, now I have it; my young mistress,  
sir,  
She who is dead, was wont to read a  
book  
A delicate gold-edged volume, that I'm  
sure  
Bore some such name within it; she  
would sit  
Beneath yon grape vine trellis toward the  
south  
(This window, sir, commands it), and  
for hours,  
Nay, days, bend o'er her favorite pages;  
once  
She left the book behind her, and I saw  
its leaves were touched with tears.

HERBERT.  
Where is it now?  
That book your mistress loved? Let  
me behold it!

JOCELYN.  
In sooth, sir, I have never seen it since,

Or, if I have [*hesitating*], it lies beyond  
our reach.

HERBERT.  
What meanest thou?

JOCELYN.  
I mean that while she lay  
Decked for her burial, whilst I stood be-  
side her,  
Looking my last upon her tranquil fea-  
tures,  
The robe of death was fluttered by the  
wind,  
A low sad wailing wind, that swept aside  
The drapery for a moment, and I marked  
The glimmer of the gold-edged pages  
placed  
Right on her bosom! Master, you are  
pale,  
You tremble; I have rudely touched the  
spring  
Of some deep-seated sorrow!

HERBERT.  
Yes, old man;  
A sorrow most unlike to common griefs,  
That pass like clouds or shadows; mine  
is mingled  
With the dark hues of treachery and re-  
morse;  
A rayless, blank eclipse, through which  
I wander,  
Accursed and hopeless; sometimes in a  
vision  
Comes the sweet face of her I foully  
wronged,  
And stabs me with a smile!

JOCELYN.  
Did'st wrong her, Sir?  
Did'st wrong my lady?

HERBERT.  
Lead me to the grave;  
I know 'tis near at hand.

JOCELYN.  
The grave! what grave?  
Moreover,—if you wronged her——

HERBERT.

If I wronged her!  
Why dost thou taunt me with it? thou  
on earth  
With Mercy still beside thee, — I — in  
Hell?

JOCELYN.

Madman!

HERBERT.

I am not mad, my friend, but only  
wretched;  
Once more, I pray thee, show me where  
she sleeps.

JOCELYN.

I must obey him; this way, — follow me.

SCENE II.

[A forest. — Deep in the shade a single  
monument appears, covered with wild-flowers  
and roses.]

HERBERT [*alone*].

'Tis fit she should be buried in this place  
So fragrant and so peaceful: O, my love!  
Thou hast grown dull of hearing! I may  
call  
'Till the lone echoes shiver with thy  
name,  
Thou wilt not heed me; dust, dust, dust  
indeed!  
And thou — more glorious than the  
morning star;  
More tender than the love-light of the  
eve!  
They tell me thou shalt rise again,  
Christ's bride,  
Not mine, most beautiful, yet changed;  
Perchance I shall not know thee, or per-  
chance,  
The human love which made thine eyes  
like heaven —  
My heaven of hope and worship — shall  
be lost  
In some diviner splendor! all is  
hushed,  
No smallest whisper trembles gently up  
From the deep grave to soothe me; 'tis  
in vain

I agonize in thought. Eternal Nature!  
She whom I once called "mother,"  
wears an aspect

Callous and pitiless. I fain would solve  
This terrible mystery that weighs down  
my soul

With nightmare fancies. Let me die in  
peace,

O God! and if I may not see her more  
Through all the long eternities, nor hear  
Her voice of tender pardon, let me rest  
Next to some stream of Lethe, and re-  
pose

In everlasting slumbers! —

[*Enter JOCELYN.*]

JOCELYN.

Come, let us hence! the darkness creeps  
upon us;

See, Sir! there's not a spark of sunset  
left

In all the waning West.

HERBERT.

Well, what of that!

I live in darkness, — the light burns my  
spirit,

It mocks and tortures me! Begone, I  
say,

And leave me to the dismal shade thou  
fearest!

JOCELYN.

Good Sir, be counselled — stay not in  
the wood;

Thine eye is troubled, and thy visage  
weary; —

'Tis a rash venture!

HERBERT.

Sooth to say, I thank thee;  
Thou could'st not serve long in the house-  
hold blessed

By her most merciful presence, and not  
catch

Some tenderness of temper; — take my  
thanks!

Yet will I stay in this same dreary wood,  
And watch until the night is overpast.

JOCELYN.

Thou'lt find it lonely.

HERBERT.

Oh, I have my thoughts,  
A stirring company, that never slumber.

JOCELYN.

Why, worse and worse! I've heard, such  
restless thoughts  
Engender a sore sickness —

HERBERT.

Of the mind;

Yet is my case already desperate,  
Past healing, and past comfort. Go thy  
way.

Thou kind old man, thou canst not  
shake my purpose,

But when the last star wanes before the  
dawn,

Come back; my night will then be over-  
past,

And my watch ended; till that hour,  
farewell!



FROM THE CONSPIRATOR,

AN UNPUBLISHED TRAGEDY.

SCENE.

[A garden; Arnold De Malpas and Catharine  
discovered walking slowly towards a summer-  
house in the distance].

CATHARINE.

Art thou prepared to risk all this, De  
Malpas?

DE MALPAS.

Ay! this, and more, if I but thought —  
[Hesitating].

CATHARINE.

What, Arnold?

DE MALPAS.

If I but thought that when the strife was  
over,

The feeble prince hurled down, the  
throne secured,

She, for whose love I braved the people's  
hate,

Malice of rulers, and the headsman's  
axe,

Would deign to share with me that  
perilous height.

CATHARINE.

She! Oh, thou hast a lady-love!

DE MALPAS.

Cruel! Wouldst thou put by my passion  
thus,

With a feigned jest? Catharine, I stake  
my all,

Manhood's strong hopes and purpose,  
the heart's wealth,

And the mind's store of hard-bought  
lore, my peace

Of conscience, and my soul's immortal  
life,

To lift thee to the summit of thy wish;  
(Oh! I have proved thee, and I know  
thy thoughts),

And yet, thou feignest ignorance!

CATHARINE.

Dear De Malpas,

Forgive me! let us both throw by the  
mask!

I hate the queen; even in our girlish  
days,

She was my rival; her mild-mannered  
arts

Stole suitors from me; the old priest, our  
teacher,

Though I eclipsed her ever in the school,  
And shamed her dullness with keen-  
witted words

And quicker apprehension, shone on her  
With sunny aspect, sleeked her golden  
hair,

Fondled and soothed and petted, whilst  
for me,

The apter scholar, he reserved harsh  
looks,

And harsher tones; (well, the old fool is  
dead!

In after time, some friend of holy church,  
Some zealous friend, proved that his  
saintship taught

Schism and heresy, and so—he perished)!  
But for this queen, this Eleanor! our  
souls

Nursed yearly a more fixed hostility;  
We sat together at the knightly jousts,  
And watched the conflict with high  
beating hearts,

Flushed cheeks, and fluttering pulses;  
 she from fear,  
 I with the mounting heat of martial  
 blood,  
 Thrilled with the music of the battle's  
 roar,  
 The ring of mighty lances on steel helms,  
 Clangor of shields, and neighing of wild  
 steeds:  
 One morn my knight was victor; as he  
 placed  
 The crown of gems and laurel on my  
 brow,  
 Methought that I was born to be a queen,  
 Not the brief ruler of a festal throng,  
 But 'stablished kingdoms, and a host of  
 men  
 Bound to my sway forever!

DE MALPAS.

A true thought!  
 O, noble Catharine! thy aspiring spirit  
 Fires my purpose, and gives wings to  
 action;  
 Thy rival hath sped past thee in the  
 race,  
 But she shall fall midway; the blinded  
 monarch  
 Walks on the brink of an abysmal deep,  
 And soon shall topple over; then, a vic-  
 tor,  
 (Not from the conflict with half-blunted  
 spears,  
 In friendly tournament), but the tumult  
 fierce  
 Of revolution, and the crash of states,  
 Shall set a weightier crown about thy  
 brows,  
 And hail thee ruler, — not of festal  
 throngs,  
 But 'stablished kingdoms, and a host of  
 men  
 Bound to thy sway forever!

DE MALPAS.

Speak, Bolton! what say these, my faith-  
 ful friends,  
 Touching my present life ?

BOLTON.

Why, Master Arnold,  
 I' sooth they're much divided; some as-  
 sert,  
 That thou art moonstruck; that some  
 morbid fancy,  
 Whether of love or pride, hath seized  
 upon thee;  
 Others, that thou hast simply lost thy  
 trust  
 In man and in thyself; and others still,  
 That thou hast sunk to base, inglorious  
 ease,  
 Urging the languid currents of the blood  
 With fiery spurs of sense; a few there  
 are,  
 Few, but most faithful, who at dead of  
 night  
 In secret conclave, with low-whispered  
 words  
 And pallid faces glancing back aghast,  
 Speak of a monstrous wrong, which  
 thou —

DE MALPAS.

[Starting up, and seizing Bolton.]

Unhappy wretch! therein thou speak'st  
 thy doom!  
 That prying, curious spirit is thy fate.  
 [Stabs him suddenly.]  
 Did I not warn thee of it ?

BOLTON.

Oh! I die!  
 Yet my soul swells and lightens; all the  
 future  
 Flashes before me like a revelation.  
 Arnold De Malpas! thou shalt gain thine  
 end!  
 The aged king shall fall, the throne be  
 thine!  
 But, as thou goest to claim it, as thy  
 foot  
 Presses the royal dais (mark my words)!  
 A bolt shall fall from heaven, sudden,  
 swift,  
 Even as thy blow on me, thou'lt writhe  
 i' the dust,  
 Down-trodden by the hostile heel of  
 thousands.

Whilst she, for whom thou'st turned  
 conspirator,  
 Smiling, shall gaze from out her palace  
 doors,  
 And wave her broidered scarf, and join  
 the music  
 Of her low witching laughter to the  
 sneers  
 Of courtly parasites; "De Malpas bore  
 His honors bravely, did he not, my  
 lords?  
 Now, by our lady, 'tis a grievous fall!"  
 "Yet pride, thou know'st, sweet Catha-  
 rine,"—  
 "Ay, ay, ay!  
 "Prithee, Francisco, wilt thou dance to-  
 night?"

DE MALPAS.

What, fool! wilt prate forever? Hence,  
 I say,  
 And entertain the devil with thy dream-  
 ings!

[Stabs him again.]

DE MALPAS.

Thou hast been to court, Bernaldi, hast  
 thou not?

BERNALDI.

Ay! all the forenoon!

DE MALPAS.

Didst thou see the lady,  
 Catharine of Savoy, whose miraculous  
 beauty  
 Hath set all Spain aflame?

BERNALDI.

I did, my cousin,  
 But, I am bold to speak it, liked her not;  
 Her beauty is the beauty of the serpent,  
 Masking a poisonous spirit; there's no  
 depth  
 Of womanly nature in her gleaming  
 eyes,  
 Falsest when most they flatter; men have  
 said  
 She owns the Borgia's blood; I know not  
 that,  
 But, by St. Mark! she owns their temper,  
 cousin!

EXPERIENCE IN POVERTY.

A. How bitterly you speak!  
 B. I have good warrant.  
 A. Well, for my part, I hold your creed  
 is false,  
 Uncharitable, monstrous! I have seen  
 The world, sir; studied men and man-  
 ners in it;  
 And though no doubt some selfishness  
 and craft  
 May evermore be found by those who  
 seek them,  
 Peering too closely underneath the  
 mask  
 Of multiform conventions, yet, by heaven,  
 The world's a fair, good, reasonable  
 world  
 To all who follow reason! Your high  
 fancies,  
 Whose goal is vague impossibility,  
 Of course must miss their mark! We  
 live not, sir,  
 In Eden, or the golden age.  
 B. Right! right!  
 You talk as is most natural in one  
 To whom all life hath been a gay parade,  
 A frolic pastime!—to whom subtle for-  
 tune  
 Hath never turned her dark and lowering  
 front,  
 But round whose footsteps sowed with  
 golden showers  
 Obsequious knaves and sweet-tongued  
 servitors  
 Have fawned and lied and flattered, till  
 your days  
 Borne bravely onward over perfumed  
 tides  
 Passed like a steady bark 'twixt shores of  
 flowers,  
 You know the world! its men and modes  
 forsooth!  
 Wait, sir, until your purse grows lean as  
 mine,  
 And fate within the compass of one evil  
 (A gaunt and loathsome poverty), in-  
 cludes  
 All ills that flesh is heir to! disrespect



From insolent curs that now you'd  
hardly stoop  
To soil your lordly boot with! studied  
coldness  
Of ancient friends whose easy faith de-  
clines  
With your decreasing wine-butts! covert  
sneers,  
Or open insult from the gaudy throng  
Of parasites, who breathe alone in sun-  
shine!  
Grief without balm, and pain that knows  
not pity;  
Dark days, and maddening midnights,  
and the pang  
Of outraged feeling, and the soul's de-  
spair:  
Ay! wait, I say, until from depths like  
these,  
The lonely thunder growling overhead,  
And misery like a cataract raging round  
Your path of ruin, wild and desperate  
eyes  
Are lifted to the summits of past hope,  
Receding ever with their shows of joy,  
Less real than the mirage, or the domes  
Which sunset builds on clouds of phan-  
tasy!  
Wait till the fiend that's born of famished  
hours  
Shall grasp your hand in bony fellow-  
ship,  
And lead you through the mist of ghastly  
dreams,  
Helpless and tottering, to the brink of  
death!  
Ha! ha! you shrink! the picture does  
not please  
Your dainty fancy! Well, soft optimist,  
Confess there's somewhat you have still  
to learn  
Of this same fair, good, reasonable world!

◆◆◆

*THE TRUE PHILOSOPHY.*

I'd have you use a wise philosophy.  
In this, as in all matters, whereupon  
Judgment may freely act; truth ever lies

Between extremes; avoid the spend-  
thrift's folly  
As you'd avoid the road of utter ruin;  
For wealth, or at the least, fair compe-  
tence,  
Is honor, comfort, hope, and self-respect;  
All, in a word, that makes our human  
life  
Endurable, if not happy: scorn the cant  
Of sentimental Dives, wrapped in pur-  
ple,  
Who over jewelled wine-cups and rich  
fare,  
Affects to flout his gold, and prattles  
loosely  
Of sweet content that's found in poverty:  
As for the miser, he's a madman simply,  
One who the means of all enjoyment  
holds.  
Yet never dares enjoy: no, no, Anselmo,  
Use with a prudent, but still liberal hand  
That store the gods have given you; thus,  
my friend,  
'Twixt the Charybdis of a churlish mean-  
ness.  
And the swift Scylla of improvident  
waste,  
You'll steer your bark o'er smooth, in-  
nocuous seas,  
And reach at last a peaceful anchorage.

◆◆◆

*LOVE'S CAPRICES.*

COME, sweetheart, hear me! I have  
loved thee well,  
God knoweth. Through all these years  
my holiest thoughts,  
Like those pure doves nurtured in an-  
tique temples,  
Have fluttered ever round thine image  
fair,  
And found in thee their shrine. No  
tenderest hope  
Of mine, which hath not warmed its  
radiant wings  
Within that heaven, thy presence, and  
drank strength  
And sunshine from it.

How hast thou responded?  
 Sometimes thine eyes, like Eden gates  
 unclosed,  
 Would pour such beams of sacred pas-  
 sion down,

That all my soul was flooded with its joy,  
 And I, methought, breathed as immor-  
 tals breathe,  
 A deathless light and ether. Then,  
 when most



"Come, sweetheart, hear me!"

I dreamed me happy, a strange change  
 would come,  
 Sudden as strange; some wind of cold  
 caprice,  
 Blowing, I knew not whence, an icy cloud  
 Upbore, and o'er the splendor of thy  
 brow,

Of late so frankly beautiful, there hung  
 Ominous shadows, crossed by gleams of  
 scorn;  
 Trifles as slight as eider-down have power  
 To move or sting thee, and a swarm of  
 humors,  
 Gendered of morbid fancy, buzz and hiss

About some vacant chambers of thy  
mind,  
By idle thoughts left open, making  
harsh,  
Rude discord, where, if healthful will  
had sway,  
Angels, perchance, might lift celestial  
voices!

Love, love, thou wrong'st thyself, and  
that sweet nature,  
Sweet at the core, for all such small de-  
spites,  
Wherewith kind heaven endowed thee;  
yet, beware!  
Caprice, though frail its shafts, a poi-  
soned barb  
Hath bound on each; their points are  
sharp to wound,  
And the wounds rankle! Giants great  
as Love  
Have perished merely of an insect's  
venom,  
And who through all God's universe can  
touch  
Love's pulseless heart to warmth and  
life again?

—◆—  
*CREEDS.*

FRIEND, 'mid the complex and unnum-  
bered creeds  
Which meet and jostle on this mortal  
scene,  
And sometimes fight à l'outrance, I  
perceive  
Some precious seed of truth ennobling all:  
Encased, it may be, like the mummy's  
wheat,  
Locked in dead forms, yet waiting but a  
breath  
Of honest air, an inch of wholesome soil,  
To bloom and flourish heavenward;  
therefore, friend,  
Walk hand in hand with clear-eyed  
Charity,  
And Faith sublime, though simple, like  
a child's,

Who feels through densest midnight,  
next his own,  
The loving throb of a kind father's  
heart.

—◆—  
*THE UNIVERSALITY OF GRIEF.*

I GRANT you that our fate is terrible,  
Bitter as gall. What then? Will lam-  
entation,  
Childish complaint, everlasting wailings,  
Grief, groans, despair, help to amend  
our doom?  
Glance o'er the world — the world is full  
of pain  
Akin to ours. If some dark spirit  
touched  
Our vision to miraculous clearness,  
sights  
Would meet our eyes, at which the cold-  
est heart  
Might weep blood-tears; there's not a  
moment passes  
Which doth not bear its load of agonies  
Out to the dim Eternity beyond;  
The primal curse of earth, with heavier  
weight,  
Descends on special victims; yet, bethink  
you,  
All sorrow hath its bounds, o'er which  
there stands  
That friend of misery, gentle-hearted  
Death.  
Balms of oblivion holds he, and the  
realm  
Wherein he rules hath mournurous caves  
of sleep.

—◆—  
*THE PENITENT.*

THOU see'st yon woman with the grave  
pelisse  
Lined with dark sables? Is she not de-  
vout?  
Her soul is in the service, and her eyes  
Are dim with weeping, — weeping for  
the follies

Of a misguided youth; thus saith the world,  
 But I, who know her ladyship, know this:  
 She weeps that youth itself, and the lost triumphs  
 Which followed in its train; the scores of lovers  
 Dead now, or married off; the rout, the joust,  
 The sweet flirtations, merry carnivals,  
 And — (oh! supremest memory of all!) —  
 The banded serenaders 'neath the lattice,  
 Lifting the voice of passion in the night:  
 And one among the minstrels loved her well.  
 But him she laughed to scorn, his heart was riven;  
 She trampled on the purest pearl of love,  
 And cast it to the dogs; well, God is just!  
 She scorned his sacred gift, and so must walk,  
 Henceforth a lonely woman on the earth!

—◆—

DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

WE might have been! ah, yes! we might have been  
 Among the laurelled noblemen of thought,  
 Who lift their species with them as they climb  
 To deathless empire in the realm of gods;  
 But some dark power — we will not call it Fate —  
 We dare not call it Providence — hath seized  
 The helm of our strange destinies, and steered  
 Right onward to the breakers. All is lost!  
 Hope's siren song of promise faints in sighs,  
 And joy — (but she ne'er charmed us, save in days

Of dim-remembered childhood); — let it pass!  
 Our lot's the lot of millions; for on life  
 A blight is preying, and a mystic wrong  
 Hath set our heartstrings to the tune of grief!

—◆—

REWARD OF FICKLENESS.

ALTON.

YOU see that man with the quick eyes and brow,  
 Too ponderous almost for his slender frame,  
 His dark locks tinged with gray; you'd hardly think it,  
 But he's a moral dandy, *dilettante*  
 (As your Italians say), whose fickle taste  
 Leads him, like some fastidious bee, from flower  
 To flower of social pastime! A fair girl,  
 Pretty and piquante, fills his heart to-day;  
 On airy wings of sentiment he hovers  
 Lovingly round her, feeds the beauteous creature  
 On honeyed nothings in a tone so sweet,  
 They seem the genuine fruit of a strong soul  
 Nurtured by passion, and true adoration;  
 Then on the morrow when he meets once more  
 "That Cynthia of the minute," a cold crust  
 Of iciest form and etiquette o'erspreads  
 His words, look, bearing; the whole man is changed —  
 As if a 'Tropic landscape, bright with sunlight,  
 Had grown to frozen hardness in an hour: —  
 A demon, fickle, trifling, and capricious  
 O'errules his spirit always! with men likewise,  
 It is his pride to play the same vile game!  
 Why, sir, your patience would be taxed to count

His dupes within the year! he'll take a youth,  
 Bright-minded, trusting, whom perchance he meets  
 In casual fashion on the public square,  
 Caress, solicit, flatter him — at length  
 Bear the poor fool, elate and jubilant,  
 To banquet at his own well-ordered board,  
 Ply him with curious questions, draw him out  
 To make display of all his raciest wit,  
 And when, like a squeezed orange, all his sap's  
 Exhausted, — faith! Sir Dainty down the wind  
 Whistles his victim with a cool assurance,  
 Which is the calm sublime of impudence!  
 In fine, the man's a worn-out Epicurean,  
 A ceaseless hunter after new sensations,  
 To whom the world's a storehouse crammed with hearts  
 And minds for his amusement! as for hearts,  
 He'll toss 'em up, as jugglers toss their balls,  
 Proud of his sleight of hand, his impish cunning,  
 His matchless turns of quick dexterity!  
 And if the baubles break, he's sore amazed  
 That aught should be so brittle! yet thanks God  
 The earth is full of these same delicate toys;  
 And so he hurls the shattered plaything by,  
 To re-assume his honest, juggling tricks,  
 And charm his weary leisure-time with lies;  
 A silken, soft, fair-spoken, dangerous knave.

MARCUS.

Some day he'll find his match!

ALTON.

Ay! you may swear to that;  
 Some woman versed in every social art,

Some rare, majestic creature, whose rich beauty  
 Will set his amorous senses in a blaze;  
 Slowly around him she will draw the net  
 Of fascinations, multiform and strange;  
 Enchant his fancy with her regal wit,  
 His taste with every charm of female guile,  
 Inflame him with voluptuous blandishments,  
 By turns, sooth, flatter, madden, vow she loves  
 At one delicious moment, then the next  
 As warmly swear she loathes him! by a spell  
 Invisible, but potent as the sun,  
 She'll lead him, fawning, quivering to her feet,  
 And at the last, O! consummation just!  
 When on the very brink of blest fruition,  
 He hovers, arms outstretched, and soul aglow,  
 She'll freeze to sudden marble, wave him off  
 With such calm haughtiness of queenly scorn,  
 Imperious, crushing, fatal, that, by heaven,  
 I should not wonder if the terrible sting  
 Of disappointment and deceived desires,  
 Of baffled passion, wounded self-conceit,  
 And hope so swiftly murdered by despair,  
 Struck to the core of being, and this man  
 Falsar than hell to others, perished wholly,  
 By his own pestilent trickery done to death!

—◆—  
 A CHARACTER.

A. HE is a man whose complex character  
 Few can decipher rightly; but for me  
 I have found the key at last!

**B.** What make you of it ?

**A.** As mournful and as blurred a page,  
perchance,

As ever pained the seeker after truth :

Listen ! this man, when like a factory  
slave

I toiled for some bald pittance in the  
city,

Came to me (unsolicited, remember),

With words of cheer, and honeyed cour-  
tesies ;

His tone was soft as *Milcet* airs of May ;

His heart the very fount of sympathy !

“ What,” said he, “ shall you grind your  
genius here,

Down to the last faint edge ; waste your  
rich thoughts ”

(Mark you the subtle flattery of this  
language),

“ Upon a thankless, ignorant, brutal  
fool,

Who plays the patron with the grace of  
Bottom,

His ass’s head from out your flowering  
fancies

Grinning in dull and idiot self-applauses ;

By every gentle muse this shall not be ! ”

Straightway, with hand caressing as a  
woman’s,

He led me from hard desk and stifling  
air,

Forth to his bowery home amid the hills,  
There fed me, sir, on kindness, day by  
day,

Until this starved and tortured spirit  
grew

Healthy and hale again ! No wish had I,  
He did not hasten blithely to forestall !

He called me “ brother,” drew from shy  
reserves

Of knowledge, feeling, poesy, full stores  
Of all my wealth—by heart or brain

amassed—

Ha ! by Apollo ! what rare times were  
those

We spent in ‘rapt communion with the  
barbs

Each worshipped, and what jovial laugh-  
ter-shook

The flying night-winds, when our graver  
books

Were cast aside, and he an artful mimic,  
A famed *raconteur*, many a humorous  
scene

Enacted with such raciness of wit

Despair itself had checked its tears—to  
smile ;

In brief, by every wile a man could  
use

To knit his fellow’s heart-strings to his  
own,

He made me love him ! other friends  
were gone

Forlornly mouldering in far churchyard  
shades

And therefore—undivided, ardent, sure,  
Affection centred all its warmth on  
him !

And now, when wholly his, I would have  
dared

For him all danger (you will scarce be-  
lieve it),

But suddenly, as sometimes on calm  
seas,

The watcher from some lonely headland  
views

A gallant bark sink swiftly in the deep,  
Dissolving like a vision—thus his friend-  
ship,

Its glittering flags of promise flaunting  
still

The tranquil sunlight, sunk before mine  
eyes

And left me gazing like a man distraught  
Across the mocking solitude !

**B.** What more ?

**A.** What more ? Why, truly, sir, the  
tale is done.

’Twas a sharp close, I grant you, to a  
dream

Which rose so fairly ; yet there’s comfort  
in’t !

**B.** Comfort !

**A.** Ay, ay ! rare comfort in the thought  
That tho’ my years should reach the  
utmost verge

Of mortal life, I shall not dream again !

But pshaw! push on the bottle, 'tis the  
last  
Of a full bin that constant friend of  
mine,  
That loyal, noble, pure Samaritan,  
Gave me, with vows of everduring love,  
Three months ago at Christmas! Stay,  
a toast:  
"Fair health, long life, immortal honor  
crown  
The man who's constant only to—him-  
self!"

—●—  
*MORALS OF DESPERATION.*

THE man who's wholly ruined, sir, fears  
nothing;  
How can he when all's lost to him al-  
ready?  
There is a desperate gayety which comes  
To buoy one up in such a strait as this;  
Under whose spell, it is a sort of witch-  
craft,  
Men lose all sense of wrong, or rather  
take  
Wrong for their right, rejoicing even in  
crime.  
Faith, now, I'd hardly answer for my-  
self,  
If in some garden solitude, like this, sir,  
At the hour of midnight (hark! the deep  
church tower  
Is tolling twelve), haply I chanced to  
meet  
A pompous millionaire, a man who stag-  
gers  
Under his golden burden, like a ship  
Reeling 'neath too much canvass; I  
should ease  
My laboring comrade, thus and thus, of  
all  
His glittering superfluities; this ring  
Is a brave diamond, and will serve me  
bravely:  
And ha! by Pluto! what a massive chain  
Meanders like a miniature Pactolus  
Across your worship's vest; my lord, no  
wonder

You grow asthmatic with a weight like  
that  
Pressed on your gasping lungs; I'll free  
you from it;  
And blessed saints! but here's a fair-knit  
purse,  
And fairly filled, too! Shame it were in  
sooth  
To keep this gift of your sweet para-  
mour,  
Therefore, behold me! I pour out this  
coin;  
O Jesu! what rich music! but the purse  
Duly return you! haste, your worship,  
haste,  
Or else these itching palms will find fresh  
work  
About your silken doublet, and bright  
hose,  
Or those trussed points you needs must  
clasp with jewels;  
Ay, haste, and take you comfort in the  
text  
Which the wise Messer Salvatore Duomo  
Dins in our ears each sacred Sabbath  
morning,  
That "blessed, three times blessed, are  
the poor!"

—●—  
*THE CONDEMNED.*

As in those lands of mighty mountain  
heights,  
The streams, by sudden tempests over-  
charged,  
Sweep down the slopes, bearing swift  
ruin with them,  
So I and all my fortunes were engulf'd  
In sudden, swift, complete destruction:  
The morning found me happy, rich,  
contented,  
But ere the sunset that black ruin  
came,  
And stared me in the face.  
  
Sir, I had reach'd  
A stage of middle life, when chains of  
habit

Cannot be broken, save by giant  
wrenches,  
When to be rudely hurled from life-long  
grooves  
Of thought and progress, leaves the  
staunchest mind

Broken, amazed, despondent. What  
had I,  
A scholar, recluse, dreamer, thou may'st  
say,  
In common with the work-day world of  
men?



"Almighty Nature, the first law of God,  
Perforce I followed."

Yet, goaded on by fierce necessity,  
I sought work in the crowded haunts of  
cities,  
Thinking to draw on knowledge as a  
bank,  
Exhaustless, opulent, whereby all needs,  
Not born of random, loose extrava-  
gance,

Would be assuredly answered. Ah!  
poor fool:  
Too soon experience clove the shining  
mist  
Of hopeful fantasy, and like a wind,  
Sullen at first and slow, but raised ere  
long  
To tempest-madness, rent the veil away



O'er which a steel-blue melancholy  
 heaven  
 Glared on me, like a mocking eye in  
 death:  
 Then came by turn mistrust, despon-  
 dence, dread,  
 And last, despair, with frenzy; the brute  
 instincts,  
 That sleep like tigers, jungled, in the  
 blood,  
 With hale or pampered bodies, at the  
 sting  
 Of loathsome famine, woke, and raged  
 and tore,  
 Till Conscience, whose fair seat is in the  
 soul,  
 Till Reason, whose deep life is in the  
 brain,  
 Lay silent, murdered. A mere animal  
 thing —  
 Hyena, tiger, wolf — whate'er thou  
 wilt —  
 I seized my prey and rent it. What to  
 me  
 The complex figments of your juggling  
 laws?  
 Nature with countless clamorous tongues  
 cried out,  
 "Thou hungerest, diest; snatch thy food  
 from fate,  
 Though 'twixt thee and the life-sustain-  
 ing bread  
 A hundred sleek, smooth, sneering ty-  
 rants stand  
 Laughing to scorn thine untold agonies!"  
 Almighty Nature, the first law of God,  
 Perforce I followed; the false codes of  
 man  
 Perforce I broke. And so, for this, for  
*this*,  
 Man's law that fain would run a tilt at  
 God,  
 Its puny weapon shivering like a reed,  
 'Gainst the great bosses of Jehovah's  
 buckler,  
 Appoints me death. Well, well, I fear  
 not death,  
 Trusting that death, perchance, is but a  
 night

Shorn of all morrow, a long, dreamless  
 slumber,  
 O'er which the ages, hoar and solemn  
 nurses,  
 Chant their majestic lullabies, that hold  
 Spells of oblivion; either thus, or I,  
 Whose life-sun rose in shadow, sets in  
 blood,  
 Shall find a nobler being in some star  
 Beyond the silvery Pleiads.

Friend, thy hand;  
 Alone of all earth's creatures do I love  
 thee:  
 Thee, and the little soft-eyed, pensive  
 child,  
 Thy fairy daughter. Strange! but when  
 I drink  
 Light from the founts of her large, seri-  
 ous eyes,  
 I seem to near a trembling, spiritual  
 joy,  
 To thrill upon the utmost verge and  
 brink  
 Of mystic revelations. Prithee, there-  
 fore,  
 Bring the fair child once more; I yearn  
 to carry  
 The dream of her sweet, pitiful, angel's  
 face,  
 To cheer the realm of shadows. Will  
 she come?

—◆—  
 ANTIPATHIES.

LOVE is no product of the obedient will,  
 It hath its root in those deep sympa-  
 thies,  
 Mere ties of blood are powerless to con-  
 trol;  
 I love thee not because around thy heart  
 An Arctic nature hath built up the ice  
 Of thawless winter: vain it is to strive  
 Against the law of just antipathies:  
 The Tropic sunlight burns not at the  
 Poles,  
 Nor blooms the lustrous foliage of the  
 East

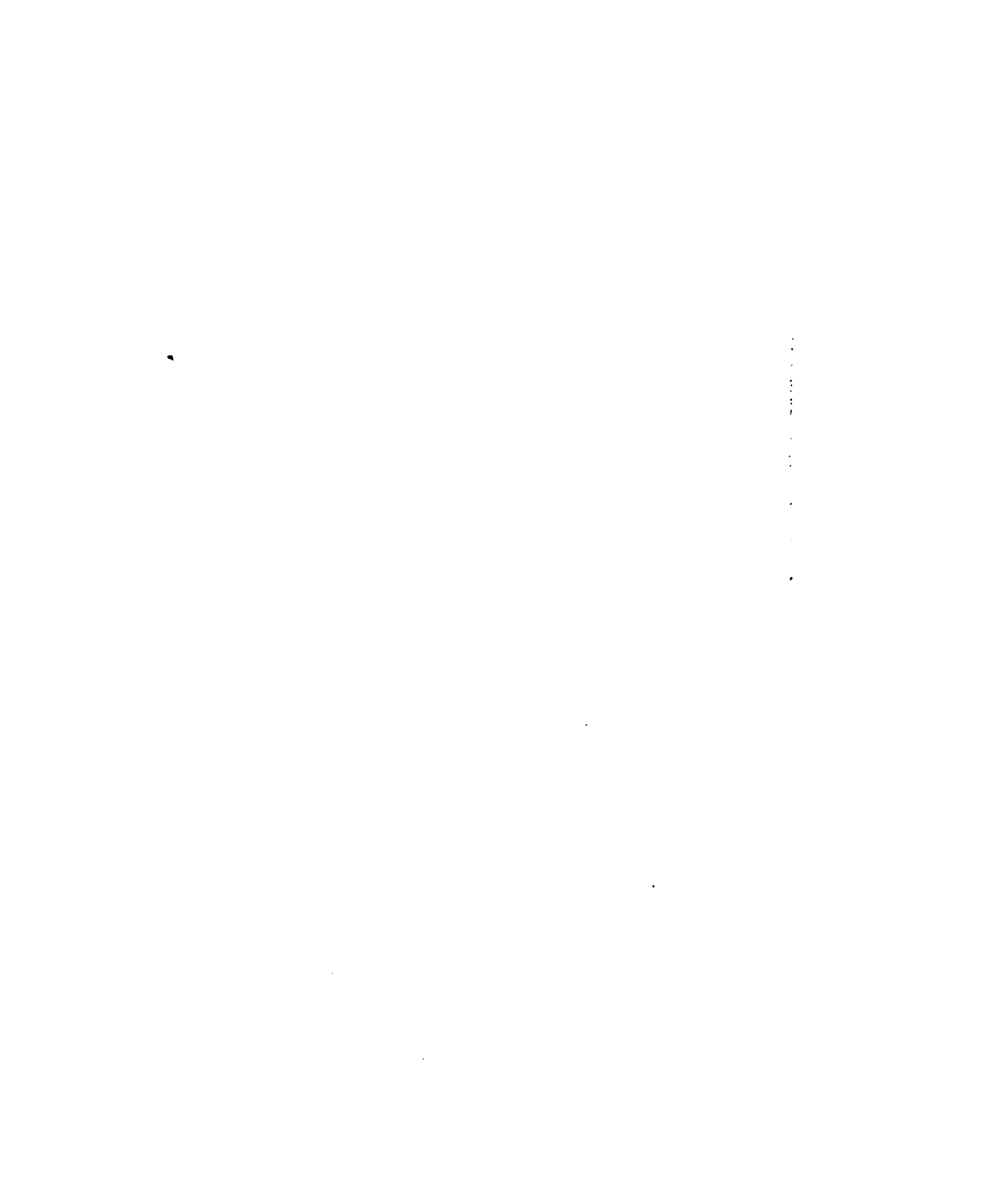
Among the rocky, storm-bound Hebrides;  
 To all my gods thou art antipodal,  
 Therefore, again, good sir! I love thee  
 not.



MISCONSTRUCTION.

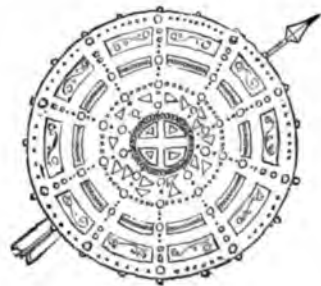
How man misjudges man! the outward  
 seeming,  
 Gesture, or glance, or utterance that may  
 jar

Against some petty, pampered, poor conceit,  
 Unworthy, undefined, is straightway  
 made  
 To prove a vast obliquity of soul,  
 And shallow disputants, with ponderous  
 show  
 Of judgment that provokes the wise to  
 scorn,  
 Exhort the virtuous by the foul abuse  
 Which damns them to the level of their  
 speech.



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**POEMS OF THE WAR.**



# POEMS OF THE WAR

## 1861-1865.

These poems are republished with no ill-feeling, nor with the desire to revive old issues;  
but only as a record and a sacred duty:—

*"Fidelis ad urnam!"*

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### MY MOTHER-LAND.

*"Animis Opibusque Parati."*

My Mother-land! thou wert the first to  
fling  
Thy virgin flag of freedom to the breeze,  
The first to front along thy neighboring  
seas.  
The imperious foeman's power;  
But long before that hour,  
While yet, in false and vain imagining,  
Thy sister nations would not own their  
foe,  
And turned to jest thy warnings, though  
the low,  
Portentous mutterings, that precede the  
throe  
Of earthquakes, burdened all the omin-  
ous air;  
While yet they paused in scorn,  
Of fatal madness born,  
Thou, oh, my mother! like a priestess  
bless'd  
With wondrous vision of the things to  
come,  
Thou couldst not calmly rest  
Secure and dumb—  
But from thy borders, with the sounds of  
drum  
And trumpet rose the warrior-call,—  
(A voice to thrill, to startle, to appall!)—  
*"Prepare! the time grows ripe to meet  
our doom!"*

Thy careless sisters frowned, or mocking  
said:

*"We see no threatening tempest over-  
head,  
Only a few pale clouds, the west wind's  
breath  
Will sweep away, or melt in watery  
death."*

*"Prepare! the time grows ripe to meet  
our doom!"*

Alas! it was not till the thunder-boom  
Of shell and cannon shocked the vernal  
day,  
Which shone o'er Charleston Bay,\*  
That startled, roused, the last scale fallen  
away  
From blinded eyes, our South, erect and  
proud,  
Fronted the issue, and, though lulled too  
long,  
Felt her great spirit nerved, her patriot  
valor strong.

. . . . .

Death! What of death?—  
Can he who once drew honorable breath  
In liberty's pure sphere,  
Foster a sensual fear,  
When death and slavery meet him face  
to face,

---

\* Fort Sumter, March, 1861.

Saying: "Choose thou between us; here,  
the grace  
Which follows patriot martyrdom, and  
there,  
Black degradation, haunted by despair."

The very thought brings blushes to the  
cheek!  
I hear all 'round about me murmurs  
run,  
Hot murmurs, but soon merging into  
one  
Soul-stirring utterance — hark! the peo-  
ple speak:

"Our course is righteous, and our aims  
are just!

Behold, we seek

Not merely to preserve for noble wives  
The virtuous pride of unpolluted lives,  
To shield our daughters from the servile  
hand,

And leave our sons their heirloom of  
command,

In generous perpetuity of trust;

Not only to defend those ancient laws,  
Which Saxon sturdiness and Norman  
fire

Welded forevermore with freedom's  
cause,

And handed scathless down from sire to  
sire —

Nor yet our grand religion, and our  
Christ,

Unsoiled by secular hates, or sordid  
harms,

(Though these had sure sufficed  
To urge the feeblest Sybarite to arms) —  
But more than all, because embracing  
all,

Ensuring all, self-government, the  
boon

Our patriot statesmen strove to win and  
keep,

From prescient Pinckney and the wise  
Calhoun

To him, that gallant knight,

The youngest champion in the Senate  
hall,

Who, led and guarded by a luminous  
fate,  
His armor, Courage, and his war-horse,  
Right,  
Dared through the lists of eloquence to  
sweep  
Against the proud Bois Guilbert of de-  
bate!\*

"There's not a tone from out the teem-  
ing past,

Uplifted once in such a cause as ours,  
Which does not smite our souls  
In long reverberating thunder-rolls,  
From the far mountain-steeps of ancient  
story,

Above the shouting, furious Persian  
mass,

Millions arrayed in pomp of Orient  
powers,

Rings the wild war-cry of Leonidas  
Pent in his rugged fortress of the rock;

And o'er the murmurous seas,  
Compact of hero-faith and patriot bliss  
(For conquest crowns the Athenian's  
hope at last),

Come the clear accents of Miltiades,  
Mingled with cheers that drown the  
battle-shock

Beside the wave-washed strand of Sala-  
mis.

"Where'er on earth the self-devoted  
heart

Hath been by worthy deeds exalted thus,  
We look for proud exemplars; yet for  
us

It is enough to know  
Our fathers left us freemen; let us show  
The will to hold our lofty heritage,  
The patient strength to act our father's  
part.

"Yea! though our children's blood  
Rain 'round us in a crimson-swelling  
flood,

\* *Vide* the Senatorial debate on "Foot's  
Resolution," in 1832.

Why pause or falter? — that red tide  
shall bear  
The ark that holds our shrined liberty,  
Nearer, and yet more near  
Some height of promise o'er the ensan-  
guined sea.

“ At last, the conflict done,  
The fadeless meed of final victory won,  
Behold! emerging from the rifted dark  
Athwart a shining summit high in  
heaven,  
That delegated Ark!  
No more to be by vengeful tempests  
driven,  
But poised upon the sacred mount,  
whereat  
The congregated nations gladly gaze,  
Struck by the quiet splendor of the  
rays  
That circle freedom's blood-bought Ara-  
rat!”

Thus spake the people's wisdom; unto  
me  
Its voice hath come, a passionate augury!  
Methinks the very aspect of the world  
Changed to the mystic music of its  
hope.  
For, lo! about the deepening heavenly  
cope  
The stormy cloudland banners all are  
furled,  
And softly borne above  
Are brooding pinions of invisible love,  
Distilling balm of rest and tender  
thought  
From fairy realms, by fairy witchery  
wrought:  
O'er the hushed ocean steal ethereal  
gleams  
Divine as light that haunts an angel's  
dreams:  
And universal nature, wheresoever  
My vision strays — o'er sky, and sea, and  
river —  
Sleeps, like a happy child,  
In slumber undefiled,  
A premonition of sublimer days,

When war and warlike lays  
At length shall cease,  
Before a grand Apocalypse of Peace,  
Vouchsafed in mercy to all human  
kind —  
A prelude and a prophecy combined!



## ODE.

[In honor of the bravery and sacrifices of the  
soldiers of the South.]

With bayonets slanted in the glittering  
light,  
With solemn roll of drums,  
With star-lit banners rustling wings of  
might,  
The knightly concourse comes!  
The flower and fruit of all the tropic  
lands,  
The unsheathed brightness of their stain-  
less brands  
Blazing in courtly hands,  
One glorious soul within those thousand  
eyes,  
One aim, one hope, one impulse from  
the skies,  
While silent, awed and dumb,  
A nation waits the end in dread sur-  
mise,  
They come! they come!

The summer flaunts her vivid leaves  
above  
The unwonted scene,  
The summer heavens embrace with  
smiles of love  
The hill-slopes green;  
Far in the uppermost realms of silent  
air  
Peace sits enthroned and happy, but on  
earth  
The cymbals clash, and the shrill trum-  
pets blare,  
And Death, like some grim mower on  
the plain,  
Topped by the ripened grain,  
Whets his keen scythe, and shakes it  
fearfully!



Our serried lines march sternly to the  
front,  
Where decked as if they rose to celebrate  
A joyous festal morn,  
In glistening pomp and splendid bla-  
zonly,  
Slow moving as in scorn  
Of those weak bands that guard the pass  
below,  
Come gorgeous, flushed and proud, the  
cohorts of the foe!

They wheel! deploy, are stationed, down  
the cleft

Of the long gorge their signal thun-  
ders run!

A sullen answer echoes from our left  
And the great fight's begun!  
O! who shall picture the immortal  
fray?

Our Southern host that day  
Breasted the onset of the invading sea  
With wills of adamant; but stern-  
weighted strength,  
Like waves by some infernal alchemy  
Hardened, transformed to solid metal,  
burning  
At white heat as they struck, and aye  
returning

Hotter and more resistless than before  
(All flecked atop with foam of human  
gore),

Pierced here and there our crumbling  
ranks at length,

Which as a mountain shore,  
Rock-ribbed and iron founded, still had  
stood,

And outward hurled  
In bloody sprayings, that tremendous  
flood

Which, with wild charge and furious  
brunt on brunt.

Had dashed against us like a fiery world!

Unceasing still poured on the fateful  
tide,

And plumèd victory ever seemed to ride  
On the red billows of the northland war!  
Our glory and pride

Had fallen,—fallen in the terrible  
van,—

Like wine the life-streams ran;  
“Back! back!” cried one (it was the  
voice of Bee,

Lifted in wrath and bitter agony),  
“We're driven backward!” unto whom  
there came

An answer, like the rush of steady flame,  
’Twi’xt ribs of iron, “We will give them  
yet

The bayonet!

The sharp edge of the Southern bayo-  
net!”

At which the other's face flushed up,  
and caught

Light like a warrior-angel's, and he  
sprang,

To the front rank, while swift as pas-  
sionate thought

Leaped forth his sword, and this high  
summons rang:

“See! see! where fixed and grand,  
Like a stone wall the braves of Jackson  
stand!

Forward!” and on he rushed with  
quivering breath,

On to his Spartan death!

Unceasing still poured down the fateful  
tide,

And plumèd victory ever seemed to ride  
O'er the red billows of the northland  
war!

When faint and far.

Far on our left there rose a sound that  
thrilled

All souls, and even the battle's thunder-  
ous pulse

(Or so we deemed) for briefest space  
was stilled;

A sound, low hissing as a meteor-star,  
But gathering depth of volume, till it  
burst

In one great flamelike cheer,  
That seemed to rend and lift the cloud  
accurst.

The poisonous-clinging cloud  
That wrapped us in its shroud,

While wounded men leaped on their feet  
to hear,  
And dying men upraised their eyes to  
see  
How on the conflict's lowering canopy,  
Dawned the first rainbow hues of vic-  
tory!

Have you watched the condor leap  
From his proud Andean rock,  
And with hurtling pinions sweep  
On the valley-pasturing flock?  
Have you watched an eygre vast  
On the rude September blast  
Roll adown with curvèd crest  
O'er the low sands of the West?  
O! thus and thus they came  
(Four thousand men and more),  
Hearts, faces, — all aflame,  
And the grandeur of their wrath  
Whirled the tyrant from their path  
As the frightened rack is driven  
By the unleashed winds in heaven;  
Then, maddened, tossed about  
In a reckless, hopeless rout,  
The Northern army fled  
O'er their dying and their dead,  
And the Southern steel flashed out,  
And their vengeful points were red  
With the hot heart's tide that flowed  
Where they sabred as they rode!  
And the news sped on apace  
(Where the Rulers, in their place,  
Sat jubilant, one and all),  
Till a shadow seemed to fall  
Round their joyance like a pall,  
And the inmost senate-hall  
Pealed an echo of disgrace!  
At the set of July's sun  
They stood quivering and undone,  
For the eagle standards waned and the  
Southern "stars" had won!

Thus loomed serene and large  
Upon that desperate contest's lurid  
marge

Our orb of destiny; millions of hearts  
Throb with bold exultation,  
Till there starts

From mountain fastness, and from wav-  
ing plain,  
From wooded swamp and mist-encircled  
main,

From hamlet, city, field,  
And the rich midland weald,  
The spirit of the antique hero time!  
O! 'twas a sight sublime  
To watch the upheaval of the popular  
soul,  
The stormy gathering, — the majestic roll  
Upward of its wild forces, by the awe  
Of Right and Justice steadied into law!  
Faith lent our cause its heavenly conse-  
cration!

Hope its omnipotent might!  
And Fame stood ready, with her flowers  
of light,  
To crown alike the living and the dead,  
While in the broadening firmament o'er-  
head

We seemed to read the fiat of our fate,  
"Ye are baptized, — a Nation!  
Amongst the freest, free, — amongst the  
mightiest, great!"  
An ominous hush! and then the scat-  
tered clouds

In the dark northern heaven  
(Clouds of a deadlier strife),  
Urged by the poison wind  
Of rage and rapine, sullenly com-  
bined,

Charged with the bolts of ruin! what  
were shrouds,  
Crimsoned with gore? the widowed  
spirit riven?

The desecration of God's gift of life,  
To that one thought (three fiery strands  
uniting,

Hot from a Hadæan loom),  
"Conquest!" "Revenge!" Suprema-  
cy?" The blighting  
Of untold promises, the grief, the gloom,  
The desolate madness and the anguish  
blind,

All spreading on and on  
From murdered sire to subjugated son,  
Were less than nothing to the arrogant  
pride

Which treaties, compacts, honor, laws  
defied,  
And aimed above the wrecks of temple  
and tower  
To rear the symbols of its merciless  
power!

Four deadly years we fought,  
Ringed by a girdle of unfaltering fire,  
That coiled and hissed in lessening cir-  
cles nigher.

Blood dyed the Southern wave;  
From ocean border to calm inland river,  
There was no pause, no peace, no respite  
ever.

Blood of our bravest brave  
Drenched in a scarlet rain the western  
lea,  
Swelled the hoarse waters of the Tennes-  
see,

Incarnadined the gulfs, the lakes, the  
rills,  
And from a hundred hills  
Steamed in a mist of slaughter to the  
skies,  
Shutting all hope of heaven from mortal  
eyes.

The Beaufort blooms were withered on  
the stem;

The fair gulf city in a single night  
Lost her imperial diadem;

And wheresoe'er men's troubled vision  
sought,

They viewed MIGHT towering o'er the  
humbled crest of RIGHT!

But for a time, but for a time, O  
God!

The innate forces of our knightly blood  
Rallied, and by the mount, the fen, the  
flood,

Upraised the tottering standards of  
our race.

O grand Virginia! though thy glittering  
glaive

Lies sullied, shattered in a ruthless  
grave,

How it flashed once! They dug their  
trenches deep

(The implacable foe), they ranged their  
lines of wrath;

But watchful ever on the imminent  
path

Thy steel-clad genius stood;

North, South, East, West, — they strove  
to pierce thy shield;

*Thou would'st not yield!*

Until, — unconquered, yea, unconquered  
still,

Nature's weakened forces answered not  
thy will,

And gored with wound on wound,

Thy fainting limbs and forehead sought  
the ground;

And with thee the young nation fell, a  
pall

Solemn and rayless, covering one and  
all!

God's ways are marvellous; here we  
stand to-day

Discrowned, and shorn, in wildest dis-  
array,

The mock of earth! yet never shone the  
sun

On sterner deeds, or nobler victories  
won.

Not in the field alone; ah, come with  
me

To the dim bivouac by the winter's sea;

Mark the fair sons of courtly mothers  
crouch

O'er flickering fires; but gallant still, and  
gay

As on some bright parade; or mark the  
couch

In reeking hospitals, whereon is laid

The latest scion of a line perchance,

Whose veins were royal; close your  
blurred romance,

Blurred by the dropping of a maudlin  
tear,

And watch the manhood here:

That firm but delicate countenance,

Distorted sometimes by an awful pang,

Born in meek patience; when the trum-  
pets rang

“To horse!” but yester-morn, that ar-  
dent boy

Sprung to his charger, thrilled with hope  
and joy  
To the very finger-tips, and now he lies,  
The shadows deepening in those falcon  
eyes,

But calm and undismayed,  
As if the death that chills him, brow and  
breast,

Were some fond bride who whispered,  
"Let us rest!"

Enough! 'tis over! the last gleam of hope  
Hath melted from our mournful horo-  
scope,

Of all, of all bereft,

Only to us are left

Our buried heroes and their matchless  
deeds;

These cannot pass; they hold the vital  
seeds

Which in some far, untracked, un-  
visioned hour

May burst to vivid bud and glorious  
flower.

Meanwhile, upon the nation's broken  
heart

Her martyrs sleep. O! dearer far to her,  
Than if each son, a wreathed conqueror,  
Rode in triumphant state

The loftiest crest of fate;

O! dearer far, because outcast and low,  
She yearns above them in her awful woe.  
One spring its tender blooms

Hath lavished richly by those hallowed  
tombs;

One summer its imperial largess spread  
Along our heroes' bed;

One autumn wailing with funereal blast,  
The withered leaves and pallid dust  
amassed

All round about them, till bleak winter  
now

Hangs hoar-frost on the grasses, and the  
bough

In dreary woodlands seems to thrill and  
start,

Thrill to the anguish of the wind that  
raves

Across those lonely desolated graves!

CHARLESTON.

CALMLY beside her tropic strand.

An empress, brave and loyal,  
I see the watchful city stand,

With aspect sternly royal;

She knows her mortal foe draws near,  
Armored by subtlest science,

Yet deep, majestic, and clear,  
Rings out her grand defiance.

Oh, glorious is thy noble face,

Lit up by proud emotion,

And unsurpassed thy stately grace,

Our warrior Queen of Ocean!

First from thy lips the summons came,  
Which roused our South to action,

And, with the quenchless force of  
flame,

Consumed the demon, Faction;

First, like a rush of sovereign wind,

That rends dull waves asunder,

Thy prescient warning struck the blind,

And woke the deaf with thunder:

They saw, with swiftly kindling eyes,  
The shameful doom before them.

And heard, borne wild from Northern  
skies,

The death-gale hurtling o'er them:

Wilt thou, whose virgin banner rose,

A morning star of splendor.

Quail when the war-tornado blows,

And crouch in base surrender?

Wilt thou, upon whose loving breast

Our noblest chiefs are sleeping,

Yield thy dead patriots' place of rest

To scornful alien keeping?

No! while a life-pulse throbs for fame,

Thy sons will gather round thee,

Welcome the shot, the steel, the flame,

If honor's hand hath crowned thee.

Then fold about thy beauteous form

The imperial robe thou wearest,

And front with regal port the storm

Thy foe would dream thou fearest:

If strength, and will, and courage fall

To cope with ruthless numbers,

And thou must bend, despairing, pale,  
Where thy last hero slumbers,  
Lift the red torch, and light the fire  
Amid those corpses gory,  
And on thy self-made funeral pyre,  
Pass from the world to glory.

◆

STUART.

A CUP of your potent "mountain dew,"  
By the camp-fire's ruddy light;  
Let us drink to a spirit as leal and true  
As ever drew blade in fight,  
And dashed on the foeman's lines of  
steel,  
For God and his people's right.

By heaven! it seems that his very name  
Embodies a thought of fire;  
It strikes on the ear with a sense of flame,  
And the life-blood boundeth higher,  
While the pulses leap and the brain ex-  
pands,  
In the glow of a grand desire.

Hark! in the day-dawn's misty gray,  
Our bugles are ringing loud,  
And hot for the joy of a coming fray,  
Our souls wax fierce and proud,  
As we list for the word that shall launch  
us forth,  
Like bolts from the mountain-cloud.

We list for the word, and it comes at  
length,  
In a strain so mighty and clear,  
That we rise to the sound with an added  
strength,  
And our hearts are glad to hear,  
And a stir, like the breath of the boding  
storm  
Thrills through us, from van to rear.

Then, with the rush of the whirlwind  
freed,  
We rush, by a secret way,  
And merry on sabre, and helmet, and  
steed,

Do the autumn sunbeams play,  
And the devil must sharpen his keenest  
wits,  
To rescue "his own" to-day.

Ho, ye who dwell in the fertile vales  
Of the pleasant land of Penn,  
Who feast on the fat of her fruitful  
dales,  
How little ye dream or ken  
That the southern Murat has bared his  
brand,  
That the Stuart rides again.

"Close up, close up! we have travelled  
long,  
But a jovial night's in store,  
A night of wassail, and wit, and song,  
In yon cosy town before.  
Quick, sergeant! spur to the front in  
haste,  
And knock at the mayor's door."

Behold, he comes with a ghost-like  
grace,  
And his knee-joints out of tune;  
And the cold, cold sweat runs down his  
face,  
I' the light of the autumn moon,  
While his husky voice, like an ancient  
crone's,  
Dies in a hollow croon.

He cannot speak; but his buxom dame,  
With her trembling daughters nigh,  
Shrieks out, "Oh, honor their virgin  
fame,  
Pass the poor maidens by."  
(Whereon, with a grievous heave and  
sob,  
She paused in her speech — to cry.)

"Rise up! we leave to the churlish brood  
Our vengeance hath sought ere now,  
The fame which springs from the ruth-  
less mood  
That crimson a woman's brow;  
For sons are we of a kindly race,  
And bound by a knightly vow.

“Rise up! we war with the strong alone;  
For where was the caitiff found.  
To sport with an outraged woman’s  
moan,  
Where the southern trumpets sound?  
“Enough! while I speak of the past, my  
lad,

There’s coming — (hush! lean thee  
near!) —  
There’s coming a raid that shall drive  
them mad,  
And cover their land with fear;  
And you and I, by the blessing of  
God,  
Ay, you and I shall be there.”



“They arose with the sun, and caught life  
from his light.”

BEYOND THE POTOMAC.

THEY slept on the field which their valor  
had won,  
But arose with the first early blush of  
the sun,  
For they knew that a great deed re-  
mained to be done,  
When they passed o'er the river.

They arose with the sun, and caught life  
from his light,  
Those giants of courage, those Anaks in  
fight,  
And they laughed out aloud in the joy  
of their might,  
Marching swift for the river.

On, on! like the rushing of storms  
through the hills;  
On, on! with a tramp that is firm as  
their wills;  
And the one heart of thousands grows  
buoyant, and thrills,  
At the thought of the river.

Oh, the sheen of their swords! the fierce  
gleam of their eyes!  
It seemed as on earth a new sunlight  
would rise,  
And, king-like, flash up to the sun in  
the skies,  
O'er their path to the river.

But their banners, shot-scarred, and all  
darkened with gore,  
On a strong wind of morning streamed  
wildly before,  
Like wings of death-angels swept fast to  
the shore,  
The green shore of the river.

As they march, from the hillside, the  
hamlet, the stream,  
Gaunt throngs whom the foemen had  
manacled, teem,  
Like men just aroused from some ter-  
rible dream,  
To cross sternly the river.

They behold the broad banners, blood-  
darkened, yet fair,  
And a moment dissolves the last spell  
of despair,  
While a peal, as of victory, swells on the  
air,  
Rolling out to the river.

And that cry, with a thousand strange  
echoings, spread,  
Till the ashes of heroes were thrilled in  
their bed,  
And the deep voice of passion surged up  
from the dead,  
"Ay, press on to the river!"

On, on! like the rushing of storms  
through the hills,  
On, on! with a tramp that is firm as  
their wills;  
And the one heart of thousands grows  
buoyant and thrills,  
As they pause by the river.

Then the wan face of Maryland, hag-  
gard and worn,  
At this sight lost the touch of its aspect  
forlorn,  
And she turned on the foemen, full-  
statured in scorn,  
Pointing stern to the river.

And Potomac flowed calmly, scarce  
heaving her breast,  
With her low-lying billows all bright in  
the west,  
For a charm as from God lulled the  
waters to rest  
Of the fair rolling river.

Passed! passed! the glad thousands  
march safe through the tide;  
Hark, foeman, and hear the deep knell  
of your pride,  
Ringing weird-like and wild, pealing up  
from the side  
Of the calm-flowing river.

'Neath a blow swift and mighty the ty-  
rant may fall;  
Vain, vain! to his gods swells a desolate  
call;  
Hath his grave not been hollowed, and  
woven his pall,  
Since they passed o'er the river?

—◆—

*BEAUREGARD'S APPEAL.*

YEA! since the need is bitter,  
Take down those sacred bells,  
Whose music speaks of hallowed joys,  
And passionate farewells!

But ere ye fall dismantled,  
 Ring out, deep bells! once more:  
 And pour on the waves of the passing  
 wind  
 The symphonies of yore.

Let the latest born be welcomed  
 By pealings glad and long,  
 Let the latest dead in the churchyard  
 bed  
 Be laid with solemn song.

And the bells above them throbbing,  
 Should sound in mournful tone,  
 As if, in grief for a human death,  
 They prophesied their own.

Who says 'tis a desecration  
 To strip the temple towers,  
 And invest the metal of peaceful notes  
 With death-compelling powers?

A truce to cant and folly!  
 Our people's ALL at stake,  
 Shall we heed the cry of the shallow  
 fool,  
 Or pause for the bigot's sake?

Then crush the struggling sorrow!  
 Feed high your furnace fires,  
 And mould into deep-mouthed guns of  
 bronze,  
 The bells from a hundred spires.

Methinks no common vengeance,  
 No transient war eclipse,  
 Will follow the awful thunder-burst  
 From their adamant lips.

A cause like ours is holy,  
 And it useth holy things;  
 While over the storm of a righteous  
 strife,  
 May shine the angel's wings.

Where'er our duty leads us,  
 The grace of God is there,  
 And the lurid shrine of war may hold  
 The Eucharist of prayer.

## THE SUBSTITUTE.

[THE crime of McNeil, perpetrated in one of our Western States, has now met with the reprobation of Christendom. But at the time the following verses — cast, as the reader will perceive, in a partly dramatic mould — were composed, ten Confederates had been hastily executed by order of a Federal commander, on a charge afterwards proven to be false; and one of the unfortunate victims (a mere youth) voluntarily sacrificed his life to rescue his friend, a man advanced in years and with a large family.

In the poem this latter individual is represented as unaware of the youth's resolve until it has been executed.

Between the first and second parts of the piece, about *twenty-four hours* are supposed to have elapsed.]

## PART I.

[PLACE — *A Federal Prison — A Confederate chained, and a Visitor, his Friend.*]

“How say'st thou? die to-morrow?  
 Oh! my friend!

The bitter, bitter doom!  
 What hast thou done to tempt this  
 ghastly end —  
 This death of shame and gloom?”

“What done? Do tyrants wait for  
 guilty deeds,  
 To find or prove a crime —  
 They, who have cherished hatred's fiery  
 seeds:  
 Hot for the harvest-time?”

“A sneer! a smile! vague trifles light as  
 air —  
 Some foolish, false surmise —  
 Lead to the harrowing drama of despair  
 Wherein — the victim dies!

“And I shall perish! Comrade, heed  
 me not!  
 For thus my tears must start —  
 Not for the misery of my blasted lot,  
 But hers who holds my heart!

“And theirs, the flowers that wreath  
 my humble hearth  
 With roseate blush and bloom.



To-morrow eve, they stand alone on  
earth,

Beside their father's tomb!

"There's Blanche, my serious beauty,  
lithe and tall,

With pensive eyes and brow —

There's Kate, the tenderest darling of  
them all,

Whose kisses thrill me now!

"There's little Rose, the sunshine of our  
days —

A tricky, gladsome sprite —

How vividly come back her winsome  
ways,

Her laughers, and delight!

"And my brave boy — my Arthur! Did  
his arm

Second his will and brain,

I should not groan beneath this iron  
charm,

Clasping my chains in vain!

"Oh, Christ! and hath it come to this?  
Will none

Ward off the ghastly end?

And yet methinks I heard the voice of  
one

Who called the old man — Friend!

"May all the curses caught from deepest  
hell

Light on the blood-stained knave

Who laughs to hear the patriot's funeral  
knell,

Blaspheming o'er his grave!

"Away! Such dreams are madness!  
My pale lips

Had best besiege Heaven's ear.

But in the turmoil of my mind's eclipse,  
No thought, no wish is clear.

"Dear friend, forgive me! Sorrow,  
frenzy, ire —

My bosom's raging guests —

By turn have whelmed me in their floods  
of fire,

Fierce passions, swift unrests.

"And now, farewell! The sentry's  
warning hand,

Taps at my prison bars.

We part, but not forever! There's a  
land,

Comrade, beyond the stars!"

"Yea!" said the youth, and o'er his  
kindling face

A saint-like glory came,

As if some prescient Angel, breathing  
grace,

Had touched it into flame.

#### PART II.

[PLACE — *The same Prison.* PERSONS — *Confederate Prisoner, together with McNeil and the Jailer.*]

The hours sink slow to sunset! Sud-  
denly

Rose a deep, gathering hum;

And o'er the measured stride of soldiery  
Rolled out the muffled drum!

The prisoner started! crushed a stifling  
sigh,

Then rose erect and proud!

Scorn's lightning quivering in his stormy  
eye,

'Neath the brow's thunder-cloud!

And girding round his limbs and stal-  
wart breast

Each iron chain and ring,

He stood sublime, imperial, self-pos-  
sessed —

And haughty as a king!

The "dead march" wails without the  
prison gate

Up the calm evening sky;

And ruffian jestings, born of ruffian hate,  
Make loud, unmeet reply!

The hired bravoës, whose pitiless features  
pale

In front of armed men,

But whose *magnanimous* courage will  
not quail

Where none can strike again!

The "dead march" wails without the  
 prison wall,  
 Up the calm evening sky:  
 And timed to the dread dirge's rise and  
 fall,  
 Move the fierce murderers by!

They passed; and wondering at his doom  
 deferred,  
 The captive's lofty fire  
 Sank in his heart, by torturing memories  
 stirred  
 Of husband, and of sire!

But hark! the clash of bolt and opening  
 door!  
 The tramp of hostile heel!  
 When lo! upon the darkening prison  
 floor,  
 Glared the false hound — McNeil.

And next him, like a bandog scenting  
 blood,  
 Roused from his drunken ease,  
 The grimy, low-browed jailer glowering  
 stood,  
 Clanking his iron keys.

"Quick! jailer! strike yon rebel's fetters  
 off,  
 And let the old fool see  
 What ransom [with a low and bitter  
 scoff],  
 What ransom sets him free."

As the night traveller in a land of foes  
 The warning instinct feels,  
 That through the treacherous dimness  
 and repose  
 A shrouded horror steals.

So, at these veiled words, the captive's  
 soul  
 Shook with a solemn dread,  
 And ghostly voices, prophesying dole,  
 Moaned faintly overhead.

His limbs are freed! his swarthy, scowl-  
 ing guide  
 Leads through the silent town,

Where from dim casements, black with  
 wrathful pride,  
 Stern eyes gleam darkly down.

They halted where the woodland  
 showered around  
 Dank leaflets on the sod,  
 And all the air seemed vocal with the  
 sound  
 Of wild appeals to God.

Heaped, as if common carrion, in the  
 gloom,  
 Nine mangled corpses lay —  
 All speechless now — but with what  
 tongues of doom  
 Reserved for judgment day.

And near them, but apart, one youthful  
 form  
 Pressed a fair upland slope,  
 O'er whose white brow a sunbeam flicker-  
 ing warm,  
 Played like a heavenly hope.

There, with the same grand look which  
 yester-night  
 That face at parting wore,  
 The self-made martyr in the sunset light  
 Slept on his couch of gore.

The sunset waned; the wakening forest  
 waved,  
 Struck by the north wind's moan,  
 While he, whose life this matchless death  
 has saved  
 Knelt by the corse — alone.

◆

*BATTLE OF CHARLESTON HARBOR,*  
 APRIL 7, 1863.

Two hours, or more, beyond the prime  
 of a blithe April day,  
 The Northmen's mailed "Invincibles"  
 steamed up fair Charleston Bay;  
 They came in sullen file, and slow, low-  
 breasted on the wave,  
 Black as a midnight front of storm, and  
 silent as the grave.

A thousand warrior-hearts beat high as  
 these dread monsters drew  
 More closely to the game of death across  
 the breezeless blue,  
 And twice ten thousand hearts of those  
 who watch the scene afar,  
 Thrill in the awful hush that bides the  
 battle's broadening star.

Each gunner, moveless by his gun, with  
 rigid aspect stands,  
 The reedy linstocks firmly grasped in  
 bold, untrembling hands,  
 So moveless in their marble calm, their  
 stern, heroic guise,  
 They look like forms of stuated stone  
 with burning human eyes!

Our banners on the outmost walls, with  
 stately rustling fold,  
 Flash back from arch and parapet the  
 sunlight's ruddy gold —  
 They mount to the deep roll of drums,  
 and widely echoing cheers,  
 And then, once more, dark, breathless,  
 hushed, wait the grim cannon-  
 eers.

Onward, in sullen file, and slow, low-  
 glooming on the wave,  
 Near, nearer still, the haughty fleet glides  
 silent as the grave,  
 When shivering the portentous calm o'er  
 startled flood and shore,  
 Broke from the sacred Island Fort the  
 thunder wrath of yore!\*

The storm has burst! and while we speak,  
 more furious, wilder, higher,  
 Dart from the circling batteries a hundred  
 tongues of fire;  
 The waves gleam red, the lurid vault of  
 heaven seems rent above —  
 Fight on, oh, knightly gentlemen! for  
 faith, and home, and love!

\* Fort Moultrie.

There's not, in all that line of flame, one  
 soul that would not rise,  
 To seize the victor's wreath of blood,  
 though death must give the  
 prize;

There's not, in all this anxious crowd  
 that throngs the ancient town,  
 A maid who does not yearn for power to  
 strike one foeman down!

The conflict deepens! ship by ship the  
 proud Armada sweeps,  
 Where fierce from Sumter's raging breast  
 the volleyed lightning leaps,  
 And ship by ship, raked, overborne, 'ere  
 burned the sunset light,  
 Crawls in the gloom of baffled hate be-  
 yond the field of fight!

—•—  
 CHARLESTON AT THE CLOSE OF 1863.

WHAT! still does the mother of treason  
 uprear

Her crest 'gainst the furies that darken  
 her sea,

Unquelled by mistrust, and unblanched  
 by a fear,

Unbowed her proud head, and un-  
 bending her knee.

Calm, steadfast and free!

Ay! launch your red lightnings! blas-  
 pheme in your wrath!

Shock earth, wave, and heaven with  
 the blasts of your ire;

But she seizes your death-bolts yet hot  
 from their path,

And hurls back your lightnings and  
 mocks at the fire

Of your fruitless desire!

Ringed round by her brave, a fierce cir-  
 clet of flame

Flashes up from the sword-points that  
 cover her breast;

She is guarded by love, and enhaloed by  
 fame,

And never, we swear, shall your foot-  
steps be pressed,  
Where her dead heroes rest.

Her voice shook the tyrant, sublime from  
her tongue  
Fell the accents of warning! a prophet-  
ess grand —  
On her soil the first life notes of liberty  
rung,  
And the first stalwart blow of her  
gauntleted hand  
Broke the sleep of her land.

What more? she hath grasped in her  
iron-bound will  
The fate that would trample her honors  
to earth:  
The light in those deep eyes is luminous  
still  
With the warmth of her valor, the  
glow of her worth,  
Which illumine the earth.

And beside her a knight the great Bayard  
had loved,  
“Without fear or reproach,” lifts her  
banner on high;  
He stands in the vanguard majestic, un-  
moved,  
And a thousand firm souls when that  
chieftain is nigh,  
Vow “ ’tis easy to die!”

Their words have gone forth on the fet-  
terless air,  
The world's breath is hushed at the  
conflict! Before  
Gleams the bright form of Freedom, with  
wreaths in her hair —  
And what though the chaplet be crim-  
soned with gore —  
We shall prize her the more!

And while Freedom lures on with her  
passionate eyes  
To the height of her promise, the  
voices of yore

From the storied profound of past ages  
arise,  
And the pomps of their magical music  
outpour  
O'er the war-beaten shore!

Then gird your brave empress, O heroes!  
with flame  
Flashed up from the sword-points that  
cover her breast!  
She is guarded by Love and enhaloed by  
Fame,  
And never, stern foe! shall your foot-  
steps be pressed  
Where her dead martyrs rest!

— — —  
SCENE IN A COUNTRY HOSPITAL.

HERE, lonely, wounded and apart,  
From out my casement's glimmering  
round,  
I watch the wayward bluebirds dart  
Across yon flowery ground;  
How sweet the prospect! and how fair  
The balmy peace of earth and air.

But, lowering over fields afar,  
A red cloud breaks with sulphurous  
breath,  
And well I know what gory star,  
Is regnant in his house of death;  
Yet faint the conflict's gathering roll,  
To the fierce tempest in my soul.

I, who the foremost ranks had led,  
To strike for cherished home and land,  
Groan idly on this torturing bed,  
With broken frame and palsied hand,  
So nerveless, 'tis a task to scare,  
The insects fluttering round my hair.

O God! for one brief hour again,  
Of that grim joy my spirit knew,  
When foemen's life-blood poured like  
rain,  
And sabres flashed and trumpets blew:  
One hour to smite, or smitten die  
On the wild breast of victory!

It may not be; my pulses beat  
 Too feebly, and my heart is chill.  
 Death, like a thief with stealthy feet  
 Draws nigh to work his ruthless will;  
 Hope, Honor, Glory, pass me by,  
 But *he* stands near with mocking eye!

Ay, smooth the couch! — pour out the  
 draught,  
 That, haply, for a season's space,  
 Hath power to charm his fatal shaft,  
 And warn the death-damps off my face,  
 A blest reprieve! — a wondrous boon,  
 Thank Heaven! this — all — ends with  
 me soon.

— ◆ —  
 VICKSBURG. — A BALLAD.

For sixty days and upwards,  
 A storm of shell and shot  
 Rained round us in a flaming shower,  
 But still we faltered not.  
 "If the noble city perish,"  
 Our grand young leader said,  
 "Let the only walls the foe shall scale  
 "Be ramparts of the dead!"

For sixty days and upwards,  
 The eye of heaven waxed dim;  
 And e'en throughout God's holy morn,  
 O'er Christian prayer and hymn,  
 Arose a hissing tumult,  
 As if the fiends in air  
 Strove to engulf the voice of faith  
 In the shrieks of their despair.

There was wailing in the houses,  
 There was trembling on the marts,  
 While the tempest raged and thundered,  
 'Mid the silent thrill of hearts;  
 But the Lord, our shield, was with us,  
 And ere a month had sped,  
 Our very women walked the streets  
 With scarce one throb of dread.

And the little children gambolled,  
 Their faces purely raised,  
 Just for a wondering moment,  
 As the huge bombs whirled and blazed,

Then turned with silvery laughter  
 To the sports which children love,  
 Thrice-mailed in the sweet, instinctive  
 thought  
 That the good God watched above.

Yet the hailing bolts fell faster,  
 From scores of flame-clad ships,  
 And about us, denser, darker,  
 Grew the conflict's wild eclipse,  
 Till a solid cloud closed o'er us,  
 Like a type of doom and ire,  
 Whence shot a thousand quivering  
 tongues  
 Of forked and vengeful fire.

But the unseen hands of angels  
 Those death-shafts warned aside,  
 And the dove of heavenly mercy  
 Ruled o'er the battle tide:  
 In the houses ceased the wailing,  
 And through the war-scarred marts  
 The people strode, with step of hope,  
 To the music in their hearts.

— ◆ —  
 THE LITTLE WHITE GLOVE.

THE early springtime faintly flushed the  
 earth,  
 And in the woods, and by their favorite  
 stream  
 The fair, wild roses blossomed modestly,  
 Above the wave that wooed them: there  
 at eve,  
 Philip had brought the woman that he  
 loved,  
 And told his love, and bared his burning  
 heart.  
 She, Constance, — the shy sunbeams  
 trembling oft.  
 Through dewy leaves upon her golden  
 hair. —  
 Made him no answer, tapped her pretty  
 foot,  
 And seemed to muse: "To-morrow I  
 depart."  
 Said Philip, sadly, "for wild fields of  
 war;

Shall I go girt with love's invisible  
mail,  
Stronger than mortal armor, or, all  
stripped  
Of love and hope, march reckless unto  
death?'

A soft mist filled her eyes, and over-  
flowed  
In sudden rain of passion, as she  
stretched  
Her delicate hand to his, and plighted  
troth,



"And by their favorite stream,  
The fair, wild roses blossomed modestly  
Above the wave that wooed them."

With lips more rosy than the sun-bathed  
flowers;  
And Philip pressed the dear hand fer-  
vently,  
Wherefrom in happy mood, he gently  
drew  
A small white glove, and ere she guessed  
his will,  
Clipped lightly from her head one golden  
curl,  
And bound the glove, and placed it next  
his heart.

"Now I am safe," cried Philip; "this  
pure charm  
Is proof against all hazard or mischance.  
Here, yea, unto this self-same spot I vow  
To bring it stainless back; and you shall  
wear

This little glove upon our marriage  
eve."  
And Constance heard him, smiling  
through her tears.  
Another springtime faintly flushed the  
earth,  
And in the woods, and by their favorite  
stream,  
The fair, wild roses blossomed modestly  
Above the wave that wooed them: there  
at eve  
Came a pale woman with wild, wander-  
ing eyes,  
And tangled, golden ringlets, and weak  
steps  
Tottering towards the streamlet's rip-  
pling marge,  
She seemed phantasmal, shadowy, like  
the forms

By moonlight conjured up from a place  
of graves;  
There, crouching o'er the stream, she  
laved and laved  
Some object in it, with a strained regard.  
And muttered fragments of distempered  
words,  
Whereof were these: "He vowed to  
bring it back,  
The love-charm that I gave him — my  
white glove —  
Stainless and whole. He has not kept  
his oath!  
Oh, Philip, Philip! have you cast me off,  
Off, like this worthless thing you send  
me home,  
Tattered and mildewed? Look you!  
what a rent,  
Right through the palm! It cannot be  
my glove;  
And look again; what horrid stain is  
here?  
My glove; you placed it next your heart,  
and swore  
To keep it safe, and on this self-same  
spot,  
Return it to me on our marriage eve;  
And now — and now — I know 'tis not  
my glove, —  
Yet Philip, sweet! It was a cruel jest,  
You surely did not mean to fright me  
thus?  
For hark you! as I laved the loathsome  
thing,  
To see what stain defiled it — (do not  
smile,  
I feel that I am foolish, foolish, Phil-  
ip) —  
But, God of Heaven! I dreamed that  
stain was *blood!*"

—◆—  
STONEWALL JACKSON.

THE fashions and the forms of men  
decay,  
The seasons perish, the calm sunsets die,  
Ne'er with the *same* bright pomp of  
cloud or ray

To flush the golden pathways of the sky;  
All things are lost in dread eternity, —  
States, empires, creeds, the lay  
Of master poets, even the shapes of  
love,  
Bear ever with them an invisible shade,  
Whose name is Death; we cannot breathe  
nor move,  
But that we touch the darkness, till dis-  
mayed,  
We feel the imperious shadow freeze our  
hearts,  
And mortal hope grows pale and flutter-  
ing life departs.  
All things are lost in dread eternity,  
Save that majestic virtue which is given  
Once, twice, perchance beneath our  
earthly heaven,  
To some great soul in ages: O! the lie,  
The base, incarnate lie we call the world,  
Shakes at his coming, as the forest  
shakes,  
When mountain storms, with bannered  
clouds unfurled,  
Rush down and rend it; sleek conven-  
tion drops  
Its glittering mass, and hoary, cob-  
webbed rules  
Of petty charlatans or insolent fools  
Shrink to annihilation, — Truth awakes,  
A morning splendor in her fearless  
eyes,  
Touching the delicate stops  
Of some rare lute which breathes of  
promise fair,  
Or pouring on the covenanted air  
A trumpet blast which startles, but  
makes strong,  
While ancient Wrong,  
Driven like a beast from his deep-cav-  
erned lair,  
Grows gaunt, and inly quakes,  
Knowing that retribution draws so near!

Whether with blade or pen  
Toil these immortal men,  
Theirs is the light supreme, which *genius*  
wed  
To a clear spiritual dower.

Hath ever o'er the aroused nations shed  
 Joy, faith, and power:  
 Whether from wrestling with the god-  
 like thought,  
 They launch a noiseless blessing on  
 mankind,  
 Or through wild streams of terrible car-  
 nage brought,  
 No longer crushed and blind,  
 Trampled, dishevelled, gored,  
 They proudly lift, where kindling soul  
 and eye  
 May feast upon her beauty as she stands  
 (Girt by the strength of her invincible  
 bands),  
 And freed through keen redemption of  
 the sword,  
 Thy worn, but radiant form, victorious  
 Liberty!

We bow before this grandeur of the  
 spirit;  
 We worship, and adore  
 God's image burning through it ever-  
 more;  
 And thus, in awed humility to-night,\*  
 As those who at some vast cathedral  
 door  
 Pause with hushed faces, purified de-  
 sires,  
 We contemplate his merit,  
 Who lifted failure to the heights of fame,  
 And by the side of fainting, dying right,  
 Stood, as Sir Galahad pure, Sir Lance-  
 lot brave,  
 The quick, indignant fires  
 Flushing his pale brow from the passion-  
 ate mind  
 No strength could quell, no sophistry  
 could bind,  
 Until that moment, big with mystic doom  
 (Whose issue sent  
 O'er the long wastes of half a conti-  
 nent  
 Electric shudders through the deepening  
 gloom),

\* This Ode was originally written to be deliv-  
 ered before a Southern patriotic association.

When in his knightly glory "Stonewall"  
 fell,  
 And all our hearts sank with him; for we  
 knew  
 Our staff, our bulwark broken, the fine  
 clew  
 To freedom snapped, his hands had  
 held alone,  
 Through all the storms of battle over-  
 blown, —  
 Lost, buried, mouldering in our hero's  
 grave.

O soul! so simple, yet sublime!  
 With faith as large, and mild  
 As that of some benignant, trustful  
 child,  
 Who mounts to heaven on bright, ethe-  
 real stairs  
 Of tender-worded prayers, —  
 Yet strong as if a Titan's force were  
 there  
 To rise, to act, to suffer, and to dare, —  
 O soul! that on our time  
 Wrought, in the calm magnificence of  
 power  
 To ends so noble, that an antique light  
 Of grace and virtue streamed along thy  
 way,  
 Until the direst hour  
 Of carnage caught from that immaculate  
 ray  
 A consecration, and a sanctity!  
 Thou art not dead, thou nevermore canst  
 die,  
 But wide and far,  
 Where'er on Christian realms the morn-  
 ing star  
 Flames round the spires that tower  
 towards the sky, —  
 Thy name, a household word,  
 In cottage homes, by palace walls, is  
 heard,  
 Breathed with low murmurs, reveren-  
 tially!

Even as I raise this faltering song to  
 one,  
 Who now beyond the empires of the sun,



Looks down perchance upon our mourn-  
ful sphere,  
With the deep pity of seraphic eyes,  
Fancy unveils the future, and I see  
Millions on millions, as year follows year,  
Gather around our warrior's place of rest  
In the green shadows of Virginian hills;  
Not with the glow of martial blazonry,  
With trump and muffled drum,  
Those pilgrim millions come,  
But with bowed heads, and measured  
footsteps slow,  
As those who near the presence of a  
shrine,  
And feel an air divine,  
All round about them blandly, sweetly  
blow,  
While like dream-music the faint fall of  
rills,  
Lapsing from steep to steep,  
The wood-dove 'plaining in her covert  
deep,  
And the long whisperings of the ghostly  
pine  
(Like ocean-breathings borne from tides  
of sleep),  
With every varied melody expressed  
In Nature's score of solemn harmonies,  
Blends with a feeling in the reverent  
breast  
Which cannot find a voice in mortal  
speech,  
So deep, so deep it lies beyond the reach  
Of stammering words,—the pilgrims  
only know  
That slumbering, O! so calmly there,  
below  
The dewy grass, the melancholy trees,  
Moulders the dust of him,  
By whose crystalline fame, earth's scar-  
let pomps grow dim,  
The crown'd heir  
Of two majestic immortalities,  
That which is earthly, and yet scarce of  
earth,  
Whose fruitful seeds  
Were his own grand, self-sacrificing  
deeds,  
And that whose awful birth

Flowered into instant perfectness sub-  
lime,  
When done with toil and time,  
He shook from off the raiments of his  
soul,  
The weary conflict's desecrating dust,  
For stern *reveillés*, heard the angels  
sing,  
For battle turmoils found eternal calm,  
Laid down his sinless sword to clasp the  
palm,  
And where vast heavenly organ-notes  
outroll  
Melodious thunders, 'mid the rush of  
wing,  
And flash of plume celestial, paused in  
peace,  
A rapture of ineffable release  
To know the long fruition of the just!

—●—  
SONNETS.

## I.

ON THE CHIVALRY OF THE PRESENT  
TIME.

Ah! foolish souls and false! who loudly  
cried  
"True chivalry no longer breathes in  
time."  
Look round us now; how wondrous, how  
sublime  
The heroic lives we witness; far and  
wide,  
Stern vows by sterner deeds are justified;  
Self abnegation, calmness, courage,  
power,  
Sway with a rule august, our stormy  
hour,  
Wherein the loftiest hearts have wrought  
and died —  
Wrought grandly, and died smiling.  
Thus, oh God,  
From tears, and blood, and anguish, thou  
hast brought  
The ennobling act, the faith-sustaining  
thought —  
'Till in the marvellous present, one may  
see

A mighty stage, by knight and patriots  
trod,  
Who had not shunned earth's haughtiest  
chivalry.

## II.

## ELLIOTT IN FORT SUMTER.

AND high amongst these chiefs of iron  
grain,  
Large-statured natures, souls of Spartan  
mien,  
Superbly brave, inflexibly serene,  
Man of the stalwart hope, the sleepless  
brain,  
Well dost thou guard our fortress by the  
main!  
And what, though inch by inch old  
Sumter falls,  
There's not a stone that forms those  
sacred walls,  
But holds a tongue, which shall not  
speak in vain!  
A tongue that tells of such heroic mood,  
Such nerved endurance, such immaculate  
will,  
That after times shall hearken and grow  
still,  
With breathless admiration, and on thee  
(Whose stern resolve our glorious cause  
made good).  
Confer an antique immortality!

## OUR MARTYRS.

I AM sitting alone and weary,  
By the hearth of my darkened room,  
And the low wind's *miserere*,  
Makes sadder the midnight gloom.  
"There's a nameless terror nigh me—  
There's a phantom spell on the air,  
And methinks, that the dead glide by me,  
And the breath of the grave's in my  
hair!"

'Tis a vision of ghastly faces,  
All pallid and worn with pain,  
Where the splendor of manful graces  
Shines dim thro' a scarlet rain:—

In a wild and weird procession  
They sweep by my startled eyes,  
And stern with their Fate's fruition,  
Seem melting in blood-red skies.

Have they come from the shores super-  
nal;  
Have they passed from the spirit's  
goal,  
'Neath the veil of the life eternal  
To dawn on my shrinking soul?  
Have they turned from the choiring  
angels,  
Aghast at the woe and dearth,  
That war with his dark evangel  
Hath wrought in the loved of earth?

Vain dream! amid far-off mountains  
They lie where the dew mists weep,  
And the murmur of mournful fountains  
Breathes over their painless sleep;  
On the breast of the lonely meadows  
Safe, safe, from the despot's will,  
They rest in the starlit shadows,  
And their brows are white and still,

Alas! for our heroes perished!  
Cut down at their golden prime,  
With the luminous hopes they cherished,  
On the height of their faith sublime!  
For them is the voice of wailing  
And the sweet blush-rose departs.  
From the cheeks of the maidens paling  
O'er the wreck of their broken hearts.

And alas! for the vanished glory  
Of a thousand household spells!  
And alas! for the tearful story  
Of the spirit's fond farewells!  
By the flood, on the field, in the forest,  
Our bravest have yielded breath,  
Yet the shafts that have smitten the  
sorest,  
Were launched by a viewless death.

Oh, Thou! that hast charms of healing,  
Descend on a widowed land,  
And bind o'er the wounds of feeling,  
The balms of thy mystic hand;

Till the lives that lament and languish,  
Renewed by a touch divine,  
From the depths of their mortal anguish,  
May rise to the calm of Thine.

◆

*FORGOTTEN.*

FORGOTTEN! Can it be a few swift  
rounds  
Of Time's great chariot wheels have  
crushed to naught  
The memory of those fearful sights and  
sounds,  
With speechless misery fraught —  
Wherethro' we hope to gain the Hesperian  
height,  
Where Freedom smiles in light?

Forgotten! scarce have two dim autumns  
velled  
With merciful mist those dreary burial  
sods,  
Whose coldness (when the high-strung  
pulses failed,  
Of men who strove like gods)  
Wrapped in a sanguine fold of senseless  
dust  
Dead hearts and perished trust!

Forgotten! While in far-off woodland  
dell,  
By lonely mountain tarn and murmur-  
ing stream,  
Bereaved hearts with sorrowful passion  
swell —  
Their lives one ghastly dream  
Of hope outwearied and betrayed desire,  
And anguish crowned with fire!

Forgotten! while our manhood cursed  
with chains,  
And pilloried high for all the world to  
view,  
Writhes in its fierce, intolerable pains,

Decked with dull wreaths of rue,  
And shedding blood for tears, hands  
waled with scars,  
Lifts to the dumb, cold stars!

Forgotten! Can the dancer's jocund feet  
Flash o'er a charnel-vault, and maid-  
ens fair  
Bend the white lustre of their eyelids  
sweet,  
Love-weighed, so nigh despair,  
Its ice-cold breath must freeze their  
blushing brows,  
And hush love's tremulous vows?

Forgotten! Nay: but all the songs we  
sing  
Hold under-burdens, wailing chords of  
woe;  
Our lightest laughers sound with hollow  
ring,  
Our bright wit's freest flow,  
Quavers to sudden silence of affright,  
Touched by an untold blight!

Forgotten! No! we cannot all forget.  
Or, when we do, farewell to Honor's  
face,  
To Hope's sweet tendance, Valor's un-  
paid debt,  
And every noblest Grace,  
Which, nursed in Love, might still be-  
nignly bloom  
Above a nation's tomb!

Forgotten! Tho' a thousand years should  
pass,  
Methinks our air will throb with mem-  
ory's thrills,  
A conscious grief weigh down the falter-  
ing grass,  
A pathos shroud the hills,  
Waves roll lamenting, autumn sunsets  
yearn  
For the old time's return!

**LEGENDS AND LYRICS.**



## LEGENDS AND LYRICS.

1865-1872.

### *DAPHLES.*

#### AN ARGIVE STORY.

ONCE on the throne of Argos sat a  
maid,  
Daphles the fair; serene and unafraid  
She ruled her realm, for the rough folk  
were brought  
To worship one they deemed divinely  
wrought  
In beauty and mild graciousness of  
heart:  
Nobles and courtiers, too, espoused her  
part,  
So that the sweet young face all thronged  
to see,  
Glanced from her throne-room's silken  
canopy  
(Broidered with leaves, and many a  
snow-white dove),  
Rosily conscious of her people's love.  
Only the chief of a far frontier clan,  
A haughty, bold, ambitious nobleman,  
By law her vassal, but self-sworn to be  
From subject-title and tribute boldly  
free,  
And scorning most this weak girl-sover-  
eign's reign,  
Now from the mountain fastness to the  
plain  
Summoned his savage legions to the  
fight, —  
Wherein he hoped to wrench the imperial  
might  
From Daphles, and confirm his claim  
thereto.  
But Doracles, the insurgent chief, could  
know

Naught of the secret charm, the subtle  
stress  
Of beauty wed to warm unselfishness,  
Which, in her hour of trial, wrapped the  
Queen  
Safely apart in golden air serene  
Of deep devotion, and fond faith of  
those  
The steadfast hearts betwixt her and her  
foes.  
The oldest courtier, schooled in state-  
craft guile,  
Some loyal fire at her entrancing smile  
Felt strangely kindled in his outworn  
soul;  
Far more the warrior youths her soft  
control  
Moulded to noble deeds, till all the land,  
Aroused at Love's and Honor's joint  
command,  
Bristled with steel and rang with sounds  
of war.  
Still rashly trusting in his fortunate star,  
This arrogant thrall who fain would  
grasp a crown,  
Backed by half-barbarous hordes,  
marched swiftly down  
'Twixt the hill ramparts and the West-  
ern Sea.  
First, blazing homesteads greet him,  
whence did flee  
The frightened hinds through fires them-  
selves had lit  
'Mid the ripe grain, lest foes should reap  
of it;  
Or here and there, some groups of aged  
folk,

Women and men bent down beneath the  
yoke  
Of cruel years and babbling idiot speech.  
"Methinks," cried Doracles, "our arms  
will reach  
The realm's unshielded heart; for lo! the  
breath,  
The mere hot fume of rapine and of  
death  
Which flames before our legions like a  
blight  
Withers this people's valor and their  
might."

The fifes played shriller; the wild  
trumpet's blast  
Smote the great host and thrilled them  
as it passed;  
While clashing shields, and spears which  
caught the morn,  
And splendid banners in strong hands  
upborne,  
And plumed helms, and steeds of match-  
less race,  
And in the van that clear, keen eagle  
face  
Of Doracles, firm set on shoulders tall,  
Squared like a rock, and towering o'er  
them all,  
With all the pomp and swell of martial  
strife,  
Woke the burnt plains and bleak de-  
files to life.  
So phalanx after phalanx glittering filed  
Firm to the front: their haughty leader  
smiled  
To see with what a bold and buoyant air  
The lowliest footman marched before  
him there,  
Till his proud head he lifted to the sun,  
And his heart leaped as at a victory won  
That self-same hour, o'er which bright-  
hovering shone  
The steadfast image of an Ivory throne.

But the Queen's host by skilful cham-  
pions led,  
Its powers meanwhile concentrated to a  
head,

Lay, an embattled force with wary  
eye,  
Ready to ward or strike when'er the  
cry  
Of coming foemen on their ears should  
fall,  
Nigh the huge towers which guard the  
capital.

Not long their watch: one bluff October  
day,  
There rose a blare of trumpets far away,  
And sound of thronging hoofs which  
muffled came,  
Borne on the wind, like the dull noise of  
flame  
Half stifled in dense woodlands; then  
the wings  
Of the Queen's host, as each swift section  
flings  
The imperial banner proudly fluttering  
out,  
Spread from the royal centre. Hark! a  
shout,  
As from those thousand hearts in one  
great soul  
Sublimely fused, rose thunder-deep, to  
roll,  
In wild acclaim, far down the quivering  
van;  
And wilder still the heroic tumult ran  
From front to rear, when through her  
palace gate,  
Daphles, in unaccustomed martial state,  
A keen spear shimmering in its silver  
hold,  
And on her brow the Argive crown of  
gold,  
Flashed like a sunbeam on her warriors'  
sight.  
Girt by her generals, on a neighboring  
height  
She reined her Lybian courser, while the  
air  
Played with the bright waves of her  
meteor hair,  
And on her lovely April face the tide  
Of varied feeling — now a jubilant  
pride

In those strong arms and stronger hearts  
 below,  
 And now a prescient fear did ebb and  
 flow,  
 Its sensitive heaven transforming mo-  
 mently.  
 But soon the foeman's cohorts, like a  
 sea,  
 With waves of steel, and foam of snow-  
 white plumes,  
 Slowly emerged from out the forest  
 glooms.  
 In splendid pomp and antique pageantry.  
 An ominous pause! And then the  
 trumpets high  
 Sounded the terrible onset, and the field  
 Rocked as with earthquake, and the  
 thick air reeled  
 With clangors fierce from echoing hill to  
 hill.

