

ST. LONGINUS  
THE CENTURION  
AND OTHER POEMS



W. L. GREENSTREET



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SAINT LONGINUS THE CENTURION  
AND OTHER POEMS



# SAINT LONGINUS THE CENTURION

AND OTHER POEMS

BY  
COL. W. L. GREENSTREET

*Author of "The Flower of Nepal," and  
"Lalu, the Child Widow."*

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TO  
THE LOVING MEMORY  
OF  
MY DEAR WIFE  
M. C. F. G.

9375

SEVERAL of the shorter pieces in this collection appeared some years ago in one or other of the Indian papers.

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RELIGIOUS POEMS.



## SAINT LONGINUS THE CENTURION.

I BID you welcome, brothers in the Lord,  
 Who come to see an old man ere he pass  
 In pain of body, but in joy of soul,  
 To his long rest. I bid you welcome, friends,  
 And gladly to your question make reply.  
 You ask if I whose sun is well-nigh set,  
 Remember well that day on Calvary,  
 When we,—may God forgive us,—crucified  
 The holy Jesus,—aye, from early dawn  
 Till night it all comes back to memory,  
 Clear as a legend sculptured on the frieze  
 Of some Greek temple to Athena reared.—

You want the story of that day complete,  
 Told as I saw it, not the incidents,—  
 These are engraved with steel upon your minds  
 Through hearing oft the wondrous narrative,—  
 But as they seemed to me, a Gentile blind  
 To Jewish faith and customs, which I thought  
 Vain superstitions fit for eastern slaves,  
 But not for Romans.

I will tell the tale  
 Although the memory of my part therein  
 Wounds like a scorpion when with angry sting  
 It pierces to the flesh.

Early that morn

When I commanded Pilate's guard, the Jews  
 Brought Jesus up for judgment. All His face  
 Was marrèd so with blows that I supposed  
 He had been battered in some riotous brawl.  
 But as I watched, surprised, such royal grace  
 And majesty shone in His countenance,  
 Although defaced with buffets, that I thought,  
 Here is no common culprit : Pilate, too,—  
 Who might, perhaps, without much questioning  
 Have sentenced some base slave to please the Jews,—  
 Seeing the unwonted dignity of Christ,  
 Required the Sanhedrim to state His crime ;  
 Whereas the Jews in their presumption thought  
 To have Him sentenced at their mere behest,  
 No question being asked. But Roman rule,  
 Unless by some weak hand administered,  
 Brooks not such rank injustice. Then the Jews,—  
 Whose answer deserved chastisement,—replied,  
 " Were He not guilty He would not be here."  
 Oh ! Pilate vexed me greatly on that day,—  
 So weak and vacillating.—Well he knew  
 Jesus had done no wrong, and yet he feared  
 The wretched Jews, and dared not set Him free.  
 I longed to take my hundred soldiers mailed  
 Straight through the crowd with sword and spear in hand,  
 And make short work of Caiaphas and his gang :  
 But Pilate gave no sign. The soldiers, too,  
 Who saw the Prætor yielding to the Jews  
 Unwillingly, were vexed, and when the word  
 Was given to scourge Jesus, all their rage,—  
 He being a Jew,—was vented upon Him.  
 Heinous injustice ! And I, angry too,  
 Checked not their cruelty ; for this I weep



Daily, and daily mourn in penitence.  
 Human injustice ? Nay, 'twas bestial,  
 Canine, not human ; see a pack of hounds,—  
 If one attack a weak defenceless dog  
 What do the rest ? Assail the criminal ?  
 Defend the innocent ? Not so, they side  
 With him who did the wrong, the stronger beast.  
 And join in worrying the defenceless hound.  
 Thus did my soldiers, and I checked them not,  
 Angry with Pilate, Caiaphas, and the Jews.

Men take their scourging differently ; some  
 Howl from the first, but others laugh in scorn  
 Until the iron-tipped thongs have ploughed the flesh,  
 And every stroke is torture ; then they groan,  
 Knowing the scourge will fall relentlessly  
 With regular pulsations ; some will faint,  
 And after, when the tale of strokes is done,  
 Are found, it may be, dead. But unlike all  
 Was Jesus, Who in silence bared His back,  
 And with a countenance resolved and firm  
 Walked to the post, and held His hands aloft  
 Until the soldiers tied them to the ring.  
 And then the blows descended. Not a word  
 Or cry He uttered, but with upturned face  
 Gazed skyward, and His lips moved silently  
 As though He prayed to some invisible God.

You ask,—did He not suffer since no cry  
 Revealed His anguish ? Aye, the tortured flesh  
 Quivered in agony, and from His brow,  
 With pain distorted, poured a stream of sweat ;  
 But not a word He uttered. This enraged  
 The soldiers, who regard it as their due  
 To hear their victims groaning, so they wove

A crown of thorns and pressed it on His head  
 Until the spikes had passed into His brow,  
 And all His face was bloodstained. O'er Him then  
 They cast in scorn a tattered purple robe,  
 And giving Him as sceptre a bamboo,  
 They mocked Him as a false, pretended King.

I would have checked them, but they had the right  
 By custom to amuse themselves at will  
 With culprits sent to torture.

Pilate then,  
 Struck by His deep humiliation, hoped  
 His foes might be appeased. So deemed not I :—  
 Hate thrives on deeds of hatred, and each sin  
 Grows strong by sinning. This I knew too well  
 By dim self-knowledge. Oh, the dreadful cry  
 From many thousand raging Israelites,—  
 “ Let Him be crucified.”—It brought to mind  
 The yell of some huge pack of hungry wolves  
 Round a belated traveller at night  
 Lost in a German forest. Such a sound  
 Would in most hearts strike terror, not in His,—  
 The prisoner before Pilate,—silent still,  
 Even when Pilate asked Him “ Whence art thou ? ”  
 He did not tremble at the mob's fierce cry,  
 Nor kneeling ask protection, but quite calm,  
 As though the people's rage concerned Him not,  
 Spoke of the source of strength, and told the judge  
 His power was given by God. I thought it strange,  
 But now perceive He would the Prætor help  
 To fear not Cæsar but the heavenly powers,  
 And so do justice,—not for Jesus' sake  
 But Pilate's.

All was vain, the Jewish mob  
 Prevailed, and Pilate's selfish, timid soul

Was stained with innocent blood. I thought it, then,  
 Unworthy of a Roman, and the attempt  
 By vain ablutions to evade the blame  
 His own heart uttered, childish. Now I see  
 Not only this, but in the fuller light  
 Vouchsafed me since, that all injustice meets  
 The wrath of God : 'Tis strange, for earth seems full  
 Of what we count injustice ; sickness falls,  
 And pain, upon the noblest of mankind.  
 So God ordains, and simple folk like me  
 Know not the reason ; but if man commit  
 Injustice on his fellows, God's rebuke  
 Will surely fall upon him, either now,  
 Or in the fields of Hades. Pilate then  
 Condemned the innocent Jesus, and his crime  
 The Furies saw and punished.

Many a man

Have I to crucifixion led, and aye  
 Their thoughts were fixed on coming agony.  
 Must it not be so ? Think of this, my friends ;—  
 Suppose you know that in a short half-hour  
 Your body will be racked with direst pain,—  
 Nerve-torture that will sometimes last three days,  
 Without a hope of respite, would your thoughts  
 Turn to aught else, or could you make them dwell  
 On troubles that might meet your countrymen  
 A generation hence ? Yet Jesus Christ,  
 Though staggering 'neath the burden of His cross,  
 Half turned to tell the women standing near  
 And weeping, not to vex themselves for Him  
 But for the sorrows coming on their babes.

I noted this as strange and wonderful,  
 Beyond my knowledge of the ways of men  
 About to die in torture.

Then I asked,  
 Questioning self without a spoken word,  
 Has this strange man no thought at all of self,  
 No fear of coming agony, no dread  
 Of those long-drawn-out hours upon the cross  
 Which soon must rack His frame ? Then as I looked  
 I saw that He was gazing on the crowd  
 Gathered around, with eyes so full of love  
 And pity that I knew He took no thought  
 For his own pain or sorrow.