Bloody but brief the contest! All the  
 skill  
 Of Doracles against the steadfast will  
 Planted by love in faithful hearts that  
 day  
 Frothed like an idle tide that slips away  
 From granite walls! His knights their  
 furious blows  
 Discharged on what seemed statues  
 whose repose  
 Was iron, or their fated coursers hurled  
 On spears unbent as bases of a world!  
 Meanwhile the whole dread scene did  
 Daphles view  
 With anguished, tearless eyes. But  
 when she knew  
 The victory hers, down the hill-slopes  
 she urged  
 Her restless steed, where still but faintly  
 surged  
 The last worn waves of tumult; there  
 her hands  
 Of conquering captains she with fervent  
 hands  
 And o'erfraught swelling breast did  
 proudly greet;  
 Yet her pale face was touched with pity  
 sweet

While the chained rebels passed her  
 worn and sore  
 With ghastly wounds, and shivering in  
 their gore.  
 But when, untamed, uncowed, in 'midst  
 of these,  
 The grand, defiant form of Doracles  
 Rose like a god discrowned, her wan  
 cheeks flushed,  
 And through her heart a quick, hot tor-  
 rent rushed  
 Of undefined, mysterious sympathy.  
 Viewing that haughty brow, that unbent  
 knee,  
 "O kingly head!" she thought, "too  
 well I know  
 How bitter-keen to him the signal blow  
 This day hath dealt! O kingly resolute  
 eyes,  
 Shrining the sov'ran soul! 'twere surely  
 wise  
 To change their glance of cold vindictive  
 gloom  
 To grateful light, and make what seemed  
 a doom  
 Heavy as death, the clouded path to  
 fame,  
 Lordship, and honor!" Ah, but pity  
 came  
 To crown admiring kindness with a  
 flame  
 Of subtler life; for he, the vanquished  
 one,  
 On whom that day his fate's malignant  
 sun  
 Had set in storms, that night would  
 slumber, kissed  
 By a fair phantom girt with golden  
 mist,  
 A new-born delicate love, but dimly  
 guessed  
 Even in the pure depths of the maiden  
 breast,  
 Whence the sweet sylph had 'scaped her  
 unaware.  
 But when the evening silence drew  
 anear,  
 And round about the borders of the  
 world



The second night since that great contest furl'd  
 Its brooding shades, the young Queen,  
 all alone,  
 Paused by the dungeon floor whereon  
 were thrown,  
 At listless length, the limbs of Doracles.  
 "How, how," she murmured, "may I  
 best appease  
 His stricken pride, or touch to tender  
 calm  
 His fevered honor? with what healing  
 balm  
 Allay the smart wherewith his spirit  
 groans?"  
 Perplexed, and yearning, on the dismal  
 stones  
 Without the prison door she walked  
 apart,  
 Love, doubt, and shame, all struggling  
 in her heart,  
 Till the large flood of mingled love and  
 woe  
 Rose to her snowy eyelids and did flow  
 In soft refreshing tears like spring-tide  
 showers;  
 Then, bright and blushing as the moss-  
 rose bowers  
 Of dewy May, she pushed the huge grate  
 back.  
 And through the dusky glooms, the  
 shadows black  
 Dawned glowingly! Next for a moment  
 she  
 Stood in a timid, strange uncertainty,  
 Changing from rosy red to deathly white;  
 When, as a Queen sustained by true  
 love's right,  
 She spake in mild, pure, steadfastness  
 of soul:  
 "I come, O Doracles, with no mean  
 dole  
 Of transient pity, but to show thee how  
 Thy mistress would exalt the abas'd  
 brow  
 Of one who knows her not!" There-  
 with she freed  
 His fettered limbs, or yet his brain could  
 heed

Or comprehend her mercy's cordial  
 scope:  
 His soul had shrunk too low for dreams  
 of hope,  
 Such swift misfortunes smote him: still,  
 when all  
 The Queen's fair meaning on his mind  
 did fall,  
 The locked and frozen sternness of his  
 look  
 Broke up, as breaks the death-cold win-  
 try brook  
 Its icy spell at noonday; yet his face  
 Was lighted not by thankful, reverent  
 grace,  
 But flashed an evil triumph where he  
 stood  
 Spurning his unloosed chains. In such  
 base mood,  
 One eager foot pressed on the dungeon  
 stair,  
 "What terms," he asked, "O Queen,  
 demand'st thou here?"  
 I pledge thee faith!" Silent were  
 Daphles' lips,  
 And all her gentle hopes by swift eclipse  
 Were darkened. With a deathly smile  
 she signed  
 The chief farewell, as one who scorned  
 to bind  
 Her mercy with set terms. He turned  
 to go,  
 Self-centred, callous, dreaming not how  
 low  
 Her heart had sunk at each cold, shallow  
 word  
 With which his barren nature, faintly  
 stirred  
 By ruth, or love, or pardon, dared repay  
 Her matchless mercy. On his unchecked  
 way  
 He turned to go, when, with one shud-  
 dering sob,  
 And deep-drawn, plaintive breath,  
 which seemed to rob  
 Life of its last dear hope, the Queen  
 sank down,  
 Wrapped in a death-like trance. With  
 sullen frown,

And many a muttered oath, he raised  
 her form,  
 Frail now as some pale lily by the storm  
 Wind-blown and beaten; for at woman's  
 love  
 He could but vaguely guess, and no poor  
 dove  
 Pierced by the woodman's shaft was less  
 to him  
 Than this fair spirit struggling in the  
 dim  
 And tortured twilight of unshared de-  
 sire;  
 Nor could he part the pure romantic fire  
 Of such high passion from the lukewarm  
 flame  
 That feebly burns in sordid hearts and  
 tame,  
 Not of love's heat, but vacant flattery's  
 born,  
 To feed his pride, yet stir the latent  
 scorn  
 Of that rough manhood such hard na-  
 tures know.  
 Waked from her trance, with wandering  
 eyes and slow  
 The Queen looked round, but dimly con-  
 scious yet,  
 Until at last her faltering glance was set  
 On Doracles, to whom — that he might  
 see  
 How a soft ruth to love's intensity  
 Had strangely grown — she laid her deep  
 heart bare:  
 Then, with a sweet but nobly queen-like  
 air,  
 She said, "O Doracles, in just return  
 For all this love and pity, which did  
 yearn  
 To lift thee fallen, and to find thee, lost,  
 And slowly sickening underneath the  
 frost  
 Of bleak despair, I well might ask of  
 thee  
 Thy heart, with all its rarest freight in  
 fee,  
 Save that I feel my virgin fame and life  
 Must count as pure, when thou hast  
 made me wife,

Though but a wife in state and name  
 alone.  
 Behold, O chief! I proffer, too, my  
 throne,  
 Not as thy freedom's sole condition  
 given,  
 But that men's eyes and scornful  
 thoughts be driven  
 Away from what in me may seem as  
 ill,  
 If — if — perchance, thou shouldst reject  
 me still."  
 At which hard word she droops her head,  
 and sighs,  
 While patient tears bedew her downcast  
 eyes.  
 Now, with sly semblance of a soul at  
 ease,  
 Her liberal proffer crafty Doracles  
 Freely embraced. They passed the  
 prison-bound,  
 And that same day with silver-ringing  
 sound  
 Of trump and cymbal, the state heralds  
 cried  
 Abroad through all the city, far and  
 wide,  
 The Queen's vast pardon; whereupon  
 her court, —  
 Nobles and dames, — each quaintly gor-  
 geous sport,  
 Known in the old time, bold or debon-  
 air,  
 With feasts, and mimic strifes, and pa-  
 geants rare,  
 Did hold in honor of their sovereign's  
 choice;  
 A choice none there would question!  
 Not a voice,  
 Gentle or simple, but was raised to bless,  
 And pray the kindly gods for happiness  
 And peace on both! Meanwhile the  
 thrall made king,  
 Albeit a secret anger still would wring  
 His thankless soul, in princely fashion  
 took  
 The general homage, nor by word or  
 look

Betrayed the festering consciousness  
 within:  
 So gracious seemed he, Daphnes' hopes  
 begin  
 To wake, and whisper fond, sweet, fool-  
 ish words  
 Close to her heart, that flutters like a  
 bird's  
 Wooed in the spring-dawn: yet, alas!  
 alas!  
 For joy that dies, and dreamy hopes that  
 pass  
 To nothingness! In 'midst of this, her  
 trust,  
 Came a swift blow which smote her to  
 the dust;  
 News that her ingrate love had basely  
 fled,  
 Whither none knew. Scarce had this  
 shaft been sped  
 From fate's unerring bow, than swift  
 again  
 Hurlled a second steeped in poisoned  
 pain;  
 For now the whole dark truth came  
 sternly out:  
 Leagued with her bitterest foes, a savage  
 rout  
 Of mountain-robbers o'er the frontier  
 land,  
 He unto whom she proffered heart and  
 hand,  
 Kingdom and crown, had bared his  
 treacherous blade,  
 And of the great and just gods unafraid,  
 Upreared his standard 'neath the blood-  
 red star,  
 And raised once more the incarnate  
 curse of war!  
 So from that day all gladness left the  
 heart  
 Of broken Daphnes; she would muse  
 apart  
 From court and friends, her once blithe  
 footsteps slow,  
 Her once proud head bowed down, and  
 such wild woe  
 Couched in the clouded depths of mourn-  
 ful eyes

That few could mark her misery but  
 with sighs  
 Deep almost as her own. At last, she  
 wrote  
 (For still her soul hailed, watery and re-  
 mote,  
 One beam of hope) a missive tender-  
 sweet,  
 Charmed with such pathos, to her deli-  
 cate feet  
 It might have lured a spirit, nigh to  
 death,  
 And straight imbued with warm compas-  
 sionate breath  
 A heart as cold as spires of Arctic  
 ice!  
 Ah, futile hope! Ah, fond and vain de-  
 vice!  
 Not all the pleading eloquence of wrong,  
 Veiling its wounds, and golden-soft as  
 song  
 Trilled by the brown Sicilian nightin-  
 gales,  
 In dusky nooks of melancholy vales,  
 Could melt the granite will of Doracles.  
 Each tender line she sent him did but  
 tease  
 And sting his obdurate temper into  
 hate,  
 As if the deep harmonious terms that  
 wait  
 On truest love, were wasp-like, poisoned  
 things:  
 Her timorous hints, her sweet imagin-  
 ings,  
 Far thoughts, and dreams evanishing,  
 but high,  
 Filled with the maiden dews of sanctity,  
 He crushed, as one might crush in mad-  
 dened hours  
 The fairest of the sisterhood of flowers;  
 No further answer made he than could  
 be  
 Couched in brief terms of cold discour-  
 esy,  
 Holding *all* love—the noblest love on  
 earth—  
 Of lesser moment than an insect's birth,

Buzzing its life out 'twixt the dawn and dark.  
 That letter stifled the last healthful spark  
 Of the Queen's flickering reason, turned  
 her wit  
 To wild and errant courses, sadly lit  
 By wandering stars, and orbs of fantasy.  
 Deeming that she full soon must sink  
 and die,  
 Daphles, still true to that one dominant  
 thought  
 And firm affection which such ill had  
 brought,  
 Summoned her learned scribes and bade  
 them draw  
 After strict form and precedents of law,  
 Her solemn testament; whereby she gave  
 Her throne to Doracles, whene'er the  
 grave  
 Closed o'er her broken heart and hum-  
 bled head.  
 But now her chiefs and nobles, hard be-  
 stead  
 By circumstance, and dreading much  
 lest he,  
 The renegade, and rebel, who did flee  
 From love to league with license, yet  
 should sway  
 The honored Argive sceptre, on a day  
 Called forth to solemn council and debate  
 Lords, liegemen, ministers, to save the  
 state  
 From threatened tyranny and upstart  
 rule:  
 Thereto the wan Queen, powerless now  
 to school  
 Features or mind to subjugation meet,  
 Came weakly tottering; in her lofty seat  
 She sank bewildered, listless; all could  
 mark  
 Beneath her languid eyes the hollows  
 dark.  
 And — save that sometimes as she slowly  
 turned  
 Her wasted form, the fires of fever  
 burned,  
 Death's prescient blazon, on each sunken  
 cheek —  
 Her face was pallid as a cold white streak

Of wintry moonlight on Siberian snows;  
 Her quivering mouth and chill con-  
 tracted brows  
 Bespoke an inward torture, while from  
 all  
 The shrewd debate within that council  
 hall  
 Her dim thoughts wandered vaguely,  
 lost and dumb.  
 But when her pitying maidens round her  
 come,  
 And gently strive on her drooped head to  
 place  
 The self-same laurel garland which did  
 grace  
 Her warm, white temples on that morn  
 of strife  
 And woeful victory, her sick brain seemed  
 rife  
 Once more with memories; in her hand  
 she pressed  
 The half-dead wreath, and o'er her  
 flowing vest  
 Strewed the plucked leaves those aimless  
 fingers tore  
 Unwittingly; which on the marble  
 floor,  
 Down fluttering, one by one, lay blurred  
 and dead,  
 Like the sere hopes her withered heart  
 had shed,  
 Smitten of love; for now she touched  
 the close  
 Of the soul's dreamy autumn, and the  
 snows  
 Of winter soon would clasp her eyelids  
 cold.  
 Yea, soon, too soon! for while her fin-  
 gers fold  
 The garland loosely, and in fitful grief  
 She still would strip the circlet, leaf by  
 leaf.  
 Till now one-half the wreath is plucked  
 and bare,  
 She lifts her dim eyes, hearkening, as  
 though 'ware  
 Of mystic voices calling on her name;  
 Therewith her cheek, whence the quick,  
 fevered flame

Had quite pulsed out, with one last  
quiver, she  
Drops on the cushioned dais, passively;  
For death, more kind than love, hath  
brought her peace.

Long was it ere her stricken realm could  
cease

To mourn for Daphles; yet her burial  
rites,

With all their mournful pomp, their  
sombre sights

Funereal, scarce were passed, when her  
last will,

Despite its humbling terms, which rank-  
led still

In all men's minds, her faithful courtiers  
sent,

With news of that most sudden, sad  
event

Which made him king, to restless Dor-  
acles.

What reeked he then that to its bitterest  
lees

A pure young soul had quaffed of mis-  
ery's cup,

And after, death's? "My star," he  
thought, "flames up,

Fronting the heights of empire! All is  
well!"

Thereon, impelled by keen desire to  
dwell

In his new realm, with reckless haste he  
rode

From town to town, till now the grand  
abode,

The palace of the royal Argive race,  
Did rise before him in its lofty place,  
O'erlooking leagues of golden fields and  
streams,

Fair hills and shadowy vineyards, by  
great teams

Of laboring oxen rilled morn by morn,  
Till the bared, tremulous branches swung  
forlorn

'Gainst the red flush of autumn's sunset  
sky.

Housed with rich state therein, full re-  
gally

The king his sovereign life and course  
began,

Striving at one swift bound to reach the  
van

Of princely fame; his rare magnificence  
Of feasts, shows, pageants, and high  
splendors, whence

The wondering guests all dazzled went  
their way,

Grew to a world-wide proverb for dis-  
play

And costly lavishness. Yet one there  
was

O'er whose gray head these days of pomp  
did pass

Like purpling shadows o'er the faded  
grass:

Wit touched him not to smiles, gay mu-  
sic's flow

Fell powerless on his closed heart's secret  
woe,

While at their feasts silent he sat, and  
grim.

Ofttimes the king a cold glance cast on  
him,

As one who marred their mirthful rev-  
elry.

And in the boisterous spring-tide of their  
glee

Rose like a boding phantom! More and  
more

He felt a vague, dim trouble at the core  
Of his rude nature stirred, whene'er he  
saw

Phorbas draw near; something akin to  
awe.

If not to dread, for this old man did  
stand

Chiefest of Daphles' mourners in her  
land,

As chief of her life's friends, ere that  
black doom

Stole from her heart its joy, her cheek  
its bloom.

Just where the mellowed rays of noon-  
day light

Streamed through the curtained gloom,  
obscurely bright,

Which wrapped the great art-galleries  
richly round,  
There hung, 'mid many a stately por-  
trait, bound  
In frames of costly ivory, carved and  
wrought,  
A picture, which the king's eyes oft had  
sought  
With anxious wonder; for day following  
day  
Would Phorbas, mutely sorrowing, make  
delay  
Going or coming from the council-hall  
To view that muffled mystery on the  
wall.  
Over it flowed a veil of silvery hue,  
With here and there fine threads of gold  
shot through  
The delicate woof; and whoso chanced  
to turn  
A glance thereon, would feel his spirit  
burn  
To pierce the jealous veil whose folds  
might hide  
Some priceless marvel. Now, at high  
noontide  
Of one calm autumn day, the king again  
Met Phorbas — his worn features drawn  
with pain,  
And in his eyes the sharp salt-rheum of  
age —  
Still poring on the picture! "Thou a  
sage!"  
Sneered Doracles, "yet idly bent, for-  
sooth,  
On vaporeng fancies?" Then, more  
harsh, "The truth!  
The *truth*, old man! What strong spell  
drags thee here?  
(Some charm, methinks, 'twixt passion  
and despair:)  
Morn after morn, forcing thine eyes to  
stray  
O'er yon blank mystery? Prythee,  
Phorbas, say  
What image lurks beneath that glimmer-  
ing shroud?  
Perchance the last king's? Well! am I  
less proud

And princely wise than he? Or art thou  
bold  
To deem *me* all unworthy to behold  
My brave forerunner?" Thereupon he  
knit  
His rugged brows, the while his soul was  
lit  
To keen, impatient wrath. With trem-  
bling hands —  
But not for fear — Phorbas unloosed the  
bands,  
Studded with diamond points, which  
clasped the veil  
Close to its place. The startled prince  
grew pale,  
As there, in all her fresh young grace,  
did shine  
The face of Daphles, with a smile di-  
vine,  
Into arch dimples rippling joyfully!  
Some faintly-pensive memory seemed to  
vie  
With deeper feelings, in the low, quick  
tone  
Wherewith the king spake, whispering  
to his own  
Half-wakened heart, — "Certes, it could  
not be,  
That she, who owned the glorious face I  
see,  
Bright with all brightness of a young  
delight,  
Yet pined and withered 'neath the fatal  
night  
Of starless grief!" To which, "Thy  
pardon, sire,"  
The old man said, "but ere my life's  
low fire  
Hath quite gone out, I fain would free  
my soul  
Of that which long hath borne me care  
and dole;  
So, sovereign lord, list to the tale I tell!"  
And therewithal did Phorbas deem it  
well  
To show how Daphles' darkened life did  
wane;  
How love, first touched by doubt, soon  
changed to pain,

And, last, blank desolation, whose wild  
stress  
Wrecked and made bare her perfect  
loveliness,  
O'erwhelming wit with beauty. "Still,"  
said he,  
"O sire! to her last hour most tenderly  
She spake of thee, her twilight reason  
set  
On the sole thought, '*My love may love  
me yet:*  
*For man's love comes with knowledge,  
so I deem,*  
*Slow-hearted man's!*' Ah, heaven! she  
could not dream,  
But *thy* name filled her dreams. When  
madness stole  
Like a dread mist about her, and her  
soul,  
Wound in its viewless cerement-folds  
accursed ——"  
"Madness!" the king cried in a sharp  
outburst  
Of wild amazement: "madness! *I* have  
known  
The mad impatience of a will o'ergrown,  
When sternly thwarted in its fiery  
zeal.  
But dreamed not how these fairy creat-  
ures feel.  
These soft, frail-natured women, if, per-  
chance,  
Love turn on them a cold or lukewarm  
glance  
Of brief denial!" Then the impatient  
red,  
In a swift flood, — but not of anger, —  
spread  
O'er the king's face; convulsed it seemed,  
and stern.  
But when from garrulous Phorbas he did  
learn  
How the queen's laurel wreath half bare  
became,  
The hot blood ebbed, and o'er its waning  
flame  
Coursed the first tear his warrior-soul  
had shed.  
Nor could he rouse again the lustihead

Of ruder thoughts, but, thickly mutter-  
ing, laid  
On the fair portrait of the sovereign  
maid  
A reverent hand; from 'midst the painted  
dome  
Of the great gallery forth he bore it  
home  
Unto the secret chamber of his rest;  
There next his couch he placed the beau-  
teous guest;  
There feasted on its sweetness; and since  
naught  
Of public import now did claim his  
thought,  
No fierce war threatened, no shrewd trea-  
ties pressed,  
Strangely the picture mastered him; it  
grew,  
As days, then weeks, and seasons, o'er  
him flew,  
A part, an inmost essence of all life,  
Which touched to joy or thrilled to  
shuddering strife  
The soul's deep-seated issues: yet, at last,  
Stronger the fierce strife waxed; the bliss  
was passed;  
And, wheresoe'er the king went, night  
or day,  
One haunting phantom barred his  
doomed way!  
But ere he reached the worst wild stage  
of woe,  
Through many a change of passion, swift  
or slow,  
The king passed downward, nearing  
treacherous death;  
And thus it happened, our old-world legend  
saith:  
The more he gazed on Daphles' blooming  
face,  
All flushed with happy youth and Hebe  
grace,  
The more her marvellous image seemed  
alive;  
He saw, or dreamed he saw, the warm  
blood strive,

In ruddier tide, with conscious hues to dye  
 Her lovely brow and swanlike neck, or vie  
 With Syrian roses on her cheeks of flame;  
 The more he gazed, the more her lips became  
 Instinct with timorous motion, till a sigh,  
 New-born of honeyed love unwittingly,  
 Seemed hovering like a murmurous fairy-bee  
 About their rich, half-parted comeliness:  
 What slight breath softly stirs the truant tress,  
 Which like a waif of sunset light did rest  
 In wandering golden lustre on her breast?  
 And what dear thought her bosom graciously  
 Heaves into gentle billows, like a sea  
 Moon-kissed, and whispering? Thus the king would task  
 Long hours with doting questions, when the mask  
 Of dull state forms and ceremonial play  
 With wearied brain and hand was cast away,  
 And he a dead maid's crafty image turned  
 To breathing life, and blissful love that burned  
 From her wild pulses and fond heart to his,  
 And on her mouth he pressed a bridegroom's kiss.

Then the sweet spell was broken; conscience spoke;  
 And in her burning depths pale memory woke.  
 Even in that gentle shape his cold self-will  
 Had strangely turned, and wrought him direful ill;

Distempered, moody, sometimes nigh distraught  
 With ceaseless pressure of one harrowing thought,  
 He grew, and hapless thrills of lonely pain;  
 Her picture, imaged on his heart and brain,  
 Ruled all his tides of being, as the moon  
 Draws changeful seas; now in a clear high noon  
 Of memories bitter-sweet his soul would swim,  
 Anon to sink in turbulent gulfs and dim  
 Of wild regret, or as the dead to lie  
 Locked in a mute, life-withering lethargy.

Creator sweet of all his fortunes high,  
 Oh, that in Hades she could hear his cry  
 Remorseful, and come back in pitying guise  
 To ease his grief and calm his tortured sighs!  
 A thousand, thousand times this wild desire  
 Would wake, and surge through all his veins like fire:  
 Followed, alas, too soon, by such deep sense  
 Of powerless will, and mortal impotence,  
 As in red hurry up from soul to cheeks  
 Runs rioting, and ever harshly seeks  
 To drag them into gaunt, gray lines of care!

Months sped eventless, with his dark despair  
 Grown darker; till, one sad November morn,  
 Set to the rhythmic wail of winds forlorn,  
 They found, just where the morning's shadowy gloom  
 Had gathered deepest in the prince's room,  
 His prostrate body, cold and turned in part  
 Upwards,—the blade's hilt glittering o'er his heart,



Where his own mad right arm had sent  
it home.  
Beneath him, in soft-tinted, fadeless  
bloom,  
Beneath him smiled the portrait he had  
torn  
Madly from off the wall, his wan face  
borne  
Next the clear brightness of that life-  
like one  
For whose fair sake he lay, at last un-  
done;  
But whose glad smile, could *she* have  
lived that hour,  
Had waned and withered inward, like a  
flower  
The storm-wind blights, at stern re-  
venge, like this,  
Of love's cold scorn and passion's unpaid  
kiss.

—◆—  
*AËTHRA.*

It is a sweet tradition, with a soul  
Of tenderest pathos! Harken, love!—  
for all  
The sacred undercurrents of the heart  
Thrill to its cordial music:  
Once, a chief,  
Philantus, king of Sparta, left the stern  
And bleak defiles of his unfruitful  
land—  
Girt by a band of eager colonists—  
To seek new homes on fair Italian  
plains.  
Apollo's oracle had darkly spoken:  
“*Where'er from cloudless skies a  
plenteous shower  
Outpours, the Fates decree that ye should  
pause  
And rear your household deities!*”  
Racked by doubt  
Philantus traversed with his faithful  
band  
Full many a bounteous realm; but still  
defeat  
Darkened his banners, and the strong-  
walled towns

His desperate sieges grimly laughed to  
scorn!  
Weighed down by anxious thoughts, one  
sultry eve  
The warrior—his rude helmet cast  
aside—  
Rested his weary head upon the lap  
Of his fair wife, who loved him ten-  
derly;  
And there he drank a generous draught  
of sleep.  
She, gazing on his brow all worn with  
toil  
And his dark locks, which pain had  
silvered over  
With glistening touches of a frosty  
rime,  
Wept on the sudden bitterly; her  
tears  
Fell on his face, and, wondering, he  
woke.  
“O blest art thou, my Aëthra, *my clear  
sky,*”  
He cried exultant, “from whose pitying  
blue  
A heart-rain falls to fertilize my fate:  
Lo! the deep riddle's solved—the gods  
spake truth!”  
So the next night he stormed Tarentum,  
took  
The enemy's host at vantage, and o'er-  
threw  
His mightiest captains. Thence with  
kindly sway  
He ruled those pleasant regions he had  
won,—  
But dearer even than his rich demesnes  
The love of her whose gentle tears un-  
locked  
The close-shut mystery of the Oracle!

—◆—  
*RENEWED.*

WELCOME, rippling sunshine!  
Welcome, joyous air!  
Like a demon shadow  
Flies the gaunt despair!

Heaven, through heights of happy  
 calm,  
 Its heart of hearts uncloses,  
 To win earth's answering love in  
 balm,  
 Her blushing thanks — in roses!

Voices from the pine-grove,  
 Where the pheasant's drumming,  
 Voices from the ferny hills  
 Alive with insect humming;

Voices low and sweet  
 From the far-off stream,  
 Where two rivulets meet  
 With the murmur of a dream;  
 Voices loud and free  
 From every bush and tree,  
 Of sportive forest bards outpouring songs  
 of gladness;  
 But over them still  
 With its passionate trill,  
 The mock-bird's jocund madness!



"Voices low and sweet  
 From the far-off stream."

Deep down the swampy brake  
 Even the poison-snake,  
 Uncoiled and basking in the noontide  
 splendor,  
 May feel, perchance on this auspicious  
 day  
 (All dark clouds rolled away),  
 Through his stagnant blood,  
 Warmed by the sunlight flood  
 A faint, far sense,  
 Coming he knows not whence,  
 Of dim intelligence.—  
 The thinnest conscious thrill that human  
 is, and tender!

Look! where on luminous wing  
 The ether's stately king,

The lone sea-eagle, circling proud and  
 slow,  
 Towers in the sapphire glow;  
 From out whose dazzling beam,  
 His resonant scream;  
 Heard even here,—a note of fierce  
 desire,—  
 Hushes to silent awe the sylvan choir,  
 Till bird and note in airy deeps up-  
 drawn  
 Are melting toward the dawn!

And hear! O! hear!  
 No longer wildly terrible and drear,  
 But as if merry pulses timed their  
 beating,  
 The frolic sea-waves near,

Dancing along like happy maidens  
 playing  
 When blithe love goes "a-Maying,"  
 And wreaking on the shore their pant-  
 ing blisses  
     In coy impulsive kisses;  
 Whilst he — poor dullard — cannot catch  
 nor hold them,  
 Nor in his massive, earthen arms en-  
 fold them,  
 The laughing virgin waves, so archly,  
 swiftly fleeting!  
     This subtle atmosphere,  
     So magically clear,  
 Melts, as it were upon my eager lip;  
 From some invisible goblet of delight  
 Idly I sip and sip  
 A wine so warm and golden  
 (From some enchanted bin the wine  
 was stolen),  
     A wine so sweet and rare,  
     Methinks a nobler birth  
     Illuminates the earth,  
 And in my heart I hear a fairy singing;  
 Yet well I know 'tis but my soul renewed,  
 Reborn and bright,  
 From grief and grief's malignant soli-  
 tude!  
 Yet well I know, Joy is the Ganymede,  
 Who in my yearning need,  
 Turns to a cordial rich the balmy air;  
 And 'tis but Hope's, divinest Hope's  
 return,  
 Which makes my inmost spirit throb  
 and burn,  
     And Hope's triumphant song,  
     So sweet and strong,  
 That all creation seems with that weird  
 music ringing!

◆◆◆

*KRISHNA AND HIS THREE HAND-  
 MAIDENS.*

AND where he sat beneath the mystic  
 stars,  
 Nigh the twin founts of Immortality,  
 That feed fair channels of the Stream  
 of Trance, —

To Krishna once his three handmaidens  
 came,  
 Asking a boon: "O king! O lord!" they  
 said,  
 "Test thou thy servants' wisdom; long  
 in dreams,  
 Born of the waters of thy Stream of  
 Trance,  
 Have we, thy fond handmaidens wan-  
 dered free,  
 And lapped in airiest wreaths of fantasy;  
 Now would we, viewless, bearing each  
 some gift  
 From thee, our father, seek the world of  
 man,  
 The world of man and pain, which  
 whoso leaves  
 Better or brighter, for thy gift bestowed  
 Most worthily, shall claim thy just re-  
 ward,  
 The Crown of Wisdom!" Krishna  
 heard, and gave  
 To each one tiny drop of diamond dew,  
 Drawn from the founts that feed the  
 Stream of Trance,  
 Wherewith, on waftage of miraculous  
 winds,  
 Breathing full south, they sought the  
 world of man,  
 The world of man and pain, that shrank  
 in drought,  
 Palsied and withered, like an old man's  
 face  
 Death-smitten.

And the first handmaiden saw  
 A monarch's fountain, sparkling in the  
 waste,  
 Glowing and fresh, though all the land  
 was sick,  
 Gasping for rain, and famished thou-  
 sands died:  
 "O brave," she said, "O beautiful  
 bright waves!  
 Like calls to like;" and so her dewdrop  
 glanced,  
 And glittered downward as a fairy star  
 Loosed from a tress of Cassiopeia's hair,  
 Down to the glorious fountain of the king.

Over the passionless bosom of the  
 sea,  
 The Indian Sea, cerulean, crystal-clear,  
 And calm, the second handmaid, hover-  
 ing, viewed —  
 Far through the tangled sea-weed and  
 cool tides  
 Pulsing 'twixt coral branches — the wide  
 lips  
 Of purpling shells that yearned to clasp  
 a pearl:  
 So where the oyster, blindly reared,  
 awaits  
 Its priceless soul — she lets the dewdrop  
 fall,  
 Thenceforth to grow a jewel fit for  
 courts,  
 And shine on swanlike necks of haughty  
 queens!

But Krishna's third handmaiden scarce  
 had felt  
 The fume from parchèd plains that made  
 the air  
 As one vast caldron of invisible fire,  
 Than casting downward pitiful eyes, she  
 saw,  
 Crouched in the brazen cere of that red  
 heat,  
 A tiny bird — a poor, weak, suffering  
 thing  
 (Its bright eyes glazed, its limbs con-  
 vulsed and prone), —  
 Dying of thirst in torture: "Ah, kind  
 Lord  
 Krishna," his handmaid murmured,  
 "speed thy gift,  
 Best yielded here, to soothe, perchance  
 to save  
 The lowliest mortal creature cursed with  
 pain!"  
 Gently she shook the dewdrop from her  
 palm  
 Into the silent throat that thirst had  
 sealed,  
 Soon silent, sealed no more, — for, lo!  
 the bird  
 Fluttered, arose, was strengthened, and  
 through calms

Of happy ether, echoing fair and far,  
 Rang the charmed music of the nightin-  
 gale.

And so, where crowned beneath the  
 mystic stars,  
 Nigh the twin founts of immortality,  
 Krishna, the father, saw what ruth was  
 hers,  
 And, smiling, to his wise handmaiden's  
 rule  
 Gave the great storm-clouds and the  
 mists of heaven,  
 Till at her voice the mighty vapors  
 rolled  
 Up from the mountain-gorges, and the  
 seas,  
 And cloudland darkened, and the grate-  
 ful rain,  
 Burdened with benedictions, rushed and  
 foamed  
 Down the hot channels, and the foliaged  
 hills,  
 And the frayed lips and languid limbs  
 of flowers:  
 And all the woodland; laughed, and  
 earth was glad!

—◆—  
 UNDER THE PINE.

TO THE MEMORY OF HENRY TIMROD.

The same majestic pine is lifted high  
 Against the twilight sky,  
 The same low, melancholy music grieves  
 Amid the topmost leaves,  
 As when I watched, and mused, and  
 dreamed with him,  
 Beneath these shadows dim.

O Tree! hast thou no memory at thy  
 core  
 Of one who comes no more?  
 No yearning memory of those scenes  
 that were  
 So richly calm and fair,  
 When the last rays of sunset, shimmer-  
 ing down,  
 Flashed like a royal crown?

And he, with hand outstretched and  
eyes ablaze,  
Looked forth with burning gaze,  
And seemed to drink the sunset like  
strong wine.  
Or, hushed in trance divine,  
Hailed the first shy and timorous glance  
from far  
Of evening's virgin star?

O Tree! against thy mighty trunk he  
laid  
His weary head; thy shade  
Stole o'er him like the first cool spell of  
sleep:  
It brought a peace so deep  
The unquiet passion died from out his  
eyes,  
As lightning from stilled skies.

And in that calm he loved to rest, and  
hear  
The soft wind-angels, clear  
And sweet, among the uppermost  
branches sighing:  
Voices he heard replying  
(Or so he dreamed) far up the mystic  
height,  
And pinions rustling light.

O Tree! have not his poet-touch, his  
dreams  
So full of heavenly gleams,  
Wrought through the folded dullness of  
thy bark,  
And all thy nature dark  
Stirred to slow throbbings, and the flut-  
tering fire  
Of faint, unknown desire?

At least to me there sweeps no rugged  
ring  
That girds the forest-king  
No immemorial stain, or awful rent  
(The mark of tempest spent).  
No delicate leaf, no lithe bough, vine-  
o'ergrown,  
No distant, fleckering cone,

But speaks of him, and seems to bring  
once more  
The joy, the love of yore;  
But most when breathed from out the  
sunset-land  
The sunset airs are bland,  
That blow between the twilight and the  
night,  
Ere yet the stars are bright;

For then that quiet eve comes back to  
me,  
When, deeply, thrillingly,  
He spake of lofty hopes which vanquish  
Death;  
And on his mortal breath  
A language of immortal meanings hung,  
That fired his heart and tongue.

For then unearthly breezes stir and  
sigh,  
Murmuring, "Look up! 'tis I:  
Thy friend is near thee! Ah, thou  
canst not see!"  
And through the sacred tree  
Passes what seems a wild and sentient  
thrill —  
Passes, and all is still! —

Still as the grave which holds his tran-  
quil form,  
Hushed after many a storm. —  
Still as the calm that crowns his marble  
brow,  
No pain can wrinkle now. —  
Still as the peace — pathetic peace of  
God —  
That wraps the holy sod,

Where every flower from our dead min-  
strel's dust  
Should bloom, a type of trust. —  
That faith which waxed to wings of  
heavenward might  
To bear his soul from night, —  
That faith, dear Christ! whereby we  
pray to meet  
His spirit at God's feet!

*A DREAM OF THE SOUTH WINDS.*

O FRESH, how fresh and fair  
Through the crystal gulfs of air,  
The fairy South Wind floateth on her  
subtle wings of balm!

And the green earth lapped in bliss,  
To the magic of her kiss  
Seems yearning upward fondly through  
the golden-crested calm!

From the distant Tropic strand,  
Where the billows, bright and bland,  
Go creeping, curling round the palms  
with sweet, faint undertune  
From its fields of purpling flowers  
Still wet with fragrant showers,  
The happy South Wind lingering sweeps  
the royal blooms of June.

All heavenly fancies rise  
On the perfume of her sighs,  
Which steep the inmost spirit in a lan-  
guor rare and fine,  
And a peace more pure than sleep's  
Unto dim, half-conscious deeps,  
Transports me, lulled and dreaming, on  
its twilight tides divine.

Those dreams! ah me! the splendor,  
So mystical and tender,  
Wherewith like soft heat-lightnings  
they gird their meaning round,  
And those waters, calling, calling,  
With a nameless charm enthralling,  
Like the ghost of music melting on a  
rainbow spray of sound!

Touch, touch me not, nor wake me,  
Lest grosser thoughts o'ertake me,  
From earth receding faintly with her  
dreary din and jars, —  
What viewless arms caress me?  
What whispered voices bless me,  
With welcomes dropping dewlike from  
the weird and wondrous stars?

Alas! dim, dim, and dimmer  
Grows the preternatural glimmer  
Of that trance the South Wind brought  
me on her subtle wings of balm.

For behold! its spirit flieth,  
And its fairy murmur dieth,  
And the silence closing round me is a  
dull and soulless calm!

*IN THE MIST.*

MORE fearful grows the hillside way,  
The gloom no softening breeze hath  
kissed!

I glance far upward to the day.  
But scarce can catch one faltering ray  
From out the mist!

Ah, heaven! to think youth's morning  
prime,  
All flushed with rose and amethyst,  
Its tender loves, its hopes sublime,  
Should shrink to this dull twilight-time  
Of cold and mist!

No tranquil evening hour descends,  
When peace with memory holds her  
tryst,  
But doubt with prescient terror blends,  
And grief her mournful curfew sends  
Along the mist!

Weird shapes and wild, stalk strangely  
by,  
And say, what bodeful voices hissed  
Where yonder blasted pine-trunks lie?  
What mystic phantoms shuddering fly  
Far down the mist?

Dark omens all! they bid me stay.  
Unsheathe resolve, pause, strive, re-  
sist  
That poisonous charm which haunts my  
way;  
Alas! the fiend, more bold than they.  
Still rules the mist!

And now from gulfs of turbulent gloom  
A torrent's threatening thunder;—  
list!

That ravening roar! that hungry boom!  
Down, down I pass to meet my doom  
Within the mist!

*A SUMMER MOOD.*

"Now, by my faith a gruesome mood, for summer!" — THOMAS HEYWARD (1597).

AH, me! for evermore, for evermore

These human hearts of ours must  
yearn and sigh,

While down the dells and up the mur-  
murous shore

Nature renews her immortality.

The heavens of June stretch calm and  
bland above,

June roses blush with tints of Orient  
skies,

But we, by graves of joy, desire, and  
love,

Mourn in a world which breathes of  
Paradise!

The sunshine mocks the tears it may  
not dry,

The breezes — tricky couriers of the  
air —

Child-roisterers winged, and lightly flut-  
tering by —

Blow their gay trumpets in the face  
of care;

And bolder winds, the deep sky's pas-  
sionate speech,

Woven into rhythmic raptures of de-  
sire,

Or fugues of mystic victory, sadly reach  
Our humbled souls, to rack, not raise  
them higher!

The field-birds seem to twit us as they  
pass

With their small blisses, piped so clear  
and loud;

The cricket triumphs o'er us in the grass,  
And the lark, glancing beamlike up  
the cloud,

Sings us to scorn with his keen rhapso-  
dies;

Small things and great unconscious  
tauntings bring

To edge our cares, whilst we, the proud  
and wise,

Envy the insect's joy, the birdling's  
wing!

And thus for evermore, till time shall  
cease,

Man's soul and Nature's — each a sep-  
arate sphere —

Revolve, the one in discord, one in  
peace,

And who shall make the solemn mys-  
tery clear?

*MIDNIGHT.*

The Moon, a ghost of her sweet self,  
And wading through a watery cloud,

Which wraps her lustre like a shroud,  
Creeps up the gray, funereal sky,  
Wearily! how wearily!

The Wind, with low, bewildered wail

A homeless spirit, sadly lost,  
Sweeps shuddering o'er the pallid  
frost,

And faints afar, with heart-sick sigh,  
Drearily! how drearily!

And now a deathly stillness falls

On earth and heaven, save when the  
shrill,

Malignant owl o'er heath and hill  
Smites the wan silence with a cry,  
Eerily! how eerily!

*THE BONNY BROWN HAND.*

OH, drearily, how drearily, the sombre  
eve comes down!

And wearily, how wearily, the seaward  
breezes blow!

But place your little hand in mine — so  
dainty, yet so brown!

For household toil hath worn away its  
rosy-tinted snow:

But I fold it, wife, the nearer,  
 And I feel, my love, 'tis dearer  
 Than all dear things of earth,  
 As I watch the pensive gloaming,  
 And my wild thoughts cease from  
 roaming,  
 And birdlike furl their pinions close be-  
 side our peaceful hearth:  
 Then rest your little hand in mine, while  
 twilight shimmers down, —  
 That little hand, that fervent hand, that  
 hand of bonny brown, —  
 The hand that holds an honest heart,  
 and rules a happy hearth.

Oh, merrily, how merrily, our children's  
 voices rise!

And cheerily, how cheerily, their tiny  
 footsteps fall!

But, hand, you must not stir awhile, for  
 there our nestling lies,

Snug in the cradle at your side, the  
 loveliest far of all;

And she looks so arch and airy,  
 So softly pure a fairy, —

She scarce seems bound to earth;

And her dimpled mouth keeps  
 smiling,

As at some child fay's beguiling,  
 Who flies from Ariel realms to light her  
 slumbers on the hearth.

Ha, little hand, you yearn to move, and  
 smooth the bright locks down!

But, little hand, — but, trembling hand,  
 — but, hand of bonny brown,

Stay, stay with me! — she will not flee,  
 our birdling on the hearth.

Oh, fittingly, how fittingly, the parlor  
 shadows thrill,

As wittingly, half wittingly, they seem  
 to pulse and pass!

And solemn sounds are on the wind that  
 sweeps the haunted hill,

And murmurs of a ghostly breath from  
 out the graveyard grass.

Let me feel your glowing fingers

In a clasp that warms and lingers

With the full, fond love of earth,

Till the joy of love's completeness  
 In this flush of fireside sweetness,  
 Shall brim our hearts with spirit-wine,  
 outpoured beside the hearth.  
 So steal your little hand in mine, while  
 twilight falters down, —  
 That little hand, that fervent hand, that  
 hand of bonny brown, —  
 The hand which points the path to  
 heaven, yet makes a heaven of  
 earth.

— ◆ —  
 SONNETS.

THE COTTAGE ON THE HILL.

ON a steep hillside, to all airs that blow,  
 Open, and open to the varying sky,  
 Our cottage homestead, smiling tran-  
 quilly,

Catches morn's earliest and eve's latest  
 glow;

Here, far from worldly strife, and  
 pompous show,

The peaceful seasons glide serenely by,  
 Fulfil their missions, and as calmly die,  
 As waves on quiet shores when winds  
 are low.

Fields, lonely paths, the one small glim-  
 mering rill

That twinkles like a wood-fay's mirth-  
 ful eye,

Under moist bay-leaves, clouds fantas-  
 tical

That float and change at the light  
 breeze's will, —

To me, thus lapped in sylvan luxury,  
 Are more than death of kings, or  
 empires' fall.

NOVEMBER.

WITHIN the deep-blue eyes of Heaven a  
 haze

Of saddened passion dims their tender  
 light,

For that her fair queen-child, the Sum-  
 mer bright,



Lies a wan corse amidst her mouldering  
bays:  
The sullen Autumn lifts no voice of  
praise  
To herald Winter's cold and cruel  
night,  
But winds foreboding fill the desolate  
night,  
And die at dawning down wild wood-  
land ways:  
The sovereign sun at noonday smileth  
cold,  
As through a shroud he hath no power  
to part,  
While huddled flocks crouch listless  
round their fold;  
The mock-bird's dumb, no more with  
cheerful dart  
Upsoars the lark through morning's  
quivering gold,  
And dumb or dead, methinks, great  
Nature's heart!

## SYLVAN MUSINGS. — IN MAY.

COUCHED in cool shadow, girt by  
billowy swells  
Of foliage, rippling into buds and  
flowers,  
Here I repose o'erfanned by breezy  
bowers, —  
Lulled by a delicate stream whose  
music wells  
Tender and low through those luxuriant  
dells,  
Wherefrom a single broad-leaved chest-  
nut towers; —  
Still musing in the long, lush, languid  
hours, —  
As in a dream I heard the tinkling  
bells  
Of far-off kine, glimpsed through the  
verdurous sheen,  
Blent with faint beatings from the dis-  
tant croft, —  
The bee-throngs murmurous in the  
golden fern,  
The wood-doves veiled by depths of  
flickering green, —

And near me, where the wild "queen  
fairies" \* burn,  
The thrush's bridal passion, warm and  
soft!

## POETS.

SOME thunder on the heights of song,  
their race  
Godlike in power, while others at their  
feet  
Are breathing measures scarce less  
strong and sweet  
Than those which peal from out that  
loftiest place;  
Meantime, just midway on the mount,  
his face  
Fairer than April heavens, when storms  
retreat,  
And on their edges rain and sunshine  
meet.  
Pipes the soft lyrist lays of tender  
grace;  
But where the slopes of bright Parnassus  
sweep  
Near to the common ground, a various  
throng  
Chant lowlier measures, — yet each tune-  
ful strain  
(The silvery minor of earth's perfect  
song)  
Blends with that music of the topmost  
steep,  
O'er whose vast realm the master min-  
strels reign!

## SONNET.

BEHOLD! how weirdly, wonderfully  
grand  
The shades and colors of yon sunset sky!  
Rare isles of light in crimson oceans lie,  
Whose airy waves seem rippling, bright  
and bland,  
Up the soft slopes of many a mystic  
strand, —

\* "Queen fairy," the name given popularly  
to an exquisite Southern wild flower.

While luminous capes, and mountains  
towering high  
In golden pomp and proud regality,  
O'erlook the frontier of that fairy land,  
But now, in transformations swift and  
strange  
The vision changes! Castles glittering  
fair,

And sapphire battlements of loftiest  
range  
Commingle with vast spire and gorgeous  
dome,  
Round which the sunset rolls its purpling  
foam,  
Girding this transient Venice of the  
air.



“Upveiled in yonder dim ethereal sea,  
Its airy towers the work of phantom spells,  
A viewless belfry tolls its wizard bells.”

THE PHANTOM BELLS.

UPVEILED in yonder dim ethereal sea,  
Its airy towers the work of phantom  
spells,  
A viewless belfry tolls its wizard bells,  
Pealed o'er this populous earth perpet-  
ually.  
Some hear, some hear them not; but  
aye they be

Laden with one strange note that sinks  
or swells.  
Now dread as doom, now gentle as fare-  
wells,  
Time's dirge borne ever toward eternity.  
Each hour its measured breath sobs out  
and dies,  
While the bell tolls its requiem,—  
“*Passing, past,*”—  
The sole sad burden of their long refrain.

Still, with those hours each pang, each  
pleasure flies,  
Brief sweet, brief bitter, — all our days  
are vain,  
Knolled into drear forgetfulness at last.

## THE LIFE-FOREST.

IN springtime of our youth, life's pur-  
pling shade,  
Foliage and fruit, do hang so thickly  
round,  
We seem glad tenants of enchanted  
ground,  
O'er which for aye dream-whispering  
winds have played.  
Then summer comes, her full-blown  
charm is laid  
On all the forest aisles; from bound to  
bound  
Floats woodland music, and the silvery  
sound  
Of fountains babbling to the golden  
glade.  
Next, a chill breath, the breath of Au-  
tumn's doom  
Strips the fair sylvan branches, one by  
one,  
Till the bare landscape broadens to our  
view;  
Behind, black tree boles blot the twilight  
blue.  
Before, unfoliated, bald of light and  
bloom,  
Our pathway darkens towards the dark-  
ening sun!

## CLOUD FANTASIES.

WILD, rapid, dark, like dreams of threat-  
ening doom,  
Low cloud-racks scud before the level  
wind;  
Beneath them, the bare moorlands,  
blank and blind,  
Stretch, mournful, through pale lengths  
of glimmering gloom:  
Afar, grand mimic of the sea waves'  
boom,

Hollow, yet sweet as if a Titan pined  
O'er deathless woes, yon mighty wood,  
consigned  
To autumn's blight, bemoans its  
perished bloom;  
The dim air creeps with a vague shud-  
dering thrill  
Down from those monstrous mists the  
sea-gale brings,  
Half formless, inland, poisoning earth  
and sky:  
Most from yon black cloud, shaped like  
vampire wings  
O'er a lost angel's visage, deathly-still,  
Uplifted toward some dread eternity.

## SONNET.

I FEAR thee not, O Death! nay, oft I pine  
To clasp thy passionless bosom to mine  
own,  
And on thy heart sob out my latest  
moan.  
Ere lapped and lost in thy strange sleep  
divine;  
But much I fear lest that chill breath of  
thine  
Should freeze all tender memories into  
stone, —  
Lest ruthless and malign Oblivion  
Quench the last spark that lingers on  
love's shrine:  
O God! to moulder through dark, date-  
less years,  
The while all loving ministries shall  
cease,  
And time assuage the fondest mourner's  
tears!  
Here lies the sting! — this, *this* it is to die!  
And yet great nature rounds all strife  
with peace,  
And life or death, each rests in mystery!

## SONNET.

OF all the woodland flowers of earlier  
spring,  
These golden jasmines, each an air-hung  
bower,

Meet for the Queen of Fairies' tiring  
hour,  
Seem loveliest and most fair in blossoming;  
How yonder mock-bird thrills his fervid wing  
And long, lithe throat, where twinkling  
flower on flower  
Rains the globed dewdrops down, a diamond shower,  
O'er his brown head poised as in act to sing;  
Lo! the swift sunshine floods the flowery  
urns,  
Girding their delicate gold with matchless light,  
Till the blent life of bough, leaf, blossom,  
burns;  
Then, then outbursts the mock-bird clear  
and loud,  
Half-drunken with perfume, veiled by radiance bright,  
A star of music in a fiery cloud!

◆

FIRE-PICTURES.

O! THE rolling, rushing fire!  
O! the fire!  
How it rages, wilder, higher,  
Like a hot heart's fierce desire,  
Thrilled with passion that appalls us,  
Half appalls, and yet enthalls us,  
O! the madly mounting fire!

Up it sweepeth,— wave and quiver, —  
Roaring like an angry river, —  
O! the fire!  
Which an earthquake backward turneth,  
Backward o'er its riven courses,  
Backward to its mountain sources,  
While the blood-red sunset burneth,  
Like a God's face grand with ire,  
O! the bursting, billowy fire!

Now the sombre smoke-clouds thicken  
To a dim Plutonian night; —  
O! the fire!  
How its flickering glories sicken,

Sicken at the blight!  
Pales the flame, and spreads the vapor,  
Till scarce larger than a taper,  
Flares the waning, struggling light:  
O! thou wan, faint-hearted fire,  
Sadly darkling,  
Weakly sparkling,  
Rise! assert thy might!  
Aspire! aspire!

At the word, a vivid lightning,  
Threatening, swaying, darting, brightening,  
Where the loftiest yule-log towers, —  
Bursts once more,  
Sudden bursts the awakened fire;  
Hear it roar!  
Roar, and mount high, high, and higher,  
Till beneath,  
Only here and there a wreath  
Of the passing smoke-cloud lowers, —  
Ha! the glad, victorious fire!

O! the fire!  
How it changes,  
Changes, ranges  
Through all phases fancy-wrought,  
Changes like a wizard thought;  
See Vesuvian lavas rushing  
'Twixt the rocks! the ground asunder  
Shivers at the earthquake's thunder;  
And the glare of Hell is flushing  
Startled hill-top, quaking town;  
Temples, statues, towers go down,  
While beyond that lava flood,  
Dark-red like blood,  
I behold the children fleeing  
Clasped by many a frenzied hand;  
What a flight, and what a meeting,  
On the ruined strand!

O! the fire!  
Eddying higher, higher, higher  
From the vast volcanic cones;  
O! the agony, the groans  
Of those thousands stifling there!  
"Fancy," say you? but how near  
Seem the anguish and the fear!  
Swelling, turbulent, pitiless fire!

'Tis a mad northeastern breeze  
 Raving o'er the prairie seas;  
 How, like living things, the grasses  
 Tremble as the storm-breath passes,  
 Ere the flames' devouring magic  
 Coils about their golden splendor,  
     And the tender  
 Glory of the mellowing fields  
 To the wild destroyer yields;  
 Dreadful waste for flowering blooms,  
 Desolate darkness, like the tomb's,  
 Over which there broods the while,  
 Instead of daylight's happy smile,  
 A pall malign and tragic!

    Marvellous fire!  
     Changing, ranging  
 Through all phases fancy-wrought,  
 Changing like a charmed thought;  
 A stir, a murmur deep,  
 Like airs that rustle over jungle-reeds,  
 Where the gaunt tiger breathes but half  
     asleep;

    A bodeful stir, —  
 And then the victim of his own pure  
     deeds,

    I mark the mighty fire  
 Clasps in its cruel palms a martyr-saint,  
     Christ's faithful worshipper;  
 One mortal cry affronts the pitying day,  
 One ghastly arm uplifts itself to heav-  
     en —

When the swart smoke is riven, —  
 Ere the last sob of anguish dies away,  
 The worn limbs droop and faint,  
 And o'er those reverend hairs, silvery  
     and hoary,

Settles the semblance of a crown of  
     glory.

    Tireless fire!  
     Changing, ranging  
 Through all phases fancy-wrought,  
 Changing like a Protean thought;  
 Here's a glowing, warm interior,  
 A Dutch tavern, rich and rosy  
 With deep color, — sill and floor  
 Dazzling as the white seashore,  
 Where within his armchair cozy

Sits a toper, stout and yellow,  
 Blinking o'er his steamy bowl;  
     Hugely drinking,  
     Slyly winking,  
 As the pot-house Hebe passes,  
 With a clink and clang of glasses;  
 Ha! 'tis plain, the stout old fellow —  
 As his wont is — waxes mellow,  
 Nodding 'twixt each dreamy leer,  
 Swaying in his elbow chair,  
 Next to one, — a portly peasant, —  
 Pipe in hand, whose swelling cheek,  
 Jolly, rubicund, and sleek,  
 Puffs above the blazing coal;  
 While his heavy, half-shut, eyes  
 Watch the smoke-wreaths evanescent,  
 Eddying lightly as they rise,  
 Eddying lightly and aloof  
 Toward the great, black, oaken roof!

Dreaming still, from out the fire  
 Faces grinning and grotesque,  
 Flash an eery glance upon me;  
 Or, once more, methinks I sun me  
 On the breadths of happy plain  
 Sloping towards the southern main,  
 Where the inmost soul of shadow  
     Wins a golden heat,  
 And the hill-side and the meadow  
 (Where the vines and clover meet,  
 Twining round the virgins' feet,  
 While the natural arabesque  
 Of the foliage grouped above them  
 Droops, as if the leaves did love them,  
 Over brow, and lips, and eyes)  
 Gleam with hints of Paradise!

    Ah! the fire!  
     Gently glowing,  
     Fairly flowing,  
 Like a rivulet rippling deep  
 Through the meadow-lands of sleep,  
 Bordered where its music swells,  
 By the languid lotos-bells,  
 And the twilight asphodels;  
 Mingled with a richer boon  
 Of queen-lilies, each a moon,  
 Orbèd into white completeness;  
 O! the perfume! the rare sweetness

Of those grouped and fairy flowers,  
 Over which the love-lorn hours  
 Linger, — not alone for them,  
 Though the lotos swings its stem  
 With a lulling stir of leaves,—  
 Though the lady-lily waves,  
 And a silvery undertune  
 From some mystic wind-song grieves  
 Dainty sweet amid the bells  
 Of the twilight asphodels;  
 But because a charm more rare  
 Glorifies the mellow air,  
 In the gleam of lifted eyes,  
 In the tranquil ecstasies  
 Of two lovers, leaf-embowered,  
     Lingering there,  
 Each of whose fair lives hath flowered,  
 Like the lily-petals finely,  
 Like the asphodel divinely.

    Titan arches!  
     Titan spires!  
 Pillars whose vast capitals  
 Tower toward Cyclopean halls,  
 And whose unknown bases pierce  
 Down the nether universe;  
 Countless coruscations glimmer,  
 Glow and darken, wane and shimmer,  
 'Twixt majestic standards, swooping, —  
 Like the wings of some strange bird  
 By mysterious currents stirred  
 Of great winds, — or darkly drooping,  
 In a hush sublime as death,  
 When the conflict's quivering breath  
 Sobs its gory life away,  
 At the close of fateful marches,  
 On an empire's natal day:  
 Countless coruscations glimmer,  
 Glow and darken, wane and shimmer,  
 Round the shafts, and round the walls,  
 Whence an ebon splendor falls  
 On the scar-seamed, angel bands, —  
     (Desolate bands!)  
 Grasping in their ghostly hands  
 Weapons of an antique age,  
 From some lost, celestial age,  
 When the serried throngs were hurled  
 Blasted to the under world:  
 Shattered spear-heads, broken brands,

And the mammoth, moonlike shields,  
 Blazoned on their lurid fields,  
 With uncouth, malignant forms,  
     Glowing, wild,  
 Like the huge cloud-masses piled  
 Up a Heaven of storms!

Ah, the faint and flickering fire!  
     Ah, the fire!  
 Like a young man's transient ire,  
 Like an old man's last desire,  
 Lo! it falters, dies!  
 Still, through weary, half-closed lashes,  
     Still I see,  
     But brokenly, but mistily,  
     Fall and rise,  
     Rise and fall,  
 Ghosts of shifting fantasy;  
 Now the embers, smouldered all,  
 Sink to ruin; sadder dreams  
 Follow on their vanished gleams;  
 Wailingly the spirits call,  
 Spirits on the night-winds solemn,  
 Wraiths of happy Hopes that left me;  
 (Cruel! why did ye depart?)  
 Hopes that sleep, their youthful riot  
 Mergèd in an awful quiet,  
 With the heavy grief-moulds pressed  
 On each pallid, pulseless breast,  
 In that graveyard called **THE HEART**,  
     Stern and lone.

    Needing no memorial stone,  
 And no blazoned column:  
     Let them rest!  
     Let them rest!  
 Yes, 't is useless to remember  
 May-morn in the mirk December;  
 Still, O Hopes! because ye were  
 Beautiful, and strong, and fair,  
 Nobly brave, and sweetly bright,  
     Who shall dare  
 Scorn me, if through moistened lashes,  
 Musing by my hearthstone blighted,  
 Weary, desolate, benighted, —  
 I, because those sweet Hopes left me,  
 I, because my fate bereft me,  
     Mourn my dead,  
     Mourn, — and shed  
 Hot tears in the ashes?

## AN ANNIVERSARY.

O LOVE, it is our wedding day!

This morn,—how swift the seasons  
flee! —

A virgin morn of cloudless May,  
You gave your loyal hand to me,  
Your dainty hand, clasped sweet and sure  
As Love's sweet self, for evermore!

O Love, it is our wedding-day,  
And memory flies from now to then;  
I mark the soft heat-lightning play  
Of blushes o'er your cheek again,  
And shy but fond foreshadowings rise  
Of tranquil joy in tender eyes.

O Love, it is our wedding-day;  
The very rustling of your dress,  
The trembling of your arm that lay  
On mine, with timorous happiness,  
Your fluttered breath and faint foot-  
fall, —

Ah, sweet, I hear, I see them all!

O Love, it is our wedding-day,  
And backward Time's strange current  
rolls,

Till life's and love's auspicious May  
Once more is blooming in our souls,  
And larklike, swell the songs of hope,  
Your blissful bridal horoscope.

O Love, it is our wedding-day, —  
Yet say, did those fair hopes but sing,  
Lapped in the tuneful morn of May,  
To die or droop on faltering wing,  
When noontide heats and evening  
chills  
Made pale the flowers and veiled the  
hills?

O Love, it is our wedding-day,  
And none of those glad hopes of  
youth,

Thrilled to its height, outpoured a lay  
To match our future's simple truth:  
Though deep the joy of vow and shrine,  
Our walled calm is more divine!

O Love, it is our wedding-day!

Life's summer, with slow-waning  
beam,  
Tints the near autumn's cloud-land gray  
To softness of a fairy dream,  
Whence peace by musing pathos kissed,  
Smiles through a veil of golden mist.

O Love, it is our wedding-day;  
The conscious winds are whispering  
low  
Those passionate secrets of the May  
Fraught with your kisses long ago;  
Warm memories of our years remote  
Are trembling in the mock-bird's throat.

O Love, it is our wedding-day, —  
And not a thrush in woodland bowers,  
And not a rivulet's silvery lay,  
Nor tiny bee-song 'mid the flowers,  
Nor any voice of land or sea,  
But deepens love to ecstasy!

Our wedding-day! The soul's noontide!  
In these rare words at watchful rest  
What sweet, melodious meanings hide  
Like birds within one balmy nest,  
Each quivering with an impulse strong  
To flood all heaven and earth with song!

—◆—  
FROM THE WOODS.

WHY should I, with a mournful, mor-  
bid spleen,  
Lament that here, in this half-desert  
scene,  
My lot is placed?  
At least the poet-winds are bold and  
loud, —  
At least the sunset glorifies the cloud,  
And forests old and proud  
Rustle their verdurous banners o'er the  
waste.

Perchance 'tis best that I, whose Fate's  
eclipse  
Seems final, — I, whose sluggish life-  
wave slips  
Languid away, —

Should here, within these lowly walks,  
 apart  
 From the fierce throbbings of the pop-  
 ulous mart,  
 Commune with mine own heart,  
 While Wisdom blooms from buried  
 Hope's decay.

Nature, though wild her forms, sus-  
 tains me still;  
 The founts are musical, — the barren  
 hill  
 Glows with strange lights;  
 Through solemn pine-groves the small  
 rivulets fleet  
 Sparkling, as if a Naiad's silvery feet  
 In quick and coy retreat,  
 Glanced through the star-gleams on calm  
 summer nights;

And the great sky, the royal heaven  
 above,  
 Darkens with storms or melts with  
 hues of love;  
 While far remote,  
 Just where the sunlight smites the  
 woods with fire,  
 Wakens the multitudinous sylvan  
 choir;  
 Their innocent love's desire  
 Poured in a rill of song from each har-  
 monious throat.

My walls are crumbling, but immortal  
 looks  
 Smile on me here from faces of rare  
 books:  
 Shakspeare consoles  
 My heart with true philosophies; a  
 balm  
 Of spiritual dews from humbler song  
 or psalm  
 Fills me with tender calm,  
 Or through hushed heavens of soul Mil-  
 ton's deep thunder rolls!

And more than all, o'er shattered  
 wrecks of Fate,  
 The relics of a happier time and state,  
 My nobler life

Shines on unquenched! O deathless  
 love that lies  
 In the clear midnight of those passion-  
 ate eyes!  
 Joy waneth! Fortune flies!  
 What then? Thou still art here, soul of  
 my soul, my Wife!

## DOLCE FAR NIENTE.

LET the world roll blindly on!  
 Give me shadow, give me sun,  
 And a perfumed eve as this is:  
 Let me lie,  
 Dreamfully,  
 When the last quick sunbeams shiver  
 Spears of light athwart the river,  
 And a breeze, which seems the sigh  
 Of a fairy floating by,  
 Coyly kisses  
 Tender leaf and feathered grasses;  
 Yet so soft its breathing passes,  
 These tall ferns, just glimmering o'er me,  
 Blending goldenly before me,  
 Hardly quiver!

I have done with worldly scheming,  
 Mocking show and hollow seeming!  
 Let me lie  
 Idly here,  
 Lapped in lulling waves of air,  
 Facing full the shadowy sky.  
 Fame! — the very sound is dreary, —  
 Shut, O soul! thine eyelids weary,  
 For all nature's voices say,  
 "'Tis the close — the close of day, &  
 Thought and grief have had their sway:"  
 Now Sleep bares her balmy breast, —  
 Whispering low  
 (Low as moon-set tides that flow  
 Up still beaches far away;  
 While, from out the lucid West,  
 Flutelike winds of murmurous breath  
 Sink to tender-panting death),  
 "On my bosom take thy rest;  
 (Care and grief have had their day!)  
 'Tis the hour for dreaming,  
 Fragrant rest, elysian dreaming!"



*CAMBYSES AND THE MACROBIAN  
BOW.*

ONE morn, hard by a slumberous stream-  
let's wave,  
The plane-trees stirless in the unbreath-  
ing calm,  
And all the lush-red roses drooped in  
dream,  
Lay King Cambyses, idle as a cloud  
That waits the wind,—aimless of thought  
and will,—  
But with vague evil, like the lightning's  
bolt  
Ere yet the electric death be forged to  
smite,  
Seething at heart. His courtiers ringed  
him round,  
Whereof was one who to his comrades'  
ears,  
With bated breath and wonder-archèd  
brows,  
Extolled a certain Bactrian's matchless  
skill  
Displayed in bowercraft: at whose mar-  
vellous feats,  
Eagerly vaunted, the King's soul grew  
hot  
With envy, for himself erewhile had been  
Rated the mightiest archer in his realm.  
Slowly he rose, and pointing southward,  
said,  
"Seest thou, Prexaspes, yonder slender  
palm,  
A mere wan shadow, quivering in the  
light,  
Topped by a ghastly leaf-crown? Pri-  
thee, now,  
Can this, thy famous Bactrian, standing  
here,  
Cleave with his shaft a hand's breadth  
marked thereon?"  
To which Prexaspes answered, "Nay,  
my lord:  
I spake of feats compassed by mortal  
skill,  
Not of gods' prowess." Unto whom,  
the King:—  
"And if myself, Prexaspes, made essay,

Think'st thou, wise counsellor, I too  
should fail?"  
"Needs must I, sire,"—albeit the court-  
ier's voice  
Trembled, and some dark prescience  
bade him pause,—  
"Needs must I hold such cunning more  
than man's;  
And for the rest, I pray thy pardon,  
King,  
But yester-eve, amid the feast and dance,  
Thou tarried'st with the beakers over-  
long."

The thick, wild, treacherous eyebrows of  
the King,  
That looked a sheltering ambush for ill  
thoughts  
Waxing to manhood of malignant acts,  
These treacherous eyebrows, pent-house  
fashion, closed  
O'er the black orbits of his fiery eyes,—  
Which, clouded thus, but flashed a dead-  
lier gleam  
On all before him: suddenly as fire,  
Half choked and smouldering in its own  
dense smoke,  
Bursts into roaring radiance and swift  
flame,  
Touched by keen breaths of liberating  
wind,—  
So now Cambyses' eyes a stormy joy  
Stormily filled; for on Prexaspes' son,  
His first-born son, they lingered,—a fair  
boy  
(Midmost his fellow-pages flushed with  
sport),  
Who, in his office of King's cupbearer,  
So gracious and so sweet were all his  
ways,  
Had even the captious sovereign seemed  
to please;  
While for the court, the reckless, revel-  
ling court,  
They loved him one and all:  
"Go," said Cambyses now, his voice a  
hiss,  
Poisonous and low, "go, bind my dainty  
page

To yonder palm-tree; bind him fast and  
sure,  
So that no finger stirreth; which being  
done,  
Fetch me, Prexaspes, the Macrobian  
bow."

Thus ordered, thus accomplished, fast  
they bound  
The innocent child, the while that mam-  
moth bow,  
Brought by the spies from Ethiopian  
camps,  
Lay in the King's hand; slowly, sternly  
up,  
He reared it to the level of his sight,  
Reared, and bent back its oaken massive-  
ness  
Till the vast muscles, tough as grape-  
vines, bulged  
From naked arm and shoulder, and the  
horns  
Of the fierce weapon groaning, almost  
met,  
When, with one lowering glance askance  
at him, —  
His doubting satrap, — the King coolly  
said,  
"Prexaspes, look, my aim is at the  
heart!"

Then came the sharp twang and the  
deadly whirr  
Of the loosed arrow, followed by the dull,  
Drear echo of a bolt that smites its mark;  
And those of keenest vision shook to  
see  
The fair child fallen forward across his  
bonds,  
With all his limbs a-quivering. Quoth  
the King,  
Clapping Prexaspes' shoulder, as in glee,  
"Go thou, and tell me how that shaft  
hath sped!"  
Forward the wretched father, step by  
step,  
Crept, as one creeps whom black Hadëan  
dreams,  
Visions of fate and fear unutterable,

Draw, tranced and rigid, towards some  
definite goal  
Of horror; thus he went, and thus he  
saw  
What never in the noontide or the night,  
Awake or sleeping, idle or in toil,  
'Neath the wild forest or the perfumed  
lamps  
Of palaces, shall leave his stricken sight  
Unblasted, or his spirit purged of woe.

Prexaspes saw, yet lived; saw, and re-  
turned  
Where still environed by his dissolute  
court,  
Cambyses leaned, half scornful, on his  
bow:  
The old man's face was riven and white  
as death;  
But making meek obeisance to his King,  
He smiled (ah, *such* a smile!) and feebly  
said.  
"What *am* I, mighty master, what am I,  
That I durst question my lord's strength  
and skill?  
His arrows are like arrows of the god,  
Egyptian Horus, — and for proof, — but  
now.  
I felt a child's heart (once a child was  
*mine*,  
'Tis my Lord's now and Death's), all  
mute and still,  
Pierced by his shaft, and cloven, ye  
gods! in twain!"

Then laughed the great King loudly, till  
his beard  
Quivered, and all his stalwart body  
shook  
With merriment; but when his mirth  
was calmed,  
"Thou art forgiven," said he, "forgiv-  
en, old man;  
Only when next these Persian dogs shall  
call  
Cambyses drunkard, rise, Prexaspes,  
rise!  
And tell them how, and to what purpose,  
once,

Once, on a morn which followed hot and wan  
 A night of monstrous revel and debauch,  
 Cambyses bent this huge Macrobian bow."

BY THE AUTUMN SEA.

FAIR as the dawn of the fairest day,  
 Sad as the evening's tender gray,  
 By the latest lustre of sunset kissed,  
 That wavers and wanes through an amber mist,  
 There cometh a dream of the past to me,  
 On the desert sands, by the autumn sea.

All heaven is wrapped in a mystic veil,  
 And the face of the ocean is dim and pale,  
 And there rises a wind from the chill northwest,  
 That seemeth the wail of a soul's unrest,  
 As the twilight falls, and the vapors flee  
 Far over the wastes of the autumn sea.

A single ship through the gloaming glides  
 Upborne on the swell of the seaward tides;  
 And above the gleam of her topmost spar  
 Are the virgin eyes of the vesper-star  
 That shine with an angel's ruth on me,  
 A hopeless waif, by the autumn sea.

The wings of the ghostly beach-birds gleam  
 Through the shimmering surf, and the curlew's scream  
 Falls faintly shrill from the darkening height;  
 The first weird sigh on the lips of Night  
 Breathes low through the sedge and the blasted tree,  
 With a murmur of doom, by the autumn sea.

Oh, sky-enshadowed and yearning main,  
 Your gloom but deepens this human pain;  
 Those waves seem big with a nameless care,  
 That sky is a type of the heart's despair,  
 As I linger and muse by the sombre lea,  
 And the night shades close on the autumn sea.

THE WIFE OF BRITTANY.

[Suggested by the *Frankleine's Tale* of Chaucer.]

PROEM.

TRUTH wed to beauty in an antique tale,  
 Sweet-voiced like some immortal nightingale,  
 Trills the clear burden of her passionate lay,  
 As fresh, as fair as wonderful to-day  
 As when the music of her balmy tongue  
 Ravished the first warm hearts for whom she sung.

Thus, when the early spring-dawn buds are green,  
 Glistening beneath the sudden silvery sheen  
 Of glancing showers; while heaven with bridegroom-kiss  
 Wakens the virgin earth to bloom and bliss,  
 Enamored breathing and soft raptures born  
 About the roseate footsteps of the morn,  
 An old-world song, whose breezy music pours  
 Through limpid channels 'twixt enchanted shores,  
 Steals on me wooingly from that far time  
 When tuneful Chaucer wrought his lusty rhyme  
 Into rare shapes and fancies and delight,  
 For May winds blithely blew, and hawthorn flowers were bright.

O brave old poet! genius frank and bold!  
 Sustain me, cherish and around me fold  
 Thine own hale, sun-warm atmosphere  
 of song,  
 Lest I, who touch thy numbers, do thee wrong;  
 Speed the deep measure, make the meaning shine  
 Ruddy and high with healthful spirit wine,  
 Till to attempered sense and quickening ears  
 My strain some faint harmonious echo bears  
 From that rich realm wherein thy cordial art  
 Throbbled with its pulse of fire 'gainst  
 youthful England's heart.

## THE STORY.

WHERE the hoarse billows of the north-land Sea  
 Sweep the rude coast of rockbound Brittany,  
 Dwelt, ages since, a knight whose warrior-fame  
 Might well have struck all carpet-knights  
 with shame;<sup>1</sup>  
 Vowed to great deeds and princely manhood, he  
 Burgeoned the topmost-flower of chivalry;  
 Yet gentle-hearted, nursed one delicate thought  
 Fixed firm in love: with anxious pain he sought  
 To serve his lady in the noblest wise,  
 And many a labor, many a grand enterprise  
 He wrought ere that sweet lady could be won.  
 She was a maiden bright-aired as the sun,  
 And graceful as the tall lake-lilies are  
 Flushed 'twixt the twilight and the vesper-star;

But born to such rare state and sovereignty,  
 He hardly durst before her bend the knee  
 In passion's ardor and keen heart distress;  
 Still, at the last, his loyal worthiness  
 And mild obeisance, his observance high  
 Of manly faith, firm will, and constancy  
 Aroused an answering pity to his sighs,  
 Till pity, grown to love, beamed forth  
 from genial eyes.

Thus with pure trust, and cheerful calm accord,  
 She made this gentle suitor her soul's lord;  
 And he, that thence their happy fates should stray  
 Through pastures beauteous as the fields of May,  
 Swore of his own free mind to use the right  
 Her mercy gave him, with no churlish might,  
 Nor e'er in wanton freaks of mastery,  
 Ire-bred perverseness, or sharp jealousy,  
 Vex the clear-flowing current of her days.  
 She thanked him in a hundred winning ways:  
 "And I," she said, "will be thy loyal wife;  
 Take here my vows, my solemn troth for life."

On a June morning, when the verdurous woods  
 Flushed to the core of dew-lit solitudes,  
 Murmured almost as with a human feeling,  
 Tenderly, low, to frolic breezes stealing  
 Through dappled shades and depths of dainty fern,  
 Crushed here and there by some low-whimpering burn,

These twain were wedded at a forest  
shrine.

O saffron-vested Hymen the divine!  
Did aught of gloom or boding shadow  
weigh

Upon thy blushing consciousness that  
day?

No! thy frank face breathed only hope  
and love;

Earth laughed in wave and leaf, all  
heaven was fair above.

Home to the land wherein the knight  
was born

Blithely they rode upon the morn-  
morn.

Not far from Penmark; there they lived  
in ease

And solace of matured felicities,  
Until Arviragus whose soul of fire  
Not even fruition of his love's desire  
Could fill with languorous idlesse, cut  
the tie,

Which bound to silken dalliance sud-  
denly.

Sailing the straits for England's war-  
torn strand,

There ampler bays to pluck from vic-  
tory's "red right hand."

But Iolene, fond Iolene, whose heart  
Can beat no longer, lonely and apart  
From him she loves, save with a sicken-  
ing stress

Of fear o'erwrought and brooding ten-  
derness,

Mourns for his absence with soul-weary-  
ing plaint,

Slow, pitiful tears and midnight mur-  
murings faint,

And thus the whole world sadly sets at  
naught.

Meanwhile her friends, who guess what  
canker-thought

Preys on her quiet, with a mild essay  
Strive to subdue her passion's torturing  
sway:

"Beware! beware, sweet lady, thou wilt  
slay

Thy reason! nay thy very life's at stake!  
By love, and love's dear pleadings, for  
his sake

Who yearns to clasp thee scathless to  
his breast,

We pray thee, soothe these maddening  
cares to rest!"

Even as the patient graver on a stone,  
Laboring with tireless fingers, sees anon  
The shape embodying his rare fancies  
grow

And lighten, thus upon her stubborn woe  
Their tireless comforts wrought, until a  
trust,

Clear-eyed and constant, raised her  
from the dust

And ashy shroud of sorrow; her despair  
Gave place to twilight gladness and soft  
cheer

Confirmed ere long by letters from her  
love:

"Dear Iolene!" he wrote, "thou tender  
dove

That tremblest in thy chilly nest at  
home,

Prithee embrace meek patience till I  
come.

Lo, the swift winds blow freshening o'er  
the sea,

From out the sunset isles I speed to rest  
with thee!"

The knight's ancestral home stood grim  
and tall

Beyond its shadowy moat and frowning  
wall;

It topped a gradual summit crowned  
with fir.

Green murmurous myrtle, and wild  
juniper.

Fronting a long, rude, solitary strand,  
Whereon the earliest sunbeam, like a  
hand

Of tremulous benediction, rested bland,  
And warmly quivering; o'er the wave-  
worn lea

Gleamed the broad spaces of the open  
sea.

Now often, with her pitying friends  
 beside,  
 She walked the desolate beach and  
 watched the tide,  
 Forth looking through unconscious tears  
 to view  
 Sail after sail pass shimmering o'er the  
 blue;  
 And to herself, oftentimes, "Alas!" said  
 she,  
 "Is there no ship, of all these ships I see,  
 Will bring me home my lord? Woe, woe  
 is me!  
 Though winds blow fresh, and sea-birds  
 skim the main,  
 Thou still delay'st, my liege! Ah, *will*  
 thou come again?"

Sometimes would she, half-dreaming, sit  
 and think,  
 Casting her dark eyes downward from  
 the brink;  
 And when she saw those grisly rocks  
 beneath,  
 Round which the pallid foam, in many  
 a wreath  
 White as the lips of passion, faintly  
 curled,  
 Her thoughts would pierce to the drear  
 under-world,  
 'Mid shipwrecks wandering, and  
 bleached bones of those  
 O'er whom the unresting ocean ebbs and  
 flows;  
 And though the shining waters hushed  
 and deep,  
 Might slumber like an innocent child  
 asleep,  
 From out the North her prescient fancy  
 raised  
 Huge ghostlike clouds, and spectral  
 lightnings blazed  
 I' th' van of phantom thunder, and the  
 roar  
 Of multitudinous waters on the shore,  
 Heard as in dreadful trance its billowy  
 swells  
 Blent with the mournful tone of far  
 funereal bells!

Her friends perceiving that this seaside  
 walk,  
 Though gay and jovial their unstudied  
 talk,  
 But dashed her dubious spirits, kindly  
 took  
 And led her where the blossom-bordered  
 brook  
 Babbled through woodlands, and the  
 limpid pool  
 Lay crouched like some shy Naiad in  
 the cool  
 Of mossy glades; or when a tedious  
 hour  
 Pressed on her with its dim, lethargic  
 power,  
 They wooed her with glad games or  
 jocund song,  
 Till the dull demon ceased to do her  
 wrong.

So, on a pleasant May morn, while the  
 dew  
 Sparkled on tiny hedgerow-flowers of  
 blue,  
 Passing through many a sun-brown orch-  
 ard-field,  
 They reach a fairy pleasance, which  
 revealed  
 Such prospects into breezy inland  
 vales,  
 The natural haunt of plaining nightin-  
 gales,  
 Such verdant, grassy plots, through  
 which there rolled  
 A gleeful rivulet glimpsing sands of  
 gold,  
 And winding slow by clumps of plumèd  
 pines,  
 Rich realms of bay, and gorgeous jas-  
 mine-vines,  
 That none who strayed to that fair  
 flowery place  
 Had paused in wonder if its sylvan  
 grace,  
 Embodied, beauteous, with an arch em-  
 brace  
 Had stopped, and smiling, kissed them  
 face to face.

A buoyant, blithesome company were they,  
 Grouped round the pleasance on that morn of May;  
 Wit, song, and rippling laughter, and arch looks  
 That might have lured the wood-gods from their nooks,  
 Echoed and flashed like dazzling arrows tipped  
 With amorous heat; and now and then there slipped  
 From out the whirling ring of jocund girls,  
 Wreathing white arms and tossing wanton curls,  
 Some maiden who with momentary mien  
 Of coy demureness bent o'er Iolene,  
 And whispered sunniest nothings in her ear.

First 'mid the brave gallants assembling there  
 Aurelian came, a squire of fair degree,  
 Tall, vigorous, handsome, his whole air so free,  
 Yet courteous, and such princely sweetness blent  
 With every well-timed, graceful compliment,  
 That sooth to speak, where'er Aurelian went,  
 To turbulent tilt-yard and baronial hall,  
 Sporting afield or at high festival,  
 Favor, like sunshine, filled his heart and eyes.

Thus nobly gifted, high-born, opulent, wise,  
 One hidden curse was his: for troublous years,\*  
 Secretly, swayed in turn by hopes and fears,

\* We are to suppose that Aurelian had seen Iolene previous to her marriage, and that circumstances had prevented his becoming intimate with her, or in any way prosecuting his suit honestly and frankly.

And all unknown to her, his heart's desire,  
 This youth had loved with wild, delirious fire,  
 The lonely, sad, unconscious Iolene.  
 He durst not show how love had brought him teen,  
 Nor prove how deep his passion's inward might;  
 Thinking, half maddened, on her absent knight;  
 Save that the burden of a love-lorn lay  
 Would somewhat of his stifed flame betray,  
 But in those vague complainings poets use,  
 When charging Love with outrage and abuse  
 Of his all-potent witchery. "Ah," said he,  
 "I love, but ever love despondently;  
 For though one vision haunts me, and I burn  
 To hold that dream incarnated, I yearn  
 In vain, in vain; love breathes no bland return!"

Thus only did Aurelian strive to show  
 What pangs of hidden passion worked below  
 The surface calmness of his front serene;  
 Unless perhaps he met his beautiful Queen,  
 Scarce brightening at the banquet or the dance;  
 When, with a piercing yet half-piteous glance,  
 His eyes would search, then strangely shun her face,  
 As one condemned, who fears to sue for grace.

But on this self-same day, when homeward bound,  
 Her footsteps sought the loneliest path  
 That wound  
 Through tangled copses to the upland ground

And orchard close, — her fair companions kissed  
 With tearful thanks, and all kind friends dismissed, —  
 Aurelian, who the secret pathway knew,  
 Through the dense growth and shrouded foliage drew  
 Near the pale Queen, the lady of his dreams:  
 The evening's soft, pathetic splendor streams  
 O'er her clear forehead and her chestnut hair,  
 All glorified as in celestial air;  
 But the dark eyes a wistful light confessed,  
 And some soft murmuring fancies heaved her breast  
 Benignly, like enamored tides that rise  
 And sink melodious to the west wind's sighs.

He gazed, and the long passion he had nursed,  
 Impetuous, sudden, unrestrained, o'erburst  
 All bounds of custom and enforced restraint:  
 "O lady, hear me: I am deadly faint,  
 Yet wild with love! such love as forces man  
 To beard conventions, trample on the ban  
 Of partial laws, spurn with contemptuous hate  
 Whate'er would bar or blight his blissful fate,  
 And in the feverous frenzy of his zeal,  
 Even from the shrinking flower he dotes on, steal  
 Blush, fragrance, and heart-dew! Forgive!  
 What! have I dared to tell thee this, to live  
 For aye hereafter in thy cold regard?  
 Yet veil thy scorn; nor make more cold and hard  
 The anguished life now cowering at thy feet."

As o'er a billowy field of ripened wheat  
 One sees perchance the spectral shadows meet,  
 Cast by a darkened heaven whose lowering hush  
 Broods, thunder-charged, above its golden flush, —  
 So, a dark wonder, a sublime suspense,  
 Of gathering wrath at this wild insolence,  
 Dimmed the mild glory of her brow and lips;  
 Her beauty, more majestic in eclipse,  
 Shone with that awful lustre which of old,  
 In the gods' temples and the fanes of gold,  
 Blazed in the Pythia's face, and shook her form  
 With throes of baleful prophecy; a storm  
 She stood incarnate, in whose ominous gloom  
 Throbbled the red lightning on the verge of doom.

But as a current of soft air, unfelt  
 On the lower earth, is seen ere long to melt  
 The up-piled surge of tempests slowly driven  
 In scattered vapors through the deeps of heaven,  
 Thus a serener thought tenderly played  
 Across her spirit; its portentous shade,  
 Big with unuttered wrath and meanings dire,  
 Began with slow, wan pulsings to expire;  
 A far ethereal voice she seemed to hear  
 Luting its merciful accents in her ear,  
 Subtly harmonious: "Yea," she thought,  
 "in truth,  
 A rage, a madness holds him, the poor youth  
 Is drunk with passion! Shall I, deeply blessed  
 By all love's sweets, its balm and trustful rest."



Crush the less fortunate spirit! utterly  
Blight and destroy him, *all for love of  
me!*

His hopes, if hopes he hath, must surely  
die;

Still would I nip their blossoms tenderly,  
With a slight, airy frost-bite of con-  
tempt.

God's mercy, good Sir Squire, art thou  
exempt

Of courtesy as of reason? What weird  
spell

Doth work this madness in thee and  
compel

Thy nobler nature to such base de-  
spites?

Forsooth, thou'lt blush some day the  
flower of knights,

Should this thy budding virtue wax and  
grow

To natural consummation! Come! thy  
flow

Of weak self-ruth might shame the veri-  
est child,

A six years' peevish urchin; whimpering  
wild,

And scattering his torn locks, because  
afar

He sees and yearns to clasp, but cannot  
clasp, a star!"

She ceased, with shame and pity weigh-  
ing down

Her dovelike lids demurely, and a  
frown

Just struggling faintly with as faint a  
smile

(For the mute trembling squire still  
kneelt the while)

Round the arch dimples of her rosy  
mouth;

Whereon, in fitful fashion, like the  
South

Which sweeps with petulant wing a field  
of blooms,

Then dies a heedless death 'mong gold-  
en brooms

And lavish shrubbery, briefly she re-  
sumes,

With quick-drawn breath, the courses  
of her speech:

"Aurelian, rise! Behold'st thou yon-  
der beach,

And the blue waves beyond? those  
bristling rocks,

O'er which the chafed sea, in quick thun-  
der-shocks,

Leaps passionate, panting through the  
showery spray,

Roaring defiance to the calm-eyed day?  
Ah, well, fantastic boy! I blithely

swear

When you rude coast beneath us rises  
clear

(Down to the farthest bounds of wild  
Bretaigne),

Of that black rampart darkening sky  
and main,

I'll pay thy vows with answering vows  
again,

And be—God save the mark!—thy  
paramour."

Her words struck keen and deep, even  
to the core

Of the rash listener's soul; they seemed  
to be

More fatal in their careless irony  
Than if the levin bolt, hurled from

above,

Had slain at once his manhood and his  
love.

What more he felt in sooth 'twere vain  
to tell;

He only heard her whispering, "Fare-  
thee-well,

And Heaven assoil thee of all sinful sor-  
row!"

Then with a grace and majesty which  
borrow

Fresh lustrous sweetness from an inward  
stress

And hidden motion of chaste gentle-  
ness,

She glideth like some beauteous cloud  
apart:

Aurelian saw her pass with yearning  
pangs at heart.

## PART II.

Soul-epochs are there, when grief's pitiless storm  
 O'erwhelms the amazed spirit; when the warm  
 Exultant heart whose hopes were brave and high,  
 Shrinks in the darkness withering all its sky:

Then, like a wounded bird by the rude wind  
 Clutched and borne onward, tortured, reckless, blind,  
 Too frail to struggle with that passionate blast,  
 We take wild, wavering courses, and at last  
 Are dashed, it may be, on the rocky verge,



“Those bristling rocks,  
 O'er which the chafed sea, in quick thunder-shocks,  
 Leaps passionate, panting through the showery spray.”

Or hurled o'er the unknown and perilous surge  
 Of some dark doom, when, bruised and tempest-tost,  
 We sink in turbulent eddies, and are lost.  
 Urged by a mood thus desperate, careless what  
 Thenceforth befell him, from that hateful spot,  
 The scene of such stern anguish and despair,  
 Aurellian rushed, he knew not, recked not, where.

All night he wandered in the forest drear.  
 Till on the pale phantasmal front of morn  
 The first thin flickering day-gleam glanced forlorn,  
 Wan as the wraith of perished hopes, the ghost  
 Of wishes long sustained and fostered most,  
 Now gone for evermore. “O Christ! that I,”  
 He muttered hoarsely, “might unsought for lie  
 Here, in the dismal shadows and dank grass,  
 And close my heavy eyelids, and so pass

With one brief struggle from the world  
of men,  
Never to grieve or languish, — never  
again!

Never to sow live seeds of expectation  
And joyous promise, to reap desolation;  
But as the seasons fly, snow-wreathed, or  
crowned

With odorous garlands, rest in the mute  
ground,

Peaceful, oblivious, — a Lethéan cloud  
Wrapped round my faded senses like a  
shroud,

And all earth's turmoil and its juggling  
show

Dead as a dream dissolved ten thousand  
years ago!"

Long, long revolving his sad thoughts he  
stood,

When gleefully from out the lightening  
wood

Came the sharp ring of horn and echoing  
steed;

A score of huntsmen, scouring at full  
speed,

Flashed like a brilliant meteor o'er the  
scene,

In royal pomp of glimmering gold and  
green;

Whereat, with wrathful gestures, 'neath  
the dome

Of the old wood he hastened towards his  
home,

Where day by day he grew more woeful-  
pale,

Calling on Heaven unheard to ease his  
bale.

Among his kinsfolk, many in hot haste,  
To salve an unknown wound with balms  
misplaced,

Came the squire's brother, Curio, — a  
wise scribe,

Modest withal, and nobler than his tribe;  
With heart as loving as his brain was  
wise:

He could not see with cold, indifferent  
eyes

Aurelian pass to madness or the grave,  
While care and wit of man perchance  
might save;

So, pondering o'er what seemed a des-  
perate case,

At length there leapt into his kindling  
face

The flush of a bright thought. "Ey  
Heaven!" cried he,

"O brother, there may still be hope for  
thee;

Therefore, take heart of grace, for what  
I tell

Doubtless preludes a health-inspiring  
spell;

And thou, released from this long, sor-  
rowful blight,

Shalt feel the stir of joy, and bless the  
morning light.

"Ten years — ten centuries sometimes  
they would seem —

Passed idly o'er me like a mystic's  
dream;

Ten years ago, when these dull locks  
of mine

Flowed round broad shoulders with a  
perfumed shine,

And life's clear glass o'erbrimmed with  
purpling wine,

I met in Orleans a shrewd clerk-at-law,  
One all his comrades loved, yet viewed

with awe,  
To whom the deepest lore of antique

ages,  
The stor'd secrets of old seers and

sages  
In Greece, or Ind, or Araby, lay

bare;  
From out the vacant kingdoms of the

air,  
He could at will call forth a hundred

forms,  
Hideous or lovely; the wild wrath of

storms;  
The zephyr's sweetness; bird, beast,

wave, obeyed  
The luminous signs his slender wand

conveyed,

<p>At whose weird touch men sick in flesh or brain Became their old, bright, hopeful selves again. Aurelian, rise! shake off this vile disease, And ride with me to Orleans; an' it please God and our Lady, we may chance to meet Mine ancient comrade, who with deffest feat Of magic skill may cut the Gordian knot That long hath bound, and darkly binds thy lot."</p> <p>"But," said Aurelian, with a listless turn Of his drooped head, and wandering eyes that burn With a quick feverish brilliance, "dost thou speak Of thine own knowledge, when thou bid'st me seek This rare magician? Hast <i>thou</i> looked on aught Of all the mighty marvels he hath wrought?"</p> <p>"Yea! I bethink me how, one summer's day, He led me through the city gates, away To the dark hollows 'neath a lonely hill: So hushed the noontide, and so breath- less-still The drowsy air, the voice of one far stream Came like thin whispers murmuring in a dream; The blithesome grasshopper, his sense half closed To all his verdurous luxury, reposed Pendent upon the quivering, spearlike grain; Steeped in the mellow sunshine's noise- less rain, All Nature slept; alone the matron wren, From the thick coverts of her thorny den,</p>	<p>Teased the hot silence with her twitter- ing low: My inmost soul accordant, seemed to grow Languid and dumb within that mystic place. At length the Wizard's hand across my face Was waved with gentle motion; a vague mist Flickered before me, on a sudden kissed To warmth and glory by an influence bright; The strangest glamour hovered o'er my sight, Wherethrough I saw, methought, a palace proud, Crowned by a lightning-veinèd thunder- cloud, Whose wreaths of vapory darkness gleamed with eyes Of multitudinous shifting fantasies; Its pinnacles like diamond spars out- shone The starry splendors of an orient zone; And, leading towards its lordly entrance, rose Through slow gradations to its marbled close, White terraces where golden sunflowers bloomed; Above a ponderous portal archway loomed, High-columned, quaint, majestic: we passed Within that palace, gorgeous, wild, and vast. Ah! blessed saints! what wonders weirdly blent Did smite me with a hushed astonish- ment! A troop of monsters couchant lined our path, Their tawny manes and eyes of fiery wrath Erect and blazing; an unearthly roar Of fury, shaking vaulted roof and floor,</p>
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Burst from each savage, inarticulate  
throat,  
In sullen echoings lost through halls and  
courts remote.

“At the far end of glimmering colon-  
nades  
That gleamed gigantic through the dusky  
shades,  
Two mighty doors swept backward noise-  
lessly;  
There heaved beyond us a vast laboring  
sea;  
Not vacant, for a stately vessel bore  
Swift down the threatening tides that  
flashed before,  
Thronged with black-bearded Titans,  
such as moved  
In far-off times heroic, well-beloved  
Of the old gods; there at his stalwart  
ease,  
Shouldering his knotted club, great Her-  
cules  
Towered, his fierce eyes touched to dewy  
light,  
And rapt on Hylas, who, serenely bright,  
With intense gaze uplifted, tranced and  
mute,  
Heard, in ecstatic reverie, the lute  
Of Orpheus plaining to the waves that  
bow  
And dance subsiding round the blazoned  
prow;  
Till the rude winds blew meekly, and  
caressed  
The mimic golden fleeces o'er the crest  
Of bard and warrior, on their secret quest  
Bound to the groves of Colchis; and the  
bark,  
Round which had frowned a threatening  
shape and dark,  
Now seemed to thrill, like some proud,  
sentient thing  
That glories in the prowess of its wing.  
The gusty billows of that turbulent sea  
Their wild crests smoothed, and slowly,  
pantingly,  
Sunk to the quiet of a charmed calm;  
What odors Hesperéan, what rich balm

Freight the fair zephyrs, as they shyly  
run  
O'er the lulled waters dimpling in the  
sun!  
And murmurings, hark! soft as the long-  
drawn kiss  
Pressed by a young god-lover in his  
bliss  
On lips immortal, when the world was  
new;  
And, lo! across the pure, pellucid  
blue,  
A barge, with silken sails, whose beau-  
teous crew,  
Winged fays and Cupids, curl their  
sportive arms  
O'er one, more lovely in her noontide  
charms  
Than youngest nymphs of Paphos; fra-  
grant showers  
Of freshening roses, all luxuriant flowers  
That feed on eastern dews, their fairy  
bands  
Scatter about her from white liberal  
hands;  
While o'er the surface of the dazzling  
water,  
Dark-eyed, mysterious, many an ocean  
daughter  
Flashes a vanishing brightness on her  
way,  
Half seen through tiny tinklings of the  
spray;  
And music its full heart in airy falls  
Outpours, like silvery cascades down the  
walls  
Of haunted rocks, and golden cymbals  
ring.  
And lutelike measures on voluptuous  
wing  
Rise gently to the tranced heavens, re-  
plying  
From azure-tinted deeps in a low pas-  
sionate sighing.  
“Then were all climes, all ages, wildly  
blended  
On blood-red fields, wherefrom shrill  
shouts ascended

Of naked warriors, huge and swart of limb,  
Mixed with the mailed Grecians' ominous hymn,  
Where mighty banners starlike waved and shone  
'Mid cloven bucklers grandly; and anon  
Marched the stern Roman phalanx, with a ring  
And clash of spears, and lusty trumpeting,  
And steeds that neighed defiance unto death,  
And all war's dreadful pomp and hot, devouring breath.  
Last, on a sudden, the whole tumult died,  
The vision disappeared; pale, leaden-eyed,  
Bewildered, on the enchanted floor I sank;  
When next my wakening spirit faintly drank  
Life's consciousness, within my lonely room  
I sat, and round me drooped the dreary twilight gloom."

Enough, good brother! By the Holy Rood  
Thy tale is medicinal! the black mood,  
Which like a spiritual vulture seized and tore  
My heart-strings, and imbued its beak in gore  
Hot from the soul, beneath the golden spell  
Of sovereign hope hath sought its native hell.  
Then, ho! for Orleans!" At the word he sprung  
Light to his feet; it seemed there scarcely hung  
One trace of his long madness round him now,  
So blithe his smile, so bright his kindling brow.  
All day they rode till waning afternoon,

Through breezy copses, and the shadowy boon  
Of mightier woods, when, as the latest glance  
Of sunset, like a level burnished lance,  
Smote their steel morions, sauntering near the town,  
With thoughtful mien, robed in his scholar's gown,  
They met a keen-eyed man, ruddy and tall;  
O'er his grave vest a beard of wavy fall  
Flowed like a rushing streamlet, rippling down:  
"Welcome!" he cried in mellow accents deep;  
"The stars have warned me, and my visioned sleep  
Foretold your mission, gentles. Curio, what!  
Thine ancient, loving comrade quite forgot?  
Spur thy dull memory, gossip!"

"By St. Paul!

The learned clerk, the gracious Artevall,  
Or glamour's in it," shouted Curio;  
"yet  
Thou look'st as hale, as young, as firmly set  
In face and form, as if for thee old Time  
Had stopped his flight." A lofty glance, sublime  
And swift as lightning, from the Magian's eye  
Darted some latent meaning grave and high.  
He spake not, but the twain he gently led  
Where grassy pathways and fair meads were spread,  
Skirting the city walls, till near them stood,  
Fronting the gloomy boskage of a wood,  
The wizard's lonely home, I need not pause  
To tell how magic and the occult laws

Of sciences long dead that sage's  
 lore  
 Did in the spectral midnight hours ex-  
 plore.  
 Enough, that his strange spells a mar-  
 vel wrought  
 Beyond the utmost reach of credulous  
 thought.  
 At last he said, "Sir Squire, my task is  
 o'er;  
 Go when thou wilt, and view the Breton  
 shore,  
 And thou shalt see a wide unwrinkled  
 strand,  
 Smooth as thy lovely lady's delicate  
 hand,  
 Washed by a sea o'er which the halcyon  
 West  
 Broods like a happy heart whose dreams  
 are dreams of rest."

## PART III.

Meanwhile Arviragus, a year before  
 Returned in honor from the English  
 shore,  
 Led with his faithful Iolene that  
 life  
 Harmonious, justly balanced, free from  
 strife,  
 Which crowns our hopes with a true-  
 hearted wife.  
 Ne'er dreamed he, as she laid her happy  
 head  
 Close to his heart, what cloud of shame  
 and dread  
 Gloomed o'er his placid roof-tree; but  
 content  
 To think how nobly his late toils had  
 spent  
 Their force beneath Death's gory drip-  
 ping brow  
 Through shocks of battle, a fresh laurel  
 bough  
 Plucking therefrom to flourish green  
 and high  
 About his war-worn temples' majesty,

Gladly from bloodshed, conflicts, and  
 alarms  
 Here rested in those white, encircling  
 arms,  
 And oft his strong heart thrilled, his  
 eyes grew dim,  
 To know, kind heaven! how deep her  
 love for him.  
 Thus month on month the cheerful days  
 went by,  
 Like carolling birds across an April sky,  
 A fairy sky undimmed by clouds or  
 showers.  
 But on a morning, while her favorite  
 flowers  
 Iolene tended, in the garden-walks  
 Pausing to clip dead leaves and prop the  
 stalks  
 Of drooping plants, herself more sweet  
 and fair  
 Than any flower, the brightest that  
 blushed there,  
 Her lord stole gently on her unaware;  
 His haughty grace all softened, he bowed  
 down  
 To kiss the stray curls of her locks of  
 brown,  
 Thick sown with threads of tangled,  
 glimmering gold:  
 "At need," he said, "thou canst be  
 calm and bold;  
 Therefore, thou wilt not yield to foolish  
 woe  
 If duty parts us briefly. Wife, I go  
 To scourge some banded ruffians who of  
 late  
 Assailed our peaceful serfs, and our es-  
 tate —  
 Thou knowest it well — northwest of  
 Penmark town,  
 Ravished with sword and fire. Thy  
 lord's renown,  
 Yea, and thy lord, were soon the scoff of  
 all,  
 If in his own fair fief such crimes befall.  
 Unscourged of justice; so, dear love,  
 adieu!  
 Nor fear the end of that I have to do."

Thus spake the knight, who forthwith  
 raised a shout,  
 And bade them bring his stalwart war-  
 horse out;  
 When, on the sudden, a steed, tall, jet-  
 black,  
 Led by a groom came whinnying down  
 the track,  
 'Twixt the green myrtle hedges; at a  
 bound  
 He vaulted in the selle; smilingly round  
 He turned to wave "farewell" with  
 mailed hand,  
 And then rode blithely down the sunlit  
 land.

That evening, at the close of vesper  
 prayer,  
 Wandering along through the still twi-  
 light air,  
 Iolene, somewhat sad and sick in mind,  
 Met in her homeward pathway, low-re-  
 clined  
 Beneath the blasted branches of an oak,  
 Aurelian, her wild lover of old days:  
 She started backward in a wan amaze.  
 But he, uprising calmly, bowed and  
 spoke;  
 "Ha! thou recall'st me, lady? I had  
 deemed  
 These bitter years which have so scarred  
 and seamed  
 Whate'er of grace I owned in youthful  
 prime,  
 Had razed me from thy memory. See a  
 rime  
 Like that of age hath touched my locks  
 to white;  
 Yet never once, — so help me heaven! —  
 by night  
 Or day, in storm or brightness, hath my  
 soul  
 Veered but a point from thee, its starry  
 goal.  
 A mighty purpose doth itself fulfil,  
 Wise men have said. Lady! I love thee  
 still,  
 And Love works marvels. Prithee come  
 with me,

Ay, quickly come, and thou thyself shalt  
 see  
 I am no falsehood-monger. Yea, come,  
 come!"  
 His words, his sudden passion, smote her  
 dumb,  
 And from her cheeks, those delicate gar-  
 dens, wane  
 The rare twin roses, as when autumn  
 rain,  
 Fatally sharp, sweeps o'er some doomed  
 domain  
 Of matron blooms, and their rich colors  
 fade  
 Like rainbows slowly dying, shade by  
 shade,  
 Unto wan spectres of the flowers that  
 were.  
 With languid head and thoughts of pre-  
 scient fear,  
 Passively following where Aurelian  
 guides,  
 She hears anon the surge and rush of  
 tides  
 On the seashore, and feels the freshen-  
 ing spray  
 Bedew her brow. "Lady, look forth,  
 and say  
 If, to a love unquenched, unquenchable,  
 Eternal Nature yields not; its strong  
 spell  
 Hath toiled for me, till the rocks rooted  
 under  
 Those heaving waters have been rent  
 asunder,  
 And the wide spaces of the ocean plain,  
 Down to the farthest bounds of wild  
 Bretagne,  
 Rise calmly glorious in the day-god's  
 beam.  
 Look, look thy fill! it is no vanishing  
 dream:  
 Lo! now I claim thy promise!"

A keen gleam  
 Shot its victorious radiance o'er his  
 brow.  
 But she, bewildered, tremulous, shrink-  
 ing low,



Her clinched hands pale even to the finger-tips,  
 Pressed on her blinded eyes and faltering lips,  
 Sued in a voice like wailing wind that breaks  
 From aspen coverts over lonely lakes,  
 In the shut heart of immemorial dells, —  
 A fitful, sobbing voice, whose anguish swells,  
 Burdened with deep upyearning supplication,  
 Coldly across his evil exultation.  
 She pleads for brief delay, with frenzied pain  
 Grasping at some dim phantom of the brain,  
 Shadowing a vague deliverance. "As thou wilt,"  
 He answered slowly. "Well I know the guilt  
 Of broken vows can never rest on thee!  
 Pass by unhurt!" Mutely she turned to flee,  
 Nor paused until her chambered privacy  
 She reached with panting sides, pallid as death,  
 And gasping with short, anguished sobs for breath.  
 "Caught am I, trapped like a poor fluttering bird,  
 Or dappled youngling from the innocent herd  
 Lured to a pitfall! Yet such oath as *this*  
 Were surely void? If not, he still shall miss —  
 Whate'er betide — his long-expected bliss!  
 Better pure-folded arms, and stainless sleep  
 Where the gray-drooping willow-branches weep,  
 Than meet a fate so hideous! Let me think!  
 Others, — pure wives, brave virgins, on the brink  
 Of shame and ruin, have struck home and fled,  
 To find unending quiet with the dead."