After this  
 He fell to earth exhausted. He had lived  
 Throughout the scourging, which will often kill ;  
 But pain and loss of blood, and that long night  
 Of sleepless torment well might sap the force  
 Even of the strongest. And I sometimes think,  
 My brothers, since I learnt the mystery  
 Of Love Divine, that what oppressed His soul  
 That night on Olivet beneath the moon,  
 When thrice He prayed, was not the fear of death,  
 Nor yet of pain, nor even mental pangs,  
 But dread of dying 'neath the murderous scourge,  
 And losing thus the glory of the cross,  
 And that mysterious power to win men's souls  
 Which Jesus' love, revealed upon the cross,  
 Holds as the price of suffering : But I stray,—  
 A simple soldier,—from my proper path.

When Jesus fell through weakness, and the blows,  
 And harsh spear-prickings of my soldiers failed  
 To make Him raise His cross, I knew not whom  
 To lade with its slave's burden. Fain would I  
 Have caught some sleek and prosperous Pharisee,  
 And laid it on his shoulders, but the law  
 Forbade such treatment of the vanquished Jews ;

Nor would the soldiers bear it. Happily  
 By chance came Simon of Cyrene, him  
 We might compel, and so he bore the cross.

Or was it God's high purpose, and not chance  
 That brought Him there just then, that he might watch  
 The faultless patience of the Son of Man,  
 And seeing learn to love? I think God works  
 Amongst us men in that way,—little things,—  
 Some chance decision of our wayward wills,—  
 Using to serve great ends. I thank the Lord  
 It was my turn for duty on that day  
 Of Jesus' crucifixion, else His Love  
 I might have never known, because the sight  
 Of His vast patience in the midst of pain  
 Showed me the dreadful ugliness of sin,  
 And turned me from the foul delights of sense,  
 Which Roman vice had taught me, to the joys  
 Found in the thought of God and His great Love.

But not at once the change; it slowly came  
 As other action in the drama dire  
 Wrought on my soul. For when at last we reached  
 The skull-shaped hill with Jesus and His cross  
 He spoke the words which more aroused my thoughts  
 Than all else done or uttered on that day.

For when the nails were driven through His flesh,  
 And all His body quivered with the pain,  
 In place of the accustomed bitter cry,  
 He spake the words,—well known now, then so strange,—  
 "Father, forgive them," and I standing by  
 Heard them and greatly wondered. Who was this?  
 And who His Father? and why in His pain,  
 When men are wont to curse their torturers,  
 Asked He that they be pardoned? All day long  
 I pondered on this mystery as I watched

The cross and all the Jewish rabblement  
 That came to mock their King. And when there fell  
 That strange and awful darkness on the land,  
 And strong men trembled, and the mocking voice  
 Of all that abject multitude was hushed,  
 And men spoke low in whispers, or were dumb,  
 My wonder grew, and still the question came  
 Unanswered to my soul,—“ What man is this ? ”  
 And as I gazed upon His quivering form.  
 Scarred, flayed, and furrowed by the cruel scourge,  
 All suddenly there came into my mind  
 Hercules dying on Mount Cæta's crest,  
 Tortured by Nessus' poison, punished thus  
 For saving his wife's honour,—Hercules,  
 The son of Zeus the Thunderer. And then  
 The thought came of Prometheus and his woes,  
 The godlike Titan, who gave gifts to men,  
 And therefor suffered torture ; and I asked  
 Within myself,—Is it a trait Divine  
 Pain to endure for giving gifts to men ?  
 And I remembered then that one had told,—  
 Bringing me Jewish tattle,—that a man  
 Who seemed to be a prophet from the north,  
 Had brought the gift of health to sickly folk,  
 And even life to some who seemed as dead ;—  
 Was this the man now dying on the cross ?  
 The Jews had said He came from Galilee.—

So through the hours of darkness did my soul  
 Question and get no answer. Then there rang  
 Through the black horror the most awful cry  
 That ever smote my ear and stilled my heart,—  
 A cry that bitter anguish of the soul,  
 Not suffering of the body, might extort  
 From one in mental torment. At that cry

The firm earth trembled, and the crosses swayed ;  
And then the sky grew brighter, and I saw  
The face of Him I watched change suddenly  
As though illumined by some wondrous joy ;  
And from the parched mouth of that tortured frame,  
When breath was scant, and friends beside the cross  
Might scarcely hope to catch a whispered word,  
There came a loud cry like the voice of one  
Who shouts in victory ; and then I knew  
That He who hung there dying on the cross  
Could be none other than the Son of God.

## CAIAPHAS.

## I.

THE way is dark, the path is set with snares,  
 And how to guide my footsteps through the maze  
 Of jeopardy and doubt I see not yet.

Here in the shadow of the olive tree  
 Watching the holy city will I rest,  
 And ponder o'er the dangers of the State.

A vain thing is ambition. With much gold  
 Bought I the High Priest's office : Pharisees  
 Whisper that this was sin ; I see them talk,  
 Huddled together with Gamaliel,  
 And eyeing me askance ; the hypocrites !  
 Their poverty their conscience. Be it sin,  
 One more or less what matters ? They too sin  
 About the things that please them : who can keep  
 The ten unbroken ? Were it indeed sin  
 That would not vex me if it brought me joy,  
 The joy of power and honour ; but no more  
 Do these delight me, growing stale with use :—  
 All things on earth grow vapid : and besides,  
 Where is my glory ? that base Nazarene,  
 That vagrant from despisèd Galilee,  
 Is reverenced more than I. The vulgar folk,—  
 That cursèd people who know not the Law,—  
 Flock after Him like sheep.



When yestermorn  
 I reached the Temple in my glorious robes,  
 Made on the pattern Moses saw in dreams,  
 And thought God showed him, all the common herd  
 Were gathered round the preaching carpenter,  
 And scarce took note of me. I heard Him say ;—  
 His words were blasphemous,—“ I am the Light ”—  
 “ The world’s light.” David to Jehovah cried,  
 “ Thou art my light ” ; what arrogant man is this  
 Claiming God’s attributes ? He must be mad,  
 Or by some lying devil be possessed.—  
 How cling to me the old thoughts of my race !—  
 There are no devils ;—but within His soul  
 Dwell pride and vanity, false thoughts and hate,  
 Making Him strong and fearless,—leading Him  
 Without a scruple onwards to His goal.—  
 Aye, but they ’vail not to work miracles  
 Such as they tell me this strange wanderer  
 Performs through Jewry blest and Galilee.

No prophet did so many wondrous works,  
 Not even Elisha ; for He heals the sick.  
 The blind restores to sight, makes the deaf hear,  
 Feedeth the people, quells the raging storm,  
 The leper heals by touch,—Oh ! vile offence  
 Against the Law. Whence come His wondrous works ?  
 Nowise of God : the holy Sabbath Day  
 Which Moses bade our Fathers consecrate,  
 And Prophets chode them for dishonouring,  
 He breaks by healing. Those whom God inspires  
 Respect the Sabbath,—whence, then, comes His power ?  
 The Pharisees say,—from Bēelzebub :  
 This serves to tell the ignorant, but we know,—  
 By wisdom raised above the common herd,—  
 There are no spirits, whether good or bad,

Only great God and man and solid earth,  
 There is naught else. What God is, none may know,  
 For man by searching cannot find out God.  
 This need not vex us ; earth remains unchanged,  
 And gold still brings us honour and delight.

But if I, Chief Priest, in my office fail,—  
 Not in the pageantry of sacrifice,  
 The sacred robes, Urim and Thummim vests,  
 And all the mummerly whereby the crowd  
 Is awed and governed, but as ruling prince,  
 Who stand before the Romans, if I fail  
 To guide the people right, then Cæsar comes  
 With his resistless legions, and destroys  
 Our faith and race.

Where are the Maccabees ?

In this degenerate age to wage our wars,  
 Or perish in the fight ? We have no faith,  
 Our manhood being destroyed by luxury ;  
 Yet many a Jew, inspired by their great deeds,  
 Has hoped to save his country. I too dreamed  
 Sweet dreams of glory when a boy I roamed  
 About the flowery uplands of Judæa,  
 Where David fed his sheep, and Judas fought.  
 I vowed to lead the armies of the Lord  
 To battle some day, gaining victories,  
 And freeing from the hated foreign yoke  
 This fair land of my fathers. But the dream  
 Passed when youth's pleasures came and lured my soul  
 From patriotic sacrifice, but still  
 I sometimes hope our Saviour may arise,—

And once I thought that from the Jordan's banks,  
 Where John baptised and preached, clad prophet-wise,  
 In camel skins, our hero might have come

To lead our armies, but he called himself  
Naught but a voice, and him hath Herod slain.

Then Jesus came, and hope with Him returned,—  
I knew not He was born in Galilee,—

The vain impostor,—so I thought His power  
Of miracle, or whatso'er it be

That holds the rabble, might supply the strength  
Of will and purpose and religious zeal

To rouse us to shake off the abhorrèd yoke  
Of Rome. I even hoped He might have proved

The Christ, and so I sent my trusted friends  
To watch His converse 'mid the multitude.

“ A mere unpractical enthusiast,”

So they report, “ befriending publicans  
And sinners, even harlots, but the good,

The Lawyers, Scribes, and rigid Pharisees,  
Charging with falschood and hypocrisy.”

No sign from heaven, no portent in the sky  
Proves Him Messiah ; for this we ask in vain :

No royal dignity or noble birth

Proclaims the kingship of the carpenter.

I hate Him, for His life reproveth ours

By mad contempt of earthly happiness,

Of riches, pleasure, and the sweet delights

That pleased the Wise King's heart, and satisfies  
Us who pretend not to be better men

Than he, the wisest. But the Nazarene

Dares to upbraid, and in His language coarse,—

Rejoicing all the vulgar,—calleth us

“ Adulterous generation.” He must die :

I sit in Moses' seat, in Samuel's place,

To judge God's people ; under me they rise

To power, or fall to grosser servitude

Than hated Rome imposes on us now.

A little thing would weight the galling chain  
 Beyond endurance ; and this dreamer mad,  
 Driving the people to some desperate act,  
 May cause our Roman lords to take away  
 Our place and Nation, as in bygone days  
 The eastern king took Sion's daughters fair  
 Captive to Babylon.

O, chosen seed,  
 So blest in promise, but in fact so curst,—  
 Once only noble, when the glorious king  
 Whose wisdom filled the East, ruled thy fair land,  
 How hast thou suffered ! Egypt's tyrant first  
 Plagued thee in bondage, then Assyria  
 Thy ten tribes carried to a barbarous land,  
 And left them there to lose their faith and race  
 Among the heathen nations. Judah then  
 Was taken captive, and though Ezra led  
 A remnant back, where are the rest ? where dwell  
 The people countless as the seashore sand  
 Promised to Abraham ? What are we now ?  
 A little State which every conquering king  
 Grinds under foot, and tramples with his shoe,  
 As royal David did the Edomites.

Jehovah cares not, or His arm is short.  
 I love my country,—land of hill and dell,  
 Where grow the vine and olive ; where the corn  
 Laughs in the sunshine, and the meadows smile  
 With flowers that grew in Eden, and the winds  
 Blow softly in the summer, bringing health  
 And dew from Hermon.

Oh, that David's son,  
 The anointed King Messiah, would appear,  
 And lead our nation on to victory,  
 Driving the Roman armies to the sea.

No sign declares him here, so danger hangs  
 Over Jerusalem if Jesus lives ;  
 And as He will not fight for Sion's hope,  
 Expediency demands that He should die  
 For God's own people. What is one poor life ?—

Some feeble members of the Sanhedrim,—  
 Joseph perchance, or Nicodemus, asked  
 " Would it be just to kill Him ? " Let them ask,—  
 Mere talkers, irresponsible, but we,  
 On whom the burden rests of government,  
 Know that in statecraft scrupulosity  
 Brings ruin, so I spoke of Galilee,  
 And they perforce were silent. It is well  
 Report assigns His birth to Nazareth ;  
 My task were hard if He from Bethlehem came,  
 As I was told once by an ancient dame  
 Who whispered, dying, that when Herod slew  
 The babes at Bethlehem three decades past,  
 Because star-gazers from the East had come  
 To seek a Child-King in Judæa born,  
 He Whom King Herod sought to kill escaped,  
 His parents safe to Zoan taking Him  
 At dead of night. After, they brought Him back,—  
 So said the dame,—to Nazareth, and now  
 He roams the land a prophet.

I know not

If this be true ; belike the woman lied,  
 So from my friends I keep the story hid.

Or true or false, the man's life is to us  
 As dangerous as the babe's was to the king.  
 Aye, surely He must die ; our nation's good  
 And my security require His death.—

And yet His works perplex and trouble me,

For Moses and Elijah seem in Him  
 United, and God's people still expect  
 That He will send a prophet like them both  
 In Israel's need.—Can it be possible  
 That Jesus is the seer whom we expect?—  
 The Sabbath-breaking Galilean,—Tush :  
 Vain thought unworthy God's High Priest.

And yet

I would He were less faultless, so my task  
 Were easier, for no tongue would then speak out  
 In His defence,—and in my inmost soul  
 The voice which now keeps bidding me beware  
 Of innocent blood would cease to trouble me.

For if so be that He is innocent,  
 Nay, more than innocent, a holy man,  
 Will not Jehovah punish those who shed  
 The innocent blood, and root the Nation up  
 From our own land, even as Rome will do  
 If we rebel? But does Jehovah know,  
 Or trouble much about the acts of men?  
 He makes no sign; the daily sacrifice  
 Ascends with incense through the long dull years,  
 And yet our servitude to Rome remains,  
 And grows more galling: Pilate in his wrath  
 Pouring the blood of harmless devotees  
 Upon their sacrifices. Yet no hand  
 Saves, and it seems as though Jehovah sleeps;  
 But Rome sleeps never. Better risk God's wrath  
 Than that of Rome,—the Nazarene must die.  
 And yet His death to compass will be hard,  
 For all the people love Him; Pilate, too,  
 Though often weak, is sometimes obstinate,  
 And may be dangerous if unduly urged.  
 If need be, we must use his selfish fear

Of Cæsar's wrath by speaking of the claims  
 Of Jesus to be king. Yet would I fain  
 Keep back the word of kingship which proclaims  
 Our Nation's fall.

Another chance I dread :—  
 Will not His mien, so calm and dignified,  
 His visage noble and His aspect kind,  
 Weigh against us with Pilate, and excite  
 The rabble in His favour? 'Tis a risk  
 Which needs judicious treatment.

In the night,  
 When all the people sleep who joyfully,  
 On that strange morning when He rode the ass,  
 Acclaimed Him as their king, He must be brought  
 Here to my palace : I have faithful slaves  
 Who at a word from me will mar His face  
 So that the multitude who, in their zeal,  
 Shouted " Hosanna " in His form will see  
 No beauty to desire Him. And the judge  
 Will just look at Him with a casual glance,  
 And recognise a culprit worthy death  
 In one who comes before the judgment-seat  
 With locks dishevelled, and with face defiled,  
 Torn and discoloured by the blows of men.

Who spoke? A voice seemed whispering through the  
 trees,—  
 " God hates injustice."

There is no one here ;  
 Alone I sit beneath the olive tree.  
 My own thoughts spoke, but unadvisedly ;  
 Pilate will crucify Him—what are blows  
 To one about to die in agony ?