Borne down as by a demon's hand which pressed  
 Invisible, but stifling on her breast,  
 With brain benumbed, yet burning, and a sense  
 Of utter, wearied, desperate impotence,  
 Her forlorn glance around the darkening room  
 Roving in helpless search, from out the gloom  
 Caught the blue glitter of a half-sheathed blade,  
 A small but trenchant steel, whose lustre played  
 Balefully bright, and like a serpent's eye  
 Fixed on her with malign expectancy,  
 Drew her perforce towards Death, — that death which seemed  
 The sole, stern means through which her fame redeemed,  
 Should soar in spiritual beauty o'er the tomb  
 Wherein might rest her body's mouldering bloom.

Ah, me! the looks distraught, the passionate care,  
 The whole wild scene, its misery and despair,  
 Come back like scenes of yesterday.  
 Half bowed  
 Her queenly form, and the pent grief allowed  
 A moment's freedom shakes her to the core,  
 The inmost seat of reason. "All is o'er,"  
 She murmurs, as her slender fingers feel  
 The deadly edge of the cold shimmering steel.  
 At once her swift arm flashes to its height,  
 While the poised death hangs quivering, and her sight  
 Grows dazed and giddy: when from far, so far  
 It sounded like the weird voice of a star,

Muffled by distance, yet distinct and deep,  
 About her in the terrible silence creep  
 Accents that seize as with a bodily force  
 On her white arm suspended, and its course  
 To fatal issues, with arresting will  
 Hold rigid, till supine it drops and still,  
 Back to its drooping level, and a clang  
 Of the freed steel through all the chamber rang  
 Sharply, and something shuddered down the air  
 Like wings of baffled fiends passing in fierce despair.

A warning blent of prescient wrath and prayer  
 Those accents seemed, where through a palpable dread  
 Ran coldly shivering. "Pause, pause, pause!" they said;  
 "Bar not thy hopes 'gainst chance of happier fate!  
 The circuit vast which rounds life's dial-plate  
 Hath many lights and shades; its hand which lowers  
 So threatening *now*, may move to golden hours,  
 And thou on this sad time may'st look like one  
 Smiling on mortal woes from some unsetting sun."

Motionless, overcome by hushing awe,  
 She heard the mystic voice, and dreamed she saw,  
 Just o'er the dubious borders of the light,  
 A wavering apparition, scarce more bright  
 Than one faint moon-ray, through the misty tears  
 Of clouded evenings seen on breezeless mountain meres.

Mistlike it waned; but in her heart of hearts  
 The solemn counsel sank: with guilty starts,  
 She thought how near, through grief's bewildering blight,  
 How near to death, to death and shame, this night  
 Her reckless soul had strayed. Yet short-lived hope  
 Moved hour by hour through paths of narrowing scope,  
 As, day by day, her term of grace passed by,  
 Like phantom birds across a phantom sky;  
 Her lord still absent, and Aurelian bound  
 (For thus he wrote her) to one weary round,  
 Morn after morn, of paces to and fro,  
 Within the wooded garden-walls below  
 The city's southward portals. "There," said he,  
 "Each day, and all day long, impatiently  
 I wait thy will."  
 As when in dewy spring,  
 'Mid the moist herbage closely nestling,  
 Ofttimes we see the hunted partridge cling,  
 Panting and scared, to the thick-covering grass,  
 The while above her couch doth darkly pass  
 What seemeth the shadow of a giant wing,  
 And she, more lowly, with a cowering stoop,  
 Shivers, expecting the fell, fiery swoop  
 Of the gaunt hawk, that corsair of the breeze,  
 And feels beforehand his sharp talons seize  
 And rend her tender vitals; so at home,  
 Iolene, trembling at the stroke to come,  
 Touched by the lurid shadow of her doom,  
 Lingered; until, upon a sunny dawn,  
 Her lord returning, gayly up the lawn

Urged his blithe courser, and, dismount-  
 ing, came  
 Upon her, warmly glowing, all aflame  
 With hope and love. But as her dreary  
 eyes  
 Were turned on his, a quick, disturbed  
 surprise  
 And then a terror, smote him, and the  
 voice  
 All jubilant, full-breathed to say, "Re-  
 joice,  
 Our foes are slain!" clave stammering  
 in his throat.  
 But she, her loose, dishevelled locks  
 afloat  
 Round the fair-sloping shoulders, her  
 hands clasped  
 About his mailed knees, brokenly gasped  
 Her anguish forth, and told her sorrow-  
 ful tale.  
 Dizzy and mute, and as the marble  
 pale  
 Whereon he leaned, unto the desperate  
 close  
 The knight heard all, locked in a cold  
 repose  
 More dread than stormiest passion; life  
 and strength  
 Seemed slowly ebbing from him, till at  
 length  
 His soul, like one that walks the fatal  
 sand  
 (Whose treacherous smoothness looks a  
 solid strand,  
 But tempts to ruin), felt all earth grow  
 dim,  
 And round him saw, as in a chaos,  
 swim  
 Joy's fair horizon melting in the  
 cloud.  
 But soon his stalwart will, rugged and  
 proud,  
 Woke lionlike to action; a swift flush  
 Rushed like a sunset river's reddening  
 glow  
 O'er the tempestuous blackness of his  
 brow,  
 Pregnant with thunder; through the dis-  
 mal hush,

His pitiless voice, sharp-echoing round  
 about  
 The clanging court, leaped like a falchion  
 out.  
 "Thou hast played with honor as a jug-  
 gler's ball;  
 God strikes thee from thy balance, and  
 the thrall  
 Art thou, henceforth, of one vainglorious  
 deed.  
 What! shall we plant with rash caprice  
 the seed  
 Of bitterness, nor look for some harsh  
 fruit  
 To spring untimely from its poisonous  
 root?  
 What! a lewd spark, a perfumed pop-  
 injay,  
 Dares in the broad-browed, honest gaze  
 of day.  
 To dash a foul thought, like the hideous  
 spray  
 Of Hell, right in thy forehead, — and  
 thy hand,  
 Which should have towered as if the  
 levin-brand  
 Of scorn and judgment armed it, but a  
 bland  
 Dismissal signs him! not one hint which  
 tells  
 Thy lord, meantime, what loathsome  
 secret dwells  
 Here, by his hearthstone, muffled up,  
 concealed,  
 And like a corse corrupting, till, revealed  
 By vengeful doom, its pestilent odor  
 steals  
 Outward, while all the wholesome blood  
 congeals  
 To a chill horror, and the air grows vile.  
 And even the blessed sun a death's-head  
 smile  
 Assumes in our distempered fantasy?  
 By Heaven! this withering curse which  
 hangs o'er thee,  
 O Iolene!" — but here his angry voice  
 Broke short, — "There is no choice," he  
 moaned, "no choice."

Yea, wife! may Christ adjudge me if I  
 lie,  
 To endless, as now keen calamity,  
 But through this troublous gloom my  
 mind discerns  
 One lonely light to guide us; lo, it burns  
 Lurid, yet clear, by whose fierce flame I  
 see —  
 Ah, grief malign! ah, bitter destiny! —  
 As if God's own right hand the blazing  
 pain  
 And fiery bale did stamp on soul and  
 brain,  
 These terms of doom:  
*Shame and despair for both,  
 Sorrow and heartbreak! Through all,  
 keep thine oath,  
 Thou woman, self-involved, self-lost;  
 and so  
 Face the black front of this tremendous  
 woe!*"

She bowed as if a blast of sudden wind,  
 Breathing full winter, smote her cold  
 and blind;  
 Then as one wandering in a soul-eclipse,  
 Feebly she rose, and with her quivering  
 lips  
 Kissed her pale lord, stifling one desolate  
 cry.  
 Anon she moved around him noiselessly  
 Bent on the small, sweet offices of love;  
 And sometimes pausing, she would  
 glance above  
 With tearless eyes, for solemn griefs like  
 this,  
 Blighting at once both root and flowers  
 of bliss,  
 Are arid as the desert, and in vain  
 Thirst for the cooling freshness of the  
 rain,  
 Fitfully led from treasured nook to  
 nook  
 Of her dear home, she walked with far-  
 off look,  
 And absent fingers, plying household  
 tasks:  
 Bravely her sunless wretchedness she  
 masks

Through moments deemed unending  
 while they passed —  
 When passed, a flickering point! Hark!  
 The doomed hour at last!

An afternoon it was, stirless and calm:  
 From field and garden-close rare breaths  
 of balm  
 Made the air moist and odorous. Nature  
 lay  
 Divinely peaceful; only far away  
 In the broad zenith, a strange cloud  
 unfurled  
 Its boding banner weirdly o'er the world;  
 Whilst Iolene, her veiled head sadly  
 bowed,  
 Passed through the gay thorpe and its  
 motley crowd,  
 To where a great wall towered this side  
 a wood.  
 All things her mazed, chaotic fancy  
 viewed  
 Looked dreamlike; even Aurelian lin-  
 gering there,  
 To meet her in the shadiest forest-lair,  
 Gleamed ghostly dim, a dreadful ghost  
 in sooth, —  
 For still a hideous trance appeared to  
 press  
 Upon her and a nightmare helpless-  
 ness, —  
 To whom she knelt in sad mechanic  
 guise,  
 Pleading for mercy with such piteous  
 eyes,  
 And such soft flow of self-bewalling  
 ruth,  
 Aurelian felt his passion's quivering  
 chords  
 Stilled at the touch of those pathetic  
 words,  
 That glance of wild appealing agonies.  
 Stirred by his nobler nature's grave  
 command  
 (That fair, indwelling angel sweet and  
 grand,  
 Born to transmute the worn and blasted  
 soil  
 Of sinful hearts by his celestial toil

To Eden places and the haunts of God),  
 He stooped, and, courteous, raised her  
 from the sod,  
 And whispered closely in her eager  
 ear  
 Words which his guardian genius smiled  
 to hear;  
 Words of release, and balmy breathing  
 cheer.  
 And while his softening gaze a grateful  
 mist  
 Feelingly dimmed, with knightly grace  
 he kissed  
 Her drooping forehead, and loose tresses  
 thrown  
 In rippling waves adown the heaving  
 zone;  
 Once, twice, he kissed her thus, with  
 reverence meek;  
 But when her brimming eyes uplifted,  
 seek  
 Aurelian now, with eloquent looks to  
 tell  
 What tenderest words could not convey  
 so well,  
 She only hears the tree-stems, tall and  
 brown,  
 The golden leaves come faintly fluttering  
 down,  
 And only hears the wind of sunset moan:  
 Midmost the twilight wood the lady  
 stands alone.

Stung by his misery into frenzied mo-  
 tion,  
 Her lord meantime beside the restless  
 ocean  
 Roamed, hearkening to the mournful  
 undertone  
 Of the sea's mighty heart, which touched  
 his own,  
 O God, how sadly! when abruptly lift-  
 ing  
 His furrowed brow, long fixed upon the  
 shifting  
 And mimic whirlwinds of loose sand that  
 flew  
 Hither and thither, as the brief winds  
 blew

At fitful whiles from o'er the watery  
 waste,  
 He saw, as if she spurned the earth in  
 haste,  
 His gentle wife returning, with a  
 face  
 Whereon there dwelt no shadow of dis-  
 grace;  
 A face that seemed transfigured in the  
 light  
 Of Paradise, it shone so softly bright.  
 Beautiful ever, round her now there  
 hovered  
 A subtle, new-born glory, which discov-  
 ered  
 A shape so dazzling, you had thought the  
 plume  
 Of some archangel's pinion cast its  
 bloom  
 About her, and the veil of heaven with-  
 drawn,  
 She viewed the mystic streams, the  
 sapphire dawn,  
 And heard the choirs celestial, tier on  
 tier  
 Uptowering to the uttermost golden  
 sphere,  
 Sing of a vanquished dread, a blest re-  
 lease,  
 The effluence and the solemn charm of  
 peace.

Evening closed round them; o'er the  
 placid reach  
 Stretching far northward of the sea-girt  
 beach,  
 They passed, while night's first planet in  
 the sky  
 Faltered from out the stillness timidly,  
 And perfumed breezes rustled murmur-  
 ing by,  
 'Twixt the grim headlands up the glens  
 to die,  
 And white-winged sea-birds, with a long-  
 drawn cry,  
 Which spake of homeward flight and  
 billowy nest,  
 Glanced through the sunset down the  
 wavering West.

Evening closed o'er them, mellowing  
 into dark;  
 Along the horizon's edge, a tiny spark,  
 Dull-red at first, but broadening to a  
 white  
 And tranquil orb of silver-streaming  
 light,  
 Slowly the Night Queen fair her heaven  
 ascends:  
 The outlines of those loving forms she  
 blends  
 Into one luminous shade, which seems  
 to float,  
 Mingle and melt in shining mists remote;  
 Type of two perfect lives, whose single  
 soul  
 Outbreathes a cordial music, sweet and  
 whole,  
 One will, one mind, one joy-encircled  
 fate,  
 And 'one winged faith that soars beyond  
 the heavenly gate.

My song, which now hath long flowed  
 unperplexed  
 Through scenes so various, calm as  
 heaven, or vexed  
 By gusty passion, reaches the lone shore,  
 Ghostlike and strange, of silence and old  
 dreams;  
 Far-off its weird and wandering whisper  
 seems  
 Like airs that faint o'er untracked oceans  
 hoar  
 On haunted midnights, when the moon  
 is low.  
 And now 'tis ended: long, yea, long  
 ago,  
 Lost on the wings of all the winds that  
 blow,  
 The dust of these dead loves hath passed  
 away;  
 Still, still, methinks, a soft, ethereal  
 ray  
 Illumes the tender record, and makes  
 bright  
 Its heart-deep pathos with a marvellous  
 light,

So that whate'er of frenzied grief and  
 pain  
 Marred the pure currents of the crystal  
 strain,  
 Transfigured shines through fancy's mel-  
 lowing trance,  
 Touching with golden haze the quaint  
 old-world romance.

NOTE. — Of "The Frankleines Tale," the  
 plot of which has been followed in "The Wife  
 of Brittany," Richard Henry Horne, the au-  
 thor of "Orion," says: "It is a noble story,  
 perfect in its moral purpose, and chivalrous  
 self-devotion to a feeling of truth and honor;  
 but it would have been more satisfactory in an  
 intellectual sense had a distinction been made  
 between a sincere pledge of faith and a 'merry  
 bond!'"

— o —

THE RIVER.

["Man's life is like a river, which likewise  
 hath its seasons or phases of progress: first, its  
 spring rise, gentle and beautiful; next, its  
 summer, of eventful maturity, mixed calm,  
 and storm, followed by autumnal decadence,  
 and mists of winter, after which cometh the  
 all-embracing sea, type of that mystery we  
 call eternity!"]

Up among the dew-lit fallows  
 Slight but fair it took its rise,  
 And through rounds of golden shallows  
 Brightened under broadening skies;  
 While the delicate wind of morning  
 Touched the waves to happier grace,  
 Like a breath of love's forewarning,  
 Dimpling o'er a virgin face, —  
 Till the tides of that rare river  
 Merged and mellowed into one,  
 Flashed the shafts from sundawn's quiver  
 Backward to the sun.

Royal breadths of sky-born blushes  
 Burned athwart its billowy breast, —  
 But beyond those roseate flushes  
 Shone the snow-white swans at rest;  
 Round in graceful flights the swallows  
 Dipped and soared, and soaring sang,  
 And in bays and reed-bound hollows,  
 How earth's wild, sweet voices rang!

Till the strong, swift, glorious river  
Seemed with mightier pulse to run,  
Thus to roll and rush forever,  
Laughing in the sun.

Nay; a something born of shadow  
Slowly crept the landscape o'er, —  
Something weird o'er wave and meadow,  
Something cold o'er stream and shore;  
While on birds that gleamed or chanted,  
Stole gray gloom and silence grim,  
And the troubled wave-heart panted,  
And the smiling heavens waxed dim,  
And from far strange spaces seaward,  
Out of dreamy cloud-lands dun,  
Came a low gust moaning leeward,  
Chilling leaf and sun.

Then, from gloom to gloom intenser,  
On the laboring streamlet rolled,  
Where from cloud-racks gathered denser,  
Hark! the ominous thunder knolled!  
While like ghosts that flit and shiver,  
Down the mists, from out the blast,  
Spectral pinions crossed the river, —  
Spectral voices wailing passed!  
Till the fierce tides, rising starkly,  
Blended, towering into one  
Mighty wall of blackness, darkly  
Quenching sky and sun!

Thence, to softer scenes it wandered,  
Scents of flowers and airs of balm,  
And methought the streamlet pondered,  
Conscious of the blissful calm:  
Slow it wound now, slow and slower  
By still beach and ripply bight,  
And the voice of waves sank lower,  
Laden, languid with delight:  
In and out the cordial river  
Strayed in peaceful curves that won  
Glory from the great Life-Giver,  
Beauty from the sun!

Thence again with quaintest ranges,  
On the fateful streamlet rolled  
Through unnumbered, nameless changes,  
Shade and sunshine, gloom and gold.

Till the tides, grown sad and weary,  
Longed to meet the mightier main,  
And their low-toned *miserere*  
Mingled with his grand refrain;  
Oh, the languid, lapsing river,  
Weak of pulse and soft of tune, —  
Lo! the sun hath set forever,  
Lo! the ghostly moon!

But thenceforth through moon and star-  
light  
Sudden-swift the streamlet's sweep;  
Yearning for the mystic far-light,  
Pining for the solemn deep;  
While the old strength gathers o'er it,  
While the old voice rings sublime,  
And in pallid mist before it,  
Fade the phantom shows of time, —  
Till with one last eddying quiver,  
All its checkered journey done,  
Seaward breaks the ransomed river,  
Goal and grave are won!

—◆—  
*THE STORY OF GLAUCUS THE  
THESSALIAN.\**

TO —

LIST to this legend, which an **antique**  
poet  
Hath left among the musty tomes of **eld**,  
Like a flushed rosebud pressed between  
the leaves  
Of some worn, dark-hued volume. **What**  
a light  
Of healthful bloom about it! **What an**  
air  
Seems breathing round its delicate petals  
still!  
Wilt thou not take it, lady, — thou,  
whose face  
Is lovely as a lost Arcadian dream, —  
And place it next thy heart, and keep it  
fresh  
With balmy dews thy gentle spirit sends

\* The elements of this story are to be found in Apollonius Rhodius, and Leigh Hunt has embodied them in a graceful prose legend.

Up to the deep founts of the tenderest  
eyes  
That e'er have shone, I think, since in  
some dell  
Of Argos and enchanted Thessaly,  
The poet, from whose heart-lit brain it  
came,  
Murmured this record unto her he loved ?

## THE STORY.

Glaucus, a young Thessalian, while the  
dawn  
Of a fresh spring-tide brightened copse  
and lawn,  
Sauntered, with lingering steps and  
dreamy mood,  
Adown the fragrant pathway of a wood  
Which skirted his small homestead  
pleasantly, —  
And there he saw a tall, majestic tree,  
An oak of untold summers, whose broad  
crown.  
Quivering as if in some slow agony,  
And trembling inch by inch forlornly  
down,  
Threatened, for want of a kind propping  
care,  
To leave its breezy realm of golden air.  
And from its leafy heights, with shriek  
and groan,  
Like some proud forest empire over-  
thrown,  
Measure its vast bulk on the greensward  
lone.

Glaucus beheld and pitied it. He saw  
The approaching ruin with a touch of  
awe,  
No less than genial sympathy, — for men,  
In those old times, pierced with a wiser  
ken  
To the deep soul of Nature, and from  
thence  
Drew a serene and mystic influence,  
Which thrilled all life to music. There-  
fore he  
Called on his slaves, and bade them prop  
the tree.

Musing he passed to a still lonelier place  
In the dim forest, by this act of grace  
Lightened and cheered, when, from the  
copse-wood nigh,  
There dawned upon his vision suddenly  
A shape more fair and iustrous than the  
star  
Which rides o'er Cloudland on her  
sapphire car  
When vesper winds are fluting solemnly.  
“Glaucus,” she said, in tones whose  
liquid flow,  
Mellow, harmonious, passionately low,  
Stole o'er his spirit with a strange, wild  
thrill,  
“I am the Nymph of that fair tree thy  
will  
Hath saved from ruin; but for thee my  
breath  
Had vanished mistlike, — my glad eyes  
in death  
Been sealed for evermore. Yes! but for  
thee  
I must have lost that half-divinity  
Whose secret essence, spiritually fine,  
Hath warmed my veins like Hebe's  
heavenly wine.  
No more, no more amid my rippling hair  
Could I have felt soft fingers of the  
air  
Dallying at dawn or twilight, — on my  
cheek  
Have felt the sun rest with a rosy streak,  
Pulsing in languor; nor with pleasant  
pain  
Drooped in the cool arms of the loving  
Rain,  
That wept its soul out on my bosom fair.  
But now, in long, calm, blissful days  
to be,  
This life of mine shall lapse deliciously  
Through all the seasons of the boun-  
teous year;  
Beneath my shade mortals shall sit, and  
hear  
Benignant whispers in the shimmering  
leaves;  
And sometimes, upon warm and odorous  
eyes,



Lovers shall bring me offerings of sweet things, —  
 Honey and fruit, — and dream they mark the wings  
 Of Cupids fluttering through the oak-boughs hoar.  
 All this I owe thee, Glaucus, — all, and more!  
 Ask what thou wilt! — thou shalt not ask in vain!"

Then Glaucus, gazing in her glorious eyes,  
 And rallying from his first unmanned surprise,  
 Emboldened, too, by her soft looks, which drew  
 A spell about his heart like fire and dew  
 Mingled and melting in a love-charm bland. —  
 And by the twinkling of her moon-white hand,  
 That seemed to beckon coyly to her side,  
 And by her maiden sweetness deified,  
 And something that he deemed a dear unrest  
 Heaving the unveiled billows of her breast —  
 (As if her preternatural part, as free  
 And wild as any nursling of the lea,  
 Yearned wholly downward to humanity) —  
 Emboldened thus, I say, Glaucus replied:  
 "O fairest vision! be my love, — my bride!"

Over her face there passed an airy flush,  
 The roseate shade, the twilight of a blush,  
 Ere the low-whispering answer pensively  
 Stirred the dim silence in its trance'd hush.  
 "Thy suit is granted, Glaucus! though, perchance  
 A peril broods o'er this, thy bright romance,  
 Like a lone cloudlet o'er a lake that's fair,

When the high noon, flaunting so hotly now  
 Fades into evening, thou may'st meet me here,  
 Just in the cool of this rill-shadowing bough;  
 My favorite bee, my fairy of the flowers,  
 Shall bid thee come to that pure tryst of ours."

Who now so proud as Glaucus? "I have won,"  
 Lightly he said, "the marvellous benison  
 Of love from her in whose soft-folding arms  
 Gods might forget Elysium! O! her charms  
 Are perfect. — perfect heaven and perfect earth,  
 Blest and commingled in one exquisite birth  
 Of beauty, — and for me! I know not why,  
 But rosy Eros ever seems to fly  
 Gayly before me, armed for victory,  
 In every pleasant love-strife!" On this theme  
 Deeply he dwelt, till a vain self-esteem  
 Obscured his worthier spirit. Thus he went  
 Out from the haunted wood, his nature toned  
 Down to the common daylight, disenzoned  
 Of all its rare, ethereal ravishment.

Still in this mood, he sought the neighboring town.  
 Met with some gay young comrades, and sat down  
 To dice and wassail. All that morn he played,  
 And quaffed, and sang, and feasted, till the shade  
 Of evening o'er earth's forehead cast a gloom;  
 And still he played, when on his ear the boom

Of a swift, shining, yellow-breasted bee  
Rung out its small alarum. Teasingly  
The insect hummed about him, went and  
came,  
And like a tiny hell of circling flame  
And discord seemed to Glaucus, who at last  
Struck at the wingèd torment testily.  
The bee — poor go-between! — in either  
thigh  
Cruelly maimed, with feeble flutterings,  
passed  
Back to its home amid the foliaged  
bloom.

At length, in two most fortunate throws,  
the game  
Was won by Glaucus! With triumphant  
smile  
He seized and pocketed a glittering pile  
Of new sestertii. "Ay! 'tis e'er the  
same,"  
He muttered; "dice or women, I *must*  
win!  
But hold! — by Venus! 'twere a burning  
sin,  
And false to my fond wild flower of the  
wood  
Longer to dally here. O Fortune! good,  
Kind mistress, speed me still! Would  
that each heel  
Were plumed like happy Hermes!"  
His late zeal  
Spurred the youth onward to the place  
of tryst, —  
One final burst of sunset — amethyst,  
Ruby, and topaz — blazed among the  
boughs,  
Whence a sad voice, — "*Breaker of  
solemn vows,  
What dost thou here? Thine hour has  
past for aye!*"  
Glaucus, with startled eyes, peered  
through the sway  
Of moistened fern and thicket, but his  
view  
Rested alone on vacancy, or caught,  
Swift as the shifting glamour of a  
thought,

Only the golden and evanishing ray,  
Which, softened by cool sparkles of the  
dew,  
Flashed through the half-closed lids of  
weary Day.

"Here am I," said the voice, so sadly  
sweet,  
The listener thrilled even to his pausing  
feet, —  
"Here, right before thee, Glaucus!"  
Yet again  
The youth with straining eyeballs and  
hot brain,  
Searched the dense thickets, — it was all  
in vain.  
"Alas! alas!" (and now a tremulous  
moan  
Sobbed through the voice, like a faint  
minor tone  
In mournful human music) — "thou  
canst see  
My face no more, for sternly, drearily,  
A wildering cloud of sense, that shall  
not rise,  
Hath come between me and thy darken-  
ing eyes.  
O shallow-hearted! nevermore on thee  
Shall visions of that finer world above  
Dawn from the chaste auroras of their  
love;  
But common things, seen in a funeral  
haze  
Of earthiness, and sorrow, and mistrust,  
Weigh the soul down, and soil its hopes  
with dust;  
A hand like Fate's with cruel force shall  
press  
Thy spirit backward into heaviness.  
And the base realm of that forlorn abyss  
Wherein the serpent Passions writhe and  
hiss  
In savage desolation! Blind, blind,  
blind  
Art thou henceforth in heart, and hope,  
and mind!  
For he to whom my messenger of joy  
And soothing promise only brought  
annoy

And sharp disquiet in his low-born  
 lust, —  
 What, what to him *Ideal Beauty's*  
 kiss,  
 The charm of lofty converse in the  
 dells,  
 Of divine meetings, musical farewells,  
 And glimpses through the flickering  
 leaves at night  
 Of such fair mysteries in awe-hushing  
 light  
 That even I, who in these forests  
 dwell  
 Purely with innocent creatures, unto  
 whom  
 All Nature opens her innermost heart of  
 bloom  
 And blessedness, by some majestic  
 spell  
 Uplifted unto realms ineffable,  
 Faint almost in the splendor large and  
 clear?  
 The winds have ceased their murmur-  
 ings, — on my ear  
 The rill-songs melt to threads of delicate  
 tune,  
 And every small mote dancing in the  
 moon  
 Expands, and brightens to a spiritual  
 eye,  
 Luring me up to Immortality,  
 O! then my earthly nature, loosening  
 slips  
 Down like a garment, and invisible  
 lips  
 Whisper the secrets of their happier  
 sphere!  
 This bliss, O youth! my soul had shared  
 with one  
 Worthy the gift! Alas! *thou art not he!*”  
 The voice died off toward the waning  
 sun!  
 Glaucous looked up, — the gaunt, gray  
 forest trees  
 Seemed to close o'er him like a vault of  
 stone.  
 “*Just Gods!*” he sighed, “*I am indeed*  
*alone!*”

## THE NEST.

AT the poet's life-core lying  
 Is a sheltered and sacred nest,  
 Where, as yet, unfledged for flying,  
 His callow fancies rest:

Fancies, and thoughts, and feelings,  
 Which the mother Psyche breeds,  
 And passions whose dim revealings  
 But torture their hungry needs.

Yet, — there cometh a summer splendor  
 When the golden brood wax strong,  
 And, with voices grand or tender,  
 They rise to the heaven of song.

## NOT DEAD.

TO J. A. D.

HERE, at the sweetest hour of this sweet  
 day,  
 Here in the calmest woodland haunt  
 I know,  
 Benignant thoughts around my memory  
 play,  
 And in my heart do pleasant fancies  
 blow,  
 Like flowers turned to thee, radiant  
 and aglow,  
 Flushed by the light of times forever  
 fled,  
 Whose tender glory pales, but is not  
 dead.

The warm south wind is like thy gener-  
 ous breath,  
 Laden with kindly words of gentle  
 cheer,  
 And every whispering leaf above me  
 saith,  
 She whom thou dream'st so distant  
 hovers near;  
 Her love it is that thrills the sunset air  
 With mystic motions from a time that's  
 fled,  
 Long past and gone, in sooth, — but,  
 oh! not dead!

The drowsy murmur of cool brooks  
below;

The soft, slow clouds that seem to *muse*  
on high;

Love-notes of hidden birds, that come  
and go,

Making a sentient rapture of the sky;  
All the rare season's peaceful sorcery,  
These hints of cordial joys forever  
fled,

Joys past, indeed, and yet they are not  
dead:

Far from the motley throng of sordid  
men,

From fashion far, mean strife and  
frenzied gain.

In those dear days through many a  
mountain glen,

By mountain streams, and fields of  
rippling grain.

We roamed untouched by Passion's  
feverish pain,

But quaffing Friendship's tranquil  
draughts instead,

Its waters clear whose sweetness is not  
dead!

Above that nook of fair remembrance  
stands

A dove-eyed Faith, that falters not,  
nor sleeps;

No flowers of Lethe droop in her white  
hands,

And if the watch that steadfast angel  
keeps

Be pensive and some transient tears  
she weeps,

They are but tears a fond regret may  
shed

O'er twilight joys which fade, but are  
not dead!

Not dead! not dead! but glorified and  
fair.

Like yonder marvellous cloudland  
floating far

Between the mellowing sunset's amber  
air

And the mild lustre of eve's earliest  
star,

Oh, such, so pure, so bright, these  
memories are!

Earth's warmth and Heaven's serene  
around them spread.

They pass, they wane, but, sweet! they  
are not dead!

—◆—  
SONNET.

HAST thou beheld a landscape dull and  
bare,

On which, at times, a flying gleam was  
shed

From some shy sunbeam shifting over-  
head,

That made the scene for one brief mo-  
ment fair?

Such is the light, so transient, flickering,  
rare,

Which, from fate's sullen heavens  
above me spread,

Hath flushed the path my weary foot-  
steps tread,

And lent to darkness glimpses of sweet  
cheer.

Alas! alas! that I, whose soul doth burn  
With such deep passion for a steadfast

bliss,

Must bend forever o'er hope's burial urn,  
And greet even love with a half-

mournful kiss!

In sooth, what stern, malignant doom  
is this?

Joy! delicate Ariel! ah! return! return!

—◆—  
MARGUERITE.

SHE was a child of gentlest air,  
Of deep-dark eyes, but golden hair,

And, ah! I loved her unaware,  
Marguerite!

She spelled me with those midnight eyes,  
The sweetness of her naïve replies,

And all her innocent sorceries,  
Marguerite!

The fever of my soul grew calm  
Beneath her smile that healed like balm,  
Her words were holier than a psalm,  
Marguerite!

But 'twixt us yawned a gulf of fate,  
Whose blackness I beheld, — too late.  
*O Christ! that love should smite like  
hate.*  
Marguerite!

She did not wither to the tomb,  
But round her crept a tender gloom  
More touching than her earliest bloom,  
Marguerite!

The sun of one fair hope had set,  
A hope she dared not all forget,  
Its twilight glory kissed her yet, —  
Marguerite!

And ever in the twilight fair  
Moves with deep eyes and golden hair  
The child who loved me unaware!  
Marguerite!



APART.

COME not with empty words that say,  
"Your strength of manhood wastes  
away

In long, ignoble, fruitless years!"  
I live apart from pain and tears,  
Wherewith the ways of men are sown,  
Nor dwell I loveless and alone;  
One tender spirit shares my days,  
One voice is swift to yield me praise,  
One true heart beats against my own!  
What more, what more could man desire  
Than love that burns a steadfast fire  
And faith that ever leads him higher  
Along the path which points to peace?

Oh, far and faint I hear the din  
Of battle-blows, and mortal sin  
From out the stir and press of life;  
Those hollow muffled sounds of strife

Seem rolled from thunder-clouds up-  
curled

About a dim and distant world;  
Below me, in the sunless gloom;  
But round my brow the amaranth's  
bloom

Of sober joy with heart's-ease furled;  
For more, what more can man desire  
Than love that burns a steadfast fire,  
And faith that ever leads him higher.  
Where all the jars of earth shall cease?

A present glory haunts my way,  
A promise of diviner day  
Illumes the flushed horizon's verge;  
And fainter, farther still, the surge  
Of buffeting waves that beat and roar  
Up the dim world's tempestuous shore  
Beneath me in the moonless air;  
Alas, its passions, sorrows, cares!  
Alas, its fathomless despairs!  
Yet dreams, vague dreams, they seem to  
me,

On these clear heights of liberty,  
These summits of serene desire, —  
Whence love ascends, a quenchless fire,  
And sweet faith ever leads me higher  
To pearly paths of perfect peace!



THE LOTOS AND THE LILY.

The little poems which follow were suggested by an oriental idea developed in *Alger's* "Specimens of Eastern Poetry." The moon is strangely spoken of as masculine.

THE LOTOS.

DROOPING in the sunlit streams,  
We are wrapped all day in dreams;

Morn and noon and evening light  
Robed for us in garbs of night.

Only when the moon appears  
Through a silvery mist of tears,

From the waters dark and still,  
We arise to drink our fill

Of the tender love he sheds  
On our fair enamored heads.

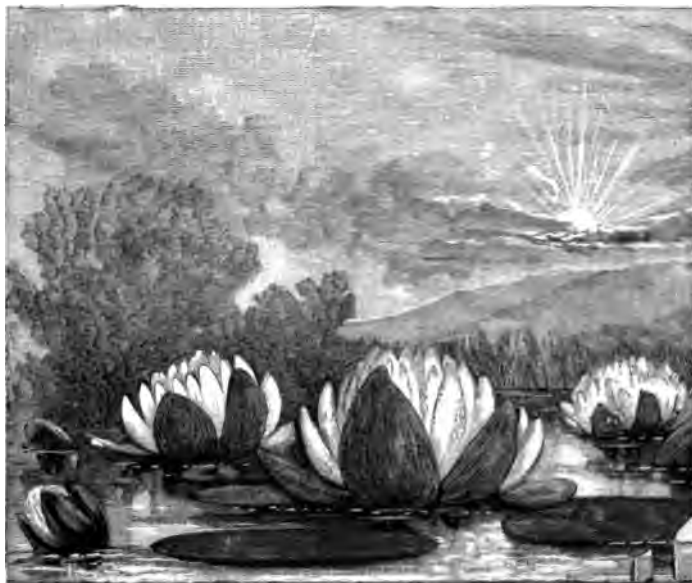
Ah! no longer wrapped in dreams,  
How we pant beneath his beams!

How, with breath of softest sighs,  
We unclothe our yearning eyes,

And our snowy necks in pride  
Curve about the glittering tide!

Warmth for warmth and kiss for kiss,  
All our pulses burn with bliss,

Till revealed our inmost charms  
Glowing in the night-god's arms.



"View us, white-robed lilies,  
We, whose beauty's rareness  
Sleeps until the bridegroom sun  
Woos our virgin fairness."

THE LILY.

VIEW us, white-robed lilies,  
We whose beauty's rareness  
Sleeps until the bridegroom Sun  
Woos our virgin fairness.

Then, our bosoms baring,  
'Neath his ardent kisses,  
Stem, and leaf, and delicate heart  
Trembling into blisses,

The full, fervid godhead  
Thrills our being tender,  
And our happy souls expand  
In ecstasie splendor.

Thus all, *all* we yield him  
Of our shrined sweetness, —  
All that maiden warmth may grant  
To true love's completeness,

## WINDLESS RAIN.

THE rain, the desolate rain!  
 Ceaseless, and solemn, and chill!  
 How it drips on the misty pane,  
 How it drenches the darkened sill!  
 O scene of sorrow and dearth!  
 I would that the wind awaking  
 To a fierce and gusty birth  
 Might vary this dull refrain  
 Of the rain, the desolate rain:  
 For the heart of heaven seems breaking  
 In tears o'er the fallen earth,  
 And again, again, again  
 We list to the sombre strain.  
 The faint, cold monotone —  
 Whose soul is a mystic moan —  
 Of the rain, the mournful rain,  
 The soft, despairing rain!

The rain, the murmurous rain!  
 Weary, passionless, slow,  
 'Tis the rhythm of settled sorrow,  
 'Tis the sobbing of cureless woe!  
 And all the tragic of life,  
 The pathos of Long-Ago,  
 Comes back on the sad refrain  
 Of the rain, the dreary rain,  
 Till the graves in my heart unclose,  
 And the dead that its depths enfold,  
 From a solemn and weird repose  
 Awake, — but with eyelids cold,  
 And voices that melt in pain  
 On the tide of the plaintive rain,  
 The yearning, hopeless rain,  
 The long, low, whispering rain!

## "IN UTROQUE FIDELIS."

ALONG the woods the whispering night-  
 airs swoon,  
 A single bird-note dies adown the trees,  
 Clear, pallid, mournful, droops the sum-  
 mer moon,  
 Dipped in the foam of cloudland's  
 phantom seas: —  
 Soundless they heave above  
 The dim, ancestral home that holds my  
 love.

How breathless still! A mystic glamour  
 keeps  
 Calm watch and ward o'er this weird,  
 drowsy hour:  
 Yon heaven's at peace, the earth be-  
 nignly sleeps;  
 And thou, thou slumberest too, my  
 woodland flower, —  
 Fair lily steeped in light  
 And happy visions of the marvellous  
 night!

I waft a sigh from this fond soul to  
 thine, —  
 A little sigh, yet honey-laden, dear,  
 With fairy freightage of such hopes di-  
 vine  
 As fain would flutter gently at thine  
 ear,  
 And, entering, find their way  
 Down to the heart so veiled from me by  
 day.

In dreams, in dreams, perchance, thou  
 art not coy;  
 And one keen hope more bold than all  
 the rest  
 May touch thy spirit with a tremulous  
 joy,  
 And stir an answering softness in thy  
 breast:  
 O sleep! O blest eclipse!  
 What murmured word is faltering at her  
 lips?

Awake for one brief moment, genial  
 South:  
 Breathe o'er her slumbers, — waft that  
 word to me,  
 Warm with the fragrance of her rosebud  
 mouth,  
 Enwreathed in smiles of dreamful fan-  
 tasy:  
 Come, whisper, low and light,  
 The name which haunts her maiden  
 trance to-night.

Still, breathless-still! No voice in earth  
 or air:  
 I only know my delicate darling lies,

A twilight lustre glimmering in her  
hair,  
And dews of peace within her languid  
eyes:  
Yea, only know that I  
Am called from love and dreams, per-  
haps to die, —

Die when the heavens are thick with  
scarlet rain,  
And every time-throb's fated: even  
there  
Her face would shine through mists of  
mortal pain,  
And sweeten death, like some incar-  
nate prayer:  
Hark! 'tis the trumpet's swell!  
O love! O dreams! farewell, farewell,  
farewell!

—◆—  
*NATURE, BETROTHED AND WEDDED.*

HAVE you not noted how in early spring,  
From out the forests, past the murmur-  
ing brooks,  
O'er the hillsides, Nature, with airy  
grace,  
Like some fair virgin, touched by lights  
and shades,  
Glides timidly, a veil of golden mist  
About her brows, and budding bosom  
draped  
In maiden coyness? She's a bride be-  
trothed  
Unto that mystic god, who comes from  
far,  
Rich Orient lands upon the winds of  
June,  
That bear him like swift ardors, winged  
with fire:  
And when, on some calm, lustrous morn,  
her lord  
Uplifts the golden veil, and weds to hers  
The quickening warmth of ripe, immor-  
tal lips,  
How the broad earth leaps into raptured  
life,  
And thrills with music!

Then a queenly spouse  
Raised unto fruitful empire, through all  
hours  
Of bounteous summer, she walks proudly  
on,  
Shining with blissful eyes of matronhood,  
Till, at the last, autumn, with reverent  
hand,  
Doth crown her with such full, com-  
pleted joy,  
Such wealth of sovereign beauty, she  
once more  
About her brows and sumptuous bosom  
folds  
That golden veil, — not in the tremulous  
fear  
Of maiden coyness now, but lest rash  
men,  
Drawn by her awful loveliness, should  
dare  
To gaze too closely on it, and thus fall,  
Smitten and blind, at her imperial feet!

—◆—  
*CHLORIS.*

WHAT time the rosy-flushing West  
Sleeps soft on copse and dingle,  
Wherein the sunset shadows rest,  
Or richly float and mingle;  
When down the vale the wood-dove's tone  
Thrills in a cadence tender,  
And every rare, ethereal note  
Turns to a winged splendor.  
Just as the mystic cloudlands ope,  
Far up their sapphire portal,  
Fair as the fairest dream of Hope,  
Half goddess and half mortal,  
I see that lovely genius rise,  
That child of Orient trances,  
On whose sweet face the glory lies  
Of weird Hellenic fancies, —  
Chloris! beneath whose procreant tread  
All earth yields up her sweetness, —  
The violet's scent, the rose's red,  
The dahlia's orb'd completeness,



And verdures on the myriad hills,  
The breath of her pure duty  
Hath nursed to life by sparkling rills  
And foliaged nooks of beauty;

Till bloom and odor, blush and song,  
So fill earth's radiant spaces,  
The fading touch of sin, or wrong,  
Leaves glad the weariest faces;

And so, through happy spring-tide dells,  
O'er mount, and field, and river,  
Her zephyr's fairy clarion swells,  
Her footsteps glance forever!



*FORTUNIO.*

A PARABLE FOR THE TIMES.

Who at the court of Astolf, the great  
King,  
King of a realm of firs, and icy flocs,  
Cold bright fiords, and mountains capped  
with clouds.  
Who there so loved and honored as the  
knight,  
The youthful knight Fortunio? Whence  
he came,  
None knew, nor whom his kindred: at  
a bound  
He passed all rivals moving towards the  
throne,  
And stood firm-poised above them; yet  
with mien  
So sweet it honeyed envy, and sur-  
prised  
The bitterest railers into complaisance!  
Low-voiced and delicate-featured, with  
a cheek  
As soft as peach down, or the golden  
dust  
Shrined in a maiden lily's heart of  
hearts,  
Yet a stern will bent bowl-like, with the  
shaft  
Of some keen purpose swiftly drawn to  
head,  
Or launched unerring at its lofty mark,

Rose thrilled with action, or high strung  
at aim,  
Beneath his jewelled doublet! While  
the hand  
So warm, so white, and wont to press  
the palm  
In palpitating clasp of fair sixteen,  
Could wield the ponderous battle-axe,  
or flash  
The lightning rapier in the foeman's  
eyes.  
Prince of the tourney and the dance  
alike,  
War's fiercer lists had seen his furrow-  
less brow  
Flushed red with heat of battle, heard  
his voice  
Shrilled clear beyond the clarions,  
mount and break  
In larklike song far o'er the mists of  
blood,  
Through victory's calmer heaven.  
Mixed love and fear.  
With love oft-times preponderant, girded  
him  
Closely as with an atmosphere disturbed  
Only by hints of thunder, ghosts of  
cloud.  
But love, all love, love in her passionate  
eyes.  
Love 'twixt the pure twin rosebuds of  
her mouth,  
Love in the arch of brooding, beauteous  
brows,  
And every wavering dimple wherein  
smiles  
At hide-and-peek with sly, mock frown-  
ings played.—  
All love was Freyla, though a princess  
she,  
For this unknown Fortunio! Wildly  
beat  
And burned her heart at each soft glance  
he gave,  
Or softer word, albeit as yet unthrilled  
By answering passion! Swiftly flew her  
dreams  
Birdlike on balmy winds of fancy  
borne,

To bridal realms empurpled and di-  
vine,—  
Alas! but Scorn, that long had lurked  
and spied  
In ambush, shot its sudden bolts, and  
brought  
Those winged dreams transfixed to earth  
and dead!

While Rage, Scorn's ally, in her father's  
breast,  
Clutched the sweet dreamer rudely,  
dragged her soul  
Into the garish glare of commonplace  
(Soon to be lit by horror's lurid star!)  
And so convulsed her tenderness with  
threats,



“King of a realm of firs, and icy flocs,  
Cold bright firds, and mountains capped with clouds.”

That all her being seemed collapsed to fall  
Crushed, as in moral earthquake: “Dot-  
ing fool,”  
Outshrieked the King, “dost dream  
great Odin's blood  
Could mix with veins plebeian? Purge  
thy thoughts,  
Unvirgined, vile, of sacrilegious sin!  
But for this boy, our twelvemonth's  
grace hath raised  
So high, a moment's justice shall cast  
down  
To fathomless depths of ruin!”

Wherewithal  
(Harping on justice still, though justice  
slept)  
The King decreed, “This youth Fortu-  
nio dies!”  
So, on a bright spring morn, the knight  
stood up,  
Fronting the royal doomsmen, with a  
face  
Sublimely calm: they tore his bravery  
off,  
His jewelled vest and knighthood's  
golden spurs,

And bared his heart to catch the arrowy  
hail,—  
When lo! beneath those rough, disrob-  
bing hands,  
*The dangerous, lewd seducer, coyly  
boared,  
Outbeamed a virgin beauty chaste and  
fair!*

The King, beholding, started, and then  
smiled:  
"Thou wanton madcap," said he, "go  
in peace!"

O cordial eyes, the brown eyes and the  
blue,  
Or ye dark eyes, with deeps like mid-  
night heavens,  
Where unimagined worlds of thought  
and love  
Shine starlike, would ye quench your  
glorious rays  
In the low levels of the lives of men?  
O gracious souls of women tender-sweet,  
And luminous with goodness, would ye  
soil  
Your nascent angel-plumage in the sty  
Of sordid worldliness? Be warned, be  
warned!  
Set not the frail spears of your rash  
caprice  
In rest against great Nature's pierceless  
shield;  
Strive not to grasp monopolies impure,  
Man's fated heritage. Be warned, be  
warned!  
For surely as you bright sun dawns and  
dies,  
And sure as Nature, all immutable,  
Year after year completes her mystic  
round  
Through law's vast orbit,—so ye des-  
perate Fair,  
Arrayed against the eternal force of God,  
Must fall discomfited, and like that  
knight,  
The false Fortunio, rest your claims at  
last,  
Not on deft spells of simulated power,

But on the soft white bosom which  
enspheres  
The sacred charms of perfect woman-  
hood!



#### A FEUDAL PICTURE.

[SCENE—The Corridor of a Palace. PER-  
SONS—A young Knight and his Mentor.  
TIME—The Fourteenth Century.]

#### MENTOR.

WITH what a grace she passed us by  
just now!  
Her delicate chin half raised, her cordial  
brow  
A cloudless heaven of bland benignities!  
What tempered lustre too in her dove's  
eyes,  
Just touched to archness by the eye-  
brow's curve,  
And those quick dimples which the  
mouth's reserve  
Stir and break up, as sunlit ripples  
break  
The cool, clear calmness of a mountain  
lake!  
A woman in whom majesty and sweet-  
ness  
Blend to such issues of serene complete-  
ness,  
That to gaze on her were a prince's  
boon!  
The calm of evening, the large pomp of  
noon,  
Are hers: soft May morns melting into  
June,  
Hold not such tender languishments as  
those  
Which steep her in that dew-light of  
repose,  
That floats a dreamy balm around the  
full-blown rose:—  
And yet, 'tis not her beauty, though so  
bright  
(Clear moon-fire mixed with sun-flame),  
nor the light,  
Transparent charm we feel so exquisite,

Whereby she's compassed as a wizard  
 star  
 By its own life-air! 'tis not one, nor all  
 Of these, whereby we're mastered, Sir,  
 and fall  
 Slavelike before her: doubtless such  
 things *are*  
 Potent as spells, — still there's a some-  
 thing fine,  
 Subtler than hoar-rime in the faint  
 moonshine,  
 More potent yet! — an undefined art,  
 'Twere vain to question: your whole  
 being, heart,  
 Brain, blood, seem lapsing from you,  
 fired and fused  
 In hers, — a terrible power, and if  
 abused —  
 But by St. Peter! 'tis not safe to talk  
 Of you weird woman! turn now! watch  
 her walk  
 'Twixt the tall tiger-lilies, — there's a  
 free,  
 Brave grace in every step, — but still to  
 me,  
 It hath — I know not what — of covert-  
 ness,  
 Cunning, and cruel purpose! can you  
 guess  
 The picture it brings up? — a lonely  
 rock  
 From which a young Bedouin guards his  
 flock,  
 In the swart desert: — there's a tawny  
 band,  
 A curved and tangled pathway of loose  
 sand,  
 Winding above him; — the tranced airs  
 make dim  
 His slumberous senses! — his great  
 brown eyes swim  
 In th' mist of dreams, when gliding  
 with mute tread  
 Forth from the thorn-trees, o'er his  
 nodding head,  
 Moves a lithe-bodied panther; — (God!  
 how fair  
 The beast is, with her moony-spotted  
 hair,

And her deft desert paces!) — one breath  
 more!  
 And you'll behold the spouting of fresh  
 gore.  
 Heart blood that's human! — can aught  
 save him now? —  
 Hlist! the sharp crackle of a blasted  
 bough,  
 Whence flies a huge hill-eagle, rustling  
 O'er the boy's forehead his vast breadth  
 of wing,  
 And sweeping as a half-seen shade,  
 'twould seem.  
 Betwixt his startled spirit, and its  
 dream;  
 He's roused! espies his danger! at a  
 bound  
 Leaps into safety where the low-set  
 ground  
 Is buttressed 'neath two giant crags  
 thereby  
 (Now hark ye! 'tis no pictured phantasy,  
 This scene, my Anslem! but all's true  
 and clear  
 Before me, though full many a weary  
 year  
 Has waxed and waned since then):  
 My meaning prithe? foolish youth, be-  
 ware!  
 There's treachery lurking in the gay  
 parterre,  
 As in the hoary desert's silentness,  
 And dreams with danger, death per-  
 chance behind,  
 May lull young sleepers in the perfumed  
 wind,  
 Which hardly lifts the tiniest truant  
 tress  
 It toys with coyly, of a woman's  
 hair:  
 Our sternest fates have risen in forms as  
 fair,  
 As — let us say for lack of similes, —  
 As, hers, who bends now with such  
 gracious ease,  
 O'er her rich tulip-beds!  
 Were I the bird,  
 Wert thou the shepherd Anslem of my  
 tale,

(And that thou hast not hearkened, boy,  
 unstirred  
 Is clear, albeit thou need'st not wax so  
 pale).  
 What would true wisdom whisper, now  
 'tis done,  
 My warning, and thy day-dream in the  
 sun?  
 What! why, her mandate's plain: I hear  
 her say,  
 'Young Knight! to horse! leave the  
 Queen's Court to-day!'

◆  
 THE WARNING.

PATIENCE! I yet may pierce the rind  
 Wherewith are shrewdly girded round  
 The subtle secrets of his mind:  
 A dark, unwholesome core is bound  
 Perchance within it! Sir, you see,  
 Men are not what they *seem* to be!

A candid mien and plausible tongue!  
 A bearing calmly frank and fair.  
 The tear ('twould seem) by pity wrung.  
 All these are his, but still, beware!  
 A something strange, false, unbegot  
 Of virtue, whispers, trust him not:  
 But yesterday, his mask (I know  
 He wears one), for a moment's space,  
 By chance dropped off and swift below  
 The smile just waning on his face,  
 I caught a look, flashed sudden, keen  
 As lightning, which he deemed unseen.

I will not pause to tell thee what  
 That look betrayed! enough I think,  
 To smite the spirit cold and hot,  
 By turns, and make one inly shrink  
 From contact with a soul that keeps  
 Such wild-fire smouldering in its deeps:  
 So friend, be warned! he is not one  
 Thy youth should trust, for all his  
 smiles,

Frank foreheads, genial as the sun,  
 May hide a thousand treacherous wiles,  
 And tones, like music's honeyed flow,  
 May work (God knows!) the bitterest  
 woe!

DRIFTING.

I HAVE settled at last in a sombre nook.  
 In the far-off heart of the Norland  
 hills,  
 There's a dark pine forest before my  
 gates,  
 And behind is the voice of rills  
 That murmur all day, and murmur all )  
 night.  
 Through the tangled copses green and  
 lone,  
 Where, couched in the depths of the  
 shadowy leaves,  
 The wood-dove makes her moan.

My home is a castle ancient and worn.  
 With hoary walls, and with crumbling  
 floors,  
 And the burglar-winds their entrance  
 force  
 Through the cobwebbed panes and  
 doors.  
 I can hardly say that a roof is mine.  
 For whene'er the mountain tempests  
 rise,  
 A deluge is poured through its countless  
 rents,  
 Wide open to air and skies!

Ah! Nature alone keeps a wholesome  
 mien,  
 In the midst of a squalor wildly bare,  
 And I draw sometimes from her bounte-  
 ous breast  
 Brief balms for the heart's despair;  
 All *human* friends that were loyal have  
 died,  
 And the false and treacherous only  
 stay,  
 To poison the soul with their serpent  
 tongues  
 In my fortune's dull decay!

Distant and dim in the perishing past  
 Grow the joys that made its springtime  
 sweet,  
 And the last of the saving angels—  
 Hope—

Hath spurned my lot with her shining  
feet;  
Ambition is dead, and if love survives,  
Her lip, it is pale, and her eyes forlorn  
As beams of the waning stars that  
melt  
In a clouded winter's morn.  
I have met my fate as a man should meet  
What cannot be vanquished, nor put  
aside,  
I have striven with spirit and force to  
stem  
Its rushing and mighty tide;  
But the godlike nerve, and the iron will,  
They were not granted to me, I say,  
And therefore a waif on an angry sea,  
I am drifting, drifting away!

Ay! drifting, and drifting, and drifting  
away,  
Not a hand upraised, nor a cry for aid;  
And hoarser the voice of the storm-wind  
swells,  
And darker the wild night-shade;  
There are breakers ahead that will crush  
me soon,  
How much, O God! do thy creatures  
bear!  
I marvel if somewhere, in heaven or  
hell,  
This riddle of life grows clear!

## SONNETS.

LEIGH HUNT.

"Leigh Hunt *loves everything*: he catches  
the sunny side of everything, and—except a  
few polemical antipathies—finds everything  
beautiful." — HENRY CRABB ROBINSON.

DESPITE misfortune, poverty, the dearth  
Of simplest justice to his heart and  
brain,  
This gracious optimist lived not in vain;  
Rather, he made a partial Heaven of  
Earth;  
For whatsoe'er of pure and cordial birth  
In body or soul dawned on him, he was  
fain

To bless and love, as an immortal gain  
A thing divine, of fair' immaculate  
worth:—  
The clearest, cleanest nature given to  
man  
In these, our latter days, methinks was  
his,  
With instincts which alone did bring  
him bliss;  
All life he viewed as one long, luminous  
plan  
Wherein God's love and wisdom meet  
and kiss, —  
His sole brave creed, the creed Samari-  
tan!

## SOUL-ADVANCES.

HE, who with fervent toil and will aus-  
tere,  
His innate forces and high faculties  
Develops ever, with firm aim, and wise,  
He *only* keeps his spiritual vision clear;  
To him earth's treacherous shadows  
shift and veer  
Like idle mists o'erercrowding windless  
skies,  
Where through oft-times to purged and  
prayerful eyes.  
The steadfast heavens seem beckoning  
calm and near:  
Still o'er life's rugged heights, with many  
a slip,  
And painful pause he journeys, and sad  
fall,  
Toward death's dark strand, washed by  
a mystic sea;  
There her worn cable straining to be  
free,  
He sees, and enters Faith's majestic ship,  
To sail — *where'er the voice of God may  
call!*

## CAROLINA.

THAT fair young land which gave me  
birth is dead!  
Lost as a fallen star that quivering dies  
Down the pale pathway of autumnal  
skies,

A vague faint radiance flickering where  
it fled;  
All she hath wrought, all she hath  
planned or said,  
Her golden eloquence, her high emprise  
Wrecked, on the languid shore of Lethe  
lies,  
While cold Oblivion veils her piteous  
head: \*  
O mother! loved and loveliest! debonair  
As some brave queen of antique chivalries.  
Thy beauty's blasted like thy desolate  
coasts:—  
Where now thy lustrous form, thy shin-  
ing hair?  
Where thy bright presence, thine imper-  
ial eyes?  
Lost in dim shadows of the realm of  
Ghosts!

## SONNET.

In yonder grim, funereal forest lies  
A foul lagoon, o'erfilmed by dust and  
slime,  
Hidden and ghastly, like a thought of  
crime  
In some stern soul kept secret from  
men's eyes:  
But if perchance a healthful breeze  
should rise,  
And part those stifling boughs, sweet  
morning's prime,  
And the fair flush of evening's cordial  
clime,  
Reflect therein the calmly glorious skies:

\* This may be esteemed an *exaggeration*: but really it is the sober and melancholy truth. The fame of the great statesmen and orators, for example, who once flourished in South Carolina, and made her name illustrious from one end of the Union to the other, is fast becoming a mere shadowy tradition. With a single exception, their works have never been collected for publication, nor have their lives been written, unless in the most fragmentary and imperfect fashion. The period during which these things might have been rightly done has forever passed.

Is't so with man? holds not the dark-  
ened breast,  
Turbid, corrupt, o'ergrown by worldli-  
ness,  
One little spot whereon love's smile may  
rest?  
Lo! a pure impulse breathes, the sin-  
clouds part,  
The grief-defilements melt in hopes that  
bless,  
And pour God's quickening sunshine on  
the heart!

## ODE TO SLEEP.

BEYOND the sunset, and the amber sea  
To the lone depths of Ether, cold and  
bare,  
Thy influence, soul of all tranquillity,  
Hallows the earth and awes the reverent  
air;  
Yon laughing rivulet quells its silvery  
tune,  
The pines, like priestly watchers tall and  
grim,  
Stand mute, against the pensive twi-  
light dim,  
Breathless to hail the advent of the  
moon;  
From the white beach the ocean falls  
away  
Coily, and with a thrill; the sea-birds  
dart  
Ghostlike from out the distance, and  
depart

Thus, over their genius and performances, as  
over their native State, — the Carolina of old,  
— oblivion, day by day, is more darkly gather-  
ing. If elements of a new political birth exist  
in that unfortunate section, they are now  
hopelessly confused and chaotic!

While the Past recedes, becoming momentarily  
more ghostly and phantasmal, the Future is  
wrapped in thick clouds and darkness! Where,  
indeed, is the prophet or son of a prophet who  
can predict the nature of that new polity des-  
tined to rise from the old institutions and the  
defunct civilization?

With a gray fleetness, moaning the dead  
day;

The wings of Silence overfolding space,  
Droop with dusk grandeur from the  
heavenly steep,  
And through the stillness gleams thy  
starry face,  
Serenest Angel — Sleep!

Come! woo me here, amid these flowery  
charms,

Breathe on my eyelids; press thy odor-  
ous lips

Close to mine own, enwreath me in  
thine arms,

And cloud my spirit with thy sweet  
eclipse;

No dreams! no dreams! keep back the  
motley throng, —

For such are girded round with ghastly  
night,

And sing low burdens of despondent  
song,

Decked in the mockery of a lost de-  
light;

I ask oblivion's balsam! the mute peace  
Toned to still breathings, and the gen-  
tlest sighs,

Not music woven of rarest harmonies  
Could yield me such elysium of release:

The tones of earth are weariness, — not  
only

'Mid the loud mart, and in the walks of  
trade,

But where the mountain Genius broodeth  
lonely.

In the cool pulsing of the sylvan shade;  
Then, bear me far into thy noiseless land,  
Surround me with thy silence, deep on  
deep,

Until serene I stand

Close by a duskier country, and more  
grand,

Mysterious solitude, than thine, O Sleep!

As he whose veins a feverous frenzy  
burns,

Whose life-blood withers in the fiery  
drought,

Feebly, and with a languid longing,  
turns

To the spring breezes gathering from the  
South,

So, feebly, and with languid longing, I  
Turn to thy wished Nepenthe, and im-  
plore

The golden dimness, the purple gloom  
Which haunt thy popped realm, and  
make the shore

Of thy dominion balmy with all bloom:  
In the clear gulfs of thy serene profound,  
Worn passions sink to quiet, sorrows  
pause,

Suddenly fainting to still-breathèd  
rest;

Thou own'st a magical atmosphere,  
which awes

The memories seething in the turbulent  
breast;

Which muffling up the sharpness of all  
sound

Of mortal lamentation, — solely bears  
The silvery minor toning of our woe,  
All mellowed to harmonious under-  
flow,

Soft as the sad farewells of dying  
years, —

Lulling as sunset showers that veil the  
west,

And sweet as Love's last tears

When overwelling hearts do mutely  
weep:

O griefs! O wailings! your tempestuous  
madness,

Merged in a regal quietude of sadness,  
Wins a strange glory by the streams of  
sleep!

Then woo me here amid those flowery  
charms,

Breathe on my eyelids, press thy odor-  
ous lips,

Close to mine own, — enfold me in thine  
arms,

And cloud my spirit with thy sweet  
eclipse;

And while from waning depth to depth  
I fall,



Down lapsing to the utmost depths of  
all,  
Till wan forgetfulness obscurely steal-  
ing,  
Creeps like an incantation on the soul,  
And o'er the slow ebb of my conscious  
life  
Dies the thin flush of the last conscious  
feeling,  
And like abortive thunder, the dull roll  
Of sullen passions ebbs far, far away. —  
O Angel! loose the chords which cling  
to strife,  
Sever the gossamer bondage of my  
breath,  
And let me pass gently as winds in  
May,  
From the dim realm which owns thy  
shadowy sway,  
To thy diviner sleep, O sacred death!

◆

SONG.

O! to be  
By the sea, the sea!  
While a brave nor'wester's blowing,  
With a swirl on the lee,  
Of cloud-foam free,  
And a spring-tide deeply flowing!  
With the low moon red and large,  
O'er the flushed horizon's marge,  
And a little pink hand in mine,  
On the sands in the long moonshine!

O! to be  
By the sea, the sea!  
With the wind full west and dying,  
With a single star  
O'er the misty bar,  
And the dim waves dreamily sighing!  
O! to be there, but there!  
With my sweet love nestling near!  
Near, near, till her heart-throbs blend  
with mine,  
Through the balmy hush of the night's  
decline,  
On the glimmering beach, in the soft  
star-shine!

HOPES AND MEMORIES.

OUR hopes in youth are like those rose-  
ate shadows  
Cast by the sunlight on the dewy grass  
When first the fair morn opes her sap-  
phire eyes;  
They seem gigantic and yet graceful  
shades,  
Touched with bright color. As our sun  
of life  
Rises towards meridian, less and less  
Grow the bright tremulous shadows, till  
at last,  
In the hot dust and noontide of our day,  
They glimmer to blank nothingness.  
Again,  
That grand climacteric passed, the shad-  
ows gleam  
Bright still, perchance (if our past deeds  
be pure), —  
*Bright still, but all reversed! Eastward*  
they point,  
Lengthening and lengthening ever  
toward the dawn;  
For hopes have then grown memories,  
whose strange life  
Deepens and deepens as the sunset dies.

◆

WIDDERIN'S RACE.

AUSTRALIAN.

[The incidents of the following sketch will  
be found in "The Recollections of Geoffrey  
Hamlyn," by Henry Kingsley.]

"A HORSE amongst ten thousand! on  
the verge,  
The extremest verge of equine life he  
stands;  
Yet mark his action, as those wild young  
colts  
Freed from the stock-yard gallop whin-  
nying up;  
See how he trots towards them, — nose  
in air,  
Tail arched, and his still sinewy legs  
out-thrown

In gallant grace before him! A brave  
 beast  
 As ever spurned the moorland, ay, and  
 more,  
 He bore me once,—such words but smite  
 the truth,  
 I' the outer ring, while vivid memory  
 wakes,  
 Recalling now, the passion and the  
 pain. —  
 He bore me once from earthly hell to  
 heaven!

“ The sight of fine old Widderin (that's  
 his name,  
 Caught from a peak, the topmost rugged  
 peak  
 Of tall Mount Widderin, towering to  
 the North  
 Most like a steed's head, with full nos-  
 trils blown,  
 And ears pricked up),—the sight of  
 Widderin brings  
 That day of days before me, whose  
 strange hours  
 Of fear and anguish, ere the sunset,  
 changed  
 To hours of such content and full-veined  
 joy,  
 As Heaven can give our mortal lives but  
 once.

“ Well, here's the story: While yon bush-  
 fires sweep  
 The distant ranges, and the river's voice  
 Pipes a thin treble through the heart of  
 drought,  
 While the red heaven like some huge  
 caldron's top  
 Seems with the heat a-simmering, better  
 far  
 In place of riding tilt 'gainst such a sun,  
 Here in the safe veranda's flowery gloom,  
 To play the dwarfish Homer to a song,  
 Whereof myself am hero:

“ Two decades  
 Have passed since that wild autumn-time  
 when last

The convict hordes from near Van Die-  
 men, freed  
 By force or fraud, swept, like a blood-  
 red fire,  
 Inland from beach to mountain, bent on  
 raid  
 And rapine; fiends o' th' lowest pit, they  
 spared  
 Nor sex, nor age, nor infancy; the vul-  
 ture  
 Followed their track, and a black smoke  
 like hell's  
 Hung its foul reek above each home  
 accursed,  
 Sacked by their greed, or ravished by  
 their lust.  
 Their crimes were monstrous, weird,  
 unutterable,  
 Not to be hinted, save in awe-struck  
 whispers  
 Dropped by dark hearthstones, far from  
 maidens' ears,  
 In the blank silent midnight! all the  
 land  
 Uprose to seek, confront and declimate  
 These devils spawned of Tophet; but  
 their bands  
 At the first bruit of battle, the first clang  
 Of sabres girding honest loins, and  
 champ  
 Of horse-bits held by manly hands that  
 burned  
 To smite them, hip and thigh, — fled,  
 disappeared,  
 And crouched in hiding, wheresoe'er the  
 earth,  
 By wave and hill-side, forest, and bleak  
 tarn.  
 Vouchsafed to shield them; as the time  
 rolled on,  
 Our fears grew lighter, and all dread was  
 quelled,  
 When on a morning, 'mid the outmost  
 reefs  
 Of rough Cape Bolling, our chief herds-  
 man found  
 The carcass of a huge boat overturned,  
 All stoven, and firmly wedged between  
 the jaws

Of monster rocks, whereby three bodies  
lay,  
Splashing and gurgling in the reflux  
tides,  
Well known as corsers of three desperate  
men,  
The outlaws' leaders; thereupon 'twas  
deemed, —  
And all must own with fairest likelihood,  
That gluttoned by their vengeance, or  
spurred on  
By hopes of rapine, beckoning other-  
where, —  
The whole foul crew embarking, had  
been seized  
By wind and wave, God's executioners,  
The pitiless doomsmen of the wrath of  
Heaven, —  
And so, crushed out of being, and  
made less  
Than the vile seaweed dabbling in the  
surf.

“Thenceforth, our caution cooled;  
save here and there,  
At critical mountain-passes, or lone  
caves,  
And sheltered inlets of the wild south-  
west,  
No sentinels watched; and wherefore  
should they watch?  
The storm had threatened, broken and  
was passed!

“So, in late autumn, — 'twas a mar-  
vellous morn,  
With breezes from the calm snow-river  
borne  
That touched the air, and stirred it into  
thrills,  
Mysterious and mesmeric, a bright mist  
Lapping the landscape like a golden  
trance,  
Swathing the hilltops with fantastic  
veils,  
And o'er the moorland-ocean quivering  
light  
As gossamer threads drawn down the  
forest aisles

At dewy dawning, — on this marvellous  
morn,  
I, with four comrades, in this self-same  
spot,  
Watched the fair scene, and drank the  
spicy airs,  
That held a subtler spirit than our wine,  
And talked and laughed, and mused in  
idleness,  
Weaving vague fancies, as our pipe-  
wreaths curled  
Fantastic, in the sunlight! I, with  
head  
Thrown back, and cushioned snugly,  
and with eyes  
Intent on one grotesque and curious  
cloud,  
Puffed upward, that now seemed to  
take the shape  
Of a Dutch tulip, now a Turk's face  
topped  
By folds on folds of turban limitless. —  
Heard suddenly, just as the clock  
chimed one,  
To melt in musical echoes up the hills,  
Quick footsteps on the gravelled path  
without, —  
Steps of the couriers of calamity, —  
So my heart told me, ere with  
blanched regards,  
Two stalwart herdsmen on our thresh-  
old paused,  
Panting, with lips that writhed, and  
awful eyes;  
A breath's space in each other's eyes we  
glared,  
Then, swift as interchange of lightning  
thrusts  
In deadly combat, question and reply  
Clashed sharply, 'What! the Rangers?'  
'Ay, by Heaven!  
And loosed in force, — the hell-hounds!'  
'Whither bound?'  
I stammered, hoarsely, 'Bound,' the  
elder said,  
'Southward! — four stations had they  
sacked and burnt,  
And now, drunk, furious —' but I  
stopped to hear

No more; with booming thunder in  
mine ears,  
And blood-flushed eyes, I rushed to  
Widderin's side,  
Drew tight the girths, upgathered curb  
and rein,  
And sprang to horse ere yet our laggard  
friends,  
Now trooping from the green veranda's  
shade,  
Could dream of action!

“ Love had winged my will,  
For to the southward, fair Garoopna  
held  
My all of hope, life, passion; she whose  
hair  
(Its tiniest strand of waving, witch-like  
gold)  
Had caught my heart, entwined, and  
bound it fast,  
As 'twere some sweet enchantment's  
heavenly net!

“ I only gave a hand-wave in farewell,  
Shot by, and o'er the endless moorland  
swept  
(Endless it seemed, as those weird,  
measureless plains,  
Which in some nightmare vision, stretch  
and stretch  
Towards infinity!) like some lone ship  
O'er wastes of sailless waters; now, a  
pine,  
The beacon pine gigantic, whose grim  
crown  
Signals the far land-mariner from  
out  
Gaunt boulders of the gray-backed Organ  
hill,  
Rose on my sight, a mistlike, wavering  
orb,  
The while, still onward, onward, on-  
ward still,  
With motion winged, elastic, equable,  
Brave Widderin cleaved the air tides,  
tossed aside  
The winds as waves their swift, invisible,  
breasts,

Hissing with foamlike noise when  
pressed and pierced  
By that keen head and fiery-crested  
form!

“ The lonely shepherd guardian on the  
plains,  
Watching his sheep through languid  
half-shut eyes,  
Looked up, and marvelled, as we passed  
him by,  
Thinking perchance it was a glorious  
thing,  
So dressed, so booted, so caparisoned,  
To ride such bright blood-courers unto  
death!  
Two sun-blackened natives, slumbering in  
the grass,  
Just rose betimes to 'scape the trampling  
hoofs,  
And hurled hot curses at me as I sped;  
While here and there, the timid kanga-  
roo  
Blundered athwart the mole-hills, and  
in puffs  
Of steamy dust-cloud vanished like a  
mote!

“ Onward, still onward, onward, onward  
still!  
And lo! thank Heaven, the mighty Or-  
gan hill,  
That seemed a dim blue cloudlet at the  
start,  
Hangs in aërial, fluted cliffs aloft,  
And still as through the long, low glacia  
borne,  
Beneath the gorge borne ever at wild  
speed,  
I saw the mateless mountain eagle wheel  
Beyond the stark height's topmost pin-  
nacle;  
I heard his shriek of rage and ravin die  
Deep down the desolate dells, as far be-  
hind  
I left the gorge and, far before me swept  
Another plain, tree-bordered now, and  
bound  
By the clear river gurgling o'er its bed.

"By this, my panting, but unconquered  
 steed  
 Had thrown his small head backward,  
 and his breath  
 Through the red nostrils burst in labored  
 sighs;  
 I bent above his outstretched neck, I  
 threw  
 My quivering arms about him, murmur-  
 ing low,  
 'Good horse! brave heart! a little longer  
 bear  
 The strain, the travail; and thenceforth  
 for thee  
 Free pastures all thy days, till death  
 shall come!  
 Ah, many and many a time, my noble  
 bay,  
*Her* lily hand hath wandered through  
 thy mane,  
 Patted thy rainbow neck, and brought  
 thee ears  
 Of daintiest corn from out the farm-  
 house loft,—  
 Help, help, to save her now!'

"I'll vow the brute  
 Heard me and comprehended what he  
 heard!  
 He shook his proud crest madly, and his  
 eye  
 Turned for a moment sideways, flashed  
 in mine  
 A lightning gleam, whose fiery language  
 said,  
 'I know my lineage, will not shame my  
 sire,  
 My sire, who rushed triumphant 'twixt  
 the flags,  
 And frenzied thousands, when on Epsom  
 downs  
 Arcturus won the Derby! — no, nor  
 shame  
 My granddam, whose clean body, half  
 entwrought  
 Of air, half fire, through swirls of desert  
 sand  
 Bore Shi'ck Abdallah headlong on his  
 prey!'"

"At last came forest shadows, and the  
 road  
 Winding through bush and bracken, and  
 at last  
 The hoarse stream rumbling o'er its  
 quartz-sown crags.

"No, no! stanch Widderin! pause not  
 now to drink;  
 An hour hence, and thy dainty nose  
 shall dip  
 In richest wine, poured jubilantly forth  
 To quench thy thirst, my beauty! but  
 press on,  
 Nor heed these sparkling waters. God!  
 my brain's  
 On fire once more! an instant tells me  
 all:  
 All! — life or death, — salvation or de-  
 spair! —  
 For yonder, o'er the wild grass-matted  
 slope  
 The house stands, or it stood but yester-  
 day.

"A Titan cry of inarticulate joy  
 I raised, as calm and peaceful in the sun,  
 Shone the fair cottage, and the garden-  
 close,  
 Wherein, white-robed, unconscious, sat  
 my Love  
 Liltng a low song to the birds and flow-  
 ers,  
 She heard the hoof-strokes, saw me,  
 started up,  
 And with her blue eyes wider than their  
 wont,  
 And rosy lips half tremulous, rushed to  
 meet  
 An I greet me swiftly. 'Up, dear Love!'  
 I cried,  
 'The Convicts, the Bush-Rangers! — let  
 us fly!'  
 Ah, then and there you should have seen  
 her, friend,  
 My noble beauteous Helen! not a tear,  
 Nor sob, and scarce a transient pulse-  
 quiver,  
 As, clasping hand in hand, her fairy foot

Lit like a small bird on my horseman's  
boot,  
And up into the saddle, lithe and light,  
Vaulting she perched, her bright curls  
round my face!

"We crossed the river, and, dismount-  
ing, led  
O'er the steep slope of blended rock and  
turf,  
The wearied horse, and there behind a  
Tor  
Of castellated bluestone, paused to  
sweep

With young keen eyes the broad plain  
stretched afar,  
Serene and autumn-tinted at our feet:  
'Either,' said I, 'these devils have gone  
East,

To meet with bloodhound Desborough  
in his rage  
Between the granite passes of Luxorne,  
Or else, — dear Christ! my Helen, low!  
stoop low!

(These words were hissed in horror, for  
just then,

'Twixt the deep hollows of the river-  
vale,



"No, no! stanch Widderin! pause not now to drink."

The miscreants, with mixed shouts and  
curses, poured  
Down through the flinty gorge tumultu-  
ously,  
Seeming, we thought, in one fierce  
throng to charge  
(Our hiding-place.) I seized my Widder-  
in's head.  
Blindfolding him, for with a single neigh  
Our fate were sealed o' th' instant! As  
they rode,  
Those wild, foul-languaged demons, by  
our lair,  
Scarce twelve yards off, my troubled  
steed shook wide  
His streaming mane, stamped on the  
earth, and pawed

So loudly that the sweat of agony rolled  
Down my cold forehead; at which point  
I felt

My arm clutched, and a voice I did not  
know,

Dropped the low murmur from pale,  
shuddering lips,

'O God! if in those brutal hands I  
fall,

*Living*, look not into your mother's face  
Or any woman's more!

"What time had passed  
Above our bowed heads, we pent, pin-  
ioned there

By awe and nameless horror, who shall  
tell?

Minutes, perchance, by mortal measurement,  
 Eternity by heart-throbs!—when at length  
 We turned, and eyes of mutual wonder raised,  
 We gazed on alien faces, haggard, worn.  
 And strange of feature as the faces born  
 In fever and delirium! Were we saved?  
 We scarce could comprehend it, till,  
 from out  
 The neighboring oak-wood, rode our friends  
 at speed,  
 With clang of steel and eyebrows bent in  
 wrath.  
 But warned betimes, the wily ruffians fled  
 Far up the forest-coverts, and beyond  
 The dazzling snow-line of the distant hills,  
 Their yells of fiendish laughter pealing faint,  
 And fainter from the cloudland, and the mist  
 That closed about them like an ash-gray shroud:  
 Yet were these wretches marked for imminent death:  
 The next keen sunrise pierced the savage gorge,  
 To which we tracked them, where, mere beasts at bay,  
 Grimly they fought, and brute by brute  
 they fell.”

—◆—  
 OCTOBER.

AFAR from the city, its cark and care, —  
 Thank God! I am cosily seated here,  
 On this night of hale October, —  
 While the flames leap high on the roaring hearth,  
 And voices, the dearest to me on earth,  
 Ring out in the music of household mirth.  
 For the time is blithe October!

There's something, — but *what* I can scarce divine, —  
 Perchance 'tis the breath like a potent wine,  
 Of the cordial, clear October,  
 Which makes, when the jovial month comes round,  
 The life-blood bloom, and the pulses bound,  
 And the soul spring forth like a monarch crown'd, —  
 God's grace on the brave October!

Come, sweetheart! open your choicest bin,  
 For who, I would marvel, could deem it sin,  
 On this night of keen October,  
 To quaff one health to his ruddy cheer,  
 On the golden edge of the waning year,  
 To his eyes so bright, and his cheeks so clear,  
 Our bluff "King Hal," — October?

Away with Rhenish and light champagne!  
 'Tis not in these we must pledge the reign  
 Of the stout old lord, — October;  
 But in mighty stoups of the "mountain dew,"  
 With "beads" like tears in an eye of blue,  
 But tears of a laughter, sound and true,  
 As thine honest heart, October!

He brought me love and he brought me health,  
 He brought me *all* but the curse of wealth,  
 This kindly and free October;  
 And forever and aye I will bless his name,  
 While his winds blow fresh, and his sunsets flame,  
 And the whole earth burns with his crimson fame,  
 This prince of the months, — October!

## WILL.

YOUR face, my boy, when six months old,

We propped you laughing in a chair,  
And the sun-artist caught the gold  
Which rippled o'er your waving hair!  
And deftly shadowed forth the while  
That blooming cheek, that roguish  
smile,

Those dimples seldom still:  
The tiny, wondering, wide-eyed elf!  
Now, *can* you recognize yourself  
In that small portrait, Will?

I glance at it, then turn to you,  
Where in your healthful ease you  
stand,

No beauty, — but a youth as true,  
And pure as any in the land!  
For Nature, through fair sylvan ways,  
Hath led and gladdened all your days,  
Kept free from sordid ill;  
Hath filled your veins with blissful fire,  
And winged your instincts to aspire  
Sunward, and Godward, Will!

Long-limbed and lusty, with a stride  
That leaves me many a pace behind,  
You roam the woodlands, far and wide,  
You quaff great draughts of country  
wind:

While tree and wildflower, lake and  
stream,  
Deep shadowy nook, and sunshot gleam,  
Cool vale and far-off hill,  
Each plays its mute mysterious part,  
In that strange growth of mind and heart  
I joy to witness, Will!

“Can this tall youth,” I sometimes  
say,

“Be mine? *my son?*” it surely seems  
Scarce further backward than a day,  
Since watching o'er your feverish  
dreams

In that child-illness of the brain,  
I thought (O Christ, with what keen  
pain!)

Your pulse would soon be still,  
That all your boyish sports were o'er,  
And I, heart-broken, nevermore  
Should call, or clasp you, Will!

But Heaven was kind, death passed you  
by;

And now upon your arm I lean,  
*My second self*, of clearer eye,  
Of firmer nerve, and steadier mien;  
Through you, methinks, my long-lost  
youth

Revives, from whose sweet founts of truth  
And joy, I drink my fill:  
I feel your every heart-throb, know  
What inmost hopes within you glow,  
One soul's between us, Will!

Pray Heaven that this be always so!  
That ever on your soul and mine  
Though my thin locks grow white as  
snow,

The self-same radiant trust may shine;  
Pray that while this, my life, endures,  
It aye may sympathize with yours  
In thought, aim, action still;  
That you, O son (till comes the end),  
In me may find your comrade, friend,  
And *more* than father, Will!

—◆—  
HERE AND THERE.\*

HERE the warm sunshine fills  
Like wine of gods the deepening, cup-  
shaped dells,  
Embossed with marvellous flowers; the  
happy rills  
Roam through the autumnal fields whose  
rich increase  
Of gathered grain smiles under heavens  
of peace;

While many a bird-song swells  
From glades of neighboring woodlands,  
cool and fair, —

Content and peace are *here*.

---

\* Written during the war between France  
and Germany.



There the wild battle's wrath  
 Thunders from castled height to storied  
 plain,  
 Ploughs with red lightning-bolts its terri-  
 ble path,  
 And sows the abhorrent seeds of blood  
 and death,  
 Blown far on Desolation's tameless  
 breath,  
 While for autumnal grain  
 Time reaps the harvest of a bleak de-  
 spair, —  
 God's curse consumes them *there*.

Here jovial children play  
 Beneath the latest vine-leaves; innocent  
 kings,  
 And blissful queens, — on them the ma-  
 tron Day,  
 Like a sweet mother drops her kisses  
 light;  
 The very clouds some secret joy makes  
 bright,  
 And round us clings and clings,  
 With Ariel arms, the season's influence  
 rare, —  
 Heaven's heart beats near us *here*.

There love bemoans its lost,  
 Countless as seaside sands; all joys of  
 life  
 Rest locked and stirless in the blood-red  
 frost;  
 Ye drums, roll out, shrill clarions, peal  
 your parts!  
 Ye cannot drown the wail of broken  
 hearts,  
 Nor still that spiritual strife  
 Which thrills through Victory's voice  
 its death-notes drear. —  
 Dear Christ, soothe, save them *there*.

—◆—  
 WELCOME TO WINTER.

Now, with wild and windy roar,  
 Stalwart Winter comes once more, —  
 O'er our roof-tree thunders loud,  
 And from edges of black cloud

Shakes his beard of hoary gold,  
 Like a tangled torrent rolled  
 Down the sky-rifts, clear and cold!

Hark! his trumpet summons rings,  
 Potent as a warrior-king's;  
 Till the forces of our blood  
 Rise to lusty hardihood,  
 And our summer's languid dreams  
 Melt, like foam-wreaths, down the  
 streams,  
 When the fierce northeasters roll,  
 Raving from the frozen pole.

Nobler hopes and keener life,  
 Quicken in his breath of strife;  
 Through the snow-storms and the sleet  
 On he stalks with armed feet.  
 While the sounding clash of hail  
 Clanging on his icy mail,  
 Stirs whate'er of generous might  
 Time hath left us in his flight,  
 And our yearning pulses thrill  
 For some grand achievement still!

Lord of ice-bound sea and land,  
 Let me grasp thy kingly hand,  
 And from thy great heart and bold,  
 Heela-warm, though all is cold  
 Round about thee, catch the fire  
 Of my lost youth's brave desire;  
 Let me, in the war with wrong,  
 Like thy storms, be swift and strong,  
 Gloomy griefs, and coward cares  
 Broods of 'wildering, dark despairs,  
 Making all life's glory dim,  
 Let me rend them, limb from limb,  
 As the forest-boughs are rent  
 When thou wak'st the firmament,  
 And with savage shriek and groan,  
 All the wildwood's overthrown!

—◆—  
 TO MY MOTHER.

LIKE streamlets to a silent sea,  
 These songs with varied motion  
 Flow from bright fancy's uplands free,  
 To Lethe's clouded ocean;

They lapse in deepening music down  
 The slopes of flower-lit meadows,  
 Nor dream, poor songs! how near them  
 frown  
 Oblivion's rayless shadows!

Yet though of brief and dubious life,  
 All wed to incompleteness, —  
 The voices of these lays are rife  
 With frail and fleeting sweetness;  
 One chord to make more full the strain,  
 One note I may not smother,  
 Is echoed in the heart's refrain  
 Which holds thy name, my mother!

To thee my earliest verse I brought,  
 All wreathed in loves and roses,  
 Some glowing boyish fancy, fraught  
 With tender May-wind closes;  
*Thou* did'st not taunt my fledgling song,  
 Nor view its flight with scorning:  
 "The bird," thou saidst, "grown fleet  
 and strong,  
 Might yet outsoar the morning!"

Ah me! between that hour and this,  
 Eternities seem flowing;  
 O'er hapless graves of youth and bliss  
 Dark cypress boughs are growing;  
 Our Fate hath dimmed with base alloy  
 The rich, pure gold of pleasure.  
 And changed the choral chant of joy  
 To care's heart-broken measure!

But through it all — the blight, the pall,  
 The stress of thunderous weather,  
 That God who keeps wild chance in  
 thrall  
 Hath linked our lots together:  
 So, hand in hand, we sail the gloom,  
 Faith's mystic plummet casting  
 To sound the ways which end in bloom  
 Of Edens everlasting!

I bless thee, Dear, with reverent  
 thought!  
 Pale face, and tresses hoary,  
 Whose every, silvery thread hath caught  
 Some hint of heavenly glory; —

To thee, with trust assured, sublime,  
 Death's angel-call that waitest,  
 To thee, as once my earliest rhyme,  
 Lo! now, I bring — my latest!

## SONNETS.

## ILLEGITIMATE.

THE maiden Spring came laughing down  
 the dales,  
 Her fair brows arched, and on her rose-  
 bud mouth,  
 The balm and beauty of the lustrous  
 South;  
 Through soft green fields, from hills to  
 happy vales,  
 She tripped, her small feet twinkling in  
 the sun,  
 Her delicate finger raised with girlish  
 mirth,  
 Pointed at graybeard Winter, who, in  
 dearth,  
 Toiled toward his couch, his long day  
 labor done;  
 Ah no, not done! for hark! a sudden  
 wind,  
 Death-laden, sweeps from realms of arctic  
 sky,  
 And blurred with storm, the morn grows  
 crazed and blind;  
 Then Winter, mocking, backward turns  
 apace,  
 Where pallid Spring all vainly strives to  
 fly,  
 And with brute buffet scars her shrink-  
 ing face!

## SONNET.

I CAST this sorrow from me like a  
 crown  
 Of bitter nettles, and unwholesome  
 weeds,  
 Nursed by cold night-dews, from malign-  
 ant seeds,  
 Ill Fortune sowed, when all the heaven  
 did frown;  
 Its loathsome round I trample deeply  
 down

In mire and dust, to burn my brain no more;  
 From off my brow I wipe the trickling gore,  
 While all about me, like keen clarions blown,  
 From breezy dells, and golden heights afar,  
 Their stern *reveillé* the wild March winds sound;  
 They wake an answering passion in my soul,  
 Whence, marshalled as brave warriors, taking ground  
 For noblest conflict, freed from doubt or dole,  
 Great thoughts uprising front Hope's morning star!

VERNAL PICTURES (WITHOUT AND WITHIN).

AMID fresh roses wandering, and the soft  
 And delicate wealth of apple-blossoms spread  
 In tender spirals of blent white and red,  
 Round the fair spaces of our blooming croft,  
 This morn I caught the gurgling note, so oft  
 Heard in the golden spring-tides that are dead, —  
 The swallow's note, murmuring of winter fled,  
 Dropped silverly from passionless calms aloft:  
 "O heart!" I said, "thy vernal depths unclose,  
 That mirror Nature's; warm airs, come and go  
 Of whispering ardors o'er thought's bud-ded rose,  
 And half-hid flowers of sweet philosophy;  
 While now upglancing, now borne swift and low,  
 Song like the swallow darts through fancy's sky."

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LOVERS.\*

I.

LOVE scorns degrees! the low he lifteth high,  
 The high he draweth down to that fair plain  
 Whereon, in his divine equality,  
 Two loving hearts may meet, nor meet in vain;  
 'Gainst such sweet levelling Custom cries amain,  
 But o'er its harshest utterance one bland sigh,  
 Breathed passion-wise, doth mount victorious still,  
 For Love, earth's lord, must have his lordly will.

II.

But ah! this sovereign will oft works at last  
 The deadliest bane, as happed erewhile to her,  
 Earl Godolf's daughter, many a century past:

\* The most important feature in the landscape of this poem the old Chronicler persists in designating as a mountain of "steep" and "terrible" ascent; but that it could not have been a mountain, and, despite certain obstacles which made it dangerous for men on horseback, it might not even have been a very "terrible" hill, is shown by the fact, that among the crowd who reached the summit soon after the catastrophe, were "old men," whom the excitement of the time and scene would hardly have sufficed to bear safely up were the Chronicler's expressions to be *literally* accepted. To any man loaded as Oswald was, the ascent of a comparatively moderate height would prove a fearful trial; but in his case the atrocious cruelty of the experiment, and the life and death issues involved, became so closely associated in the spectators' minds with the material scene of the tragedy, that the latter was not unnaturally beheld through the magnifying medium of pity and terror. Thus the hill was elevated into a mountain! The old Chronicler celebrates it as such. We follow the old Chronicler — to the death!

She loved her father's low born forester,  
 About whose manful grace did breathe  
 and stir  
 So clear a radiance, by soul-virtues cast,  
 He moved untouched of social blight or  
 ban —  
 Nature's serene, true-hearted gentleman.

## III.

Yet she alone of all the household saw  
 That softy soul beneath his serf's attire;  
 But of the ruthless Earl so great her  
 awe,  
 Close, close she kept her spirit's veiled  
 desire,  
 Nor outward shone one spark of hidden  
 fire.  
 Too well she knew to what stern feudal  
 law  
 She and her hapless Love perforce must  
 yield,  
 If once this tender secret were re-  
 vealed.

## IV.

Yea! even by Oswald's self her covert  
 flame  
 Undreamed of burned; proud stood she,  
 coldly fair,  
 When, to report of woodcraft lore, he  
 came  
 To the Earl's hall, and she was lingering  
 there.  
 "Cold heart!" thought he; "who 'midst  
 her liegemen, dare  
 Play as I played with death a desperate  
 game  
 For her sweet sake? and yet, alas! and  
 yet,  
 She scorns the service and disowns the  
 debt."

## V.

For sooth it was that one keen winter's  
 night,  
 While slowly journeying homeward  
 through a wood

Whose every deepest copse in moonshine  
 bright  
 Glimmered from hoary trunk to frost-  
 tipped bud,  
 On sire and child there burst a cry of  
 blood,  
 Followed by hurrying feet, and the dread  
 sight  
 Of scores of gray-skinned brutes — a  
 direful pack  
 Of wolves half-starved that yelled along  
 their track.

## VI.

In vain his frantic team Earl Godolf  
 smote,  
 With blended prayer and curse; nigh  
 doom were they,  
 Riders and steeds, for now each ravening  
 throat  
 Yawned like a foul tomb. On the bound-  
 ing sleigh  
 The fierce horde gained, when from the  
 silvery-gray,  
 Cold-branched glades outrang a bugle  
 note,  
 With next a bowstring's twang, an  
 arrow whir,  
 As shaft on shaft the keen-eyed forester

## VII.

Launched on the foe, each hurtling shaft  
 a fate.  
 Then Oswald, 'twixt pursuers and  
 pursued  
 Leapt, sword in hand, his eyes of fiery  
 hate  
 Fixed on the baffled horde, whose doubt-  
 ful mood  
 Changed to quick fear, they scoured  
 adown the wood,  
 Their long gaunt lines, in fiend-like,  
 vanquished state,  
 Fading with flash of blood-red orbs from  
 far,  
 Till the last vanished like a baleful  
 star!

## VIII.

Now, by the mass! abrupt and brief, I  
ween,  
The rule Earl's thanks for rescued limbs  
and life;  
But not so graceless proved the fair  
Catrine,  
As glancing backward to the field of  
strife  
She flashed a smile with cordial meaning  
rife,  
Which struck our sylvan hero (who did  
lean,  
Pale, on his bow,) as 'twere the piercing  
gleam  
Of some strange, sudden, half bewildering  
dream.

## IX.

Alack! the dream waxed not, but seemed  
to wane,  
As if a cloudless sun but late arisen,  
Back journeying, passed across the ethereal  
plain,  
And the fresh dawn it brought, died out  
in heaven;  
For from that eve no subtlest signs were  
given,  
As erst we said, that passion's blissful  
pain  
Touched the maid's heart, or that her  
days were caught  
In those fine meshes woven by love for  
thought.

## X.

In Britain dwelt Earl Godolf, nigh the  
bounds  
Of the Welsh marches; a wild rover he  
In his hot youth, inured to strife and  
wounds  
Through many a foray fierce by land and  
sea;  
But, after years of bright tranquillity —  
Years linked to love through pleasure's  
peaceful bounds —

So gently lapsed, the unmailed warrior's  
hand  
Forgot almost the use of spear or brand.

## XI.

A bride erewhile won by his dauntless  
blade  
In a great sea fight — where his arm had  
slain  
Some half score foemen — wan and half  
afraid,  
Homeward he brought, whose every delicate  
vein  
Pulsed the rich blood and tropic warmth  
of Spain;  
But when pure wifehood crowned the  
noble maid,  
Heart-fruits for him his beauteous lady  
bore,  
Of whose strange sweets he had not  
dreamed before.

## XII.

She strove his nature's ruggedness to  
smooth,  
And in his bosom dropped a fruitful  
germ  
Of those mild virtues given our lives to  
soothe,  
And change their gusty solitude to warm  
Beneficent calm, — divinest after storm.  
Within him flowered a pallid grace of  
ruth,  
Nor oft, as once, o'er bleeding breasts he  
trod  
Straight to his purpose, blind to law and  
God.

## XIII.

And in fair fulness of the ripened time,  
Still gentler grew his dark, war-furrowed  
mien;  
He quaffed the sunshine of a fairy clime,  
Love charmed, hope gladdened, when,  
to crown the scene  
Of transient bliss, there smiled a new  
Catrine —

The loveliest babe e'er lulled by mother's  
rhyme —  
Whose tiny fingers o'er her heart-strings  
played,  
Making ineffable music where they  
strayed.

## XIV.

Woe worth the end! for though the in-  
fant thrived  
Slowly the hapless mother pined away;  
Love to the last in pleading eyes sur-  
vived —  
Those fond, fond eyes doomed to the  
churchyard clay,  
C'offined, and shut from all blithe sights  
of day;  
But Christ! in thee her stainless spirit  
lived,  
Whose memory — a white star — should  
evermore  
O'er her lord's paths have beamed to  
keep them pure.

## XV.

Nathless, some souls there are by cruel  
loss  
Stung, as with scourge of scorpions, to  
despair:  
These will not seek the Christ, nor clasp  
His cross,  
But, groping vaguely through sulphure-  
ous air,  
Strike hands with Satan, in the murky  
glare  
Of furious hell, whose billows rage and  
toss  
About their tortured being, urged to  
curse  
That mystic will which rules the uni-  
verse.

## XVI.

Yea, such the Earl's; no cooling dew  
did fall  
To heal his wound; 'gainst heaven and  
earth he turned,  
Girt to his sense with one vast funeral  
pall;

And the sore heart within him writhed  
and burned  
With baffled hope, and pain that madly  
yearned,  
Vainly and madly, for dear love's recall.  
No light o'ershone grief's ocean drear  
and black,  
The while old passions thronged tumultu-  
ous back.

## XVII.

So, his last state was worse than e'en his  
first;  
Murder and rapine, pitiless greed, and  
ire  
Raged wheresoe'er his raven banner  
burst,  
'Mid shrieks and wails, and hollow roar  
of fire,  
Which lapped the household porch and  
crackling byre;  
He seemed demoniac in his aims ac-  
curst,  
Wrath in his soul, and on his brow the  
sign  
Of hell — a human scourge by power di-  
vine

## XVIII.

For some mysterious end permitted  
still —  
As many an evil thing our God allows  
To range the world, and work its dread-  
ful will,  
Whether in form of chiefs, with laurelled  
brows,  
Or spies and traitors in the good man's  
house;  
Or, it may be, some slow, infectious ill,  
Untraced, and rising like a mist defiled  
With poisonous odors on a lonely wild,

## XIX.

Albeit no marsh is near, or steamy fen.  
More monstrous year by year Earl Go-  
dolf's deeds  
Flared in hell's livery on the eyes of men;  
All growths of transient goodness  
checked by weeds,

Sin-bred; and, ah! *one* angel's bosom  
bleeds  
To know she may not meet her love  
again;  
And even the vales immortal seemed  
less sweet,  
Because too pure for his crime-cumbered  
feet.

## XX.

But, weal or woe, the world rolls  
blindly on,  
While nature's charm, in child, and  
bird, and flower,  
Works its rare marvels 'neath the noon-  
day sun.  
And the still stars in midnight's slum-  
berous hour.  
And so a human bud, through beam  
and shower,  
Glad play, and easeful sleep—the  
orphaned one,  
The *beauteous* babe—a sour old *bel-  
dame's* care,  
Upflowered at length a matchless maid,  
and fair.

## XXI.

Most fair to all but him to whom she owed  
Her life and place in this bewildering  
world;  
For he, a changed man since that hour  
which showed  
His wife's worn form in earthly cere-  
ments furled,  
Cold scorn had launched, or captious  
passion hurled  
At this sole offspring of his lone abode,  
Till grown, alas! too early grave and  
wise,  
She viewed her sire, in turn, with love-  
less eyes.

## XXII.

Still in benignant arms did nature fold  
Her favored child, and on her richly  
showered  
All gifts of beauty; with long hair of  
gold

And lucid, languid eyes the maid 'she  
dowered,  
And her enticing loveliness empowered  
With charms to melt the wintriest tem-  
per's cold  
Charms wrought of sunrise warmth,  
and twilight balm,  
Passion's deep glow, and pity's saint-  
like calm.

## XXIII.

Tall, lithe, and yielding as a young bay  
tree  
Her perfect form; but 'neath its lissom  
grace  
There lurked a latent strength keen  
eyes could see,  
Drawn from her father's undegenerate  
race:  
The dazzling fairness of her Saxon face,  
Contrasted with the dark eyes' witchery,  
Shone with such light as northern noon-  
days wake  
Through the clear shadows of a moun-  
tain lake.

## XXIV.

Her full blown flower of beauty lured  
ere long  
Unnumbered suitors round her; these  
declare  
Boldest report hath done the virgin  
wrong,  
And past all power of words they deem  
her fair;  
The kingdom's princeliest youth besiege  
her ear  
And heart with ardent vows and amor-  
ous song:  
Love, rank and wealth their splendid  
beams combine,  
She the rare orb about whose path they  
shine.

## XXV.

Still would she wed with none till rudely  
pressed  
To the last boundary of her patience  
sweet;

No more she struggled in a yearning  
breast  
To hide her passion, howsoe'er unmeet  
For one high placed as she; her fervent  
feet  
Oft bore her now where woodland flow-  
ers caressed  
The grand old oaks, beneath whose shel-  
tering boughs  
The lovers mused, or, whispering,  
breathed their vows.

## XXVI.

But ere to such sweet pass their fates  
had led,  
Or ere her thought unbosomed utterly,  
To the rapt youth, in tremulous tones,  
she said,  
“*I love thee*,” through full many a fine  
degree  
Of feeling, touched by sad uncertainty,  
That truth they neared, which, like a  
bird o'erhead,  
Still faltering flew, till borne through  
shade and sun,  
It nestled warm in two hearts made as  
one!

## XXVII.

The truth, the fond conviction that all  
earth  
Was less than naught — a mote, a van-  
ishing gleam,  
Matched with the glow of that transcen-  
dent birth  
Of love which wrapped them in his hap-  
piest dream;  
Entranced thus, shut in by beam on beam  
Of glory, is it strange but trivial worth  
Their dazzled minds in transient doubts  
should see  
Which some times crossed their keen fel-  
icity?