## CAIAPHAS.

## II.

AGAIN beneath the o'ershadowing tree I sit  
 Unresting, as I strive in vain to think  
 Calmly of all the issues terrible,  
 Perplexingly mysterious and strange,  
 Which followed on our deed of yesterday,  
 Crowding the dreadful hours. But this one thought  
 Thrusts out all others,—that the direst pain,  
 The fellest torture that a man endures,  
 Is that which he prepares by his own crime  
 To clutch him in the talons of despair,  
 Till thought is torment and the memory hell.

Was it but yesterday we watched Him die  
 Upon the cross? It seems as though since then  
 Eons had passed. How patiently He bore  
 The dreadful agony: no murmur fell  
 From out His blackened lips till rose the cry  
 Which filled us with a horror that will fade  
 Never from memory while life shall last,—  
 The horror of a soul which God forsakes:—  
 That cry will haunt my deathbed. Did it mean  
 That Him God had forsaken? I trow not;  
 He prayed for those who nailed Him to the wood,  
 And such men God forsakes not in their need;—  
 Nails through the hands and feet! It made me shrink



To watch it, though it satisfied my hate,  
 And I was glad, though now I fain would give  
 All I possess to change the dreadful past.

We mocked Him in His torment ; everyone  
 In that vast multitude derided Him,  
 Save for a few disciples near the cross ;  
 But not a word He uttered of reproach,  
 Or answer to our gibes, only He looked  
 Unutterably sad ; and then His eye  
 Caught mine and held me spellbound. He had stood  
 Before me as a culprit in my court,  
 But as before His cross I stood entranced,  
 I seemed to be the sinner, He the judge ;  
 And all the evil things that I had done,  
 And all the foul thoughts that had stained my mind,  
 The crimes, impurities, and cruel deeds,  
 Came back to memory with a sudden flash,  
 And seemed as though He too beheld them there.

Then came the awful darkness, and I knew  
 That for our sins God had forsaken us.  
 And when from out the gloom there came that cry  
 Of horror, lo ! it seemed as though a void  
 Beneath my feet had opened, like the pit  
 Which swallowed Korah : and methought that He  
 Who hung upon the cross in agony  
 Uttered that cry because He knew indeed  
 That God had left His people in their sins  
 To perish, and Him with them, being a Jew.  
 So to the holy city back I came,  
 Trembling and terrified, but when I reached  
 The hill of Sion and the sacred fane,  
 Hoping to find before its altar fires  
 And in its holy ritual relief  
 From fearful thoughts, and those dread searching eyes,

Which ever pierced into my inmost soul.  
 Behold ! the veil that shut from vulgar gaze  
 The Holy Place where none but I dare tread,  
 All suddenly, and by no human hand,  
 Was rent in twain, and with a dreadful sound  
 The solid earth 'gan tremble, and the walls,  
 Which Ezra had built solid like the rock  
 Of Sion's hill, swayed fearfully and shook,  
 As though the earth were ocean.

Then I saw

In the dim light a shadowy figure, clad  
 In all the glorious robes of the High Priest,  
 Come slowly towards me with a noiseless tread  
 From out the Holy Place, his threatening hand  
 Held high, and in his noble countenance  
 Anger and sorrow, mingled with disdain :  
 And through his form the golden cherubim  
 Shone, so I knew he was no mortal man,  
 But some dread spirit from the nether world,—  
 Aaron belike, or Eli, and I fell  
 Unconscious through paralysis of fear.

When I awoke the shadowy form was gone,  
 But not its memory ; it filled my thoughts,  
 And showed that all the Sadducean lore  
 On which my life was founded, and my pride,  
 Was false, for now I know a spirit world  
 Exists beyond the sphere of sight and sense  
 In Paradise, or dread Gehenna fire,  
 Where sin and death have torment ; so my heart  
 Sinks in a void, engulfed in blank despair.

And still those searching eyes look into mine ;  
 And all night I beheld them : If I slept  
 They mingled with some dreadful dream of woe  
 From which I started trembling.

Once I saw,—

It seemed more real than aught seen by day,—  
 The Crucified enthroned amidst the clouds  
 In dazzling light, and all the sky was filled  
 With glorious angels, but beneath their feet  
 A black form grovelled in his filthy robes ;  
 And as I looked I saw it was myself.  
 Then dreadful fear fell on me and I woke ;  
 But still from out the darkness shone those eyes,  
 And I remembered, horror-struck, the curse  
 Which I had uttered,—was it yesternorn,  
 Or on a day far distant ?—“ May His blood  
 Lie on us and our children.” So despair  
 Falls on me, for the curse will be my doom :  
 My doom, and my dear country's that I love.  
 'Tis with the Holy Seed I stand or fall ;  
 Then be it so, I will not flinch or fail,  
 Or go back from the deeds which have been wrought,  
 Nor falter in the course I have begun.

What I have done was for my country's good,  
 Nor for myself,—no, surely, not for self,  
 Nor hate nor envy moved me, only fear,—  
 Fear of the Roman menace. Still it stands  
 Before us threatening ; and the followers  
 Of Him Whom Pilate crucified may rouse  
 The Galilean swarms fanatical  
 To dangerous riot by some lying tale,  
 For which His words prepared them. I must work  
 With energy and swiftness. Action brings  
 The surest remedy for sickly thoughts,  
 Banishing fear and weakness and remorse.

## JAEL.

“Blessed above women shall Jael be, the wife of Heber the Kenite.”

THE fiery sun rose redly yestermorn,  
 Crossed by the black bars of an angry cloud  
 Which darkened all the region of the East  
 Above the plain of Jezrèel, and lo !  
 E'en as I watched there shot a bolt of God  
 From sky to earth across the cloud's dark pall ;  
 And then the voice of Him Who spake in storm  
 On Sinai to Moses, called again  
 As oftentimes He calls, and men awestruck,  
 Looking from face to face, in wonder ask,  
 “What saith the mighty Lord ?” So when at dawn  
 He spake in thunder, to my soul I said,—  
 “Is it of war or pestilence He tells,  
 Of private grief to Heber and our kin,  
 Or danger to the people of the Lord ?”

And while I thought thereon, from out the grove,  
 Where the long shadow of the terebinth  
 At early morn steals to the sacred well,  
 Swiftly a youth of Israel drew nigh,  
 And said,—“To thee, O Jael, Deborah  
 The prophetess sends greeting from beneath  
 The palm tree in the hills of Ephraim ;  
 To thee she says,—‘The God of Moses once  
 Delivered His own people from the hand

Of Egypt's king, and now again will show  
 On Sisera and Jabin His fierce wrath :  
 And God has tools ;—the Red Sea slew the host ;  
 A woman shall slay Sisera ; beware  
 Thou fear not.' ” Then he vanished, but I heard,  
 Far off, his voice upon the mountain-side  
 Singing the song of Moses which he taught  
 To Jethro, and the priest of Midian  
 Taught Zipporah's fair sister,—“ This is God,  
 My God, and I will praise Him, Thy right hand,  
 O Lord, in power is glorious, Thy right hand  
 Dasheth the foe in pieces.”

#### Deborah

Is great and wise, what means she when she says  
 “ Beware thou fear not ” ?

Lo ! the sheen of arms  
 Far down the valley gleams ; The sound of war  
 Comes on the wind, the shout of mighty men,  
 The rolling of the chariots, and the clash  
 Of sword and spear,—Thus Deborah awakes  
 The people of the Lord from their long sleep  
 Beneath the yoke of Jabin, and they fight  
 For freedom and the glory of their God.—

“ The Lord hath tools,” said Deborah. “ The sea,  
 The sea it was that as the hand of God  
 Did dash the foe in pieces ; and the tool  
 Of God may be a woman, who shall dash  
 In pieces Sisera ”—so said the lad.  
 What meaneth Deborah ? What woman ? She  
 Herself the prophetess ? Then why warn me  
 “ Beware thou fear not ” ? Can she have meant me ?  
 How can a woman slay who feels no hate ?  
 And Heber is with Jabin now at peace.