## XXVIII.

Their love awhile, like some smooth rivu-  
let borne  
Through drooping umbrage of a lonely  
dell,

By clouds unvisited, by storms untorn,  
Passed, rippling music; like a magic bell  
Out rung by spirit hands invisible,  
Each tender hour of meeting, eve or  
morn,  
Above them, stole in rhythmic sweet-  
ness, blent  
With rare fruition of supreme content.

## XXIX.

But in the sunset tide of one calm day,  
When, all unconscious at the place of  
tryst,  
Beyond their wont they lingered; with  
dismay  
They saw, begirt by gold and amethyst,  
Of that rich time, gigantic in the midst  
Of shimmering splendor, which did flash  
and play  
About his form, and o'er his visage dire,  
The wrathful Earl, midmost the sunset  
fire.

## XXX.

No word he uttered, but his falchion  
drew,  
Red with the slain boar's blood, and  
pointed grim  
Where 'gainst the eastern heavens' slow-  
deepening blue  
Uprose his castle turrets, tall and dim.  
The maid's eyes close; she feels each  
nerveless limb  
Sink nigh to swooning; but, heart-brave  
and true,  
Clings to her Love, while from pale lips  
a sigh  
Doth faintly fall, which means “*with  
him I die!*”

## XXXI.

Gravely advancing, the Earl's stalwart  
hand  
Rests on her shuddering shoulder; one  
quick glance,  
Haughty and high, rife with severe com-  
mand,  
On the 'mazed woodsman doth he dart  
askance,



Who doubtful bides, as one half roused  
 from trance,  
 Striving to know on what new ground  
 his stand  
 Thenceforth shall be; or if life's priceless  
 all,  
 Put to the test just then, must rise or  
 fall.

## XXXII.

Fate wrought the issue! for as Oswald  
 waits  
 Biding his time to smite, or else retreat,  
 With the maid's hand his own Earl  
 Godolf mates,  
 And from the wood they pass with foot-  
 steps fleet;  
 One tearful, backward look vouchsafed  
 his sweet,  
 Just as the castle gates — those iron  
 gates,  
 Heavy and stern, like Death's — were  
 closed between  
 His burning vision and the lost Catrine.

## XXXIII.

To heaven he raises wild despairing  
 eyes,  
 But heaven responds not; then to earth  
 returns  
 His baffled gaze from ranging the cold  
 skies,  
 And earth but seems a place for burial  
 urns;  
 In sooth, the whole creation mutely  
 spurns  
 His prayer for aid; alas! what kind re-  
 plies  
 Can woeful man from fair, dumb Nature  
 draw  
 Locked in the grasp of adamant Law ?

## XXXIV.

Three morns thereafter, in the market  
 place  
 Of the small town, from Godolf's castle  
 wall  
 Distant, it might be, some twelve fur-  
 longs' space,

Came, grandly robed, our Lord's high  
 seneschal;  
 To all the lieges, with shrill trumpet  
 call,  
 In name of his serene puissant grace  
 Godolf, the Earl; to all folk, bond or  
 free,  
 With strident voice he read this foul de-  
 cree:

## XXXV.

“Whereas our virgin daughter, hight  
 Catrine,  
 False to her noble race and lineage  
 proud,  
 Hath owned her love for one of birth as  
 mean  
 As any hind's who creeps among the  
 crowd  
 Of common serfs, with cowering shoul-  
 ders bowed —  
 Oswald by name — the whom ourselves  
 have seen,  
 When least he deemed us nigh, his  
 traitorous part  
 Press with hot wooing on the maiden's  
 heart:

## XXXVI.

“Let all men know hereby our will it is,  
 To-morrow morn their trial morn must  
 be;  
 Either the serf shall win, and call her  
 his,  
 Or both shall taste such bitter misery  
 As even in dreams the boldest soul would  
 flee;  
 If lips unlicensed thus will meet and kiss,  
 Reason it seems that such unhallowed  
 flame  
 Of love should end in agony and shame.

## XXXVII.

“Therefore, the morrow morn shall view  
 their doom  
 Accomplished; 'mid the ferns of Bolton  
 Down,  
 Where Bolton Height doth catch the  
 purpling bloom

Of early sunrise on his treeless crown,  
 We say to all — knight, burgher, squire  
 and clown —  
 Just as the castle's morning bell shall  
 boom  
 O'er the far hills, and brown moor's  
 blossoming,  
 Come, and behold a yet undreamed-of  
 thing.

## XXXVIII.

“For then and there must Oswald bear  
 aloft,  
 By his sole strength, unaided and alone,  
 The blameful maid, whose nature, grown  
 too soft,  
 Durst thus betray our honor and her  
 own;  
 Yet, if he gain the height, untamed, un-  
 thrown,  
 All hands applaud him, and all plumes  
 be doffed;  
 While for ourselves, we vow they both  
 shall fare  
 Unharmèd beyond our realm — we reck  
 not where.”

## XXXIX.

So, as decreed, the next morn, calm and  
 clear,  
 Witnessed, in many a diverse mode con-  
 veyed,  
 A mixed and mighty concourse gathering  
 near  
 The appointed height, some in rough  
 frieze arrayed,  
 And some in gold; there blushed the  
 downcast maid,  
 Urged to this cruel test, a passionate  
 tear  
 Misting her view, as surged the living  
 sea.  
 Behind her, his arms folded haughtily,

## XL.

His comely head thrown back, his eyes  
 on fire  
 With hot contempt, fixed on an armèd  
 band

Which, stationed near him at the Earl's  
 desire,  
 His every move o'erlooked, did Oswald  
 stand,  
 Striving his roused anger to command,  
 And lift his clouded aspirations higher  
 Than thoughts revengeful. Hark! a  
 deepening hum  
 On the crowd's verge — the trial hour  
 has come!

## XLI.

Divided, then, betwixt his ire and  
 scorn,  
 Outspake the Earl, in tones of savage  
 glee:  
 “Woodsman! essay thy task, for lo! the  
 morn  
 Grows old, and I this wretched mum-  
 mery  
 Would fain see ended.”  
 — With mien gravely free,  
 Clad in light garb, o'erwrought by hound  
 and horn,  
 Oswald stood forth, nor quelled by frail  
 alarms,  
 About the maiden clasped his reverent  
 arms;

## XLII.

And she, like some pure flower by May  
 tide rain  
 Gracefully laden, turns her eyes apart  
 From the great throng, and, pierced by  
 modest pain,  
 Veiled her sweet face upon her lover's  
 heart;  
 Whereat the youth is seen to thrill and  
 start,  
 While o'er his own face, calm and pale  
 but now,  
 Rush the deep crimson waves from chin  
 to brow;

## XLIII.

Then do they ebb away, and leave him  
 white  
 As the vexed foam on ocean's stormy  
 swell,

Yet cool and constant in his manful  
 might  
 As some stanch rock 'gainst which the  
 tides rebel  
 In useless rage, with hollow, billowy  
 knell;  
 Meanwhile advancing with sure steps  
 and light,  
 He moves in measured wise to dare his  
 fate  
 Beneath those looks of blended ruth and  
 hate.

## XLIV.

Stirred by his generous bravery, and the  
 sight  
 Of such young lives — their love, hope,  
 joyance set  
 On the hard mastery of yon terrible  
 height,  
 Whose rugged slopes and sheer descent  
 are wet  
 And slippery with the dews of dawning  
 yet, —  
 Through the dense rout, which swayed  
 now left, now right,  
 Low, inarticulate murmurs faintly ran,  
 And one keen, quivering shock from  
 man to man.

## XLV.

The watchful matrons sob, the virgins  
 weep  
 Full tears, but all unheeded, as with  
 slow,  
 Sure footfalls still he mounts the hostile  
 steep  
 On to a point where two great columns  
 show  
 Their rounded heads, crowned by the  
 morning glow.  
 His task half done, a sigh, long, grateful,  
 deep,  
 Breaks from his heaving heart; secure  
 he stands,  
 A sunbeam glimmering on his clasped  
 hands,

## XLVI.

And the glad lustre of his wind-swept  
 locks  
 More radiant made thereby; his tall  
 form towers  
 'Gainst the dark background, piled  
 with rocks on rocks  
 Precipitous, whose grim, gaunt visage  
 lowers,  
 As if in league they were — like Titan  
 powers  
 Victorious long o'er storms and earth-  
 quake shocks —  
 To cast mute scorn on him whose doubt-  
 ful path  
 Leads near the threatening shadows of  
 their wrath.

## XLVII.

From the charmed crowd then rose an  
 easeful breath,  
 Lightening the dense air; but, 'midst  
 doubt and bale,  
 Raves the wild Earl, reckless of life or  
 death,  
 If so his tyrannous purpose could pre-  
 vail;  
 For, almost mad, he smites his gloves of  
 mail,  
 Goading with frenzied heel the steed  
 beneath  
 His barbarous rule; in reason's fierce  
 eclipse,  
 A blood-red foam burns on his writhing  
 lips.

## XLVIII.

Meanwhile, brief space for needful  
 respite given,  
 With quickened pace, onward and  
 upward still,  
 And fanned by freshening gales, as  
 nearer heaven  
 He climbs o'er granite passways of the  
 hill,  
 Oswald ascends, untamed of strength or  
 will.

Striving, as ne'er before had mortal  
striven,  
Boldly to win, and proudly wear as his,  
The prize he bore of that bright, breath-  
ing bliss.

## XLIX.

Two thirds, two thirds and more, of  
that last half  
Of his fell journey had he stoutly won;  
And now he pauses the cool breeze to  
quaff,  
And feel the royal heartening of the sun  
Nerving his soul for what must yet be  
done,  
When with a gentle, quivering, flutelike  
laugh,  
Holding a sob, the maiden rose and  
kissed  
Her hero's lips, sought through a tremu-  
lous mist

## L.

Of love and pride! The on-lookers,  
ranged afar,  
Saw, and more boldly blessed them; all  
are moved  
To trust that theirs may prove the for-  
tunate star  
Fate brightly kindles for young lives  
beloved:  
"His truth and valor hath he nobly  
proved;  
How brave, how constant both these  
lovers are;  
Sooth! the sweet heavens seem with  
them." Thus, full voiced,  
Yet with some lingering doubts, the folk  
rejoiced.

## LI.

Alas! for false forecasting, and surmise!  
Though small the space betwixt him and  
his goal,  
Oswald doth stagger now in feeblest  
wise,  
And like some drunken carl, with heave  
and roll,  
Blindly he staggers in his lost control

Of sense, or power; and so, with an-  
guished sighs,  
Turned on his love — the goal in easy  
reach —  
His yearning woe too deep for mortal  
speech.

## LII.

Whereon the lady's arms are wildly  
raised,  
Perchance in prayer, perchance with  
pitying aim  
His strain to ease, when lo! (dear Christ  
be praised!)  
It seemed new strength, fresh courage  
o'er him came,  
And through his spirit rushed a glorious  
flame,  
At which the crowd stood moveless,  
dumb, amazed,  
For, like a god, with swift, resistless  
tread,  
He strides to clasp the near goal o'er his  
head.

## LIII.

A savage cliff of beetling brow it was,  
Midmost the summit of the lowering  
height,  
Rooted amongst low shrubs and sun-  
dried grass,  
And reared in blackness, like a cloud of  
night,  
On whose dull breast no beacon star is  
bright.  
Thitherward, from cold terrors of the  
pass  
Well nigh of death, the hero speeds  
amain,  
Nor seems his matchless labor wrought  
in vain.

## LIV.

Yea; for a single rood's length oversped  
And victory crowns him! God! how  
still the crowd,  
Once rife with voices! silent as the dead  
Lodged in their earthly crypt and moul-  
dering shroud;

But suddenly a great cry mounted loud  
And shrill above them, as in ruthless  
dread,  
They saw the lovers, linked in close  
embrace,  
Fall headlong down by that wild trysting  
place.

## LV.

Then comes a quick revulsion, when, the  
pain  
Of fear and choking sympathy gone by,  
Hope reappears — aye, joy and triumph  
reign —  
For though supine on yonder height they  
lie,  
Still, brow to brow, turned from the  
deepening sky,  
'Tis but the faintness of the mighty  
strain —  
Or so they dream — on o'erworked nerve  
and will,  
Which leaves them moveless on the con-  
quered hill.

## LVI.

Spurring his courser, in vexed doubt and  
haste,  
The Earl charged on the dangerous  
height, as though  
Firm-trenched, defiant, 'mid the rock-  
strewn waste  
Glittered the spear-points of his mortal  
foe;  
The horse's hoof struck fire, hurling  
below  
Huge stones and turf his goaded limbs  
displaced,  
Till checked midway, his reckless rider  
found  
He needs must climb afoot the treacher-  
ous ground

## LVII.

And next the throng had caught, and  
past him swept,  
Clothed as he was in armor; a young  
knight

Headed the rout, whose feverish fingers  
crept  
Oft to his sword hilt; on the topmost  
height,  
Pausing with veiled eyes, his gaze he  
kept  
Fixed on the prostrate pair, o'er whom  
the light  
Of broadening sunrise now was mixed  
with shade,  
And still the knight's hand wandered  
round his blade.

## LVIII.

Impatient, spleenful, struggling with the  
tide  
Of common folk, who seemed to heed  
no more  
His sullen passion and revengeful  
pride,  
Than if just then he were the veriest  
boor, —  
The Earl at length with bent brows  
strode before  
The mongrel horde, and unto Oswald  
cried:  
"Rise, traitor, rise! by some foul, jug-  
gling sleight,  
Through the fiend's help, thou hast  
attained the height:

## LIX.

Part them, I say!" To whom in meas-  
ured tone,  
Measured and strange, the young knight  
answering said:  
"Earl, well I know thou wear'st for  
heart a stone,  
Yet dar'st thou part these twain whom  
death has wed,  
No longer twain, but one? Look! over-  
head  
The burning sun mounts to his noonday  
throne;  
But o'er the sun, as o'er this fateful  
sod,  
Rules a great King, the King whose  
name is God!

## LX.

“Deem'st thou for this day's work His  
wrath shall rest?”  
Whereon, low murmuring like a hive of  
bees,  
With stifled groans and tears, the people  
pressed  
Round the fair corpses — women on their  
knees  
Embraced them — and old men — but  
dusky lees  
Of feeling left — did touch them, and  
caressed  
The maid's soft hair, the woodsman's  
noble face,  
Praying, under breath, that Christ would  
grant them grace.

## LXI.

That mournful day had waned; by sun-  
set rose  
A wailing wind from out the dim north-  
east;  
Which, as the shadows waxed at twi-  
light's close  
O'er moat and wood, to a shrill storm  
increased;  
But in his castle hall, with song and  
feast,  
Varied full oft by ribald gibes and blows  
Twixt ruffian guests in rage or maudlin  
play,  
The wild night raved its awful hours  
away.

## LXII.

With not a pang at thought of her whose  
form  
In pallid beauty lay unwatched and  
dead,  
In a far turret chamber, where the storm,  
Thundering each moment louder over-  
head,  
Entered and shook the close-draped, som-  
bre bed,  
The barbarous sire with wine and was-  
sail warm,

Lifting his cup 'mid brutal jest and  
jeer,  
Banned his pale daughter, slumbering on  
her bier.

## LXIII.

Just as those impious words had taken  
flight,  
In the red dusk beyond the torch's  
glare,  
Stole a vague shape that 'scaped the rev-  
ellers' sight,  
Slowly toward Earl Godolf, unaware  
Even as the rest, what fateful foe drew  
near.  
Muffled the shape was, masked and black  
as night,  
And now for one dread instant with  
raised sword  
Stood hovering o'er the heedless banquet  
board.

## LXIV.

And next with flashing motion fierce and  
fast,  
Vengeance descended on that glittering  
blade;  
The amazed spectators started, dumb,  
aghast,  
While at their feet the caltiff lord was  
laid,  
His heart's blood trickling o'er the pur-  
ple braid  
(For through his heart the avenger's  
brand had passed),  
And silver broidery of his gorgeous vest,  
Drawn drop by drop from out his smitten  
breast.

## LXV.

The muffled shape which as a cloud did  
rise  
On the wild orgie, as a cloud departs;  
Wan hands are swept across bewildered  
eyes,  
And awe stilled now the throbbing at  
their hearts,  
When suddenly one death-pale reveller  
starts

Up from the board and in shrill accent  
cries,  
" 'Curst is this roof-tree, curst this meat  
and wine.  
Fly, comrades; fly with me the wrath  
Divine!"

## LXVI.

In haste, in horror, and great tumult,  
fled  
The affrighted guests; then, on the va-  
cant room  
No maddening voice thenceforth dis-  
quieted,  
Fell the stern presence of a ghastly  
gloom.  
A place 'twas deemed of hopeless, bale-  
ful doom;  
Barred from all mortal view in darkness  
dread,  
Only the spectral forms of woe and sin  
Thro' the long years cold harborage  
found therein.

◆

*THE VENGEANCE OF THE GODDESS  
DIANA.\**

WHAT time the Norman ruled in Sicily  
At that mild season when the vernal sea,  
O'erflitted by the zephyr's frolic wing,  
Dances and dimples in the smile of  
spring  
A godly ship set sail upon her way  
From Ceos unto Smyrna; through the  
play  
Of wave and sunbeam touched with fra-  
grant calm,  
She passed by beauteous island shores of  
palm,

\* Sixteen years ago, in a volume of comparatively youthful verses, the above poem appeared under the title of: "*Acolio: a legend of the island of Cos.*" The original narrative has now been carefully rewritten and amended and upwards of a hundred and fifty lines of entirely new matter have been added thereto. So far as we know, the only poet who has celebrated this significant and beautiful tradition,

Until so sweet the tender wooing breeze,  
So fraught the hours with balms of slum-  
brous ease,  
That those who manned her, in the ge-  
nial air  
And dalliance of the time, forgot the  
care  
Due to her courses; in the bland sun-  
shine  
They lay enchanted, dreaming dreams  
divine,  
While idly drifting on the halcyon  
water,  
The bark obeyed whatever currents  
caught her.  
Borne onward thus for many a cloudless  
day,  
They reach at length a wide and wooded  
bay,  
The haunt of birds whose purpling  
wings in flight  
Make even the blushful morning seem  
more bright,  
Flushed as with darting rainbows;  
through the tide,  
By overripe pomegranate juices dyed,  
And laving boughs of the wild fig and  
grape,  
Great shoals of dazzling fishes madly  
ape  
The play of silver lightnings in the deep  
Translucent pools; the crew awoke from  
sleep,  
Or rather that strange trance that on  
them pressed  
Gently as sleep; yet still they loved to  
rest,  
Fanned by voluptuous gales, by mor-  
phean languors blessed.

is William Morris, in the first section of whose "Earthly Paradise" there is a story (called "*The Lady of the Land*") founded upon some of its more obvious and popular incidents. Since Morris's wonderful tales were not published until 1868, we can, at least, assert the humble claim of precedence in the poetical treatment of *this* legend.

The shore sloped upward into foliaged  
hills,  
Cleft by the channels of rock-fretted  
rills,  
That flashed their wavelets, touched by  
iris lights,  
O'er many a tiny cataract down the  
heights.

Green vales there were between, and  
pleasant lawns  
Thick set with bloom, like sheen of  
tropic dawns,  
Brightening the orient; further still the  
glades  
Of whisperous forests, flecked with  
golden shades,  
Stretched glimmering southward; on the  
wood's far rim,  
Faintly discerned thro' veiling vapors,  
dim  
As mists of Indian summer, the broad  
view  
Was clasped by mountains flickering in  
the blue  
And hazy distance; over all there hung  
The morn's eternal beauty, calm and  
young.  
Amid the throng, each with a marvel-  
ling face  
Turned on that island Eden and its  
grace,  
Was one — Avolio — a brave youth of  
Florence,  
Self-exiled from his country, in abhor-  
rence  
Of the base, blood-stained tyrants dom-  
inant there.

A gentleman he was, of gracious air,  
And liberal as the summer, skilled in  
lore  
Of arms, and chivalry, and many more  
Deep sciences which others left un-  
learned.  
He loved adventure; how his spirit  
burned  
Within him, when, as now, a chance  
arose

To search untravelled forests, and  
strange foes  
Vanquish by puissance of knightly  
blows,  
Or rescue maidens from malignant  
spells,  
Enforced by hordes of wizard sentinels.  
So in the ardor of his martial glee,  
He clapped his hands and shouted sud-  
denly:  
"Ho! sirs, a challenge! let us pierce  
these woods  
Down to the core: explore their sol-  
itudes,  
And make the flowery empire all our  
own:  
Who knows but we may conquer us a  
throne?  
At least, bold feats await us, grand em-  
prise  
To win us favor in our ladies' eyes;  
By heaven! he is a coward who delays."

So saying, all his countenance ablaze  
With passionate zeal, the youth sprang  
lightly up,  
And with right lusty motion, filled a  
cup —  
They brought him straightway — to the  
glistening brim  
With Cyprus wine: "Now glory unto  
him,  
The ardent knight, no mortal danger  
daunts,  
Whose constant soul a fiery impulse  
haunts,  
Which spurs him onward, onward, to  
the end;  
Pledge we the brave! and may St. Ermo  
send  
Success to crown our valliantest!"

This said,  
Avolio shoreward leaped, and with him  
led  
The whole ship's company.

A motley band  
Were they who mustered round him on  
the strand,



Mixed knights and traders; the first fired  
 for toil  
 Which promised glory; the last keen for  
 spoil!  
 Thro' breezy paths and beds of blossoming  
 thyme  
 Kept fresh by secret springs, the showery  
 chime  
 Of whose clear falling waters in the dells  
 Played like an airy peal of elfin bells—  
 With eager minds, but aimless, idle  
 feet  
 (The scene about them was so lone and  
 sweet  
 It spelled their steps), 'mid labyrinths  
 of flowers,  
 By mossy streams and in deep shadowed  
 bowers,  
 They strayed from charm to charm  
 thro' lengths of languid hours.  
 In thickets of wild fern and rustling  
 broom,  
 The humble bee buzzed past them  
 with a boom  
 Of insect thunder; and in glens afar  
 The golden firefly—a small animate  
 star—  
 Shone from the twilight of the darkling  
 leaves.  
 High noon it was, but dusk like mellow  
 eve's  
 Reign'd in the wood's deep places,  
 whence it seemed  
 That flashing locks and quick arch  
 glances gleamed  
 From eyes scarce human. Thus the  
 fancy deemed  
 Of those most given to marvels; the rest  
 laughed  
 A merry jeering laugh; and many a  
 shaft  
 Launched from the Norman cross bow,  
 pierced the nooks,  
 Or cleft the shallow channels of the  
 brooks,  
 Whence, as the credulous swore, an Oread  
 shy,  
 Or a glad nymph, had peeped out cunningly.

Thus wandering, they reached a sombre  
 mound  
 Rising abruptly from the level ground.  
 And planted thick with dim funereal  
 trees,  
 Whose foliage waved and murmured,  
 tho' the breeze  
 Had sunk to midnight quiet, and the sky  
 Just o'er the place seemed locked in  
 apathy,  
 Like a fair face wan with the sudden  
 stroke  
 Of death, or heart-break. Not a word  
 they spoke,  
 But paused with wide, bewildered, gleaming  
 eyes,  
 Standing at gaze; what spectral terrors  
 rise  
 And coil about their hearts with serpent  
 fold,  
 And oh! what loathly scene is this they  
 hold,  
 Grasping with unwinking vision, as they  
 creep,  
 Urged by their very horror, up the  
 steep,  
 And the whole preternatural landscape  
 dawns  
 Freezingly on them; a broad stretch of  
 lawns,  
 Sown with rank poisonous grasses, where  
 the dew  
 Of hovering exhalations flickered blue  
 And wavering on the dead-still atmosphere—  
 Dead-still it was, and yet the grasses  
 sere  
 Stirred as with horrid life amidst the  
 sickening glare.  
 The affrighted crew, all save Avolio, fled  
 In wild disorder from this place of  
 dread;  
 In him, albeit his terror whispered  
 "fly!"  
 The spell of some uncouth necessity  
 Baffled retreat, and ruthless, scourged  
 him on;  
 Meanwhile, the sun thro' darkening vapors  
 shone.

Nigh to his setting, and a sudden blast —  
 Sudden and chill — woke shrilly up, and  
     passed  
 With ghostly din and tumult; airy  
     sounds  
 Of sylvan horns, and sweep of circling  
     hounds  
 Nearing the quarry. Now the wizard  
     chase  
 Swept faintly, faintly up the fields of  
     space,  
 And now with backward rushing whirl  
     roared by  
 Louder and fiercer, till a maddening  
     cry —  
 A bitter shriek of human agony —  
 Leaped up, and died amid the stifling  
     yell  
 Of brutes athirst for blood: a crowning  
     swell  
 Of savage triumph followed, mixed with  
     wails  
 Sad as the dying songs of nightingales,  
 Murmuring the name Actæon!  
   Even as one,  
 A wrapt sleep-walker, through the shad-  
     ows dun  
 Of half oblivious sense, with soulless  
     gaze,  
 Goes idly journeying through uncertain  
     ways,  
 Thus did Avolio, sore perplexed in mind  
 (Excess of mystery made his spirit  
     blind),  
 Grope through the gloom. Anon he  
     reached a fount  
 Whose watery columns had long ceased  
     to mount  
 Above its prostrate Tritons. Near at  
     hand,  
 Dammed up in part by heaps of tawny  
     sand,  
 All dull and lustreless, a streamlet  
     wound  
 By trickling banks, with dark, dank  
     foliage crowned,  
 That gloomed 'twixt sullen tides and  
     lowering sky:  
 The melancholy waters seemed to sigh

In wailful murmurs of articulate  
     woe,  
 Till at the last arose this strange dirge  
     from below:

SONG OF THE IMPRISONED NAIAD.

“Woe! woe is me! the centuries pass  
     away,  
 The mortal seasons run their ceaseless  
     rounds,  
 While here I wither for the sunbright  
     day.  
 Its genial sights and sounds.  
     Woe! woe is me!

“One summer night, in ages long ago,  
 I saw my woodland lover leave the  
     brake;  
 I heard him plaining on the peaceful  
     lawn  
 A plaint ‘for my sweet sake.’  
     Woe! woe is me!

“My heart upsprang to answer that fond  
     lay,  
 But suddenly the star-girt planets  
     paled,  
 And high into the welkin’s glimmering  
     gray  
 Majestic Dian sailed!  
     Woe! woe is me!

“She swept aloft, bold almost as the  
     sun,  
 And wrathful red as fiery-crested Mars;  
 Ah! then I knew some fearful deed was  
     done  
 On earth, or in the stars.  
     Woe! woe is me!

“With ghastly face upraised, and shud-  
     dering throat,  
 I watched the omen with a prescient  
     pain;  
 When, lightning-barbed, a beamy arrow  
     smote,  
 Or seemed to smite, my brain.  
     Woe! woe is me!

“Oblivion clasped me, till I woke forlorn,  
 Fettered and sorrowing on this lonely bed,  
 Shut from the mirthful kisses of the morn —  
 Earth’s glories overhead.  
 Woe! woe is me!

“The south wind stirs the sedges into song,  
 The blossoming myrtles scent the enamored air;  
 But still, sore moaning for another’s wrong,  
 I pine in sadness here.  
 Woe! woe is me!

“Alas! alas! the weary centuries flee,  
 The waning seasons perish, dark or bright;  
 My grief alone, like some charmed poison-tree,  
 Knows not an autumn blight.  
 Woe! woe is me!”

The mournful sounds swooned off, but  
 Echo rose,  
 And bore them up divinely to a close  
 Of rare mysterious sweetness; nevermore  
 Shall mortal winds to listening wood and shore  
 Waft such heart-melting music. “Where, oh! where,”  
 Avolio murmured — “to what haunted sphere —  
 Has fate at length my errant footsteps brought?”

Launched on a balling sea of mystic thought,  
 His reason in a whirling chaos, lost  
 Compass and chart and headway, vaguely tossed  
 ‘Mid shifting shapes of winged fantasies.

Just then, uplifting his bewildered eyes,  
 He saw, half hid in shade, on either hand,  
 Twin pillars of a massive gateway grand  
 With gold and carvings; close behind it stood  
 A sombre mansion in a beech tree wood.

Long wreaths of ghostly ivy on its walls  
 Quivered like goblin tapestry, or palls,  
 Tattered and rusty, mildewed in the chill  
 Of dreadful vaults; across each window sill  
 Curtains of weird device and fiery hue  
 Hung moveless, — only when the sun  
 glanced through  
 The gathering gloom, the hieroglyphs  
 took form  
 And life and action, and the whole grew  
 warm  
 With meanings baffling to Avolio’s  
 sense;  
 He stood expectant, trembling, with intense  
 Dread in his eyes, and yet a struggling  
 faith,  
 Vital at heart. A sudden passing  
 breath —  
 Was it the wind? — thrilled by his tingling ear,  
 Waving the curtains inward, and his  
 fear  
 Uprose victorious, for a serpent shape,  
 Tall, supple, writhing, with malignant  
 gape,  
 Which showed its cruel fangs — hissed  
 in the gleam  
 Its own fell eyeballs kindled! Oh! supreme  
 The horror of that vision! — as he  
 gazed,  
 Irresolute, all wordless, and amazed,  
 The monster disappeared — a moment  
 sped!  
 The next it fawned before him on a bed  
 Of scarlet poppies. “Speak,” Avolio  
 said;  
 “What art thou? Speak! I charge  
 thee in God’s name!”

A death-cold shudder seized the serpent's  
frame,  
Its huge throat writhed, whence bub-  
bling with a throe  
Of hideous import, a voice thin and low  
Broke like a muddied rill: "Bethink  
thee well,  
This isle is Cos, of which old legends tell  
Such marvels. Hast thou never heard  
of me,

The island's fated queen?" "Yea,  
verily,"  
Avolio cried, "thou art that thing of  
dread ——"  
Sharply the serpent raised its glittering  
head  
And front tempestuous: "Hold! no  
tongue save mine  
Must of these miseries tell thee! Then  
incline



"A monster meet for Tartarus, a thing  
Whereon men gaze with awe and shuddering."

Thine ear to the dark story of my  
grief,  
And with thine ear yield, yield me thy  
belief.  
Foul as I am, there *was* a time,  
O youth,  
When these fierce eyes were founts of  
love and truth;  
There *was* a time when woman's  
blooming grace  
Glowed through the flush of roses in  
my face;  
When — but I sinned a deep and damn-  
ing sin,

The fruit of lustful pride nurtured  
within  
By weird, forbidden knowledge — I  
defied  
The night's immaculate goddess, purest  
eyed,  
And holiest of immortals; I denied  
The eternal Power that looks so cold and  
calm;  
Therefore, O stranger, am I what I  
am,  
A monster meet for Tartarus, a thing  
Whereon men gaze with awe and shud-  
dering,

And stress of inward terror; through all  
time,  
Down to the last age, my abhorred  
crime  
Must hold me prisoner in this vile  
abode.  
*Unless some man, large-hearted as a  
God,  
Bolder than Ajax, mercifully deign  
To kiss me on the mouth!*"

She towered amain,  
With sparkling crest, and universal  
thrill  
Of frenzied eagerness, that seemed to  
fill  
Her cavernous eyes with jets of lurid  
fire,  
Pulsed from the burning core of unap-  
peased desire.

Back stepped Avolio with a loathing  
fear,  
Sick to the inmost soul; then did he  
hear  
The awful creature vent a tortured  
groan,  
Her frantic neck and dragon's forehead  
thrown  
Madly to earth, whereon awhile she  
lay,  
Her glances veiled, her dark crest turned  
away.

As thus she grovelled, quivering on the  
ground,  
Stole through the brooding silence a  
faint sound  
As 'twere of hopeless grief — it seemed  
to be  
A human voice weeping how piteously!  
Yet its deep passion striving to sub-  
due.  
Just then the serpent writhed her folds  
anew.  
And while from earth her horrent crest  
she rears,  
The loathly creature's face is bathed in  
tears!

"Lady!" the knight said, "if in sooth  
thou art  
A maid and human, wherefore thus de-  
part  
From truth's plain path to blind me?  
well I know  
This Dian, famed and worshipped long  
ago  
By heathen folk, was as the idle fume  
Formed into shifting shapes of vaporous  
bloom  
O'er her vain altars. Ah!" (he shud-  
dered now,  
Growing death-pale from tremulous chin  
to brow)  
"Ah, God! I cannot kiss thee! Ne'er-  
theless,  
Fain am I in the true God's name to bless,  
And even to mark thee with His sacred  
cross!"

As one weighed down by anguish and  
the loss  
Of one last hope, in faltering tones and  
sad  
The serpent spake: "Deem'st thou that  
Dian had  
No life but that wherewith her votaries  
vain  
Invested a vague image of the brain?  
Nay, she both *was* and *was not*, as on  
earth,  
Even to this day, full many a thing from  
birth  
To death lapses alike through bane and  
bliss;  
Full many a thing, which is not and  
yet is,  
Save to man's purblind vision; — in the  
end  
Some clearer spirits may rise to compre-  
hend  
This strange enigma! but meanwhile,  
meanwhile  
The sure heavens change not, star and  
sunbeam smile  
Fair as of yore; eternal nature keeps  
Her strength and beauty, though the  
mortal weeps

In desolation! Oh! wert *thou* but true  
And brave enow this thing I ask to do,  
Then human, happy, beauteous would I  
be,  
Ye merciful Gods! once more!"

Then suddenly  
She writhed her vast neck round, her  
glittering crest  
Cast backward o'er the fierce, tumultu-  
ous breast,  
Red as a stormy sunset — with a moan,  
"Pass on, weak soul!" she said, "leave  
me alone;"  
Then, wildly, "Go! I would not catch  
thine eye;  
*Go, and be safe!* for swiftly, furiously,  
Surges a cruel thought through all my  
blood,  
And the brute instincts turn to hardi-  
hood  
Of vengeful impulse all my gentler  
frame;  
Go! for I would not harm thee; yet a  
flame  
Of blasting torments have I power to  
raise  
Through all thy being, and mine eyes  
*could gaze.*  
Gloating on pain. Is this not horri-  
ble?"  
And therewithal the wretched monster  
fell  
To open weeping, with sad front, and  
bowed.

Something in such base cruelty avowed,  
Blent with the softer will which disal-  
lowed  
Its exercise, so on Avolio wrought,  
That sore perplexed, revolving many a  
thought,  
He lingered still, lost in a spiritual mist;  
But when the mouth that waited to be  
kissed,  
Fringed with a yellow foam, malignly  
rose  
Before him, his first fear its terrible  
throes

Renewed. "And how, O baleful  
shape!" said he —  
Striving to speak in passionless tones,  
and free —  
"How can I tell, what certain gage have  
I,  
That this strange kiss thine awful des-  
tiny  
Hath not ordained — the least elaborate  
plan  
Whereby to snare and slay me?" "O  
man! man!"  
The serpent answered, with a loftier  
mien —  
A voice grown clear, majestic and se-  
rene —  
"Shall *matter* always triumph? the  
base mould  
Mask the immortal essence, uncontrolled  
Save by your grovelling fancies mean  
and cold?  
O green and happy woods, breathing like  
sleep!  
O quiet habitants of places deep  
In leafy shades, that draw your peaceful  
breaths,  
Passing fair lives to rest in tranquil  
deaths!  
O earth! O sea! O heavens! forever  
dumb  
To man, while ages go and ages come  
Mysterious, have the dark Fates willed  
it so  
That nevermore the sons of men shall  
know  
The secret of your silence? the wide  
scope  
Granted your basking pleasures, and  
sweet hope,  
Revived in vernal warmth and spring-  
tide rains,  
Your long, long pleasures, and your  
fleeting pains?  
And must the lack of what is brave and  
true,  
From other souls, callous or blind there-  
to,  
From what themselves beauteous and  
truthful are,

Differ for aye as glow-worms from a  
 star?  
 Is such our life's decretal? Shall the  
 faith  
 Which even, perchance, the clearest  
 spirit hath  
 In good within us, always prove less  
 bold  
 Than keen suspicions, nursed by craven  
 doubt,  
 Of treacherous ills, and evil from with-  
 out?"

Then, after pause, with passion: "O  
 etern  
 And bland benignities, that breathe and  
 burn  
 Throughout creation, are we but the  
 notes  
 In some vague dream that idly sways  
 and floats  
 To nothingness? or are your glories  
 pent  
 Within ourselves, to rise omnipotent  
 In bloom and music, when we bend  
 above,  
 And wake them by the kisses of our  
 love?"

I yearn to be made beautiful. Alas!  
 Beauty itself looks on, prepared to pass,  
 In hardened disbelief! *one* action kind  
 Would free and save me — why art thou  
 so blind,  
 Avolio?" While she spoke, a timorous  
 hare,  
 Scared by a threatening falcon from its  
 lair,  
 Rushed to the serpent's side. With  
 fondling tongue  
 She soothed it as a mother soothes her  
 young.

Avolio mused: "Can innocent things  
 like this  
 Take refuge by her? then, perchance,  
 some good,  
 Some tenderness, if rightly understood,  
 Lurks in her nature. *I will do the deed!*  
*Christ and the Virgin save me at my*  
*need."*

He signed the monster nearer, closed  
 his eyes,  
 And with some natural shuddering, some  
 deep sighs!  
 Gave up his pallid lips to the foul kiss!  
 What followed then? a traitorous ser-  
 pent hiss,  
 Sharper for triumph? Ah! not so — he  
 felt  
 A warm, rich, yearning mouth approach  
 and melt  
 In languid, loving sweetness on his own.  
 And two fond arms caressingly were  
 thrown  
 About his neck, and on his bosom  
 pressed  
 Twin lilies of a snow white virgin breast.

He raised his eyes, released from brief  
 despair;  
 They rested on a maiden tall and fair —  
 Fair as the tropic morn, when morn is  
 new —  
 And her sweet glances smote him through  
 and through  
 With such keen thrilling rapture that he  
 swore  
 His willing heart should evermore adore  
 Her loveliness, and woo her till he died.

"I am thine own," she whispered, "thy  
 true bride,  
 If thou wilt take me!"  
 Hand in hand they strayed  
 Adown the shadows through the wood-  
 land glade,  
 Whence every evil influence shrank  
 afraid,  
 And round them poured the golden even-  
 tide.  
 Swiftly the tidings of this strange event  
 Abroad on all the garrulous winds were  
 sent,  
 Rousing an eager world to wonderment!

Now 'mid the knightly companies that  
 came  
 To visit Cos, was that brave chief, by  
 fame

Exalted for bold deeds and faith divine,  
So nobly shown erewhile in Palestine —  
Tancred, Salerno's Prince — he came in  
state,

With fourscore gorgeous barges, small  
and great,

With pomp and music, like an ocean  
Fate;

His blazoned prows along the glimmering  
sea

Spread like an eastern sunrise gloriously.

Him and his followers did Avolio feast  
Right royally, but when the mirth in-  
creased,

And joyous-wing'd jests began to pass  
Above the sparkling cups of Hippoceras,  
Tancred arose, and in his courtly phrase  
Invoked delight and length of prosperous  
days

To crown that magic union; one vague  
doubt

The Prince did move, and this he dared  
speak out,

But with serene and tempered courtesy:  
"It could not be that their sweet hostess  
still

Worshipped Diana and her heathen  
will?"

"Ah sir! not so!" Avolio flushing  
cried,

"But Christ the Lord!"

No single word replied  
The beauteous lady, but with gentle pride  
And a quick motion to Avolio's side  
She drew more closely by a little space,  
Gazing with modest passion in his face,  
As one who yearned to whisper tenderly:  
"O, brave kind heart! I worship only  
thee!"

—◆—  
THE SOLITARY LAKE.

From garish light and life apart,  
Shrined in the woodland's secret heart,  
With delicate mists of morning furled  
Fantastic o'er its shadowy world,

The lake, a vaporous vision, gleams  
So vaguely bright, my fancy deems  
'Tis but an airy lake of dreams.

Dreamlike, in curves of palest gold,  
The wavering mist-wreaths manifold  
Part in long rifts, through which I view  
Gray islets throned in tides as blue  
As if a piece of heaven withdrawn —  
Whence hints of sunrise touch the  
dawn —

Had brought to earth its sapphire glow,  
And smiled, a second heaven, below.

Dreamlike, in fitful, murmurous sighs,  
I hear the distant west wind rise,  
And, down the hollows wandering,  
break

In gurgling ripples on the lake,  
Round which the vapors, still outspread,  
Mount wanly widening overhead,  
Till flushed by morning's primrose-red.

Dreamlike, each slow, soft-pulsing surge  
Hath lapped the calm lake's emerald  
verge,

Sending, where'er its tremors pass  
Low whisperings through the dew-wet  
grass;

Faint thrills of fairy sound that creep  
To fall in neighboring nooks asleep,  
Or melt in rich, low warblings made  
By some winged Ariel of the glade.

With brightening morn the mockbird's  
lay

Grows stronger, mellow; far away  
'Mid dusky reeds, which even the noon  
Lights not, the lonely-hearted loon  
Makes answer, her shrill music shorn  
Of half its sadness; day, full-born,  
Doth rout all sounds and sights forlorn.

Ah! still a something strange and rare  
O'errules this tranquil earth and air,  
Casting o'er both a glamour known  
To *their* enchanted realm alone;  
Whence shines, as 'twere a spirit's face,  
The sweet coy genius of the place,



You lake beheld as if in trance,  
The beauty of whose shy romance  
I feel — whatever shores and skies  
May charm henceforth my wondering  
eyes, —  
Shall rest, undimmed by taint or stain,  
'Mid lonely byways of the brain.  
There, with its haunting grace, to seem  
Set in the landscape of a dream.

—○—

*THE VOICE IN THE PINES.*

THE morn is softly beautiful and still,  
Its light fair clouds in pencilled gold  
and gray  
Pause motionless above the pine-grown  
hill,  
Where the pines, tranced as by a wiz-  
ard's will,  
Uprise as mute and motionless as  
they!  
Yea! mute and moveless; not one flick-  
ering spray  
Flashed into sunlight, nor a gaunt  
bough stirred;  
Yet, if wooed hence beneath those pines  
to stray,  
We catch a faint, thin murmur far away,  
A bodiless voice, by grosser ears un-  
heard.  
What voice is this? what low and sol-  
emn tone,  
Which, though all wings of all the  
winds seem furled,  
Nor even the zephyr's fairy flute is blown,  
Makes thus forever its mysterious moan  
From out the whispering pine-tops'  
shadowy world?  
Ah! can it be the antique tales are true?  
Doth some lone Dryad haunt the  
breezeless air,  
Fronting yon bright immitigable blue,  
And wildly breathing all her wild soul  
through  
That strange unearthly music of de-  
spair?

Or can it be that ages since, storm-  
tossed,  
And driven far inland from the roar-  
ing sea,  
Some baffled ocean-spirit, worn and lost,  
Here, through dry summer's dearth and  
winter's frost,  
Yearns for the sharp, sweet kisses of  
the sea?

Whate'er the spell, I hearken and am  
dumb,  
Dream-touched, and musing in the  
tranquil morn;  
All woodland sounds — the pheasant's  
gusty drum,  
The mock-bird's fugue, the droning in-  
sect's hum —  
Scarce heard for that strange, sorrow-  
ful voice forlorn!

Beneath the drowsèd sense, from deep to  
deep  
Of spiritual life its mournful minor  
flows,  
Streamlike, with pensive tide, whose  
currents keep  
Low murmuring 'twixt the bounds of  
grief and sleep,  
Yet locked for aye from sleep's divine  
repose.

—○—

*VISIT OF THE WRENS.*

FLYING from out the gusty west,  
To seek the place where last year's nest,  
Ragged, and torn by many a rout  
Of winter winds, still rocks about  
The branches of the gnarled old tree  
Which sweep my cottage library —  
Here on the genial southern side,  
In a late gleam of sunset's pride,  
Came back my tiny, springtide friends,  
The self-same pair of chattering wrens  
That with arch eyes and restless bill  
Used to frequent yon window sill,  
Winged sprites, in April's showery  
glow.

'Tis now twelve weary months ago  
 Since first I saw them; here again  
 They drop outside the glittering pane,  
 Each bearing a dried twig or leaf,  
 To build with labor hard, yet brief,  
 This season's nest, where, blue and  
 round,  
 Their fairy eggs will soon be found.  
 But sky and breeze and blithesome sun,  
 Until that little home is done,  
 Shall — wondering, maybe — hear and  
 see

Such chatter, bustle, industry,  
 As well may stir to emulous strife  
 Slow currents of a languid life,  
 Whether in bird or man they run!

But when, in sooth, the nest complete  
 Swings gently in its green retreat,  
 And soft the mother birdling's breast  
 Doth in the cozy crevice rest,  
 How, back from jovial journeying,  
 Merry of heart, though worn of wing,  
 Her brown mate, proudly perched above  
 The limb that holds his brooding love,  
 His head upturned, his aspect sly,  
 Regards her with a cunning eye,  
 As one who saith, "How well you bear  
 The dullness of these duties, dear;  
 To dwell so long on nest or tree  
 Would be, I know, slow death to me;  
 But, then, you women folk were made  
 For patient waiting, in — the shade!"

No tame one little guest becomes —  
 'Tis the male bird — my scattered  
 crumbs

He takes from window sill and lawn  
 Each morning in the early dawn;  
 And yesterday he dared to stand  
 Sorely on my outstretched hand,  
 While his wee wife, with puzzled  
 glance,  
 Looked from her breezy seat askance!

My pretty pensioners! ye have flown  
 Twice from your winter nook unknown,  
 To build your humble homestead here,  
 In the first flush of springtide cheer;

But ah! I wonder if again,  
 Flitting outside the window pane,  
 When next the shrewd March winds  
 shall blow,  
 Or in mild April's showers glow,  
 New come from out the shimmering  
 west,  
 You'll seek the place of this year's  
 nest,  
 Ragged and torn by then, no doubt,  
 And swinging in worn shreds about  
 The branches of the ancient tree.

Nay, who may tell? Yet, verily,  
 Methinks when, spring and summer  
 passed,  
 Adown the long, low autumn blast,  
 In some dim gloaming, chill and drear,  
 You, with your fledglings, disappear,  
 That ne'er by porch or tree or pane  
 Mine eyes shall greet your forms again!

What then? At least the good ye  
 brought,  
 The delicate charms for eye and thought  
 Survives; though death should be your  
 doom  
 Before another spring flower's bloom,  
 Or fairer clime should tempt your wings  
 To bide 'mid fragrant blossoming  
 On some far Southland's golden lea,  
 Still may fresh spring morns light for  
 me

Your tiny nest, their breezes bear  
 Your chirping, household joyance near  
 And all your quirks and tricksome ways  
 Bring back through many smiling days  
 Or future Aprils; not the less  
 Your simple drama shall impress  
 Fancy and heart, thus acted o'er  
 Toward each small issue, as of yore,  
 With sun and wind and skies of blue  
 To witness, wondering, all you do,  
 Because your happy toil and mirth  
 May be of fine, ideal birth;  
 Because each quick, impulsive note  
 May thrill a visionary throat.  
 Each flash of glancing wing and eye  
 Be gleams of vivid fantasy;

Since whatso'er of form and tone  
 A past reality hath known,  
 Most charming unto soul and sense,  
 But wins that subtle effluence,  
 That spiritual air which softly clings  
 About all sweet and vanished things,  
 Causing a bygone joy to be  
 Vital as actuality.  
 Yet with each earthlier tint or trace  
 Lost in a pure, ethereal grace!

— o —

FOREST PICTURES.

MORNING.

O GRACIOUS breath of sunrise! divine  
 air!  
 That brood'st serenely o'er the pur-  
 pling hills:  
 O blissful valleys! nestling, cool and  
 fair,  
 In the fond arms of yonder murmur-  
 ous rills,  
 Breathing their grateful measures to the  
 sun;  
 O dew-besprinkled paths, that circling  
 run  
 Through sylvan shades and solemn si-  
 lences,  
 Once more ye bring my fevered spirit  
 peace!

The fitful breezes, fraught with forest  
 balm,  
 Faint, in rare wafts of perfume, on my  
 brow;  
 The woven lights and shadows, rife with  
 calm,  
 Creep slantwise 'twixt the foliage,  
 bough on bough  
 Uplifted heavenward, like a verdant  
 cloud  
 Whose rain is music, soft as love, or  
 loud  
 With jubilant hope — for there, en-  
 tranced, apart,  
 The mock-bird sings, close, close to Na-  
 ture's heart.

Shy forms about the greenery, out and  
 in,  
 Flit 'neath the broadening glories of  
 the morn;  
 The squirrel — that quaint sylvan harle-  
 quin —  
 Mounts the tall trunks; while swift as  
 lightning, born  
 Of summer mists, from tangled vine and  
 tree  
 Dart the dove's pinions, pulsing vividly  
 Down the dense glades, till glimmering  
 far and gray  
 The dusky vision softly melts away!

In transient, pleased bewilderment I  
 mark  
 The last dim shimmer of those lessen-  
 ing wings,  
 When from lone copse and shadowy  
 covert, hark!  
 What mellow tongue through all the  
 woodland rings!  
 The deer-hound's voice, sweet as the  
 golden bell's,  
 Prolonged by flying echoes round the  
 dells,  
 And up the loftiest summits wildly  
 borne,  
 Blent with the blast of some keen hunts-  
 man's horn.

And now the checkered vale is left be-  
 hind;  
 I climb the slope, and reach the hill-  
 top bright;  
 Here, in bold freedom, swells a sover-  
 eign wind,  
 Whose gusty prowess sweeps the pine-  
 clad height;  
 While the pines — dreamy Titans roused  
 from sleep —  
 Answer with mighty voices, deep on  
 deep  
 Of wakened foliage surging like a  
 sea;  
 And o'er them smiles Heaven's calm  
 infinity!

## GOLDEN DELL.

BEYOND our moss-grown pathway lies  
A dell so fair, to genial eyes  
It dawns an ever-fresh surprise!

To touch its charms with gentler grace,  
The softened heavens a loving face  
Bend o'er that sweet, secluded place.

There first, despite the March wind's  
cold,  
Above the pale-hued emerald mould  
The earliest spring-tide buds unfold;

There first the ardent mock-bird, long  
Winter's dumb thrall, from winter's  
wrong  
Breaks into gleeful floods of song;

Till, from coy thrush to garrulous wren,  
The humbler bards of copse and glen  
Outpour their vernal notes again;

While such harmonious rapture rings,  
With stir and flash of eager wings  
Glimpsed fleetly, where the jasmine  
clings

To bosk and briar, we blithely say,  
"Farewell! bleak nights and mornings  
gray,  
Earth opes her festal court to-day!"

There, first, from out some balmy nest,  
By half-grown woodbine flowers caressed,  
Steal zephyrs of the mild southwest;

O'er purpling rows of wild-wood peas,\*  
So blandly borne, the droning bees  
Still suck their honeyed cores at ease;

Or, trembling through yon verdurous  
mass,  
Dew-starred, and dimpling as they pass  
The wavelets of the billowy grass!

\* In the Southern woods, often among sterile tracts of pine barren, a species of *wild pea* is found, or a plant which in all externals resembles the pea plant.

But, fairest of fair things that dwell  
'Mid sylvan nurslings of the dell,  
Is that clear stream whose murmurs swell

To music's airiest issues wrought,  
As if a Naiad's tongue were fraught  
With secrets of its whispered thought.

Yes, fairest of fair things, it flows  
'Twixt banks of violet and of rose,  
Touched always by a quaint repose.

How golden bright its currents glide!  
While goldenly from side to side  
Bird shadows flit athwart the tide.

So Golden Dell we name the place,  
And aye may Heaven's serenest face  
Dream o'er it with a smile of grace;

For next the moss-grown path it lies,  
So pure, so fresh to genial eyes  
It glows with hints of Paradise!

## ASPECTS OF THE PINES.

TALL, sombre, grim, against the morn-  
ing sky

They rise, scarce touched by melan-  
choly airs,  
Which stir the fadeless foliage dream-  
fully,  
As if from realms of mystical despairs.

Tall, sombre, grim, they stand with  
dusky gleams

Brightening to gold within the wood-  
land's core,  
Beneath the gracious noontide's tranquil  
beams—  
But the weird winds of morning sigh  
no more.

A stillness, strange, divine, ineffable,  
Broods round and o'er them in the  
wind's surcease,

And on each tinted copse and shimmer-  
ing dell  
Rests the mute rapture of deep heart-  
ed peace.

Last, sunset comes — the solemn joy and  
might

Borne from the West when cloudless  
day declines —

Low, flutelike breezes sweep the waves  
of light,

And lifting dark green tresses of the  
pines,

Till every lock is luminous — gently float,  
Fraught with hale odors up the heav-  
ens afar

To faint when twilight on her virginal  
throat

Wears for a gem the tremulous vesper  
star.



MIDSUMMER IN THE SOUTH.

I LOVE Queen August's stately sway,  
And all her fragrant south winds say,  
With vague, mysterious meanings  
fraught,

Of unimaginable thought;  
Those winds, 'mid change of gloom and  
gleam,

Seem wandering thro' a golden dream —  
The rare midsummer dream that lies

In humid depths of nature's eyes,

Weighing her languid forehead down

Beneath a fair but fiery crown:

Its witchery broods o'er earth and skies,  
Fills with divine amenities

The bland, blue spaces of the air,

And smiles with looks of drowsy cheer

'Mid hollows of the brown-hued hills;

And oft, in tongues of tinkling rills,

A softer, homelier utterance finds

Than that which haunts the lingering  
winds!

I love midsummer's azure deep,

Whereon the huge white clouds, asleep,  
Scarce move through lengths of tran-  
scend hours;

Some, raised in forms of giant towers —  
Dumb Babels, with ethereal stairs

Scaling the vast height — unawares

What mocking spirit, æther-born,  
Hath built those transient spires in  
scorn,

And reared towards the topmost sky  
Their unsubstantial fantasy!

Some stretched in tenuous arcs of light

Athwart the airy infinite,

Far glittering up yon fervid dome,

And lapped by cloudland's misty foam,

Whose wreaths of fine sun-smitten spray

Melt in a burning haze away:

Some throned in heaven's serenest  
smiles,

Pure-hued, and calm as fairy isles,

Girt by the tides of soundless seas —

The heavens' benign Hesperides.

I love midsummer uplands, free

To the bold raids of breeze and bee,

Where, nested warm in yellowing  
grass,

I hear the swift-winged partridge pass,

With whirr and boom of gusty flight,

Across the broad heath's treeless height:

Or, just where, elbow-poised, I lift

Above the wild flower's careless drift

My half-closed eyes, I see and hear

The blithe field-sparrow twittering clear

Quick ditties to his tiny love;

While, from afar, the timid dove,

With faint, voluptuous murmur, wakes

The silence of the pastoral brakes.

I love midsummer sunsets, rolled

Down the rich west in waves of gold,

With blazing crests of billowy fire.

But when those crimson floods retire.

In noiseless ebb, slow-surgings, grand,

By pensive twilight's flickering strand,

In gentler mood I love to mark

The slow gradations of the dark;

Till, lo! from Orient's mists withdrawn,

Hail! to the moon's resplendent dawn;

On dusky vale and haunted plain

Her effluence falls like balmy rain;

Gaunt gulfs of shadow own her might;

She bathes the rescued world in light,

So that, albeit my summer's day,

Erewhile did breathe its life away,

Methinks, what'er its hours had won  
Of beauty, born from shade and sun,  
Hath not perchance so wholly died,  
But o'er the moonlight's silvery tide  
Comes back, sublimed and purified!

—•—  
CLOUD-PICTURES.

HERE in these mellow grasses, the whole  
morn,  
I love to rest; yonder, the ripening corn  
Rustles its greenery; and his blithesome  
horn

Windeth the frolic breeze o'er field and  
dell,  
Now pealing a bold stave with lusty  
swell,  
Now falling to low breaths ineffable

Of whispered joyance. At calm length  
I lie,  
Fronting the broad blue spaces of the  
sky,  
Covered with cloud-groups, softly jour-  
neying by:

An hundred shapes, fantastic, beau-  
teous, strange,  
Are theirs, as o'er yon airy waves they  
range  
At the wind's will, from marvellous  
change to change;

Castles, with guarded roof, and turret  
tall,  
Great sloping archway, and majestic  
wall,  
Sapped by the breezes to their noiseless  
fall!

Pagodas vague! above whose towers  
outstream  
Banners that wave with motions of a  
dream —  
Rising, or drooping in the noontide  
gleam;

Gray lines of Orient pilgrims: a gaunt  
band  
On famished camels, o'er the desert  
sand  
Plodding towards their prophet's Holy  
Land;

'Mid-ocean, — and a shoal of whales at  
play,  
Lifting their monstrous frontlets to the  
day,  
Thro' rainbow arches of sun-smitten  
spray;

Followed by splintered icebergs, vast  
and lone,  
Set in swift currents of some arctic  
zone,  
Like fragments of a Titan's world o'er-  
thrown;

Next, measureless breadths of barren,  
treeless moor,  
Whose vaporous verge fades down a  
glimmering shore,  
Round which the foam-capped billows  
toss and roar!

Calms of bright water — like a fairy's  
wiles,  
Wooing with ripply cadence and soft  
smiles,  
The golden shore-slopes of Hesperian  
Isles;

Their inland plains rife with a rare in-  
crease  
Of plumèd grain! and many a snowy  
fleece  
Shining athwart the dew-lit hills of  
peace;

Wrecks of gigantic cities — to the  
tune  
Of some wise air-God built! — o'er  
which the noon  
Seems shuddering; caverns, such as  
wan Moon

Shows in her desolate bosom; then, a  
 crowd  
 Of awed and reverent faces, palely  
 bowed  
 O'er a dead queen, laid in her ashy  
 shroud —

A queen of eld — her pallid brow im-  
 pearled  
 By gens barbaric! her strange beauty  
 furled  
 In mystic ceremonies of the antique  
 world.

Weird pictures, fancy-gendered! — one  
 by one,  
 'Twixt blended beams and shadows, gold  
 and dun,  
 These transient visions vanish in the  
 sun.

— • —

SONNET.

SUNSET, the god-like artist, paints on air  
 Pictures of loveliness and terror blent!  
 Lo! yonder clouds, like mountains tem-  
 pest-rent,  
 Through whose abysmal depths the  
 lightning's glare  
 Darts from wild gulfs and caverns of de-  
 spair:  
 O'er these a calm, majestic firmament.  
 Flushed with rich hues, with rainbow  
 isles besprent,  
 Like homes of peace in oceans heavenly  
 fair:

But *still*, beyond, one lone mysterious  
 cloud,  
 Steeped in the solemn sunset's fiery  
 mist,  
 Strange semblance takes of Him whose  
 visage bowed,  
 Divinely sweet, o'er all things, dark or  
 bright,  
 Yet draws the darkness ever toward  
 His light  
 The tender eyes and awful brow of  
 Christ!

IN THE PINE BARRENS.

SUNSET.

HARK! to the mournful wind; its burden  
 drear  
 Borne over leagues of desert wild and  
 dun,  
 Sinks to a weary cadence of despair,  
 Beyond the closing gateways of the  
 sun.

Yon clouds are big with flame, and not  
 with rain,  
 Massed on the marvellous heaven in  
 splendid pyres,  
 Whereon ethereal genii, half in pain  
 And half in triumph, light their fervid  
 fires:

Kindled in funeral majesty to rise  
 Above the perished day, whose latest  
 breath  
 Exhaled, a roseate effluence to the skies,  
 Still lingers o'er the pageantry of  
 death.

One stalwart hill his stern defiant crest  
 Boldly against the horizon line up-  
 rears,  
 His blasted pines, smit by the fiery West,  
 Uptowering rank on rank, like Titan  
 spears;

Fantastic, bodeful, o'er the rock-strewn  
 ground  
 Casting grim shades beyond the hill  
 slope riven,  
 Which mock the loftier shafts, keen,  
 lustre-crowned  
 And raised as if to storm the courts of  
 Heaven!

As sinks the wind, so wane those won-  
 drous lights;  
 Slowly they wane from hill and sky  
 and cloud,  
 While round the woodland waste and  
 glimmering heights  
 The mist of gloaming trails its silvery  
 shroud!

Through which, uncertain, vague as  
shifting ghosts,  
The forms of all things touched by  
mystery seem,  
I walk, methinks, on pale Plutonian  
coasts,  
And grope 'mid spectral shadows of a  
dream.

## SONNET.

IN the deep hollow of this sheltered dell  
I hear the rude winds chant their giant  
staves  
Far, far beyond me, where in darkening  
waves  
The airy seas of cloudland sink or swell.  
No faint breeze stirs the wild-flower's  
soundless bell,  
Here in the quiet vale, whose rivulet  
laves  
Banks silent almost as those desert  
graves,  
Whereof the worn Zaharan wanderers  
tell.  
Oh! thus from out still depths of tran-  
quil doom,  
My soul beyond her views life's turmoil  
vast,  
Harkening the windy roar and rage of  
men,  
Vain to *her* eyes as shades from cloud-  
land cast,  
And to *her* ears like far-off winds that  
boom,  
Heard, but scarce heard, in this Arca-  
dian glen!

## THE WOODLAND PHASES.

YON woodland, like a human mind,  
Hath many a phase of dark and  
bright:  
Now dim with shadows, wandering blind,  
Now radiant with fair shapes of light.

They softly come, they softly go,  
Capricious as the vagrant wind,  
Nature's vague thoughts in gloom or  
glow,  
That leave no airiest trace behind.

No trace, no trace! yet wherefore thus  
Do shade and beam our spirit's stir?  
Ah! Nature may be cold to us,  
But we are strangely moved by her.

The wild bird's strain, the breezy spray,  
Each hour with sure earth-changes  
rife  
Hint more than all the sages say,  
Or poets sing of death and life.

For truths half drawn from Nature's  
breast,  
Through subtlest types of form and  
tone,  
Outweigh what man, at most, hath  
guessed  
While heeding his own heart alone.

And midway, betwixt heaven and us,  
Stands Nature in her fadeless grace,  
Still pointing to our Father's house,  
His glory on her mystic face.

## AFTER THE TORNADO.

LAST eve the earth was calm, the heav-  
ens were clear;  
A peaceful glory crowned the waning  
west,  
And yonder distant mountain's hoary  
crest  
The semblance of a silvery robe did  
wear,  
Shot through with moon-wrought tis-  
sues; far and near  
Wood, rivulet, field — all Nature's face  
— expressed  
The haunting presence of enchanted rest.  
One twilight star shone like a blissful  
Un t ravage in a



Yon mountain height fades in its cloud-  
girt pall;  
The prostrate wood lies smirched with  
rain and mire;  
Through the shorn fields the brook  
whirls, wild and white;  
While o'er the turbulent waste and  
woodland fall,  
Glares the red sunrise, blurred with  
mists of fire!

—◆—  
*IN THE BOWER.*

THE gusty and passionate March hath  
died;  
And now in the golden April-tide  
There sits in the shade of her jasmine  
bower  
A maid more fair than an April flower.

The delicate curve of her perfect mouth,  
Whose tints grow warm in the fervid  
South,  
She stoops to press, as she murmurs  
low,  
On a note upraised in her hand of snow.

What words are writ on the tiny scroll?  
What thoughts lie deep in the maiden's  
soul?  
Oh, is it with bliss of her love she sighs?  
Is the light but love's in those shy  
brown eyes?

So thinks the mock-bird trilling his lay  
On the tremulous top of the lilac spray;  
He views the maid, on his perch apart,  
And his song is meant for her secret  
heart.

So thinks the breeze, for its frolic free  
With the rose's stem, and the wing o'  
the bee  
It leaves, to sigh in the maiden's ear,  
"He is coming, sweet! he is almost  
here!"

So thinks the sun, for his ardent beams  
Grow mellow and soft as a virgin's  
dreams,

Through the vine-leaf shadows steal coy-  
ly down,  
And she wears his light like a bridal  
crown.

Let the songster trill, and the breezes  
sigh,  
And the sun weave crowns of his light i'  
the sky;  
She heeds them not, for a step is heard,  
And her soul leaps up like a startled  
bird —

Her soul leaps up, but it is not fear:  
He is coming, sweet! he is here! is here!  
And she flies to his bosom, (ah! panting  
dove),  
And is folded home on the heart of love!

—◆—  
*WHENCE?*

EERILY the wind doth blow  
Through the woodland hollow;  
Eerily forlorn and low,  
Tremulous echoes follow!

Whence the low wind's tortured plaint?  
Burden hopeless, dreary.  
As the anguished tones that faint  
Down the *Miserere*.

Whence? From far-off seas its moan!  
Darksome waves and lonely,  
Where the tempest, overblown,  
Leaves a death-calm only.

Thence it caught the awful cry  
Of some last pale swimmer,  
O'er whose drowning brain and eye  
Life grows dim and dimmer—

Ere the billows claim their prey,  
Settling stern and lonely,  
Where the storm-clouds, rolled away,  
Leave death-silence only!

So with pain the wind-heart sighs;  
Through its sad commotion  
Weary sea-tides sob, and rise  
Wailing hints of Ocean!

Hist! oh hist! as spreads the mist,  
 Wood and hill-slope doming,  
 By no grace of starlight kissed,  
 'Mid the shadowy gloaming,

Drearier grows the wind, more drear  
 Echoes shuddering follow,  
 'Till a place of doom and fear  
 Seems that haunted hollow!



"Uplift and bear me where the wild flowers grow,  
 By many a golden dell-side, sweet and low."

## SONNET.

ENOUGH, this glimpse of splendor wed to  
 shame:  
 Enough this gilded misery, this bright  
 woe.  
 Pause, genial wind! that even here dost  
 blow  
 Thy cheerful clarion; and from dust  
 and flame  
 The noonday pest, the night-enshrouded  
 blame,  
 Uplift and bear me where the wild flow-  
 ers grow  
 By many a golden dell-side sweet and  
 low,

Shrined in the sylvan Eden whence I  
 came.  
 O woodland water! O fair-whispering  
 pine!  
 Loved of the dryad none but I have  
 viewed!  
 O dew-lit glen, and lone glade, breathing  
 balm,  
 Receive and bless me, till this tumult  
 rude  
 Merged in your verdant solitudes di-  
 vine,  
 My soul once more hath found her an-  
 cient calm!

## VIOLETS.

"Rare wine of flowers."—FLETCHER.

A GUSTY wind o'ersweeps the garden  
close,  
And, where the jonquil, with the white-  
rod glows,  
Riots like some rude hoyden uncon-  
trolled.  
But here, where sunshine and coy  
shadows meet,  
Out gleam the tender eyes of violets  
sweet,  
Touched by the vapory noontide's  
fleeting gold.

What subtlest perfume floats serenely up!  
Ethereal wine that brims each delicate  
cup,

Rifted by viewless Ariels of the air,  
And lo! methinks from out these fairy  
flowers

Rise the strange shades of half forgotten  
hours.

Pale, tearful, mute, and yet, O  
heaven, how fair!

Yea, fair and marvellous, gliding gently  
nigh.

Some with raised brows and eyes of con-  
stancy.

Fixed with fond meanings on a goal  
above.

And some faint shades of weary, droop-  
ing grace.

Each with a nameless pathos on its face,  
Breathing of heart-break and sad  
death of love.

Slowly they vanish! while these odors  
steep

Spirit and sense, as if in waves of sleep,  
Mysterious and Lethean; languid  
streams

Flowing through realms of twilight  
thought apart.

Whereon the half-closed petals of the  
heart

Pulse flower-like o'er a whispering  
tide of dreams:—

Nor wakes the soul to outward sound or  
sight,

Till, noonday beams declining, warm  
and light,

A wood-breeze fans the dreamer's  
forehead calm;

Who feels as one long wrapped from  
pain and drouth,

By magic dreams dreamed in the fervid  
south,

Beneath the golden shadows of the  
palm.



## BY THE GRAVE OF HENRY TIMROD.

WHEN last we parted — thy frail hand  
in mine —

Above us smiled September's passion-  
less sky,

And touched by fragrant airs, the hill-  
side pine

Thrilled in the mellow sunshine ten-  
derly;

So rich the robe on nature's slow de-  
cay,

We scarce could deem the winter tide  
was near,

Or lurking death, masked in imperial  
grace;

Alas! that autumn day

Drew not more close to winter's empire  
drear

Than thou, my heart! to meet grief  
face to face!

I clasped thy tremulous hand, nor  
marked how weak

Its answering grasp; and if thine eyes  
did swim

In unshed tears, and on thy fading cheek  
Rested a nameless shadow, gaunt and  
dim. —

My soul was blind; fear had not  
touched her sight

To awful vision: so, I bade thee go.

Careless, and tranquil as that treach-  
erous morn;

Nor dreamed how soon the blight

Of long-implanted seeds of care would  
throw

Their nightshade flowers above the  
springing corn.

Since then, full many a year hath risen  
and set,

With spring-tide showers, and au-  
tumn pomps unfurled

O'er gorgeous woods, and mountain walls  
of jet —

While love and loss, alternate, ruled  
the world;

Till now once more we meet — my  
friend and I —

Once more, once more — and thus, alas!  
we meet —

Above, a rayless heaven; beneath, a  
grave;

Oh, Christ! and dost thou lie  
Neglected here, in thy worn burial-  
sheet?

Friend! were there none to shield  
thee, none to save?

Ask of the winter winds — scarce colder  
they

Than that strange land — thy birth-  
place and thy tomb:

Ask of the sombre cloud-wracks trooping  
gray,

And grim as hooded ghosts at stroke  
of doom;

At least, the winds, though chill,  
with gentler sweep

Seem circling round and o'er thy place  
of rest,

While the sad clouds, as clothed in  
tenderer guise,

Do lowly bend, and weep

O'er the dead poet, in whose living  
breast

Dumb nature found a voice, how  
sweet and wise!

Once more we meet, once more — my  
friend and I —

But ah! his hand is dust, his eyes  
are dark;

Thy merciless weight, thou dread mor-  
tality,

From out his heart hath crushed the  
latest spark

Of that warm life, benignly bright  
and strong;

Yet no; we have *not* met — my friend  
and I —

Ashes to ashes in this earthly prison!  
Are these, O child of song,

Thy glorious self, heir of the stars and  
sky?

*Thou* art not here, not *here*, for thou  
hast risen!

Death gave thee wings, and lo! thou  
hast soared above

All human utterance and all finite  
thought;

Pain may not hound thee through that  
realm of love,

Nor grief, wherewith thy mortal days  
were fraught,

Load thee again — nor vulture want,  
that fed

Even on thy heart's blood, wound thee;  
idle, then,

Our bitter sorrowing; what though  
bleak and wild

Rests thine uncrowned head?

Known art thou now to angels and to  
men —

Heaven's saint and earth's brave  
singer undefiled.

Even as I spake in broken under-breath  
The winds drooped lifeless; faintly

struggling through

The heaven-bound pall, which seemed a  
pall of death,

One cordial sunbeam cleft the opening  
blue;

Swiftly it glanced, and settling, softly  
shone

O'er the grave's head; in that same in-  
stant came

From the near copse a bird-song half  
divine;

“Heart,” said I, “hush thy moan,

List the bird's singing, mark the heaven-born flame,  
 God-given are these — an omen and a sign!"

In the bird's song an omen *his* must live!

In the warm glittering of that golden beam,

A sign his soul's majestic hopes survive,  
 Raised to fruition o'er life's weary dream.

So now I leave him, low, yet, restful here;

So now I leave him, high-exalted, far  
 Beyond all memory of earth's guilt or guile;

Hark! 'tis his voice of cheer,  
 Dropping, methinks, from some mysterious star;

His face I see, and on his face — a smile!

◆  
 SONNET.

As one who strays from out some shadowy glade,  
 Fronting a lurid noontide, stern, yet bright,

O'er mart and tower, and castellated height,

Shrinks slowly backward, dazed and half afraid —

So I, whose household gods their stand have made

Far from the populous city's life and light,

Its roar of traffic and its stormy might,  
 Shrink as I pass beyond my woodland shade.

The wordy conflict, the tempestuous din  
 Of these vast capitals, on ear and brain  
 Beat with the loud, reiterated swell  
 Of one fierce strain of passion and of sin,  
 Strange as in nightmare dreams the mad refrain

Of some wild chorus of the vaults of Hell.

ARIEL.

"My dainty Ariel." — *Tempest*.

A VOICE like the murmur of doves,  
 Soft lightning from eyes of blue;  
 On her cheek a flush like love's  
 First delicate, rosebud hue;

Bright torrents of hazel hair,  
 Which, glittering, flow and float  
 O'er the swell of her bosom fair,  
 And the snows of her matchless throat;

Lithe limbs of a life so fine,  
 That their rhythmical motion seems  
 But a part of the grace divine  
 Of the music of haunted dreams;

Low gurgling laughter, as sweet  
 As the swallow's song 't' the South,  
 And a ripple of dimples that, dancing,  
 meet  
 By the curves of a perfect mouth;

O creature of light and air!  
 O fairy sylph o' th' sun!  
 Hearts whelmed in the tidal gold of her hair  
 Rejoice to be *no* undone!

◆  
 SONNET.

THE glorious star of morning would we blame

Because it burns not on the front  
 of night?

Or the calm evening planet, that her light

Foretells not sunrise, with its herald-flame?

All things that are should subtly own  
 the same

Eternal law! the stars shine on aright,  
 Each in his sphere; the souls of Love  
 and Might

Their separate bounds of grace or grandeur claim;

Not on the low or lofty, great or small,  
Should justice fix for judgment; the  
true soul,  
Which sways its own world in serene  
control,  
Highest or humblest — such the Master's  
call  
Shall summon upward, with its deep  
"well done,"  
And the just Father crown his faith-  
ful son!

## THE CLOUD-STAR.

## A FABLE.

FAR up within the tranquil sky,  
Far up it shone;  
Floating, how gently, silently,  
Floating alone!

A sunbeam touched it's loftier side  
With deepening light:  
Then to its inmost soul did glide,  
Divinely bright.

The cloud transfigured to a star,  
Thro' all its frame  
Throbbled in the fervent heavens afar,  
One pulse of flame:

One pulse of flame, which inward turned,  
And slowly fed  
On its own heart, that burned, and  
burned,  
'Till almost dead,

The cloud still imaged as a star,  
Waned up the sky;  
Waned slowly, pallid, ghost-like, far,  
Wholly to die;

But die so grandly in the sun —  
The noonfire's breath —  
Methinks the glorious death it won,  
Life! life! not death!

Meanwhile a million insect things  
Crawl on below,  
And gaudy worms on fluttering wings  
Flit to and fro;

Blind to that cloud, which grown a star,  
Divinely bright,  
Waned in the deepening heavens afar,  
Till — lost in light!

## SWEETHEART, GOOD-BYE!

## A SONG.

SWEETHEART, good-bye! Our varied day  
Is closing into twilight gray,  
And up from bare, bleak wastes of sea  
The north-wind rises mournfully;  
A solemn prescience, strangely drear,  
Doth haunt the shuddering twilight air;  
It fills the earth, it chills the sky —  
Sweetheart, good-bye!

Sweetheart, good-bye! Our joys are  
passed,  
And night with silence comes at last;  
All things must end, yea, — even love —  
Nor know we, if reborn above,  
The heart-blooms of our earthly prime  
Shall flower beyond these bounds of time.  
"Ah! death alone is sure!" we cry —  
Sweetheart, good-bye!

Sweetheart, good-bye! Through mists  
and tears  
Pass the pale phantoms of our years,  
Once bright with spring, or subtly strong  
When summer's noontide thrilled with  
song;  
Now wan, wild-eyed, forlornly bowed,  
Each rayless as an autumn cloud  
Fading on dull September's sky —  
Sweetheart, good-bye!

Sweetheart, good-bye! The vapors rolled  
Athwart yon distant, darkening wold  
Are types of what our world doth know  
Of tenderest loves of long ago;  
And thus, when all is done and said,  
Our life lived out, our passion dead,  
What can their wavering record be  
But tinted mists of memory?  
Oh! clasp and kiss me ere we die —  
Sweetheart, good-bye!

## SONNET.

COMPOSED ON A MARCH MORNING IN  
THE WOODS.

THE winds are loud and trumpet-clear  
to-day;  
They seem to sound an onset, half in  
ire,  
Half in the wildness of a vague desire  
To force spring's fairy vanguard to de-  
lay;  
For here, methinks, worn winter stands  
at bay,  
Yet stands how vainly! spring-time's  
subtlest fire  
Melts his cold heart to nothingness,  
while nigher  
Draw April hosts, and rearward powers  
of May —  
All maiden ventures, concords of sweet  
air,  
Stealing as dawn steals gently on the  
world;  
Breezes, balm-laden, blown from dis-  
tant seas,  
With armies of blush-roses, dew-im-  
pearled,  
Till Earth reclaimed from winter's grim  
despair  
Blooms as once bloomed the fair Hes-  
perides.

## FRIDA AND HER POET.

A BRAVE young poet born in days of Eld,  
Dwelt 'mid the frozen Northlands; he  
beheld,  
And wondering, sung the marvels of the  
ice,  
The swirl of snow-flakes, and the quaint  
device  
Wrought on the fir-trees by the glittering  
sleet;  
And loved on stormy heights, cloud-girt,  
to greet  
The gray ger-falcon towering o'er the  
sea;  
To watch the waves, and mark the cloud-  
drifts flee,

Big with the wrath of tempests; yet his  
heart,  
Soft as the inner rose-leaves of the  
spring,  
Rich with young life, and love's sweet  
blossoming,  
Too soon, alas! from life and love did  
part:  
Veiled was the fate that smote him;  
unaware  
What sudden, blasting doom had drawn  
so near,  
A strange blight breathed upon him, and  
he died!

On earth to die, in heaven be glorified,  
Such was the Minstrel's portion; still he  
went  
Through all the heavenly courts in dis-  
content  
And sombre grief, the pathos of his  
woe  
Rising at times to such wild overflow  
As forced its wailful utterance into  
song.  
That passionate rush of music, the  
heart's wrong  
Set to the sweetness of harmonious  
chords,  
The All-Father, Odin, o'er the clash of  
swords,  
And din of heroes feasting at the  
boards  
Of loud Valhalla, heard: thereon he  
sought  
This lonely soul, in highest heaven o'er-  
fraught  
With mortal memories. "Wherefore-  
lift'st thou here,"  
The All-Father asked, "these measures  
of despair?"  
"Because my mortal Love," the Poet  
said,  
"With time grows gray and wrinkled;  
on her head,  
So golden bright in youth's benignant  
prime,  
Chill frosts of age have left their hoary  
rime;

Her eyes are dimmed, her soft cheeks'  
 rosy red  
 Hath with the flowers of many a spring-  
 time fled;  
 And so when Heaven shall claim her —  
 ah! the pain! —  
 I shall not know mine earthly love  
 again!"

To whom the God, "But doth she love  
 thee still?"  
 "Her love, like mine, nor years, nor  
 change can kill."  
 The Minstrel answered: "Faith, a cease-  
 less shower,  
 Keeps fair and bright our love's immac-  
 ulate flower."  
 "I loose thy heavenly bonds, — I bid  
 thee go!"  
 The All-Father cried, "and seek thy  
 Love below!"  
 To earth he came: drear waste and flow-  
 ery lea  
 Beheld his search 'mid fettered folk and  
 free;  
 Yet all his toils but brought the direful  
 stress  
 Of lone heart-yearning, grief and wear-  
 ness,  
 Till hope died out and all his soul was  
 dark.

At last, when aimless as an autumn leaf  
 Borne on November's idle winds afar,  
 He roamed a sea-beach wild, by moon or  
 star  
 Unlighted in its dreariest hour of grief  
 And desolate longing, on his eyes a  
 spark  
 Of tiny radiance through the clouded  
 night  
 Flashed from a cottage window on a  
 height,  
 Next the dim billows of the moaning  
 main.

There broke a sudden lightning on his  
 brain  
 Of prescient expectation, — then, before

Its glow could fade, he trod the cottage  
 floor,  
 And saw in tattered raiment, wan and  
 dead,  
 An ancient withered woman on a  
 bed,  
 Of whom a crone, as shrunk almost as  
 she,  
 Said with drawn lips and blinking  
 wearily  
 "Lo! here thine old Love! Hast thou  
 come so far  
 To find how cares may blight us, death  
 may mar?"  
 As ebbs a flood-tide, so his eager breath  
 Sank slowly. "Oh, the awful front of  
 death!"  
 He moaned. "Yet wherefore shudder?  
 Thou, my love,  
 Art precious still; nor shalt thou move  
 above,  
 An alien soul, albeit no longer fleet,  
 Nor fair, thou roam'st through Heaven  
 with tottering feet,  
 Bent, aged form, and face bedimmed by  
 tears;  
 I only ask to *know* thee, while the years  
 Eternal roll!"

He bids a last farewell  
 To this world's life, again prepared to  
 dwell  
 On heights celestial, in whose golden  
 airs  
 The heart, at least, shall shed earth's  
 wintry cares,  
 And blooming, breathe the vernal heats  
 of Heaven.

Twice ransomed soul! thou spirit that  
 hast striven  
 With countless ills, and conquered all  
 thy foes,  
 Rise with the might of morning, the  
 repose  
 Of moonlit night, and entering Heaven  
 re —  
 both meet thee by the



With smiling brow, and gently parted lips,  
 And eyes wherein no vestige of eclipse  
 From pain, or death, or any evil thing,  
 Lies darkly, but whose passionate  
 triumphing,  
 In peace attained, and true love crowned  
 at last,  
 Hath such rare joy and sweetness round  
 her cast,  
 She seems an angel on the heights of  
 bliss.  
 And yet a mortal maid 'twere heaven  
 to kiss!

To whom the singer, in a voice that  
 seems  
 Vague, and half-muffled in the mist of  
 dreams:—  
 "Art thou the little Frida that I knew  
 So long—ah! long ago? Thine eyes  
 are blue,  
 Deep blue like hers, and brimmed with  
 tender dew,  
 Through which love's starlight smiles—  
 art thou, in sooth,  
 The sweet, true-hearted Frida of my  
 youth?"

She drew more closely to the poet's side,  
 And nestling her small hand in his,  
 replied,  
 As half in tremulous wonder, half  
 delight:—  
 "I am thy little Frida, in thy sight  
 Fair once, and well beloved—Ah me!  
 ah me!  
 Hast thou forgotten?" "Nay; but  
 whose" (quoth he.)  
 "Yon withered corse, on which I gazed  
 below,  
 With pale shrunk limbs, and furrowed  
 face of woe?  
 Thy corse, thy face, they told me!"  
 "Yea, but know,  
 O Love! that earth, and things of earth,  
 are past:  
 That here, where, soul to soul, we meet  
 at last,

The merciful gods have made this wise  
 decree:—  
*Love, in heaven's tongue, means immor-  
 tality*  
*Of youth and joy; then, wheresoe'er we*  
 go,  
 Loving and loved through these high  
 courts divine,  
 Mine eyes eternal youth shall drink from  
 thine;  
 And thou forevermore shalt find in  
 me  
 The tender maid who walked the world  
 with thee,  
 Thy little Frida, loved so long ago!"

—◆—  
 PRÆEXISTENCE.

WHILE sauntering through the crowded  
 street,  
 Some half-remembered face I meet,  
 Albeit upon no mortal shore  
 That face, methinks, hath smiled before.  
 Lost in a gay and festal throng,  
 I tremble at some tender song—  
 Set to an air whose golden bars  
 I must have heard in other stars.  
 In sacred aisles I pause to share  
 The blessings of a priestly prayer—  
 When the whole scene which greets mine  
 eyes  
 In some strange mode I recognize  
 As one whose every mystic part  
 I feel prefigured in my heart.  
 At sunset, as I calmly stand,  
 A stranger on an alien strand—  
 Familiar as my childhood's home  
 Seems the long stretch of wave and  
 foam.  
 One sails toward me o'er the bay,  
 And what he comes to do and say

I can foretell. A prescient lore  
Spirits from some life outlived of yore.

O swift, instinctive, startling gleams  
Of deep soul-knowledge! not as *dreams*

For aye ye vaguely dawn and die,  
But oft with lightning certainty

Pierce through the dark, oblivious brain,  
To make old thoughts and memories  
plain —

Thoughts which perchance must travel  
back  
Across the wild, bewildering track

Of countless æons; memories far,  
High-reaching as yon pallid star,

Unknown, scarce seen, whose flickering  
grace  
Faints on the outmost rings of space!

## SONNET.

TO ———

FAIR Muse, beloved of all, thou art no  
high

Imperious goddess of the mount or  
main.

But a sweet maiden of the pastoral  
plain.

To whom the hum of bees, the west  
wind's sigh,

The lapse of waters murmuring tran-  
quilly,

Come, like soft music of a May-tide  
dream.

Yet, times there are when some imperial  
theme.

Born of a stormy sunset's marvellous  
sky.

And heralded by thunder and fierce  
flame,

Sweeps o'er thy vision with a mien sub-  
lime,

And mighty voices, calling on thy  
name:

Then dost thou rise, exultant, thrilled,  
inspired,

Thy song a clarion lay that stirs our  
time,

Hot from the soul some secret god hath  
fired!

## A THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW.

I SAT within my tranquil room;

The twilight shadows sank and rose  
With slowly flickering motions, waved  
Grotesquely through the dusk repose;  
There came a sudden thought to me,  
Which thrilled the spirit, flushed the  
brow —

A dream of what our world would be  
A thousand years from now!

If science on her heavenward search,  
Rolling the stellar charts apart,  
Or delving hour by hour to win  
The secrets of earth's inmost heart —  
If that her future apes her past,  
To what new marvels men must bow,  
Marvels of land, and air, and sea,  
A thousand years from now!

If empires hold their wonted course,  
And blind republics will not stay  
To count the cost of laws which lead  
Unerring to the State's decay —  
What changes vast of realm and rule,  
The low upraised, the proud laid low,  
Shall greet the unborn ages still,  
A thousand years from now!

Our creeds may change with mellowed  
times

Of nobler hope, and love increased,  
And some new Advent flood the world  
In glory from the haunted East —  
While souls on loftier heights of faith  
May mark the mystic pathway grow  
Clearer between their stand and heaven's,  
A thousand years from now!

These things *may be!* but what, per-  
force,

*Must* with the ruthless epochs pass?  
The millions' breath, the centuries'  
pomp,

Sure as the wane of flowers or grass;  
The earth so rich in tombs to-day,  
There scarce seems space for death to  
sow.

Who, who shall count her churchyard  
wealth

A thousand years from now?

And we — poor waifs! whose life-term  
seems,

When matched with *after* and *before*,  
Brief as a summer wind's, or wave's,

Breaking its frail heart on the shore,  
We — human toys — that Fate sets up  
To smite, or — spare I marvel how  
These souls shall fare, in what strange  
sphere.

A thousand years from now?

Too vague, too faint for mortal ken

That far, phantasmal future lies;  
But sweet! one sacred truth I read,  
Just kindling in your tear-dimmed  
eyes,

That states may rise, and states may set,  
With age earth's tottering pillars bow,  
But hearts like ours can ne'er forget,  
And though we know not *where*, nor  
*how*,

Our conscious love shall blossom yet,  
A thousand years from now!

SONNET.

I stood in twilight by the winter's sea;  
The spectral tides with hollow, hungry  
roar.

Broke massed and mighty on the shrink-  
ing shore.

The sea-birds wailed; the foam flew wild  
and free.

Ruthless as fate, upborne victoriously.

A fierce wind clove the billows urged  
afar

With vengeful rhythm toward the west-  
ern star,

Just risen beyond a gaunt gray cypress  
tree.

Then twilight waned in cloud-descend-  
ing night,

The sole star died, as if some phantom  
hand

Wiped out its radiance; in the void pro-  
found

The wind and waters (blended in one  
sound,

Awful, mysterious), with invisible might  
Thrilled the blank heavens, and smote  
the affrighted strand!

THUNDER AT MIDNIGHT.

At midnight wakening, through my  
startled brain

The sudden thunder crashed a chord of  
pain;

I rose, and, awe-struck, hearkened.  
Overhead

In one long, loud, reverberant peal of  
dread,

Ceaseless it rolled, till as a sea of fire,  
The climax gained, must wave by wave  
retire;

So, half-reluctant, up the heights of  
space

The reflux thunder softened into grace,

Its deep, harsh menace changed to mur-  
murs low

As the lost south wind's, muffled in the  
snow;

Waning through whisperous echoes less  
and less

Till the last echo sleeps in gentleness.

Thus 'minded am I of that law of old  
Which down the slopes of awful Sinai  
rolled,

Smote men with judgment terrors; yet,  
 at last,  
 The lightning flame and mystic tumult  
 passed,  
 Lapsed down the ages, echoing less and  
 less  
 Jehovah's wrath, till, changed to tender-  
 ness,  
 The vengeful law, which once man's  
 faith sufficed,  
 Melts into mercy on the heart of Christ!



## ON THE DEATH OF CANON KINGSLEY.

MORTALS there are who seem, all over,  
 flame,  
 Vitalized radiance, keen, intense, and  
 high,  
 Whose souls, like planets in a dominant  
 sky,  
 Burn with full forces of eternity:

Such was his soul, and such the light  
 which came  
 From that pure heaven he lived in; ho-  
 liest worth  
 Of will and work was his, to brighten  
 earth,  
 Heal its foul wounds, and beautify its  
 dearth.

He dwelt in clear white purity apart,  
 Yet walked the world; through many a  
 sufferer's door  
 He shone like morning; comfort  
 streamed before  
 His footsteps; on the feeble and the poor

He lavished the rich spikenard of his  
 heart.  
 Christ's soldier! To his trumpet-call he  
 sprung,  
 Eager, elate; valiant of pen and tongue,  
 Grand were the words he spake, the  
 songs he sung.

Still, hero-priest! born out of thy due  
 time —  
 Thou should'st have lived when on thine  
 England's sod  
 Giants of faith and seers of freedom trod,  
 Daring all things to break the oppressor's  
 rod.

Great in thine own age, thou hadst been  
 sublime  
 In theirs — that age of fervent, fruitful  
 breath,  
 When, scorning treachery, and defying  
 death,  
 Her true knights girt their loved Eliza-  
 beth,

Seeing on her the centuries' hopes were  
 set;  
 Then hadst thou ranged with Raleigh  
 land and sea,  
 Bible and sword in hand, gone forth with  
 Leigh,  
 The tyrant smote, the heathen folk made  
 free!

Yea! but to God and grace thou hast  
 paid thy debt,  
 In measure scarce less glorious and com-  
 plete  
 Than theirs who bearded on his chosen  
 seat  
 The bloody Antichrist; or, fleet to fleet,  
 Thundered through storms of battle-  
 wrack and fire  
 At Britain's Salamis; \* the heroic strain  
 Ran purpling all thy nature like a vein  
 Oped from God's heart to thine; the lof-  
 tiest plane

Of thought and action, purpose and desire  
 Thou trod'st on triumphing; thy Vi-  
 king's face  
 Showed granite-willed, yet softened into  
 grace  
 By effluence of good deeds, the angelic  
 race

\* Alluding to the defeat of the "Invincible Armada."

Of prayers to prompt, and aid them!  
 Fare thee well,  
 Clear spirit and strong! thy life-work  
 nobly done,  
 Shines beautiful as some unsetting sun  
 O'er arctic summers; chords of victory  
 run  
 Even through the mournful boom of thy  
 deep funeral knell!

—◆—  
 WHEN ALL HAS BEEN SAID AND  
 DONE.

TO RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.

(In reply to his poem called "Wishing and  
 Having.")

"Perhaps it will all come right at last;  
 It may be, when all is done,  
 We shall be together in some good world,  
 Where to *wish* and to *have* are one."  
 —STODDARD.

O FRIEND! be sure that a spirit came,  
 In the gloom of your saddened hour,  
 To plant that hope in your hopeless heart,  
 Like the seed of an Eden flower.  
 The seed may rest in your brooding  
 breast,  
 Half stifled in cold and night.  
 Or be only felt as a yearning dim  
 Toward comforting peace and light;  
 But 'twill burst some day into perfect  
 bloom.  
 And fruition be brightly won;  
 For the earth-life fades like a dream o'  
 the dark  
 When all has been said and done!

The earth-life fades in its sin and pain;  
 But whatever of sweet and pure  
 Breathed over its pallor and flushed its  
 gloom,  
 Surviveth for evermore.  
 O, not as the ghost of a mortal joy,  
 But as Joy herself from the dead  
 Upraised to the clear, calm courts of  
 Heaven.  
 With a halo around her head;

'Tis only the vile and the sad shall die  
 With the wane of an earthly sun,  
 And pass like a vision as man awakes  
 When all has been said and done!

Do you think you have lost your days  
 for aye  
 In the heart of the woods of spring,  
 By that seaside town that is glimpsed  
 through mist,  
 Like the white of a petrel's wing?  
 Do you think that the patter of tiny feet  
 Shall never come back again,  
 And that those whom the rage of Death  
 had killed  
 Are in sooth forever slain?  
 Look up! look up! as the hope com-  
 mands,  
 From the ruth of the angels won;  
 The earth-woe fades like a dream o' the  
 night,  
 When all has been said and done!

O God, we wander in devious ways,  
 Till the end comes, stern and stark;  
 We lift our voices of useless wail  
 From the depths of the hollow dark;  
 Yet the Christ is there, though we see  
 him not.  
 But only when sorrow lowers  
 Wildest, we feel through the hollow  
 dark  
 A strange, warm hand in ours;  
 And a voice is heard in the music of  
 heaven,  
 Saying: "Courage and hope. O,  
 son!"  
 The earth-woe fades like a dream o' the  
 night,  
 When all has been said and done!

—◆—  
 THE VISION IN THE VALLEY.

AMID the loveliest of all lonely vales,  
 Couched in soft silences of mountain  
 calm,  
 And broadly shadowed both by pine  
 and palm,

O'er which a tremulous golden vapor sails  
Forever, though unbreathed on by a  
breeze

Or any wind of heaven, serenely sleeps  
A lucid fountain, from whose fathom-  
less deeps

Come murmurs stranger than the twi-  
light sea's.

That golden vapor, buoyed without a  
breath,

Tints to its own fair bloom the limpid  
tide,

Through which erewhile the solemn  
vision rose

Of a calm face, benignly glorified

By all we dream or yearn for of pure  
rest,

Profound, Lethæan, passionless repose.

Still through the silence mystic mur-  
murs sighed,

Fraught with far meanings, vague and  
unexpressed,

Till at the last, upbreathing, weird  
and near,

The voice of that pale phantom thrilled  
mine ear —

“Behold the face, the marvellous face,  
of Death!”

—◆—  
THE ARCTIC VISITATION.

SOME air-born genius, with malignant  
mouth,

Breathed on the cold clouds of an Arctic  
zone—

Which o'er long wastes of shore and  
ocean blown

Swept threatening, vast, toward the  
amazed South:

Over the land's fair form at first there  
stole

A vanward host of vapors, wild and  
white;

Then loomed the main cloud cohorts,  
massed in might,

Till earth lay corpse-like, reft of life and  
soul;

Death-wan she lay, 'neath heavens as  
cold and pale;

All nature drooped toward darkness and  
despair;

The dreary woodlands, and the ominous  
air

Were strangely haunted by a voice of  
wail.

The woeful sky slow passionless tears did  
weep,

Each shivering rain-drop frozen ere it fell;  
The woodman's axe rang like a muffled  
knell;

Faintly the echoes answered, fraught  
with sleep.

The dawn seemed eved; noon, dawn  
eclipsed of grace;

The evening, night; and tender night be-  
came

A formless void, through which no starry  
flame

Touched the veiled splendor of her sor-  
rowful face;

Like mourning nuns, sad-robed, fune-  
real, bowed,

Day followed day; the birds their qua-  
vering notes

Piped here and there from feeble, quer-  
ulous throats.

Fierce cold beneath — above, one riftless  
cloud

Wrapped the mute world — for now all  
winds had died —

And, locked in ice, the fettered forests  
gave

No sign of life; as silent as the grave  
Gloomed the dim, desolate landscape far  
and wide.

Gazing on these, from out the mist one  
day

I saw, a shadow on the shadowy sky,  
What seemed a phantom bird, that fal-  
tering nigh,

Perched by the roof-tree on a withered  
spray;

With drooping breast he stood, and  
 drooping head;  
 This fateful time had wrought the minstrel  
 wrong;  
 Even as I gazed, our southland lord of  
 song  
 Dropped through the blasted branches,  
 breathless, dead!

Yet chillier grew the gray, world-haunting  
 shade.  
 Through which, methought, quick,  
 tremulous wings were heard;  
 Was it the ghost of that heartbroken bird  
 Bound for a land where sunlight cannot  
 fade?

—◆—  
 THE WIND OF ONSET.

With potent north winds rushing  
 swiftly down,  
 Blended in glorious chant, on yester-  
 night  
 Old Winter came with locks and beard  
 of white,  
 The hoarfrost glittering on his ancient  
 crown:

He sent his icy breathings through the  
 pane,  
 He raved and rattled at the close-shut  
 doors,  
 Then waned with hollow murmur down  
 the moors,  
 To rise, revive and sweep the world  
 again.

The chorus of great winds which gird  
 him round  
 Hold many voices — the deep trumpet's  
 swell,  
 The air harp's mournful burden of fare-  
 well,  
 The fife's shrill tones, the clarion's  
 silvery sound:

But o'er the roof-tree, 'round the gable  
 rings  
 Loudest his wind of onset, hour by hour,

Till a new sense of almost rapturous  
 power  
 Comes on the mighty waftage of his  
 wings;

Sense of fresh hope and faith's re-  
 kindled glow,  
 The awakened aim, the brain drawn  
 tense and high,  
 To shoot its fiery thoughts against the  
 sky,  
 Like arrows launched from some deft  
 archer's bow!

All latent forces of our being start  
 To marshalled order, ranged in battle  
 line,  
 While the roused life-blood with a thrill  
 divine  
 Runs tingling thro' the chambers of  
 the heart.

Summer is rich with dreams of languid  
 tone;  
 October sunsets feed the soul with  
 light;  
 But give *me* winter's war wind in his  
 might,  
 O'er the scourged lands and turbulent  
 oceans blown.

—◆—  
 THE VISIT OF MAHMOUD BEN SU-  
 LEIM TO PARADISE.

BENEATH the shadow of a breezeless  
 palm  
 Mahmoud Ben Suleim, in the evening  
 calm,  
 Sat, with his gravely meditative eyes  
 Turned on the waning wonder of the  
 skies;  
 What time beside him paused a brother  
 sage,  
 Whose flowing locks, like his, were white  
 with age:  
 His gaze a half-veiled fire, seemed sadly  
 cast  
 Inward, to scan the records of his past —

Perchance the past of man — and thence  
to draw  
From far experience, sanctified by awe  
Of God's mysterious ways, some hint to  
tell  
Who of the dead in heaven and who in  
hell  
Dwelt now in endless bliss or endless  
bale.

Thus, while he mused, the old man's  
face grew pale  
With stringent memories; on his labor-  
ing thought  
Vague speculations, dim and doubtful,  
wrought  
From out the fragments of the vanished  
years.  
At length he said : " Ben Suleim, lend  
thine ears  
To that I fain would ask thee. Thou  
art wise  
In sacred lore, in pure philosophies;  
So tell me now thine inmost thought of  
heaven  
And heaven's fair habitants."

" Whoe'er hath striven,"  
Ben Suleim answered, " to the extremest  
verge  
Of spiritual power, across death's dreary  
surge  
Hath passed to find the fathomless peace  
of God!"

" Yea," quoth the other, smiting on the  
sod  
His staff impatiently. " I know! I  
know!  
But who of all *we* have seen or loved  
below  
Think'st thou in Aidenn?"

Slowly from his lips,  
Wrapped by the smoke-wreaths in a  
half-eclipse,  
Ben Suleim's pipe was lowered: " My  
friend," said he,  
" Hark to this vision of eternity,

Which in the long-gone time of youth  
did seem  
To rise before me in a twilight dream.  
Methought the life on earth had passed  
away,  
That near me spread the new, immortal  
day  
Of Paradise; but yet mine eyes looked  
back  
On this our clouded world, and marked  
the track  
My waning life-course still left glimmer-  
ing there.  
Behold! all dues of funeral dole and  
prayer  
Mine heirs had paid me; through the  
cypress gloom  
I saw the glitter of my new-made  
tomb,  
Whereon so many a blazoned virtue  
shone,  
A blush seemed gathering o'er the har-  
dened stone,  
And I, albeit a spirit, flushed with  
shame.  
Nathless, just then to Eden gates I  
came,  
And, at the outmost wicket thundering  
loud,  
Summoned full soon an angel from the  
cloud  
Which girls those heavenly portals, blent  
with mist  
Of shifting rainbow arcs of amethyst,  
Who, somewhat harshly for an angel,  
said  
I knocked as if an hundred thousand  
dead,  
Not *one* poor soul, besieged the heavenly  
door.  
He raised his luminous hands, which  
hovered o'er  
For a brief moment, like a flash of stars,  
The sapphire brilliance of the circling  
bars,  
Then one by one unclosed them. En-  
tered in  
The realm celestial, safe from pain and  
sin,



I stretched at ease, with shadows cool  
and dim  
Floating about me, thus did question  
him:  
‘Fair Seraph, speak. Is not this land  
divine,  
Rife with pure souls, once faithful  
friends of mine?’  
‘Nay! be content if wandering here and  
there,  
Thou meet’st a *feve*—none in the loftiest  
sphere.’  
‘Where, then,’ I cried, ‘is holy Ibn  
Becár?’  
If not the highest he, surely not far  
Beneath the highest that clear spirit  
beams?’  
‘Ah! thou art muffled still in earthly  
dreams,’  
The angel answered. ‘If on *him* thou’dst  
call,  
*Pass downward*, for he’s not in Heaven  
at all!’  
‘Dread Allah! can it be? So just a man  
Walked not, methought, the streets of  
Ispahan.  
Morn after morn, year after year his  
feet,  
Alike in summer’s bloom and winter’s  
sleet,  
Bore him to worship in the sacred place;  
What righteous zeal burned hotly in his  
face!  
And when inspired his heavenly vows  
he made,  
Or ’neath the innermost mosque devoutly  
prayed,  
Why, even the roaring Dervish, robed  
and cowed,  
Shrank from those pious lungs, which  
almost howled  
Creation deaf. A saint we deemed him—  
one  
Pure as the snow, yet ardent as the  
sun.  
Who, not content with turning toward  
the light  
His own blest feet, must set on paths of  
right

All erring brethren!’ ‘True,’ the an-  
gel cried;  
‘But Ibn Becár, down to the day he  
died,  
Kept on his neighbor’s ways so keen an  
eye  
He lost at length his own straight course  
thereby;  
And though the purblind world hath  
guessed it not,  
*He* bides in Eblis’ kingdom; fierce and  
hot  
The waves of Hades roll above him  
now.’  
Amazed, I bowed my head, just whisper-  
ing low  
An ‘*Allah Kebur.*’ Next: ‘How fares  
it, then,’  
I asked, ‘with Hafiz, the wise scribe,  
whose pen  
Signed many a deed of gift, and scored  
his name  
High on the roll of charitable hearts?’  
Clear came the answer: ‘Mid thy  
public marts  
No soul more sordid strove with heaven  
to drive  
Its wicked bargains. Largely would he  
give  
To general charities; but, sooth to say,  
Whene’er he ’scaped the broad, bright  
gaze of day,  
He stamped with cruel heel the writhing  
poor.  
Would turn the perishing beggar from  
his door,  
And wring from friendless widows the  
last crust  
Saved for their half-starved children.  
God is just;  
So Hafiz dwells not here.’  
  
In faltering tone,  
As dropped from one who deals with  
things unknown,  
I questioned next: ‘Abdallah, he is  
saved?’  
‘Nay; for, albeit with seeming truth he  
braved

Temptation, and each wise and sacred  
     saw  
 Wrought from the precepts of our  
     prophet's law,  
 Fell soft as Hybla's honey from his  
     mouth,  
 Yet his whole nature withered in the  
     drouth  
 Of drear hypocrisy. By stealth he  
     bought  
 Strong waters of the Giaour, and nightly  
     sought  
 Oblivion from sweet opiates of the  
     South.  
 Sickness he feigned, to gain in these his  
     cure;  
 And once, that he might tipple more  
     and more.  
 Moved to a province rife with serpents  
     dread,  
 Because, by such as knew his wiles,  
     'twas said  
 He drank the poison of each treacher-  
     ous throat,  
 To seek in fiery wine an antidote.  
 Nathless, a serpent slew him, and his  
     home  
 Is far from ours.'  
     My thoughts began to roam  
 Vaguely, in loose disorder. Yet again:  
 'What of Kalkarri, he whose songs of  
     pain  
 And joy alike forever struck the key,  
 The under-note of golden purity,  
 Virtue his theme and heavenly love his  
     muse?'  
 'Thou fool and blind! Kalkarri could  
     not choose  
 But sing mellifluous verses; yet in him  
 The light of truth was always blurred  
     and dim.  
 A tireless trick of tinkling rhymes he  
     had,  
 And naught he cared what spirit, good  
     or bad,  
 O'erruled his lay. The good, perchance,  
     paid best;  
 Therefore he sang of heavenly joy and  
     rest,

But sang of that whereof he shall not  
     taste.'  
 'Just Allah!' sighed I, 'see what barren  
     waste  
 Drinks up my hopes. Since none of all  
     I named  
 Here for the sacred roll hath Allah  
     claimed,  
 I pray thee tell me *whom* his will hath  
     blessed.'  
 'Dost thou remember Saâdi?' 'What,  
     that wretch  
 Who shod the Bactrian camels—who  
     would fetch  
 Strange oaths from far to sow our whole-  
     some air  
 With moral poison?' 'True, the man  
     did swear,'  
 Confessed the Bright One, sadly. 'Yet  
     so strong  
 His penitent sorrow o'er the hateful  
     wrong  
 Done his own soul and Allah, and so  
     rife  
 With tireless effort his whole earnest  
     life  
 To smite the giant tempters in his soul,  
 To kill them outright, or with firm con-  
     trol  
 Hold them in native darkness chained  
     and cowed—  
 At last he conquered and our Lord al-  
     lowed  
 His weary soul to quaff the founts of  
     balm!'

Amazement held me dumb. Within  
     the palm  
 Waving above, just then a whispering  
     breeze  
 Rose, and passed up the long-ranked,  
     radiant trees  
 Which lined the hills of heaven. It  
     seemed a sigh  
 Born of soft Mercy's immortality  
 Wafted toward the throne! The Bright  
     One then,  
 Lifting his voice harmonious, spake  
     again:



*To light, at last, unerring, strong and  
fleet,  
In the deep calm which lies at Allah's  
feet!'" "*

—◆—  
*MY DAUGHTER.*

Thou hast thy mother's eyes, my child —  
Her deep dark eyes: the undefiled  
Sweetness which breathes around her  
mouth,  
A perfect rosebud of the south,  
And the broad brow, as smooth to-day  
As when on life's auspicious May  
I clasped her to an ardent breast  
With yearnings of divine unrest.

Thou hast thy mother's voice, as low  
And soft as happy winds that blow  
At springtime o'er the wild-bloom beds,  
When the blue harebells lift their heads  
To hearken to those strains of peace,  
And through the lustrous day's decrease  
Drink in the sunset-beams that float  
Downward from glittering airs remote.

Thou hast thy mother's heart, no less  
Than all her body's loveliness —  
A heart as firmly brave and true,  
O'er-brimming now with morning dew  
Of hopeful light as doth a flower;  
Yet strong to meet misfortune's hour,  
And for the sake of loving ruth  
Lie down and perish in its youth.

Child! child! so fair, so good thou art,  
Sometimes an awful pang my heart  
Pierces as thus I gaze on thee.  
Too rare a thing thou seem'st to be  
Long in this barren world to smile;  
Methinks, with many a heavenly wile,  
Unseen, but felt, the angels stray  
Near thee, to tempt thy soul away.

Oh! heed them not. **Why**  
cull  
My one sweet blossom?

Of just such spirits. Leave her here,  
Kind seraphs! our poor joys to share,  
Our griefs to brighten by her love;  
Pass on to your calm homes above,  
And thus in mercy spare to earth  
The angel of my heart and hearth.

'Tis strange, but yet so fresh and whole,  
So radiant in my brain and soul  
Doth this enchanting image dwell,  
This pure, unrivalled miracle  
Of maidenhood and modest grace,  
I vow that I behold her face,  
Hear her low tones, and mark her mien  
So gentle, virginal, serene,

Clearly, as if her voice and brow,  
In softest sooth, beguiled me now;  
As if, incarnate and benign,  
She placed her little hand in mine.  
And her long midnight tresses rare  
Were mingling with my snow-touched  
hair.  
And yet she only lives for me  
In golden realms of fantastic,  
A creature born of air and beam,  
The delicate darling of a dream.

—◆—  
*OUR "HUMMING-BIRD."*

Al! well I know the reason why  
They called her by that graceful name:  
She seems a creature born with wings,  
O'er which a rainbow spirit flings  
Fair hues of softly shifting flame;  
Light is she as the changeful air,  
Borne on gay humors everywhere,  
Bewitchingly.

Her soul hath seldom breathed a sigh;  
No hint of care hath ever stirred  
Her being; sunshine and the breeze  
Have been the fairy witnesses  
Of all those joys our happy bird  
from the golden fountains drawn  
unsullied as the dawn,  
So lavishly.

Full many a flower, just hovering nigh,  
 In life's broad garden, rife with sweets,  
 She deftly drains of nectar dew;  
 Then, sylph-like, sweeps o'er pathways  
     new

To taste some balmier bliss she meets;  
 Now flashing fast through myrtle  
     bowers,  
 Now clinging to red lips of flowers,  
     Capriciously.

Forbear, rash heart! forbear to try  
 Our bird to capture with your wiles,  
 For, lo! she glimmers like a beam

Of fancy, on from dream to dream:  
 Vain are a lover's tears or smiles  
 To check her flight bewildering,  
 To tame her soul, or chain her wing  
     Submissively.

Nay! let the dazzling fairy fly  
 From flower to flower, so gladly whirled;  
 Cruel it were her matchless light  
 By one rude touch to dim or blight,  
 To see her luminous pinions furled  
 In grosser airs than those which stray  
 Round the fresh rosebuds of the May,  
     Deliciously.

**LATER POEMS.**



## LATER POEMS

OF IMAGINATION, SENTIMENT, AND DESCRIPTION.

### UNVEILED.

I CANNOT tell when first I saw her face;  
Was it athwart a sunset on the sea,  
When the huge billows heaved tumultuously,  
Or in the quiet of some woodland place,  
    Wrapped by the shadowy boon  
Of breezeless verdures from the summer  
    noon?  
Or likelier still, in a rock-girdled dell  
Between vast mountains, while the  
    midnight hour  
    Blossomed above me like a shining  
    flower,  
Whose star-wrought petals turned the  
    fields of space  
To one great garden of mysterious light?

Vain! vain! I cannot tell  
When first the beauty and majestic  
    might  
Of her calm presence, bore my soul apart  
From all low issues of the grovelling  
    world;—  
About me their own peace and grandeur  
    furled, —  
    Filling the conscious heart  
With vague, sweet wisdom drawn from  
    earth or sky, —  
    Secrets that glance towards eternity,  
Visions divine, and thoughts ineffable!

But ever since that immemorial day,  
A steadfast flame hath burned in brain  
    and blood,  
    Urging me onward in the perilous  
    search

For sacred haunts our queenly mother  
    loves;  
    By field and flood,  
Thro' neighboring realms, and regions  
    far away,  
Have I not followed, followed where she  
    led,  
    Tracking wild rivers to their fountain  
    head,  
And wilder desert spaces, mournful,  
    vast,  
Where Nature, fronting her inscrutable  
    past,  
    Holds bleak communion only with the  
    dead;  
    Yearning meanwhile, for pinions like  
    a dove's,  
    To waft me further still,  
Beyond the compass of the unwinged  
    will;  
Yea; waft me northward, southward,  
    east, or west,  
    By fabled isles, and undiscovered  
    lands,  
    To where enthroned upon his moun-  
    tain-perch,  
    The sovereign eagle stands,  
Guarding the unfledged eaglets in their  
    nest,  
    Above the thunders of the sea and  
    storm?

Oh! sometimes by the fire  
Of holy passion, in me, all subdued,  
And melted to a mortal woman's mood,  
    Tender and warm, —  
She, from her goddess height,  
In gracious answer to my soul's desire,



Descending softly, lifts her Isis veil,  
To bend on me the untranslated light  
Of fathomless eyes, and brow divinely  
pale:

She lays on mine her firm, immortal  
hand;

And I, encompassed by a magical mist,  
Feel that her lips have kissed  
Mine eyes and forehead;—how the in-  
fluence fine

Of her deep life runs like Arcadian  
wine

Through all my being! How a moment  
pressed

To the large fountains of her opulent  
breast,

A rapture smites me, half akin to pain;  
A sun-flash quivering through white  
chords of rain!

Thenceforth, I walked  
The earth all-seeing;—not her stateliest  
forms

Alone engrossed me, nor her sounds of  
power:

Mountains and oceans, and the rage of  
storms;

Fierce cataracts hurled from awful steep  
to steep,

Or, the gray water-spouts, that whirling  
tower

Along the darkened bosom of the deep;  
But all fair, fairy forms: all vital things,  
That breathe or blossom 'midst our  
bounteous springs;

In sylvan nooks rejoicingly I met  
The wild rose and the violet;  
On dewy hill-slopes pausing, fondly  
talked

With the coy wind-flower, and the  
grasses brown,

That in a subtle language of their own  
(Caught from the spirits of the wan-  
dering breeze),

Quaintly responded; while the heavens  
looked down

As graciously on these  
Titanic growths, as on sublimer

things:

Of century-moulded continents, that  
benoek

Alike the earthquake's and the  
billows' shock

By Orient inlands and cold ocean  
capas!

The giant constellations rose and set:  
I knew them all, and worshipped all I  
knew;

Yet, from their empire in the pregnant  
blue,

Sweeping from planet-orbits to faint  
bars

Of nebulous cloud, beyond the range  
of stars,

I turned to worship with a heart as  
true,

Long mosses drooping from the cypress-  
tree:

The virginal vines that stretched re-  
motely dim,

From forest limb to limb:

Network of golden ferns, whose  
tracery weaves

In lingering twilights of warm August  
eves,

Ethereal frescoes, pictures fugitive,

Drawn on the flickering and fair-  
foliated wall

Of the dense forest, ere the night  
shades fall:

Rushes rock-tangled, whose mixed colors  
live

In the pure moisture by a fountain's  
brim;

The sylph-like reeds, wave-born, that  
to and fro

Move ever to the waters' rhythmic  
flow,

Blent with the humming of the wild-  
wood bee,

And the winds' under thrills of mystery:  
The twinkling "ground-stars," full of  
modest cheer,

Each her cerulean cup

In humble supplication lifting up,  
To catch whate'er the kindly heavens  
may give

Of flooded sunshine, or celestial dew;  
 And even when, self-poised in airy  
 grace,  
 Their phantom lightness stirs  
 Through glistening shadows of a secret  
 place  
 The silvery-tinted gossamers;  
 For thus hath Nature taught amid her  
 All, —  
 The complex miracles of land and sea,  
 And infinite marvels of the infinite air,  
 No life is trivial, no creation small!

Ever I walk the earth,  
 As one whose spiritual ear  
 Is strangely purged and purified to  
 hear  
 Its multitudinous voices; from the  
 shore  
 Whereon the savage Arctic surges roar,  
 And the stupendous bass of choral  
 waves  
 Thunders o'er "wandering graves,"  
 From warrior-winds whose viewless co-  
 horts charge



"Have I not followed, followed where she led,  
 Tracking wild rivers to their fountain head."

The banded mists through Cloudland's  
 vaporous dearth,  
 Pealing their battle bugles round the  
 marge  
 Of dreary fen and desolated moor;  
 Down to the ripple of shy woodland rills  
 Chanting their delicate treble 'mid the  
 hills,  
 And ancient hollows of the enchanted  
 ground, —  
 I pass with reverent thought,  
 Attuned to every tiniest trill of sound,  
 Whether by brook or bird  
 The perfumed air be stirred.  
 But most, because the unwearied strains  
 are fraught

With Nature's freedom in her happiest  
 moods,  
 I love the mock-bird's, and brown  
 thrush's lay,  
 The melted soul of May.  
 Beneath those matchless notes,  
 From jocund hearts upwelled to fervid  
 throats,  
 In gushes of clear harmony,  
 I seem, oft-times I seem  
 To find remoter meanings; the far tone  
 Of ante-natal music faintly blown  
 From out the misted realms of mem-  
 ory;  
 The pathos and the passion of a dream;  
 Or, broken fugues of a diviner tongue

That e'er hath chanted, since our earth  
 was young,  
 And o'er her peace-enamored solitudes  
 The stars of morning sudg!



*MUSCADINES.*

SOBER September, robed in gray and  
 dun,  
 Smiled from the forest in half-pensive  
 wise;  
 A misty sweetness shone in her mild  
 eyes.

And on her cheek a shy flush went and  
 came,  
 As flashing warm between  
 The autumnal leaves of slowly dying  
 green,

The sovereign sun  
 Tenderly kissed her; then (in ruthless  
 mood

For the vague fears of modest maiden-  
 hood)

Behold him gently, lovingly retire;  
 Beneath the foliaged screen,  
 Veiling his swift desire —

Even as a king, wed to some virgin  
 queen.

Might doom his sight to blissful, brief  
 eclipse.

After his tender lips  
 Had touched the maiden's trembling  
 soul to flame.

Through shine and shade,  
 Thoughtful I trod the tranquil forest  
 glade.

Up-glancing oft  
 To watch the rainless cloudlets, white  
 and soft,

Sail o'er the placid ocean of the sky.  
 The breeze was like a sleeping infant's  
 sigh,

Measured and low, or, in quick, palpi-  
 tant thrills

An instant swept the sylvan depths  
 apart

To pass and die  
 Far off, far off, within the shrouded  
 heart  
 Of immemorial hills,

Through shade and shine  
 I wandered, as one wanders in a dream,  
 Till, near the borders of a beauteous  
 stream

O'erhung by flower and vine,  
 I pushed the dense, perplexing boughs  
 aside.

To mark the temperate tide  
 Purpled by shadows of the Muscadine.

Reclining there at languid length I sank,  
 One idle hand outstretched beyond the  
 bank,

With careless grasp  
 The sumptuous globes of these rare  
 grapes to clasp.

Ah! how the ripened wild fruit of the  
 South

Melted upon my mouth!  
 Its magic juices through each captured  
 vein

Rose to the yielding brain,  
 Till, like the hero of an old romance,  
 Caught by the fays, my spirit lapsed  
 away.

Lost to the sights and sounds of mortal  
 day.

Lost to all earthly sights and sounds  
 was I,

But blithesomely,  
 As stirred by some new being's won-  
 drous dawn,

I heard about me, swift though gentily  
 drawn,

The footsteps of light creatures on the  
 grass.

Mine eyelids seemed to open, and I saw,  
 With joyance checked by awe,

A multitudinous company  
 Of such strange forms and faces, quaint,  
 or bright

With true Elysian light,  
 As once in fairy fantasies of eld

High-hearted poets through the wilds  
 beheld  
 Of shadowy dales and lone sea beaches  
 pass,  
 At spring-tide morn or holy hush of  
 night.

Then to an airy measure,  
 Low as the sea winds when the night at  
 noon  
 Clasps the frail beauty of an April  
 moon,  
 Through woven paces at soft-circling  
 leisure,  
 They glided with elusive grace adown  
 The forest coverts — all live woodland  
 things,  
 Black-eyed or brown,  
 Firm-footed or up-poised on changeful  
 wings,  
 Glinting about them 'mid the indolent  
 motion  
 Of billowy verdure rippling slow  
 As the long, languid underflow  
 Of some star-tranced, voluptuous South-  
 ern ocean.

The circle widened, and as flower-  
 wrought bands,  
 Stretched by incautious hands,  
 Break in the midst with noiseless wrench  
 asunder,  
 So brake the dancers now to form in  
 line  
 Down the deep glade — above the shift-  
 ing lights,  
 Through massive tree-boles, on majestic  
 heights;  
 The blossoming turf thereunder,  
 Whence, fair and fine,  
 Twinkling like stars that hasten to be  
 drawn  
 Close to the breast of dawn,  
 Shone, with their blue veins pulsing  
 fleet,  
 Innumerable feet,  
 White as the splendors of the milky  
 way,  
 Yet rosy warm as opening tropic day,

With lithe, free limbs of curvature di-  
 vine,  
 And dazzling bosoms of unvelled glow,  
 Save where the long, ethereal tresses  
 stray  
 Across their unimaginable snow.

One after one,  
 By sun-rays kissed or fugitive shades  
 o'errun,  
 All vision-like they passed me. First  
 there came  
 A Dryad coy, her sweet head bowed in  
 shame,  
 And o'er her neck and half-averted face  
 The faintest delicate trace  
 Of the charmed life-blood pulsing softly  
 pure.

Next, with bold footsteps, sure,  
 And proudly set, from her untrammelled  
 hills,  
 Fair-haired, blue-eyed, upon her lofty  
 head  
 A fragrant crown of leaves, purple and  
 red,  
 Chanting a lay clear as the mountain rills,  
 A frank-faced Oread turned on me  
 Her cloudless glances, laughter-lit and  
 free

As the large gestures and the liberal air  
 With which I viewed her fare  
 Down the lone valley land, —  
 Pausing betimes to wave her happy  
 hand

As in farewell; but ere her presence died  
 Wholly away,  
 Her voice of golden swell  
 Breathed also a farewell.

Farewell, farewell, the sylvan echoes  
 sighed,  
 From rock-bound summit to rich blos-  
 soming bay —  
 Farewell, farewell!

Fauns, satyrs flitted past me — the whole  
 race  
 Of woodland births uncouth —  
 Until I seemed, in sooth,  
 Far from the garish track

Of these loud days to have wandered,  
 joyful, back  
 Along the paths, beneath the crystal sky  
 Of long, long-perished Arcady.  
 But last of all, filling the haunted space  
 With odors of the flower-enameled tide,  
 Whose wavelets love through many a  
 secret place  
 Of the deep dell and breezeless bosk to  
 glide,  
 Stole by, lightsome and slim  
 As Dian's self in each swift, sinuous  
 limb,  
 Her arms outstretched, as if in act to  
 swim  
 The air, as erst the waters of her home,  
 A naid, sparkling as the fleckless foam  
 Of the cool fountain-head whereby she  
 dwells.

O'er her sloped shoulders and the pure  
 pink bud  
 Of either virginal breast is richly rolled  
 (O rare, miraculous flood!)  
 The torrent of her freed locks' shimmering  
 gold,  
 Through which the gleams of rainbow-  
 colored shells,  
 And pearls of moon-like radiance flash  
 and float  
 Round her immaculate throat.

Clothed in her beauty only wandered she,  
 'Mid the moist herbage to the streamlet's  
 edge,  
 Where, girt by silvery rushes and brown  
 sedge,  
 She faded slowly, slowly, as a star  
 Fades in the gloaming, on the bosom  
 bowed  
 Of some half-luminous cloud,  
 Above the wan, waste waters of the sea.  
 Then, sense and spirit fading inward too,  
 I slept oblivious; through the dim, dumb  
 hours,  
 Safely encoined on autumn leaves and  
 flowers,  
 I slept as sleep the unperturbed dead.

At length the wind of evening, keenly  
 chill,  
 Swept round the darkening hill;  
 Then throbbed the rush of hurried wings  
 o'erhead,  
 Blent with aerial murmurs of the pine,  
 Just whispering twilight. On my brow  
 the dew  
 Dropped softly, and I woke to all the low,  
 Strange sounds of twilight woods that  
 come and go  
 So fitfully; and o'er the sun's decline,  
 Through the green foliage flickering high,  
 Beheld, with dreamy eye,  
 Sweet Venus glittering in the stainless  
 blue.  
 . . . . .  
 Thus the day closed whereon I drank the  
 wine—  
 The liquid magic of the Muscadine.

—◆—  
 IN A SPRING GARDEN.

WHEN Heaven was stormy, Earth was  
 cold,  
 And sunlight shunned the wold and  
 wave,—  
 Thought burrowed in the churchyard  
 mould,  
 And fed on dreams that haunt the  
 grave:—  
 But now that Heaven is freed from strife,  
 And Earth's full heart with rapture  
 swells,  
 Thought soars the realms of endless life  
 Above the shining asphodels!  
 What flower that drinks the south wind's  
 breath,  
 What sparkling leaf, what Hebe-Morn,  
 But flouts the sullen graybeard, Death,  
 And laughs our Arctic doubts to scorn?  
 Pale scientist! scant of healthful blood,  
 Your ghostly tomes, one moment,  
 close;  
 Pluck freshness with a spring-time bud,  
 Find wisdom in the opening rose:

From toil which, blindly delving, gropes  
 When time but plays a juggler's part,  
 Ah go! and breathe the dew-lit hopes  
 That cluster round a violet's heart:

Mark the white lily whose sweet core  
 Hath many a wild-bee swarm enticed,  
 And draw therefrom a honeyed lore  
 Pure as the tender creed of Christ:

Yea! even the weed which upward holds  
 Its tiny ear, past bower and lawn,  
 A lovelier faith than yours enfolds,  
 Caught from the whispering lips of  
 dawn!

—◆—  
*IN DEGREE.*

THY life is full of motion, perfume,  
 grace;  
 Mine, a low blossom in a shaded place,  
 Whereto the zephyrs whisper, only they,  
 Through the long lapses of the lone-  
 some day.

Thy lordly genius blooms for all to see  
 On the clear heights of calm supremacy;  
 My humbler dower they only find who  
 pass  
 With eyes that seek for violets mid the  
 grass.

—◆—  
*THE SKELETON WITNESS.*

ROOTED in soil dull as a dead man's eye,  
 Dank with decay, yon ghastly oak as-  
 pires,  
 As if in mockery, to the alien sky,  
 Frowning afar through clouded sunset  
 fires.

No garb of summer greenery girds it now:  
 Stripped as some naked soul at  
 Judgment-morn,  
 It rears its blasted arms, its sullen brow,  
 Defiant still, though wasted, scarred,  
 forlorn!

Not all its ruin came through storm or  
 time;  
 Ages ago, 'mid winter's dreariest  
 blight,  
 It saw and strove to shroud an awful  
 crime,  
 But slowly withered from that fateful  
 night!

An evil charm its many-centuried rings  
 Robbed of their pith; no more with  
 healthful start  
 Its lusty life-sap, nursed by countless  
 springs,  
 Coursed through great veins, and  
 warmed its giant heart.

Now all men shun the gaunt accursed  
 thing—  
 Only the raven with monotonous  
 croak,  
 Tortures the silence, staining with black  
 wing  
 The leprous whiteness of the rotting  
 oak!

—◆—  
*STORM-FRAGMENTS.*

THE storm had raved its furious soul  
 away;  
 O'er its wild ruins Twilight, spectral,  
 gray,

Stole like a nun, 'midst wounded men  
 and slain,  
 Walking the bounds of some fierce battle-  
 plain.

The ghost of thunder muttered faintly  
 by;  
 While down the uttermost spaces of the  
 sky,

Just where the sunset's glimmering verge  
 grew pale,  
 The baffled winds outbreathed their dy-  
 ing wail!

The sombre clouds that thronged a shadowy west  
 Writhed, as if tortured monsters of unrest,

Whose depths the keen sheet-lightnings rent apart,  
 To show what fiery torment throbbled at heart!

Where raged of late the war of elements dread,  
 Brooded a solemn silence overhead,

Through which, beyond the cloud-strewn, heavenly field,  
 The moon shone gory as a warrior's shield,

Dipped in the veins of many a vanquished foe;  
 Blood-red, I marked the wandering vapors flow

Vaguely about her, while her lurid light  
 Scared the vague vanguard of the shades of night;

Their banded hosts retreating, wild and dim,  
 In shattered cohorts o'er the horizon's rim:

Yet, the broad empire of those baleful beams  
 Heaved with strange shapes and hues of nightmare dreams!

Here, as from cloud-born Himalayas rolled,  
 I saw what seemed a cataract's rush of gold,

Hurled between shores of darkness, dense and dire,  
 Down to a seething mountain-lake of fire;

There, dismal catacombs, whose nether glooms  
 Yawned, to reveal their loathsome place of tombs:

Caverns of mystic depth, whence bubbling came  
 The blue-tinged horror of sulphureous flame;

Fragments of castles, with fresh blood besprent,  
 Gaunt, ruined tower, and blasted battlement —

On which, flame-clad, and tottering to their fall,  
 Dark eyes of frenzy flashed o'er cope and wall!

With awful ocean-spaces, limitless, grand,  
 Where spectral billows lashed a viewless land;

Their mountainous floods a frowning zenith kissed,  
 But glimpsed, at times, 'twixt folds of phantom-mist,

I viewed, as faintly touched by muffled stars,  
 The semblance of dead forms, on shipwrecked spars

Whirled upward, and dead faces, a white spume  
 Smote to false life against that turbulent gloom,

Where mournful birds, on pinions gray or dun,  
 Circled, methought, o'er some half-perished sun,

Whose feeble lustre, faltering upward, flings  
 A sad-hued radiance round their pallid wings;

Yea! all fantastic shapes of terror, wrought  
 'Twixt errant fancy and dream-haunted thought,

Until I seemed with Dante's soul to fly,  
 Through new Infernos, shifted to — the sky!

ABOVE THE STORM.

THE winds of the winter have breathed  
 their dirges  
 Far over the wood and the leaf-strown  
 plain;  
 They have passed, forlorn, by the moun-  
 tain verges  
 Down to the shores of the moaning  
 main;  
 And the breast of the smitten sea divides,  
 Till the voice of winds and the voice of  
 tides  
 Seem blent with the roar of the central  
 surges,  
 Whose fruitless furrows are sown with  
 rain.

The pines look down, and their branches  
 shiver  
 On the misty slopes of the mountain  
 wall,  
 And I hear the shout of a mountain river  
 Through the gloom of the ghostly  
 gorges call;  
 While from drifting depths of the troub-  
 led sky  
 Outringeth the eagle's wild reply,  
 So shrill that the startled echoes quiver;  
 And the veil of the tempest is over all.

O groaning forest! O wind that rushes  
 Unfettered and fierce as a doom malign!  
 How the pulses leap, how the heart-tide  
 flushes  
 The temples and brow like the flush  
 of wine,  
 As I pause, as I hearken the vast com-  
 motion  
 Of the air, of the earth, of the wakened  
 ocean;  
 And my soul goes forth with the storm  
 that crushes,  
 With the battling foam and the blind-  
 ing brine.

Yea, my soul is rent by a tempest stronger  
 Than ever was Nature's, with ruin  
 rife,

And the flame of its lightnings can bide  
 no longer,  
 Ensheathed at the core of a clouded  
 life;  
 And its pent-up thunders, unloosed at  
 last,  
 Keep time to the rhythmic rage of the  
 blast,  
 For my spirit, half-maddened by Fates  
 that wrong her,  
 Is shaken by passion, and hot with  
 strife!

Ah, God! for the wings of the eagle  
 above me,  
 With their steadfast vigor and royal  
 might;  
 Ah, God! for an impulse like theirs to  
 move me  
 In endless courses of upward flight;  
 The clouds may billow, the vapors  
 heave,  
 But still his pinions the darkness cleave;  
 And proudly serene, in those realms  
 above me  
 He is soaring from conquered height to  
 height:

Till at length, his great, broad vans at  
 even  
 And stately poise on the airy stream,  
 I mark, through the rifts of the turbid  
 heaven  
 His form outflashed like a winged  
 beam;  
 And I ask, "Shall *my* spirit soar like his?  
 Shall it ever soar in the peace and bliss  
 Of the shining heights and the glory  
 given  
 To the will unvanquished, the faith  
 supreme?"



UNDERGROUND — A FANTASY.

MAJESTIC dreams of heavenly calms,  
 Bright visions of unfading pa  
 Wherewith the brows c  
 crowned, —



Awhile my soul resigns them all,  
Content to rest death's dreamless thrall,  
Safe underground!

Rest! rest! oblivious rest I crave,  
Though narrowed to a pine-clad grave,  
With sylvan shadows shimmering  
round;  
The peace of Heaven, if fair and deep,  
Scarce woos me like Earth's ebon sleep,  
Far underground.

By infinite weariness oppressed  
Of soul and senses, blood and breast,  
Where can such Gilead balm be  
found  
As that which breathes from out the sod  
Baptized by rain and dew of God,  
Deep underground?

A century's space I yearn to be  
Untroubled, slumbering tranquilly,  
There, by the haunted woodlands  
bound;  
What suns shall set, what planets rise  
O'er pulseless brain and curtained eyes,  
Dark underground!

A century's sleep might bring redress  
To these dull wounds of weariness,  
Till the soothed spirit, hale and  
sound,  
Grow conscious of the sacred trust  
Which holds immortal bloom in dust,  
Safe underground.

Yea! conscious grow of rustling wings,  
And keen, mysterious whisperings,  
Blown flame-like o'er the burial-  
mound:  
My soul would feel thy Orient kiss,  
Angel of Palingenesis,  
Thrilled underground!

—◆—  
*THE DRYAD OF THE PINE.*

AH, forest sweetheart! over land and  
sea  
I come once more, once more to stand  
by thee;

My sylvan darling! set 'twixt shade and  
sheen,  
Soft as a maid, yet stately as a queen!

Thy loyal head, crowned by one lonely  
star,  
Flickers thro' twilight, coldly fine, and  
far;  
But thy earth-yearning branches bend  
to greet  
The lowliest wood-grass tangled round  
my feet.

Leaning on thee, I feel the subtlest thrill  
Stir thy dusk limbs, tho' all the heavens  
are still;  
And 'neath thy rings of rugged fretwork,  
mark  
What seems a heart-throb muffled in the  
dark!

Here lingering long, amid the shadowy  
gleams,  
Faintly I catch (yet scarce as one that  
dreams)  
Low words of alien music, softly sung,  
And rhythmic sighs in some sweet un-  
known tongue.

And something rare, I cannot clasp or  
see,  
Flits vaguely out from this mysterious  
tree —  
A viewless glory, an ethereal grace,  
Which make Elysian all the haunted  
place!

Ethereal! viewless! yet divinely dear!  
Ah me! what strange enchantment hov-  
ers near.  
What breaths of love the old, old dreams  
renew!  
What kisses fall, like charmed Thessa-  
lian dew!

*My Dryad-Love hath slipped the impris-  
oning bark,  
Her heart on mine, unmuffled by the  
dark.*



O blissful mite! native of light and air!  
 In eager zeal you haste your spoils to  
 win;  
 From half-blown bud to flower all ma-  
 tron-fair,  
 Sucking the nectared sweetness  
 shrined within!

The jonquill woos you with her golden  
 blush,  
 And blossoming quince (each flower a  
 fairy Mars,  
 That tints its heaven of-green with crim-  
 soned flush),  
 While the pure "white-rod" blooms  
 in silvery stars.

Open to yield their delicate richness up.  
 But most you love on vernal noons, to  
 dart  
 'Mid jasmine bowers, and drain each  
 petalled cup  
 With fervid lip and warm voluptuous  
 heart.

There, safely couched, you hum a low  
 refrain,  
 Of such supreme and rare contentment  
 born.  
 Its happy monotone mocks our human  
 pain.  
 And subtly stings us with unconscious  
 scorn.

Thence, honey-freighted, you steal lazily  
 out,  
 Pausing a moment on some leafy brink.  
 As if enmeshed by viewless webs of  
 doubt  
 From what next fount of luscious life  
 to drink—

A moment only. Soon your matchless  
 flight  
 Cleaves the far blue; your elfin thun-  
 der booms  
 In elfin echoes from yon glimmering  
 height,  
 To fall and die amid these ravished  
 blooms.

Gone, like a vision! Yet, be sure that he  
 Hath only flown through lovelier  
 flowers to stray,  
 Anacreon's soul, thus prisoned in a bee.  
 Still sips and sings the springtide  
 hours away!

—◆—  
 THE FIRST MOCKING-BIRD IN  
 SPRING.

WINGED poet of vernal ethers!  
 Ah! where hast thou lingered long?  
 I have missed thy passionate, skyward  
 flights  
 And the trills of thy changeful song.  
 Hast thou been in the hearts of wood-  
 lands old,  
 Half dreaming, and, drowsed by the  
 winter's cold,  
 Just crooning the ghost of thy springtide  
 lay  
 To the listless shadows, benumbed and  
 gray?  
 Or hast thou strayed by a tropic shore,  
 And lavished, O sylvan troubadour!  
 The boundless wealth of thy music free  
 On the dimpling waves of the Southland  
 sea?  
 What matter? Thou comest with magic  
 strain,  
 To the morning haunts of thy life again,  
 And thy melodies fall in a rhythmic rain.

—◆—  
 The wren and the field-lark listen  
 To the gush from their laureate's  
 throat;  
 And the blue-bird stops on the oak to  
 catch  
 Each rounded and perfect note.  
 The sparrow, his pert head reared aloft,  
 Has ceased to chirp in the grassy croft,  
 And is bending the curves of his tiny ear  
 In the *pose* of a critic wise, to hear.  
 A blackbird, perched on a glistening  
 gum,  
 Seems lost in a rapture, deep and dumb;  
 And as eagerly still in his trance'd hush,

'Mid the copse beneath, is a clear-eyed thrush.  
No longer the dove by the thorn-tree root  
Moans sad and soft as a far-off flute.  
All Nature is hearkening, charmed and mute.

We scarce can deem it a marvel,  
For the songs *our* nightingale sings  
Throb warm and sweet with the rhythmic beat  
Of the fervors of countless springs.  
All beautiful measures of sky and earth  
Outpour in a second and rarer birth  
From that mellow throat. When the winds are whist,  
And he follows his mate to their sunset tryst,  
Where the wedded myrtles and jasmine twine,  
Oh! the swell of his music is half divine!  
And I vaguely wonder, O bird! can it be  
That a human spirit hath part in thee?  
Some Lesbian singer's, who died perchance  
Too soon in the summer of Greek romance,  
But the rich reserves of whose broken lay,  
In some mystical, wild, undreamed-of way,  
Find voice in thy bountiful strains to-day!

—◆—  
THE RED AND THE WHITE ROSE.

THE Red Rose bowed one golden summer's night,  
The Red Rose bent, low whispering to the White,  
"Thou pallid shadow of a beauteous flower,  
Unchanged from purpling dawn to sunset hour;

Whose calm, cold heart beneath all lights that beam,  
Seems centred always in an Arctic dream;

Prim, puritanic, passionless, austere,  
What would'st thou give my opulent life to share?

To every breeze—the daintiest breeze that blows,  
Each petalled curve of mine more richly glows;—

And all the countless tints of heaven-born grace  
But touch to make more bright my Hebe face!"

"Ah! well, fulfil thy fate!" the White Rose said;  
"List to the wooing winds! uplift thy head

In sovereign pride through every radiant phase  
Of star-illuminated nights and cloudless days;

Let winged lovers thy warm leaves depart,  
To find voluptuous shelter next thy heart.

Fulfil thy fate, O Queen! but leave to me  
My stainless calm and cloistral sanctity;

Those passionate airs that trembling round thee meet,  
Sink in soft worship at my veiled feet;

The reverent sun-rays shimmering gently down,  
Weave o'er my brows a halo for a crown;

And while I muse in star, or moonshine faint,  
The flowers seem murmuring, 'Lo! our garden saint!'"

The Red Rose heard, but ere she spoke,  
her mouth  
Thrall'd by the light, quick kisses of the  
South,

Passed from arch wonder, blent with gay  
disdain,  
Back to its dimpled mirthfulness again;

And she,— the garden's empress—proud  
yet fond,—

Of summer flowers, the matchless Rosa-  
mond,—

Looked at her pale-hued sister, dew-  
impearled,  
As that fair marvel of the island world,

Might, in her ruddier nature's Tropic  
glow,

Have viewed a calm St. Agnes' brow of  
snow,

With some dim sense of mystic space  
between

The heaven-bound votaress and the  
earthly queen!

—◆—  
*BEFORE THE MIRROR.*

WHERE in her chamber by the Southern  
sea,

Her taper's light shone soft and silvery,  
Fair as a planet mirrored in the main,  
Fresh as a blossom bathed by April  
rain,

A maiden robed for restful sleep aright,  
Stood in her musing sweetness, pure and  
white

As some shy spirit in a haunted place:  
Her dew-bright eyes and faintly flushing  
face

Viewed in the glass their delicate beauty  
beam,

Strange as a shadowy "dream within a  
dream"

With fingers hovering like a white dove's  
wings,

'Mid little, tender sighs and murmur-  
ings

(Joy's scarce articulate speech), her  
eager hands

Loosed the light coil, the ringlet's golden  
bands,

Till, by their luminous loveliness em-  
braced,

From lily-head to lithe and lissome waist,  
Poured the free tresses like a cascade's  
fall.

Her image answered from the shimmer-  
ing wall,

Answered and deepened, while the  
gracious charms

Of brow and cheek, bared breast and  
dimpling arms,

To innocent worship stirred her happy  
heart:

Her lips — twin rosebud petals blown  
apart —

Quivered, half breathless; then, subdued  
but warm,

Around her perfect face, her pliant  
form

A subtler air seemed gathering, touched  
with fire

By many a fervid thought and swift de-  
sire,

With dreams of love, that, bee-like, came  
and went,

To feed the honeyed core of life's con-  
tent!

Closer toward her mirrored self she  
pressed,

With large child-eyes, and gently pant-  
ing breast,

Bowed as a flower when May-time  
breezes pass,

And kissed her own dear Image in the  
glass!

—◆—  
*TWO EPOCHS.*

LOVERS by a dim sea strand  
Looking wave-ward, hand in hand;  
Silent, trembling with the bliss  
Of their first betrothal kiss:

Lovers still, tho' wedded long!  
 (Time true love can never wrong!  
 Gazing — faithful hand in hand,  
 O'er a darker sea and strand:

Ah! one lover's face is wan  
 As a wave the moon shines on;  
 But those strange tides stretched afar  
 Know not sun, nor moon, nor star!



"O masterful wind and cruel! at thy sweep,  
 From the bold hill-top to the valley deep,  
 Surprise and fear through all the woodlands run."

## WIND FROM THE EAST.\*

THE Spring, so fair in her young incompleteness,  
 Of late the very type of tender sweetness;  
 Now, through frail leaves and misty branches brown,  
 Looks forth, the dreary shadow of a frown  
 Chasing the frank smile from her innocent face;  
 What marvel this? for the East Wind's disgrace  
 Smites, like a buffet, April's tingling cheek,  
 Whence the swift, outraged blood doth ebb to seek  
 The affrighted heart!  
     The Earth, herself so gay,  
 Buoyant, and happy, at the dawn of day,

\* This piece is (for the most part) a rhymed version of an exceedingly graphic description of the East wind, which occurs in Mr. Blackmore's admirable novel, "Cripps, the Carrier." Mr. Blackmore is a poet, although he writes in prose.

Thrills, shivering low with every flaw increased,  
 And fraught with salt-sea coldness from the East!

O masterful wind and cruel! at thy sweep,  
 From the bold hill-top to the valley-deep,  
 Surprise and fear through all the woodlands run,  
 Till the coy nestling-places of the sun  
 Are ruffled up; from shine to shade, as when  
 At the first note of storm the moorland hen  
 Ruffles her wings ere yet their warmth be spread  
 About each tremulous nestling's dusky head.

On the tall trees the foremost buds, half bare,  
 Stared, as wild-eyed, on the keen, rasping air;

Then shook — but not with softly-palpitant thrills,  
 As when, o'erlooking the freed mountain-rills,  
 They felt their life by loving arms caressed —  
 Warm, viewless arms of zephyrs of the West —  
 But with the sense, the cold and shivery stress  
 Of utter and forlornest nakedness.  
 The twigs that bore them flattened upward, lost  
 To all but rigid consciousness of frost:  
 And their full-foliaged branches which so blindly  
 Bowed in meek homage when the winds were kindly  
 Strained upward, too, in stiff, rebellious fashion,  
 With throes of anguish and deep moans of passion,  
 Wrung from them by wild beatings of the gale!

Then many a tiny leaf, though waxing pale,  
 Cloud-shadowed; all unfrayed, yet quivering, shrunk  
 Behind the mosses of some giant trunk,  
 To wait till the shrewd tempest hurtling by  
 Left Spring once more empress of earth and sky —  
 While many a large leaf, almost riven apart,  
 Piped a sad dirge from out its fluted heart,  
 And knowing what sombre selvage must be seen —  
 Alas, too soon! — to film its glow of green,  
 Bewailed the hour whose treacherous brightness came  
 To warm its life-blood into genial flame  
 Only to send the blissful-flowing tide  
 Back through the baffled veins unsatisfied,

Its nascent joy nipped by the arctic breath  
 And merciless waftage of this Wind of Death!

—◆—  
 PEACH BLOOMS.

O! tenderly beautiful, beyond compare,  
 Flushed from pale pink to deepest rosebud hue —  
 Nurslings of tranquil sunshine and mild air,  
 Of shadowless dawn, and silvery twilight dew —  
 Ye blush and burn, as if your flickering grace  
 Were love's own tint on Spring's enamored face!  
 And day by day — yea, golden hour by hour  
 Your subtle fragrance and rich beauty tell  
 (Each fairy blossom rounded into flower),  
 How matchless once that lost Arcadian spell,  
 Which dwelt in leafy bowers and vernal dyes  
 Whence coyly peeped the Dryad's fawn-like eyes!  
 And yet, while all so fair and bounteous seems,  
 While the birds carol — each his daintiest part,  
 Veiled in soft brightness, and like musical dreams  
 In some blithe soul — the bee-swarm  
 haunt your heart.  
 Lo! severed slowly from yon roscate crown,  
 A scarlet snowdrift, silent, falters down,  
 The reign of these rich blooms is almost done:  
 Soon to the languid Zephyr's feeblest breath,  
 Their loosened petals, yielding one by one,

Must find the Lethe of unawakening  
 death.  
 Ah me! of all the bourgeoned buds that  
 shoot  
 Even to full flower, how few shall bear  
 us fruit!

Their little day is closing fast in gloom;  
 Nor will they reck — poor wilted waifs,  
 and blind!  
 What germs of richness wax from faded  
 bloom.  
 To charm the pampered taste of hu-  
 man kind;  
 Forever dropped from off their parent  
 stem,  
*What* have man's thoughts or tastes to  
 do with them?

So let them rest, I pray you, let them rest,  
 Small, perishing sweethearts of the  
 sun and rain:  
 O! mother-earth, thou hast a ruthless  
 breast,  
 Which yearns to fold thy humblest  
 child from pain.  
 Men fall like flowers; both claim the  
 self-same balm,  
 The equal peace of thy majestic calm!

◆◆◆  
 THE AWAKENING.

FROM day to day the dreary heaven  
 Outpoured its hopeless heart in rain;  
 The conscious pines, half shuddering,  
 heard  
 The secret of the East wind's pain.

Mist veiled the sun — the sombre land,  
 In floating cloud-wracks densely furled,  
 Seemed shut forever from the bloom  
 And gladness of the living world.

From week to week the changeless  
 heaven  
 Wept on — and still its secret pain  
 To the bent pine-trees sobbed the wind,  
 In hollow truces of the rain.

Till in a sunset hour, whose light  
 Pale hints of radiance pulsed o'erhead,  
 Afar the moaning East wind died,  
 And the mild West wind breathed in-  
 stead.

Then the clouds broke, and ceased the  
 rain;  
 The sunset many a kindling shaft  
 Shot to the wood's heart; nature rose,  
 And through her soft-lipped verdures  
 laughed.

Low to the breeze; as some fair maid,  
 Love wakes from troublous dreams,  
 might rise,  
 Half dazed, yet happy — mists of sleep  
 Still hovering in her haunted eyes.

◆◆◆  
 LOVE'S AUTUMN.

[To My Wife.]

I WOULD not lose a single silvery ray  
 Of those white locks which like a milky  
 way  
 Streak the dusk midnight of thy raven  
 hair;

I would not lose, O sweet! the misty  
 shine  
 Of those half-saddened, thoughtful eyes  
 of thine,  
 Whence Love looks forth, touched by  
 the shadow of care;

I would not miss the droop of thy dear  
 mouth,  
 The lips less dewy-red than when the  
 South, —  
 The young South wind of passion sighed  
 o'er them;

I would not miss each delicate flower that  
 blows  
 On thy wan cheeks, soft as September's  
 rose  
 Blushing but faintly on its faltering  
 stem;



I would not miss the air of chastened  
 grace  
 Which breathed divinely from thy patient  
 face,  
 Tells of love's watchful anguish, merged  
 in rest;

Naught would I miss of all thou hast, or  
 art,  
 O! friend supreme, whose constant,  
 stainless heart,  
 Doth house unknowing, many an angel  
 guest;

Their presence keeps thy spiritual  
 chambers pure;  
 While the flesh fails, strong love grows  
 more and more  
 Divinely beautiful with perished years;

Thus, at each slow, but surely deepening  
 sign  
 Of life's decay, we will not, Sweet! re-  
 pine,  
 Nor greet its mellowing close with thank-  
 less tears;

Love's spring was fair, love's summer  
 brave and bland,  
 But through love's autumn mist I view  
 the land,  
 The land of deathless summers yet to be;

There, I behold thee, young again and  
 bright,  
 In a great flood of rare transfiguring  
 light,  
 But there as here, thou smilest, Love! on  
 me!

—◆—  
 THE SPIREA.

[This exquisite plant blooms in the Southern  
 States as early as the middle of February.]

Of all the subtle fires of earth  
 Which rise in form of spring-time  
 flowers,  
 Oh, say if aught of purer birth  
 Is nursed by suns and showers

Than this fair plant, whose stems are  
 bowed  
 In such lithe curves of maiden grace,  
 Veiled in white blossoms like a cloud  
 Of daintiest bridal lace?

So rare, so soft, its blossoms seem  
 Half woven of moonshine's misty bars,  
 And tremulous as the tender gleam  
 Of the far Southland stars.

Perchance — who knows? — some virgin  
 bright,  
 Some loveliest of the Dryad race,  
 Pours through these flowers the kindling  
 light  
 Of her Arcadian face.

Nor would I marvel overmuch  
 If from yon pines a wood-god came,  
 And with a bridegroom's lips should  
 touch  
 Her conscious heart to flame;

While she, revealed at that strange tryst,  
 In all her mystic beauty glows,  
 Lifting the cheek her Love had kissed,  
 Paled like a bridal rose.

—◆—  
 COQUETTE.

[Among the family portraits.]

I.

YES! there from out the gallery gloom,  
 Retaining still a flush of bloom,  
 I mark our bright ancestress glow —  
 The maiden Rose of long ago.  
 She lived in times of sumptuous dress,  
 And rich colonial stateliness;  
 But through the strong restraints of art  
 I seem to view her heaving heart,  
 As if a protest warm it made  
 'Gainst that stiff bolice of brocade,  
 While in her fair cheeks' deepening dyes,  
 Her lifted brows and roguish eyes,  
 Her swan-like neck and dimpled chin —  
 Cleft for small Loves to ambush in —

I can not fail (who could?) to see  
 All potent charms of coquetry —  
 The wiles whose glamour, swift and  
     sure,  
 Smote hapless victims by the score;  
 And even now (although they be  
 Discerned in pictured phantasy)  
 Not all innocuous, but possessed  
 Of power to pierce the manly breast,  
 If frosted to its shivering core  
 By forty arctic years or more.

## II.

Ah! many a gallant loved her well  
 In those old days! Her features tell  
 The world-wide story o'er again,  
 Of *others'* passion, *her* disdain;  
 Of hearts that spent their best to make  
 Her own more tender for love's sake,  
 Only in time to find, perchance,  
 Dull ending to a life's romance,  
 Since trivial natures are not stirred  
 Save by the lightly trivial word;  
 And much I fear, despite the fine  
 Rare beauty of each faultless line —  
 Her face, of gay *insouciance*, shows  
 No golden gulfs of pure repose  
 Deep in her inmost being shrined —  
 But shallow thoughts and purpose blind.  
 And yet who knows? My erring sight  
 May not have read its meanings right,  
 And something of ethereal grace  
 May lurk beneath that careless face,  
 Which masks with inconsiderate mirth  
 A soul not wholly wed to earth!

## III.

Therefore, sweet flesh and blood, I trust  
 That, ere ye passed to senseless dust,  
 Your beauty played a worthier part —  
 The love-*rôle* of the loyal heart.

No answer comes: for time doth mar  
 Our records. Only, like a star  
 Scarce touched by vapors vague and chill,  
 Your gracious image haunts us still.  
 But none, alas! may truly guess  
 What fate befell your loveliness.

## SKATING.

I CHASED the maid with rapid feet,  
 Where ice and sunbeam quiver;  
 But still beyond me, shyly fleet,  
 She flashed far down the river.

Sometimes, blown backward in the chase,  
 With balmy, soft caresses,  
 I felt across my glowing face  
 The waft of perfumed tresses.

Sometimes a glance she shot behind,  
 O'er graceful shoulders turning  
 A cheek whose tints the eager wind  
 Had set like sunrise burning.

Then, in a sudden onward glide,  
 She rushed with even motion,  
 As a long wave the restless tide  
 Drives shoreward fast from ocean;

And swift as some winged creature sped  
 Far down the crystal river,  
 Until the shining form that fled  
 I dreamed might fly forever.

## THE WORLD WITHIN US.

## A FANTASY.

PERCHANCE our *inward* world may  
     partly be  
 But *outward* Nature's fine epitome;

Now, o'er it floats some cloud of tender  
     pain  
 Too frail to hold the sad reserves of rain;

And now behold some breezy impulse  
     run  
 O'er Thought's bright surface, glittering  
     in the sun;

Whereon, like birds, the flocks of fancy  
     throng,  
 And all is peace and sweetness, light and  
     song:

Anon, dim moods like shadowy wood-lands rise  
As 'twere between the spirit's earth and skies:

All fair suggestions, hints of twilight grace,  
Safe harborage seek within the spell-bound space;

Music is there, low laughter, and the sound  
Of fairy voices, echoing gently round

The cool recesses of the veiled mind:  
While on the surge of memory's phantom wind,

Ghosts of dead loves, swathed in a silvery mist  
Pass by us; and the lips our lips had kissed,

In youth's glad prime, unutterable things  
Whisper, through wafts of visionary wings.

Ah, yes! our *inward* world but mirrors true,  
This *outward* world of sense; — it hath its dew,

Its sunshine, and fresh roses, white and red;  
It holds a tender moonlight over head;

The dews of yearning, mild, or fiery-bright,  
The flowers of peace, or passion; the calm light

Of reasoning thought, and retrospection fine,  
All merged in subtlest beauty — half divine!

It hath its mounts of vision, and its vales  
Of contemplation, where fond nightingales,

Born of the brain, and 'gainst some thorns of woe,  
Setting their breasts — but sing more sweetly so:

Fountains it owns of shyest *fantasie*;  
Glad streams of inspiration, swift and free,

Rolling toward Thought's central ocean vast  
Wherein all lesser forms of thought, at last

Sink, as the rivulets perish in a sea; —  
Thus, rounded, whole, our spirit-landscapes be,

Our spirit-world thus perfect; over all,  
No clouds of doubt hang, stifling as a pall;

But if the soul be healthful, noble, high,  
God's promise lights it, like a sleepless eye!

— ● —  
*FOREST QUIET.*

[In the South.]

So deep this sylvan silence, strange and sweet,

Its dryad-guardian, virginal Peace, can hear

The pulses of her own pure bosom beat;

And her low voice echoed by elfin rills,  
And far-off forest fountains, sparkling clear

'Mid haunted hollows of the hoary hills;

No breeze, nor wraith of any breeze that blows,

Stirs the charmed calm; not even *yon* gossamer-chain,

Dew-born, and swung 'twixt violet and wild rose,

Thrills to the airy elements' subtlest  
breath;  
Such marvellous stillness almost broods  
like pain  
O'er the hushed sense, holding dim hints  
of death!

What shadows of sound survive, the  
waves' far sigh,  
Drowsed cricket's chirp, or mock-bird's  
croon in sleep,  
But touch this sacred, soft tranquillity

To yet diviner quiet: the fair land  
Breathes like an infant lulled from deep  
to deep  
Of dreamless rest, on some wave-whis-  
pering strand!

—◆—  
*THE MOCKING-BIRD.*

[At night.]

A GOLDEN pallor of voluptuous light  
Filled the warm southern night:  
The moon, clear orb'd, above the sylvan  
scene

Moved like a stately queen,  
So rife with conscious beauty all the  
while,

What could she do but smile  
At her own perfect loveliness below,  
Glass'd in the tranquil flow  
Of crystal fountains and unruffled  
streams?

Half lost in waking dreams,  
As down the loneliest forest dell I  
strayed,

Lo! from a neighboring glade,  
Flashed through the drifts of moonshine,  
swiftly came

A fairy shape of flame.  
It rose in dazzling spirals overhead,  
Whence to wild sweetness wed,  
Poured marvellous melodies, silvery trill  
on trill;

The very leaves grew still  
On the charmed trees to hearken; while  
for me,  
Heart-trilled to ecstasy,

I followed — followed the bright shape  
that flew,  
Still circling up the blue,  
Till as a fountain that has reached its  
height,  
Falls back in sprays of light  
Slowly dissolved, so that enrapturing  
lay,  
Divinely melts away  
Through tremulous spaces to a music-  
mist,  
Soon by the fitful breeze  
How gently kissed  
Into remote and tender silences.

—◆—  
*A STORM IN THE DISTANCE.*

[Among the Georgian Hills.]

I SEE the cloud-born squadrons of the  
gale,  
Their lines of rain like glittering  
spears deprest  
(While all the affrighted land grows  
darkly pale),  
In flashing charge on earth's half-  
shielded breast;

Sounds like the rush of trampling  
columns float  
From that fierce conflict; volleyed  
thunders peal,  
Blent with the maddened wind's wild  
bugle-note;  
The lightnings flash, the solid wood-  
lands reel!

Ha! many a foliaged guardian of the  
height,  
Majestic pine or chestnut, riven and  
bare,  
Falls in the rage of that aerial fight,  
Led by the Prince of all the powers of  
air!

Vast boughs, like shattered banners  
hurtling fly  
Down the thick tumult: while, like  
emerald snow,

Millions of orphaned leaves make wild  
the sky,  
Or drift in shuddering helplessness  
below.

Still, still, the levelled lances of the rain  
At earth's half-shielded breast take  
glittering aim;  
All space is rife with fury, racked with  
pain,  
Earth bathed in vapor, and heaven  
rent by flame!

At last the cloud-battalions through long  
rifts  
Of luminous mists retire; . . . the  
strife is done;  
And earth once more her wounded  
beauty lifts,  
To meet the healing kisses of the sun.

◆

*THE VISION BY THE SEA.*

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

I.

A HAUNTING face! with strange, ethereal  
eyes,  
Deep as unfathomed gulfs of tranquil  
skies  
When o'er their brightness a vague mist  
is drawn,  
Breathed from the half-veiled lips of  
melting dawn;  
A mouth whose passionate love and  
sweetness seem  
But just released from kisses in a dream;  
A brow like Psyche's, pensive, broad,  
and low  
And white as winter's whitest wreath of  
snow;  
While round that gracious forehead,  
calmly fair.  
Ripples an April rain of golden hair.

II.

For some rapt moments, on the ocean  
strand,  
Unconscious, beautiful, I saw her stand,

As tremulous wave on wave, with  
freightage sweet  
Of murmured music, fawned about her  
feet,  
Then died in one divine, harmonious  
sigh;  
The breeze bewitched, could only falter  
nigh,  
And in sly delicate wafts of homage  
play  
With her rare tresses; like incarnate  
May,  
She seemed the earth, the tides, the  
heaven, to bless:  
For once I gazed on Beauty's perfectness.

III.

I gazed for some rapt moments, but no  
more;  
Then lowered mine eyes and slowly left  
the shore  
Made marvellous by that vision of de-  
light;  
Yet evermore its beauty, day and night,  
Standing between the blue sky and the  
sea,  
Shines like a star of immortality  
Through all my being; it becomes a part  
Of the deep life that quickens soul and  
heart  
To sense of things ideal and supreme —  
A palpable bliss, yet wedded to a dream.

◆

*THE VISIONARY FACE.*

I AM happy with her I love,  
In a circle of charmed repose;  
My soul leaps up to follow her feet  
Wherever my darling goes;  
Whether to roam through the garden  
walks,  
Or pace the sands by the sea; —  
There's never a shadow of doubt or fear  
Brooding 'twixt her and me: —  
But through memory's twilight mists,  
Sometimes, I own, in sooth,  
Falters the face of one I loved  
In the fervent years of youth; —

The soft pathetic brow is there,  
 With its glimmer and glance of golden  
 hair,  
 And scarcely shadowed by death's eclipse  
 The delicate curve of the faultless lips,  
 The tremulous, tender lips I kissed,  
 So coyly raised at the sunset tryst,  
 As we stood from the restless world  
 apart,  
 'Mid the whispering foliage, heart to  
 heart,  
 In the fair, far years of youth.  
 Yet, the vision is pure as heaven,  
 Untouched by a hint of strife  
 From the passion that moved itself to  
 sleep,  
 On the morning strand of life;  
 And I know that my living Love would  
 feel  
 The tremor of rueful tears,  
 If I told of the sweetness and hope that  
 drooped,  
 So soon in the vanished years:  
*She* would not banish the phantom  
 sad  
 Of a beauty dis-crowned and low;—  
 Can jealousy rest in the rose's breast  
 Of a lily under the snow?  
 Can the passion so warm and strong  
 to-day  
 Envy a ghost from the cypress shades  
 For an hour astray?  
 Or, the love that waned like a blighted  
 May,  
 In the dead days, long ago,  
 Ah! long, how long ago!

## THE ROSE AND THORN.

*SHE'S* loveliest of the festal throng  
 In delicate form and Grecian face;  
 A beautiful, incarnate song:  
 A marvel of harmonious grace;  
 And yet I know the truth I speak:  
 From those gay groups she stands  
 apart,  
 A rose upon her tender cheek,  
 A thorn within her heart.

Though bright her eyes' bewildering  
 gleams,  
 Fair tremulous lips and shining hair,  
 A something born of mournful dreams,  
 Breathes round her sad enchanted  
 air;  
 No blithesome thoughts at hide and seek  
 From out her dimples smiling start;  
 If still the rose be on her cheek,  
 A thorn is in her heart.

Young lover, tossed 'twixt hope and fear,  
 Your whispered vow and yearning  
 eyes  
 Yon marble Clytie pillared near  
 Could move as soon to soft replies;  
 Or, if she thrill at words you speak,  
 Love's memory prompts the sudden  
 start;  
 The rose has paled upon her cheek,  
 The thorn has pierced her heart.

## THE RED LILY.

I CALL her the Red Lily. Lo! she stands  
 From all her milder sister flowers  
 apart;  
 A conscious grace in those fair-folded  
 hands,  
 Pressed on the gulleful throbbings of  
 her heart!

I call her the Red Lily. As all airs  
 Of North or South, the Lily's leaves  
 that stir,  
 Seem lost in languorous sweetness that  
 despairs  
 Of blissful life or hope, except through  
 her;

So this Red Lily of maids, this human  
 flower,  
 Yielding no love, all sweets of love  
 doth take,  
 Twining such spells of passion's secret  
 power  
 As, woven once, what lordliest will  
 can break?

## LAKE WINNIPISEOGEE.

ONE day the River of Life flowed o'er  
The verge of heaven's enchanted shore,  
And falling without lapse or break.  
Its waters formed this wondrous lake.

Hence the far sheen of Eden palms  
Is mirrored in its silvery calms,  
And all its rich cerulean dyes  
Are deep as Raphael's splendid eyes.

And hence the unimagined grace  
Which sanctifies this lonely place,—  
A subtle, soft, ethereal spell  
Of light and sound ineffable.

Surely such tempered glory paints  
The mystic City of the Saints;  
Such music breathes its dying falls  
Above the heavenly palace walls.

O lake of peace! whose still expanse  
Gleams through a golden-misted trance,  
Earth holds thee sacred and apart,  
The cloistered darling of her heart.

## LAKE MISTS.

[Composed near Lake Winnipiseogee.]

As I gazed on the prospect enchanted,  
On waves the sun-glory had kissed,  
There slowly swept down from the distance,

The phantom-like bands of the mist.

On their feet that were spectrally soundless,

They glided fantastic and chill.  
While a prescient pallor crept over  
The beauty of lake-side and hill!

All nature grew cold at their advent!  
Like Thugs of the air, demon-born,  
With their coils of blue vapor they  
strangled  
The virgin effulgence of morn.

By that ambush of darkness was girdled  
Each bright beam in dreary embrace,

Till the fairest young dawn of September  
Lay wan on her death-shadowed face.

When wildly and weirdly from sea-ward,  
A low wind how mournfully stole!  
Like an anthem outbreathed for the  
morning,  
Thus sternly divorced from her soul!

## THE INEVITABLE CALM.

THE sombre wings of the tempest,  
In fetterless force unfurled,  
Buffet the face of beauty,  
And scar the grace of the world;

But they fade at length with the darkness,

And softly from sky to sod  
Peace falls like the dew of Eden,  
From the opened palm of God!

Earthquake, the angered Titan,  
A continent cleaves apart;  
Yet soon the glamour of quiet heals  
Earth's smitten and tortured heart.

And soon o'er the ruin of cities  
The sun-bright virginal grass  
Courtesies and curves into dimples,  
At the kiss of the winds that pass.

One lesson all nature teaches,  
As balm to the troubled breast,  
That after the turmoil of passion  
There cometh a time of rest.

For the anguish of life wanes downward  
Like fire unfanned by a breath;  
And deep is the ashen stillness  
On the hearthstone cold of death!

## THE DEAD LOOK.

Lo! in its still, soft-shrouded place,  
The pathos of a death-pale face!

I view the marks of mortal care  
Time's hopeless sorrows branded there.

Waning beneath the noiseless glide  
Of Lethé's dim, ethereal tide,  
As furrows on some twilight lea  
Fade in calm wave-sweeps of the sea!  
Across that bare, unbended brow  
The chrism of peace has fallen now,  
And, lightening life's austere eclipse,  
A star-soft smile hath touched the  
lips:

Though his sealed sight the death-mists  
mar,  
He hath a strange look, fixed afar:—  
As if wan folks of curtained eyes  
Trembled almost in act to rise,  
And show where each cold-lidded sheath  
Now veils the wide, weird orbs beneath,  
The mirrored glow, the blest surprise  
Of some first glimpse of Paradise!



"While grimly down the moonlit bay,  
The wrecked hull gleamed from far."

JETSAM.

BESIDE the coast for many a rood  
Were fragments of a shipwreck  
strewn;  
And there in sad and sombre mood  
I walked the sands alone.  
Torn bales and broken boxes lay,  
Heaped high amid shattered sails and  
spar,  
While grimly down the moonlit bay  
The wrecked hull gleamed from far.  
Well had the storm its mission wrought,  
With thunder crash and billowy roar;  
For not one precious waif was brought  
Safe to the rugged shore.

Yet stay! what tiny sparkling thing  
Shines faintly in the moonbeams  
cold?  
I stooped, and wondering, grasped a  
ring,  
A fairy ring of gold.  
Of great and small, of rich and rare,  
Of all yon stranded vessel bore,  
Only this gem the waves would spare  
To cast unharmed ashore.  
With what a deep and tender thrill  
I put the modest gem away,  
And while the silvery vapors chill  
Crept ghost-like up the bay,



I dreamed of shivering human lives  
 Wrecked on Fate's cold and cruel  
 lee,  
 Trusting that some small hope survives,  
 Spared to them from the sea!

◆◆◆  
*FAMELESS GRAVES.*

I WALKED the ancient graveyard's ample round,  
 Yet found therein not one illustrious name  
 Wedded by Death to Fame.

The sea-winds moaned by each deserted mound,  
 Where mouldering marbles shed their pungent must  
 O'er that worn human dust.

Thin cloudlets passed, with purpled skirts of rain  
 Grazing the sentinel pine-trees, gaunt and tall;  
 Some trembling to their fall.

From out the misty marsh-lands next the main,  
 Long lines of curlews in the sunset flame,  
 With dissonant noises came;

O'erswept the tombs in slow, high-wheeling flight,  
 And while the sunset verged on evening's gray,  
 Faded, ghostlike, away.

Yet down the dusky, shimmering, weird twilight  
 (Though lost their forms beyond the outmost hill),  
 Their strange cries sounded still:—

Prolonged by elfin echoes, 'mid the rocks,  
 Or lapsing in sad, plaintive wails to die  
 'Twixt darkling wave and sky.

The garrulous sparrows, in home-wending flocks,  
 Sought their rude nests among those shattered tombs,  
 Veiled now in vesper glooms;

Till o'er the scene a mystic influence stole;  
 The wave-enamored winds their pinions furled;  
 Pale Silence clasped the world.

Beside a grave, the lowliest of the whole  
 Obscure republic of the fameless dead,  
 Pausing, I mused, and said:—

All graves are equal! His, the laurelled, great,  
 Miraculous Shakspeare's, some far day shall rest  
 As level on Earth's breast, —

And all unknown — through stern behests of Fate —  
 As this, round which the rustling dock-leaves meet  
 Here, tangled at my feet.

All graves are equal to all-conquering Time;  
 Scornful, he laughs at monumental stones, —  
 Wasting a great man's bones,

A great man's sepulchre, though reared sublime  
 Toward heaven, until both stone and record pass,  
 Mocked by the flippant grass;

The feeblest weeds in Nature flaunting high  
 Above a Shakspeare's or a Dante's dust:—  
 Just then a gentle gust

Breathed from beyond the gloaming:  
 Night's first sigh  
 Of conscious life touched the awakened trees,  
 And blended with the sea's

Monotonous murmur, seemed to whisper low:

“I rise, and sink, am born, and lose my breath,  
Yet am not held by Death.

“For since the world began — when sunset’s glow  
Melts in the western tides — my air of balm  
Rises, if earth be calm.\*

“My spell is sacred, wheresoe’er it falls;  
The dreariest graves grow brighter at my voice,  
And human hearts rejoice,

“Because that I, winged from these twilight halls,  
In this, my life renewed, would subtly seem  
A sweet, half-uttered dream

“Of immortality, made bright by love:  
That love which binds the humblest human clod  
Fast to the throne of God.”

I left the graves; but now my gaze above  
Ranged through the heavenly spaces, clear and far:  
I marked the vesper star

Silver the edges of the wavering mist,  
And centred in an air-wrought, luminous isle  
Of lambent glory, smile;—

Smile like an angel whom the Lord hath kissed,  
And freed from arms divine, in soft release,  
To bless our earth with peace.

\* What dweller by the ocean can have failed to remark the almost invariable calm after sunset on quiet even air, a very sigh of tranquility, were, from God?

## WINTER ROSE.

God’s benison upon each happy day  
Dead now and gone!—its gentle ghost  
our feet  
Doth follow, singing faintly; and how sweet —  
Tenderly sweet, as through a luminous mist —  
Its shadowy lips draw near us, to be kissed!  
And though they melt upon the yearning mouth  
Like fairy balm from some phantasmal south,  
Their touch is magic; and we feel the start  
As of an unsealed fountain, close at heart —  
Till, warmed, restored, breathing a fine repose,  
Our innermost nature, wakening, glows anew;  
While, gemmed by sunset memory’s radiant dew,  
Lo! the heart blossoms, like a Winter Rose!

## TRISTRAM OF THE WOOD.

ONCE, when the autumn fields were dim and wet,  
The trumpets rang; the tide of battle set  
Toward gray Brocellande, by the western sea.

In the fore-front of conflict grimly stood,  
Clothed in dark armor, Tristram of the Wood,  
And round him ranged his knights of Brittany.

Of lordlier frame than even the lordliest there,  
Firm as a tower, upon his vast *destriere*,  
He looked as one whose soul was steeped in trance.

Ne'er spake nor stirred he, though the trumpet's sound  
Echoed abroad, and all the glittering ground  
Shook to the steel-clad warriors' swift advance;

Ne'er spake nor stirred he, for the mystic hour  
Closed o'er him then; the glamour of its power  
Dream-wrought, and sadly beautiful with love—

Love of the lost Iseult. In marvellous stead  
Of thronging faces, with looks stern and dread,

Through the dense dust, the hostile plumes above,

He saw his fair, lost Iseult's passionate eyes,

And o'er the crash of lances heard her cries,

Shrill with despair, when last they twain did part.

While others thrilled to strife, he, thrilled with woe,

Felt his life-currents shuddering cold and low

Round the worn bastions of his broken heart.

Then rolled his way the battle's furious flood:

Squadrons charged on him blindly: blows and blood

Showered down like hail and water; vainly drew

The whole war round him; still his broadsword's gleam

Flashed in death's front, and still, as wrapped in dream,

He fought and slew, witting not whom he slew,

Nor knew whose arm had smitten him deep and sore—

So deep that Tristram never, never more

Shone in the van of conflict; but the smart

Of his fierce wound tortured him night and day,

Till, through God's grace, his life-blood ebbed away,

And death's sweet quiet healed his broken heart.

—◆—  
*HINTS OF SPRING.*

[COMPOSED IN SICKNESS.]

"When the hill-side breaks into green, every hollow of blue shade, every curve of tuft, and plume and tendril, every broken sunbeam on spray of young leaves is *her!* No *spring* is a representation of any former *spring!*"—  
GOETHE.

A SOFTENING of the misty heaven,  
A subtle murmur in the air:  
The electric flash through coverts old  
Of many a shy wing, touched with gold;  
The stream's unmulled voice, that calls,  
Now shrill and clear, now silvery low,  
As if a fairy flute did blow  
Above the sylvan waterfalls:  
Each mellowed sound, each quivering wing

Heralds the happy-hearted Spring:  
Earth's best beloved is drawing near.

Amid the deepest woodland dells,  
So late forlornly cold and drear,  
Wafts of mild fervor, procreant breaths  
Of gentle heat, unclose the sheaths  
Of fresh-formed buds on bower and tree;  
A spirit of soft revival looks  
Coyly from out the young-leaved nooks,  
Just dimpling into greenery;  
Through flashes of faint primrose bloom,  
Through delicate gleam and golden gloom,

The wonder of the world draws near.

On some dew-sprinkled, cloudless morn,  
 She, in her full-blown joyance rare,  
 Will pass beyond her Orient gate,  
 Smiling, serene, calmly elate,  
 All garmented in light and grace:  
 Her footsteps on the hills shall shine  
 In beauty, and her matchless face  
 Make the fair vales of earth divine.  
 O goddess of the azure eyes,  
 The deep, deep charm that never dies,  
 Delay not long, delay not long!  
 Come clad in perfume, glad with song,  
 Breathe on me from thy perfect lips,  
 Lest mine be closed, and death's eclipse  
 Rise dark between  
 Me and thine advent, tender queen,  
 Albeit thou art so near, so near!

— — —  
 THE HAWK.

AMBUSHED in yonder cloud of white,  
 Far-glittering from its azure height,  
 He shrouds his swiftness and his might!

But oft across the echoing sky,  
 Long-drawn, though uttered suddenly,  
 We hear his strange, shrill, bodeful cry.

Winged robber! in his vaporous tower  
 Secure in craft, as strong in power,  
 Coolly he bides the fated hour,

When thro' cloud-rifts of shadowy rise,  
 Earthward are bent his ruthless eyes,  
 Where, blind to doom, the quarry lies!

And from dense cloud to noontide glow,  
 (His fiery gaze still fixed below),  
 He sails on pinions proud and slow!

Till, like a fierce, embodied ray,  
 He hurtles down the dazzling day, —  
 A death-flash on his startled prey:

And where but now a nest was found,  
 Voiceful, beside its grassy mound,  
 A few brown feathers strew the ground!

OVER THE WATERS.

I.

OVER the crystal waters  
 She leans in careless grace,  
 Smiling to view within them  
 Her own fair happy face.

II.

The waves that glass her beauty  
 No tiniest ripple stirs:  
 What human heart thus coldly  
 Could mirror grace like hers?

— — —  
 THE TRUE HEAVEN.

THE bliss for which our spirits pine,  
 That bliss we feel shall yet be given,  
 Somehow, in some far realm divine,  
 Some marvellous state we call a  
 heaven.

Is not the bliss of languorous hours  
 A glory of calm, measured range,  
 But life which feeds our noblest powers  
 On wonders of eternal change?

A heaven of action, freed from strife,  
 With ampler ether for the scope  
 Of an immeasurable life  
 And an unbaffled, boundless hope.

A heaven wherein all discords cease,  
 Self-torment, doubt, distress, turmoil,  
 The core of whose majestic peace  
 Is godlike power of tireless toil.

Toil, without tumult, strain or jar,  
 With grandest reach of range endured.  
 Unchecked by even the farthest star  
 That trembles thro' infinitude;

In which to soar to higher heights  
 Through widening ethers stretched  
 abroad,  
 Till in our onward, upward flights  
 We touch at last the feet of God.

Time swallowed in eternity!  
 No future evermore; no past,  
 But one unending now, to be  
 A boundless circle round us cast!

—◆—  
*THE BREEZES OF JUNE.*

Oh! sweet and soft,  
 Returning oft,  
 As oft they pass benignly,  
 The warm June breezes come and go,  
 Through golden rounds of murmurous  
 flow,  
 At length to sigh,  
 Wax faint and die,  
 Far down the panting primrose sky,  
 Divinely!

Though soft and low  
 These breezes blow,  
 Their voice is passion's wholly;  
 And ah! our hearts go forth to meet  
 The burden of their music sweet,  
 Ere yet it sighs,  
 Faints, falters, dies,  
 Down the rich path of sunset skies—  
 Half glad, half melancholy!

Bend, bend thine ear!  
 Oh! hark and hear  
 What vows each blithe new-comer,  
 Each warm June breeze that comes and  
 goes,  
 Is whispering to the royal rose,  
 And star-pale lily, trembling nigh,  
 Ere yet in subtlest harmony  
 Its murmurs die,  
 Wax faint and die,  
 On thy flushed bosom, passionate sky,  
 Of youthful summer!

—◆—  
*A MOUNTAIN FANCY.*

[Respectfully inscribed to Mrs. R. S. Storrs.]

Close to each mountain's towering peak  
 A white cloud leans its tearful cheek,  
 Till all its soul of mystic pain  
 Dissolves in slow, soft, vaporous rain.

Thus, when our heart-griefs seek aright  
 Some heavenly Thought's majestic  
 height,  
 Their passion, touched by loftier air,  
 Dissolves in tender mists of prayer!  
 Jefferson Hill House, White Mountains, N.H.,  
 September, 1879.

—◆—  
*ABSENCE AND LOVE.*

WE need the clasp of hand in hand,  
 The light flashed warm from neighbor-  
 ing eyes:  
 Or else as weary seasons pass—  
 Alas! alas!  
 Our tenderest love grows wan and  
 dies.

The fatal years like seas expand  
 'Twixt souls that long have dwelt  
 apart,  
 Till, broadening o'er our being's verge,  
 The ruthless surge  
 Love's memory sweeps from out the  
 heart.

O Absence! thou unreverenced Death!  
 Thy dense, unconsecrated clay  
 Inurns affection past regret;  
 No hint is set  
 Thereon of Resurrection Day.

—◆—  
*THE FALLEN PINE-CONE.*

I LIFT thee, thus, thou brown and rug-  
 ged cone,  
 Well poised and high,  
 Between the flowering grasses and the  
 sky;  
 And, as sea-voices dwell  
 In the fine chambers of the ocean-shell,  
 So fancy's ear  
 Within thy numberless, dim complexities  
 Hath seemed oft-times to hear  
 The imprisoned spirits of all winds that  
 blow;  
 Winds of late autumn that lamenting  
 moan

Across the wild sea-surges' ebb and flow;  
 Storm-winds of winter mellowed to a  
 sigh,  
 Long-drawn and plaintive; or—how  
 lingeringly!—  
 Soft echoes of the spring-tide's jocund  
 breeze,  
 Blent with the summer south wind, mur-  
 muring low!

What wonder, fairy cone, that thou  
 should'st hold  
 The semblance of these voices? day and  
 night,  
 Proudly enthroned upon the wavering  
 height  
 Of yon monarchal pine, thou did'st  
 absorb  
 The elemental virtues of all airs,  
 Timid or bold,  
 Measures of gentle joys and wild despairs,  
 Breathed from all quarters of our change-  
 ful orb;  
 Whether with mildness freighted or with  
 might,  
 Into thy form they entered, to remain  
 Each the strange phantom of a perished  
 tone,  
 An eerie, marvellous strain  
 Pent in this tiny Hades made to fold  
 Ghosts of the heavenly couriers long ago,  
 Sunk as men dreamed by ocean and by  
 shore,  
 Into the void of silence evermore!

—◆—  
 STERN TRUTHS TRANSFIGURED.

THOSE mountain forms of giant girth  
 Are rooted deep in moveless earth;  
 But lo! their yearning heights with-  
 drawn,  
 Are melting in soft seas of dawn.

What golden lights and shadows kiss  
 Brown ledge and Titan precipice!  
 Till all the rock-bound, sullen space  
 Glows like a visionary face:

Thus frowning truths whose roots are  
 fhried  
 Round bases of some granite world,  
 May lift their mellowed light afar,  
 Transfigured by love's morning-star.

—◆—  
 DISTANCE.

WHY is it that yon far-off, mellowed  
 horn  
 Sounds like an antique story, half-for-  
 lorn,  
 Half-sweet, with iterance of rare echoes  
 sent  
 Up the serenely listening firmament?

I thrill, soul-smitten by each melting  
 tone  
 About the golden distant spaces blown,  
 As if soft pathos came on rhythmic sighs  
 From out the heart of vanished centu-  
 ries.

Distance is magic! in its fairy hold  
 Are alchemies that change even dross to  
 gold,—  
 While beauty's nymph, too closely seen  
 or pressed,  
 Melts to mere shadow from the enamored  
 quest!

—◆—  
 HORIZONS.

I LOVE to gaze along the horizon's  
 verge—  
 To strain my sight where steeped in  
 golden-gray  
 The sun-illumined vapors gently surge,  
 To melt in measureless distances away.

I gaze and gaze, till tears bedim my eyes,  
 And tongueless fancies haunt me,  
 vague and fond;  
 Ethereal boundary! blending earth and  
 skies,  
 Ah! dost thou veil some marvellous  
 realm beyond?

Deep spirit of mine! thou, too, art  
strangely bound  
By far horizons, vaporous, dim, and  
vast;  
Beyond the range of whose enchanted  
round,  
Not even the genii of weird dreams  
have passed!

—◆—  
*IN THE GRAY OF THE EVENING.*

AUTUMN.

WHEN o'er yon forest solitudes  
The sky of autumn evening broods —  
A heaven whose warp, but palely bright,  
Shot through with woofs of crimson  
light,

So slowly wanes with waning day —  
Whatever thoughts, pathetic, sweet  
Are wont to fawn round Memory's feet,  
Pleading with soft and sacred stress  
To be upcaught in tenderness;  
Whatever thoughts like these there are,  
Choose the weird hour 'twixt sun and  
star,

Of failing breeze, and whisperous sea,  
And that still heaven o'er leaf and lea,  
To come — each thought a temperate  
bliss —

Embracing the calmed soul, to kiss  
The pallor of old cares away.

O twilight sky of mellow gray,  
Flushed with faint hues! O voiceful  
trees,

Lilting low ballads to the breeze!  
O all ye mild amenities  
Wherewith the solemn eve is rife,  
At this strange hour 'twixt death and  
life;

The death of beauteous day, whose last  
Dim tints are almost overpast,  
Who lives alone in odors blent  
Of every subtlest element,  
Borne on a fairy rain-like dew,  
Exhaled, not dropped from out the blue;  
The life of stars that one by one  
Are mustering o'er the sunken sun,

And wafts of vague earth-perfume blown  
Up to the pine-tree's quivering cone,  
From heath-flowers hidden in cool  
grass, —

Like spells of delicate balm, ye pass  
Into my wearied heart and brain.

What room for any sordid pain  
Within me now? Ah! Nature seems  
Through something sweeter than all  
dreams,

To woo me; yea, she seems to speak  
How closely, kindly, her fond cheek  
Rested on mine, her mystic blood  
Pulsing in tender neighborhood,  
And soft as any mortal maid,  
Half veiled in the twilight shade,  
Who leans above her love to tell  
Secrets almost ineffable!

—◆—  
*THE VISION AT TWILIGHT.*

[To E. R., October, 1879.]

WITHOUT the squares of misted pane,  
I saw the wan autumnal rain,  
And heard, o'er tufts of churchyard  
grass,

The wind's low *miserere* pass.

Within, more bright for outward gloom,  
I saw her wild-rose cheeks abloom,  
And, deep as stars in uppermost skies,  
The lustre of dark Syrian eyes!

Without, still drearier grew the sigh  
Of the chill east wind shuddering by,  
Wildier the sad, strange moaning made  
Beneath the elm-trees' rayless shade.

Within, as if the embodied south  
Had opened her enchanted mouth,  
I caught, through twilight's gray eclipse,  
The music from her gracious lips.

It breathed such sweetness, purely deep,  
On my dull pain it dropped like sleep.  
"How vain," I thought, "this gathering  
gloom:

Some heavenly presence fills the room!"

And when her warm hand, pulsing  
youth,  
On mine she pressed in guileless ruth,  
One moment, charmed through blood  
and brain,  
I felt my own lost youth again!

With quickened heart and lifted head  
I viewed the vision near my bed,  
But lovelier for that envious gloom,  
Her heavenly presence blessed the room!

—◆—  
AN HOUR TOO LATE.

I HAVE loved you, oh, how madly!  
I have wooed you softly, sadly,  
As the changeful years went by;  
Yet you kept your haughty distance,  
Yet you scorned my brave persistence,  
While the long, long years went by.

Now that colder lovers leave you,  
Now that Fate and Time bereave you  
(For the cruel years *will* fly),  
In your beauty's pale declension  
You would grace with condescension  
The love that touched you never  
When your bloom and hopes were high.

Ah! but what if I discover  
That too long in antique fashion  
I have nursed a fruitless passion,  
Whose rage and reign (thank Heaven!)  
Are passed at length and over—  
That fate hath locked forever love's  
golden Eden gate?  
There's a wrong beyond redressing,  
There's a prize not worth possessing,  
And a lady's condescension  
May come an hour *too late!*

—◆—  
"TOO LOW AND YET TOO HIGH!"

HE came in velvet and in gold;  
He wooed her with a careless grace;  
A confidence too rashly bold  
Breathed in his language and his face.

While she—a simple maid—replied:  
"No more of love 'twixt thee and me!  
These tricks of passion I deride,  
Nor trust thy boasted verity.  
Thy suit, with artful smile and sigh,  
Resign, resign:  
*No mate am I for thee or thine,  
Being too low, and yet too high!"*

His spirit changed; his heart grew warm  
With genuine passion; morn by morn  
More perfect seemed the virgin charm  
That crowned her 'mid the ripening  
corn.

And now he wooed with fervent mien,  
With soul intense, and words of fire,  
But reverence-fraught, as if a queen  
Were hearkening to his heart's desire.  
She brightly blushed, she gently sighed,  
Yet still the village maid replied  
(Though in sad accents, wearily):  
"Thy suit resign,  
Resign, resign!  
*Lord Hugh, I never can be thine.  
Too low am I, and yet too high!"*

—◆—  
THE LORDSHIP OF CORFU.

A LEGEND OF 1516.

WHAT time o'er gory lands and threat-  
ening seas  
Fair fortune, wearied, fled the Genoese—  
What time from many a realm the  
waters woo  
In the warm south. "*Who now shall  
rule Corfu?*"  
Rose with the eager passion and fierce  
greed  
Of those who preyed on every empire's  
need,—  
There fell upon that isle's disheartened  
brave  
A wild despair, such as in one dark  
grave  
Might well have whelmed the prostrate  
nation's pride,  
Her honor, strength, traditions—all  
beside



Which crowns a race with sovereignty.  
Sublime

Above the reckless purpose of his time  
Their Patriarch stood, and such wise  
words he spake

The basest souls are thrilled, the feeblest  
wake

To some high aim, some passion grand  
and free,

Some cordial grace of magnanimity:  
By such unwonted power they yield their  
all

To him that came, as if at Godhead's  
call,

To save the state, whose stricken pillars  
reel.

How works the Patriarch for his people's  
weal?

Calmly he bids them launch their stanch-  
est keel—

A gorgeous galley: on her decks they  
raise

Great golden altars, girt by lights that  
blaze

Divinely, and by music's mystic rain,  
Blent of soft spells, half sweetness and  
half pain.

Fallen from out the highest heaven of  
song.

And there, to purify all souls of wrong  
And latent sin, he calls from far and  
near

Nobles and priests and people. Every  
where

The paths are full, which, sloping  
steeply down

From the green pasture and the walled  
town.

Lead oceanward, where, anchored near  
the quay.

That sacred galley heaved along the  
sea—

Her captain no rude mariner, with soul  
Tough as the cordage his brown hands  
control.

But the gray Patriarch, lifting eyes of  
prayer,

While o'er the reverent thousands, calm  
in air,  
The sacred host shone like an awful  
star.

“Children!” the Patriarch cried, “If  
strong ye are

To trust in heaven—albeit heaven's  
message sent

This day through me, seem strange, and  
strangely blent

With chance-fed issues—swear, what-  
e'er betide,

When once our unmoored bark doth  
fleetly glide

O'er the blue spaces of the midland  
sea—

What flag soe'er first greets our eager  
view,

Our own to veil, and humbly yield there-  
to

The faith and sovereign claims of fair  
Corfu.”

They vowed a vow methinks ne'er vowed  
before,

The while their galley, strangely laden,  
bore

Down the south wind, which freshly  
blew from shore.

Past Vido and San Salvador they  
sped,

Past stormy heights and capes whose  
rock-strewn head

Batted the surges; still no ship they  
met,

Till, sailing far beyond the rush and  
fret

Of shifting sand-locked bars, at last they  
gain

The open and illimitable main.

There in one line two gallant vessels  
rode:

From this the lurid Crescent banner  
glowed,

From that the rampant Lion of St.  
Mark's!

Much, much they wondered when  
athwart them drew,  
With glittering decks, the galley from  
Corfu,  
Lighted by tapers tall of myriad dyes,  
And echoing chants of holy litanies.

Soon unto both the self-same message  
came;  
For loud o'er antique hymn and altar  
flame  
Thrilled the chief's voice, "Hearken, ye  
rival powers!  
Whichever first may touch our armed  
towers\*  
Thenceforth shall be the lords of fair  
Corfu!"

Changed was the wind, and landward  
now it blew;  
Smiting the waves to foam-flakes wild  
and white.  
All sails were brace'd, the rowers rowed  
with might,  
But soon the island men turned pale to  
see  
The Turk's prow surging vanward stead-  
ily,  
Till five full lengths ahead, careering  
fast,  
With flaunting flag and backward-swoop-  
ing mast,  
And scores of laboring rowers bent as one  
Toward oars which made cool lightnings  
in the sun,  
The Paynim craft — unless some mar-  
vellous thing  
Should hap to crush her crew or clip her  
wing —  
Seemed sure as that black Fate which  
urged her on  
Victor to prove, and that proud island  
race  
To load with sickening burdens of dis-  
grace!

\* These "Towers," we must remember, were built in with the substance of the city walls, which rose abruptly out of the waters of the sea.

And now on crowded decks and crowd-  
ed shore  
Naught but the freshening sea wind's  
hollow roar  
Was heard, with flap of rope and clang  
of sail,  
Veering a point to catch the changing  
gale,  
Or furious lashes of the buffeting oar!

Just then the tall Venetian strangely  
changed  
Her steadfast course, with open port-  
holes ranged  
'Gainst the far town. Across the sea-  
waste came,  
First, a sharp flash and lurid cloud of  
flame,  
Then the dull boom of the on-speeding  
ball,  
Followed by sounds which to the isles-  
men seem  
Sweet as the waking from some night-  
mare dream —  
The sounds of splintered tower and  
crashing wall!  
Then rose a shrill cry to the shivering  
heaven —  
"Thus, thus to us your island realm is  
given!"  
Burst as one voice from out the conquer-  
ing crew:  
"Thus Venice claims the lordship of  
Corfu!"

— ◆ —

TALLULAH FALLS.

ALONE with nature, where her passion-  
ate mood  
Deepens and deepens, till from shadowy  
wood,  
And sombre shore the blended voices  
sound  
Of five infuriate torrents, wanly crowned  
With such pale-misted foam as that  
which starts  
To whitening lips from frenzied human  
hearts!

Echo repeats the thunderous roll and boom  
 Of these vexed waters through the foliaged gloom  
 So wildly, in their grand reverberant swell  
 Borne from dim hillside to rock-bounded dell,  
 That oft the tumult seems  
 The vast fantastic dissonance of dreams;  
 A roar of adverse elements, torn and riven  
 In dark recesses of some billowy hell,  
 But sending ever through the tremulous air,  
 Defiance laden with august despair  
 Up to the calm and pitiful face of heaven!

From ledge to ledge the impetuous current sweeps  
 Forever tortured, tameless, unsubdued,  
 Amid the darkly humid solitude,  
 Through waste and turbulent deeps  
 It cleaves a terrible pathway, over-run  
 Only by doubtful flickerings of the sun,  
 To meet with swift cross-eddies, whirl-pools set  
 On verges of some measureless abyss,  
 Above the stir and fret,  
 The lion's hollow roar, or serpent hiss  
 Of whose unceasing conflict waged below  
 The gorges of the giant precipice,  
 Shines the mild splendor of a heavenly bow.

But blinded to the rainbow's glory shed  
 Fair as the aureole 'round an angel's head  
 Still with dark vapors all about it furled  
 The demon spirit of this watery world,  
 Through many a maddened curve, and stormy throe,  
 Speeds to its last tumultuous overflow,

When downward hurled, from 'wilder-  
 ing shock to shock,  
 Its wild heart breaks upon the outmost rock  
 That guards the empire of this rule of wrath!  
 Henceforth, beyond the shattered cata-  
 ract's path,  
 The tempered spirit of a gentler guide  
 Enters, methinks the unperturbed tide;  
 Its current sparkling in the blest re-  
 lease  
 From wasting passion, glides through  
 shores of peace,—  
 O'er brightened spaces and clear con-  
 fluent calms,  
 Float the hale breathings of near mead-  
 ow balms,  
 And still by silent cove and silvery  
 reach,  
 The murmurous wavelets pass;  
 Lip the green tendrils of the delicate  
 grass,  
 And tranquil hour by hour,  
 Uplift a crystal glass,  
 Wherein each lithe Narcissus-flower,  
 May mark its slender frame and beau-  
 teous face  
 Mirrored in softly visionary grace,  
 And still, by fairy-bright and shelving  
 beach,  
 The fair waves whisper low as leaves in  
 June  
 (Small gossips lipping in their woodland  
 bower),  
 And still, the ever-lessening tide  
 Lapses, as glides some once imperious  
 life  
 From haughty summits of demoniac  
 pride,  
 Hatred and vengeful strife,  
 Down through time's twilight-valleys  
 purified:  
 Yearning, alone, to keep  
 A long-predestined tryst with night and  
 sleep,  
 Beneath the dew-soft kisses of the  
 moon!

DIVIDED.

As not a bud that burgeons 'mid the  
bowers;  
As not a leaf on any tree that grows,  
But to its neighbor some unlikeness  
shows,  
Made clearer still through all the blos-  
soming hours.

Thus hath it chanced that, since the  
world began,  
No soul hath found its fellow; fates  
may blend  
In the close ties of lover, husband,  
friend,  
Yet through some subtle difference, man  
from man

Severed, sees not his brother's innermost  
life;  
The lover his sweet mistress knows  
in part,  
And each to other half revealed in  
heart,  
Pass deathward, the true husband and  
true wife.

Shall heaven make all things plain?  
Nay, who can tell?  
Only, sick heart! like the sore-  
wounded dove  
Seeking her distant nest, *hold fast to  
love,*  
Till death's deep curfew tolls its vesper  
bell.



"Gurgle, gurgle, gurgle,  
Over ledge and stone."

THE MEADOW BROOK.

GURGLE, gurgle, gurgle,  
Over ledge and stone;  
How I'm going, flowing,  
Westward, all alone;  
All alone, but happy,  
Happy and hale am I,  
Clasped by the emerald meadows,  
Flushed by the golden sky!

No kindred brook is calling,  
To woo these tides in glee;  
I hear no neighboring voices  
Of inland rill, or sea;

But the sedges thrill above me,  
And where I blithely pass,  
Coy winds, like nymphs in ambush,  
Seem whispering through the grass.

Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle;  
Hark! the tiny swell  
Of wavelets softly, silverly  
Toned like a fairy bell,  
Whose every note sweetly  
In mellow  
Echo hath  
In airy

## THE VALLEY OF ANOSTAN.

[In Ælian's "Various History," book iii., chapter xviii., the following legend, or parable, will be found. How vividly it recalls to us the words of the Master: "Unless ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven!"]

AN Orient legend, which hath all the light  
And fragrance of the asphodels of heaven,  
Smiles on us from old Ælian's mellowed page;  
And thus it runs, smooth as the stream of joy  
Whereof it tells, yet with some discord blent,  
Which, hearkened rightly, makes the music true  
To man's mysterious instincts and his fate:

In the strange valley of Anostan dwelt  
The far Merope, through whose murmurous realm  
Two mighty rivers — one a stream of joy,  
Divine and perfect; one a stream of bale —  
Flowed side by side, 'twixt forest shades and flowers  
(Bright shades and sombre, poison flowers and pure),  
Down to a distant and an unknown sea.

On either bank were fruit-trees and ripe fruit,  
Whereof men plucked and ate; but whoso ate  
Of the wan fruitage of the stream of bale  
Went ever after weeping gall for tears,  
Till death should find him; but whoe'er partook  
Of the rare fruitage of the stream of joy  
Straightway was lapped in such ecstatic peace,  
Such fond oblivion of all base desires,

His soul grew fresh, dew-like, and sweet again,  
And through his past, his golden yester-days,  
He wandered back and back, till youth, regained,  
Shone in the candid radiance of his eyes,  
That still waxed larger, holier, crystal-clear,  
With resurrection of life's tenderest dawn  
Of childlike faith; by which illumed and warmed,  
He walks, himself a dream within a dream,  
Yearning for infancy. This found at last,  
Gently he passes upward unto God,  
Not through death's portal, wrapped in storms and wrath,  
But the fair archway of the gates of birth!

## TWO SONGS.

## FIRST SONG.

LET me die by the sea!  
When his billows are haughty and high,  
And the storm-wind's abroad, —  
When his dark passion grasps at the sky  
With the power of a god, —  
When all his fierce forces are free —  
Let me die by the sea.

Let me die by the sea!  
To his rhythms of tempest and rain,  
I would pass from the earth,  
Through death that is travail and pain,  
Through death that is birth;  
'Mid the thunders of waves and of led,  
Let me die by the sea.

Let me die by the sea!  
When the great deeps are sundered and stirred,  
And the night cometh fast,  
Let my spirit mount up like a bird,  
On the wings of the blast.

O'er the tumults of wave and of lea,  
O'er their ravage and roar,  
She would soar, she would soar,  
Where peace waits her at last:  
Oh! Fate, let me die by the sea.

## SECOND SONG.

Ah, no! Ah, no! I would not go  
While earth and heaven are black:—  
When all is wildly drear and dark,  
Guard, guard, O God! this vital  
spark!

But I would go when winds are low,  
And distant, dreamy rills  
Are heard to lapse with lingering flow,  
Between the twilight hills:  
With earth, and wave, and heaven at  
peace,  
Then let these outworn pulses cease.

## SONNETS.

## ON VARIOUS THEMES.

## I.

## FRESHNESS OF POETIC PERCEPTION.

DAY followed day; years perish; still  
mine eyes  
Are opened on the self-same round of  
space:  
Yon fadeless forests in their Titan grace,  
And the large splendors of those opulent  
skies.  
I watch, unwearied, the miraculous dyes  
Of dawn or sunset; the soft boughs  
which lace  
Round some coy dryad in a lonely place,  
Thrilled with low whispering and strange  
sylvan sighs:  
Weary? the poet's mind is fresh as dew,  
And oft re-filled as fountains of the  
light.  
His clear child's soul finds something  
sweet and new  
Even in a weed's heart, the carved  
leaves of corn,

The spear-like grass, the silvery rim of  
morn,  
A cloud rose-edged, and fleeting stars at  
night!