If Sisera should come a fugitive

From Jabin's army here into my tent  
 I could not slay him : yet if it should be  
 Jehovah's will, I dare not disobey.  
 The sea stood still to let His people pass,  
 And flowed again to overwhelm their foe ;  
 And Jordan's waters stayed their downward course  
 When touched by priests who bare the sacred Ark.  
 Shall I be less obedient than the tide  
 Which, senseless, does the will of the Most High ?  
 God's finger on the mount for Moses wrote,—  
 " Thou shalt not kill "—did Joshua transgress  
 Slaying the men and women, aye, and babes,  
 Of Jericho ? Nay, for the Lord's command  
 Bade him to slay, because their sin was great.  
 He rules the sea, sometimes His lightning kills ;  
 His fire from heaven consumed the Sodomites ;  
 And if He says to Joshua,—“ Slay the folk  
 Who break my law,” where lies the difference ?  
 Death by the fire of God or Jewish sword  
 Is equal death ; and they obeyed the Lord.  
 But why should He command the Israelites  
 To kill ? they scarce are better than the folk  
 Whom they destroyed. They worship Ashtaroth,  
 And Baalim, forsaking the Most High,  
 And so to Jabin's rule He giveth them  
 For punishment. Then will He slay them too,—  
 Destroy them like the Canaanites ? Ah, no ;  
 God's promise unto Abraham is known  
 Through all the land from Jordan to the sea,  
 That in his seed the nations of the earth  
 Shall find a blessing. This may be the cause  
 Why God forgives and watches evermore  
 O'er Abram's wayward children.—When shall come  
 Fulfilment of Jehovah's promise ? When

The Holy Seed come forth that Balaam saw  
 Far off in vision ? It will right the world,  
 Which now is evil. Oh, that it might come  
 Now and restore the goodness of the earth  
 As God beheld it ere our mother sinned.—  
 Now might alone prevails. No poor man dwells  
 Secure beneath his vine and olive tree :  
 Some robber tribe from out the desert wild  
 Or mountain fastness sweeps at dead of night  
 Upon his quiet homestead, and destroys  
 With torch and weapon all that he holds dear,  
 And those who die not, strips for slavery.  
 O ! that the Lord of all would send us peace !  
 The blessed peace which Abraham's race will bring.

It may not be, how can the promised seed  
 Come when the people of the Lord are slaves  
 To Jabin and to Sisera ? God brought  
 His people from Egyptian slavery,  
 Bidding the sea o'erwhelm the impious king  
 Who would not let them seek the promised land ;  
 And He may slay again another king,  
 Or mighty captain, to prepare the way  
 For the seed's coming. If He bade me slay,  
 Speaking in thunder roll, as once He spoke  
 On Sinai, I dare not disobey.

But He may speak more gently, as of yore  
 To Abraham at eve beside his tent.

The voice Divine, in thunder or in calm,  
 Must be obeyed,—and Deborah is ordained  
 By God to judge His people, she it was  
 Who sent the lad.—

Hark to the clash of arms

In Kishon's valley, and the warriors' shout.  
 How dread a thing is war and cruel iron

The blood, the pain, the dying and the thirst.  
 May God the victory to His people grant.  
 How can He? Sisera and his hosts are strong,  
 And he has countless chariots; Israel's sons  
 So long have trembled at his cruel sword  
 That when they see him they will flee away  
 To Tabor's heights, making the rock their nests  
 Like Heber's kin: I hear the sound of flight,  
 And victors shouting.—

Lo! who cometh here,  
 Climbing the steep alone with weary step  
 And hunted eye, back-looking on his path?  
 His dress is torn and bloodstained, and his face  
 Pale with calamity.—'Tis Sisera.

\* \* \* \* \*

He asked for shelter and I gave it him,  
 He called for water and I brought him milk:  
 Poor soul, he was so weary and afraid,  
 So parched with thirst and terror, that my heart  
 Was full of pity,—yet I know too well  
 That Sisera and pity are apart  
 As far as Hermon from Mount Sinai.  
 When showed he mercy upon Israel's sons  
 Whose daughters he desired? the orphaned maids  
 Were soon within his power: fierce is the hate  
 Of Moses' people for the man asleep  
 Within the tent. Him they will catch and slay  
 With cruelty, for him 'twere well to die  
 There in his sleep.

When I was but a child  
 A hunted wolf came crawling to the tent  
 Wounded and weary, and with outstretched tongue



Lay gasping, and its eye was pitiful,  
 So flesh I brought and water, and it slept.  
 Then came my little brother with a spear,  
 And would have slain it but I held him back  
 For pity ; so it woke refreshed and strong.  
 Then came my father weary from the hunt,  
 And at the tent door saw the wounded beast,  
 And fought with it ; I wept to see its pain,—  
 Slashed, maimed, and blinded ere at length it died.  
 And then I thought it had been better far  
 My brother's spear had slain it in its sleep.  
 So were it well for Sisera if death  
 Could find him now.

Death ! What said Deborah ?

“ A woman shall slay Sisera, beware  
 Thou fear not ! ” I ? Is this great God's command  
 That I should slay him sleeping in the tent ?  
 If God commands and I dare disobey  
 What happens ? Lo ! the vengeful Israelites  
 Will find him here and I shall see him die  
 In pain and terror ; it were kinder now  
 To slay him painless ; rest and milk I gave,  
 And painless death were also a kind gift.  
 But they may find him not ;—Then will he go  
 Back to the king and gather up his force,  
 And kill and slave the people of the Lord.  
 Then will they cry, “ 'Tis Jael's fault we die.”  
 And Deborah will curse Jael,—and the Lord  
 Will say,—“ 'Tis Jael that hath done this thing,  
 She saved my people's enemy.” Through the years  
 Of Israel's slavery, when the promised seed  
 In whom the world is blest can come not forth,  
 The weary people in their pain will curse  
 The memory of Jael. But to slay

A guest in mine own tent to whom I gave  
Food, drink, and shelter were a dastard act.  
How should I answer Heber and his friends  
Blaming the deed? I know not. Every way  
Is blame to me and trouble. What is death?  
The death of one? It had been good to slay  
The Egyptian king ere yet the firstborn died,  
And well for him to perish. Moses self  
Grew wise in Pharaoh's palace through the death  
Of many an infant. When the promised seed  
Shall come to bless the world, I think that death  
Will near Him dwell.—It may be Sisera's death  
Is needful for His coming; who can say?  
Not I, a short way only can I see,  
How then to act? Obedience is the way;—  
Through Deborah God calls me, and I come.  
If Sisera sleeps not and beholds me armed  
With nail and hammer, me he will destroy.  
What matters death if I obey the Lord,—  
My death or Sisera's? Little things are we  
Before Jehovah. To obey His will  
Is our sole wisdom, Deborah I come.

## THE GARMENT OF THE CREATOR.

## I.

I WALK through the English woods and lanes,  
 When the air is fresh and the sun is bright ;  
 For the Spring has burst the Winter's chains,  
 And earth is a garden of pure delight.  
 And as I tread on the soft green sward,  
 Besprinkled with blossoms, I thank the Lord  
 For health, and strength of body and mind,  
 For peace and light, and the life-giving wind ;  
 For the heavenly blue above,  
 For the canopy of love,  
 For the cloudlets white and golden,  
 In the unseen ether holden,  
 As swiftly through the sunny space they fly  
 Across the blue expanses of the sky.

Glittering, golden, far beneath me shines the placid,  
 sunlit bay,  
 Lovely now in calm, and glorious when a tempest flings  
 the spray.  
 Blue hills stand beside it furrowed deep by violet-grey  
 vales  
 Lying sheltered by the oak trees from the rage of winter  
 gales

And afar the granite headlands, where the waves beat,  
 crest on crest,

In the greyness of the distance, seem the calm abodes of  
 rest.

So I thank the Lord of Heaven,  
 Who to earth its charm has given,  
 And has broken up the light,  
 So that colours gladden sight,  
 And has given to vaporous air  
 Power to mellow the sun's fierce glare,  
 And to soften each earthly scene  
 With a tender grey, or a delicate green,  
 Caught up from the sea, or lent by the sky ;  
 And when the sun to the earth draws nigh  
 The whole of the western space to infuse  
 With a saffron light from the glory untold,  
 Hidden by clouds with a fringe of gold.