## II.

## LAOCOON.

A GNARLED and massive oak log, shape-  
less, old,  
Hewed down of late from yonder hill-  
side gray,  
Grotesquely curved, across our hearth-  
stone lay;  
About it, serpent-wise, the red flames  
rolled  
In writhing convolutions; fold on fold  
They crept and clung with slow portent-  
ous sway  
Of deadly coils; or in malignant play,  
Keen tongues outflashed, 'twixt vapor-  
ous gloom and gold.  
Lo! as I gazed, from out that flaming  
gyre  
There loomed a wild, weird image, all  
astrain  
With strangled limbs, hot brow, and  
eyeballs dire,  
Big with the anguish of the bursting  
brain:  
Laocoon's form, Laocoon's fateful pain.  
A frescoed dream on flickering walls of  
fire!

## III.

## AT LAST.

IN youth, when blood was warm and  
fancy high,  
I mocked at death. How many a quaint  
conceit  
I wove about his veiled head and feet.  
Vaunting aloud. *Why need we dread  
to die?*  
But now, enthralled by deep solemnity.  
Death's pale phantasmal shade I darkly  
greet:  
Ghostlike it haunts the hearth, it haunts  
the street.  
Or drearier makes drear midnight's  
mystery.

Ah, soul-perplexing vision! oft I deem  
That antique myth is true which pic-  
tured death  
A masked and hideous form all shrank  
to see;  
But at the last slow ebb of mortal  
breath,  
Death, his mask melting like a night-  
mare dream,  
Smiled,—heaven's high-priest of Im-  
mortality!

## IV.

## A PHANTOM IN THE CLOUDS.

ALL day the blast, with furious ramp  
and roar,  
Sweeps the gaunt hill-tops, piles the  
vapors high,  
Thro' infinite distance, up the tortured  
sky—  
Till to one nurtured on the ocean-  
shore,  
It seems—with eyes half-shut to hill  
and moor—  
The anguished sea waves' multitudinous  
cry—  
It changes! deepening . . . Christ! what  
agony  
Doth some doomed spirit on these  
wild winds outpour!  
At last a lull! stirred by slow wafts of  
air!  
When lo! o'er dismal wastes of stormy  
wreck,  
Cloud-wrought, an awful form and face  
abhorred!  
Thine, thine, Iscariot! smitten by mad  
despair,  
With lurid eyeballs strained, and writh-  
ing neck,  
Round which is coiled a blood-red  
phantom cord!

## V.

## JAPONICAS.

BENEATH the sullen slope of shadowy  
skies,  
Midmost this flowerless, wind-bewil-  
dered space

(Once a fair garden, now a desert-  
place)

Ah! what voluptuous hues are these  
that rise

In sudden lustre, on my startled eyes?  
They glow like roses on an orient face,  
Glimpsed in swift flashes of enchant-  
ing grace,

'Twixt the shy harem's gold-wrought  
tapestries!

Ye bright Japonicas! your glorious  
gleam

Tints with strange light the enamored  
waves of air,

And wafts of such coy fragrance round  
you float

Fancy transcends these boundaries  
blanched and bare,

For beauty lures her in a ravishing  
dream

Of roseate lips, dark locks, and swan-  
white throat!

## VI.

## THE USURPER.

FOR weeks the languid southern wind  
had blown,

Fraught with Floridian balm; thro'  
winter skies

We seemed to catch the smile of April's  
eyes;

A queenly waif, from her far temperate  
zone

Wayfaring—half bewildered and alone,  
Yet, by the delicate fervor of her grace.

And the arch beauty of her changeful  
face,

Making an alien empire all her own.

So day by day that sweet usurper's reign  
Gladdened the world. One eve the  
south wind sighed

Her soft soul out; the north wind raved  
instead;

All night he raved; when morning  
dawned again,

Winter, rethroned, looked down with  
scornful pride

Where April, dying, bowed her golden  
head!

## VII.

## DECEMBER SONNET.

ROUND the December heights the clouds  
are gray —  
Gray, and wind-driven toward the  
stormy west,  
They fly, like phantoms of malign un-  
rest,  
To fade in sombre distances away.  
A flickering brightness o'er the wreck  
of day,  
Twilight, like some sad maiden, grief-  
oppressed,  
Broods wanly on the farthest mountain  
crest;  
All nature breathes of darkness and  
decay  
Now from low meadow land and drowsy  
stream.  
From deep recesses of the silent vale,  
Night-wandering vapors rise formless  
and chill,  
When, lo! o'er shrouded wood and  
shadowy hill,  
I mark the eve's victorious planet  
beam,  
Fair as an angel clad in silver mail!

## VIII.

## A COMPARISON.

I THINK, ofttimes, that lives of men may  
be  
Likened to wandering winds that come  
and go,  
Not knowing whence they rise, whither  
they blow  
O'er the vast globe, voiceful of grief or  
glee.  
Some lives are buoyant zephyrs sporting  
free  
In tropic sunshine; some long winds  
of woe  
That shun the day, wailing with mur-  
murs low,  
Through haunted twilights, how  
resting sea;  
Others are ruthless, at  
with might,

Born of deep passion or malign desire:  
They rave 'mid thunder-peals and clouds  
of fire.  
Wild, reckless all, save that some power  
unknown  
Guides each blind force till life be  
overblown,  
Lost in vague hollows of the fathomless  
night.

## IX.

## FATE, OR GOD?

BEYOND the record of all eldest things,  
Beyond the rule and regions of past  
time,  
From out Antiquity's hoary-headed  
rime,  
Looms the dread phantom of a King of  
kings:  
Round His vast brows the glittering  
circlet clings  
Of a thrice royal crown; behind Him  
climb,  
O'er Atlantean limbs and breast sublime  
The sombre splendors of mysterious  
wings;  
Deep calms of measureless power, in  
awful state,  
Gird and uphold Him; a miraculous rod,  
To heal or smite, arms His infallible  
hands:  
Known in all ages, worshipped in all  
lands,  
Doubt names this half-embodied mys-  
tery — Fate,  
While Faith, with lowliest reverence,  
whispers — God!

## X.

## SONNET.

Written on a fly-leaf of "The Rubaiyat"  
of Omar Kháyám, the astronomer-poet  
of Persia.

WHO deems the soul to endless death is  
thrall,  
't no life breathes beyond that mo-  
ment dire,  
a every sense seems lost as out-  
blown fire;—



Must walk, clothed round with darkness  
 like a pall,  
 Or on false gods of sensual rapture call;  
*Pluck the rich rose-leaves! lift the wine  
 cup higher!*  
*Wed delicate Instinct to malign Desire,*  
*(Like some Greek girl clasped by a bar-  
 barous Gaul!)*  
 Thus Omar preached, thus practised,  
 centuries since;  
 Wine, beauty, idlesse, orgies crowned  
 by lust;  
 All these he chanted in voluptuous song;  
 Yet who shall vow, deep Thinker!  
 poet Prince!  
 Thy rhythmic creed the unnatural voice  
 of wrong,  
*If man, dust-born, shall still return to  
 dust!*

## XI.

## EARTH ODORS — AFTER RAIN.

LIFE-YIELDING fragrance of our mother  
 earth!  
 Benignant breath exhaled from summer  
 showers! —  
 All Nature dimples into smiles of flowers,  
 From unclosed woodland, to trim gar-  
 den girth; —  
 These perfumes softening the harsh  
 soul of dearth,  
 Are older than old Shinar's arrogant tow-  
 ers, —  
 And touched with visions of rain-fresh-  
 ened hours,  
 On Syrian hill-slopes 'ere the patriarch's  
 birth!  
 Nay! the charmed fancy plays a subtler  
 part! —  
 Lo! banished Adam, his large, wonder-  
 ing eyes  
 Fixed on the trouble of the first dark  
 cloud!  
 Lo! tremulous Eve, — a pace behind,  
 how bowed, —  
 Not dreaming, 'midst her painful pants  
 of heart,  
 What balm shall fall from yonder omi-  
 nous cloud!

## XII.

## SONNET.

I LAY in dusky solitude reclined,  
 The shadow of sleep just hovering  
 o'er mine eyes,  
 When from the cloudland in the west-  
 ern skies  
 Rose the strange breathings of a tremu-  
 lous wind.  
 As sound upborne o'er water, through  
 some blind,  
 Mysterious forest, so this wind did rise.  
 Laden, methought, with half-articu-  
 late sighs,  
 Wafted like spirit-memories o'er the  
 mind.  
 Then the night deepened; through my  
 window-bars  
 I saw the gray clouds billowing fast and  
 free,  
 Smit by the splendor of the solemn  
 stars.  
 Then the night deepened; wind and  
 cloud became  
 A blended tumult, crossed by spears of  
 flame,  
 While the great pines moaned like a  
 moaning sea.

## XIII.

## POVERTY.

ONCE I beheld thee, a lithe mountain  
 maid,  
 Embrowned by wholesome toils in lusty  
 air;  
 Whose clear blood, nurtured by strong,  
 primitive cheer,  
 Through Amazonian veins, flowed una-  
 fraid.  
 Broad-breasted, pearly-teethed, thy pure  
 breath strayed,  
 Sweet as deep-uddered kine's curled in  
 the rare  
 Bright spaces of thy lofty atmosphere,  
 O'er some rude cottage in a fir-growth  
 glade.  
 Now, of each brave ideal virtue stripped,  
 O Poverty! I beheld thee as thou art,

A ruthless hag, the image of woeful  
dearth  
Or brute despair, gnawing its own  
starved heart.  
Thou ravening wretch! fierce-eyed and  
monster-lipped,  
Why scourge forevermore God's beaute-  
teous earth?

## XIV.

## WASTE.

How many a budding plant is born to  
fade!  
How many a May bloom wilt with quick  
decay!  
Ofttimes the ruddiest rose holds briefest  
sway,  
While heart and sense are evermore be-  
trayed  
Alike in nature's shine and nature's  
shade.  
Vainly earth-tendered seeds have sought  
the day.  
And countless threads of rivulets wind  
astray,  
For one that joins the vast main unem-  
braced.  
O prodigal nature, why this spendthrift  
waste  
Of light, strength, beauty given to earth  
or man?  
Thy richest realm may lie in trackless  
seas,  
Thy tenderest loves, perchance, die un-  
embraced;  
While faith and reason watch thy 'wil-  
dering plan,  
The baffled soul's cloud-compassed Hy-  
ades!

## XV.

## A MORNING AFTER STORM.

ALL night the north wind blew; the  
harsh north rain  
Lashed like a spiteful whip at roof and  
sill.  
Now the pale morning lowers, bewil-  
dered, chill.

Leaning her cheek against the misted  
pane,  
Like some worn outcast, sick in heart  
and brain.  
The wind that raved all night, though  
muttering still,  
Moans fitfully, with faint, irresolute  
will,  
Through dreary interludes, its low re-  
frain.  
In desolate mood I turn to rest once  
more,  
Closing my senses to this hopeless  
morn,  
This dismal wind. Still must the  
morning gloom,  
Still the low sighing pass sleep's muffled  
door,  
Till her veiled life is filled with dreams  
forlorn,  
With hollow sounds and bodeful shapes  
of doom.

## XVI.

## DEAD LOVES.

WHENE'ER I think of old loves wan and  
dead,  
Of passion's wine outpoured in senseless  
dust,  
Of doomed affection's and long-buried  
trust,  
Through all my soul an arctic gloom is  
shed;  
And ah! I walk the world disquieted.  
Thou, my own love! white lily of April!  
must  
Thy beauty, perfume, radiance, all be  
thrust  
Earthward, to crumble in a grass-grown  
bed?  
Yea, sweet, 'tis even so! How long, how  
long  
The dust of her who once was tender  
Ruth,  
Hath mouldered dumbly! And how oft  
the clod,  
Which binds, like hers, all perished love  
and truth,

Strives with pale weeds to veil death's  
hopeless wrong,  
Or through chill lips of flowers appeals  
to God!

## XVII.

## NATURE AT EASE.

I FEEL the kisses of this lingering  
breeze,  
Warm, close, and ardent as the lips of  
love,  
I quaff the sunshine streaming from  
above,  
Like mellow wine of antique vintages;  
Now, serene nature, at luxurious ease,  
Her deep toils perfected, and richly  
rife  
With subtlest meanings — all her opu-  
lent life  
Reveals in tremulous brakes and whis-  
pering seas.  
If, then, the reverent soul doth lean  
aright,  
Close to those voices of wood, wind, and  
wave,  
What wondrous secrets bless the spir-  
itual ear,  
Born, as it were, of music winged with  
light,  
Sweeter than those strange songs which  
Orpheus gave  
To earth and heaven, while both grew  
dumb to hear!

## XVIII.

## THE CNYDIAN ORACLE.

*"What though the Isthmus lacks an  
ocean-gate,  
Dulce not the soil! If Jove had willed  
it so,  
His watchful power had opened long ago  
The channelled pathways of a billowy  
strait."*  
Thus spake the Cnydian Oracle but too  
late;  
For men are blinder than blind winds  
that blow  
Round midnight waves, yet idly dream  
they know

Some Hermes' trick to steal the goods of  
fate.

Fools! trench your Isthmus, delving fast  
and deep;

And as ye toil uplift your boastful  
breath

O'er swift inrushings of the turbulent  
sea —

Too swift, by heaven! for, lo! its  
treacherous sweep

O'erwhelms the graded dykes, the oppos-  
ing lea,

While ye that mocked at fate, fate  
whirls to death!

## XIX.

## THE HYACINTH.

HERE in this wrecked storm-wasted gar-  
den-close

The grave of infinite generations fled  
Of flowers that now lay lustreless and  
dead,

As the gray dust of Eden's earliest rose.  
What bloom is this, whose classical  
beauty glows

Radiantly chaste, with the mild splen-  
dor shed

Round a Greek virgin's poised and per-  
fect head,

By Phidias wrought 'twixt rapture and  
repose?

Mark the sweet lines whose matchless  
ovals curl

Above the fragile stem's half shrink-  
ing grace,

And say if this pure hyacinth doth not  
seem

(Touched by enchantments of an an-  
tique dream)

A flower no more, but the low droop-  
ing face

Of some love-laden, fair Athenian girl?

## XX.

## THE WOOD FAR INLAND.

I CLOSE mine eyes in this lone inland  
place,

This wood, far inland, thronged with  
sombrous trees —



**"Now, serene nature, at luxurious ease,  
    . . . all her opulent life  
Reveals in tremulous brakes and whispering seas."**

But most I dream of Shropshire's meadow grass,  
 Its grazing herds, and sweet hay-scented air;  
 An ancient hall near a slow rivulet's mouth;  
 A church vine-clad; a graveyard glooming south;  
 These are the scenes through which I fain would pass;  
 There lived my sires, whose sacred dust is there.

## XXIV.

## DISAPPOINTMENT.

Ah! phantom pale, why hast thou come with pace  
 Thus slow, and such sad deprecating eyes?  
 What! dost thou dream *thy* presence could surprise  
 One the born vassal of thy realm and race?  
 I looked in boyhood on thy clouded face;  
 In youth disservered from all cordial ties,  
 Heard the deep echoes of thy murmured sighs  
 In many a shadowy, grief-enshrouded place;  
 Therefore, O sombre Genius, be not coy!  
 When have we dwelt so alien and apart  
 I could not faintly feel thy muffled heart?  
 Till even should hope's fruition softly shine,  
 I well might deem beneath the mask of joy  
 Lurked that sad brow, those twilight eyes of thine!

## XXV.

## THE LAST OF THE ROSES.

A ROYAL rose! A rose how darkly red!  
 A proud, voluptuous, full blown flower,  
 that sways  
 Her sceptre o'er the wind-swept garden-ways,

With mantling cheek and bold, imperious head!

Alone she lifts above yon desolate bed  
 A beauty past all terms of raptured praise,

The statelier that she rules in autumn days,

When every rival flower is dimmed or dead!

A haughty Cleopatra! there she smiles,  
 Unwitting that her sovereign love is lost —

Her Antony! a gorgeous sunflower bloom!

Ah! vain henceforth her beauty and sweet wiles!

Queen! art thou blind? Thy lord hath met his doom;

His Actium came with winter's vanguard — Frost!

## XXVI.

## THE AXE AND PINE.

ALL day, on bole and limb the axes ring,  
 And every stroke upon my startled brain

Falls with the power of sympathetic pain;

I shrink to view each glorious forest-king

Descend to earth, a wan, discrowned thing.

Ah, Heaven! beside these foliaged giants slain,

How small the human dwarfs, whose lust for gain

Hath edged their brutal steel to smite and sting!

Hark! to those long-drawn murmurings, strange and drear!

The wail of Dryads in their last distress;  
 O'er ruined haunts and ravished loveliness

Still tower those brawny arms; tones coarsely loud

Rise still beyond the greenery's waning cloud,

While falls the insatiate steel, sharp, cold and sheer!

## XXVII.

## BETROTHAL NIGHT.

THROUGH golden languors of low glim-  
mering light,  
Deep eyes, o'erbrimmed with passion's  
sacred wine,  
Heart-purfumed tears—yearning towards  
me, shine  
Like stars made lovelier by faint mists  
at night;  
Her cheeks, sweet lilies change to roses  
bright,  
Blown in love's realm, fed by his breath  
divine;  
And even those virginal tremors seem  
the sign  
Of perfect joy through love's unchal-  
lenged right:  
O happy breast, that heaviest soft and  
fair  
Through silvery clouds of luminous silk  
and lace!  
O, gracious hands, O flower-enwoven  
head,  
O'er which hope's charm its delicate  
warmth has shed!  
While smiles and blushes wreath her  
dimpling face,  
Set in the splendor of dark Orient hair!

## XXVIII.

## "THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA."

GRIEVOUS, in sooth, was luckless Sind-  
bad's plight,  
Saddled with that foul monster of the  
sea:  
But who of some soul-harrowing weight  
is free?  
And though we veil our woe from public  
sight,  
Full many a weary day and dismal  
night,  
It chafes our spirits sorely! Yet, for  
thee,  
Whate'er, O friend, thy special grief  
may be,  
Range thou against it all thy manhood's  
might.

Thus, though thou may'st not smite on  
brow or breast  
That irksome incubus, be sure some  
day  
The load that blights shall droop and fall  
away,  
And thou, because of torture borne so  
well,  
Shall pass from out thy long, malign  
unrest  
And walk thy future paths invincible!

## XXIX.

## TWO PICTURES.

SHE stood beneath the vine-leaves flushed  
and fair;  
The dimpling smiles around her tender  
mouth,  
Seemed born of mellow sunshine of  
the South;  
A light breeze trembled in her unbound  
hair;  
No young Greek goddess, in the violet  
air  
Of vales immortal, shone with purer  
grace;  
A delicate glory touched her form and  
face,  
Whence the sweet soul looked on us,  
nobly bare, —  
As Heaven itself, unclouded: — thus she  
stood,  
But when I saw her next (O God! the  
woe!)  
Love, mirth, and life had fled forever  
more;  
Prostrate she lay, about her a dark wood,  
And many a helpless mourner, walling  
low;  
The cruel waves which drowned her  
lapped the shore.

## XXX.

## THE MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

ONCE in the twilight hour there stole on  
me  
A strange, sweet spirit! In her tender  
eyes

Shone a far beauty, like the morning  
 skies,  
 And tranquil was she as a summer sea;  
 An air of large, divine benignity  
 Breathed, like a living garb of spiritual  
 dyes  
 About her — with the gentle fall and  
 rise  
 Of her heart pulses tuned to mystery —  
 But, as I gazed, a sadness deep as death  
 Crept o'er the beauty of her brow serene  
 And a faint tremor stirred her shadowy  
 lips:  
 "Thou know'st me not," she sighed,  
 with mournful breath:  
 "How can'st thou know me? Lo,  
 through Fate's eclipse,  
 Thou seest, too late, too late, thy MIGHT  
 HAVE BEEN!"

## XXXI.

## NIGHT-WINDS IN WINTER.

WINDS! *are* they winds? — or myriad  
 ghosts, that shriek?  
 Ghosts of poor mariners, drowned in  
 Northern seas,  
 Beside the surf-tormented Hebrides,  
 Whose voices now of tide-born terror  
 speak  
 In tones to blanch the boldest listener's  
 cheek?  
 Hark! how they thunder down the far-off  
 leas,  
 Sweep the scourged hills, and smite the  
 woodland trees,  
 To die where towers you glittering moun-  
 tain-peak!  
 A moment's stillness! Then with lus-  
 tier might  
 Of wing and voice, these marvellous  
 wraiths of air  
 Fill with dread sound the ominous  
 heights of night.  
 Athwart their stormful breath the star-  
 throgs fade:  
 How dimmed is Cassiopeia's radiant  
 chair,  
 While Perseus droops, touched by trans-  
 figuring shade!

## XXXII.

## TO THE QUEBULOUS POETS.

THROW by the trappings of your tinsel  
 rhyme!  
 Hush the crude voice, whose never-  
 ending wall  
 Blights the sweet song of thrush, or  
 nightingale, —  
 Set to the treble of our querulous time;  
 Is earth grown dim? Hath heaven  
 her grace sublime,  
 Her pomp of clouds, and winds, and  
 sunset showers  
 Merged in the twilight of funereal hours,  
 And Time's death-signal struck its iron  
 chime?  
 O! false, frail dreamer! not one tiniest  
 note  
 From yonder green-girt copse, but whis-  
 pers "shame!" —  
 Love, beauty, rapture, swell the war-  
 bler's throat. —  
 The self-same joy, the passion blithe  
 and young,  
 Thrilled by the force of whose immaca-  
 late flame,  
 The first glad stars, the stars of morn-  
 ing, sung!

## XXXIII.

## IN THE PORCH.

IN this old porch, fast mouldering to de-  
 cay,  
 But wreathed in vines and girt by shad-  
 ovy trees,  
 All day I hear the dreamful hum of  
 bees,  
 Soft-rustling foliage, and the fragrant  
 sway  
 Of breezes borne from some far ocean  
 bay;  
 And oft with half-closed eyelids,  
 stretched at ease —  
 The pines above me voiced like distant  
 seas —  
 I seem to mark a coy young Dryad stray  
 Out from the tangled greenery over-  
 head,

Her brow leaf-crowned, her eyes of twilight fire  
 Deep with Arcadian mysteries softly shed;  
 And near her, wafted from the ambrosial South,  
 A white-limbed Nereid, round whose balmy mouth  
 Breathe the wave's freshness and the wind's desire.

XXXIV.

## THE PHANTOM—SONG.

IN museful hours, when thoughts of grace divine  
 Roll wave-like up the stormless strand of dreams;—  
 When that which *is* grows vague as that which *seems*,—  
 I mark, far-off, a radiant shade incline  
 From heaven to earth,—whose face of marvellous shine,  
 (Half veiled in mystic beauty), softly beams  
 With delicate lustres, and elusive gleams,  
 Caught from some viewless Eden—hyaline:—  
 Ethereal, as the wavering hues that start  
 From chorded rainbows;—lingering scarce so long  
 As the last sun-ray flashed in twilight's eye,  
 I hail this phantom of a perfect song;—  
 And I, some day, shall pass the phantom by,—  
*To feel the embodied music next my heart!*

XXXV.

## SMALL GRIEFS AND GREAT.

How oft by trivial griefs our spirits tossed  
 Drift vague and restless round this changeeful world!  
 Yet when great sorrows on our lives are hurled,  
 And fate on us has wreaked his uttermost,

O'er wounded breasts our steadfast arms are crossed;  
 We front the blast, silent, with unbowed head  
 And stoic mien; for fear with hope is dead;  
 And calm the voice which whispers: "*All is lost!*"  
 Thence to the end, our being, stripped and bare  
 Of love, and peace, and gracious joys of earth,  
 Like some storm-shattered tree, its withered might  
 May lift defiant, dauntless in its dearth,  
 Seeming Death's bolt, that final stroke, to dare,  
 A dreary watcher on a blasted height!

XXXVI.

## THE SHALLOW HEART!

"PITY her," say'st thou, "pity her!"  
 nay, not I!  
 Her heart is shallow as yon garrulous rill  
 That froths o'er pebbles: grief, *true* grief is still,  
 Deathfully solemn as eternity  
 Thro' whose dread realm its silent fancies fly  
 Seeking the lost and loved; sorrows that kill  
 Life's hope, are like those poisons which distil  
 Their noiseless dews beneath the midnight sky:—  
 Their venom works in secret! gnaws the heart,  
 And withers the worn spirit, albeit no sign  
 Shows the sad inward havoc, till some day,  
 (Pledging our calm friend o'er the purpling wine),  
 Sudden, he falls amongst us, and we start  
 At a low whisper, "He has passed away!"



## XXXVII.

## THE STORMY NIGHT.

[Written on a stormy Christmas night (1873).]

How roars this wintry tempest, fierce  
and loud,  
Borne from far passes of the ice-locked  
hills!  
How raves this desolate rain, whose tu-  
mult fills  
The whole dark heaven up-piled with  
cloud on cloud;  
While yonder quivering pine-trees,  
drenched and bowed,  
Blend their strange moaning with the  
noise of rills,  
And one swift stream, whose angry  
clarion shrills,  
Piercing the mists which o'er it cling and  
crowd!  
Roar, mighty wind! rave on, thou mer-  
ciless rain!  
Uproot, and madly ravage — whilst ye  
may;  
Your furious voices smite mine ears in  
vain,  
For, housed and warmed by this bright  
fireside cheer, —  
Safe as on some calm springtide's calm-  
est day,  
I mock your ire, nor heed your wild de-  
spair.

## PERSONAL SONNETS.

## I.

TO HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

I THINK earth's noblest, most pathetic  
sight  
Is some old poet, round whose laurel-  
crown  
The long gray locks are streaming softly  
down: —  
Whose evening, touched by prescient  
shades of night,  
Grows tranquillized, in calm, ethereal  
light: —

Such, such art *thou*, O master! worthier  
grown  
In the fair sunset of thy full renown, —  
Poising, perchance, thy spiritual wings  
for flight!  
Ah, heaven! why shouldst thou from thy  
place depart?  
God's court is thronged with minstrels,  
rich with song;  
Even now, a new note swells the immac-  
ulate choir, —  
But thou, whose strains have filled our  
lives so long,  
Still from the altar of thy reverent  
heart  
Let golden dreams ascend, and thoughts  
of fire!

## II.

TO GEORGE H. BOKER.

Addressed to George H. Boker, of Philadel-  
phia — after the perusal of *Sonnets* contained  
in his "Plays and Poems."

It hath been thine to prove what use  
and power,  
What sweetness, and what glorious  
strength belong  
To the brief compass of that slandered  
song  
We term the Sonnet. Thine hath been  
the dower  
Whereby its richly fruitful, fairy shower  
Of poesy hath flooded o'er our hearts;  
And thine the dominant magic which  
imparts  
Life to its thrilling music. Hour by  
hour,  
My soul from this small fountain, in  
whose deep  
The sunshine of thy passionate genius  
plays,  
Doth drink delight, till fancy melts in  
sleep,  
Charmed by the witchery of thy perfect  
lays, —  
Not dreamless, but flushed through with  
joys that keep  
Some fervent gleam of youth's volup-  
tuous days.

## III.

TO ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.  
 NOT since proud Marlowe poured his  
 potent song  
 Through fadeless meadows to a marvel-  
 lous main,  
 Has England hearkened to so sweet a  
 strain —  
 So sweet as thine, and ah! so subtly  
 strong!  
 Whether sad love it mourns, or wreaks  
 on wrong  
 The rhythmic rage of measureless dis-  
 dain,  
 Dallies with joy, or swells in fiery pain,  
 What ravished souls the entrancing  
 notes prolong!  
 At thy charmed breath pale histories  
 blush once more:  
 See! Rosamond's smile! drink love from  
 Mary's eyes;  
 Quail at the foul Medici's midnight  
 frown.  
 Or hark to black Bartholomew's an-  
 guished cries!  
 Blent with far horns of Calydon widely  
 blown  
 O'er the grim death-growl of the ensan-  
 guined boar!

But crowned by hope, winged with  
 august desire,  
 Thy muse soars loftiest, when her breath  
 is drawn  
 In stainless liberty's ethereal dawn,  
 And "songs of sunrise" her warm lips  
 suspire:  
 High in auroral radiance, high and  
 higher,  
 She buoys thee up, till, earth's gross  
 vapors gone,  
 Thy proud, flame-girdled spirit gazes on  
 The unveiled fount of freedom's crystal  
 fire.  
 When thou hast drained deep draughts  
 divinely nurst  
 'Mid lucid lustres, and hale haunts of  
 morn,

On lightning thoughts thy choral thun-  
 ders burst  
 Of rapturous song! Apollo's self, new-  
 born,  
 Might thus have sung from his Olympian  
 sphere;  
 All hearts are thrilled; all nations  
 hushed to hear!

## IV.

TO EDGAR FAWCETT.

ART thou some reckless poet, fiercely  
 free,  
 Singing vague songs an errant brain  
 inspires?  
 Mad with the ravening force of inward  
 fires,  
 Whose floods o'erwhelm him like a  
 masterless sea?  
 No! art and nature wisely blend in  
 thee!  
 Thy soul has learned from lays of loftiest  
 lyres  
 What laws should bind weird fancy's  
 wild desires,  
 Rounded to rhythmic immortality!  
 Thus golden thoughts in golden har-  
 monies meet:  
 Thy fairy conceptions reel not with false  
 glow,  
 Through frenzied realms by metrical  
 motley swayed;  
 But passion-curbed, with voices strong  
 and sweet,  
 Born of regret or rapture, love or woe,  
 Pass from rich sunshine to dew-haunted  
 shade!

## V.

CARLYLE.

O GRANITE nature; like a mountain  
 height  
 Which pierces heaven! yet with found-  
 ations deep,  
 Rooted where earth's majestic forces  
 sleep,  
 In quiet breathing on the breast of  
 night :—

Proud thoughts were his that scaled the  
infinite  
Of loftiest grasp, and calm Elysian  
sweep;  
Fierce thoughts were his that burnt the  
donjon keep  
Of ancient wrong, to flood its crypts  
with light:  
Yet o'er his genius, firm as Ailsa's  
rock,  
Large, Atlantean, with grim grandeur  
dowered,—  
Love bloomed, and buds of tender  
beauty flowered:—  
Yet down his rugged massiveness of  
will  
Unscarred by alien passion's fiery shock,  
Mercy flowed melting like an Alpine  
rill!

## VI.

TO JEAN INGELow.

BRAVE lyrist! like the sky-lark, heaven-  
possessed,  
Thy glance is sunward; and thy soul  
grown wise,  
Fronts the full splendor of Apollo's  
eyes,  
While following still thy muse's high  
behest:  
Strength, sweetness, subtlety, are all  
expressed  
In thy clear lays, — whether they dare  
the skies,  
O'ertopping radiant dawns, or rill-like  
rise,  
To thread with rhythmic pulse earth's  
pastoral breast!  
Proud inspiration, hand in hand with  
act

Hath made thy winged feet beautiful  
along  
The halcyon heights of thine eternal song:  
So near our human love, though born  
afar,  
Its mellow concord on the listener's  
heart  
Melts with the softness of a falling star!

## VII.

TO M. I. P.

YOur gracious words steal o'er like the  
breeze  
That blows from far-off southland isles  
benign,—  
All steeped in perfume, sweet as fairy  
wine,  
Yet touched with salt keen breathings  
of the seas!  
What smiling thoughts of tender min-  
istries  
Passionless service, and strong faith  
divine,  
Rest with this pictured sister's face of  
thine,  
And sister's love:— (blent fire and  
balms of ease!)  
O love! a two-faced shield of light thou  
art,  
Whose golden-sided glamour long hath  
shone,  
In wedded bliss and affluence on my  
life;  
A sister's love — the fair shield's silvery  
zone,  
Turns on me now! — thy deathless  
fervor, wife,  
Blends with the sweetness of this new  
found heart!

## MACDONALD'S RAID. — A.D. 1780.

AS NARRATED MANY YEARS AFTER BY A VETERAN OF "MARION'S BRIGADE."

[The hero of the following ballad, though a Scotchman by birth, was a determined, enthusiastic Whig. Marion's men, among whom he served during the whole of the war for Independence, regarded him with an admiration bordering sometimes upon awe. His gigantic size and strength, and a species of "Berserker rage" which came over him in battle, were the means by which he performed many a feat of "derring-do," characteristic rather of the Middle Ages than the times of practical "Farmer George." Of all his desperate escapades, the raid through Georgetown, South Carolina, with a force of only four troopers (Georgetown being a fortified post, defended by a garrison of three hundred English regulars), proved, naturally enough, the most notorious. Authorities differ as to the origin and details of this remarkable affair. Some inform us that Sergeant Macdonald had been commanded by Marion to take a small party of his men and merely reconnoitre the enemy's lines, and that he chose to exceed his orders; while others affirm that Macdonald himself, acting independently, as he often did, proposed the mad scheme of "bearding the British lion in his den," as a charming relief to the *ennui* of camp life. The latter authorities have furnished the groundwork of our ballad. "Nothing," observes Horry, in his Life of General Marion, "ever so mortified the British as did this mad frolic. 'That half a dozen d—d young rebels,' they exclaimed, 'should thus dash in among us, in open daylight, and fall to cutting and slashing the *king's troops* at this rate! And after all, to gallop away without the least harm in hair and hide! 'Tis high time to turn our bayonets into pitchforks, and go to foddering the cows.'"]

I REMEMBER it well; 'twas a morn dull and gray,  
 And the legion lay idle and listless that day,  
 A thin drizzle of rain piercing chill to the soul,  
 And with not a spare bumper to brighten the bowl,  
 When Macdonald arose, and unsheathing his blade,  
 Cried, "Who'll back me, brave comrades? I'm hot for a raid.  
 Let the carbines be loaded, the war harness ring,  
 Then swift death to the Redcoats, and down with the King!"

We leaped up at his summons, all eager and bright,  
 To our finger-tips thrilling to join him in fight;  
 Yet he chose from our numbers *four* men and no more.  
 "Stalwart brothers," quoth he, "you'll be strong as fourscore,  
 If you follow me fast wheresoever I lead,  
 With keen sword and true pistol, stanch heart and bold steed.  
 Let the weapons be loaded, the bridle-bits ring,  
 Then swift death to the Redcoats, and down with the King!"

In a trice we were mounted; Macdonald's tall form  
 Seated firm in the saddle, his face like a storm  
 When the clouds on Ben Lomond hang heavy and stark,  
 And the red veins of lightning pulse hot through the dark;  
 His left hand on his sword-belt, his right lifted free,  
 With a prick from the spurred heel, a touch from the knee,  
 His lithe Arab\* was off like an eagle on wing —  
 Ha! death, death to the Redcoats, and down with the King!

\* Macdonald owned a magnificent horse, named Selim, of pure Arabian blood, which he obtained possession of through a cunning trick played at the expense of a certain wealthy Carolina Tory.

'Twas three leagues to the town, where, in insolent pride,  
 Of their disciplined numbers, their works strong and wide,  
 The big Britons, oblivious of warfare and arms,  
 A soft *dolce* were wrapped in, not dreaming of harms,  
 When fierce yells, as if borne on some fiend-ridden rout,  
 With strange cheer after cheer, are heard echoing without,  
 Over which, like the blast of ten trumpeters, ring,  
 "Death, death to the Redcoats, and down with the King!"

Such a tumult we raised with steel, hoof-stroke, and shout,  
 That the foemen made straight for their inmost redoubt,  
 And therein, with pale lips and cowed spirits, quoth they,  
 "Lord, the whole rebel army assaults us to-day.  
 Are the works, think you, strong? God of heaven, what a din!  
 'Tis the front wall besieged — have the rebels rushed in?  
 It must be; for, hark! hark to that jubilant ring  
 Of 'death to the Redcoats, and down with the King!'"

Meanwhile, through the town like a whirlwind we sped,  
 And ere long be assured that our broadswords were red;  
 And the ground here and there by an ominous stain  
 Showed how the stark soldier beside it was slain:  
 A fat sergeant-major, who yawed like a goose,  
 With his waddling bow-legs, and his trappings all loose,  
 By one back-handed blow the Macdonald cuts down,  
 To the shoulder-blade cleaving him sheer through the crown,  
 And the last words that greet his dim consciousness ring  
 With "Death, death to the Redcoats, and down with the King!"

Having cleared all the streets, not an enemy left  
 Whose heart was unpierced, or whose headpiece unleft,  
 What should we do next, but — as careless and calm  
 As if we were scenting a summer morn's balm  
 'Mid a land of pure peace — just serenely drop down  
 On the few constant friends who still stopped in the town.  
 What a welcome they gave us! One dear little thing,  
 As I kissed her sweet lips, did I dream of the King? —

Of the King or his minions? No; war and its scars  
 Seemed as distant just then as the fierce front of Mars  
 From a love-girdled earth; but, alack! on our bliss,  
 On the close clasp of arms and kiss showering on kiss,  
 Broke the rude bruit of battle, the rush thick and fast  
 Of the Britons made 'ware of our rash *ruse* at last;  
 So we haste to our coursers, yet flying, we fling  
 The old watch-words abroad, "Down with Redcoats and King!"

As we scampered pell-mell o'er the hard-beaten track  
 We had traversed that morn, we glanced momentarily back,  
 And beheld their long earth-works all compassed in flame:  
 With a vile plunge and hiss the huge musket-balls came,  
 And the soil was ploughed up, and the space 'twixt the trees  
 Seemed to hum with the war-song of Brobdingnag bees;  
 Yet above them, beyond them, victoriously ring  
 The shouts, "Death to the Redcoats, and down with the King!

Ah! *that* was a feat, lads, to boast of! What men  
 Like you weaklings to-day had durst cope with *us* then?  
 Though I say it who should not, I am ready to vow  
 I'd o'ermatch a half score of your fops even now —



"I remember it well; 'twas a morn cold and gray, . . .  
 A thin drizzle of rain piercing chill to the soul."

The poor puny prigs, mincing up, mincing down,  
 Through the whole wasted day the thronged streets of the town:  
 Why, their dainty white necks 'twere but pastime to wring —  
 Ay! *my* muscles are firm still; *I* fought 'gainst the King!

Dare you doubt it? well, give me the weightiest of all  
 The sheathed sabres that hang there, unlooped on the wall;  
 Hurl the scabbard aside; yield the blade to my clasp;  
 Do you see, with one hand how I poise it and grasp  
 The rough iron-bound hilt? With this long hissing sweep  
 I have smitten full many a foeman with sleep —  
 That forlorn, final sleep! God! what memories cling  
 To those gallant old times when we fought 'gainst the King.

## THE BATTLE OF KING'S MOUNTAIN.

Supposed to have been narrated by an aged volunteer, who had taken part in the fight, to certain of his friends and neighbors, upon the fiftieth anniversary of the conflict, viz. Oct. 7, 1830.

[Written for the Centennial Celebration of the battle on Oct. 7, 1860.]

OFTTIMES an old man's yesterdays o'er his frail vision pass,  
Dim as the twilight tints that touch a dusk-enshrouded glass;  
But, ah! youth's time and manhood's prime but grow more brave, more bright,  
As still the lengthening shadows steal toward the rayless night.

So deem it not a marvel, friends, if, gathering fair and fast,  
I now behold the gallant forms that graced our glorious past,  
And down the winds of memory hear those battle bugles blow,  
Of strifeful breath, or wails of death, just fifty years ago.

Yes, fifty years this self-same morn, and yet to me it seems  
As if time's interval were spanned by a vague bridge of dreams,  
Whose cloud-like arches form and fade, then form and fade again.  
Until a beardless youth once more, 'mid stern, thick-bearded men,

I ride on Rhoderic's bounding back, all thrilled at heart to feel  
My trusty "smooth-bore's" deadly round, and touch of stainless steel —  
And quivering with heroic rage — that rush of patriot ire  
Which makes our lives from head to heel, one seething flood of fire.

There are some wrongs so blackly base, the tiger strain that runs,  
And sometimes maddens thro' the veins, of Adam's fallen sons,  
Must mount and mount to furious height, which only blood can quell,  
Who smite with hellish hate must look for hate as hot from hell!

And hide it as we may with words, its awful need confessed,  
War is a death's-head thinly veiled, even warfare at its best:  
But *we* — heaven help us! — strove with those by lust and greed accurst,  
And learned what untold horrors wait on warfare at its worst.

You well may deem my soul in youth dwelt not on thoughts like these:  
Timed to strong Rhoderic's tramp my pulse grew tuneful as the breeze,  
The hale October breeze, whose voice, borne from far ocean's marge,  
Pealed with the trumpet's resonance, which sounds "To horse, and charge!"

A mist from recent rains was spread about the glimmering hills;  
Far off, far off, we heard the lapse of streams and swollen rills,  
While mingling with them, or beyond, from depths of changeful sky,  
Rose savage, sullen, dissonant, the eagle's fauished cry.

We marched in four firm columns, nine hundred men and more,  
Men of the mountain fortresses, men of the sea-girt shore;

Rough as their centuried oaks were these, those fierce as ocean's shocks,  
When mad September breaks her heart across the Hatteras rocks.

We marched in four firm columns, till now the evening light  
Ghnted through rifted cloud and fog athwart the embattled height,  
Whereon, deep-lined, in dense array of scarlet, buff or dun,  
The haughtiest British "regulars" outflashed the doubtful sun.

Horsemen and footmen centred there, unflinching rank on rank,  
And the base Tories circled near, to guard each threatened flank;  
But, pale, determined, sternly calm, our men, dismounting, stood,  
And at their leader's cautious sign, crouched in the sheltering wood.

What scenes come back of ruin and wrack, before those ranks abhorred!  
The cottage floor all fouled with gore, the axe, the brand, the cord;  
A hundred craven deeds revived, of insult, injury, shame—  
Deeds earth nor wave nor fire could hide, and crimes without a name.

Such thoughts but hardened soul and hand. Ha! "dour as death" were we,  
Waiting to catch the voice which set our unleashed passion free.  
At last it came deep, ominous, when all the mountain ways  
Burst from awed silence into sound, and every bush ablaze,

Sent forth long jets of wavering blue, wherefrom, with fatal dart,  
The red-hot Deckhard bullets flew, each hungering for a heart;  
And swift as if our fingers held strange magic at their tips,  
Our guns, reloaded, spake again from their death-dealing lips,

Again, again, and yet again, till in a moment's hush,  
We heard the order, "Bay'nets charge!" when, with o'er-mastering rush,  
Their "regulars" against us stormed, so strong, so swift of pace,  
They hurled us backward bodily for full three furlongs' space.

But, bless you, lads, we scattered, dodged, and when the charge was o'er,  
Felt fiercer, pluckier, madder far, than e'er we had felt before;  
From guardian tree to tree we crept, while upward, with proud tramp,  
The British lines had slowly wheeled to gain their 'leaguered camp.

Too late; for ere they topped the height, Hambright and Williams strode  
With all their armed foresters, across the foeman's road,  
What time from right to left there rang the Indian war-whoop wild,  
Where Sevier's tall Waturga boys through the dim dells defiled.

"Now, by God's grace," cried Cleaveland (my noble colonel he),  
Resting (to pick a Tory off) quite coolly on his knee—  
"Now, by God's grace, we have them! the snare is subtly set;  
The game is bagged; we hold them safe as pheasants in a net."



And thus it proved; for galled and pressed more closely hour by hour,  
 Their army shrank and withered fast, like a storm-smitten flower;  
 Blank-eyed, wan-browed, their bravest lay along the ensanguined land,  
 While of the living, few had 'scaped the bite of ball or brand.

Yet sturdier knave than Ferguson ne'er ruled a desperate fray:  
 By heaven! you should have seen him ride, rally, and rave that day,  
 His fleet horse scoured the stormy ground from rock-bound wall to wall,  
 And o'er the rout shrilled wildly out his silvery signal call.

"That man must die before they fly, or yield to us the field."  
 Thus spake I to three comrades true beneath our oak-tree shield;  
 And when in furious haste again the scarlet soldiers came  
 Beside our fastness like a fiend, hurtling through dust and flame,

Their sharp demurrers on the wind our steadfast rifles hurled,  
 And one bold life was stricken then from out the living world.  
 But, almost sped, he reared his head, grasping his silver call,  
 And one long blast, the faintest, last, wailed round the mountain wall.

Ah, then the white flags fluttered high; then shrieks and curses poured  
 From the hot throats of Tory hounds beneath the avenger's sword —  
 Those lawless brutes who long had lost all claims of Christian men,  
 Whereof by sunset we had hanged the worst and vilest ten.

We slept upon the field that night, 'midmost our captured store,  
 That seemed in gloating eyes to spread and heighten more and more.  
 Truly the viands ravished us; our clamorous stomachs turned  
 Eager toward the provender for which they sorely yearned.

Apicius! what a feast was there blended of strong and sweet,  
 Cured venison hams, Falstaffian pies, and fat pigs' pickled feet:  
 While here and there, with cunning leer, and sly Silenus wink,  
 A stoutish demijohn peered out, and seemed to gurgle, "Drink!"

Be sure we revelled merrily, till eyes and faces shone;  
 Our lowliest felt more lifted up than any king on throne;  
 Our singers trolled; our jesters' tongues were neither stiff nor dumb;  
 And, by Lord Bacchus! how we quaffed that old Jamaica rum!

Perchance (oh, still, through good and ill, his honest name I bless!) —  
 Perchance my brother marked in me some symptoms of excess;  
 For gently on my head he laid his stalwart hand and true,  
 And gently led me forth below the eternal tent of blue;

He led me to a dewy nook, a soft, sweet, tranquil place,  
 And there I saw, upturned and pale, how many a pulseless face!

Our comrades dead — they scarce seemed fled, despite their ghastly scars,  
But wrapped in deep, pure folds of sleep beneath the undying stars.

My blood was calmed; all being grew exalted as the night,  
Whence solemn thoughts sailed weirdly down, like heavenly swans of white,  
With herald strains ineffable, whose billowy organ-roll —  
Thrilled to the loftiest mountain peaks and summits of my soul.

Then voices rose (or seemed to rise) close to the raptured ear,  
Yet fraught with music marvellous of some transcendent sphere,  
While fancy whispered: These are tones of heroes, saved and shriven,  
Who long have swept the harps of God by stormless seas in heaven!

Heroes who fought for right and law, but, purged from selfish dross,  
Above whose conquering banners waved a shadowy Christian cross:  
Whose mightiest deed no ruthless greed had smirched with sad mistrust,  
And whose majestic honors scorn all taint of earthly dust.

Doubt, doubt who may! but, as I live, on the calm mountain height  
Those voices soared, and sank, and soared up to the mystic night.  
A dream! perhaps; but, ah! such dreams in ardent years of youth  
Transcend, as heaven transcends the earth, your sordid daylight truth.

The voices soared, and sank, and soared, till, past the cloud-built bars,  
They fainted on the utmost strand and silvery surge of stars.  
Then *something* spoke: Your friends who strove the battle tide to stem,  
Who died in striving, have passed up beyond the stars with them.

What, lads! you think the old man crazed to talk in this high strain,  
Or deem the punch of years gone by still buzzes in his brain?  
Down with such carnal fantasy! nor let your folly send  
Its blunted shafts to smite the truth you may not comprehend.

Would ye be worthy of your sires who on King's Mountain side  
Welcomed dark death for freedom's sake as bridegrooms clasp a bride?  
Then must your faith be winged above the world, the worm, the clod,  
To own the veiled infinitudes and plumbless depths of God!

The roughest rider of my day shrank from the atheist's sneer,  
As if Iscariot's self were crouched and whispering at his ear;  
The stormiest souls that ever led our mountain forays wild  
Would oftentimes show the simple trust, the credence, of a child.

True faith goes hand in hand with power — faith in a holler charm  
Than fires the subtlest mortal brain, the mightiest mortal arm;  
And though 'tis right in stress of fight "to keep one's powder dry,"  
What strength to feel, beyond our steel, burns the great Captain's eye!

## THE HANGING OF BLACK CUDJO.

(1780.)

## A DIALECT BALLAD.

The incidents of this Ballad are literally true. Our readers will find them circumstantially recorded in Horry's "Life of Marion." Captain Snipes (Phoebus! *what a name*) was a notable patriot during the Revolutionary war, but is likely to be known to the future, rather as the master of Cudjo, than as an active member of a Partisan Band.

He resided in the low country of South Carolina; and Cudjo's quaint *patois* is an *exact* representation of the broken English spoken by the slaves of that section in the *ante bellum* times:

"WELL, Maussa! if you wants to heer, I'll tell you 'bout um 'true.  
Doh de berry taut ob dat bad time is fit to tun me blue;  
A sort ob brimstone blue on black, wid jist a stare o' wite,  
As when dem cussed Tory come fur wuck deir hate dat nite!

"Mass Tom and me was born, I tink, 'bout de same year and day,  
And we was boys togedder, Boss! in ebbery sport and play —  
Ole missis gib me to Mass Tom wid her las' failin bret:  
Aud so I boun' — in conscience boun', fur stick to him till det.

"At las' ole Maussa, *he* teek sick wid chill and feber high,  
And de good Dokter shake 'e head, and say he sur fur die.  
And so true 'nuff de sickness bun' and freeze out all he life,  
And soon ole Maussa sleep in peace long side e' fateful wife.

"Den ebbery ting de lan' could show, de crap, de hoss, de cows.  
Wid all dem nigger in de fiel', and all dem in de house,  
Dey b'long to my Mass Tom fur true, and so dat berry year,  
He pick *me* out from all de folks to meck me Obersheer!

"I done my bes', but niggars, sir — dey seems a lazy pack.  
*One* buckra man will do mo' wuck dan five and twenty black.  
I jeered dem and I wolloped dem, and cussed dem too — but law!  
De Debble self could nebber keep dem rascal up to tau!

"But still we done as good as mose, wid cotton, rice and corn,  
Till in de year dat '*Nuttin' tall*'\* (my oldest chile) was born,  
De Tory war, de bloody war, 'bout which you've heerd dem tell,  
Come down on all de country yeh, as black and hot as hell!

"Mass Tom he jine de Whig, you know; in course I follow him,  
And Gor' a mighty! how he slash dem Tory limb from limb,  
When fust I heer the war-cry shout and see de flow ob blood' —  
I long fur hide this woolly head like cootah in de mud!

---

\* The negro is a humorous creature. We have credibly heard of a negro father whose son being *abnormally small*, at birth, coolly had the ebony youngster christened, "*Nuttin' Tall*" (*Nothing at all*). We have borrowed so characteristic a name, and bestowed it upon Cudjo's supposititious "son and heir."

This is the single touch of fancy in the whole ballad.

“ But Lawd! I soon git n’used to blood, de broadswed and de strife,  
And nebber care a pig tail eend fur ’tudder folks’ life;  
Only, I heerd my Maussa yell thro’ all dem battle-call,  
And sneaked dis big fat karkiss up betwixt him and de ball!

“ Well, sir! one day Mass Tom come home, ’e close and hoss blood red,  
And say sense all dem Tory kill, he gwine dat once to bed;  
‘ I needs a long fine snooze,’ sez he, ‘ so don’t you wake me soon,  
‘ But Cudjo! let me snore oncalled till late to-morrow noon!’;

“ Somehow, my mine misgib me dem; so by de kitchin light,  
I sot and smoked, with open ears, a listenen’ true de nite:  
And when de fus cock crow, I heer a fur soun, down de road,  
And knowed ’um fur de hosses’ trot, and de clash ob spur and sword:

“ Quick I run outside in de yad, and quick outside de gate—,  
And there I see de ’Tory come as fas’ and sho’ as fate;  
I run back to my Maussa room, and den wid pull and push  
I shub ’um by de side way out, and hide ’um in de bush!

“ He only hab he nite shut on, and how he rabe and cuss!  
‘ But Maussa! hush,’ sez I, ‘ before you meck dis matter wuss;’  
I tun to fin’ some hidin’ too, but de moon shine bright as sun,  
And de d—d ’Tory ride so swif’, dey ketch me on de run.

“ Den, dey all screech togedder, loud, ‘ Boy, is your Boss widin ?  
‘ Say where he hide, or by de Lawd! your life not wut a pin!’  
I trembled at dese horrid tret, but sweer my Boss was fled,  
Yet when, or where, poor Cudjo knowed no better dan de dead.

“ One Tory debble teck my head, another teck my foot  
To drag me like a Chrismass hog to de ole oak tree root;  
Dey fling a tick rope roun’ my neck, dey drawed me quick and high,  
I seed a tousan’ million star a-flashin’ from de sky.

“ And den I choke, and all de blood keep rushin’ to my head  
I tried to yell, but only groaned, and guggled low enstead;  
Till ebbery ting growed black as nite, and my last taut was, sho,  
Dis nigger is a gone coon now, he’ll see de wuld no mo’!

“ But, Boss! I was a hale man den, and tough as tough could be;  
Dey loose de rope and let me down quite safely from de tree;  
But when I seed and heered agen, come de same furious cry,  
‘ Say where your Maussa hide, you dog, quick, quick, or else you die!’

“ I gib dem de same answer still, and so, dey hang me higher;  
I feel de same hot chokin’ sob; see de same starry fire;  
Dey heng me twice, tree time dey heng; but de good Lawd was dere,  
And Jesus self, he bring me safe from all de pain and fear.

“ Mose dead dey lef’ me, stiff and cole, stretched on de swashy groun’  
While all de house, big house and small, was blazin’, fallin’ roun’.  
When pore Mass Tom from out de briar creep in he half-torn shut,  
To bless and ring me by bote han’ dere in de damp and dut!

“ And when de war was ober, Boss, Mass Tom, he come to me,  
And say, I sabe he life dat time, and so he meck me free;  
‘ I’ll gib you house and lan’ (sez he.) ‘ and wid dem plough and mule,’  
I tenk him kind, ‘ but Boss,’ (says I,) ‘ wha’ meck you tink me fool?’

“ ‘ If you, Mass Tom, was like,’’ (sez I,) *some* buckra dat I know,  
Cudjo bin run and hug de swamp — Lawd bless you! — long ago,  
But I got all ting dat I want, wid not one tax to pay;  
Now go long, Maussa! why you wish for dribe ole Cuj away?

“ ‘ I nebber see free nigger yet, but what he lie and steal,  
Lie to ‘e boss, ‘e wife, ‘e chile, in de cabin, and de fiel’ —  
And as for tieflin’, dem free cuss is all like ‘ lightfoot Jack,’  
Who carry de lass blanket off from he sick mudder back!

“ ‘ I stays wid you, (sez I again,) I meck de nigger wuck,  
I wuck myself, and may be, Boss, we’ll bring back de ole luck;  
But don’t you pizen me no more wid talk ob “ freedom sweet,”  
But sabe dat gab to stuff de years of de next fool you meet!’ ”

— • —  
CHARLESTON RETAKEN.

DEC. 14, 1782.

As some half-vanquished lion,  
Who long hath kept at bay  
A band of sturdy foresters  
Barring his blood-stained way —  
Sore-smitten, weak and wounded —  
Glares forth on either hand;  
Then, cowed with fear, his cavernous lair  
Seeks in the mountain land:

So when their stern Cornwallis,  
On Yorktown heights resigned,  
His sword to our great leader,  
Of the stalwart arm and mind —  
So when both fleet and army  
At one grand stroke went down  
And Freedom’s heart beat high once  
more  
In hamlet, camp and town: —

Through wasted Carolina,  
Where’er from plain to hill  
The Briton’s guarded fortresses  
Uprose defiant still,  
Passed a keen shock of terror,  
And the breasts of war-steeled men  
Quailed in the sudden blast of doom  
That smote their spirits then.

“ Our cause is lost!” they muttered,  
Pale browed, with trembling lips;  
“ Our strength is sapped, our hope o’er-  
whelmed,  
In final, fierce eclipse;  
And what to us remaineth  
But to blow our earthworks high,  
And hurl our useless batteries  
In wild fire to the sky?”

'Twas done! each deadly fastness  
 In flaming fragments driven  
 Farther than e'er *their* souls could  
 climb  
 Along the path to heaven —  
 Coastward the Britons hurried,  
 In reckless throngs that flee  
 Wild as December's scattered clouds  
 Storm-whirled toward the sea.

In Charleston streets they gathered,  
 Each dazed wisecrack's head  
 Wagging, perchance in prophecy,  
 Or more perchance in dread.  
 Horsemen and footmen mingled,  
 They talked with bated breath  
 Of the shameful fate that stormed the  
 gate,  
 Of wrack, and strife, and death!



“Three hundred noble vessels  
 Rose on the rising flood,  
 Wherein with sullen apathy  
 Embarked those men of blood.”

Meanwhile our squadrons hastened,  
 Keen as a sleuth-hound pack  
 That near their destined quarry  
 By some drear wild-wood track,  
 Ah, Christ! what desolation  
 Before us grimly frowned!  
 The roadways trenched and furrowed,  
 The gore-ensanguined ground,  
 With many a mark (oh! deep and dark!)  
 Made ghastlier by the star-white frost,  
 'Twixt broken close and thorn-hedge-  
 row,  
 Of desperate charge and mortal blow  
 In conflicts won or lost!

Proud manors once the centre  
 Of jubilant life and mirth,  
 Now silent as the sepulchre,  
 Begirt by ruin and dearth;

Their broad domains all blackened  
 With taint of fire and smoke,  
 And corpses vile with a death's-head  
 smile,  
 Swung high on the gnarled oak.

No sportive flocks in the pasture,  
 No aftermath on the lea;  
 No laugh of the slaves at labors  
 No chant of birds on the tree;  
 But all things bodeful, dreary,  
 As a realm by the Stygian flood,  
 With odors of death on the uplands,  
 And a taste in the air of blood!

On, on our squadrons hastened,  
 Sick with the noisome fumes  
 From man and beast unburied,  
 Through the dull funeral gloom

Till in unsullied sunshine  
 One glorious morn we came  
 Where far aloof, o'er tower and roof,  
 We viewed our brave St. Michael's  
 spire  
 Flushed in the noontide flame!

Without their ruined ramparts,  
 Beyond their shattered lines,  
 Just where the soil, bent seaward,  
 In one long slope declines,  
 The foe had sent their messengers,  
 Who vowed the vanquished host  
 Would leave unscathed our city,  
 Would leave unscathed our coast!

Only due time they prayed for  
 (Meek, meek our lords had grown)  
 To range their broken legions,  
 And rear ranks overthrown —  
 So that, though smirched and tainted  
 Their martial fame might be,  
 In order meet their stately fleet  
 Should bear them safe to sea.

Who win, may well be gracious;  
 We did not stint their boon,  
 Though the white kerchiefs of our  
 wives  
 Were fluttered in the noon,  
 On house-top and on parapet  
 Each token fair and far  
 Shone through the golden atmosphere  
 Like some enchanted star!

Next morn their signal-cannon  
 Roared from the vanward wall,  
 And to the ranks right gleefully  
 We gathered, one and all,  
 Our banners scarred in many a fight,  
 Could still flash back the winter light.  
 And proud as knights of old renown,  
 With sunburnt hands and faces  
 brown,

Borne through the joyous, deepening  
 hum.

'Mid ring of life and beat of drum,  
 'Mid purpling silk and flowery arch,  
 Our long, unwavering columns march;

And yet (good sooth!) we almost seem  
 Like weird battalions of a dream;  
 Our souls bewildered scarce can deem  
 We tread once more,  
 Released, secure,  
 With fetterless footsteps as of yore.  
 The pathways of the ancient town!

And still, as borne through dreamland,  
 We glanced from side to side,  
 While mothers, wives and daughters  
 rushed

To greet us, tender-eyed;  
 Each hoary patriot proudly  
 Lifted his brave, gray head,  
 And the forms of careworn captives  
 rose  
 Like spectres from the dead —

Like spectres whom the trumpets  
 Of freedom's cohorts call  
 To burst their grave-like dungeon,  
 And spurn their despot's thrall;  
 To take once more the image  
 Of manhood's loftier grace.  
 And, chainless now, the universe  
 Look boldly in the face!

And the young girls scattered flowers,  
 And the lovely dames were bright  
 With something more than beauty,  
 In their faithful hearts' delight;  
 The very babes were crowing  
 Shrill welcome to our bands,  
 And, perched on matron shoulders,  
 clapped  
 Blithely their dimpled hands:

And naught but benedictions  
 Lightened that sacred air,  
 Freed from the awful burden  
 Of two long years' \* despair —  
 Two years so thronged with anguish,  
 So fraught with bitter wrong,  
 They seemed in mournful retrospect  
 Well nigh a century long.

\* The precise period of the British occupa-  
 tion of Charleston was two years, seven  
 months and two days.

But if years of mortal being  
 Trebled threescore and ten,  
 At the last, our souls exultant,  
 Would recall that scene again,  
 With its soft "God bless you, gentlemen?"  
 Its greetings warm and true,  
 And the tears of bliss our lips did  
 kiss  
 From dear eyes black or blue.

Nathless, despite our rapture,  
 Down to the harbor-mouth  
 We dogged the Britons doomed to  
 fly  
 Forever from our South!  
 They left as some foul vulture  
 Might leave his mangled prey.  
 And pass with clotted beak and wing  
 Reluctantly away.

Three hundred noble vessels  
 Rose on the rising flood,  
 Wherein with sullen apathy  
 Embarked those men of blood;  
 Then streamed their admiral's pen-  
 nant —  
 The northwest breeze blew free;  
 With sloping mast, and current fast,  
 Out swept their fleet to sea.

We strained our vision waveward,  
 Watching the white-winged ships,  
 Till the vague clouds of distance  
 Wrapped them in half eclipse:  
 And still we strained our vision  
 Till, dimmer and more dim,  
 The rearmost sail, a phantom pale,  
 Died down the horizon's rim.

Thus, o'er the soul's horizon,  
 Did thoughts of blood and war,  
 Through time's enchanted distances  
 Receding, fade afar,  
 Thus o'er the soul's horizon,  
 Our strife's last ghastly fear,  
 Like all the rest, down memory's west  
 Did slowly disappear.

TO THE AUTHOR OF "THE VICTO-  
 RIAN POETS."

So keen, so clear thy genius, that no mist  
 Of subtlest phrase can baffle or delay  
 The lance-like, swift illuminating ray,  
 Wherewith, O art-enamored annalist,  
 Thy lightning logic cleaves the elusive  
 gist  
 Of thoughts Protean; or, in lowlier  
 play,  
 Smites tinselled weakness to a red dis-  
 may—  
 As swordsmen smite by one deft turn of  
 wrist.  
 Yet oft that glittering and remorseless  
 blade  
 Thy logic wields is dropped that thou  
 may'st take  
 Some gracious lyre, and sing with liquid  
 breath  
 By many a haunted dell and shadowy  
 lake,  
 Where faun and naiad wander undis-  
 mayed,  
 Lays of Arcadian love, or painless  
 death.

HERA.

(IN THE HERAEUM.)

ONCE between Argos and Mycaenæ shone  
 Half-velled in myrtle and mysterious  
 pine,  
 The ivory splendors of that holy shrine,  
 Wherein embowered, majestic, and alone  
 Her sculptured brow with wavering locks  
 o'erblown,  
 As if by airs ethereal and divine,  
 Smiled the calm goddess of Olympian  
 line,  
 Girt by awed silence, like a sacred zone:  
 Save that mild murmurings sounding  
 vague and far,  
 From suppliant women—through frail-  
 hearted dread  
 Touched the shy pulses of that strange  
 repose,  
 Till the last petal dropped from cen-  
 set's rose,



And gleamed through twilight, like a  
flawless star,  
The chastened glory of proud Hera's  
head!

—♦—  
*BELOW AND ABOVE.*

I SEE in the forest coverts  
The sheen of shimmering lights;  
They gleam from the dusky shadows,  
They flash from the ghostly heights:

No lights of the tranquil homestead  
Or the hostel warm are they;  
But warring flames of the Titan fire  
Which stormed through the woods to-  
day.

Each darts with an aimless passion,  
Or sinks into lurid rest  
Like the crest of a wounded serpent  
drooped  
On the scales of its treacherous breast.

Let them idly dart and quiver,  
Or sink into lurid rest —  
Above, like a child-saint's face in heav-  
en,  
There's a sole, sweet star in the west.

Ah! slowly the earth-lights wither;  
But the star, like a saintly face,  
Shines on, with the steadfast strength of  
peace.  
In its God-appointed place.

—♦—  
*THE WOODLAND GRAVE.*

We roam, my love and I,  
'Mid the rich woodland grasses,  
Where, through dense clouds of green-  
ery,  
The softened sunshine passes;  
But near a rivulet's lonely wave  
We come half startled, on — a grave!

We pause, my love and I,  
Each thinking, "*Who* reposes  
Here, in the forest tranquilly,  
Beneath these sylvan roses?"  
When, 'twixt the wild flowers' tangled  
flame,  
Wind-parted, we beheld — a name.

We mark, my love and I,  
With thoughts that swiftly vary,  
Of doubt, surprise, solemnity,  
The flickering name of "*Mary*;"  
My love's own name! — but flickering  
*there*,  
Each letter burns a hint of fear.

We shrink, my love and I,  
Pierced by prescient sorrow,  
"To think, my sweet! that *thou* may'st  
die  
To-night or else to-morrow!"  
Each murmurs sadly, under breath:  
"O love, malignly watched by death!"

We turn, my love and I,  
From that strange grave together,  
And o'er our spirits' darkened sky  
Roll mists of mournful weather;  
With boding grief our hearts are rife —  
Death's shadow steals 'twixt love and  
life!

—♦—  
*A CHARACTER.*

"The most impenetrable mask for a ma-  
licious design is — well-acted candor," — *From*  
*the French of De Larrinière.*

YES, madame, I know you better, far  
better than those can know  
Whose plummet of judgment never is  
dropped to the depths below;

Whose test is a surface-seeming, the  
glitter of lights that gleam  
With a moment's rainbow **ustre on the**  
shifting face of the **sun.**

Because you have bold, blunt manners,  
because you can broadly smile,  
With the devil's own art in veiling your  
infinite gulfs of guile,

There are some who bring you homage,  
who vow your nature is free  
And frank as the life of summer, when  
fullest on land and sea:

And yet your soul is a charnel where  
many a ruined name  
Rots, festering vile and loathsome in  
burial-shrouds of shame;

A sepulchre dark, that's crowded with  
ashes of old and young,  
Dead fames you have foully poisoned  
with your pitiless serpent's tongue!

Beware! by the God above us, who part-  
eth the false from true,  
There's a curse in the future, *some-  
where* — an ambushed curse for you.

It will burst from the wayside fiercely,  
when least you dream of a blow.  
A tigerish fate in its fury, to rend, and  
to lay you low!

But ere it has sucked your heart's blood,  
and stifled your latest breath,  
The thought of *your* victims, woman!  
will sharpen the sting of death!

—◆—  
LYRIC OF ACTION.

'Tis the part of a coward to brood  
O'er the past that is withered and  
dead:  
What though the heart's roses are ashes  
and dust?  
What though the heart's music be  
fled?  
Still shine the grand heavens o'er-  
head,

Whence the voice of an angel thrills  
clear on the soul,  
"Gird about thee thine armor, press on  
to the goal!"

If the faults or the crimes of thy youth  
Are a burden too heavy to bear,  
What hope can rebloom on the desolate  
waste

Of a jealous and craven despair  
Down, down with the fetters of fear!  
In the strength of thy valor and man-  
hood arise,  
With the faith that illumines and the will  
that defies.

"*Too late!*" through God's infinite  
world,  
From his throne to life's nethermost  
fires,

"*Too late!*" is a phantom that flies at  
the dawn  
Of the soul that repents and aspires.  
If pure thou hast made thy desires.  
There's no height the strong wings of  
immortals may gain  
Which in striving to reach thou shalt  
strive for in vain.

Then, up to the contest with fate,  
Unbound by the past, which is dead!  
What though the heart's roses are ashes  
and dust?

What though the heart's music be  
fled?  
Still shine the fair heavens o'erhead;  
And sublime as the seraph who rules in  
the sun  
Beams the promise of joy when the con-  
flict is won!

—◆—  
BY A GRAVE.

IN SPRING.  
AH, mother! canst thou feel her? . . .  
spring has come!  
Birds sing, brooks murmur, woods no  
more are dumb;

And for each grief that vexed thine  
earthly hour,  
Nature has kissed thy grave! and lo! . .  
a flower.

Here wails no nightingale against her  
thorn,  
But like the incarnate soul of May-  
flushed morn,  
The mocking-bird above thy splendor  
sings,  
With rapturous throat, and upraised  
quivering wings;

Half drowsed between brief glooms and  
mellowed gleams,  
The sun smiles gently, like a god in  
dreams:  
His sacred light across thy place of  
rest,  
Steals with the softness of a hand that  
blessed!

Thro' magic ministers of spring-tide  
grace,  
Thy grave transfigured lifts a radiant  
face,  
O'er which elusive golden shadows  
run,  
A waft of wind-wrought dimples in the  
sun;

Ah! if thy soul, that loved all beauty  
here,  
May yet look earthward from her holier  
sphere,  
'Twill joy to mark, from even those  
heights august,  
In what a mantle Nature wraps thy  
dust.

And still the brown bird rears his poet-  
head,  
And pours his matchless music o'er the  
dead,  
'Till touched and wakened by the mar-  
vellous flow,  
I seem to hear a thrilled heart throb be-  
low!

*SEVERANCE.*

Ah! who can tell how strong the tie  
Which subtly binds us, heart to heart,  
Till the dark master, Death, comes  
nigh,  
To wrench our kindred lives apart ?

Then, pondering on the sombre bed,  
Where one we cherished dumbly  
lies,  
With pulseless hands, low-sunken head,  
And the wan droop of curtained eyes,

The torpor of the death-sleep cold,  
The mystic quiet's awful spell,  
Whose fathomless silence seems to hold  
Such pathos of supreme farewell,

Our clouded spirits throb and reel,  
As if some viewless power in air  
Had driven a keen ethereal steel  
Through quivering heart-depths of  
despair!

Paled is the dream of heavenly grace,  
The jasper sea, the unwaning calms;  
We can but mark that breathless face,  
Those sightless orbs and folded palms!

A moment since, she softly spake,  
Her soul looked forth still hale and  
clear;  
Now, who her wondrous sleep can  
break ?  
And she! where hath she vanished, —  
where ?

Ah, Christ! yon shape of ice-locked  
clay,  
Yon fading image, frail and thin,  
Touched, as we gaze, by swift decay,  
Shrivelled without, and wan within,

What is it but an empty husk,  
O'er which (at Death's mysterious  
kiss)  
Freed Psyche soars from doubt and dusk  
Beyond earth's crumbling chrysalis ?

Ay! "dust to dust!"—the soil she trod  
 Claims soon her outworn fleshly dress;  
 But her true life puts forth, with God,  
 Fresh blooms of everlastingness!

—◆—  
 TWO GRAVES.

I.

IT glooms forlornly 'mid wan ocean  
 dunes,  
 A desolate grave-mound on a dreary  
 lea,  
 Touched by sad splendors of gray-misted  
 moons,  
 Or veiled by shivering spray-drifts  
 from the sea.

There, all unmarked, the dim days come  
 and go;  
 No tender hand renews its crumbling  
 turf,  
 On which the o'erwearied sea-winds  
 faintly blow,  
 Blent with far murmurings of the  
 mournful surf.

Vaguely the unaccompanied hours flit  
 by,  
 Wrapped in pale clouds that some-  
 times mutely weep  
 Some ghost of Lethe haunts that hollow  
 sky,  
 Where even the doubtful noontides  
 seem asleep,

Save when autumnal tempests fiercely  
 rise,  
 Baring the harbor-mouth's black teeth  
 of rocks,  
 And like a Maenad, with wild hair and  
 eyes,  
 Raves from the North the infuriate  
 Equinox.

II.

Here, peace divine, o'er glimmering  
 grove and grass,  
 Hallows the sunshine in the noon's  
 warm lull;

Ethereal shadows gently pause, or  
 pass,  
 Flecking with gold the hill-slope beau-  
 tiful.

This grave, all wreathed with flowers  
 and glad with spring  
 Looks skyward like a half-veiled,  
 museful eye,  
 Which answers subtly while the wood-  
 birds sing  
 Heaven's smile of forecast immortal-  
 ity.

Can deathly dust pervade a spot so  
 sweet?  
 Or hath the form it guarded stolen  
 away,  
 And ere its hour of ransom, gone to  
 meet  
 The unborn soul of Resurrection Day?

—◆—  
 THE WORLD.

QUATRAINS.

THE world is older than our earliest  
 dates;  
 All thoughts, all feelings, all desires, all  
 fates,  
 Were known and tested, long ere  
 Adam's crime  
 Set the keen sword of flame at Eden-  
 gates!

Billions of years on billions more have  
 fled,  
 Since first love's kiss a maiden cheek  
 turned red;  
 Since the first mother nursed her inno-  
 cent babe—  
 The first wild mourner wept above his  
 dead.

These ancient clods our vagrant feet dis-  
 place,  
 May once have held the loftiest soul of  
 grace;

This dateless dust that dims our garden  
flowers,  
May once have smiled—a beauteous  
woman's face!

Older than all man's wisdom and his  
dreams,  
Older than all which is, than all which  
seems,  
Our world rolls on, where wrapped in  
cloud-like fire,  
Phantasmal, pale, her awful death-morn  
gleams!

—◆—  
*THE MAY SKY.*

O SKY! O lucid sky of May!  
O'er which the fleecy clouds have  
stolen,  
In bands snow-white, and glimmering-  
gray,  
Or heart-steeped in a lustre golden.

O sky! that tak'st a thousand moods,  
Enshadowed now, and now out-beam-  
ing,  
Swept by low winds like interludes  
Of music 'twixt soft spells of dreaming,

Type of the poet's soul thou art  
In spring-time of his teeming fancies,  
When heavenly glammers brim his heart,  
And heavenly glory lights his glances;

As morning's dubious vapors form  
In wavering lines and circlets tender,  
Pure as an infant's brow, or warm  
With tintings of a primrose splendor;

Thus o'er the poet's soul his thought  
Pale first as mist-wreaths scarce cre-  
ated,  
With fire-keen breaths of ardor fraught,  
From radiance born, to beauty mated,

Takes shape like yonder cloud out-  
spanned  
Above the murmurous woodland  
spaces,

Whose brightening rifts, methinks, are  
grand  
With mystic lights and marvellous  
faces;

Or, merges in some fancy vain,  
Yet rare beyond the worldling's  
measure;  
Some delicate cloudlet of the brain  
That melts far up its quivering azure!

—◆—  
*A LYRICAL PICTURE.*

COMPOSED NEAR THE SEA-COAST.

SEE! see!  
How the shadows steal along,  
Blending in a golden throng,  
Softly, lovingly;  
From each mossed and quaint tree-col-  
umn,  
Stretched toward the dimpling river,  
How they quiver!  
While in low, pathetic tone  
Twilight's herald-breeze is blown  
Down the sunset solemn!

Hear! hear!  
Dropped from gray mists, circling high,  
The sea-wending curlew's cry,  
Strangely wild and drear;  
Echoed by a voice that thrills us—  
From the murmurous verge of ocean—  
Voice that fills us  
With a sense of mystery old,  
And vague memories which enfold  
Many a weird emotion.

Turn! turn!  
From yon loftier cloud-land dun;  
Mark what splendors of the sun  
Westward throb and burn —  
Burn as if some glorious angel  
Blessed the air and land and river  
With his mute evangel:  
All things own so rich a grace  
That in Heaven's divine embrace  
Earth seems clasped forever!

## LAMIA UNVEILED.

HER step is soft as a fay's footfall,  
 And her eyes are wonderful founts of  
 blue;  
 But I've seen that small foot spurning  
 hearts,  
 And the soul that burns so strangely  
 through  
 Those orbs of blue,  
 O! is't a *human* soul at all?

I never have gazed on their cloudless  
 light,  
 But there came a chill to my blood and  
 brain,  
 And their ominous beauty hath struck  
 me dumb  
 With a secret and nameless pain:  
 Ay, blood and brain  
 Grew cold as with spells of a witch's  
 blight.

Is't true? Can it be that a mortal  
 frame  
 Of the tenderest mould, of the fairest  
 grace,  
 May hold but a serpent's soul in sooth?  
 That the white and red of the daintiest  
 face  
 May mask the trace  
 Of subtle guile, that shall wake to  
 flame

And smite with the sting of a poisoned  
 jest,  
 Or the sudden flashing of deadly  
 scorn,  
 If it be, I know that your Charman  
 there,  
 In her fragile grace, is a Lamia, born  
 To blight the morn  
 Of the passion that clings to her faithless  
 breast!

Why, look! As we speak, she has turned  
 her wiles  
 On the gilded wooer her eyes had  
 sought,

While *you* were steeped in the roseate  
 gulf  
 Of a sweet, voluptuous thought:  
*Some* loves are bought,  
 And you'll yearn in vain for her 'wilder-  
 ing smiles.

From this night forth, until placid and  
 meek,  
 (Oh! meek as a saint, as an angel bland!)  
 With a faint rose flushing her brow and  
 cheek,  
 She whispers, "*Adieu! I must give my  
 hand,  
 At the heart's command.  
 Win a worthier love; you have only to  
 seek!*"



## RACHEL.

INSCRIBED TO MRS. M. D., OF GEORGIA.

"A more desolate Rachel than she of old,  
 because, although her children 'are not,' yet  
 the fountain of her tears is sealed."

THE wan September moonbeams, strug-  
 gling down  
 Through the gray clouds upon her des-  
 olate head,  
 The coldness of their muffled radiance  
 shed  
 Faintly above her like a spectral crown:  
 So, glimmering ghostlike in the dreary  
 light,  
 Recounting her strange sorrows o'er  
 and o'er,  
 Her words rang hollow as far waves  
 ashore  
 Rolled through the sombre void of wind-  
 less night.

Nor in her mortal weakness could she win  
 Even brief redemption from the soul's  
 eclipse.  
 She looked like suffering *Patience*, on  
 whose lips  
 Cold fingers press to keep the wild grief  
 in.

Suddenly on the pathos and the woe  
Of that sad vision broke the gleeful  
noise  
From the near playground of blithe  
girls and boys,  
Through shine and shadow hurrying to  
and fro.

A wearier shade the pallid face o'er-  
crossed:  
She shivered, drooping; but through  
flowery bars  
Of the rude trellis sought the distant  
stars,  
Saying, low: "*Where dwell in heaven  
my loved and lost?*"

Dear Christ, I thought, if soft and ruth-  
ful, thou  
Still reign'st beyond us,—ah! assuage  
the pain  
Of this worn soul, more laden than  
hers of Nain;  
Ope thy deep heavens for one swift mo-  
ment now;

And, while her very heart-throbs seem  
to cease  
For rapture, let those hungry eyes  
behold  
Her lost beloved transfigured in thy  
fold,  
Crowned with the palm, walking the  
fields of peace!

—•—

THE SNOW-MESSENGERS.

Dedicated to John Greenleaf Whittier and  
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, with pen por-  
traits of both.

THE pine-trees lift their dark bewildered  
eyes —  
Or so I deem — up to the clouded skies;  
No breeze, no faintest breeze, is heard  
to blow;  
In wizard silence falls the windless  
snow.

It falls in breezeless quiet, strangely  
still;  
'Scapes the dulled pane, but loads the  
sheltering sill.  
With curious hand the fleecy flakes I  
mould,  
And draw them inward, rounded, from  
the cold.

The glittering ball that chills my finger-  
tips  
I hold a moment's space to loving lips;  
For from the northward these pure  
snow-flakes came,  
And to *my* touch their coldness thrills  
like flame.

Outbreathed from luminous memories  
nursed apart,  
Deep in the veiled *adytum* of the heart,  
The type of Norland dearth such snows  
may be:  
They bring the soul of summer's warmth  
to me.

Beholding them, in magical light ex-  
pands  
The changeful charm that crowns the  
northern lands,  
And a fair past I deemed a glory fled  
Comes back, with happy sunshine  
round its head.

For Ariel fancy takes her airiest flights  
To pass once more o'er Hampshire's  
mountain heights,  
To view the flower-bright pastures  
bloom in grace  
By many a lowering hill-side's swarthy  
base;

The fruitful farms, the enchanted vales,  
to view,  
And the coy mountain lakes' transcen-  
dent blue.  
Or flash of sea-waves up the thunderous  
dune,  
With wan sails whitening in the mid-  
night moon;

The cataract front of storm, malignly  
rife  
With deathless instincts of demoniac  
strife,  
Or, in shy contrast, down a shaded dell,  
The rivulet tinkling like an Alpine  
bell;

And many a cool, calm stretch of cul-  
tured lawn,  
Touched by the freshness of the crystal  
dawn,  
Sloped to the sea, whose laughing waters  
meet  
About the unrobed virgin's rosy feet.



"To pass once more o'er Hampshire's mountain heights, . . .  
The fruitful farms, the enchanted vales, to view,  
And the coy mountain lakes' transcendent blue."

*But, tireless fancy, stay the wing that  
roams,  
And fold it last near northern hearts  
and homes.*

These tropic veins still own their kin-  
dred heat,  
And thoughts of thee, my cherished  
South, are sweet—  
Mournfully sweet—and wed to memories  
vast,  
High-hoivering still o'er thy majestic  
past.

But a new epoch greets us; with it blends  
The voice of ancient foes now changed  
to friends.

Ah! who would friendship's outstretched  
hand despise,  
Or mock the kindling light in generous  
eyes?

So, 'neath the Quaker-poet's tranquil  
roof,  
From all dull discords of the world aloof,  
I sit once more, and measured converse  
hold  
With him whose nobler thoughts are  
rhythmic gold;

See his deep brows half puckered in a  
knot  
O'er some hard problem of our mortal  
lot,  
Or a dream soft as May winds of the  
south  
Waft a girl's sweetness round his firm-set  
mouth.

Or should he deem wrong threats the  
public weal,  
Lo! the whole man seems girt with  
flashing steel;



His glance a sword thrust, and his words  
of ire  
Like thunder-tones from some old proph-  
et's lyre.

Or by the hearth-stone when the day is  
done,  
Mark, swiftly launched, a sudden shaft  
of fun;  
The short quick laugh, the smartly smit-  
ten knees,  
And all sure tokens of a mind at ease.

Discerning which, by some mysterious  
law,  
Near to his seat two household favor-  
ites draw,  
Till on her master's shoulders, sly and  
sleek,  
Grimalkin, mounting, rubs his furrowed  
cheek;

While terrier Dick, denied all words to  
rail,  
Snarls as he shakes a short protesting tail,  
But with shrewd eyes says, plain as plain  
can be,  
"Drop that sly cut. I'm worthier far  
than she."

And he who loves all lowliest lives to  
please,  
Conciliates soon his dumb Diogenes,  
Who in return his garment nips with  
care,  
And drags the poet out, to take the air.

God's innocent pensioners in the wood-  
lands dim,  
The fields and pastures, know and trust  
in him;  
And in *their* love his lonely heart is  
blessed,  
Our pure, hale-minded Cowper of the  
West!

The scene is changed; and now I stand  
again  
By one, the cordial prince of kindly men,

Courtly yet natural, comrade meet for  
kings,  
But fond of homeliest thoughts and  
homeliest things.

A poet too, in whose warm brain and  
breast  
What birds of song have filled a golden  
nest,  
Till in song's summer prime their wings  
unfurled,  
Have made Arcadian half the listening  
world,

Around whose eve some radiant grace of  
morn  
Smiles like the dew-light on a mountain  
thorn.  
Blithely he bears Time's envious load to-  
day:  
Ah! the green heart o'ertops the head of  
gray.

Alert as youth, with vivid, various  
talk  
He wiles the way through grove and gar-  
den walk,  
Fair flowers untrained, trees fraught  
with wedded doves,  
Past the cool copse and willow glade he  
loves.

Here gleams innocuous of a mirthful  
mood  
Pulse like mild fire-flies down a dusky  
wood,  
Or keener speech (his leonine head un-  
bowed)  
Speeds lightning-clear from thought's  
o'ershadowing cloud.

O deep blue eyes! O voice as woman's  
low!  
O firm white hand, with kindest  
warmth aglow!  
O manly form, and frank, sweet, courte-  
ous mien,  
Reflex of museful days and nights se-  
rene!

Still are ye near me, vivid, actual still,  
Here in my lonely fastness on the hill;  
Nor can ye wane till cold my life-blood  
flows,  
And fancy fades in feeling's last repose.

What! snowing yet? The landscape  
waxes pale;  
Round the mute heaven there hangs a  
quivering veil,  
Through whose frall woof like silent  
shuttles go  
The glancing glammers of the glittering  
snow.

Yes, falling still, while fond remem-  
brance stirs  
In these wan-faced, unwonted messen-  
gers.  
Dumb storm! outpour your arctic heart's  
desire!  
Your flakes to me seem flushed with  
fairy fire!

TO ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS.

LAST of a stalwart time and race gone  
by,  
That simple, stately, God-appointed  
band,  
Who wrought alone to glorify their  
land,  
With lives built high on truth's eternity,  
While placemen plot, while flatterers  
fawn or lie,  
And foul corruptions, wave on wave,  
expand,  
I see thee rise, stainless of heart as  
hand,  
O man of Roman thought and radiant  
eye!

Through thy frail form, there burn  
divinely strong

The antique virtues of a worthier day;  
Thy soul is golden, if thy head be gray,  
No years can work that lofty nature  
wrong;

They set to concords of ethereal song  
A life grown holier on its heavenward  
way.

THE ENCHANTED MIRROR.

FROM THE PERSIAN.

WHAT time o'er Persia ruled that up-  
right Khan  
Khosru the Good, in Shiraz lived a  
man,  
A beggar-carle, to whose rough hands  
were given —  
I know not how — a mirror clear as  
heaven  
On beauteous, vernal mornings, and  
more bright  
Than streamlets sparkling in midsum-  
mer's light;  
And, strange to say, whose should look  
therein,  
Though uglier than a nightmare dream  
of sin,  
Grew comely as the loveliest shapes we  
know;  
The while — oh, wonder! a fair form and  
face  
Caught straightway somewhat of cele-  
stial grace.

Where'er in twilight dusk, or noontide  
glow  
With swift, firm pace or footstep sad  
and slow,  
Where'er he walked through the broad  
land of palms,  
Or yet his lips unclosed to plead for  
alms,  
The beggar held his mystic treasure  
high  
To glass the forms of those who passed  
him by;  
And all who came within that marvel's  
range,  
Paused spell-bound by the strangely-das-  
zling change;

Lords, ladies, gazed! the prospect  
pleased them well;  
"Ah, heavens!" they sighed, "how  
irresistible!"  
E'en the coarse hag, foul, wrinkled, and  
unclean,  
Beamed like a blushing virgin of six-  
teen.

Hearts are transformed with faces; out-  
ward beauty  
Seems to make quick the inward sense  
of duty;  
For none, of all the charmèd throng that  
pass  
Revivified within the fairy glass,  
But pours upon the beggar pence with  
praise,  
Invoking on his head long, golden days,  
And every joy that lights our mortal  
ways.

In vain! — the beggar sickened. While  
he lay  
In death's cold shadow, prostrate and  
forlorn,  
He bade his wife call to him, on a morn,  
His only son: "Guard well when I am  
dead,"  
Feebly, with fluttering breath, the old  
man said:  
"This mystic glass, whereby great  
things are won —  
Be shrewd, be watchful; do as I have  
done,  
And thou shalt prosper likewise, O my  
son!"

He took the precious gift — that brain-  
less wight —  
But, scorning to employ its powers  
aright,  
Returned all pale and penniless at night.

"Fool!" cried the angry father, "well  
I guess  
Why thus thou seek'st me, pale and  
penniless:  
O stupid dolt! vain peacock! arrant ass!

*Thou hast watched all day thine own  
face in the glass;*

Go to! this foolish fruit of idle pride  
No human heart hath ever satisfied,  
Far less an empty pocket lined with  
gold;

Thy coxcomb pate to base self-love is  
sold!

Yet hearken once again: *he's only wise  
Who dupes the world through flattery's  
mirrored lies;*

*But past all terms of scorn the insensate  
elf*

*Who holds its glass therein to view —  
himself!"*

—◆—  
*THE IMPRISONED SEA-WINDS.*

VOICES of strange sea breezes caught,  
Half tangled in the pine-tree tall,  
With ocean's tenderest music fraught,  
Serenely rise, and sweetly fall.

They charm the lids of wearied eyes,  
And all the dreamy senses bless  
With breath of wave-born symphonies,  
And balm of mild forgetfulness.

'Till o'er the fragrant calms of peace,  
My soul, scarce moved, benignly  
glides,

Or in all sorrows' soft surcease,  
Rocks tranced on the phantom tides:

But still those faint sea voices speak,  
Those prisoned sea winds rise and fall,  
The ghost of sea foam sweeps my cheek,  
And the sea's mystery sighs through  
all.

—◆—  
*BLANCHE AND NELL.*

A BALLAD.

OH, Blanche is a city lady,  
Bedecked in her silks and lace:  
She walks with the mien of a stately  
queen,  
And a queen's imperious grace.

But Nell is a country maiden,  
Her dress from the farmstead loom:  
Her step is free as a breeze at sea,  
And her face is a rose in bloom.

The house of Blanche is a marvel  
Of marble from base to dome;  
It hath all things fair, and costly and  
rare,  
But alas! it is not — home!

Nell lives in a lonely cottage  
On the shores of a wave-washed isle;  
And the life she leads with its loving  
deeds  
The angels behold and smile.

Blanche finds her palace a prison,  
And oft, through the dreary years,  
In her burdened breast there is sad un-  
rest,  
And her eyes are dimmed with tears.

But to Nell her toils are pastime,  
(Though never till night they cease);  
And her soul's afloat like a buoyant  
boat  
On the crystal tides of peace.

Ah! Blanche hath many a lover,  
But she broodeth o'er old regret;  
The shy, sweet red from her cheek is  
fled  
For the star of her heart has set.

Fair Nell! but a single lover  
Hath she in the wide, wide world;  
Yet warmly apart in her glowing heart  
Love bides, with his pinions furled.

To Blanche all life seems shadowed,  
And she but a ghost therein;  
Thro' the misty gray of her autumn  
day  
Steal voices of grief and sin.

To Nell all life is sunshine,  
All earth like a fairy sod,  
Where the roses grow, and the violets  
blow,  
In the softest breath of God.

What meaneth this mighty contrast  
Of lives that we meet and mark?  
One bright as the flowers from May-tide  
showers,  
One rayless, sombre, and dark?

O, folly of mortal wisdom,  
That neither will break nor bow,  
That riddle hath vexed the thought per-  
plexed  
Of millions of souls ere now!

O, folly of mortal wisdom!  
From your guesses what good can  
come?  
We can learn no more than the wise of  
yore;  
'Tis better to trust, and — be dumb!

—◆—  
THE DARK.

A FANTASY.

THE passionless twilight slowly fades  
Beyond the gray, grim woodland glades,  
Till now, with mournful eyes, I mark  
The approaching dark:

A clouded spirit, borne from far,  
Whose sombre front no delicate star  
Brightens, — to tint with silvery light  
Her realms of night:

An *awful* spirit! her pale lips  
Low whispering down the drear eclipse,  
Send thro' those rayless spaces chill  
An ominous thrill:

Her tongue's strange language none  
may know;  
We only feel it ebb and flow  
In murmurs of half-muffled sighs,  
And vague replies:

All hail! akin to me thou art,  
Dim angel of the veiled heart —  
Ah! wrap me close, ah! fold me deep!  
I fain would sleep!

## IN THE STUDIO.

You walk my studio's modest round,  
 With slowly supercilious air;  
 While in each lifted eyebrow lurks,  
 The keenness of an ambushed sneer.

You lift your glass, and scan the walls,  
*Between* the pictures — with a glance  
 Which takes the curtained drapery in,  
 But views the art-work all askance:

A sigh! a shrug! and then you turn  
 Homeward — your judgment fixed as  
 fate —

The labors of a life-time gauged,  
 Serenely in your shallow pate!

## WASHINGTON!

Feb. 22, 1732.

BRIGHT natal morn! what face appears  
 Beyond the rolling mist of years? —  
 A face whose loftiest traits combine  
 All virtues of a stainless line

Passed from leal sire to loyal son;  
 The face of him whose steadfast zeal  
 Drew harmonies of law and right  
 From chaos and anarchic night:  
 Who with a power serene as Fate's  
 Wrought from rude hordes of turbu-  
 lent States

The grandeur of our commonweal: —  
 All hail! all hail! to Washington!

Freedom he wooed in such brave guise,  
 Men gazing in her luminous eyes  
 Beheld all heaven reflected shine  
 Far down those sapphire orbs divine:  
 And, worshipped her so chastely won;  
 If still she panted, fresh from strife,  
 And blood-stains flecked her gar-  
 ment's rim,

They could not make its whiteness  
 dim:

For, shed by hearts sublimely true,  
 Such drops are changed to sacred dew.  
 The chrism of patriot light and life, —  
 Baptizing first our Washington.

For cloudless years, benignant still.  
 This Freedom worked her bounteous  
 will; —

Mingling with homespun man and maid,  
 Her pale cheek caught a browner shade  
 In fields where harvest tolls were done;  
 To theirs she tuned her rhythmic  
 tongue

Veiling in part her goddess-mien:  
 The woman smiled above the queen;  
 While stationed always by her side,  
 Men saw — as bridegroom near his bride.  
 (O bride, forever fair and young!) —  
 Her chosen hero — Washington!

She wove for him a civic crown;  
 She made so pure his hale renown,  
 All glories of the antique days,  
 Waned in the clear, immaculate blaze  
 Poured from his nature's noontide  
 sun;

No slave of folly's catchword school,  
 His instincts proud of blood and race  
 She tempered with sweet, human  
 grace,

Till his broad being's rounded flow  
 Sea-like, embraced the high and low,  
 Swayed by the golden-sceptred rule,  
 The equal will of Washington.

His influence spread so wide and deep,  
 Earth's fettered millions stirred in sleep;  
 And murmurs born of wakening flame  
 On the wild winds of twilight came  
 From lands by despot-swarms o'errun;  
 They too would win the priceless boon  
 Of Freedom's dower; — they too  
 would see,

And clasp the robes of Liberty;  
 But, throned within the virgin west,  
 She heard them not; — she loved to rest  
 In dew-lit dawn and tranquil noon,  
 Next the strong heart of Washington!

Through shower and sun the seasons  
 rolled,

November's gray and April's gold;  
 They only raised (more calmly grand)  
 His genius of supreme command,

Whose course, in blood and wrath begun,  
 Grew gentler, as the mellowing lights  
 Of peace made beauteous sky and sod;  
 His evening came;—he walked with  
 God;  
 And down life's gradual sunset-slope,  
 He hearkened to a heavenly hope;—  
 "Look up! behold the fadeless heights  
 Which rise to greet thee,—Washington!"

He dies! the nations hold their breath!  
 He dies! but is he thrall to Death?—  
 Thousands who quaff earth's sunshine  
 free,  
 Are less alive on earth than he;  
 Lacking that power which thrills  
 through none  
 But God's elect, that wingèd spell  
 Which like miraculous lightning darts  
 Electric to all noble hearts;—  
 Flashed from his soul's sublimer  
 sphere,  
 'Tis still a matchless influence here!  
 Majestic spirit! all is well,  
 Where'er thou rulest,—Washington!

IN AMBUSH.

THE crescent moon, with pallid glow,  
 Swept backward like a bended bow:  
 Across, a shaft of phantom light  
 Thrilled, like an arrow winged for  
 flight.

Just when that flickering shaft was  
 aimed  
 Venus in mellow radlance flamed,  
 Unmindful of the treacherous dart  
 Which seemed upreared to pierce her  
 heart;

For, fain to smite her through and  
 through,  
 Dian lay ambushed in the blue:  
 Half veiled from sight, still, still below,  
 She aimed her shaft, she clasped her  
 bow.

For ever thus, since time was born,  
 Cold virtue points *her* shaft of scorn  
 At passionate love, in whose warm  
 beam  
 Her own but seems a crescent dream.

SOUTH CAROLINA TO THE STATES  
 OF THE NORTH.\*

ESPECIALLY TO THOSE THAT FORMED A  
 PART OF THE ORIGINAL THIRTEEN.

*Dedicated to His Excellency, Wade Hampton.*

I LIFT these hands with iron fetters  
 banded:  
 Beneath the scornful sunlight and cold  
 stars  
 I rear my once imperial forehead  
 branded  
 By alien shame's immedicable scars;  
 Like some pale captive, shunned by all  
 the nations,  
 I crouch unpitied, quivering and  
 apart—  
 Laden with countless woes and desola-  
 tions,  
 The life-blood freezing round a broken  
 heart!

About my feet, splashed red with blood  
 of slaughters,  
 My children gathering in wild, mourn-  
 ful throngs;  
 Despairing sons, frail infants, stricken  
 daughters,  
 Rehearse the awful burden of their  
 wrongs;  
 Vain is their cry, and worse than vain  
 their pleading:

\* This Poem was composed at a period when  
 it seemed as if all the horrors of misgovern-  
 ment, so graphically depicted by Pike in his  
 "*Prostrate State*," would be perpetuated in  
 South Carolina.

It was a significant and terrible epoch; a  
 time American statesmen would do well to  
 remember occasionally as a warning against  
 patchwork political re-constructions.

I turn from stormy breasts, from  
yearning eyes,  
To mark where Freedom's outraged form  
receding,  
Wanes in chill shadow down the mid-  
night skies!

I wooed her once in wild tempestuous  
places,  
The purple vintage of my soul out-  
poured,  
To win and keep her unrestrained em-  
braces,  
What time the olive-crown o'ertopped  
the sword;  
O! northmen, with your gallant heroes  
blending,  
Mine, in old years, for this sweet god-  
dess died;  
But now — ah! shame, all other shame  
transcending!  
Your pitiless hands have torn her  
from my side.

What! 'tis a tyrant-party's treacherous  
action —  
Your hand is clean, your conscience  
clear, ye sigh;  
Ay! but ere now your sires had throt-  
tled faction,  
Or, pealed o'er half the world their  
battle-cry;  
Its voice outrung from solemn mountain-  
passes  
Swept by wild storm-winds of the At-  
lantic strand,  
To where the swart Sierras' sullen  
grasses,  
Droop in low languors of the sunset-  
land!

Never, since earthly States began their  
story,  
Hath any suffered, bided, borne like  
me:  
At last, recalling all mine ancient glory,  
I vowed my fettered commonwealth to  
free:

Even at the thought, beside the pro-  
strate column  
Of chartered rights, which blasted lay  
and dim —

Uprose my noblest son with purpose sol-  
emn,  
While, host on host, his brethren fol-  
lowed him:

Wrong, grasped by truth, arraigned by  
law, (whose sober  
Majestic mandates rule o'er change  
and time) —

Smit by the ballot, like some flushed Oc-  
tober,

Reeled in the autumn rankness of his  
crime;

Struck, tortured, pierced — but not a  
blow returning.

The steadfast phalanx of my honored  
braves

Planted their bloodless flag where sun-  
rise burning,

Flashed a new splendor o'er our mar-  
tyrs' graves!

What then? O, sister States! what wel-  
come omen

Of love and concord crossed our  
brightening blue,

The foes we vanquished, are they not  
your foemen,

Our laws upheld, your sacred safe-  
guards, too?

Yet scarce had victory crowned our  
grand endeavor,

And peace crept out from shadowy  
glooms remote —

Than — as if bared to blast all hope for-  
ever,

Your tyrant's sword shone glittering  
at my throat!

Once more my bursting chains were re-  
united,

Once more barbarian plaudits wildly  
rung

O'er the last promise of deliverance  
blighted,

The prostrate purpose, and the palsied  
tongue:  
Ah! faithless sisters, 'neath my swift  
undoing,  
Peers the black presage of your wrath  
to come;  
Above your heads are signal clouds of  
ruin,  
Whose lightnings flash, whose thun-  
ders are not dumb!