## II.

How sweet to the soul is the evening peace,  
 When the air is still, and the fierce winds cease  
 To ripple the waves and the sails to shake,  
 And the bay is calm as a crystal lake,  
 And amber cloudlets are floating high  
 Before a vista of blue-green sky,—  
 A heavenly green like a lawn for rest  
 In the garden of Paradise the blest ;—  
 The beautiful country which Thou hast prepared  
 For those who the pain of Thy Cross have shared  
 Gladly, O Lord, for love of Thee,  
 Creator of earth and the beautiful sea.

But we come not yet to the promised land,  
 It is still far off with its blissful bowers :  
 Yet love is all round me as here I stand  
 On the bountiful earth clad with verdure and flowers.  
 The meadow is gay  
 In its vernal array  
 Of daisies and buttercups shining with dew,  
 Of hawkweed-stars and veronica blue,  
 Of clover and campion white and red,  
 And grasses tall with a feathery head.

The primrose rests in its home of leaves,  
 Like a bird in the nest which she skilfully weaves ;  
 The celandine decketh the edge of the lane  
 With a carpet of golden sheen,  
 The cuckoo-flower speckles the roadside drain,  
 And the hedge is an emerald green.

'Tis the home of the thrush who is singing the praise  
 Of God in the budding thorn,  
 And surely the blossoming thorn itself,  
 And the elm in its fresh attire  
 Of virginal green, are as brimful of praise  
 As the dear little bird in the briar :  
 For now they are bursting once more into life,  
 As the winter is over and gone,  
 And sorrow is past, and the yearly strife  
 With death is triumphantly won.

### III.

We walk through the fields which with flowers are  
 bedight,  
 Through the woods where the hyacinth looks for the  
 light,

And giveth its scent to the morning breeze ;  
 Through lanes which are green with embowering trees,  
 And glad with the songs of birds which bring  
 The full delight of the early Spring.

And the bliss of the morning fills  
 The wayfarer's heart with the purest joy,  
 And the spirit of blessedness thrills  
 His soul as he follows the track of a wain,  
 Through meadow and coppice and shadowy lane,  
 Past byre and hamlet and farmstead grey.

And in the garden bright  
 Of the cottage by the way,  
 Where the flowers are a delight  
 To the senses, smell, and sight,  
 With the sweetness of their lovely Spring array,  
 The happy bees are buzzing  
 Round the blossoms pink and white  
 Of the apple trees that make the hamlet gay.  
 And the lowly folk who dwell  
 In the calm, sequestered dell,  
 Surrounded by the gracious gifts of God,  
 Have learnt in joy and pain,  
 In sunshine and in rain,  
 To give by kindly deeds and grateful words  
 A higher, holier praise than that of birds.  
 For the birds and insects praise Him with the joyance  
 of their lay,  
 But the hearts of loving people, which throughout the  
 weary day  
 Of ill-requited toil and stress,  
 Are lifted up in thankfulness,  
 Present a strain of better worth  
 To aid the harmonies of earth  
 Than creatures void of reason in their mirth.

## IV.

The earth is fair with its flowers and herbs,  
The sky is blue, and the mountain grey,  
But it is not alone for the beauty seen  
That we bless the Creator's sway.  
The air that we breathe gives life and health,  
The blithe lambs skip, and the children play,  
The flowers are bright in the meadows green,  
And the trees grow strong through the breezes keen,  
For every life has need of the air,  
And plants and animals take their share  
Of its varied gifts, and in exchange,  
For the common store they all prepare  
Their tribute through an alembic strange.

For the Will Divine in Nature works  
Through cycles of change unceasing ;  
The Spring-time glad follows Winter sad,  
The earth from its sleep releasing ;  
And autumnal dying, and dead leaves flying,—  
The Winter's death and frosty breath  
Come after the sweetness of summer days  
In flowery meads beneath golden rays.  
So we thank the Lord for the poles' incline,  
And the change that the seasons bring :  
'Twas a wondrous part of the vast design,  
That made the angels sing.

## V.

We praise the thought of the Father wise  
In giving us rain from the cloudy skies,

Enduing the glorious sun with power  
 The vapour to raise from the silvery ocean,  
 And send it afar by the breeze's motion,  
 Until on the thirsty land there lower  
 The black rain-clouds. The air is chill,  
 The stormy wind grows suddenly still,  
 And lo ! the long-wished-for shower.  
 Onward the clouds are borne to the hills,  
 And there the rainstorm rapidly fills  
 The little mountain rills,  
 Until the streamlets which they feed  
 Swallow them up in unsatisfied greed,  
 And flowing swiftly through forest and lea,  
 Carry them on to the mighty river,  
 Which gives them all back to the former giver,—  
 The wild and desolate sea.  
 Thus with a regular fixed pulsation,  
 The vapours rise and the clouds descend,  
 For all things move in a ruled relation,  
 And nothing has either beginning or end,  
 Unless from the depths God's voice shall call,  
 For His infinite wisdom is over all.

## VI.

A little rabbit crossed my path as I walked beside the  
 brook,  
 It rushed away when it saw me come, with a startled,  
 terrified look,  
 It ran beside the grazing sheep, but they no notice took ;  
 And when I came to some dark brown kine,  
 Contentedly chewing the grass,  
 They looked at me with their soft sad eyen,



But I doubt if they saw me pass ;  
 Just a picture on the retina came, but no thought  
 informed the brain ;  
 No thought except of hope or fear, of pleasure or of pain,  
 Can reach their clouded animal minds  
 In their apathy serene.  
 Then is there a link that the creatures binds  
 To the spirit-world unseen ?  
 And can their feeble mental powers find any true relation  
 To that stupendous intellect which formed the vast  
 creation ?  
 And dare we believe that it is their fate  
 To find a place in the future state ?  
 Perhaps a hope may lie in the love  
 Of the animals for their young,  
 For as I passed by the beech-tree grove  
 A cow did her baby calf caress,  
 Which to life had suddenly sprung  
 From the strange abyss of nothingness ;—  
 Will it there again be flung,—  
 To the dreadful void be cast  
 When its little day is passed ?

The love of the beast for its offspring frail  
 Is an image dim and obscure  
 Of the Love Divine for created life,  
 Which is steadfast, strong, and sure.  
 And yet, as in all the works of God,  
 There is mystery lying here,—  
 In the vision of pain and the strokes of Fate,  
 And the agony of fear,  
 When the victim beholds its enemy,  
 And knows that death is near :  
 And we ask how suffering, strife, and hate

Can exist when the Love of God is nigh.  
 For the shadow of sorrow and sacrifice,—  
 (O ! Lord, is it shadow or light ? )  
 On the beautiful earth all heavily lies.  
 And when, having veiled His Glory and Might,  
 The Creator in love, came to visit the earth,  
 And eternity changed into time,  
 And Glory and Power into weakness and shame,  
 And ineffable bliss into contact with crime,  
 His days He spent in sorrow and pain,  
 Pain of body and grief of mind,  
 And His marred life seemed to have been in vain  
 When His soul in agony He resigned.  
 So pain and grief like threads of gold  
 Through life's woof run, for young and old,  
 Whether animal or man ;  
 And dare we the mystery further scan,  
 And dream that the sweetness of sacrifice  
 Is essentially part of the joy Divine,  
 Since He Who suffered in human guise,  
 As the image of God upon earth did shine,—  
 The expression to human thought and sight  
 Of God as He is in ineffable light ?  
 Then does the distress of His creatures prove  
 A grief to the heart of the God of love ?  
 Is the sacrifice His even more than theirs  
 When sorrow or pain their heart-strings tears ?  
 To what intent ? Is it all in vain ?  
 Or will creation through its pain  
 Slowly rise to a higher life,  
 As man was evolved through painful strife ?  
 No sacrifice fails of its proper guerdon,  
 And if God can share the creature's burden  
 Of pain and dolour, in heaven He reigns,

And can balance the sorrow against the gains,  
 And the groaning creation can slowly raise  
 To a higher state in the endless days,  
 For the earth's life is but a little span,  
 And eternity was ere time began.  
 And if life's germ in the course of time  
 Grew to the height of a man sublime,  
 In eternity all God's works may rise  
 To a glory beyond our hope's surmise.

## VII.

For we are animals too, we men who drink and eat  
 Have bodily wants and desires, and toil with our hands  
 and feet  
 Have muscular activity, and the nerves whereby we feel,  
 And the senses of sight and sound, which the wondrous  
 world reveal.  
 But we thank the Lord of all for a higher blessing still,  
 For memory and thought, and the gift of a steadfast will,  
 And an eye to see the beautiful, and a heart its charm to  
 love ;  
 For love is the best and divinest of blessings from above :  
 Love for the great Creator, and the offspring of His  
 thought,  
 The garment of Light and Glory that His will alone has  
 wrought ;  
 Love for the beauties that charm us in human and animal  
 forms,  
 For the sweetness of peaceful valleys, and the grandeur  
 of mountain storms,  
 Love for the far-stretching plains, for the chaunt of the  
 winds rushing by,

For the greyness of grass-covered hills and the blue of  
 the star-spangled sky,  
 For the cornfields, the heather and whin ; for the verdure  
 that covers the earth ;  
 For the trees in the forest and field, and the wild-flowers  
 that dance in their mirth.  
 Love, too, for all things that are living, for man and for  
 woman and child,  
 For gentle and friendly animals, and beasts of the  
 forest wild,  
 For birds with a gorgeous plumage, and those with a  
 dulcet song  
 And for all the diverse creatures that to this fair earth  
 belong.

Oh ! love is a wonderful, heavenly gift,  
 But others there are which the soul uplift ;  
 For these we adore the All-Father Who knows  
 Our trials and weakness, our pleasures and woes.

For forces of Spirit around and within us,  
 For aid in temptation, and strength in our need,  
 For comfort in grief, for the mercies that win us  
 To love, when from sorrow and pain we are freed ;

For the volume Divine and the truths that it teaches,  
 For faith and the pardon vouchsafed to misdeeds,  
 For hope that to heavenly blessedness reaches,  
 For intellect, mystic religion, and creeds.

For the struggles of life, lending character force,  
 For the grief of bereavement, its loneliness and loss,  
 For failure and sadness, to humble our course,  
 And the pain which is marked by the sign of the cross.

For these and the favours of every hour  
 Thy love and Thine infinite wisdom we bless  
 O, wonderful Trinity, perfect in Power,  
 The essence of beauty and true loveliness.

So Thee we praise through changeful earthly days  
 For Thee we hope as in the gloom we grope.

Thy glorious Being, Lord, Thy sons adore,  
 Mysterious, wonderful, enthroned in space,  
 The fount of wisdom, and the source of power,  
 Love in Thine essence, Love revealed in grace,

And in creation, where Thy Spirit dwells,  
 Abiding as the source of all things fair,  
 For every lovely form Thy glory tells,  
 And each minute perfection shows Thy care.

The wisest fail to comprehend Thy ways ;  
 Even the nature is as yet unknown  
 Of matter, though it dominates our days,  
 And mystery deep still lingers in a stone :

Solid seems matter, motionless and dead,  
 Yet science points to movements swift within  
 Each tiny unseen atom, where, 'tis said,  
 Unnumbered corpuscles for ever spin.

Strange mystery of the infinitely small,  
 More awful still the infinitely great,  
 The Light-year spaces 'twixt the stars appal  
 The minds which Thy creation contemplate.

The veiled effulgence of the Milky Way,—  
 Faint spangles on the azure of the sky,—  
 To aided sight reveals the dread array  
 Of countless stars lost in immensity.

Yet chaos rules not there ; Thy Spirit moves  
 E'en in the vast realms of the starry deep  
 As surely as amid the budding groves  
 In Springtime when the earth awakes from sleep.

And nothing less than Thy unfailing might,  
 High Will and perfect Wisdom could avail  
 To form that wondrous galaxy of light,  
 And rule the stars as through the abyss they sail.

#### VIII.

Thou movest in all creation, in insect and blossom and  
 star,  
 In beautiful earth as in desolate space, for naught is  
 near or far ;  
 The indwelling source of all natural force, Thou givest  
 us light and heat,  
 The heat that warms in the winter storms, and the light  
 that makes life sweet.  
 Thou rulest the motions of planet and moon, for gravity's  
 force is Thine,  
 And Thou art nigh in the stormy sky when the lightning  
 blasts the pine.  
 Thou governest with a regular law all natural motion  
 and force,  
 But if Thou willest to show Thy Power, Thy Will can  
 change its course ;  
 For Thou art not only within Thy works : all things  
 Thou dost transcend,

Thou rulest above the water-floods, and Thy reign can  
 have no end.  
 And Thou art Love and Beauty and Joy, and glorious  
 is Thy throne ;  
 But though One only in essence and Will, Thou art not,  
 Lord, alone.  
 Yet the whole creation would not suffice to satisfy Thy  
 Heart,  
 And before the universe 'gan to be, from eternity Thou  
 art.  
 What was there in the ages past Thy Being with joy to  
 fill,  
 When nothing had sprung into life as yet in obedience  
 to Thy Will ?  
 Within the essence Divine there meet the Persons of  
 Father and Son,  
 And in union with both the Paraclete, and they are  
 Three in One.  
 Herein is the fountain of peace and joy,—the Love of  
 the Holy Three,  
 In Person distinct, yet united in Will, in Essence and  
 Deity.  
 O wonderful light on the Being of God ! O mystery  
 sublime !  
 Which draws the things of Eternity into touch with  
 those of time,  
 And shows that God in His works may dwell as the  
 moving Spirit-force,  
 And yet transcend them all as King, their origin and  
 source :  
 And gives us men the blessed gift of a mystic Union  
 true  
 With Him Who dwelt on Earth as man, man's nature  
 to renew.

## IX.

And so for Thy creation, Lord, Thy glorious Name we  
 praise,  
 For all the mighty universe which Thy decree obeys,  
 For countless stars in spaces vast unfathomed e'en by  
 thought,  
 As through the boundless deep they take the path Thy  
 wisdom taught,  
 For the golden sun and the silver moon, to gladden day  
 and night,  
 The loveliness of summer days, and winter garments  
 white.  
 We praise Thee for creation vast, but more for what  
 Thou art,  
 Thy Being all-pervading, yet from all Thy works apart.  
 For the splendour of Thine earthly robe is but a mystic sign  
 To show how beautiful Thou art in radiant light Divine,  
 Lovely to eye if eye could see, to heart if it were pure,  
 To mind if man's imperfect powers were strengthened  
 to endure.  
 But as the eye of mortal man Thy perfect work can see,  
 His heart made glad by the loveliness of all that comes  
 from Thee,  
 So when its spiritual state his body shall attain,  
 Oh ! may his sight be purified and such perfection gain  
 That the vision of Thee in Glory may ravish the heart  
 at last ;  
 Not only the outer garment fair, now o'er Thy splendour  
 cast,  
 But the inner shrine of beauty, where Thine awful  
 Presence is,  
 Shining from all eternity in perfect blessedness.  
 And in that vision wonderful, delights will surely blend,



Which mortal, unillumined man can not yet comprehend :—

The joy of all the loveliest things that on this earth have been,

Not the view alone which pleases sight, but that which the soul has seen ;

The underlying sweetness consoling the heart forlorn,  
When the sunlight touches the snow-white peaks with fire at the early dawn ;

The awful sense of mystery which bringeth infinity nigh,  
When alone in the night we watch the stars shine clear in a tropic sky ;

The thought of Divine Omnipotence, which makes the heart adore,

When tossed on the mighty ocean where the winds and waters roar ;

The blessed sense of an infinite Love which fills the heart with praise,

On seeing a valley rich with corn, and meads where the cattle graze,

Or at the sight of a gentle wife, with her little child at play,

The type of the Holy Mother dear, whose Son is our hope and stay.