There towers a judgment-seat beyond  
our seeing;  
There lives a Judge, whom none can  
bribe or blind;  
Before whose dread decree, your spirit  
fleeing,  
May reap the whirlwind, having sown  
the wind:  
I, in that day of justice, fierce and torrid,  
When blood — *your* blood — outpours  
like poisoned wine,  
*Pointing to these chained limbs, this  
blasted forehead,*  
*May mock your ruin, as ye mocked at  
mine!*

—◆—  
THE STRICKEN SOUTH TO THE  
NORTH.

[Dedicated to Oliver Wendell Holmes.]

"We are thinking a great deal about the  
poor fever-stricken cities of the South, and all  
contributing according to our means for their  
relief. Every morning as the paper comes,  
the first question is 'What is the last ac-  
count from Memphis, Grenada, and New  
Orleans.'" — *Extract from a private letter of  
Dr. Holmes.*

WHEN ruthless time the South's memor-  
ial places —  
Her heroes' graves — had wreathed in  
grass and flowers;  
When Peace ethereal, crowned by all her  
graces,  
Returned to make more bright the  
summer hours;  
When doubtful hearts revived, and  
hopes grew stronger:

When old sore-cankering wounds that  
pierced and stung,  
Throbbled with their first, mad, feverous  
pain no longer,  
While the fair future spake with flat-  
tering tongue;  
When once, once more she felt her pulses  
beating  
To rhythms of healthful joy and brave  
desire:  
Lo! round her doomed horizon darkly  
meeting,  
A pall of blood-red vapors veined with  
fire!

O! ghastly portent of fast-coming sor-  
rows!  
Of doom that blasts the blood and  
blights the breath,  
Robs youth and manhood of all golden  
morrrows —  
And life's clear goblet brims with  
wine of death! —  
O! swift fulfilment of this portent dreary!  
O! nightmare rule of ruin, racked by  
fears,  
Heartbroken wail, and solemn *miserere*,  
Imperious anguish, and soul-melting  
tears!  
O! faith, thrust downward from celestial  
splendors,  
O! love grief-bound, with palely-mur-  
murous mouth!  
O! agonized by life's supreme surren-  
ders —  
Behold her now — the scourged and  
suffering South!

No balm in Gilead? nay, but while her  
forehead  
Pallid and drooping, lies in foulest dust,  
There steals across the desolate spaces  
torrid,  
A voice of manful cheer and heavenly  
trust,  
A hand redeeming breaks the frozen  
starkness  
Of palsied nerve, and dull, despondent  
brain:



Rolls back the curtain of malignant  
darkness,  
And shows the eternal blue of heaven  
again —  
Revealing there, o'er worlds convulsed  
and shaken,  
That face whose mystic tenderness  
enticed  
To hope new-born earth's lost bereaved,  
forsaken!  
Ah! still beyond the tempest smiles the  
Christ!

Whose voice? Whose hand? Oh, thanks,  
divinest Master,  
Thanks for those grand emotions  
which impart  
Grace to the North to feel the South's  
disaster,  
The South to bow with touched and  
cordial heart!

Now, now at last the links which war  
had broken  
Are welded fast, at mercy's charmed  
commands:

Now, now at last the magic words are  
spoken  
Which blend in one two long-divided  
lands!

O North! you came with warrior strife  
and clangor;  
You left our South one gory burial  
ground;

But love, more potent than your haughti-  
est anger,  
Subdues the souls which hate could  
only wound!

◆

*THE RETURN OF PEACE.*

[Written by request of the committee of  
arrangements, for the opening ceremonies of  
the International Cotton Exposition, in At-  
lanta, Georgia, Oct. 5, 1881.]

I HAD a vision at that mystic hour,  
When in the ebon garden of the Night,  
!ooms the Cimmerian flower  
Of doubt and darkness, covering from  
the light.

I seemed to stand on a vast lonely  
height,  
Above a city ravished and o'erthrown,  
The air about me one long lingering  
moan  
Of lamentation like a dreary sea  
Scourged by the storm to murmurous  
weariness;

Then, from dim levels of mist-folded  
ground  
Borne upward suddenly.  
Burst the deep-rolling stress  
Of jubilant drums, blent with the all-  
very sound  
Of long-drawn bugle notes — the clash of  
swords  
(Outflashed by alien lords) —  
And warrior-voices wild with victory.

They could not quell the grieved and  
shuddering air,  
That breathed about me its forlorn de-  
spair:  
It almost seemed as if stern Triumph  
sped  
To one whose hopes were dead,  
And flaunting there his fortune's ruddier  
grace,  
Smote — with a taunt — wan Misery in  
the face!

Lo! far away,  
(For now my dream grows clear as lu-  
minous day,)  
The victor's camp-fires gird the city  
round;  
But she, unrobed, disrowned —  
A new Andromeda, beside the main  
Of her own passionate pain;  
Bowed, naked, shivering low —  
Veils the soft gleam of melancholy eyes,  
Yet lovelier in their woe, —  
Alike from hopeless earth and hopeless  
skies.  
No Perseus, for her sake, serenely fleet,  
Shall cleave the heavens with winged  
and shining feet: —  
Ah me! the maid is lost —  
For sorrow, like keen frost

Shall eat into her being's anguished  
core—

Atlanta (not Andromeda in this),  
What outside helper can bring back her  
bliss?

Can re-illuminate, beyond its storm-built  
bar,

Her youth's auroral star,  
Or wake the aspiring heart that sleeps  
forever more.

O! lying prophet of a sombre mood,  
This city of our love  
Is no poor, timorous dove,  
To crouch and die unstruggling in the  
mire;

If, for a time, she yields to force and fire,  
Blinded by battle-smoke, and drenched  
with blood,

Still must that dauntless hardihood  
Drawn to her veins from out the iron  
hills,

(Nerving the brain that toils, the soul  
that wills,)

Shake off the lotus-languishment of  
grief!

I see her rise and clasp her old belief,  
In God and goodness—with imperial  
glance,

Face the dark front of frowning Circum-  
stance,—

While trusting only to her strong right  
arm

To wrench from deadly harm,  
All civic blessings and fair fruits of  
peace!

High-souled to gain (despite her  
ravished years),

And dragon-forms of monstrous doubts  
and fears,

The matchless splendor of Toll's "golden  
fleece!"

I see her rise, and strive with strenuous  
hands firmly to lay

The fresh foundations of a nobler  
sway—

War-wasted lands  
Laden with ashes, gray and desolate—

Touched by the charm of some regener-  
ate fate—

Flush into golden harvests prodigal;  
Set by the steam-god's fiery passion free,  
I hear the rise and fall

Of ponderous iron-clamped machinery,  
Shake, as with earthquake thrill, the  
factory halls;

While round the massive walls  
Slow vapor, like a sinuous serpent  
steals—

Through which revolve in circles,  
great or small,  
The deafening thunders of the tireless  
wheels!

Far down each busy mart  
That throbs and heaves as with a human  
heart

Quick merchants pass, some debonaire  
and gay,

With undimmed, youthful locks—  
Some wrinkled, sombre, gray—  
But all with one accord

Dreaming of him—their lord—  
The mighty monarch of the realm of  
stocks!

And year by year her face more frankly  
bright,

Glowing with the ardor of the bloodless  
fight

For bounteous empire o'er her  
cherished South.

More sweet the smile upon her maiden  
mouth,

Just rounding to rare curves of woman-  
hood:

Because all unwithstood  
The magic of her power and stately pride  
Hath called from many a clime

Of tropic sunshine and of winter rime,  
The world's skilled art and science to  
her side;

Hence from her transient tomb,  
Three lustra since, a hideous spot to  
see—

Grows the majestic tree  
Of heightened and green-leaved pros-  
perity.

Hence, her broad gardens bloom  
With rose and lily, and all flowers of  
balm.

And hence above the lines  
Of her vast railways, droop the laden  
vines —

A luscious largess thro' the summer  
calm!

Feeling her veins so full of lusty blood,  
That pulsed within them like a rhyth-  
mic flood,

And eager for sweet sisterhood, — the  
bond

Blissful and fond,  
That yet may hold all nations in its  
thrall,

Atlanta — from a night of splendid  
dreams,  
Roused by soft kisses of the morning  
beams,

Decreed a glorious festival  
Of art and commerce in her brave  
domain:

She sent her summons on the courier  
breeze;

Or thro' the lightning winged wire  
Flashed forth her soul's desire: —  
Swiftly it passed,

O'er native hills and streams and prairies  
vast, —

And o'er waste barriers of dividing  
seas

'Till from all quarters, like quick tongues  
of flame,

That warm, but burn not, — cordial an-  
swers came,

And waftage of benignant messages.

Thus, thus it is a mighty concourse  
meets

O'erflowing squares and streets —  
Borne at flood-tide toward the guarded  
ground,

Where treasures of two hemispheres are  
found,

To tax the inquiring mind, the curious  
eye!

Gain of the upland and damp river bed

In yellow stalks, or sifted meal for  
bread;

Unnumbered births of Ceres clustered  
nigh;

Beholding which — as touched by  
tropic heat, —

(The old-world picture never can grow  
old,

Nor the deep love that thrills it dumb  
and cold) —

Clear fancy looks on Boaz in the wheat,  
And in her simple truth,

The tender eyes of Ruth  
Holding the garnered fragments at his  
feet!

But piled o'er all, thro' many an un-  
bound bale

Peering to show its snow-white softness  
pale,

— Snow-white, yet warm, and destined  
to be furled

In some auspicious day,

For which we yearn and pray,

Round half the naked misery of the  
world,

A fleece more rich than Jason's, giances  
down.

Ah! well we know no monarch's jewelled  
crown,

No marvellous koh-i-noor,

Won, first perchance, from gulfs of  
human gore,

Or life-toil of swart millions, gaunt and  
poor,

Hath e'er outshone its peerless sover-  
eignty.

The wings of song unfold

Towards thy noontide-gold;

The eyes of song are clear,

(Turned on thy broadening sphere)

To mark, oh! city of the midland-wealth,  
And follow thy fair fortunes far afield —

The years unborn,

Doubtless must bring to thee

Trials to test thy spirit's constancy;

(While unthrift aliens wear the mask of

Financial shocks without thee and  
 within:  
 Wrought by shrewd moneyed Shylocks  
 hot to win  
 Their brazen game of monstrous usury;  
 Ravage of bandit "rings" whose bound-  
 less maw  
 Can swallow all things glibly, save — the  
 law!  
 And many a subtler ill  
 Sudden and subtle as the ambush  
 laid,

By black-browed "stranglers" 'mid an  
 Orient glade;  
 But thou, with keenest will,  
 Shalt cut the bonds of stealthy fraud  
 apart,  
 And if force fronts thee with a murder-  
 ous blade,  
 Pierce the rash son of Anak to the heart!  
 Oh! queen! thy brilliant horoscope  
 Was cast by Helios in the halls of  
 hope;



"War-wasted lands . . .  
 Touched by the charm of some regenerate fate —  
 Flush into golden harvests prodigal."

And hope becomes fulfilment, as thy  
 tread —  
 Firm, placed between the living and the  
 dead —  
 Wins the high grade which owns a  
 heavenward slope:  
 For force and fraud undone,  
 And stormless summits won.  
 In thee I view heaven's purpose per-  
 fected:  
 Thou shalt be empress of all peaceful  
 ties,  
 All potent industries.

All world-embracing magnanimities;  
 A warrior-queen no more, but mailed  
 in love,  
 Thy spear a fulgent shaft of sun-  
 steeped grain;  
 Thy shield a buckler, the field-fairies wove  
 Of strong green grasses, in the silvery  
 noon  
 Of some full harvest-moon.  
 Thy stainless crown, red roses, blent  
 with white!  
 Now, throned above the half-forgotten  
 pain

Of dreadful war, and war's remorseless  
 blight,  
 Thy heart-throbs glad and great,  
 Sending through all thy Titan-statured  
 state,  
 Fresh life and gathering tides of grander  
 power  
 From glorious hour to hour,  
 Thousands thy deeds shall bless  
 With strenuous pride, toned down to  
 tenderness:  
 Shall bless thy deeds, exalt thy name;  
 Till every breeze that sweeps from hill  
 to lea,  
 And every wind that furrows the deep  
 sea,  
 Shall waft the fragrance of thy soul  
 abroad  
 The sweetness and the splendor of thy  
 fame:—  
 For thou, midmost a large and opulent  
 store,  
 Of all things wrought to meet a nation's  
 need,  
 Thou, nobly pure,  
 Of any darkening taint of selfish greed,—  
 Wert pre-ordained to be  
 Purveyor of divinest charity, —  
 The love-commissioned almoner of God.

—◆—  
 YORKTOWN CENTENNIAL LYRIC.

[Written at the request of the Yorktown Centennial Commission, appointed by Congress, to conduct the celebration of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, to the combined forces of France and America, upon the 19th of Oct. 1781, at Yorktown, Va.]

HARK, hark! down the century's long  
 reaching slope  
 To those transports of triumph, those  
 raptures of hope,  
 The voices of main and of mountain  
 combined  
 In glad resonance borne on the wings of  
 the wind,

The bass of the drum and the trumpet  
 that thrills  
 Through the multiplied echoes of jubilant  
 hills.  
 And mark how the years melting up-  
 ward like mist  
 Which the breath of some splendid en-  
 chantment has kissed,  
 Reveal on the ocean, reveal on the shore  
 The proud pageant of conquest that  
 graced them of yore,  
 When blended forever in love as in  
 fame  
 See, the standard which stole from the  
 starlight its flame,  
 And type of all chivalry, glory, romance,  
 The lilies, the luminous lilies of France.

Oh, stubborn the strife ere the conflict  
 was won!  
 And the wild whirling war wrack half  
 stifled the sun.  
 The thunders of cannon that boomed  
 on the lea,  
 But re-echoed far thunders pealed up  
 from the sea,  
 Where guarding his sea lists, a knight  
 on the waves,  
 Bold De Grasse kept at bay the bluff  
 bull-dogs of Graves.  
 The day turned to darkness, the night  
 changed to fire,  
 Still more fierce waxed the combat,  
 more deadly the ire,  
 Undimmed by the gloom, in majestic  
 advance,  
 Oh, behold where they ride o'er the red  
 battle tide,  
 Those banners united in love as in  
 fame,  
 The brave standard which drew from  
 the star-beams their flame,  
 And type of all chivalry, glory, romance,  
 The lilies, the luminous lilies of France.  
 No respite, no pause; by the York's  
 tortured flood,  
 The grim Lion of England is writhing  
 in blood.

Cornwallis may chafe and coarse Tarleton aver,  
 As he sharpens his broadsword and buckles his spur,  
 " *This blade, which so oft has reaped rebels like grain,  
 Shall now harvest for death the rude yeomen again.* "  
 Vain boast! for ere sunset he's flying in fear,  
 With the rebels he scouted close, close in his rear,  
 While the French on his flank hurl such volleys of shot  
 That e'en Gloucester's redoubt must be growing too hot.  
 Thus wedded in love as united in fame,  
 Lo! the standard which stole from the starlight its flame,  
 And type of all chivalry, glory, romance,  
 The lilies, the luminous lilies of France.

O morning superb! when the siege reached its close;  
 See! the sundawn outbloom, like the alchemist's rose!  
 The last wreaths of smoke from dim trenches upcurled,  
 Are transformed to a glory that smiles on the world.  
 Joy, joy! Save the wan, wasted front of the foe,  
 With his battle-flags furled and his arms trailing low;—  
 Respect for the brave! In stern silence they yield,  
 And in silence they pass with bowed heads from the field.  
 Then triumph transcendent! so Titan of tone  
 That some vowed it must startle King George on his throne.

When Peace to her own, timed the pulse of the land,  
 And the war weapon sank from the war-wearied hand,  
 Young Freedom upborne to the height of the goal

She had yearned for so long with deep travail of soul,  
 A song of her future raised, thrilling and clear,  
 Till the woods leaned to hearken, the hill slopes to hear:—  
 Yet fraught with all magical grandeurs that gleam  
 On the hero's high hope, or the patriot's dream,  
 What future, tho' bright, in cold shadow shall cast  
 The proud beauty that haloes the brow of the past.  
 Oh! wedded in love, as united in fame,  
 See the standard which stole from the starlight its flame,  
 And type of all chivalry, glory, romance,  
 The lilies, the luminous lilies of France.

ON THE PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS IN RUSSIA.

"Be advised! Do not trample upon my people. Nations and men that oppress us do not thrive."—From Charles Reade's "*Never Too Late to Mend.*"

WHAT murmurs are these that so woefully rise  
 Into heart-storms of agony borne from afar?  
 A tempest of passion, a tumult of sighs?  
 There is dread on the earth, and stern grief in the skies,  
 While the nations, appalled, watch the realm of the Czar!

Can humanity's sun have gone down in an hour,  
 Or a fiend have struck mercy's soft key-note ajar,  
 That upwhirled on the fierce winds of madness and power,  
 This cloud—with its hall of harsh hatreds—should lower  
 O'er those who still call on their "father," the Czar?

Can hell have burst upward, and  
spawned from its womb

The worst of all demons that menace  
and mar?

O God! see an empire reeking in  
gloom—

Hark! the death-shock, the shriek, the  
wild volleys of doom—

Ay! the riot of hell shakes the land of  
the Czar!

The fields are flame-girdled, the rivers  
roll red

Through the sulphurous fumes and  
swift ravage of war.

A war on the helpless, unhelmeted head,  
Which tortures the living and spares not  
the dead;

Is he sleeping, or dumb, their "good  
father" the Czar?

Ah, no! — through the corridors stately  
and vast

Of his palace that gleams like a pale  
polar star.

On a gale from the south these black  
tidings have passed:

He hears! and the lightnings of justice  
at last

Quiver hissing and hot in the hand of  
the Czar!

The world holds its breathing to mark  
them in flame

On their limitless course that no bul-  
wark can bar;

But instead, through his wily state pa-  
rasite came

A "script" so false, its unspeakable  
shame

Should haunt to his death the dark  
dreams of the Czar!

No word for the victims, all butchered  
and bare,

By the hearth-stone defiled, and the  
blood-tainted bar;

For the poor ravished maid, whose sole  
shroud is her hair;

For the mother's lament, or the father's  
despair:

No pity for such thrills the thought of  
the Czar;

But his spirit leans, tender and yearn-  
ing, above

The mad helots who riot, rage, murder  
afar;

To them he is soft as a nest-brooding  
dove;

But the *murdered!* alas! *they* are  
stinted of love,

Right, justice, or ruth, in the creed of  
the Czar!

Shall grim carnage goad onward, em-  
bruted and base.

The black coursers that strain at her  
iron-wrought car.

While those of high purpose and fetter-  
less race

Idly gaze on the foul mediæval disgrace  
Which poisons all earth from you  
realm of the Czar?

Wake, England, your thunders! America,  
fling

To the wind the shrewd statecrafts  
that hamper, or mar!

Blend your voices of wrath! your deep  
warnings outring.

To smite the dulled ears, and blind soul  
of the king—

Who rules—Heaven help them!  
those realms of the Czar!

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ASSASSINATION.

O BLINDED readers of the scroll of  
time,

Think ye that freedom yields her hand  
to crime?

Or the fair whiteness of her virginal  
bud

Of heavenly hope, would desecrate with  
blood?

Her eyes are chastened lightnings, and  
the fire  
Of her divinely purified desire

Burns not in ambush by assassins  
trod,  
But on the holiest mountain heights of  
God!

So, ye that fain would meet her fond  
embrace,  
Purge the base soul, unmask the  
treacherous face,

Drop bowl or dagger while ye bring her  
naught  
But the grand worship of a selfless  
thought!

—◆—  
ENGLAND.

LAND of my father's love, my father's  
race.

How long must I in weary exile  
sigh  
To meet thee, O my empress, face to  
face.  
And kiss thy radiant robes before I  
die?

O England! in my creed, the humblest  
dust  
Beside thy haunted shores and shadowy  
streams,  
Is touched by memories and by thoughts  
angust.  
By golden histories and majestic  
dreams.

O England! to my mood thy lowliest  
flower  
Feeds on the smiles of some transcen-  
dent sky;  
Thy frailest fern-leaf shrines a spell of  
power!  
Ah! shall I walk thy woodlands ere I  
die?

Thy sacred places, where dead heroes  
rest

By temples set in ivy-twilight deep;  
Thy fragrant fields topped by the sky-  
lark's crest;  
Thy hidden waters breathing balms of  
sleep:

Thy castled homes, and granges veiled  
afar  
In antique dells; thy ruins hoar and  
high;  
Thy mountain tarns, each like a glitter-  
ing star,  
Shall I behold their marvels ere I die?

Thine opulent towns, throned o'er the  
subject-main,  
Girt by brave fleets, their weary canvas  
furled,  
Deep-laden argosies through storm and  
strain,  
Borne from the utmost boundaries of  
the world

O'er all, thy London! every stone with  
breath  
Indued to question, counsel, or reply;  
City of mightiest life and mightiest  
death,  
Shall I behold thy splendors ere I die?

But most I yearn, in body as heart, to  
bow  
Before our England's poets, strong and  
wise,  
Watch some grand thought uplift the  
laureate's brow,  
And flash or fade in Swinburne's fiery  
eyes.

And other glorious minstrels would I  
greet  
Bound to my life by many a rhythmic  
tie.  
When shall I hear their welcomes frankly  
sweet,  
And clasp those cordial hands, before  
I die?



Fair blow the breezes; high are sail and steam;

Soon must I mark brave England's brightening lea;  
Fulfilled at length, the large and lustrous dream

Which lured me long across the summer sea!

Alas! a moment's triumph! — false as vain!

O'er dreary hills the gaunt pines moan and sigh;  
Pale grows my dream, pierced through by bodeful pain;

England! I shall not see thee ere I die!

—◆—  
TO LONGFELLOW.

(ON HEARING HE WAS ILL.)

O THOU, whose potent genius (like the sun

Tenderly mellowed by a rippling haze)

Hast gained thee all men's homage, love and praise,  
Surely thy web of life is not outspun,  
Thy glory rounded, thy last guerdon won!

Nay, poet, nay! — from thought's calm sunset ways  
May new-born notes of undegenerate lays  
Charm back the twilight gloom ere day be done!

But past the poet crowned I see the friend —

Frank, courteous, true — about whose locks of gray,  
Like golden bees, some glints of summer stray:

Clear-eyed, with lips half poised 'twixt smile and sigh;  
A brow in whose soul-mirroring manhood blend  
Grace, sweetness, power and magnanimity!

"PHILIP MY KING." \*

"PHILIP, my king," ay, still thou art a king,

Though storms of sorrow on thy suffering head

Have flashed and thundered through the midnight's dread;

Ah, lofty soul! fraught with the sky-lark's wing

To capture heaven, the sky-lark's voice to sing

Such notes ethereal through veiled brightness shed

Their gracious power to liquid pathos wed,

Thrills like the soft rain-pulses of the spring:

Banned from earth's day — thine inward sight expands

Above the night-bound senses' birth or bars;

Lord of a larger realm, of subtler scope,  
Where thou at last shalt press the lips of

Hope,

And feel God's angel lift in radiant hands

Thy life from darkness to a place of stars!

Meanwhile, alas! despite these inward spells

Of voice and vision, and fond hope to be,

Perchance,—though vaguely shadowed forth to thee,—

Oft-times thy thought but echoes the deep knells

Of buried joy; oft-times thy spirit swells

With moaning memories, like a smitten sea,

When the worn tempest wandering up the lea,

Leaves a low wind to breathe its wild farewells.

\* "Philip my King," Miss Mulock's exquisite song, all lovers of poetry must recall. The little hero of that lyric was Philip Marston, the author's god-son.

O brother! — pondering dreary and  
 apart  
 O'er the dead blossoms of deciduous  
 years:  
 O poet! fed too long on bitter tears!

I waft, o'er seas, a white-winged courier-  
 dove,  
 Bearing to thee this balmy spray of love,  
 Warm from the nested fragrance of my  
 heart.



A PLEA FOR THE GRAY. !

[A discussion has recently been inaugurated in the city of Mobile, Ala., among the military companies, as to the propriety of changing the *Gray* for the *Blue* or some other uniform.]

WHEN the land's martyr, mid her  
 tears,  
 Outbreathed his latest breath,  
 The discord of long, festering years,  
 Lay also dumb in death:  
 Our souls a new-born friendship drew  
 With spells of kindest sway;  
 At last, at last, the conquering Blue  
 Blent with the vanquished Gray!

Yet, who thro' this south-land of ours,  
 While faith and love are free,  
 But still must cast memorial flowers  
 Across the grave of Lee?  
 And oft their ancient grief renew  
 O'er "Stonewall's" cherished clay?  
 The heart that's pledged to guard the  
 Blue  
 Must honor still the Gray!

O veterans of Potomac's flood,  
 Or Vicksburg's lurid sky,  
 Old passions may be purged of blood,  
 Old memories cannot die!  
 They fill your eyes with fiery dew,  
 Revive your manhood's May,  
 And past the bright victorious Blue,  
 Bring back the stainless Gray!

O martyrs of the desperate fight,  
 All weak and broken now,  
 With shattered nerves, or blasted sight,  
 Frail arms and furrowed brow!  
 What think ye of the *patriot* view  
 Flashed on your minds to-day?  
 Too old to don the prosperous Blue,  
 Ye clasp your tattered Gray!

From many a worn and wasted mound,  
 And dust-encumbered clod,  
 The voices of dead heroes sound,  
 Rising from earth to God!  
 "Our doom was dark, our lives were true,

Ah! cast not quite away,  
 What time ye hail the favored Blue —  
 Old dreams that crowned the Gray!"

Can honor in his sacred grave  
 Less fair and glorious be?  
 Can faith on fortune's fickle wave,  
 Change with the changeful sea?  
 Beware lest what ye rashly do  
 Should end in shamed dismay,  
 And all pure champions of the Blue,  
 Scorn traitors to the Gray!

◆◆◆

UNION OF BLUE AND GRAY.

(Suggested by the recent visit of Governor Bigelow and the Connecticut companies to Charleston, South Carolina.)

THE Blue is marching south once more,  
 With serried steel and stately tread;  
 Their martial music pealed before,  
 Their flag of stars flashed overhead.

Ah! not through storm and stress they  
 come,  
 The thunders of old hate are dumb,  
 And frank as clear October's ray  
 This meeting of the Blue and Gray.

A Phoenix from her outworn fires,  
 Her gory ashes, rising free,  
 Fair Charleston with her stainless spires  
 Gleams by the silver-stranded sea.  
 No hurtling hail nor hostile ball  
 Breaks through the treacherous battle-  
 pall;  
 True voices speak from hearts as true,  
 For strife lies dead 'twixt Gray and Blue.

Grim Sumter, like a Titan maimed,  
 Still glooms beyond his shattered keep;  
 But where his bolts of lightning flamed  
 There broods a quiet, mild as sleep;  
 His granite base, long cleansed of blood,  
 Is circled by a golden flood,  
 Type of that peace whose sacred sway  
 Enfolds the Blue, exalts the Gray.

The sea-tides faintly rise afar,  
 And — wings of all the breezes furled,  
 Seem slowly borne o'er beach and bar,  
 Dream-murmurings from a spirit  
 world,  
 Through throbbing drum and bugle-trill  
 The distant calm seems deeper still —  
 Deep as that faith whose cordial dew  
 Hath soothed the Gray and charmed the  
 Blue.

O'er Ashley's breast the autumn smiles,  
 All mellowed in her hazy fold,  
 While the white arms of languid isles  
 Are girdled by ethereal gold,  
 All Nature whispers: war is o'er,  
 Fierce feuds have fled our sea and shore;  
 Old wrongs forget, old ties renew,  
 O heroes of the Gray and Blue!

The southern Palm and northern Pine  
 No longer clash through leaf and  
 bough;  
 Tranquillities of depth benign  
 Have bound their blending foliage now,

Or, tranced by cloudless star and moon,  
Serene they shine in sun-lit noon.  
Their equal shadows softly play  
Above the Blue, across the Gray.

—♦—  
THE KING OF THE PLOW.

THE sword is re-sheathed in its scab-  
bard,

The rifle hangs safe on the wall;  
No longer we quail at the hungry  
Hot rush of the ravenous ball,  
The war-cloud has hurled its last light-  
ning,

Its last awful thunders are still,  
While the demon of conflict in Hades  
Lies fettered in force as in will:  
Above the broad fields that he ravaged,  
What monarch rules blissfully now?

Oh! crown him with bays that are  
bloodless,

The king, the brave king of the  
plow!

A king! ay! what ruler more potent  
Has ever sway'd earth by his nod?  
A monarch! aye, *more* than a monarch,  
A homely, but bountiful God!

He stands where in earth's sure protec-  
tion

The seed-grains are scattered and  
sown,

To uprise in serene resurrection  
When spring her soft trumpet hath  
blown!

A monarch! yea, *more* than a monarch,  
Though toil-drops *are* thick on his  
brow;

O! crown him with corn-leaf and wheat-  
leaf,

The king, the strong king of the  
plow!

Through the shadow and shine of past  
ages,

(While tyrants were blinded with  
blood)

He reared the pure ensign of Ceres  
By meadow, and mountain, and  
flood,

And the long, leafy gold of his harvests  
The earth-sprites and air-sprites had  
spun,

Grew rhythmic when swept by the  
breezes,

Grew royal, when kissed by the  
sun;

Before the stern charm of his patience  
What rock-rooted forces must bow!  
Come! crown him with corn-leaf and  
wheat-leaf,

The king, the bold king of the plow!

Through valleys of balm-drooping  
myrtles,

By banks of Arcadian streams,  
Where the wind-songs are set to the  
mystic

Mild murmur of passionless dreams;  
On the storm-haunted uplands of Thule,  
By ice-girdled fiords and floes,  
Alike speeds the spell of his god-  
hood,

The bloom of his heritage glows;  
A monarch! yea, *more* than a monarch,  
All climes to his prowess must bow;

Come crown him with bays that are  
stainless,

The king, the brave king of the  
plow.

Far, far in earth's uttermost future,  
As boundless of splendor as scope,

I see the fair angel!—fruition,  
Outspeed his high heralds of hope;

The roses of joy rain around him,  
The lilies of sweetness and calm,

For the sword has been changed to the  
plowshare,

The lion lies down with the lamb!

O! angel-majestic! We know thee,  
Though raised and transfigured art  
thou,

This lord of life's grand consumma-  
tion

Was once the *meek king of the plow!*

## IN MEMORIAM.

I.

LONGFELLOW DEAD. 1

AY, it is well! Crush back your selfish  
tears;  
For from the half-veiled face of earthly  
spring  
Hath he not risen on heaven-aspiring  
wing  
To reach the spring-tide of the eternal  
years?

With life full-orbed, he stands amid his  
peers,  
The grand immortals! a fair, mild-eyed  
king,  
Flushing to hear their potent welcomes  
ring  
Round the far circle of those luminous  
spheres.

Mock not his heavenly cheer with mortal  
wail,  
Unless some human-hearted nightingale,  
Pierced by grief's thorn, shall give such  
music birth  
That he, the new-winged soul, the  
crowned and shriven,  
May lean beyond the effulgent verge of  
heaven,  
To catch his own sweet requiem, borne  
from earth!

Such marvellous requiem were a pæan  
too —  
(Woe touched and quivering with  
triumphant fire);  
For him whose course flashed always  
high and higher,  
Is lost beyond the strange, mysterious  
blue:  
Ah! yet, we murmur, *can* this thing be  
true?  
Forever silent here, that tender lyre,  
Tuned to all gracious themes, all pure  
desire,  
Whose notes dropped sweet as honey,  
soft as dew?

No tears! you say — since rounded,  
brave, complete,  
The poet's work lies radiant at God's  
feet.

Nay! nay! our hearts with grief must  
hold their tryst:  
How dim grows all about us and above!  
Vainly we grope through death's bewil-  
dering mist,  
To feel once more his clasp of *Amara*  
love!

II.

ON THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT  
GARFIELD.

I SEE the Nation, as in antique ages,  
Crouched with rent robes, and ashes  
on her head:  
Her mournful eyes are deep with dark  
presages,  
Her soul is haunted by a formless  
dread!

"O God!" she cries, "why hast Thou  
left me bleeding,  
Wounded and quivering to the heart's  
hot core?  
Can fervid faith, winged prayer, and  
anguished pleading  
Win balm and pity from thy heavens  
no more?"

"I knelt, I yearned, in agonizing pas-  
sion,  
Breathless to catch thy 'still small  
voice' from far;  
Now thou *hast* answered, but in awful  
fashion,  
And stripped our midnight of its last  
pale star.

"What tears are given me in o'erma-  
stering measure,  
From fathomless floods of *Marah*,  
darkly free.  
While that pure life I held my noblest  
treasure  
Is plunged forever in death's tideless  
sea!

"Hark to those hollow sounds of lamentation,  
The muffled music, the funereal bell;  
From far and wide on wings of desolation  
Float wild and wailful voices of farewell.

"The North-land mourns her grief in full libation,  
Outpoured for him who died at victory's goal;  
And the great West, in solemn ministrations,  
May not recall her hero's shining soul.

"Yea, the North mourns; the West; a stricken mother,  
Droops as in sackcloth with veiled brow and mouth;  
And what old strifes, what waning hates, can smother  
The generous heart-throbs of the pitying South?

"Did doubt remain? — *She* crushed its latest ember  
At that stern moment when the victim's fall  
Changed loveliest summer to a grim December,  
Paled by the hiss of Guiteau's murderous ball.

"Thus by the spell of one vast grief united  
(Where cypress boughs their death-cold shadows wave),  
My sons, I trust, a holier faith have plighted,  
And sealed the compact by *his* sacred grave."

'Twas thus she spoke; but still in prostrate sorrow,  
While lowlier earthward drooped her brow august.

To-day is dark; vague darkness clouds to-morrow.  
Ah! in God's hand the nations are but — dust!

## III.

DEAN STANLEY.

DEAD! dead! in sooth his marbled brow is cold,  
And prostrate lies that brave, majestic head;  
True! his stilled features own death's arctic mould,  
Yet, by Christ's blood, I know he is not dead!

Here fades the cast-off vestment that he wore,  
The robe of flesh, whence his true self hath fled;  
Whate'er be false, one faith holds fast and sure,  
Great souls like his abide not with the dead:

Eyried with God, beyond all mortal pain,  
Breathing the effluence of ethereal birth,  
Through deeds divine, his spirit walks again,  
On rhythmic feet the mournful paths of earth!

In heaven immortal, yet on earth supreme,  
The glamour of his goodness still survives,  
Not in vain glimpses of a flattering dream,  
But flower and fruit of ransomed human lives.

His hopes were ocean-wide, and clasped mankind;  
No Levite plea his mercy turned apart,  
But wounded souls — to whom all else were blind —  
*He* soothed with wine and balsam of the heart.

With stainless hands he reared his Master's cross;

His Master's watchword pealed o'er land and sea;  
And still through days of gain, and days of loss,  
Proclaimed the golden truce of charity.

All men were brethren to his larger creed,  
But given the thought sincere — the earnest aim;  
God's garden will not spurn the humblest weed  
That yearns for purer air and loftier flame.

This sweet evangel of the unborn years,  
Seer-like he spake, as one that viewed his goal,  
While the world felt through darkness and through tears,  
Mysterious music thrill its raptured soul.

Dead! nay, not dead! while eagle thoughts aspire,  
Clothed in winged deeds across the empyreal height,  
And all the expanding space is flushed with fire,  
And deep on deep, heaven opens to our sight, —

He *cannot* die! yet o'er his dust we shed  
Our rain of human sorrow; on his breast  
Cross the pale palms; and pulseless heart and head  
Leave to the quiet of his cloistered rest.

Sleep, knightly scholar! warrior-saint, repose!  
Thy life-force folded like an unfurled sail!

Spent is time's rage — its foam of crested woes —  
And thou hast found, at last, the Holy Grail!

## IV.

HIRAM H. BENNER.

[Dedicated to the Wife of this Hero and Martyr.]

WHEN the war-drums beat and the trumpets blare,  
When banners flaunt in the stormy air,  
When at thought of the deeds that must soon be done,  
The hearts of a thousand leap up as one,  
Who could not rush through the din and smoke,  
The cannon's crash and the sabre stroke,  
Scarce conscious of ebbing blood or breath,  
With a laugh for wounds and a scoff at death?

But when on the sullen breeze there comes  
No thrill of trumpets nor throb of drums,  
But only the wail of the sick laid low  
By the treacherous blight of a viewless foe —  
Who, then, will upgird his loins for fight  
With the loathsome pest in the poisoned night,  
No martial music his pulse to start,  
But the still, small voice of the ruthless heart?  
Who then? Behold him, the calm, the brave,  
On his billowy path to an alien grave!  
Serene in the charm of his God-like will,  
This soldier is armored to save, not kill.  
Ah! swiftly he speeds on the mist-bound stream  
This pilgrim wrapped in his tender dream,  
His vision of help for the sick laid low  
By the evil spell of an ambushed foe.  
Ah! swiftly he speeds 'mid the hollow boom  
Of bells that are tolling to death and doom.

Till even the sounds of the bells grow  
still;  
For the hands of their ringers are lax  
and chill.  
And the hum of the mourners is heard  
no more  
On the misty slope and the vacant shore,  
And the few frail creatures that greet  
him seem  
But the ghosts of men by a phantom  
stream.

Still the hero his own great soul enticed  
To suffer and toil in the name of Christ,  
He follows wherever his Lord had led,  
To the famished hut or the dying bed.  
He medicines softly the fevered pain:  
To the starving he bringeth his golden  
grain:  
And ever before him and ever above  
Is the sheen of the unfurled wings of  
love.

Meanwhile, in his distant home are those  
That his going has robbed of their sweet  
repose.  
The days pass by them like leaden years;  
The nights are bitter with tears and  
fears —  
Till at last, by the lightning glamour  
sped,  
Comes a name and date, with the one  
word, "Dead!"  
And the arms of the smitten are lifted  
high,  
And the heavens are rent by an anguished  
cry!

Dead! dead! Vain word for the wise to  
hear!  
How false its echo on heart and ear!  
To the earth and earth's he may close  
his eyes,  
But who dares tell us a martyr dies?  
And of him just gone it were best to say  
That in some charmed hour of night or  
day —  
Having given us all that his soul could  
give —  
Brave Hiram Bennet began to live.

V.

W. GILMORE SIMMS.

A POEM

Delivered on the night of the 13th of Decem-  
ber, 1877 "at the Charlestown Academy of  
Music," as prologue to the "Dramatic Enter-  
tainment" in aid of the "Simms Memorial  
fund."

THE swift mysterious seasons rise and  
set:  
The omnipotent years pass o'er us,  
bright or dun; —  
Dawns blush, and mid-days burn, 'till  
scarcely aware  
Of what deep meaning haunts our  
twilight air,  
We pause bewildered, yearning for the  
sun:  
Only to find in that strange evening-  
tide,  
By the last sunset pathos sanctified,  
Pale memory near us, and divine re-  
gret!

Then memory gently takes us by the  
hand;  
And doubtful boundaries of a faded  
time,  
Half veiled in mist and rime,  
Emerge, grow bright, expand;  
The past becomes the present to our  
eyes:  
Poor slaves of dust and death,  
(As if some trump of resurrection  
clear  
Somewhere outpealed, *our* senses could  
not hear)  
Rise, freed from churchyard taint and  
mortal stain;  
Old friends! dear comrades! *hark* we  
met again?  
God! how these dismal years  
Of anguished desolation, and veiled  
tears,  
Of fettered feeling, and despondent  
sighs,  
Wither and shrivel like a parchment  
scroll



Seized by the fury of consuming fire,  
 Before the rapture of the illumined  
 soul,  
 Lifted and lightened by our love's  
 desire!

Old friends! dear comrades! *have* we  
 met once more?

Come! let us fondly mark  
 In this weird truce, whose moments  
 soon must flee,

'Twixt the charmed heart and dread  
 reality,

Those well-belovéd features that ye wore  
 Once on this earthly shore,  
 Now rescued from the void and treach-  
 erous dark!

O! faces soft or strong,  
 Familiar faces! how ye press and throng  
 Closely about us, while the enchanted  
 light

Changes to noonday our long spiritual  
 night!

The faithful eyes that beamed in ours of  
 yore,  
 Shine on us in their ancient guileless  
 way,

Undimmed, unshorn of *one* beneficent  
 ray,

And vital seeming as our own, to-day;  
 Lips smile, as once they smiled with  
 innocent zest,

When round the social board  
 The impetuous flood-tide poured  
 Of curbless mirth, and keen sparkling  
 jest

Vanished like wine-foam on its golden  
 crest!

We feel the loyal grasp  
 Of many a warm hand, yielding clasp  
 for clasp;

But may not stay, alas! we may not  
 stay

To greet ye one by one,  
 Comrades! returned from realms beyond  
 the sun;

For lo! in rightful precedence of power,  
 "A Saul amongst his brethren," than  
 the rest

Loftier, if ruder in his natural might,  
 The man who toiled through fortune's  
 bitterest hour,

As calmly steadfast and supremely  
 brave,

As if above a fair life's tranquil wave,  
 Brooded the halcyon with unruffled  
 breast;

The man whose sturdy frame upheld  
 aright,

We meet, (O friends), to consecrate to-  
 night!

All pregnant powers that wait  
 On intellectual state,

Favored and loved him; earliest, dear-  
 est came

Imagination, robed in mystical flame;  
 Her clear eyes searching all created  
 things

Heavenly and earthly; with vast breadth  
 of wings

Engirdled by the magic of a spell ineffa-  
 ble;

And like the sportive nymph of wood-  
 land bowers,

Fancy stole on him coyly, pranked with  
 flowers,

Whereof the fairest her white fingers  
 shed,

To crown his bended head.

Bluff humor true, if broad,

Placed in his hand a mirth-evoking rod,  
 While satire, from the heights of reason  
 proud,

Flashed a keen gleam, like lightning from  
 a cloud

The levin-bolt so sheerly cuts in two,

The cloud disparts, to leave — a lumi-  
 nous blue!

All that he was, all that he owned, we  
 know

Was lavished freely on *one* sacred  
 shrine,

The shrine of home and country! from  
 the first

Fresh blush of youth, when merged in  
 sanguine glow,

His life-path seemed a shadowless steep  
 to shine,  
 Leading forever upward to the stars;  
 Through many a desperate and embittered  
 strife  
 That raging, rose and burst  
 Above the storm-wracked waste of middle-life.

Down to the day, a few sad years ago,  
 When a grave veteran with his age's  
 scars,  
 He moved among us, like a Titan  
 maimed;  
 Only *one* glorious goal,  
 Through fate, grief, change, the pure allegiance  
 claimed



"Pale memory near us."

Of his unconquered and majestic soul;  
 The goal of honor; not that *he* might  
 rise  
 Alone and dominant; *but that all men's*  
*eyes*  
*Might view, perchance through much*  
*brave toil of his.*  
*His country stripped of every filthy weed*  
*Of crime imputed; in thought, word and*  
*deed.*  
*A noble people, none would dare despise*  
 In their unsullied *Palingenesis*,  
 (Which he with blissful awe,

And all a poet's prescient faith foresaw;) *A noble people*, o'er their subject-lands  
 Ruling with constant hearts and stain-  
 less hands;  
 Their feet firm planted as McGregor's  
 were,  
 Deep in the herbage of their native sod,  
 And every honest forehead free to rear  
 A front unquelled by fear,  
 Untouched by shame, unfurrowed by  
 despair. —  
 High in man's sight, or bowed alone to  
 God!

So, let us rear the shaft, and poise the  
bust

Above the mouldering, but ah! priceless  
dust

Of vanished genius! Let our homage be  
Large as that splend'ed prodigality  
Of force and love, wherewith he  
stanchly wrought

Out from the quarries of his own deep  
thought,

Unnumbered shapes; whether of good or  
ill,

No puny puppets whose false action  
frets

On a false stage, like feeble *Marion-  
ettes*;

But life-like, human still;  
Types of a by-gone age of crime and  
lust:

Or, grand historic forms, in whom we  
view

Re-vivified, and re-created stand,  
The braves who strove through cloud-  
encompassed ways,

Infinite travail, and malign dispraise,  
To guard, to save, to wrench from tyrant  
hordes,

By the pen's virtue, or the lordlier  
sword's

Unravished Liberty,  
The virgin huntress on a virgin strand!

I, through whose song your hearts have  
spoken to-night,

Soul-present with you, yet am far away;  
Outside my exile's home, I watch the  
sway

Of the bowed pine-tops in the gloaming  
gray,

Casting across the melancholy lea,

A tint of browner blight;  
Outside my exile's home, borne to and  
fro,

I hear the inarticulate murmurs flow  
Of the faint wind-tides breathing like a  
sea:

When, in clear vision, softly dawns on  
me,

(As if in contrast with you slow decay),

The loveliest land that smiles beneath  
the sky,

*The coast-land of our Western Italy*;  
I view the waters quivering; quaff the  
breeze,

Whose briny raciness keeps an *under*  
taste

Of flavorful tropic sweets (perchance  
swept home,

Across the flickering waste  
Of summer waves, capped by the Ariel  
foam),

From Cuba's perfumed groves, and gar-  
den spicerics!

Along the horizon-line a vapor swims,  
Pale rose and amethyst, melting into  
gold;

Up to our feet the fawning ripples rolled,  
Glimmer an instant, tremble, lapse,  
and die;

The whole rare scene, its every element  
Etherealized, transmuted subtly, blent  
By viewless alchemy,

Into the glory of a golden mood,  
Brings potent exaltations, while I walk,  
(A joyful youth again),

The snow-white beaches by the Atlant'ic  
Main!

Ah! *not* alone! the carking curse of  
Time

Far from him yet; his bold hopes unsub-  
dued

By the long anguish of the woes to be,  
Midmost his years, in mellow-hearted  
prime,

Beside me stands our stalwart-statured  
*Sinnu*!

See! what a Viking's mien!

Half tawny locks in careless masses  
curled

Over his ample forehead's massive dome!  
Eyes of bold outlook, that sometimes  
beneath

Their level-fronted brows, shine lam-  
bent, deep,

With inspirations scarce aroused from  
sleep;

And sometimes rife with ire,  
Sent forth as sword-blades from an un-  
bared sheath,

Flashes of sudden fire!

His whole air breathes of combat, unse-  
rene

Profounds of feeling, by a scornful world  
Too early stirred to impotent disdains;  
Generous withal; bound by all liberal ties  
Of lordly-nature! magnanimities;

Whereof we mark the sign

In the curved fullness of a mobile  
mouth,

Almost voluptuous; hinting of the  
south,

Whose suns high summer shed through  
all his veins:

Blending the mildness of a cordial grace  
With sterner traits of his Berserker face,

Firm-set as granite, haughty, leo-  
nine.

No prim Precisian he! his fluent talk  
Roved thro' all topics, vivifying all;  
Now deftly ranging level plains of  
thought,

To sink, anon in metaphysical deeps;  
Whence, by caprice of strange transition  
brought

Outward and upward, the free current  
sought

Ideal summits, gathering in its course,  
Splendid momentum and imperious  
force,

Till, down it rushed as mighty cataracts  
fall,

Hurled from gaunt mountain steeps!

Sportive he could be as a gamesome boy!  
By heaven! as 'twere but yesterday, I  
see

His tall frame quake with throes of jolli-  
ty;

Hear his rich voice that owned a jovial  
tone,

Jocund as Falstaff's own;

And catch moist glints of steel-blue eyes  
o'errun

Sideways, by tiny rivulets of fun!

Alas! this vivid vision slowly fades!  
Its serious beauty, and its flush of joy  
Pass into nothingness! . . . Stern  
Death resumes

His sombre empire in the dusk of  
tombs;

And the deep umbrage of the cypress  
glades

Is wanly, coldly cast

In lengthening gloom o'er the reburied  
past!

What then? the spirit of him

We mourn and fain would honor, grows  
not dim;

On earth will live with consummated  
toil

Worthily wrought, despite the hot tur-  
moil

Of open enmity, the secret guile,  
That mole-like burrowed 'neath the  
fruitful soil

Of his broad mental acres, but to show  
Marks of its crawling littleness between,

Each far-extended row

Of those hale harvests, glittering gold or  
green!

And somewhere, *somewhere* in the infi-  
nite space,

Like all true souls by our Soul-Father  
prized,

It dwells *forever individualized*;

No ghost bewildered 'midst a "No  
Man's Land;"

Outlawed and banned

Of fair identity's redeeming grace,  
Shivering before its wretched phantom  
self,

Marred by Lethean moonshine — a pale  
elf.

A passionless shadow, but in mind and  
heart,

The mortal creature's marvellous coun-  
terpart;

Only exalted, nobler; down on us  
Gazing thro' fathomless ethers lumi-  
nous;

Watching the earth and earth-ways  
from afar.

Perhaps with somewhat of a scornful  
 smile;  
 Yet tempered by the tolerance which be-  
 seems  
 One long translated from *our* sphere of  
 dreams,  
 Hollow illusions, vacant vanities,  
 To that vast actual, which beyond us  
 lies,  
 Where who may guess? midst yonder  
 opulent skies;  
 Clear "coigns of vantage," in some  
 deathless star!

## VI.

DICKENS.

METHINKS the air  
 Throbs with the tolling of harmonious  
 bells,  
 Rung by the hands of spirits; every-  
 where  
 We feel the presence of a soft despair  
 And thrill to voices of divine farewells.

Sweet Fancy lost,  
 Wandering in darkness, now makes sil-  
 very moan;  
 While Pathos, pale, and shadowy, like  
 a ghost,  
 Sobs upon Humor's breast, that  
 mourns him most.  
 The wizard king who leaves them all—  
 alone.

Wan genii throng,  
 From earth's four quarters hurrying,  
 mount and mart,  
 Pure woodland peace, the city's din  
 and wrong,  
 Each breathing low a fond funereal  
 song,  
 Each sadly bowed o'er that grand, silent  
 heart.

The children's tears  
 Mingle with manhood's woe, that falls  
 like rain;  
 Low lieth one who towered above his  
 peers,

And nevermore, through all the fruit-  
 ful years,  
 Our eyes shall greet the master's like  
 again.

Creations fine,  
 His prodigal offspring, crowd so thickly  
 round  
 That Wit falls foul of Sorrow, Cupids  
 twine  
 Warm arms with Avarice, and Love's  
 strength divine  
 Hath vanquished Hate on Hate's own  
 chosen ground.

Though gone, his art  
 Triumphant spans the threatening clouds  
 of death;  
 Its rainbow hues forever pulse and  
 start,  
 Steeped in the life-blood of the human  
 heart,  
 And woven on heavens beyond Time's  
 stormy breath.

## VII.

TO BAYARD TAYLOR BEYOND US.

A VISION OF CHRISTMAS EVE, 1878.

As here within I watch the fervid coals,  
 While the chill heavens without shine  
 wanly white,  
 I wonder, friend! in what rare realm of  
 souls,  
 You hail the uprising Christmas-tide  
 to-night!

I leave the fire-place, lift the curtain's  
 fold,  
 And peering past these shadowy win-  
 dow-bars,  
 See through broad rifts of ghostly clouds  
 unrolled,  
 The pulsing pallor of phantasmal  
 stars.

Phantoms they seem, glimpsed through  
 the clouded deep,  
 Till the winds cease, and cloudland's  
 ghastly glow

Gives place above to luminous calms of sleep,  
Beneath, to glittering amplitudes of snow!

Some stars like steely bosks on blazoned shields,  
Stud constellations measureless in might;  
Some lily-pale, make fair the ethereal fields,  
In which, O friend, art thou ensphered to-night?

Where'er mid yonder infinite worlds it be,  
Its souls, I know, are clothed with wings of fire;  
How wouldst thou scorn even Immortality,  
In whose dull rest thou couldst not still aspire!

There, Homer raised where genius cannot nod,  
Hears the orb'd thunders of celestial seas;  
And Shakespeare, lofty almost as a God,  
Smiles his large smile at Aristophanes;

With earth's supremest souls, still grouped apart,  
Great souls made perfect in the eternal noon,  
There thy loved Goethe holds thee to his heart,  
Re-born to youth and all life's chords in tune.

While in the liberal air of that wide heaven,  
He whispers: "Come! we share the self-same height;  
To me on earth thy noblest toils were given,  
Brothers, henceforth, we walk these paths of light."

Clear and more clear the radiant vision gleams!  
More bright grand shapes and glorious faces grow;

While like deep fugues of victory, heard in dreams,  
A thousand heavenly clarions seem to blow!

## VIII.

## BAYARD TAYLOR ('PON DEATH).

"More than once I have met death, but without fear! Nor do I fear now! Without being able to demonstrate it, I know that my soul cannot die. . . Indeed, to me the infinite is more comprehensible than the finite!"

These words occur in a letter of Bayard Taylor's to me, written not many weeks before his death. They have suggested the following sonnet:—

"OFT have I fronted Death, nor feared his might!  
To me immortal, this dim Finite seems  
Like some waste low-land, crossed by wandering streams  
Whose clouded waves scarce catch our yearning sight:  
Clearer by far, the imperial Infinite!  
Though its ethereal radiance only gleams  
In exaltations of majestic dreams,  
Such dreams portray God's heaven of heavens aright!"  
Thou blissful Faith! that on death's imminent brink  
Thus much of heaven's mysterious truth hast told!  
Soul-life aspires, though all the stars should sink;  
Not vain our loftiest instinct's upward stress,  
Nor hath the immortal hope shone clear and bold,  
To quench at death, his torch in nothingness!

## IX.

## RICHARD H. DANA, SEN.

O DEEP grave eyes! that long have seemed to gaze  
On our low level from far loftier days,  
O grand gray head! an aureole seemed to gird,  
Drawn from the spirit's pure, immaculate rays!

At length death's signal sounds! From  
weary eyes  
Pass the pale phantoms of our earth  
and skies;  
The gray head droops; the museful lips  
are closed  
On life's vain questionings and more  
vain replies!

Like some gaunt oak wert thou, that  
lonely stands  
'Mid fallen trunks in outworn desert  
lands;  
Still sound at core, with rhythmic leaves  
that stir  
To soft swift touches of aerial hands.

Ah! long we viewed thee thus, forlornly  
free,  
In that dead grove the sole unravished  
tree;  
Lo! the dark axe man smites! the oak  
lies low  
That towered in lonely calm o'er land  
and sea!

## X.

## BRYANT DEAD!

Lo! there he lies, our Patriarch Poet,  
dead!  
The solemn angel of eternal peace  
Has waved a wand of mystery o'er his  
head,  
Touched his strong heart, and bade  
his pulses cease.

Behold in marble quietude he lies!  
Pallid and cold, divorced from earthly  
breath,  
With tranquil brow, lax hands, and  
dreamless eyes,  
Yet the closed lips would seem to smile  
at death.

Well may they smile: for death, to such  
as he,  
Brings purer freedom, loftier thought  
and aim;

And, in grand truce with **immortality**,  
Lifts to song's fadeless heaven his  
star-like fame!

## XI.

## THE POLE OF DEATH.

## IN MEMORY OF SIDNEY LANIER.

How solemnly on mournful eyes  
The mystic warning rose,  
While o'er the Singer's forehead lies  
A twilight of repose.

The twilight deepens into night, —  
That night of frozen breath,  
The rigor of whose Arctic blight,  
We recognize as — death!

But since beyond the polar ice  
May shine bright baths of balm;  
Past its grim barriers' last device,  
A crystal-hearted calm, —

Thus, ice-bound Death that guards so  
well  
His far-off, secret goal,  
May clasp a peace ineffable,  
For some who reach his pole!

My poet — is it thus with thee,  
Beyond this twilight gray, —  
This frozen blight, this sombre sea, —  
Ah! hast thou found the Day?

## XII.

## THE DEATH OF HOOD.\*

THE maimed and broken warrior lay,  
By his last foeman brought to bay.

No sounds of battlefield were there —  
The drum's deep bass, the trumpet's  
blare.

\* During the terrible yellow fever season of 1878, General Hood and his wife died at very nearly the same time. They left a large family of children unprovided for, under circumstances which aroused the sympathy of the public, north and south. At the South, a considerable fund was subsequently raised for their support; while northern philanthropists, we understand, adopted two of the children.

No lines of swart battalions broke  
Infuriate, thro' the sulphurous smoke.

But silence held the tainted room  
An ominous hush, an awful gloom,

Save when, with feverish moan, he  
stirred,  
And dropped some faint, half-muttered  
word.

Or outlined in vague, shadowy phrase,  
The changeful scenes of perished days!

What thoughts on his bewildered brain,  
Must then have flashed their blinding  
pain!

The past and future, blent in one, —  
Wild chaos round life's setting sun.

But most his spirit's yearning gaze  
Was fain to pierce the future's haze,

And haply view what fate should find  
The tender loves he left behind.

"O God! outworn, despondent, poor,  
I tarry at death's opening door,

While subtlest ties of sacred birth  
Still bind me to the lives of earth.

How *can* I in calm courage die,  
Thrilled by the anguish of a cry

I know from orphaned lips shall start  
Above a father's pulseless heart?"

His eyes, by lingering languors kissed,  
Shone like sad stars thro' autumn mist;

And all his being felt the stress  
Of helpless passion's bitterness.

When, from the fever-haunted room,  
The presecient hush, the dreary gloom,

A blissful hope divinely stole  
O'er the vexed waters of his soul,

That sank as sank that stormy sea,  
Subdued by Christ in Galilee.

It whispered low, with smiling mouth,  
"She is not dead, — thy queenly South.

And since for her each liberal vein  
Lavished thy life, like vintage rain,

When round the bursting wine-press  
meet

The Ionian harvesters' crimsoned feet;

And since for her no galling curb  
Could bind thy patriot will superb.

Yea! since for her thine all was spent,  
Unmeasured, with a grand content, —

Soldier, thine orphaned ones shall rest,  
Serene, on her imperial breast.

Her faithful arms shall be their fold,  
In summer's heat, in winter's cold;

And her proud beauty melt above  
Their weakness in majestic love!"

Ah! then the expiring hero's face,  
Like Stephen's, glowed with rapturous  
grace.

Mad missiles of a morbid mood,  
Hurled at his heart in solitude,

No longer wounding, round it fell;  
Peace sweetened his supreme farewell!

For sure the harmonious hope was true,  
O South! he leaned his faith on you!

And in clear vision, ere he died,  
Saw its pure promise justified.

—◆—  
MEDITATIVE AND RELIGIOUS.

I.

CHRIST ON EARTH.

HAD we but lived in those mysterious  
days,

When, a veiled God 'mid unregenerate  
men,

Christ calmly walked our devious mortal  
ways,



Crowned with grief's bitter rue in place  
of bays, —

Ah! had we lived but then:

Lived to drink in with every wondering  
breath,

A consciousness beyond all human  
ken,

That clothed in flesh, as long conceived  
in faith,

We viewed the Lord of life and Lord of  
death, —

Ah! had we lived but then:

To mark all Nature quickening where  
He trod,

Whether thro' golden field, or shadowy  
glen,

While a strange sweetness breathed from  
leaf and clod,

As thro' man's image they divined their  
God: —

Ah! had we lived but then!

Wild birds above him passed on reverent  
wing,

And savage sovereigns of dark dune  
or den,

Out stole to greet Him with mild mur-  
muring,

Soft as a nested dove's song in the  
spring —

Ah! had we lived but then!

At "peace: be still!" the storm-wind  
ceased to roar,

And the lulled waters seemed to sigh  
"amen!"

Fear — the soul's mightier tempest —  
surged no more,

But a strange stillness fell on sea and  
shore: —

Ah! had we lived but then!

With our own ears to hear the words He  
said,

(Their music pondering o'er and o'er  
again!)

The wine of wisdom quaff from wisdom's  
head,

View the lame leap, and **watch the up-**  
rising dead:

Ah! had we lived **but then!**

The world grows old. **Faith, once a**  
mountain stream,

Now crawls polluted down a **poisonous**  
fen;

The Bethlehem star hath lost its **morning**  
beam;

Thy face, dear Christ, wanes like a  
wasted dream, —

How changed, how cold since then.

Ah! 'tis our sordid lives whose **promise**  
fails:

These languorous lives of **low, lost,**  
aimless men;

Thro' mockery's mist our **Lord's pure**  
aureole pales,

Yet tenderer than the Syrian nightin-  
gales,

His voice sounds *now as then*.

## II.

### HARVEST-HOME.

O'ER all the fragrant land **this harvest**  
day,

What bounteous sheaves are **garnered,**  
ear and blade!

Whether the heavens be **golden-glad,** or  
gray, —

And the swart laborers **toil in sun or**  
shade: —

Like some fair mother in time's morning  
beams,

When mortal beauty lured immortal  
eyes,

*Here,* Earth lies smiling in ethereal  
dreams,

While her deep-bosomed **breathings**  
fall and rise!

Through half-closed lids she **views o'er**  
lawn and lea,

Rich-fruited trees, vast **piles of glim-**  
mering grain, —

And from the mountain boundaries to  
the sea,  
Hears the low rumbling of the loaded  
wain.

A magical murmur born of ocean-deeps,  
Blent with the pine-tree's lingering  
music thrills  
Up the brown pastures to the trackless  
steeps.  
And ancient caverns of the lonely  
hills.

Far-flashing insects flicker thro' the  
grass;  
The humble-bee with burly bass drones  
by;  
Afar the plover pipes; the curlews pass  
In long lithe lines across the violet sky:

A mellowed radiance rings creation  
round;  
Plenty and peace the auspicious season  
bless;  
The full year pauses proudly, clothed  
and crowned  
In consummation of high queenliness:

All nature seems to throb with rhythmic  
fires;  
Dawns rise harmonious; splendid sun-  
sets roll  
Down to the chorus of invisible choirs—  
Strange winds in tune with Earth's  
victorious soul!—

Thus, on the verge of winter's dreary  
rest,  
Nature rejoices in rare pomps of  
power;  
To breeze and sunbeam bares her prod-  
gal breast,  
And robes in purple her last shadowless  
hour.

Ah, when Life's autumn nears the eter-  
nal main,  
May the heart's granary its rich depths  
unfold, —

Brimmed with immaculate sheaves of  
heavenly grain,  
And flushed with fruitage of unfading  
gold!

III.

RECONCILIATION.

[From the South to the North. Written in  
view of the new year.]

LAND of the North! I waft to thee  
The South's warm *benedicite!*  
Thou camest when all was grief and pain,  
The feverish blood, the tortured brain,  
When through hot veins delirium ran,  
Thou cam'st, the true Samaritan!

The charm of ruthless grace divine,  
The golden oil and perfumed wine,  
Have soothed far deeper wounds than  
those

Which harmed the body's hale repose;  
On anguished souls dropped purely calm,  
And sweet as Mary's "spikenard"  
balm!

Lo! now o'er all the world are drawn  
Clear splendors of the New-year's dawn!  
O North! O South! let warfare cease!  
Hark! to *that* prince whose name is  
peace!

And ere time's new-born child departs,  
Be joined in hands and joined in  
hearts!

Once wedded thus, O North! O South!  
Should discord ope her Marah mouth,  
Smite the foul lips so basely fain  
To outpour hate's salt tides again:  
Long raged the storm, long lowered the  
night, —

O faction, fly our morning light!

IV.

A VERNAL HYMN.

THE fresh spring burgeons into bloom—  
And Earth with all her vernal charms  
Lies like a queenly bride enclasped  
Within her heavenly bridegroom's  
arms;

The storms that raved have sunk to  
peace;  
Freed rivulets weave a blithesome lay,  
And blissful Nature softly sings  
Preludings of her perfect day!

Meanwhile there's not a breeze that  
thrills  
Leaf, bud, and flower with genial  
kiss, —  
Which does not breathe *thy* mystic hope,  
Oh, soul of Palingenesis: —

Glance where we may, the symbols rise  
Of loftier loves and lives to be: —  
*This marvellous spring-time seems to  
grasp  
The skirts of immortality!*

## V.

## CHRISTIAN EXALTATION.

O CHRISTIAN soldier! shouldst thou rue  
Life and its toils, as others do —  
Wear a sad frown from day to day,  
And garb thy soul in hoddin-gray?  
O rather shouldst thou smile elate,  
Unquelled by sin, unawed by hate, —  
Thy lofty-statured spirit dress  
In moods of royal stateliness: —  
For say, what service so divine  
As that, ah! warrior heart, of thine,  
High pledged alike through gain or loss,  
To thy brave banner of the cross?

Yea! what hast *thou* to do with gloom,  
Whose footsteps spurn the conquered  
tomb?  
Thou that through dreariest dark can  
see  
A smiling immortality?

Leave to the mournful doubting slave,  
Who deems the whole wan earth a grave,  
Across whose dusky mounds forlorn  
Can rise no resurrection morn,  
The sombre mien, the funeral weed,  
That darkly match so dark a creed;  
But be *thy* brow turned bright on all,  
Thy voice like some clear clarion call,

Pealing o'er life's tumultuous van  
The keynote of the hopes of man,  
While o'er thee flames through gain,  
through loss, —  
That fadeless symbol of the cross.

## VI.

## SOLITUDE; IN YOUTH AND AGE.

In youth we shrink from solitude!  
Its quiet ways we shun,  
Because our hearts are fain to dance  
With others' in the sun; —  
Life's nectar bubbling brightly up,  
O'erfloweth toward our brother's cup.

In age we shrink from solitude,  
Because our God is there;  
And something in his "still, small voice"  
Doth bid our souls "beware!"  
Who flies from God and conscience, can  
But seek his fellow-sinner — man!

## VII.

## DENIAL.

We look with scorn on Peter's thrice-  
told lie;  
Boldly we say, "Good brother! you  
nor I,  
So near the sacred Lord, the Christ,  
indeed,  
Had dared His name and marvellous  
grace deny."

Oh, futile boast! Oh, haughty lips, be  
dumb!  
Unheralded by boisterous trump or  
drum,  
How oft 'mid silent eves and midnight  
chimes,  
Vainly to us our pleading Lord hath  
come —

Knocked at our hearts, and striven to  
enter there;  
But we poor slaves of mortal sin and care,  
Sunk in deep sloth, or bound by  
spiritual sleep,  
Heard not the voice divine, the tender  
prayer!

Ah! well for us if some late spring-tide  
hour  
Faith still may bring, with blended shine  
and shower;  
If through warm tears a late remorse  
may shed,  
Our wakened souls put forth one  
heavenly flower!

## VIII.

## LESSON OF SUBMISSION.

BEN YOUSSEF, bound to Mecca, day by  
day  
Toiled bravely o'er the desert's fiery  
way.  
Till its hot sands and flint-sown courses  
sore  
Pressed on the brodered sandals which  
he wore,  
Scorching and cutting! at the last they  
fell  
Loosely abroad;— he seemed to fare  
through hell,  
So blistering now, the flame-hued rocks  
and dust:—  
“O mighty Allah!” cried he, “art thou  
just,  
To let thy faithful pilgrim, serving thee,  
Pass onward, thus, in nameless agony?”  
With bitter thoughts and half-rebellious  
mind  
He left, at length, the desert sands  
behind,  
And still in that dark temper—far  
from grace—  
Went where his brethren midst the  
holy place  
Kneeled, by the *Caäba's* sanctity en-  
thrall'd:—  
Lo! there he marked a smitten wretch  
who crawled  
Nearer the shrine, on bleeding hands  
and knees,  
Yet his deep eyes were stars of prayer  
and peace:—  
And ah, how Youssef's heart remorse-  
ful beat,  
To find *he* lacked not only shoes, but—  
feet!

## IX.

## THE SUPREME HOUR.

THERE comes an hour when all life's  
joys and pains  
To our raised vision seem  
But as the flickering phantom that  
remains  
Of some dead midnight dream!

There comes an hour when earth recedes  
so far,  
Its wasted wavering ray  
Wanes to the ghostly pallor of a star  
Merged in the milky way.

Set on the sharp, sheer summit that  
divides  
Immortal truth from mortal fantasie;  
We hear the moaning of time's muffled  
tides  
In measureless distance die!

Past passions—loves, ambitions and  
despairs,  
Across the expiring swell  
Send thro' void space, like wafts of  
Lethæan airs,  
Vague voices of farewell.

Ah, then! from life's long-haunted  
dream we part,  
Roused as a child new-born,  
We feel the pulses of the eternal heart  
Throb thro' the eternal morn.

## X.

## A CHRISTMAS LYRIC.

THO' the Earth with age seems whitened,  
And her tresses hoary and old  
No longer are flushed and brightened  
By glintings of brown or gold,  
A voice from the Syrian highlands,  
O'er waters that flash and stir,  
By the belts of their tropic islands,  
Still singeth of joy to her!

A song which the centuries hallow!  
Though softer than April rain  
That soweth on field and fallow,  
A spell that shall rise in grain—

Yet deep as the sea-strain chanted  
 On the fluctuant ocean-lyre,  
 By the magical west-wind haunted,  
 With the pulse of his soul on fire!

A promise to lift the lowly, —  
 To weed the soul of its tares,  
 And change into harmonies holy  
 The discord of fierce despairs:  
 A glory of high Evangels,  
 Of rhythmical storms and calms;  
 All hail to the voices of angels,  
 Heard over the starlit palms!

A hymn of hope to the ages,  
 The music of deathless trust,  
 No frenzy of mortal rages  
 Can darken with doubt or dust;  
 A rapture of high evangels,  
 But centred in sacred calms!  
 Ah! still the chorus of angels  
 Thrills over the Bethlehem palms!

Still heralds the day-spring tender,  
 That never can melt or close,  
 Till the noon of its deepening splendor  
 Out-blooms, like a mystic rose,  
 Whose petals are rays supernal  
 Of love that hath all sufficed, —  
 And whose heart is the grace eternal,  
 Of the fathomless peace of Chris:!

## XI.

## THE PILGRIM.

THROUGH deepening dust and dreary  
 dearth  
 I walk the darkened wastes of earth,  
 A weary pilgrim sore beset,  
 By hopeless griefs and stern regret.

With broken staff and tattered shoon  
 I wander slow from dawn to noon —  
 From arid noon till dew-impearled,  
 Pale twilight steals across the world.

Yet sometimes through dim evening  
 calms

I catch the gleam of distant palms:  
 And hear, far off, a mystic sea  
 Divine as waves on Galilee.

Perchance through paths unknown,  
 forlorn,  
 I still may reach an orient morn;  
 To rest when Easter breezes stir,  
 Around the sacred sepulchre.

## XII.

## PENEEL.

NEAR Jabbok Ford, endued with sacred  
 night,  
 The patriarch strove with *one* that silent  
 came,  
 Obscurely limned against the twilight  
 flame —  
 Stroved thro' slow watches of the marvel-  
 lous night!

“*Ungird thine arms, for lo! 'tis morning  
 light.*”

Spake the weird stranger! — “*nay, but  
 grant the claim,*

*Made good thro' strife divine, and bless  
 my name,*

*'Ere yet thou goest from doubtful clasp  
 and sight!*”

Thus Jacob, in the slowly ebbing swell  
 Of power and passion, — yearning still  
 to mark  
 That wrestler's face between the dawn  
 and dark:

Again, “*wilt thou not bless me?*” . . .  
*yea! and yea!*”

Dropped a still voice, what time the  
 new-born day  
 Haloed an angel's head at Penuel!

## XIII.

## PATIENCE.

SHE hath no beauty in her face,  
 Unless the chastened sweetness there  
 And meek long-suffering yield a grace  
 To make her mournful features fair.

Shunned by the gay, the proud, the  
 young,

She roams through dim unsheltered  
 ways:

Nor lover's vow, nor flatterer's tongue,  
Brings music to her sober days.

At best, her skies are clouded o'er,  
And oft she fronts the stinging sleet,  
Or feels on some tempestuous shore  
The storm-waves lash her naked feet!

Where'er she strays, or musing stands  
By lonesome beach, by turbulent  
mart, —

We see her pale, half-tremulous hands  
Crossed humbly o'er her aching heart.

Within, a secret pain she bears,  
A pain too deep to feel the balm  
An April spirit finds in tears, —  
Alas! all cureless griefs are calm!

Yet in her passionless strength supreme,  
Despair beyond her pathway flies,  
Awed by the softly steadfast beam  
Of sad, but heaven-enamored eyes!

Who pause to greet her, vaguely seem  
Touched by fine wafts of holler air,  
As those who in some mystic dream  
Talk with the angels unaware!

## XIV.

## THE LATTER PEACE.

WE have passed the noonday summit,  
We have left the noonday heat,  
And down the hillside slowly  
Descend our weary feet.  
Yet the evening airs are balmy,  
And the evening shadows sweet.

Our summer's latest roses  
Lay withered long ago;  
And even the flowers of autumn  
Scarce keep their mellowed glow.  
Yet a peaceful season woos us  
Ere the time of storms and snow.

Like the tender twilight weather  
When the toil of day is done,  
And we feel the bliss of quiet  
Our constant hearts have won —  
When the vesper planet blushes,  
Kissed by the dying sun.

So falls that tranquil season,  
Dew-like, on soul and sight,  
Faith's silvery star rise blended  
With memory's sunset light,  
Wherein life pauses softly  
Along the verge of night.

## XV.

## GAUTAMA.

SEVEN weary centuries ere our star-like  
Christ

Rose on the clouded heavens of mortal  
faith

Gautama came, the stern high priest  
of death,

Oblivion's sombre, dark evangelist.  
Millions of souls hath this dread creed  
enticed

To wander lost through realms of hale-  
ful breath,

Ghoul-haunted, rife with shapes of sin  
and scath,

Monstrous, yet dim, as births of mid-  
night mist:

All life, he taught, hath been, all life  
must be

Accursed! the gift of demons! All  
delight

Lies at the far-off goal of pulseless peace.

NOTE. — We yield to none in our cordial admiration of Mr. Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia;" but we regard that most eloquent, pathetic, and beautiful poem, chiefly as a poem — and by no means as an absolutely authoritative presentation of Gautama's creed, or its tendencies. It even seems to us that Mr. Arnold is himself somewhat in the dark as to these matters. The "prodigious controversy among the erudite in regard to Gautama's doctrines," Mr. Arnold confronts chiefly by his own firm conviction that "a third of mankind would never have been brought to believe in blank abstractions, or in nothingness, as the crown of Being!" *Au contraire*, we cannot fairly ignore the opinion of those Orientalists who maintain, that "Nirvana" is essentially nothingness; and moreover, that the idea involved in it has a peculiar charm for the Hindoo mind.

"Pray," sighed he, "that this breath of  
men shall cease;  
Our hell is earth, our heaven eternal  
night;  
Our only godhead vague Nonentity!"

## XVI.

## CHRIST.

THE soul's physician thus the soul would  
kill,  
The soul's high priest its heaven-  
bound pinions stay,  
Bring from fresh beauty chaos, night  
from day,  
Despair from trust, from all good prom-  
ise ill;  
The outworn heart and sickened senses  
still  
Must shroud heaven's life in fogs of  
foul decay,  
Veil the swift angel, love, and hide the  
ray  
Born of God's smile with masks of mor-  
bid will:—  
But Truth, and Truth's great Master  
cannot die:  
While Love, the seraph, free of wings  
and eyes,  
Upsweeps the realm of calm immensity,  
A thousand times our buried Christ  
shall rise  
In prayerful souls to hush their  
anguished sighs,  
And dawn, not darkness, rule o'er earth  
and sky.

## XVII.

## A WINTER HYMN.

O WEARY winds! O winds that wail!  
O'er desert fields and ice-locked rills!  
O heavens that brood so cold and pale  
Above the frozen Norland hills!  
Nature is like some sorrowing soul,  
Robed in a garb of dreariest woe;—  
She cannot see her vernal goal  
Through ghostly veils of mist and  
snow:—

Her pulse beats low; through all her  
veins  
Scarce can the sluggish life-blood  
start;  
What feeble, faltering heat sustains  
The half-numbered forces of her heart!

Above, despondent eyes she lifts,  
To view the sun-ray's dubious birth;  
Beneath she marks the storm-piled drifts  
About a waste bewildering earth!

Ah, stricken Mother! hast thou lost  
All memory of the germs that rest  
Untouched by tempest, rain, or frost,  
Shrined in thine own immortal breast?

Bend, bend thine ear; yea, bend and  
hear,—  
Despite the winds' and woodlands'  
strife,—  
Deep in Earth's bosom, faint and clear,  
The far-off murmurous hints of life:—

The sound of waves in whispering flow;  
Of seeds that stir in dreams of light,  
Whose sweetness mocks the shrouded  
snow,  
Whose radiance smiles at death and  
night;

So, Christian spirit! wrapt in grief,—  
Beneath *thy* misery's frozen sod,  
Love works, to burst in flower and leaf,  
On some fair spring-dawn fresh from  
God!

## XVIII.

## THE THREE URNS.

LIST to an Arab parable, wherein  
The beauty of the Orient fancy shrines  
A star-like truth, the iconoclastic West  
Is blind to see, its shrewd material vision  
Bent over on the foulest soils of earth,  
If only gold may gild them! Hear and  
learn!

Nimroud, the king to whom his four-  
score years  
Had brought a wisdom pure as his white  
locks,

(And spotless they as snow on Caucasus!)  
 One morn commanded his three sons to  
     grace  
 His presence chamber; there in front of  
     each  
 A mighty urn, sealed with a mystic seal,  
 Was duly set—the one of burnished  
     gold,  
 Blazed like an August noon—of amber  
     fair  
 The other—but the third (dull as a  
     cloud  
 Seen 'gainst the bright flash of a distant  
     wave,  
 Or 'twixt the glittering tree-tops),  
     seemed, in form,  
 A rugged mould wrought from the com-  
     mon earth.

“Choose thou, my eldest,” said the  
     king, deep-breathed,  
 “Choose thou amongst these urns, the  
     urn which seems  
 To thee most precious,”—whereupon he  
     chose  
 The Vase of Gold, which bore in jewelled  
     flame,  
 Clear leaping, the word “EMPIRE,”—  
     opened it,  
 And found beneath a deadly, vaporous  
     fume,  
 (Which on the instant sickened heart  
     and sense),—  
 Nought but a bubbling tide of vital  
     blood,  
 Hot, as appeared, that moment from the  
     veins  
 Of murdered manhood. The fair amber  
     vase,  
 With “GLORY” written on it—“this  
     for me!”  
 Exclaimed the second prince, with eager  
     eyes,  
 And feverish hands clasping his treasure  
     close,—  
 Too close, alas! for as he spake, the urn  
 Crashed on his breast, and bruised and  
     tortured it,  
 And a rare dust, the ashes of great men,

Dead centuries since, rose from its shat-  
     tered bulk  
 Pungent, and yet so light the feeblest  
     puff  
 Of failing wind hath shorn and scattered  
     them  
 Into vague air. One vase alone re-  
     mained,  
 Which the third son unsealing, found  
     therein,  
 Deep-graven, glittering like a planet  
     keen,  
 Thro' gulfs of envious darkness the sole  
     name  
 Of GOD,—“which name, O! princes,”  
     said the king,  
 “Doth sanctify yon vase of common  
     earth  
 Above all precious metals sought of  
     men,  
 Since but one letter of that sacred  
     three,  
 Outweighs all worlds, from the mild star  
     of eve,  
 Shining on love, to those mysterious  
     orbs,  
 Which gird the pathway of the Pleiades.”

XIX.

ON THE DECLINE OF FAITH.

As in some half-burned forest, one by  
     one,  
 We catch far echoes on the doleful  
     breeze,  
 Born of the downfall of its ruined  
     trees;  
 While even thro' those which stand,  
     slow shudderings run,  
 As if Fate's ruthless hand were laid  
     thereon;  
 So, in a world sore-smitten by foul dis-  
     ease,  
 — That Pest, called Doubt — we mark by  
     slow degrees.  
 The fall of many a faith that wooed the  
     sun:  
 Some, with low sigh of parting bough,  
     or leaf,



Strain, quivering downward to the abhorred ground;  
Some totter feebly, groaning toward their doom;  
While some broad-centuried growths of old Belief,  
Sapped as by fire, defeatured, charred, discrowned,  
Fall with a loud crash, and long reverberant boom!

Thus, fated hour by hour, more gaunt and bare,  
Gloom the wan spaces, whence, a power to bless,  
Up burgeoned once, in grace or stateliness,  
Some creed divine, offspring of light and air;  
What then? and must we yield to blank despair,  
Beholding God Himself wax less and less,  
Paled in the skeptical storm-cloud's whirl and stress,  
Till all is lost—love, reverence, hope, and prayer.  
O man! when faith succumbs, and reason reels,  
Before some impious, bold iconoclast,  
Turn to thy heart that *reasons* not, but *feels*;  
Creeds change! shrines perish! *still* (her instinct saith),  
*Still the soul lives, the soul must conquer Death.*  
*Hold fast to God, and God will hold thee fast!*

## XX.

## THE ULTIMATE TRUST.

THOUGH in the wine-press of thy wrath divine,  
My crushed hopes droop, like crude and worthless must,  
That love and mercy, Father! still are thine,  
With reverent soul, I trust!

Though all my life be shattered by thine ire,  
The mystic whirlwind of thy will august,  
Still, from the din, the darkness and the fire,  
I lift my song of trust!

Tho' foes assail me! yea, within, without!  
Harrow my heart, and hurl its joys in dust,  
No forceful fear, nor fraud of treacherous doubt,  
Disarms my bucklered trust!

Though my lost years be wrapped in Arctic cloud,  
And Grief on me hath wreaked her ruthless lust,  
Still, like an angel's face above a shroud  
Smiles my celestial trust!

Tho', Lord! thou wear'st a mask of hate ('twould seem),  
And for a time, I think—as mortals must—  
That mask shall melt, as melts a nightmare dream,  
Before my Orient trust!

Yea! tho' Thou slay me, and supine, I cower,  
Heart-pierced and bleeding from the fiery thrust,—  
I know there bides in heaven a glorious hour,  
To crown my sacred trust!

## XXL

“A LITTLE WHILE I FAIN WOULD LINGER YET.”

A LITTLE while (my life is almost set!)  
I fain would pause along the downward way,  
Musing an hour in this sad sunset-ray,  
While, Sweet! our eyes with tender tears are wet;  
A little hour I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger yet,  
 All for love's sake, for love that cannot tire;  
 Though fervid youth be dead, with youth's desire,  
 And hope has faded to a vague regret,  
 A little while I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger here:  
 Behold! who knows what strange, mysterious bars  
 'Twixt souls that love, may rise in other stars?  
 Nor can love deem the face of death is fair;  
 A little while I still would linger here.

A little while I yearn to hold thee fast,  
 Hand locked in hand, and loyal heart to heart;  
 (O pitying Christ! those woeful words,  
 "We part!")  
 So ere the darkness fall, the light be past,

A little while I fain would hold thee fast.

A little while, when night and twilight meet;  
 Behind, our broken years; before, the deep  
 Weird wonder of the last unfathomed sleep.

A little while I still would clasp thee,  
 Sweet;

A little while, when night and twilight meet.

A little while I fain would linger here;  
 Behold! who knows what soul-dividing bars  
 Earth's faithful loves may part in other stars?

Nor can love deem the face of death is fair:

A little while I still would linger here.

XXII.

TWILIGHT MONOLOGUE.

CAN it be that the glory of manhood has passed,  
 That its purpose, its passion, its might,  
 Have all paled with the fervor that fed them at last,  
 As the twilight comes down with the night?

Can it be I have lived, dreamed, and labored in vain —  
 That above me, unconquered and bright,  
 The proud goal I had aimed at is taunting my pain,  
 As the twilight comes down with the night?

Can it be that my hopes, which seemed noble and fair,  
 Were predestined to mildew and blight?  
 Ah! sad disenchantment! that bids me beware  
 Of a twilight which heralds the night!

The glad days, the brave years that were lusty and long —  
 How they fade on vague memory's sight!  
 And their joys are like echoes of jubilant song,  
 As the twilight comes down with the night!

All the past is o'ershadowed, the present is dim,  
 And could earth's fairest future requite  
 The worn spirit that swoons, the racked senses that swim,  
 In this dread of the twilight and night?

There is dew on my raiment; the sea winds wail low,  
 As lost birds, wafted wave-ward in flight,

And all Nature grows cold, as my heart  
in its woe,

At the advent of twilight and night!

From the realm of dead sunset scarce  
darkened as yet —

Over hills mist-enshrined and white,  
A deep sigh of ineffable, mournful regret,  
Seems exhaled 'twixt the twilight and  
night!

O! thou genius of art! I have wor-  
shipped and blessed;

O! thou soul of all beauty and light!

Lift me up in thine arms, give me  
warmth from thy breast,

Ere the twilight be merged in the  
night!

Let me draw from thy bosom miraculous  
breath,

And for once, on song's uppermost  
height,

I may chant to the nations such music  
in death

As shall mock at the twilight and  
night!

## XXIII.

## III. SHADOW OF DEATH.

I PRAY you, when the shadow of death  
draws nigh,

To hear me out beneath the unmeasured  
heaven;

I'd fain would hear the pine trees' shum-  
berous sigh,

And watch the cloud flotillas drifted  
high,

By slow, soft breezes driven

Due south, perchance toward realms of  
tropic balms,

And the warm fragrance of the Syrian  
palms.

I pray you, when the shadow of death  
comes down,

Oh! lay me close to nature's pulses deep,  
Whether her breast with autumn tints  
be brown,

Or bright with summer, or hale winter's  
crown

Press on her brows in sleep;

So nigh the dawn of some new, marvel-  
lous birth,

I'd look to heaven, still clasped in arms  
of earth!

I pray you, when the shadow of death  
draws near,

Give, give me freedom for my last, faint  
breath;

Beneath God's liberal heaven I could  
not fear,

His merciful winds would dry my latest  
tear,

His sunshine soften death,

And some fair shreds of our dear earth's  
delight

Cling round the spirit in her upward  
flight.

## XXIV.

## FINIS.

A MOMENT'S gleam, a hint of sunnier  
weather,

Borne from the storm-clouds and the  
mists of fate;

Dawned, with a tender "Peradventure"  
hither,

A soft "Perchance it is not yet too  
late!"

And so a transient omen magnifying,

My soul would fain pass brightened,  
unto thine;

But to my half-formed thought comes  
truth replying:

"No life mounts backward from its  
wan decline."

Would'st thou expect, drear winter,  
ashen, sober,

To burn with blushes of a spring-tide  
noon?

Would'st thou expect the hectic-checked  
October

To catch the virginal freshness of  
young June?

All mortal lives like the year's seasons  
 ever  
 Pass from their May dawn and rare  
 summer's bloom,  
 Down to the day when autumn winds  
 dissever  
 Life's latest sheaves to strew them  
 near a tomb.

And then death looms, that pitiless grim  
 December.  
 Bringing cold tears, a winding sheet  
 like snow,  
 Last, a carved stone, which bids the  
 world remember  
 One of its countless myriads sleeps be-  
 low.



"My thoughts are wandering on the verge of dreams, . . .  
 While lower, feebler, flit the fireside gleams."

XXV.

THE SHADOWS ON THE WALL.

WHAT mournful influence chills my soul  
 to-night ?  
 I watch the expiring flames that fade  
 and fall.  
 From which outleap vague shafts of  
 arrowy light,  
 Pursued by spectral shadows on the  
 wall.

My thoughts are wandering on the verge  
 of dreams,  
 Mist-laden, gray, and sombre as a  
 pall,  
 While lower, feebler, flit the fireside  
 gleams,  
 And darker those quaint shadows on  
 the wall.

The old sad voice (fraught with the centuries' tears)

That seems through infinite space and time to call,

Faint with the doubts and grief of antique years,

Years that are dim as shadows on the wall;

The old sad voice is whispering to my heart:

Man's life, phantasmal, vain, illusive all,

Beholds too soon its cloud-foundations part,

Melting like midnight shadows on the wall.

Too soon the noblest passions, worn and old,

Die, or grow dulled and languid past recall;

Even love may wane in memory's twilight cold,

Sad, wavering, wan, as shadows on the wall.

And oft the loftiest nature's loftiest aim,  
Heaven-soaring once, wide as this earthly ball,

Sinks, a tamed eagle o'er whose eyes of flame

The death-films steal like shadows on the wall.

A subtler voice whispers the conscious soul,

"What of high hopes which held *thy* youth in thrall?

Where flash *thy* chariot wheels, where shines *thy* goal?"

The mocking shadows answer from the wall.

With deepening dusk and faded flame they grow

Fantastic phantoms, hovering over all  
The tremulous space, or flickering to and fro

In wild unearthly antics on the wall.

Till as the last slow ember drops in gloom,

Like vassals hurrying through some wizard's hall,

Whirling they pass, and darkness haunts the room,

No life, not even a shadow on the wall!

## XXVI.

## CONSUMMATUM EST.

I've done with all the world can give,

Whate'er its kind or measure.

(O Christ! what paltry lives we live

If toil be lord, or pleasure!).

Alas! *I* only yearn for sleep.

Calm rest for fevered riot —

The sacred sleep, the shadows deep,

Of death's majestic quiet.

I've done with all our earth-life lends —

False hopes and wild ambitions,

Brilliant beginnings, futile ends,

And long-postponed fruitions,

Those hollow shows dissembling truth,

Vain myths that mock the real.

The dreary wrecks of peace and youth

Above a crushed ideal.

I've done with heavenly dreams that wane

At touch of earth-born dawns,

With fervid passion, useless pain,

Brave aims and dim forewarnings;

I've done with alien tears or smiles,

Past days and vague to-morrows;

I've done with earth's unhallowed wiles,

Brief joys and helpless sorrows.

I've done with compacts sealed in dust,

Dull cares that overweighed me,

With promise of the Judas-trust,

That, while it kissed, betrayed me;

With *all* save love, whose matchless face

Midmost a life's undoing

Smiles in its tender angel's grace

To sanctify the ruin.

I've done with all beneath the stars,  
 O world! so wanly fleeting!  
 How long against time's ruthless bars  
 Have the soul's wings been beating,  
 Till even the soul but yearns for sleep,  
 Calm rest for fevered riot —  
 The sacred sleep, the shadows deep,  
 Of death's majestic quiet!

XXVII.

THE BROKEN CHORDS.

LIKE a worn wind-harp on a barren lea,  
 Unstirred by subtle breathings of the  
 sea,

Though sweet south-breezes swell the  
 floodtide's flow,  
 The lyric power in this worn heart of  
 mine  
 Droops in the twilight of life's wan  
 decline,

While the loosed chords of song grown  
 lax and low,  
 Are dumb to all the heavenly airs that  
 blow!

Only, sometimes along each shattered  
 string

I hear the ghost of Memory murmur-  
 ing

Old strains, as half in sadness half in  
 scorn,

So faint, so far, they scarcely pass the  
 bound

'Twixt sullen silence and ethereal  
 sound, —

Mere wraiths of murmurous tone, that  
 die forlorn

Ere yet we deem those faltering notes  
 are born!

So, smitten chords, sink, wane, and pass  
 away!

Yet have ye made soft music in your  
 day

On many a sea-swept strand or breezy  
 lawn.

Once more I hear that yearning music  
 rise;

Once more I see deep tears in tender  
 eyes;

And all my soul melts in me, fondly  
 drawn

Back to youth's love and youth's Arca-  
 dian dawn!

XXVIII.

THE RIFT WITHIN THE LUTE.

A TINY rift within the lute  
 May sometimes make the music mute!  
 By slow degrees, the rift grows wide,  
 By slow degrees, the tender tide —  
 Harmonious once — of loving thought  
 Becomes with harsher measures fraught,  
 Until the heart's Arcadian breath  
 Lapses thro' discord into death!

XXIX.

IN HARBOR.

I THINK it is over, over,  
 I think it is over at last,  
 Voices of foeman and lover,  
 The sweet and the bitter have passed: —  
 Life, like a tempest of ocean  
 Hath outblown its ultimate blast:  
 There's but a faint sobbing sea-ward  
 While the calm of the tide deepens lee-  
 ward,  
 And behold! like the welcoming quiver  
 Of heart-pulses throbbed thro' the river,  
 Those lights in the harbor at last,  
 The heavenly harbor at last!

I feel it is over! over!  
 For the winds and the waters surcease;  
 Ah! — few were the days of the rover  
 That smiled in the beauty of peace!  
 And distant and dim was the omen  
 That hinted redress or release: —  
 From the ravage of life, and its riot  
 What marvel I yearn for the quiet  
 Which bides in the harbor at last?  
 For the lights with their welcoming  
 quiver

That through the sanctified river  
 Which girdles the harbor at last,  
 This heavenly harbor at last?

I know it is over, over,  
 I know it is over at last!  
 Down sail! the sheathed anchor uncover,  
 For the stress of the voyage has passed:  
 Life, like a tempest of ocean  
 Hath outbreathed its ultimate blast:  
 There's but a faint sobbing sea-ward,  
 While the calm of the tide deepens lee-ward;  
 And behold! like the welcoming quiver  
 Of heart-pulses throbb'd thro' the river,  
 Those lights in the harbor at last,  
 The heavenly harbor at last!

## XXX.

## FORECASTINGS.

WHEN I am gone, what alien steps shall tread  
 This flowery garden-close?  
 What alien hands shall pluck the violets sweet,  
 Or gather the rich petals of the rose,  
 When I — drear thought! — am dead?

When I am gone, toward doubtful darkness led,  
 What voices, false or true,  
 Shall echo round these old, familiar haunts  
 My happiest days of tranquil manhood knew,  
 Ah me! when I am dead?

When I am gone, what museful eyes instead  
 Of these dimmed eyes of mine,  
 Beneath yon trellised porch shall mark thro' heaven,  
 On cloudless eves the summer sunsets shine,  
 When I, alas! am dead?

When I am gone, and all is done and said,  
 One life had wrought below —  
 'Mid these fair scenes what other souls shall thrill,

In turn, to love and anguish, joy and woe —

Dear Christ! when I am dead?

Though I be dead, perchance when Spring has shed

Her gentlest influence round —

Here, where love reigned, my ghostly feet may tread

The old accustomed paths without a sound, —

Perchance — when I am dead!

Though I be dead, earth's fragrant white and red

Here in spring roses met,

May to strange spiritual senses bring the balms

Of tender memory and divine regret.

Yea! even to me — though dead!

Though I be dead, with faded hands and head

Laid in unbreathing rest —

Dear cottage roof! thou still mayst lure me back,

Among the unconscious living a wan guest,

Veiled, as Fate veils the dead:

A guest of shadowy frame, ethereal tread,

Amongst them, yet apart —

A sombre mystery! in whose bosom throb

The faint, slow pulses of its phantom heart,

Ah, heaven! not wholly dead!

## XXXI.

## APPEAL TO NATURE OF THE SOLITARY HEART.

DEAR mother, take me to thy breast!

I have no other place of rest

In all this weary world of men:

Ah! fold me in thy love again,  
 Sweet mother; clasp me to thy breast!

From out thy womb, long since, I came,  
A creature wrought of dust and flame;  
I knew no mortal mother's grace,  
But only viewed *thy* mystic face,  
That softly went, and softly came!

I knew thee in the sunset grand,  
The waveless calm, the silvery strand;  
From out the shimmering twilight-  
bars  
I saw thee smile between the stars,  
Divinely sweet, or softly grand!

I heard, beneath the sylvan arch,  
Thy battling winds, led on by March,  
Sweep where the solemn pine-tops  
close  
About its ravaged, dim repose —  
Hushed, awed, beneath the woodland  
arch!

I heard thee, 'mid some tender hour,  
In lisping leaf and rustling flower,  
In low lute-breathings of the breeze,  
And tidal sighs o'er moonless seas  
Star-charmed in midnight's mournful  
hour!

I thrilled at each far-whispered tone  
That touched me from thy vast un-  
known,  
At every dew-bright hint that fell  
From out thy soul unsearchable,  
Yea, each strange hint and shadowy  
tone!

I felt, through dim, awe-laden space,  
The coming of thy veiled face;  
And in the fragrant night's eclipse  
The kisses of thy deathless lips,  
Like strange star-pulses, throbbled  
through space!

Now mine own pulses, beating low,  
Whisper the spent life: "*Thou must go;*  
*Even as a wasted rivulet, pass*  
*Beyond the light, beneath the grass,*  
*For strength grows faint, and hope is*  
*low!"*

FOUR POEMS FOR SPECIAL OCCA-  
SIONS.

L

TO THE POET WHITTIER.

ON HIS 70th BIRTHDAY.

FROM this far realm of pines I waft thee  
now  
A brother's greeting, Poet, tried and  
true;  
So thick the laurels on thy reverend  
brow,  
We scarce can see the white locks  
glimmering through!  
O pure of thought! Earnest in heart  
as pen,  
The tests of time have left thee unde-  
filed;  
And o'er the snows of threescore years  
and ten  
Shines the unsullied aureole of a child.

II.

TO O. W. HOLMES,

ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

DEAR Doctor, whose blandly invincible  
pen  
Has honored so often your great fellow-  
men  
With your genius and virtues, who  
doubts it is true  
That the world owes in turn, a warm  
tribute to you?

Wheresoever rare merit has lifted its  
head  
From the cool country calm or the city's  
hotbed —  
You were always the first to applaud it  
by name,  
And to smooth for its feet the harsh  
pathway to fame.

Wheresoever beneath the broad rule of  
the sun,  
By some spirit elect, a grand deed has  
been done —



Its electrical spell like the lightning's  
would dart,  
Though the globe lay between, to thrill  
first in *your* heart!

Philanthropist! poet! romancer! com-  
bined —

Ay! shrewd scientist too — who shall  
fathom your mind,

Shall plumb that strange sea to the ut-  
termost deep,

With its vast under-tides, and its rhyth-  
mical sweep?

You have toiled in life's noon, till the  
hot blasting light

Blinds the eyes that would gauge your  
soul stature aright;

But when eve comes at last, 't will be  
clear to mankind,

By the length of bright shadow your  
soul leaves behind!

## III.

TO EMERSON.

ON HIS 77th BIRTHDAY.

"I do esteeme him a deepe sincere soule; one  
that seemeth ever to be travailing after the  
Infinite!" — *Sir Thomas Browne*.

Al! what to him *our* trivial praise or  
blame,

Who through long years hath raised  
half-mournful eyes

Yearning to mark some heaven-descend-  
ed flame

Light his soul's altar rife with sacri-  
fice?

The offering of far thoughts, profound  
as prayer,

And starry dreams, still rhythmical of  
youth,

With travail of brain that pants for loft-  
tier air,

To the veiled mystery of immaculate  
Truth:

No Orient seer — wild woodlands, 'round  
him furled, —

Building his shrine 'mid virginal  
vales apart,

E'er watched and waited in the antique  
world,

For fire divine, with more ethereal  
heart!

*Can* life's supreme oblations still re-  
main

All undiscerned? or hath some mar-  
vellous levin

Hallowed his gift, and down his rifted  
pain

Flashed the white splendor of God's  
grace from heaven?

## IV.

TO HON. R. G. H.

UPON HIS 78th BIRTHDAY.

CLOSE to the verge of fourscore crowded  
years

Your heart is strong, your soul serene  
and bright;

As when confronting first life's hopes  
and fears —

The star of manhood crowned your brow  
with light.

Clear thoughts are spells to keep the life-  
blood pure,

Brave aims are medicinal, rife with  
balm;

What wonder then, with *thee* life's joys  
endure,

And life's majestic sunset smiles in  
calm!

For thou art one whose brotherhood  
supreme

Hath touched all circles of benign  
desire;

Therefore, thy days like some uncloud-  
ed dream,

Are slowly melting into heavenly fire.



**HUMOROUS POEMS.**



## HUMOROUS POEMS.

### VALERIE'S CONFESSION.

TO A FRIEND.

THEY declare that I'm gracefully pretty,  
The very best waltzer that whirls;  
They say I am sparkling and witty,  
The pearl, the queen rose-bud of girls.  
But, alas for the popular blindness!  
Its judgment, though folly, can hurt:  
Since my heart, that runs over with  
    kindness,  
It vows is the heart of a flirt!

How, *how*, can I help it, if Nature,  
Whose mysteries baffle our ken,  
Hath made me the tenderest creature  
That ever had pity on men?  
When the shafts of my luminous glances  
Have tortured some sensitive breast,  
Why, I soften their light till it trances  
The poor wounded bosom to rest!

Can I help it if, brought from all regions,  
As diverse in features as gait,  
Rash lovers besiege me in legions,  
Each lover demanding his fate?  
To be cold to such fervors of feeling  
Would pronounce me a dullard or  
    dunce;  
And so, the bare thought sets me reel-  
    ing,  
I'm engaged to *six* suitors at once!

The first, — we shall call him "sweet  
    William,"

He's a lad scarcely witty or wise —  
The gloom of the sorrows of "Ilium"  
Would seem to outbreathe on his  
    sighs.

When I strove, half in earnest, to flout  
    him,  
Pale, pale at my footstool he sunk;  
But mamma, quite too ready to scout  
    him,  
    Would hint that "sweet Willie" was  
    drunk!

My second, a florid Adonis  
Of forty-and-five, to a day,  
Drives me out in his phaeton with po-  
    nies,

Making love every yard of the way,  
Who so pleasantly placed could resist  
    him?

Had he popped 'neath the moonlight  
    and dew  
That eve, I could almost have kissed him  
(A confession alone, dear, for you).

Next, a widower, polished and youthful,  
Far famed for his learning and pelf:  
Can I doubt that *his* passion is truthful,  
That he seeks me alone for myself?  
Yet I know that some slanderers mutter  
His fortune is just taking wings;  
But I scorn the backbiters who utter  
Such basely censorious things!

Could they hearken his love-whisper,  
    dulcet

As April's soft tide on the strand,  
Whose white curves are loath to re-  
    pulse it,

So sweet is its homage and bland;  
Could they hear how his dead wife's de-  
    votion

He praises, while yearning for mine —  
They would own that his ardent emotion  
Is something — yes — almost *divine*!

My fourth — would to heaven I could  
paint him

As next the high altar he stands —  
A Saint John, all the people besaint  
him?

Pale brow and immaculate hands,  
Ah! his tones in their wooing seem  
holy,

Nor dare I believe it misplaced,  
When an arm of the church, stealing  
slowly.

Is folded, at length, round my waist;

Behold this long list of my lovers

With a soldier and sailor complete:  
Both swear that their hearts were but  
rovers

Till fettered and bound at *my* feet.  
Oh dear! but these worshippers daunt  
me:

Their claims, their vain wishes, appall;  
'Tis sad how they harass and haunt  
me, —

*What, WHAT, shall I do with them all?*

LATER.

As the foam-flakes, when steadfastly  
blowing,

The west wind sweeps reckless and  
free,

Are borne where the deep billows, flow-  
ing,

Pass out to a limitless sea,  
So the gay spume of girlish romances,

Upaught by true Love on his breath,  
With the fretwork and foam of young  
fancies,

Was borne through vague distance to  
death.

For he came — the true hero — one  
morning.

And my soul with quick thrills of del-  
ight

Leaped upward, renewed, and reborn in  
A world of strange beauty and might:  
I seemed fenced from all earthly disas-  
ter;

My pulses beat tuneful and fast;  
So I welcomed my monarch, my master  
The *first* real love, and the *last*.

—◆—  
*A MEETING OF THE BIRDS.*

OF a thousand queer meetings, both  
great, sir, and small  
The bird-party I sing of seemed oddest  
of all!

How they come to assemble — a multi-  
form show —

From all parts of the earth, is — well  
— more than I know.

I only can vow that, one fine night of  
June,

In a vast, varied garden, made bright by  
the moon,

Such bird-throngs I saw, with plumes  
brilliant or dark,

As had ne'er met, I deem, since the age  
of the ark:

There the phoenix, upborne on a tall  
jasper spar,

His fair mate by his side, shone serene  
as a star:

With a calm sort of pride glancing down  
on all others,

As scorning to claim such *canaille* for  
*his* brothers!

He alone of earth's creatures (more wise  
far than Adam),

When Eve tempted *him*, said "Excuse  
me, good madam!

"No juice from *that* fruit shall e'er  
moisten *my* thrapple!

Delicious! perhaps . . . but who gave  
you the apple?"\*

\* Tradition says that when Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, at Eve's instigation, the phoenix, *alone*, of all creatures, equally tempted, did not fall.

Then — his tiny red optics upturned to  
this king  
Of all species that court the light air  
with a wing —

Lo, the rooster! his top-knot bright crim-  
son and blue,  
With his impudent strut and his cock-  
doodle-doo,

Is resolved, one can see, the king's hau-  
teur to balk!

*What's a phoenix, forsooth, to such cocks  
of the walk!*

Oh! he bustles along, and he bullies his  
wife,  
Till the poor humbled partlet is weary of  
life —

When, phew! like a bolt of blue light-  
ning or brown,  
Outflashed from the trees, a swift bee-  
bird whirls down

Upon cocky's great top-knot upreared  
like a dome,  
To cut, just for once, his big high-  
ness's comb!

From the rooster's discomfiture, laugh-  
ing, I turn  
To where, 'mid the garden's cool  
avenues, burn

The fair cinnamon tufts of those  
hippoes that sold  
To King Solomon, once, their true  
crownlets of gold;\*

And beyond where the shadow waves  
dim by the sheen,  
The gay humming-bird darts — a live  
rainbow — between:

\* The Hippoes originally had *real* crowns of gold on their heads; but so persecuted were they because of this possession that they appealed to Solomon, who (the legend says) exchanged their gold crowns for crowns of feathers, retaining the *former* as a trifling "compliment" for his magic skill and *kindness!*

While the parrakeets glitter, the orioles  
float  
Through the moonlighted mist and fine  
vapors remote;

And by sides of small streams and clear  
lakelets outspread  
Stalks the long-legged flamingo, all scar-  
let and red:

In sooth, birds of all climes, whether  
wild birds or tame,  
Whether dove-hued and sad, or high-  
colored like flame,

Walked, wobbled and sauntered, paused,  
fluttered and flew,  
With vast blending of plumes, and, ah!  
endless ado.

The eagle's loud anger, set deaf'ningly  
loose,  
Shrilled fierce o'er the arrogant hiss of  
the goose,

And a peacock, who screeched till his  
gills were half black,  
Could not drown, after all, a profes-  
sional "quack;"

The nightingale pitted his voice and his  
lore  
'Gainst the skylark, that never had  
trilled *thus* before;

And the cock now recovered, and fresh,  
sir, as dew,  
Strove to bear them *both* down with his  
cock-doodle-doo:

Till — one volume of strange, contra-  
dictory sound,  
The air, like a millwheel, whizzed round  
us and round.

And while still the white moonshine, on  
vapors of fleece,  
Rained down its ineffable splendors in  
peace,

That bird congregation broke up in a row,  
Whose noises, half dreaming, I catch even now.

But the last glimpse of all that flashed quick on my eyes,  
Ere the whole meeting faded 'twixt garden and skies,

Was the cuckoo's unwearied, nefarious leg  
Scratching fast to discover a phoenix's egg.

Which, it found, I've no doubt, was close-hidden and pressed  
By the vile little wretch, with quite mother-like breast.

Yet I've seen other creatures than creatures with wings  
Who dared to make free with thrice sanctified things,

From whose false incubation *what* creeds came in vogue!  
*Even truth's egg is marred if hatched out by a rogue!*



*A BACHELOR-BOOKWORM'S COMPLAINT OF THE LATE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.*

[Written during the Hayes and Tilden Controversy].

A MAN of peace, I never dared to marry,  
Lover of tranquil hours, I dwelt apart;  
Outside the realm where noisy schemes miscarry;

My only handmaids, Science, Learning, Art;  
Oh! home of pleasant thought, of calm affection,  
All blasted now by this last vile election!

One morn, absorbed in studious contemplation  
Of what or whom, I cannot now recall,

A strident voice, "Rise! help to save the nation!"

Roared in mine ear, half bellow and half squall;

"Throw by your books, why, man, there's treason brewing;

Come, come with me, we'll block the march of ruin!"

My neighbor, Dobson—all the gods confound him!

Seized, shook and hauled me from my cushioned seat;

(Just then I could have drugged the wretch, or drowned him;)

But the next moment on bewildered feet,

I trudged with him through dirty streets and weather,

That we might vote at the next poll together.

Vote! vote for whom? I'd not the faintest notion;

Little I recked of modern joys or woes;  
Wrapped in Greek wars and ancient Rome's commotion,

What passed beneath my philosophic nose,

Seemed dim as glimmerings of a midnight taper

Marked from afar through autumn clouds and vapor!

At length we paused before a wood-work wicket,

Shrining the grimy guardian of the poll;

Into my hands they thrust a printed ticket,

An ink-besmeared, suspicious-looking scroll,

Which, ne'ertheless, held names of men whose action

Would cow—they swore—the brazen front of faction!

With scarce a glance, in vacant mood, I cast it;

That ticket solled into as solled a box;

A box, I thought, half vaguely as I  
passed it;  
Whose guardian "Rough" looked wily  
as a fox,  
Willing, no doubt, for any public hero,  
To cheat *ad lib.* — a Brutus, or a Nero!

Well! from that day, my peace of life  
was shattered;  
Dobson *would* come, all lowering or  
ablaze  
With joy, to shout — (as if the issue  
mattered?)  
Now "*Tilden's won!*" now "*glorious  
Ruthy Hayes!*"  
Vainly I argued, vainly vowed that d—  
me,  
I didn't care three straws for Ruth or—  
Sammy!

"Have I not Scipio and majestic Cato,  
With their grand deeds to ponder yet?"  
I cried;  
"Why, dunder-headed Dobson, *will* you  
prate so,  
Of modern dwarfs of time and fate  
untried;"  
"Untried!" quoth he, aghast at my  
iniquity;  
"I'll back them *both*, by Jove! 'gainst  
all antiquity!"

And still he came, morning, and noon,  
and twilight,  
Bringing, at last, his party henchmen  
too:  
O! how I yearned to blow them through  
the skylight,  
Or, at the gentlest, beat them black  
and blue;  
Each cursed and threatened like some  
desperate Lara;  
Meanwhile they quaffed and quaffed my  
best Madeira!

A point there is beyond the soul's de-  
fiance,  
Which gained, a mortal man must  
fight, or fly;

Fight, if he knows the wily tricks of  
"science,"\*

Fly, if he knows not *when* to smite,  
and *why*;  
Needless to say, in this disastrous mat-  
ter,  
Of the two ways, I wisely chose — the  
latter!

I left my home; I fled to shades subur-  
ban,  
Where an old aunt, as deaf as twenty  
posts.  
(A fine antique, bedecked with lace and  
turban,)  
Lived in a house unknown to rats or  
ghosts;  
There, far from party conflicts, proud or  
petty,  
I dwell at peace, with sober Madame  
Betty!

At peace! good lack, the universal  
virus  
Of party strife had captive made the  
air.  
The light, the very sun-notes shifting  
nigh us,  
And thus, alas! it entered even  
there;  
Up, down her stairs, how oft had I to  
stump it,  
Shrieking the news through her infernal  
trumpet.

Baffled, once more I sought the public  
pass-ways,  
But then, from morn to midnight's  
"witching noon,"  
Monotonous as when some blatant ass  
brays,  
The same mixed clamors rose 'neath  
sun and moon;  
Tilden and Hayes in never-ceasing wran-  
gle,  
Who the vexed "snarl" shall ever dis-  
entangle?

\* Ring science, of course.



Bank, hall, and market, counting-house  
and alley,

Patrician parlor and low bar-room den,  
Echoed, as 'twere, cries of retreat or  
rally,

From brassy throats of many thousand  
men;

Such foolish boasts were blent with  
threats as silly,

Yet even the wise men babbled — *willy*  
*nilly*.

The very nurse-maids with their baby  
charges,

Took sides, and squabbled; newsboys  
shouting loud,

Scuttled along the slippery pavement  
marges,

And burst like young bulls through the  
motley crowd

Of parsons, black-legs, dandies, hack-  
men, bummers;

Swollen each moment by some rash new  
comer!

Around the telegraph stands they surged  
and battled,

Till direful Hades seemed unloosed on  
earth:

Lies were exchanged, cudgels and brick-  
bats rattled;

The veriest blackguard scorned the  
man of birth,

And tweaked his nose, or knocked his  
beaver double—

Ah me! the noise, the blows, the furious  
trouble!

I passed a gay "Bazaar," and glanced  
within it,

Of silks and satins, what a dazzling  
maze!

Fair tongues were wagging smartly:  
every minute,

"Of course 'tis Tilden!" "nay, not so,  
'tis Hayes!"

Rose, with the rustle of bright garments  
blending—

A strife of voices, eager and unending!

You'd scarce believe it; but maids fair  
and tender,

Dancing from school, the merest slips  
of girls,

Shrilled *Hayes* or *Tilden*, and with fin-  
gers slender,

Caught and dragged fiercely at each  
others' curls;

Ill words they spake—those inconsiderate  
misses—

From rosebud lips just framed for love  
and kisses!

. . . . .

Enough! the die is cast; from rage and  
riot,

I'll cross o'er mountain walls and ocean  
streams,

To seek and find again, that gracious  
quiet,

Whose charm hath left me, save in  
transient dreams;

In some far land and time, my spirit  
stilled then—

I may — who knows — forgive both  
*Hayes* and *Tilden*!



COQUETTE AND HER LOVER.

A "PETITE COMEDIE" IN RHYME.

LOVER.

COQUETTE! coquette! now, is it fair  
To weave for me your magic hair,  
Binding me thus, all unaware?  
Till, wholly meshed in every part,  
From dazzled eyes to captured heart,  
Scarce can I, thro' your radiant snare,  
Inhale one waft of free-born air;  
Answer, coquette! now, is it fair?

COQUETTE.

O, foolish querist! what if I,  
Beholding your enamored face  
And every well-attested trace  
Of verdant, young idolatry,  
Should, after my own fashion, choose  
To play the subtly-amorous muse,

Your inexperienced heart-strings touch,  
 Wooing the warm chords overmuch!  
 Or tempt you, 'twixt a smile and sigh,  
 To enter beauty's luminous net?  
 Such snares must evermore be set

For blinded human flies like you!  
 Cease, therefore, this half-feigned ado,  
 You are a natural victim! I  
 Am by the same strange law's decree,  
 Your dear, predestined enemy!



"For full five seconds, it would seem  
 As if you really thought, coquette,  
 On something grave."

LOVER.

Is *such* the only comfort, then,  
 You give to thrice-deluded men?  
 Suppose our life-plan quite upset,  
 Reversed in whole, or changed in part;  
*My* sex your own, and feelings strong,  
 (Wiled by deep passion's siren song);  
*Yours* the blind victim's tangled heart,  
 And *mine* to weave the tempter's net—  
 What then, O! honey-tongued coquette?

COQUETTE.

*Such* questions!—ah! *mon Dieu! mon Dieu!*—  
 Fancy I've places changed with you!  
 I cannot! 'tis too hard a task  
 Of any mortal *belle* to ask!

[*ASIDE with a half-humorous, half-solemn air.*]  
 Fancy *my* person changed to *his*  
 By some odd metamorphosis!

My fairy frame to that huge bulk  
That might befit red Rory O'Fulke,  
Our Irish groom!—six feet, at least,  
Of stature — with that boundless waist,  
Instead of mine, Titania might  
Quite envy on a "round-dance" night,  
By all the waltzing beaux adored!  
*My* brow to that great, sabre-scored  
Brown forehead; and my cheeks of  
rose  
To bearded *puffs*; my delicate nose —  
*Quel horreur!* 'tis a hideous dream!

## LOVER.

For full five seconds, it would seem  
As if you really *thought*, coquette,  
On something grave! Slowly about  
Your flower-like lips' delicious pout,  
Came tiny puckerings, lined with doubt;  
Your large eyes widened deep and  
blue,  
As May-skies glimpsed thro' morning  
dew;  
And shadows vague as noon-tide trance  
Stole o'er your vivid countenance:  
Coquette! show pity! — after all,  
*Hare* you resolved to free from thrall  
Your wretched serf? . . . Close, close  
your eyes  
For one brief, merciful minute; try  
To turn your perfect mouth awry;  
Let those arch smiles which magnetize  
My inmost blood be changed to scorn;  
Do all a winsome lady born  
To loveliness and witchery, can,  
To flout a love-tormented man!

## COQUETTE.

You know as well as I  
What balms have soothed your slavery;  
Besides, *I'm sure, whate'er you say*,  
There never yet has dawned the day  
On which, in truth ('tis vain to frown),  
You longed to lay your fetters down.  
Surely but airy chains they are,  
And tenuous as the farthest star.  
But *should* you break the binding net,  
You'd come . . . (ah! graceless, thank-  
less loon!)

'Ere the next wax or wane of moon,  
To sigh, or call on "sweet coquette!"

## LOVER.

Too much! by heaven! you heartless  
chit!  
I'll *prove* you underrate my wit,  
And self-respect, for all that's passed!  
I will — will break these bonds at last.  
Yes! look! you false, hard-hearted girl!  
I dash to earth the dazzling curl  
You gave me once! . . . your portrait  
too! . . .

(O, yes! I *stole* it, . . . what of that?  
'Twill soon be shapeless, crushed and  
flat,

Beneath my stern, avenging heel!  
Would it were *flesh*, and so could *feel*,  
. . . Where is it! *where?*

[*He searches frantically, but vainly for the  
likeness in one pocket after another.*]

[COQUETTE—approaching with infinite sweet-  
ness, rests one hand upon his shoulder, while  
the forefinger of the other is archly shaken in  
his angry face, that changes with ludicrous  
quickness, from passion to bewilderment, and  
from bewilderment to rapture]:

. . . Why, Hal, for shame! you prayed  
just now,

With earnest mien and solemn brow,  
That I would sting you with hot scorn;  
"Do all a winsome lady born  
To loveliness and witchery, can,  
To flout a love-tormented man."  
And lo! because your bidding's done;  
Half-way, and mildly; why, I've won  
Such rude abuse! . . . I shall not stir,  
Till you have begged my pardon, sir!  
. . . Hal! do you love me? . . .

## LOVER.

. . . Angel! saint!  
*Can* this be true! . . . my heart grows  
faint,  
With happiness! . . . so then, despite—

COQUETTE (*interrupting*).

Yes, dear! of feigned contempt and  
slight,  
— I have loved you always! who but *you*

Had failed thus long to read me true?  
You dear, delightful, blundering boy.

## LOVER.

. . . Cupid be blessed! Oh, love! Oh, joy!  
. . . But where's that precious curl I  
threw  
Rashly away? . . . Already flown  
On some light wind?

## COQUETTE.

— Yes, yes, 'tis gone!  
But then the whole bright, golden net  
(*shaking down her curls.*)  
You've gained with me! . . . If still  
unfair  
You deem this soft, imprisoning snare;  
And self-respect, for all that's passed,  
Demands you break your bonds at last,  
Give me due warning — if you please —

LOVER (*embracing her*).

Ah! *thus* a loving seal is set  
On rosy lips to keep them dumb;  
Some other eve beneath the trees  
Of golden summer, 'mid the hum  
Of forest brooks and hive-bound bees,  
I'll harken, madcap, while you tease.  
But now, my heart the future years  
Sees through a mist of blissful tears;  
My eyes with gracious dew are wet;  
I'm dreaming! . . . No! . . . *here smiles*  
coquette!

## SENEX TO HIS FRIEND.

## ABOUT THE PERIOD OF A NEW YEAR.

*Dedicated to Sam'l Lord, Jr., Charleston, S.C.*

YOUR hair is scant, my friend, and mine  
is scanter,  
On heads snowed white by Time, the  
disenchanter;  
In place of joyous beams and jovial  
twinkles,  
Behold, old boy, our faces scored with  
wrinkles!

Sparkles your legal lore with salt that's  
Attic!

But, ah! those twinges (gout?), those  
pangs rheumatic!

With muse of mine no more the public  
quarrels,

But, Lord! how cold I feel despite the  
laurels!

If spiced your fame, not so your milk or  
sago:

Only mild diet suits a sharp lumbago.

While as for me — what critic "puff"  
avails one

Whose own short breath (asthmatic!)  
almost fails one?

The world we deemed so rife with fade-  
less prizes —

Which of us most its hollow show de-  
spises?

We'd yield our gains for just one mar-  
vellous minute

Of our lost youth, with all youth's glory  
in it!

Yet from this House of Life, now  
wrapped in twilight,

Gleams 'mid the shadowy roof Faith's  
magic skylight;

Whereby as night steals down through  
weird gradations,

We hail the glow of heavenly constella-  
tions.

So, as through darkness only dawn the  
graces

Of God's calm stars and lofty shining  
spaces,

That night called death which shrouds  
our bodies breathless

May flood the heaven of soul with peace  
made deathless.

## THE OBSERVANT "ELDEST" SPEAKS.

"PA vows that all gluttony's wicked;  
He's always for docking my meat,  
And ne'er at dessert will he give me  
Enough of what's racy and sweet:

Yet he'll gorge and gorge on at *his* din-  
ners,  
As restless in mouth as in hand;—  
Now, say, — if all gluttons are sinners,  
Where — where does *my* 'governor'  
stand!

"Oh! pa's most impressive on lying;  
( 'Meanest crime in the annals of sin;'  
Yet why does *he* tell folk (through  
Thomas)

That he's *out* when he knows that he's  
*in*!

And ma's done the same, when she  
meant not

From house nor from chamber to stir:  
I suppose what is punished in *me*, sir,  
Is all right in *him* or in *her*!

"Pa says, that good men must be  
generous,

Self-denying, benevolent, kind;  
Then why does he give those poor beg-  
gars

Just nothing? The lame and the  
blind,

Small orphan, and wan, pining widow,  
The gold-covered head and the gray,  
Unsoothed and unhelpt in their sor-  
rows,

From *him* turn — how sadly — away!

"Pa counsels fair words of our neigh-  
bors;—

Oh! he dotes on the pure 'golden  
rule;'—

Yet he calls Aunt Selina 'back-biter,'  
And he dubs Uncle Reuben 'a fool.'  
And when *I* said, 'Young Reub's like  
his father.'

On what text in reply did pa lean?

Why, 'Whoso thou fool shall dare utter,'  
Must taste — well, *you* know what I  
mean!

"Pa says, 'we must reverence our  
elders;'—

How he harps and he harps upon  
that;—

Yet grandfather, who's ninety and up-  
ward,

He treats like an imbecille 'flat.'

And once when poor grandpa, at break-  
fast,

Mistook the slop-bowl for his cup,

Pa muttered, 'I wish the old dotard  
Were locked — *somewhere* — heedfully  
up!'

"I don't know what the 'governor's'  
made of;

But truly, if *he were not he*,

(I mean if he were not *my* 'pater' —  
Alack! that *such* fathers should be,)

His name would begin as I spelt it,  
With a big blatant H, if you please,  
And conclude with the tiniest, meanest,  
But most self-sufficient of e's!"

—◆—  
LUCIFER'S DEPUTY.

A MEDLEVAL LEGEND.

A POET once, whose tuneful soul, per-  
chance,

Too fondly leaned toward sin, and sin's  
romance,

On a long vanished eve, so calm and  
clear

None could have deemed an evil spirit  
near,

Brooding ill deeds, was summoned by a  
writ,

In the due form of Hades, to the Pit;

A red-nosed, red-haired fiend the sum-  
moner,

About whose horrent head his locks did  
stir

Like half-waked serpents! "Well," in  
wrath and woe,

The poet cried, "whom the De'il drives  
*must* go,

Whate'er the goal! Yet much I wish  
that he

Had sent as guide some nobler fiend than  
thee,

Thou hideous varlet!"

"Come, keep cool, I say,"  
Counselled the other sagely, "while *you*  
*may!*"  
Whereon, as half in scorn and half in  
ire,  
He haled the poet to the realm of fire.

Arrived in bounds Hadéan, a vast rout  
Of fiends they met, who rushed tumultu-  
ous out,  
To roam the earth and those doomed  
spirits snare  
Who unsuspecting lived and acted  
there;  
Till in a few brief seconds the whole  
crew  
Of crowding demons — black, brown,  
green and blue —  
All but their haughty chief, his form up-  
reared  
Through the red mist, had wildly dis-  
appeared.

Then said the dark archangel to the  
bard:  
"Thine eye is bright, thou hast a shrewd  
regard;  
And, therefore, ere I likewise o'er the  
marge  
Of Hades wing my way for some brief  
hours,  
To thee I choose to delegate my powers  
As chief and sovereign of this kingdom  
dread,  
To which, if well thou guardest, by my  
head  
Thy recompense, when I come back,  
shall be  
A luscious tid bit, garnished daintily —  
No meaner *entrée* than a roasted monk,  
(Before he's cooked we'll make the  
rascal drunk,  
*To spice his juices!*); or, if thou'dst  
prefer  
Yon leaner and less succulent usurer,  
Why, of our toil and time with trifling  
loss,  
We'll serve *him* up, larded with golden  
sauce!"

But while the absent fiends their cunning  
tasked  
To trap unwary souls, thick cloaked and  
masked,  
One entered Hades who did soon  
entice  
The heedless bard to play a game at  
dice,  
Staking the souls he held in charge  
thereon.  
The stranger played superbly — played,  
and won.  
So, gathering round him the freed souls,  
with care  
And kind despatch, safe to the outward  
air  
He led them triumphing; and all who  
now  
Looked on his unmasked face and  
glorious brow  
Knew that St. Peter stood amongst them  
there.  
But when the devils, trooping homeward,  
found  
Their kingdom void — its conflagrations  
drowned  
As 'twere by showers from Heaven —  
such curses rose —  
Like thunder bellowing through the  
strange repose  
Which late had reigned — the poet's  
head whirled round,  
Stunned by the tumult. But ere long,  
with whirr  
And furious whizz, his right hand  
Lucifer  
Brought in such stinging contact with  
one cheek  
And then the other, that our minstrel,  
weak  
From pain and fear, sank trembling on  
the floor.  
But sternly Satan pointed to the door,  
Where through his faithless guard, with  
many a kick  
And echoing thump, and one swift mer-  
ciless prick  
Of a keen pitchfork, was thrust forth in  
shame

From out the empire of fierce grief and  
flame,  
In even more woeful plight than when  
he came!  
Then Lucifer upraised his arms and  
swore  
A mighty oath that Hades' lurid door  
No poet's form should ever enter more!

So, brother bards, whate'er ye write or  
do,  
Be fearless. Hades holds no place for  
you:  
Since if on earth men deem your worth  
but small,  
Why there, 'tis plain, ye have no worth  
at all!



**POEMS FOR CHILDREN.**





## POEMS FOR CHILDREN.

### *LITTLE NELLIE IN THE PRISON.*

The eyes of a child are sweeter than any hymn  
we have sung,  
And wiser than any sermon is the lisp of a  
childish tongue!

HUGH FALCON learned this happy truth  
one day;  
(’Twas a fair noontide in the month of  
May) —

When, as the chaplain of the convicts’  
jail,

He passed its glowering archway, sad  
and pale,

Bearing his tender daughter on his arm.  
A five years’ darling she! The dewy  
charm

Of Eden star-dawns glistened in her  
eyes;

Her dimpled cheeks were rich with sun-  
ny dyes.

“Papa!” the child that morn while  
still abed,

Drawing him close toward her, shyly  
said:

“Papa! oh, won’t you let your Nellie go  
To see those naughty men that plague  
you so,

Down in the ugly prison by the wood?  
Papa, I’ll beg and pray them to be  
good.”

“What, you, my child?” he said, with  
half a sigh.

“Why not, papa? I’ll beg them so to  
*try.*”

The chaplain, with a father’s gentlest  
grace,

Kissed the small ruffled brow, the plead-  
ing face:

“Out of the mouths of babes and suck-  
lings still,  
Praise is perfected,” thought he; thus,  
his will

Blended with hers, and through those  
gates of sin,

Black, even at noontide, sire and child  
passed in.

Fancy the foulness of a sulphurous lake,  
Wherefrom a lily’s snow-white leaves  
should break,

Flushed by the shadow of an unseen  
rose!

So, at the iron gate’s loud clang and  
close,

Shone the drear twilight of that place  
defiled,

Touched by the flower-like sweetness of  
the child!

O’er many a dismal vault, and stony  
floor,

The chaplain walked from ponderous  
door to door,

Till now beneath a stairway’s dizzy flight  
He stood and looked up the far-circling  
height;

But risen of late from fever’s torture-  
bed,

How could he trust his faltering limbs  
and head?

Just then, he saw, next to the milkewed  
wall,

A man in prisoner’s raiment, gaunt and  
tall,

Of sullen aspect, and wan, downcast  
face,

Gloomed in the midnight of some deep  
disgrace;

He shrank as one who yearned to fade  
 away,  
 Like a vague shadow on the stone-work  
 gray,  
 Or die beyond it, like a viewless wind;  
 He seemed a spirit faithless, passionless,  
 blind  
 To all fair hopes which light the hearts  
 of men, —  
 A dull, dead soul, never to wake again!

The chaplain paused, half doubting  
 what to do,  
 When little Nellie raised her eyes of blue,  
 And, no wise daunted by the downward  
 stir  
 Of shaggy brows that glowered askance  
 at her,  
 Said, — putting by her wealth of sunny  
 hair, —  
 “Sir, will you kindly take me up the  
 stair?  
 Papa is tired, and I'm too small to  
 climb.”  
 Frankly her eyes in his gazed all the  
 time;  
 And something to her childhood's  
 instinct known  
 So worked within her, that her arms  
 were thrown  
 About his neck. She left her sire's em-  
 brace  
 Near that sad convict-heart to take her  
 place,  
 Sparkling and trustful! — more she did  
 not speak;  
 But her quick fingers patted his swart  
 cheek  
 Caressingly, — in time to some old tune  
 Hummed by her nurse, in summer's  
 drowsy noon!

Perforce he turned his wild, uncertain  
 gaze  
 Down on the child! Then stole a trem-  
 ulous haze  
 Across his eyes, but rounded not to tears;  
 Wherethrough he saw faint glimmerings  
 of lost years

And perished loves! A cabin by a rill  
 Rose through the twilight on a happy  
 hill;  
 And there were lithe child-figures at  
 their play  
 That flashed and faded in the dusky  
 ray;  
 And near the porch a gracious wife who  
 smiled,  
 Pure as young Eve in Eden, unbeguiled!

Subdued, yet thrilled, 'twas beautiful to  
 see  
 With what deep reverence, and how ten-  
 derly,  
 He clasped the infant frame so slight  
 and fair,  
 And safely bore her up the darkening  
 stair!  
 The landing reached, in her arch, child-  
 ish ease,  
 Our Nelly clasped his neck and whis-  
 pered:

“Please,  
 Won't you be good, sir? For I like you  
 so,  
 And you are such a big, strong man,  
 you know —”  
 With pleading eyes, her sweet face side-  
 wise set.  
 Then suddenly his furrowed cheeks  
 grew wet  
 With sacred tears — in whose divine  
 eclipse  
 Upon her nestling head he pressed his  
 lips  
 As softly as a dreamy west wind's sigh,  
 What time a something, undefined but  
 high,  
 As 'twere a new soul, struggled to the  
 dawn  
 Through his raised eyelids. Thence,  
 the gloom withdrawn  
 Of brooding vengeance and unholy pain,  
 He felt no more the captive's galling  
 chain;  
 But only knew a little child had come  
 To smite despair, his taunting demon,  
 dumb;

A child whose marvellous innocence enticed  
 All white thoughts back, that from the heart of Christ  
 Fly dove-like earthward, past our clouded ken,  
 Child-life to bless, or lives of child-like men!

Thus he went his way,  
 An altered man from that thrice blessed day;  
 His soul tuned ever to the soft refrain  
 Of words once uttered in a sacred fane:  
 "The little children, let them come to me,  
 Of such as these my realm of heaven must be;"  
 But most he loved of one dear child to tell,  
 The child whose trust had saved him, tender Nell!

THE CHILDREN.

THE children! ah, the children!  
 Your innocent, joyous ones;  
 Your daughters, with souls of sunshine;  
 Your buoyant and laughing sons.

Look long in their happy faces,  
 Drink love from their sparkling eyes,  
 For the wonderful charm of childhood,  
 How soon it withers and dies!

A few fast-vanishing summers,  
 A season or twain of frost,  
 And you suddenly ask, bewildered  
 "What is it my heart hath lost?"

Perhaps you see by the hearth-stone  
 Some Juno, stately and proud,  
 Or a Hebe whose softly ambushed eyes  
 Flash out from the golden cloud

Of lavish and beautiful tresses  
 That wantonly floating, stray  
 O'er the white of a throat and bosom  
 More fair than blossoms in May.

And perhaps you mark their brothers—  
 Young heroes who spurn the sod  
 With the fervor of antique knighthood,  
 And the air of a Grecian god!

But where, ah, where are the children,  
 Your household fairies of yore?  
 Alack! they are dead, and their grace  
 has fled  
 For ever and ever more!

WILL AND I.

I.

WE roam the hills together,  
 In the golden summer weather,  
 Will and I:  
 And the glowing sunbeams bless us,  
 And the winds of heaven caress us,  
 As we wander hand in hand  
 Through the blissful summer land  
 Will and I.

II.

Where the tinkling brooklet passes  
 Through the heart of dewy grasses,  
 Will and I  
 Have heard the mock-bird singing,  
 And the field-lark seen upspringing  
 In his happy flight afar,  
 Like a tiny winged star,  
 Will and I.

III.

Amid cool forest closes  
 We have plucked the wild wood roses,  
 Will and I;  
 And have twined, with tender duty,  
 Sweet wreaths to crown the beauty  
 Of the purest brows that shine  
 With a mother-love divine  
 Will and I.

IV.

Ah! thus we roam together,  
 Through the golden summer weather,  
 Will and I;

While the glowing sunbeams bless us,  
And the winds of heaven caress us —  
As we wander hand in hand  
O'er the blissful summer land  
Will and I.

—◆—  
*JAMIE AND HIS MOTHER — IN THE TROPICS.*

JAMIE.

O MOTHER, what country is that I see  
Far over the stream and the boulders  
gray,  
Where the wind-song pipes, and the cur-  
lews flee,  
And the little brown squirrels dance  
and play  
Through the boughs all day?

MOTHER.

Why, only a forest dark and wild,  
A savage waste you must shun, my child!

JAMIE.

O mother, what shapes are those that sit  
In the deep dun heart of the woodland  
gloom?  
And what those creatures that dip and  
flit,  
Each crowned with a golden and scar-  
let plume,  
O'er the tamarind bloom?

MOTHER.

Why, only the monkeys crouched from  
sight,  
And paroquets flashing in gay-hued  
flight!

JAMIE.

O mother, what children are those that  
run  
So swift and light 'mid the tree-stems  
bare?  
They seem to twinkle from shade to sun,  
And beckon me over their sport to  
share  
In the noontide fair!

"Go not," she cried, with a quivering  
breath:

"They are Pixies, child, and their sport  
is death!"

But there came a morn when the moth-  
er's words

No longer dwelt in her Jamie's mind;  
When he followed the flight of the whirl-  
ring birds

That circled and soared on the wood-  
land wind,  
And mother and home were far behind.

Like one in a golden dream was he,

Far over the stream and the boulders  
gray:

And the wind-song pipes, and the cur-  
lews flee.

And the little brown squirrels dance  
and play  
Through the boughs all day.

But the day grew dim, and the night-  
shades fell,

And there in the dark, drear, hungry  
wild,

In the loneliest nook of a mountain dell,  
Where never a tender moonbeam  
smiled,  
Lay the weary child!

Like one in an awful trance was he.

In the deep dun heart of the woodland  
gloom;

But a trance whose shadows can never  
flee,

Till the mystic trump of the day of  
doom  
Breaks vault and tomb.

And they found him there with his  
bleeding hands

So humbly crossed o'er the ragged vest,  
His spirit had gone to the angel lands,  
But his out-worn body they laid to  
rest

In the last sad smile of the gentle wass:  
God guard his rest!

## THE THREE COPECKS.

CROUCHED low in a sordid chamber,  
With a cupboard of empty shelves,  
Half starved, and, alas, unable  
To comfort or help themselves,

Two children were left forsaken,  
All orphaned of mortal care;  
But with spirits too close to heaven  
To be tainted by earth's despair,

Alone in that crowded city,  
Which shines like an arctic star,  
By the banks of the frozen Neva,  
In the realm of the mighty Czar.

Now, Max was an urchin of seven;  
But his delicate sister, Leeze,  
With the crown of her rippling ringlets,  
Could scarcely have reached your  
knees.

As he looked on his sister weeping,  
And tortured by hunger's smart,  
A thought like an angel entered  
At the door of his opened heart.

He wrote on a fragment of paper,  
With quivering hand and soul,  
"Please send to me, Christ, three co-  
pecks,  
To purchase for Leeze a roll!"

Then, rushed to a church, his missive  
To drop,—ere the vesper psalms,—  
As the surest mail bound Christward,  
In the unlocked box for alms!

While he stepped upon tiptoe to reach it,  
One passed from the priestly band,  
And with smile like a benediction,  
Took the note from his eager hand.

Having read it, the good man's bosom  
Grew warm with a holy joy;  
"Ah! Christ may have heard you  
already,  
Will you come to my house, my boy?"

"But not without Leeze?" "No,  
surely,  
We'll have a rare party of three;  
Go, tell her that somebody's waiting  
To welcome her home to tea."

That night in the cosiest cottage,  
The orphans were safe at rest,  
Each sang as a callow birdling,  
In the depths of its downy nest.

And the next Lord's Day, in his pulpit,  
The preacher so spake of these.  
Stray lambs from the fold, which Jesus  
Had blessed by the sacred seas:

So recounted their guileless story,  
As he held each child by the hand,  
That the hardest there could feel it,  
And the dullest could understand.

O'er the eyes of the listening fathers  
There floated a gracious mist;  
And oh, how the tender mothers  
Those desolate darlings kissed!

"You have given your tears," said the  
preacher,  
"Heart-alms we should none despise;  
But the open palm, my children,  
Is more than the weeping eyes!"

Then followed a swift collection,  
From the altar steps to the door,  
Till the sum of two thousand rubles  
The vergers had counted o'er.

So you see that the unmailed letter  
Had somehow gone to its goal,  
And more than three copecks gathered  
To purchase for Leeze a roll!

## THE REASON WHY.

I'd like, indeed I'd like to know  
Why sister Bell, who loved me so,  
And used to pet me day and night,  
And could not bear me out of sight,

Now always looks so cross and glum,  
If to her side I chance to come,  
When that great, gawky man is nigh;  
I'd like to know the reason why?

That man! I *hate* him! yes, I do,  
And, in *my* place, you'd hate him too.  
At first, (his common name is John!)  
He brought me boxes of *bon bons*,  
With books, and dolls, and tiny rings,  
And lots on lots of precious things,  
And said, of all Miss Pontoon's girls,  
Not one could match my flowing curls,  
My rosy cheeks and rounded chin,  
With one sly dimple nestling in.  
But now, he seems so stern and high,  
I scarce may catch his scornful eye.  
While as for *toys!* — he has ceased to  
buy!  
Tell me, who can, the reason why?

It's mean! dear me! I'm sure it's mean!  
Did I not run a "go-between"  
From him to sister Bell so long.  
(Although I *feared* it might be wrong),  
With sweetmeats, flowers, and scented  
notes,  
Sealed by two doves with curving throats?  
Of course I thought him kind and nice.  
But now, he's cold as arctic ice!  
And more than once I've heard him  
say,  
"That chit's forever in the way!"  
While Bell — she *snaps!* till I could  
cry.  
Will no one tell the reason why?

## LATER.

Think — Mr. John's my friend again.  
('Twas yesternight he made it plain),  
For most of our big household gone  
To Friday's lecture. — left alone,  
But Bell and I; *he* came to tea,  
(As now he's coming constantly.)  
And spoke to me quite warmly — quite:  
"Lizzie, you are not looking bright;  
And since both Bell and I are here,  
Take Nurse, and see the circus, dear;  
I'll pay, my love! accept of this."

(A wee gold dollar, and — a kiss!)  
"Why don't you come with Bell?"  
asked I;  
He smiled, but would not answer why.

## LATER STILL.

Good news! good news! I'm almost mad,  
I feel so pleased, so proud and glad.  
To-morrow is the wedding-day;  
Papa will give our Bell away,  
And I'm a bridesmaid! — oh, my dress!  
"Soft waves of white silk loveliness,"  
Bell says, "with grace in every tuck!"  
And isn't Brother John a duck?  
(I call him *Brother* now, you see.)  
*He* gave this dainty dress to me,  
And said, his "little friend must look  
Fair as a picture in a book."  
I answered gayly, "I shall try!"  
What need to ask the reason why?

## THE SILKEN SHOE.

"Hie on the holly-tree!" — *Old Ballad.*

THE firelight danced and wavered  
In elvish, twinkling glee  
On the leaves and crimson berries  
Of the great green Christmas Tree;

And the children who gathered round it  
Beheld, with marvelling eyes,  
Pendant from trunk and branches  
How many a precious prize,

From the shimmer of gold and silver  
Through a purse's cunning net,  
To the coils of a rippling necklace,  
That quivered with beads of jet.

But chiefly they gazed in wonder  
Where flickered strangely through  
The topmost leaves of the holly  
The sheen of a silken shoe!

And the eldest spake to her father:  
"I have seen — yes, year by year,  
On the crown of our Christmas hollies,  
That small shoe glittering clear;

"But you never have told who owned it,  
Nor why so loftily set,  
It shines through the fadeless verdure,  
You never have told us yet!"

'Twas then that the museful father  
In slow sad accents said,  
While the firelight hovered eerily  
About his downcast head:

"My children — you had a sister;  
(It was long, long, long ago),  
She came like an Eden rosebud  
'Mid the dreariest winter snow,

"And for four sweet seasons blossomed  
To cheer our hearts and hearth,  
When the song of the Bethlehem angels  
Lured her away from earth —



"My shoe, papa, please hang it  
Once more on the holly bough."

"For again 'twas the time of Christmas,  
As she lay with laboring breath;  
But — our minds were blinded strangely,  
And we did not dream of death.

"A little before she left us,  
We had deftly raised to view,  
On the topmost branch of the holly  
Yon glimmering, tiny shoe;

"We knew that no toy would please her  
Like a shoe so fair and neat,  
To fold, with its soft caressing  
Her delicate, sylph-like feet!

"Truly, a smile like a sunbeam  
Brightened her eyes of blue,  
And once — twice — thrice — she tested  
The charm of her fairy shoe!

"Ah! then the bright smile flickered,  
Faded, and drooped away,  
As faintly, in tones that faltered,  
I heard our darling say:

"My shoe, papa, please hang it  
Once more on the holly bough,  
Just where I am sure to see it,  
When I wake — an hour from now.

"But alas! she never wakened!  
Close shut were the eyes of blue;  
Whose last faint gleam had fondled  
The curves of that dainty shoe.

"Ah, children, you understand me;  
Your eyes are brimmed with dew,  
As they watch on the Christmas holly  
The steen of a silken shoe."



## THE BLACK DESTRIER.

## A BALLAD OF THE THIRD CRUSADE.

FIRST 'mid the lion Richard's host,  
 Sir Aymer fought in Holy Land;  
 And they loved him well for his honest  
 heart,  
 And they feared, for his stalwart hand.

Once on a glorious battle eve,  
 The Paynim legions wildly flying,  
 Sir Aymer paused from his work of  
 blood,  
 Where an eastern knight lay dying.

He was the latest guard of one,  
 The Soldan's fair and favorite bride.  
 And there on the trampled and crimson  
 sod  
 She moaned by the warrior's side.

No strength had he to shield his charge;  
 But mild the Christian victor's face;  
 And the lady knew, as she gazed thereon,  
 That his mercy would grant her grace.

The Paynim died: "I am thy guide,"  
 The brave Sir Aymer softly said;  
 "By my father's faith thou art safe from  
 scath,  
 Wheresoever thou would'st be led."

True to his word, through friend, through  
 foe,  
 He bore the lady fast and far,  
 Till the hostile sheen of the Moslem  
 spears  
 Flashed under the evening star.

The Soldan's self with speechless joy,  
 With glistening eyes and bated breath,  
 The queen of his house and heart em-  
 braced,  
 As if claiming his Love from death!

"Now, Christian knight, by this pure  
 light,  
 No vain nor empty thanks are mine;  
 So, name thee the guerdon a king may  
 grant,  
 And believe me, it shall be thine."

"No guerdon, prince, for simple ruth  
 The Christian warrior deigns to take;  
 He has vowed to rescue the lorn and  
 weak,  
 For his own sweet lady's sake."

"All proofs of zeal the grateful feel,  
 Surely, fair knight, thou would'st not  
 shun?  
 An honored guest, thou wilt tarry and  
 rest,  
 At least till the morrow's sun?"

Thus, in the Soldan's tent he stayed —  
 What time the queen with passionate  
 eyes,  
 Struck blind to the harem's splendor,  
 dreamed  
 Of his beauty with love-sick sighs:

And ere that morrow's sun had set,  
 With scarce a blush her love she told;  
 But Sir Aymer hearkened with haughty  
 mien,  
 And the words that he spake were cold.

Then flushed the imperious forehead  
 high,  
 A dark flame glittered in her eyes,  
 And the hate of the deadly orient quelled  
 The breath of her tender sighs.

"Sir knight, enough; thou scorn'st my  
 love!  
 But ere thou goest, take instead  
 This marvellous steed of the jet-black  
 breed,  
 In the land of the Magi bred.

"O stern in fight! O swift in flight!  
 This matchless steed will serve thee  
 well,  
 Whether thy lure be a lady's bower,  
 Or the vanward war-trump's swell."

He took the gift, he bowed him low,  
 And gained the Christian camp at  
 noon;

"O courser of might in strife or fight!"  
 Quoth he, "I shall prove thee soon."

The conflict joins; the hosts are hot;  
 That gallant Destrier "holds his  
 own;"  
 Aghast at the rush of his whirlwind  
 course,  
 Whole legions are overthrown.

In twice three mortal combats more  
 The same fell ruin marked his path,  
 Till the Saracens deemed, as their life-  
 blood streamed,  
 'Twas a fiend of hell in his wrath.

But once, alas! alas! the day!  
 The Moslem's sudden war-cry rose,  
 And the knight his "Avè" forgot to  
 say,  
 Ere he hastened to meet his foes.

St. Paul! what wizard spell is this?  
 The Destrier spurns the hands that  
 guide,  
 And full on the front of the *Christian*  
 host  
 Sweeps back through the battle tide.

Gramercy! 'twas a dreadful sight  
 Which met the gathering thousands  
 there,  
 When the war-horse charged like a blaz-  
 ing star,  
 Through a halo of blood-red air.

With bristling mane, and hot disdain  
 Against the mail-clad lines he came;  
 And his red orbs burned with a frenzied  
 ire,  
 And his nostrils darted flame.

Thus raging from the heathen van,  
 Strange steel and awful rider rushed,  
 And the souls of the boldest shrank  
 appalled,  
 And the wildest voice was hushed;

Till swift towards King Richard's camp  
 The fiery-fronted portent bore,  
 From the fetlock firm to the horrent crest  
 All reeking with Christian gore.

There, on a sudden paused the barb,  
 Still, as if carved in marble black,  
 And from silent knight and terrible steed  
 The pale throng shuddered back:

But now from out the trembling crowd  
 A priest with holy water passed,  
 He sprinkled the knight, he sprinkled  
 the steed  
 With the pure lymph free and fast:

When lo! the fatal charm dissolved —  
 Prone, with a hollow, rattling sound  
 In the clasp of his unscathed armor, fell  
 The knight to the bloody ground:

They loosed his hauberk and his helm,  
 But dead and wan his eyeballs shone,  
 As if they had gazed on a nameless  
 dread  
 Which had frozen their life to stone!

They felt his pulseless heart, his brow  
 Dim with the death-shade's mystic  
 gloom,  
 While ruthless and stern are the looks  
 they turn  
 On the demon that wrought his doom.

But pallid as a waning cloud  
 Athwart the summer moon-disc blown,  
 The shadowy form of a demon steed  
 In the ghost-like eve had grown:

Only — his supernatural eyes  
 One moment shot a vengeful spark,  
 Ere the glimmering Syrian twilight  
 closed  
 On the steps of the sudden dark.



THE ADVENTURES OF LITTLE BOB  
 BONNYFACE.

LITTLE Bob Bonnyface went out one  
 day  
 Into his father's fields to play;  
 'Twas a morn underkened by mist or  
 cloud,

With the thrush and the blackbird  
 piping loud;  
 The locust, deep in the pine-tree wood,  
 Shrilled, as only a locust could;  
 And borne on the waft of a summer  
 breeze,  
 Swarmed by him an army of honey-bees.  
 Delighted he saw, delighted he heard  
 The morn, the bees, and the singing  
 bird;  
 He also sang, as he roamed through the  
 clover,  
 Feeling so jolly, and free all over!

But Bob — I must tell you the honest  
 truth —  
 Was a terribly mischievous thoughtless  
 youth;  
 Whatever he wanted to do or say,  
 He did and he said in the boldest way,  
 Not seeming to ponder, even to care  
 How naughty his words or his actions  
 were;  
 For the only aim of this reckless elf  
 Was — everywhere, always, to please —  
 himself!

'Twas to please himself, without license  
 or leave  
 Nor a thought how his poor sick moth-  
 er might grieve,  
 If she missed too long, on her suffering  
 bed,  
 The golden gleam of his curly head.  
 That he left his home through the fields  
 to stray,  
 On that sunny and beautiful summer's  
 day,  
 As the air breathed over him, blithe-  
 some, but calm,  
 All laden with fragrance and meadow-  
 balm,  
 And the sunshine warmed his young  
 blood through,  
 While it dazzled and danced from the  
 stainless blue,  
 Bob felt that a jollity, wholesome and  
 sweet,  
 Possessed him wholly, from head to feet.

He looked around, and what should his  
 eye  
 In an open space 'mid the clover spy,  
 But an ant-hole, wrought in the sandy  
 drouth.

Out of its busy, populous mouth,  
 The dwarfish tenants — an endless train,  
 Emerging, covered the tiny plain;  
 Eastward and westward, north and  
 south,  
 They toiled, with a constant will, to  
 gain

The fairy stores of their winter's grain;  
 Yet Bob in his recklessness deemed it  
 fun

The ants and their mansion to overrun.  
 By millions down in the crumbling sod  
 The frightened creatures he swiftly  
 trod;

Filled up with dust, and grasses, and  
 stone,  
 The entrance-ways to their home, o'er-  
 thrown

Not one of the innocent horde, not one,  
 Was left to toil in the laughing sun —  
 But still Bob shouted, and thought it —  
 fun!

Next on his wandering way he came  
 To a furze-bush, gleaming like yellow  
 flame;

A spider as ugly and fierce as sin,  
 Had spread the snares of his web there-  
 in;

But — cunning and sly — as Bob rushed  
 up,

He hid himself deep in a thistle's cup,  
 Leaving above, in his worship's stead,  
 A bee, caught fast in his poisoned  
 thread!

Now, here was a chance for Bobby to  
 free

From his pain and prison this harmless  
 bee;

But bless you! no! 'twas a finer thing  
 He thought, to pierce him from wing to  
 wing;

On a pin's keen point to whirl him high,

And behold the quivering insect die,  
This, too, when the barbarous act was  
done,  
Seemed nothing to Bob but a moment's  
— fun.

More gleeful than ever, Bob onward  
pressed;  
In the wayside thickets he found a nest,  
The eggs half hatched; but he took  
them out,  
And with rude hand scattered them all  
about,  
Laughing to see how the egg-shells  
broke.  
But hey! what's this? with a buffeting  
stroke,  
The wings of the outraged mother-bird  
(Who down from her neighboring perch  
had whirred,)  
So smartly smote him on forehead and  
eyes,  
That Bobby in *his* turn trembling—  
flies!

(Don't you think that his was a wretch-  
ed plight?  
Just picture a *boy* from a *bird* in flight!  
His heart and his knee-joints weak with  
fright.)

But soon recovered, he trudged along,  
Humming the words of a ballad-song,  
Till reaching a place where the grasses  
bred  
Tall "hoppers" in thousands, he stald  
his tread,  
And cunningly crouching, as quick as  
thought,  
A "grandfather hopper" was deftly  
caught.  
Bob squeezed his body, and pulled his  
thighs,  
And poked a straw in his winking  
eyes:  
Then, with shrill laughter, and merry  
scoff,  
He wrenched both legs of the creature  
off;

And next (could the rascal have had a  
heart?)  
Its head from the body was snatched  
apart,  
Till, a pitiful image of death and dearth,  
Its carcass lay on the verdant earth!

I haven't the leisure to stop and tell  
What other pains and evils befell  
The defenceless tenants of wood and  
dell;  
All wrought by an urchin's uncurbed  
will,  
At length as an evening fair and still,  
Shone over the wood, Bob strolled be-  
yond  
The wooded glades to a quiet pond,  
The home of eels, mud-fishes, and  
things  
Half frog, half fish, all covered with  
stings,  
And scaly armor, as bright as brass;  
Then and there, reader, it came to pass  
That a terrapin, lazily crawling o'er  
The moistened ways of its native shore,  
Bob shrewdly captured — he turned his  
back  
Heedfully down on the sandy track,  
And — need we say it? — at once began  
To practise as ever, his teasing plan.  
He pinched the flesh of the terrapin  
sore  
Racked it behind, and racked it before;  
And strove — tho' just with a touch of  
awe,  
The reptile's head from its shell to draw.  
When hark! the sound of a vicious  
snap!  
And the juvenile's fingers were in a trap  
As ruthless as fate, and as sharp as  
steel;  
Then, followed a piteous discord!  
Squeal,  
Bellow, and shriek, the echoes around,  
Woke up from the startled wave and  
ground.  
Bob struggled and panted, kicked and  
cried,  
Yet, his enemy's hold all efforts defied;

He thought to rise, but he would not do  
it,  
For fear that his mangled flesh might  
rue it;  
And still more agonized, angry, and  
loud,  
His yells went up to a whirling cloud,  
Which in a moment from out the  
blue,  
(*Or such was his fancy*), darker grew,  
Whence peered a head and a face to  
fear;  
But what shall I say of the monster's  
leer,  
His huge mouth stretching from ear to  
ear?

"You have tortured," (it said) "and  
torn all day  
God's helpless creatures in wanton  
play;  
Now, learn, oh! cruel and coward elf!  
A useful lesson of pain, yourself!  
Does it burn and sting to the deepest  
nerve?  
What less do your brutal deeds deserve?  
How! groaning again! for shame! be  
done!  
*You only tortured, you know, — in  
fun!*"

When he gained from the terrapin's  
clutch release  
While resting, that night, on his couch  
in peace,  
There softly dawned thro' the twilight  
gloom,  
A face more fair than a white-rose  
bloom;  
And a voice that seemed like the under  
speech  
Of the waters that swoon on a breezeless  
beach,  
Whispered as low as low could be:  
"Look up! I charge thee! and worship  
me;  
And yet *not* me, but the Master—  
Christ!

"My name is Pity!—I am enticed  
From even the Heaven of Heavens to  
bring  
Soft balms for mortal suffering;  
And whosoever the frailest thing  
With strength within it to feel or love,  
Wounds *here*—he is torturing me  
above;  
And worse—for the pangs of that  
anguish dart  
Through mine, to the tender Saviour's  
heart!"

Silence!—but just as sleep was won,  
And over the boy's bright eyes of brown,  
The delicate lashes came drooping down,  
Thro' the silvery eddies of moonlight  
mist,  
There stole the shadow of lips that  
kissed  
The stain from the childish soul away,  
That sadly sinning, had deemed it—  
play!

—◆—  
**KISS ME, KATIE!**

KATIE, Katie, little Katie!  
Mouth of rose and eyes of blue,  
(Eyes that look one frankly through!)  
When I'm absent don't you miss me?  
Now I'm near you, come and kiss me!  
Katie, little Katie, kiss me!  
Katie, do!

Katie, Katie, pretty Katie!  
Prettier far than Jane or Lu,  
Madge or Margaret, Mand or Prue;  
Graceful as a spring-born fairy,  
Tuneful as your pet canary—  
Katie, pretty Katie, kiss me!  
Katie, do!

Katie, sly, deceptive Katie!  
If you fly me I'll pursue,  
(What though *corns* or *gout* should rue!)  
Then, if I can overmatch you,  
Running fast can clasp and catch you,  
Captured Katie, won't you kiss me?  
Katie, do!

Katie, mute, day-dreaming Katie,  
If I tell your thoughts to you,  
Guess your dreams and *make* them true,  
Won't you cease your coy defiance,  
Vanquished by such wondrous science—  
Won't you kiss me, Katie darling?  
Katie, do!

Katie, captious little Katie!  
Why that quickly tapping shoe,  
Ready shrug and scornful *moue*?  
Can it be you mean to scout me?  
Just because I'm *grayish*, flout me?  
Are you muttering, "KISS HIM! NEVER!  
No, I *can't*! and no, I *won't*!"  
O, you petulant, changeful Katie!  
Katie, *don't*!

## CAGED.

You think he sings a gladsome song!  
Ah, well, he *sings*! but only see  
How oft on glossy neck and breast  
His bright head droops despondingly;  
Or note the restless, eager bird  
When a *free* minstrel's voice is heard.

You think because he pecks his grain  
With vigorous mien and active bill,  
This long captivity has trained  
To tame content his roving will.  
But watch, as some wild pinion flies,  
Flashed near his cage, from summer  
skies:

He lifts his crest, his eyes dilate  
To yearning orbs of passionate fire;  
His whole small body seems to thrill,  
And vibrate to the heart's desire:  
The deathless wish once more to roam  
The broad blue heaven God made his  
home.

Mark, next, the weary pant, the sigh  
Of hope deferred, that follows then;  
Perchance your captive's pain is deep  
As that which haunts imprisoned *men*,  
Pining behind *their* cruel bars  
For sunlight or the holy stars.

Come! ope the door! he owns a soul  
As tender, sensitive and fine  
As yours or mine — for aught *we* know,  
And dowered with rights scarce less  
Divine;  
Come! let him choose, at least, between  
God's azure and yon gilded screen!

Freed! yet he flies not! — Wait! — his  
brain  
Is dazed! — he comprehends not yet  
How earnest is your proffered boon, —  
How surely his the glorious debt  
Of freedom and all free-born things:  
Wait! — ha! he prunes his doubtful  
wings.

Hops, perch by perch, to gain the door;  
Then, as if first conviction came,  
Full-faced, and whispered, "*thou art  
free!*"

He darts without, a wingèd flame,  
And soon from far, fair cloudland floats  
The rapture of his grateful notes!

## LITTLE LOTTIE'S GRIEVANCE.

MAMMA'S in heaven! and so, you see  
My sister Bet's mamma to me.  
Oh! yes, I love her! — that's to say,  
I love her well the whole bright day;  
For Sis is kind as kind can be,  
Until, indeed we've finished tea —  
Then (why did God make ugly night?)  
She never, never treats me right,  
But always says, "Now, sleepy head,  
'Tis getting late! come up to bed!"

Just when the others, Fred and Fay,  
Dolly and Dick, are keen for play —  
Card-houses, puzzles, painted blocks,  
Cat-corner, and pert Jack-in-the-box —  
I must (it's that bad gas, I think,  
That makes me somehow seem to wink!)  
Must leave them all to seek the gloom  
Of sister Bet's close-curtained room,  
Put on that long stiff gown I hate,  
And go to bed — oh, dear! at eight!

Now, is it fair that I who stand  
Taller than Dolly by a hand,  
(I'll not believe, howe'er 'tis told,  
That cousin Doll is ten years old!  
And just because I'm only seven,  
Should be so teased, yes, almost driven,  
Soon as I've supped my milk and bread,  
To that old drowsy, frowsy bed?  
I've lain between the dusky posts,  
And shivered when I thought of ghosts:  
Or else have grown so mad, you know,  
To hear those laughing romps below,  
While there I yawned and stretched  
(poor me!)

With one dim lamp for company.  
I've longed for courage just to dare  
Dress softly — then trip down the stair,  
And on the parlor pop my head  
With "No, I will not stay abed!"

I'll do it yet, all quick and bold,  
No matter how our Bet may scold.  
For, oh! I'm sure it can't be right,  
To keep me here each dismal night,  
Half scared by shadows grimly tall  
That dance along the cheerless wall,  
Or by the wind, with fingers chill,  
Shaking the worn-out window-sill  
One might as well be sick or dead,  
As sent by eight o'clock to bed!

—◆—  
*A NEW VERSION OF WHY THE  
ROBIN'S BREAST IS RED.*

Know you why the robin's breast  
Gleameth of a dusky red,  
Like the lustre mid the stars  
Of the potent planet Mars?  
'Tis — a monkish myth has said —  
Owing to his cordial heart:  
For, long since, he took the part  
Of those hapless children, sent  
Hadean-ward for punishment;  
And, to quench the fierce desire,  
Bred in them by ruthless fire,  
Brought on tiny bill and wing,  
Water from some earthly spring,

Which in misty droplets fell  
O'er their dwelling of unrest,  
While the sufferer's faces grew  
Softer 'neath the healing dew!

But, too far within that hell  
Venturing, some malicious fiend,  
A small devil hardly weaned,  
Seized bold Robin in his claw,  
Striving thro' the flames to draw  
His poor body, until fled  
Sight of eyes and sense of head,  
Scorched he lay and almost dead!

Then, a child whose tongue and brow,  
Robin's help had cooled but now,  
Clutched the baby-fiend in ire,  
And in gulfs of his own fire  
Soused the vile misshapen elf.

Fluttering upwards, scarce himself,  
After all the pain and fear  
Of his horrid sojourn there  
In that realm of flame and smoke,  
Lo! earth's happy sunlight broke  
On the bird's dazed view at last;  
But the ordeal he had passed  
Left a flame-spot widely spread  
Where the wind-blown feathers part  
Just above his loyal heart.  
So the robin's breast is red!

—◆—  
*THE LITTLE SAINT.*

At the calm matin hour  
I see her bend in prayer.  
As bends a virgin flower  
Kissed by the summer air:  
Oh, meek her downcast eyes!  
But the sweet lips wear a smile;  
How hard our little angel tries  
To be serious all the while!

I tell her 'tis not right  
To be half-grave, half-gay,  
Imploring in Heaven's sight  
A blessing on the day;

She hears and looks devout —  
Although it gives her pain;  
Still, when the ritual's almost out  
She's sure — to smile again!

She shocks her maiden aunt,  
Who thinks it a disgrace  
That, do her best, she can't  
Give her a solemn face;  
She'll scold and rate and fume,  
And lecture hour by hour,  
Until she makes the very room  
Look passionate and sour!

Alack, 't is all in vain!  
Soon as the sermon's done  
My fairy blooms again,  
Like a rose-bud in the sun.  
I cannot damp her mirth!  
I will not check her play;  
Is guileless joy so rife on earth,  
Hers shall not have full sway?

I asked her yester night,  
Why, when her prayer was made,  
Her brow of cordial light  
Scarcely caught a serious shade.  
"Father," she said, "*you love  
Better to meet me glad;  
And so I thought the Christ above  
Might grieve to see me — sad!*"

—◆—  
A NEW PHILOSOPHY: OR, STAR  
SHOWERS EXPLAINED.

ONE luminous night in winter,  
All crystal clear and still,  
A band of wondering children  
Were grouped by the window sill.

The window looked out northward,  
Where through the tranquil hours  
The stars kept falling, falling,  
In a ceaseless shine of showers.

Ah! beautiful sight! those children! —  
As they gazed on the magic skies,  
With their tiny hands uplifted,  
And their large, bright, marvelling  
eyes.

"What is it?" asked curly Alfred,  
Of his elder brother, Gus;  
"Does you think it is coming nearer?  
If it comes, can it fall on us?"

"No, stupid!" (in tones determined,)  
But soon he was touched by doubt,  
And wished, as the flames waxed  
brighter,  
Somebody would put them out!

For, indeed, the radiant sparkles  
Now poured from a grander height:  
And filled like a conflagration,  
The hollows and gulfs of night!

Till at last they all grew frightened;  
And the small dark heads and light  
Were in a closer circle,  
While still they watched the night!

All but one sturdy urchin,  
The smallest and shrewdest there,  
Whose eyes like a pert cock robin's,  
Turned up on the northward glare,

As he lisped, with an air quite final,  
And with somewhat of scorn and  
scoff:

"It's the Fourth of July up yonder,  
And the wockets is whizzing off!"

—◆—  
BABY'S FIRST WORD.

WE watched our baby day by day,  
With earnest expectation,  
To hear his infant lips unclose  
In vague articulation.

But weeks, nay weary months, passed on;  
His last wee tooth had broken  
From rosy gums, yet not a word,  
Not one had baby spoken.

"O Rol!" I cried, "it cannot be  
A child so quick and clever,  
Who hears ('tis plain he hears our talk),  
Should thus stay dumb forever!"



Rol answered sharply, vexed and red,  
 "What wretched nonsense, Jenny!  
 I never could have dreamed, my dear,  
 You'd prate like such a ninny!"

(Yes, that's the term, I must confess,  
 By which, with judgment narrow,  
 He dared for once, just once, you know,  
 To call his "winsome marrow.")

But what cared I? since as I live,  
 True as my name is Jenny,  
 From out the cradle clear and loud,  
 Came back the bad word "Ninny!"

Thence uprose baby all aglee,  
 His peaceful slumbers routed,  
 And thrice that naughty, naughty word  
 He spoke, nay, almost shouted!

Rol, glancing at my startled eyes,  
 His mirth could scarcely smother.  
 But oh! to think the rogue's first word  
 Should thus abuse his mother!

—◆—  
 THE CHAMELEON.

I KNOW that I'm *like*, yet I am *not*, a  
 snake!  
 'Tis true that I glisten by boll and  
 by brake,  
 That I dart out and in, can glide, quiver  
 and coil  
 As swift as the lightning, but softer than  
 oil,  
 Yet a creature more innocent never was  
 drawn  
 From the gray of cool shadows to bask  
 in the dawn!

If I pause by a brook the rock-currents  
 divide,  
 I grow silvery-white as the foam of its  
 tide;  
 If 'mid dew-freshened meadows at sun-  
 rise I pass,  
 There's a shaft of pure emerald shot  
 through the grass.

When to gay garden-closes I joyfully turn,  
 'Tis mine with all hues, of their roses to  
 burn;

I reflect each bright blush that the  
 petals have won  
 Of their young virgin-flowers from the  
 kiss of the sun.

My skin's a clear mirror, a glass of the  
 elves,

In which all lovely tints can smile back  
 on themselves!

Stranger still! for on ugliness mirrored  
 therein,

Though it tarnish a moment, this magi-  
 cal skin,

On the dark and uncouth some slight  
 beauty's bestowed;

Why, even that dull little hunchback,  
 the toad,

I endow with faint outlines of sweetness  
 and grace,

While the newt, glancing down on his  
 lop-sided face,

Reflected, — in pity, — by softened de-  
 grees,

Almost dreams he was formed by kind  
 Nature to please!

Ah, therefore, sweet maiden, shrink not  
 when you see

My lithe body reposing by streamlet or  
 tree;

But kneel down where I rest, and all  
 mellowed behold

Your eyes of deep blue, and your ring-  
 lets of gold,

In my miniature mirror, my glass of the  
 elves,

Wherein all lovely things can smile back  
 on themselves!

—◆—  
 FLYING PURSE.

AIRILY, fairly, over the meadows,  
 Over the broom-grasses waving and gay,  
 O! see how it shimmers,  
 How wavers and glimmers,  
 Flying, and flying away.

Hastefully, wastefully, over the copses,  
Over the hedge-rows in scattered array,  
See, see how 'tis curling  
And twinkling and whirling,  
Ever and ever away!

Merrily, cheerily, down the far verges,  
Verges of fields growing misty and gray,  
Still, still how it shimmers,  
Grows fainter and glimmers,  
Shimmers, and glimmers away!

—◆—  
THE NEW SISTER.

*Phil.* SAY, Pete, do you like her?

*Pete.* Like! love her you mean!

*Phil.* Ain't she jolly and red?

*Pete.* And hurrah for her! just think of  
her head!

*Phil.* As big as a pippin, and round as  
a bullet!

*Pete.* And bald! oh! as bald as a newly-  
plucked pullet!

*Phil.* Did you look at her eyes too?

*Pete.* Of course; they are blue.

*Phil.* Not a bit of it — black!

*Pete.* Blue, I tell you — ask Jack!

*Phil.* Jack! I've eyes of my own that  
see better than his!

*Pete.* Brag on! but for once they have  
led you amiss.

Baby's eyes are blue — very!

*Phil.* As black as a berry!

*Pete.* Blue, you ninny! but s'pose we  
come down to her nose!

It's as funny and fat with an end  
like —

*Phil.* Like a rose?

*Pete.* No! a small dab of putty just tint-  
ed with pink!

*Phil.* Now, stoo-pid! how can you! I'm  
sure that I think

Nothing nicer than roses so  
dumpy and smug —

*Pete.* Pshaw! you mean it's a boo-ti-ful,  
boo-ti-ful pug!

*Phil.* Well, you naughty old Pete! you  
can't laugh at her chin!

*Pete.* Oh, no, it's the nattiest, sauciest,  
sweetest —

*Phil.* The nicest, completest,  
Of arch little chins, with a dimple  
put in,

That winks up like a sunbeam,

*Pete.* And then her wee throat!

*Phil.* Her throat like egg-foam, or a  
syllabub boat

On a lake of clear cream!

*Pete.* And her arms; they are nice now;  
there's nothing can beat them!

*Phil.* So plump, round, and soft! I'm  
most ready to eat them!

*Pete.* Of course, Phil, you kissed her?

*Phil.* Oh, didn't I!

*Pete.* Well!

*Phil.* Well, I put my mouth down; I had  
something to tell;

Ah! close whispered close in the  
shy little ear,

That seemed to turn up, Pete, half  
coily to hear,

And again, as I kissed her —

*Pete.* You blessed the good Lord for so  
jolly a sister!

*Phil.* Yes, I did!

*Pete.* So did I!

*Phil.* And now, Pete, 'tis but right  
We should go in once more and  
bid "Baby" good night!

—◆—  
HOP, SKIP, AND JUMP: A QUEER TRIO  
PERSONIFIED.

O! Hop is a sailor leg up in the war,  
With a single good leg to stand on;

And a face as dingy almost as the tar

He was wont to rest his hand on:

And he grumbles strange oaths in his  
hairy throat

Whenever he sees a fair vessel afloat,

Especially one with those staring round  
eyes

(Port-holes, you know)

Whence the hot shot flies

At a quaking foe;

For then his anger, it fixles up

(Like the sputtering foam in a lager-beer cup),

And he hoarsely cries,

" May witches fly off with that fellow by whom

I'm reduced to the cruel, contemptible doom

Of tottering all day,

In an imbecile way,

'Twixt a single good leg

And this base wooden peg,

Far, far from the spume

Of the gay ocean-spray!

So, seize him, and scorch him, and fry him, I say!"

But Skip is a mincing lady fine;  
She never was seen to breakfast or dine;

And how she lives, none knoweth;  
Her waist is so very slender and thin,  
You fear it must snap, and topple in,

At the first slight wind that bloweth.  
Her favorite motion's an airy jerk,  
With her eye-balls raised, and her chin a-perk,

And her little red ringlets bobbing,  
Bobbing and hobnobbing,  
In a friendly fashion, each to each;  
And her cheek is the hue of a delicate peach

(That never a shade can vary);  
" *Perpetual motion*" she's sometimes called,

And really, truly one feels appalled  
To view her galvanized skipping,  
Her dancing, wriggling, whipping  
Of one skirt in and one skirt out,  
Her general manner of going about,  
Which lies, I ween,

Half pitched between  
The twittering, fussy, old-maidish way  
Of the restless jay,  
And the airs of a sprightly canary!

Jump is a long-limbed sturdy boy,  
With such strong muscles to back him,

That I hardly could wish the creature joy

Who should ever dare to attack him;  
A four-foot fence he clears in a minute;  
And if you bet from the cottage eave  
(And a very tall cottage it is in sooth),  
With your leave, or without your leave,

That he cannot jump

With a dauntless thump,

And a thundering bump, —

Be sure that he'll quickly win it!

And, to whisper the truth, — the fearful truth,

I believe if whale or dragon,

The one on sea, and t'other on land,

(The biggest that either could brag on),

Came floating, or crawling nigh,

That this marvellous boy,

With a ringing cry

Of fierce, exuberant, reckless joy,

Would, just for the fun of it,

Make a swift run of it

Right down the jaws of whichever dread vermin

The turn of chance or a thought should determine!

So here my song ends,  
And ye, charming young friends!

Don't endeavor to pump

My dry fancy again;

'Tis enough I've made plain

As Tommy's big nose

Looming red o'er the snows,

Those impalpable ideas of Hop, Skip, and Jump!

◆◆◆

DANCING.

DANCING! I love it, night or day:  
There's nought on earth so jolly,  
Whether you straightly glide with May,  
Or madly whirl with Molly,  
The country dance is smooth and sleek;  
But waltzes (some call vicious!)  
Bring one so near a rosy cheek,  
That, Jack, they're just delicious!

At every chance, I'm bound to go,  
And join our "West End" classes,  
With all about me *comme il faut*,  
To captivate the lasses.

I think they rather like me, Jack, —  
(Oh, dear! the pretty creatures!) —  
One shyly praised — behind my back —  
She *did* — my Roman features!



"Dancing! I love it, night or day:  
There's nought on earth so jolly."

Yet somehow, Jack, the loveliest she  
(I mean sweet Mary Whimple)  
Has never, never turned on me  
A single charming dimple:  
But when I try the least advance,  
Her smile is changed to sneering;  
Three times she has snubbed me in the  
dance  
To please that odious Speering!

Ah! Jack, it makes my bosom swell,  
And all my life forlorn,  
To think (while others like me well)  
She, *she* should be a scorner!  
I cannot be revenged on *her*,  
Nor *would*, if able even;  
But, oh! that long-legged Speering  
cur  
I wish he was — in heaven!

He has given my hopes a blighting touch  
 Though lank as any mummy;  
 And as for *mind*, — I've seen as much  
 In some poor pasteboard dummy:  
 But then the best of girls are queer —  
 Titania loved a donkey;  
 So Mary airs her charms to snare  
 This awkward ball-room **funkey!**

Ha! now my steam is all blown off,  
 Once more I'm pleased and placid;  
 If Mary Whimpie still *will* scoff,  
 Why should I too grow acid?  
 With jovial smile and heart in tune  
 (Ill humor's best disarmers,)  
 See, Jack, if I don't figure soon —  
 Adonis 'mid the charmers!

◆

NOTES.

Up and down, up and down,  
 In the air the sunshine mellows —  
 Green or yellow, gold or brown,  
 See those gay capricious fellows!  
 Sparkling, glittering, frisking, dancing,  
 Now retreating, now advancing,  
 Livelier than the jolliest clown,  
 Tinier than the tiniest fairy  
 That e'er robbed a farmer's dairy  
 Of the luscious cream which floats  
 Round his frothed and brimming bowls  
 Buoyant, tireless little souls!

Who can fold them,  
 Catch or hold them?

Evanescent,  
 Omnipresent,  
 Shy eluders,  
 Bold obtruders,  
 Past all joking, most provoking,  
 Tricky, whisky, frisky  
 Motes.

Up and down, up and down,  
 Light in sunshine, lost in shadow —  
 Green or yellow, gold or brown,  
 Over hill and over meadow,  
 Swiftly over  
 Rock-ribbed height and billowy clover,

Still advancing,  
 Still retreating,  
 Glittering, fleeting,  
 Never dozing, nor reposing,  
 But forever dancing, dancing;  
 And in numberless quaint fusions,  
 And eye-dazzling convolutions,  
**Deftly sped**

Overhead —

See (where happy sunshine mellows  
 All the air) those jovial fellows!  
 Ah! ye tricksome waifs and tiny,  
 Who may circumvent and bind ye?  
 Can it be such creatures antic,  
 Unrestrained, grotesquely frantic,  
 Are but small nymphs out of school,  
 Laughing at all graver rule?  
 Or loose sylphides, bent on sowing,  
 Sowing,  
 Sowing,

In their thoughtless mirth o'erflowing,  
 Naughty crops of wildish oats?  
 How they jostle, whirl and hustle,  
 Up and down, up and down,  
 Through the air the sunshine mellows!  
 Green or yellow, gold or brown,  
 All those gay, capricious fellows,  
 Evanescent,  
 Omnipresent,  
 Shy eluders,  
 Bold obtruders,  
 Past all joking, most provoking,  
 Tricky, whisky, frisky,  
 Motes!

◆

THE GROUND SQUIRREL.

BLESS us, and save us! What's here?  
 Pop!  
 At a bound,  
 A tiny brown creature, grotesque in his  
 grace,  
 Is sitting before us, and washing his face  
 With his little fat paws overlapping;  
 Where does he hail from? Where?  
 Why, *there*,  
 Underground,

From a nook just as cosy,  
And tranquil, and dozy,  
As e'er wooed to Sybarite napping  
(But none ever caught him a-napping).  
"Don't you see his soft burrow so quaint,  
lad! and queer?"

Gone! like the flash of a gun!  
This oddest of chaps,  
Mercurial,  
Disappears  
Head and ears!  
Then, sly as a fox,  
Swift as Jack in his box,  
Pops up boldly again!  
What does he mean by this frisking  
about,  
Now up and now down, and now in and  
now out,  
And all done quicker than winking?  
What does it mean? Why, 'tis plain,  
fun!  
Only fun! or, perhaps,  
The pert little rascal's been drink-  
ing?  
There's a cider press yonder all day on  
the run!

Capture him! no, we won't do it,  
Or, be sure in due time we would rue  
it!

Such a piece of perpetual motion,  
Full of bother  
And pother,  
Would make paralytic old Bridget  
A fidget.  
So you see (to *my* notion),  
Better leave our downy  
Diminutive browny  
Alone near his "diggings";  
Ever free to pursue,  
Rush round, and renew  
His loved vaulting  
Unhalting.  
His whirling,  
And curling,  
And twirling,  
And swirling,

And his ways, on the whole,  
So unsteady!  
'Pon my soul,  
Having gazed  
Quite amazed,  
On each wonderful antic  
And summersault frantic,  
For just a bare minu'e,  
My head, it feels whizzing;  
My eyesight's grown dizzy;  
And both legs, unstable  
As a ghost's tipping table,  
Seem waltzing, already!

Capture him! no, we won't do it,  
Or in less than *no* time, *how* we'd rue  
it!

## ARTIE'S "AMEN."

THEY were Methodists twain, of the  
ancient school,  
Who always followed the wholesome  
rule  
That whenever the preacher in meeting  
said  
Aught that was good for the heart or  
head  
His hearers should pour their feelings  
out  
In a loud "Amen" or a godly shout.  
Three children had they, all honest boys,  
Whose youthful sorrows and youthful  
joys  
They shared, as your loving parents will,  
While tending them ever through good  
and ill.  
One day — 'twas a bleak, cold Sabbath  
morn,  
When the sky was dark and the earth  
forlorn —  
These boys, with a caution not to roam.  
Were left by the elder folk at home.  
But scarce had they gone when the  
wooded frame  
Was seen by the tall stove pipe aflame;

And out of their reach, high, high, and  
higher,  
Rose the red coils of the serpent fire.

With startled sight for a while they  
gazed,

As the pipe grew hot and the wood-work  
blazed:

Then up, though his heart beat wild with  
dread,

The eldest climbed to a shelf o'erhead,  
And soon, with a sputter and hiss of  
steam.

The flame died out like an angry dream.

When the father and mother came back  
that day —

They had gone to a neighboring church  
to pray —

Each looked, but with half-averted eye,  
On the awful doom which had just  
passed by.

And then the father began to praise  
His boys with a tender and sweet amaze,  
"Why, how did you manage, Tom, to  
climb

And quench the threatening flames in  
time

To save your brothers, and save your-  
self?"

"Well, father, I mounted the strong oak  
shelf

By help of the table standing nigh."

"And what," quoth the father, suddenly,  
Turning to Jemmy, the next in age,

"Did *you* to quiet the fiery rage?"

"I brought the pail, and the dipper too,  
And so it was that the water flew

All over the flames, and quenched them  
quite."

A mist came over the father's sight,

A mist of pride and of righteous joy,

As he turned at last to his youngest boy,

A gleeful urchin scarce three years old,

With his dimpling cheeks and his hair  
of gold.

"Come, Artie, I'm sure *you* weren't  
afraid:

Now tell in what way you tried to aid  
This fight with the fire." "Too small  
am I,"

Artie replied, with a half-drawn sigh,  
"To fetch like Jemmy, and work like  
Tom:

So I stood just here for a minute dumb,  
Because, papa, *I was frightened some*;  
But I prayed, 'Our Father,' and then,  
and then

I shouted as loud as I could, 'Amen.'"

### THREE PORTRAITS OF BOYS.

STURDY little form, of true  
Saxon pattern, through and through;  
Face as purely Saxon, too,  
With a smile demure and sly,  
Dimpled cheek and twinkling eye;  
Robin head, with sideway perk,  
O'er some cunning *ruse* at work;  
Welcome, lad! of wholesome ways,  
And true juvenile displays;  
Now progressing at full speed  
On your gay velocipede,  
(Yet where'er it deftly goes,  
Wronging no one's dress or toes);  
Now, beneath the basement hid,  
On a dwarfish pyramid  
Toiling, with scarred bricks and stone,  
After methods, all your own;  
A small Cheops! scarce less shrewd  
In your purpose and your mood,  
Than that king of mobs and mud,  
By the old Nilotic flood!  
Or with flying scarf and hat,  
Coursing some half-frantic cat,  
Fraught with wrath, and words that rail,  
Should poor Tabby save his tail!  
For the "old Adam's" sometimes seen  
In your actions and your mien,  
But no more than *must* appear  
In his undegenerate heir.

Grown from what seems nature's plan,

What will Henry be as man?

One of healthful, mental range,

Honored at the doors of 'Change?

Of a quick and eager mind,  
At the rise of fortune's wind;  
Shrewd! perchance with scores of  
friends,  
And productive dividends?

On life's middle pathway still,  
By extremes of good and ill.  
Evermore unvisited,  
Shall we see him safely tread?  
Not ambitious of grand things,  
Or the scope of eagle's wings;  
But within the limits meet  
Of his unpretentious feet,  
A good man, perhaps a wise.  
Who — (in ledger of the skies),  
May — unsmutched by blots of blame,  
Find, at last, his honest name?

## MARION.

URCHIN of the Syrian face,  
And half melancholy grace,  
With a look in your dark eyes,  
Sometimes deep and overwise;  
What shall be your mortal doom?  
Desert blight, or healthful bloom?  
Shall the lily, Virtue, shine  
On your life, made thus divine;  
Or Corinthian roses shed  
Poisoned petals on your head?  
Ah! the soul that dwells in you,  
Heaven hath blent of flame and dew  
Mixed by subtlest art together  
In your nature's changeful weather,  
Whence a lightning-glitter warm,  
Now and then, portends a storm;  
*Such* a storm of tropic strain,  
Scathed by fire and big with rain;  
All your being o'er and under,  
Thrilled as if by spirit-thunder;  
Till, exhausted at the source  
Of its wild imperious course  
Passion — like a blast that dies  
Down the slowly brightening skies,  
Thro' loud sob and weary moan  
Falls to plaintive monotone!

Strange child-soul, but half unfurled,  
Who shall scan its complex world?

Glimpsed 'twixt light and shadow dim,  
Dare I prophesy of him?  
Subtle, mystical, refined,  
Seem the thoughts that haunt his mind,  
While large forces play their part  
On the boy's embattled heart,

Stubborn *will* — it irks to yield,  
Always watchful — under shield;  
Scorn of all who do him wrong,  
Keen, implacable and strong;  
Yet — toward the fair and just,  
Love, that's crowned with generous  
trust;  
And those graces, pure and high,  
Born of tender loyalty!

With a firm and wise control,  
Guide the currents of his soul!  
Forceful are they, and must ride  
Ever, with impetuous tide,  
If to duty's strand they flow,  
Fraught with all pure flowers that  
blow,  
Or, the Syren's lotus-leaf,  
Fronting death's unfathomed sea!

## HERBERT.

AH! you tricky little elf,  
How you idolize yourself!  
And believe the world was made  
Like a gay-hued masquerade,  
Just for you to sport and dance,  
Ever, in a happy trance!  
How I envy you the joy  
Of such bright *abandon*, boy!  
All your buoyant veins are rife  
With the sunniest wine of life!  
And if e'er a shadow strays  
O'er your glad, elysian ways,  
'Tis but like the doubtful mote  
In the morning's eye afloat;  
At the slightest breeze of fun,  
Cloudless is your spirit's sun!

Still, my tricky little elf,  
Idolize your blissful self;  
Dream you'll always be a boy,  
And that life's a painted toy,



Just for you to hasten after,  
 Full of thoughtless mirth and laughter;  
 Soon, alack! how grim and grum,  
 Disenchantment's sure to come!  
 Life, with which you loved to play,  
 Slowly turns from gold to gray;  
 All its splendid tints are lost,  
 For, experience, cold as frost,  
 Dims the hues which undefiled,  
 Blessed the outlook of the child;  
 And we learn in mournful wise,  
 Earth's no longer — Paradise!

—◆—  
 BIRDS.

THAT's the dove, my darling!  
 Murmurous, soft and tender;  
 There! she's mooning, crooning,  
 On a pine-branch slender.  
 And ah! it's the dove, the dove, dove,  
 dove,  
 That never can coo, but she pleads of  
 love,  
 Of love, love, love,  
 In the shadows fair and tender.

That's the wren, my fairy!  
 With her wee love-pledges;  
 See her playing, straying  
 Underneath the hedges.  
 And oh! it's the wren, the wren, wren,  
 wren,  
 That is never contented too far from  
 men,  
 But lives, lives, lives  
 Secure in the field-side hedges.

That's the thrush, my beauty!  
 Hark! and let us hear her,  
 Yonder swinging, singing,  
 Higher, bolder, clearer,  
 And oh! it's the thrush, the thrush,  
 thrush, thrush,  
 Whose loud song wakens the noon-tide  
 hush,  
 The deep, deep hush  
 Of the meadows and wolds, to hear  
 her!

That's the mockbird, sweetheart!  
 To all tones beholden,  
 Which are thrilling, filling  
 Glades of woodland golden,  
 And ah! it's a bird, a bird, bird, bird,  
 The sweetest that ever a mortal heard.  
 Ah! sweet, sweet, sweet,  
 In the sunshine, fresh and golden!

—◆—  
 THE DEAD CHILD AND THE MOCK-  
 ING-BIRD.

ONCE in a land of balm and flowers,  
 Of rich fruit-laden trees,  
 Where the wild wreaths from jasmine  
 bowers  
 Trail o'er Floridian seas;

We marked our Jeannie's footsteps run  
 Athwart the twinkling glade;  
 She seemed a Hebe in the sun,  
 A Dryad in the shade!

And all day long her winsome song,  
 Her trebles and soft trills,  
 Would wave-like flow or silvery low  
 Die down the tinkling rills.

One morn, midmost the foliage dim,  
 A dark-gray pinion stirs;  
 And hark! along the vine-clad limb,  
 What strange voice blends with hers?

It blends with hers which soon is stilled!  
 Braver the mock-bird's note  
 Than all the strains that ever filled  
 The queenliest human throat:

As Jeannie heard, she loved the bird,  
 And sought thenceforth to share  
 With her new favorite dawn by dawn,  
 Her daintiest morning cheer!

But ah! a blight beyond our ken,  
 From some far feverous wild,  
 Brought that dark shadow feared of  
 men,  
 Across the fated child!

It chilled her drooping curls of brown,  
It dimmed her violet eyes,  
And like an awful cloud stole down  
From vague mysterious skies!

At last, one day our Jeannie lay,  
All paleless, pale, forlorn;  
The sole sweet breath on lips of death.  
The mocking breath of morn!

When just beyond the o'ercurtained  
room,  
(How tender yet how strong!)  
Rose through the misty morning gloom,  
The mock-bird's sudden song!

Dear Christ! those notes of golden peal,  
Seem caught from heavenly spheres;  
Yet through their marvellous cadence,  
steal  
Tones soft as chastened tears!

Is it an angel's voice that throbs  
Within the brown bird's breast?  
Whose rhythmic magic soars, or sobs,  
Above our darling's rest?

The fancy passed, but came once more,  
When stolen, from Jeannie's bed,  
That eve along the porchway floor,  
I found our minstrel . . . dead!

The fervor of the angelic strain  
His life-chords burned apart,  
And blent with sorrow's earthlier pain,  
Broke the o'erburdened heart!

Maiden and bird! the self-same grave  
Their wedded dust shall keep,  
While the long low Floridian wave  
Moans round their place of sleep!

—◆—  
THE LITTLE GRAND DUCHESS.

WHAT a pure and chastened splendor,  
What a grace of joyance tender,  
Like to starlight or to moonlight,  
Melting into fairy Junelight,  
Sleeps my little lady sweetly, —

In the air that answers meekly  
With each soul-illuminated feature,  
Which the lovely, winsome creature  
Lifts toward us so demurely,  
That despite their candor, surely  
Something of an elfish slyness  
Sparkles 'round their shadowed shyness,  
Though a pose that's sometimes stately,  
(Baby brows thrown back sedately,)  
Charms us by a look that such is,  
She might be a wee Grand Duchess!

But anon that aspect changes,  
Through all moods her spirit ranges.  
Free and far as Ariel pinions  
O'er a warlock's weird dominions;  
Happy fields of dim romances:  
Woods wherein an elf-troop dances  
'Neath a noon of splendid trances,  
Culling flowers, or chanting lowly  
Songs of golden melancholy;  
Or in stretch of wildest dreamings,  
(Holding true their gracious seemings,)  
Wafted into blissful vision  
Of some rarer realm Elysian.

Well I know that mark the yearning  
Through her snowy eyelids burning,  
Shadowed by those midnight lashes,  
(Quickly closed when aught abashes,  
And as quickly flashed asunder,  
When swift anger lightens under,)  
How supreme the hidden forces  
Blindly struggling at their sources  
In her depths of nascent being:  
Insight, but half-born to seeing,  
Faint perceptions, intuitions,  
And soft-murmuring admonitions,  
Toned and mellowed down so finely  
That their voices breathe divinely.

Ha! but see, our dainty fairy  
Freed from thought, or dreamings airy,  
All an embryo flirt's beguiling,  
Wooes us in her roguish smiling,  
Rippled into silvery laughter,  
With arch glances levelled after,  
Coy, coquettish, gay, capricious  
Sprite! thy every mood's delicious; —

When a gasping groan and sputter  
 Prove to Ponto, shrewd and true,  
 What is now the sacred duty  
 That a faithful dog should do;  
 See, he tugs at Roly's trowsers,  
 Tugs with steadfast might and main,  
 Till he brings our dripping urchin  
 Safely to the shore again.

Ponto's teeth are sharp and potent,  
 And impelled by need to speed,  
 They have made poor Roly Poly  
 In no stinted measure bleed!  
 Therefore, with his gory garments,  
 And his mud-bespattered knees,  
 He is like a dwarfish Sindbad,  
 Sorrow-laden, by the seas!

Oh! to mark our roguish Roly  
 Throw his fright and trouble off!  
 How he laughs at dangers vanished,  
 With his merriest boyish scoff.  
 Decked once more in spotless trowsers  
 How he makes the household ring:  
 Scours and scampers, shouts and dances,  
 Domineering like a king.

Doubt not that at lunch and dinner,  
 Fervid is the fork he plies;  
 Presto, how the mutton dwindles!  
 Gone are sweetmeats; melted pies!  
 Not one drop of bygone trouble  
 Bitter makes his cup, or can;  
 Roly! let us change our places —  
 I, the boy; and you, the man!

—◆—  
 THE IMPRISONED INNOCENTS.

[Or the Complaint of a Philosopher of Family!]

ONE morning I said to my wife,  
 Near the time when the heavens are  
 rife  
 With the Equinoctial strife,  
 "Arabella, the weather looks ugly as sin!  
 Observe, how those mists from the ocean  
 begin  
 To creep eastward and blend

With the sickly street vapors fantastic  
 and thin;  
 So, (*won't* you attend?) keep the chil-  
 dren within,  
 Safe-housed from these damps of Sep-  
 tember!  
 For myself — as I'm studying '*Barret  
 On Drainage*' just now — I'll go up to  
 the garret,  
 And thus will be barred from all noises,  
 And tumults of infantile voices!  
 (Please listen, my dear! I am speaking,  
 I *think*,  
 And put down your baby! he'll drink,  
 and he'll drink  
 Warm tea till he pops!) so again let me  
 say,  
 Keep the juveniles housed on this treach-  
 erous day,  
 May I trust you, for *once*, to remem-  
 ber?"

Then, with pain (for my limbs are  
 rheumatic),  
 I slowly climbed up to the attic;  
 And all the 'mid-stories o'er passed,  
 Reached the dismal old garret at last!  
 "Now," thought I, "no echoes of riot  
 Can break my philosopher's quiet;  
 Thank heaven! all luxuries scorning  
 Of stuffed couch or sofa, — I'll settle  
 just here —  
 (Though perhaps I would like a less im-  
 becille chair)  
 And be deep in research the whole morn-  
 ing!"

Alack! for all bright expectation!  
 While safe, as I fancied, from worry,  
 For below me I heard,  
 Ere my choler was stirred  
 First, a faint indefinable flurry,  
 Then, a deep roll, and thunder-like  
 rumble,  
 With the shock of some terrible tumble,  
 Which shook the whole house to its  
 basis!  
 In a trice from my foolish elation  
 I emerged with the blankest of faces,

And, well, I confess as a Christian I erred  
 But who, my good sir, or good madam!  
 Could have throttled, (just then), the  
 "old Adam" ?

I'm afraid that I muttered a some-  
 thing  
 That ought to have rested a dumb  
 thing!

Yet before your stern censure you  
 urge on,  
 Bethink you! the same term 's been  
 uttered  
 Quite roundly, not stammered or stut-  
 tered.

By good men from Edwards to Spur-  
 geon!

So, pray don't confuse me,  
 But kindly excuse me.

If once in a justified passion,  
 I followed their clerical fashion,  
 (Albeit much modified too!)

And whispered, not shouted, a d——n!

Of course, to the doorway I scurried,  
 And down the old stairs from the  
 attic

(In spite of my twinges rheumatic),  
 Incontent hurried!

Having reached the back parlor, I  
 trembled.

Alack! now, with fear undissembled,  
 For Jacky all spattered with gore,  
 Lay flabby and flat on the floor!

A pestilent urchin,  
 Who stood much in need of promis-  
 cuous 'birchin?

With his tricks and his manners un-  
 stable,

He had taken to tipping the table,  
 (A rickety table, though heavy as lead),  
 And succeeded, the mischievous elf!  
 In tremendously tipping himself!

And then the big board like an un-  
 loosened rafter,

Came sundering, blundering, thunder-  
 ing after,

Gave his pert shanks a majestic rap,  
 And one fat little thumb,  
 Round as a plum,

Caught — as in spite,  
 And held on to it tight,  
 As a new patent trap!

But worst of all, he had thumped his  
 head,

Thumped his head and maltreated his  
 nose,

(Hence, the sanguine stains that dis-  
 figured his clothes!)

And yet after all the ado,  
 We managed to rescue, and bring him  
 to,

On his pipe-like pegs  
 Of ridiculous legs,

To set him up in the general view,  
 No longer flecked by a crimson hue,  
 But, a trifle black and a trifle blue!

Behold me, once more in the garret!  
 This time with the door barred fast,  
 And locked by a rusty key,

(As if one could banish trouble,  
 By making one's fastenings double!

"Here's peace," quoth I, "at last!  
 One row, and a row of such degree,  
 Is surely enough 'till twilight!"

And so, 'neath the garret sky-light,  
 Again I pored o'er my "Barret"  
 ("Barret on Drainage," I've said),

With calmer nerves and a cooler head;  
 Determined to compass the topic,

In a mode most philosophic,  
 And launching a sudden shot,  
 Lightning-swift, and fiery hot,

Through an article terse and satirical,  
 Those foolish savants to bring down,  
 Who with theories basely empirical,  
 Had so startled and shocked the  
 town!

Ah! soon in order beautiful,  
 To a masterly logic dutiful,  
 My thoughts were ranged for fight;  
 I was making here and there,  
 A note on the fly-leaves bare,  
 When horribly higher and higher,  
 Uprose the shout of "Fire!"  
 In a monstrous dumb affright,  
 I hardly walked, but fell,

(As it seemed), from the garret's height,  
 (Though how, I could never tell!)  
 I alighted beneath to find  
 In the parlor a spark half out,  
 Which the feeblest puff of wind  
 From the chimney had blown about  
 But the children still would shout,  
 And dance, and prance, and bellow,  
 In a deafening, demonish rout,  
 While as for their mother, low and limp,  
 She lay, in a faint, by the opened door,  
 With her eighteenth-monther, a restless imp,  
 Drawing and pawing o'er and o'er  
 The folds of her rumped dress!  
 Somebody in years gone by,  
 Had pronounced her fainting *pose*  
 The *ne plus ultra* of loveliness,  
 As she lay like a sweet white rose;  
 But now! perchance, perchance,  
 I have lost my young romance,  
 For, unadmiring quite,  
 I gazed on the touching sight,  
 And (I'm a brute no doubt!)  
 But I let the siren lie.

Ah me, the vexations,  
 Exasperations,  
 And tribulations,  
 Confusions,  
 Obtrusions,  
 And endless affrays,  
 Which marked with dark tracing that  
 blackest of days!  
 Don't tell me that children are angels,  
 All fraught with pure heaven's evan-  
 gels,  
 And trailing — what is it! — from  
 some mystic star  
 Bright cloudlets of glory. I know  
 what mine are,  
 Not a whit worse I'm sure than the rest  
 of young "fry,"  
 Whose natures are thoughtless and  
 spirits are high;  
 But as for your "angels!" all that's  
 "in my eye!"

To enter again  
 On that morning of pain:  
 I should wretchedly blunder  
 In counting the number  
 Of times I was harried  
 (My thoughts all miscarried!)  
 By yells of shrill laughter  
 Or dread cries thereafter,  
 By accidents seen or invisible,  
 And mishaps high tragic, or risi-  
 ble;  
 Young Tommy three window-panes  
 shattered,  
 And, of course, cut his head in the pro-  
 cess,  
 And an old silver heir-loom  
 That oft held the rare bloom  
 Of vintages mellow and lusciously  
 fine  
 From the banks of Moselle or the banks  
 of the Rhine,  
 A tankard four centuries old and no  
 less,  
 By wee Janet was battered,  
 Disgraced,  
 And defaced,  
 Till the Bacchus Cellini had graven there-  
 on,  
 Was broken and wan,  
 And the sweep of the vine, and the curve  
 of the grape,  
 Were twisted hopelessly out of shape.  
 Then Harry fell down in the cistern!  
 With yells to be heard for a mile,  
 And in striving to fish him out,  
 (For the boy is portly, puffy, and stout)  
 Back would he slip, and slip, and  
 slip,  
 E'en from the cistern's utmost lip,  
 Until with a wrench swift-handed,  
 The human gudgeon was landed,  
 Who made with a ghastly smile  
 The half-inarticulate pledge,  
 That never more would he tempt the  
 edge  
 Of well or cistern, fount or river,  
 Although upon earth he should dwell  
 forever!

And lastly, Cornelia, aged five,  
 (I marvel the child is still alive!  
 Contrived in the subtlest, deftest way,  
 From the surgery shelf, to steal, in  
   play,  
   A box of my pills cathartic;  
 Enough (if swallowed at once) to slay  
   A bear of the regions Arctic!  
 How many she took I cannot say,  
 But thereafter for many and many a day,  
 Supine the suffering maiden lay,  
 And I scarce believe that her blood has  
   set  
 To the shore of health that is perfect, yet!

What is the moral of this, my masters?  
 (To you that are fathers, I mean,  
   Fathers, and students as well?)  
   Tis easy enough to tell,  
 Would you 'scape all household disas-  
   ters?  
 And be cosy, sweet-tempered, serene?  
 Then *never, never, never*,  
 Make the absurd endeavor,  
 Because the sky's not bluish  
 And the wind seems somewhat shrew-  
   ish,  
 To pen a young regiment in,  
 Of heirs to Adam's sin!

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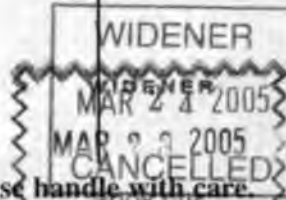
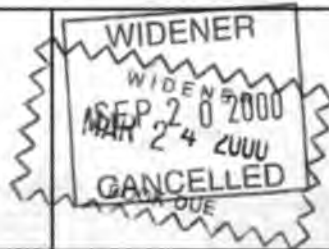
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