The rapture of images sweet as these, we hope may be attained

In the Beatific Vision seen when the perfect life is gained.

For God is the source of all things fair that heaven and earth can show,

And the souls that perceive His beauty veiled by His garment here below,

May hope to behold the Robe again when His glorious Form they see

In the vision of Light which will gladden sight through all eternity.

## S. SIMEON STYLITES.

“ I never found any so religious and devout, that he had not sometimes a withdrawing of grace, or felt not some decrease of zeal.

“ There never was saint so rapt and illuminated, who first or last was not tempted.”—*Imitation of Christ.*

O God, the morning star shines cold and bright,  
 And golden dawn begins to touch the East,  
 Yet Thou hast heard not ; since the setting sun,  
 Bowing in prayer upon the western hills,  
 Sank down to slumber, I have lifted up  
 My hands to Thee in sorrow, whilst the dew  
 Fell coldly on me. All the night I prayed  
 In desolation, but the dew of grace  
 Celestial came not, and no ray of hope  
 Passed from the stars, and still my heart is dark,  
 All dark and loveless ; and the vision clear  
 Of heavenly beauty that, to comfort me,  
 Thou sendedst once, is gone and in its place  
 Dark sights of hell torment me, and the fear  
 Comes horribly upon me that perchance  
 My life of awful torment has been spent  
 In vain,—and at the end I may be lost  
 A wreck, through self-deception and self-will,  
 Cast on the rock of pride ; was it a sin  
 For which Thou leav’st me that I wandered far  
 From Sacrament and holy brotherhood  
 Into the desert ; that I well-nigh died

By mine own act in fasting ? Oh, I thought  
 Of Jesus in His sorrow till the pain  
 Was vanquished by His sweetness. But I fear :  
 For Thou art angry : is it sin to live  
 High on my pillar, separate from men  
 As though I tried to come too near to Thee  
 In mine unworthiness ? O God, I see  
 In every act a dreadful taint of sin  
 That makes my life a wasted agony.

All round my tower the sleeping multitudes  
 Lie waiting for the morning,—men untaught  
 And savage as their desert come to hear  
 Of Christ the gentle : how can I discourse  
 To these of His great sweetness when He leaves  
 Me desolate ? How can the desert land  
 Bear fruit unwatered ? Many days have passed  
 Since Thou went from me, and with daily grief  
 I taught Thy people truths which seemed to me  
 Decaying visions of departed peace,—  
 Realities no more.

I had no joy  
 All through my life but in the love of Thee,  
 And Thou hast left me ;—whither shall I turn ?  
 The world and friendship and the joys of earth  
 I quit in childhood, Thou alone wert mine ;  
 And when, a boy, I followed in Thy path  
 Of sorrow, heaven seemed to be so near  
 That I could almost see it, and at night  
 Could hear the angels singing : All was then  
 So real in the brilliancy of faith.  
 Now art Thou absent, yet to Thee I cling  
 In fiery desolation, though a voice,—  
 Without the deeper spiritual will,—

Denying Thy existence and Thy love,  
Torments me with the agonies of doubt.  
Yet in my inmost soul I hold to Thee,  
And will not leave Thee ; do Thy Holy Will  
On me in all things, only grant me this,  
My God, to persevere unto the end.

## THE ANCHORITE.

THE fiery sun is rising o'er the dunes,  
 Gilding the scanty herbage of the waste,  
 And in the hollows underneath the rocks  
 Casting blue shadows : thus the day begins ;  
 And you who come but rarely find the scene  
 Fair to the sight, but I who see no change  
 From day to day through all the weary years,  
 Find little beauty in the dawn. So come  
 Into the ancient tomb wherein I dwell,  
 For converse on the text of sacred writ,  
 Which to discuss, my brother, you have come  
 From yonder city to this desert wild.

You ask about those words of holy John,  
 Which some have given a sense heretical,—  
 “ The whole world lieth in the evil one ” :  
 So all last night I watched, and pondered them,  
 Bathed in the soft light of the paschal moon,  
 Striving to bring once more to memory  
 The stings that drove me first into the wild  
 Far from the city's pleasure and its sin.  
 But now I find the thoughts which moved my will,  
 Far off across the sands of twenty years  
 Return no more, for I am greatly changed,  
 And all the world, methinks, is changed with me,  
 And you, my brother, you whom I recall

A bright and happy boy are altered most,—  
Your face all lined and furrowed with sad thoughts.

See on the south horizon, like a star,  
That golden turret glitter in the rays  
Shot by the morning sun.—Naught else we see  
Of all the glorious city far away :  
So is it with my memory of past thoughts ;  
And only this shines clear,—that evil lay  
All round me in the city, and sin strove  
So fiercely to engulf my soul in vice  
That in my terror to the desert lone  
I fled for peace and safety. But wherein  
The evil lay my memory fails to tell,—  
Whether in self alone, or in the friends  
Who moulded thought, or in material things  
Which ministered to pleasure I know not.  
For memory weakens 'neath the sun's fierce glare,  
'Mid thirst and hunger and the desert sands.

Sometimes I think all evil lay in self,  
For little respite found I in the wild,  
The old temptations coming in new guise :  
So memory helps not and experience fails.

Why said the aged saint before his death  
“ The whole world lieth in the evil one ” ?—  
You ask,—does this refer alone to men,  
Or doth the ordered cosmos share the curse ;  
And is it truth or heresy to say  
That matter is all evil ?

God, we know,  
Made all things perfect ; He could not create  
Aught evil, being Good ; yet evil is.  
Whence comes it then ? Say first,—what is it now ?  
Rebellion against God ; all human sin

Is this in essence : so the origin  
 Of evil is rebellion in the past ;  
 Not man's, he was too feeble to invent  
 So vast a thing as evil.

Spirit powers,  
 Created for some glorious destiny,  
 Alone could plan and dare so great a crime  
 As was the first rebellion against God.

And though created things are beautiful,  
 And bear the impress of God's thought ; yet all  
 Seem not to savour equally of love.—  
 The fierce simoom, the earthquake and the storm,  
 The dread volcano and the pestilence,  
 Whene'er they vanquish man, appear to him  
 Forces of hate not love. They show God's might  
 And justice more than mercy, and maybe  
 Their use is by permission to fell Powers  
 Rather than His own act. Remember Job,  
 And who tormented him.

Methinks God gave  
 Vast powers on earth to Satan—ages past  
 When as a glorious angel he performed  
 God's bidding in creation. Then he fell,  
 And through rebellion broke the harmony  
 Of earth's mysterious forces. But God's gifts  
 Being without repentance, He endures  
 The evil, till the hour of victory  
 Comes in the far-off ages. And meanwhile  
 Earth is the battlefield of good and ill,  
 And where the evil conquers, Satan rules,  
 In part within the souls of wicked men,  
 And in the world around them. Then his hate  
 Unchecked by good men living in the world,  
 And aiding Divine Goodness, grasps the sword,

And smiting the ungodly, carries out  
 The sentence of God's justice. Hence the flood,  
 And fires from heaven upon the cities vile.—  
 God's work, you say. Aye, naught can Satan do  
 Without Divine permission. God alone  
 Is of all power the source, and He employs  
 Satan to execute His judgments dread.

Consider prayer :—Why need men pray, since God  
 Knows all we want, and loves us? Is not this  
 Enough without importunating Him  
 To give us what we crave? Nay, for our sins  
 Aiding Satanic influences, may close  
 The door to heavenly mercies. Thus it was  
 That when God visited this evil world,  
 And dwelt a Man with men, His mighty works  
 He could not show where faith was choked by sin.—

I see it there, that war in Palestine  
 'Twixt good and evil wills. On one side gloom,  
 Where Satan dwelt, and with him human pride,  
 Foul lusts, base avarice, and envious greed  
 Stiffing the frail aspirings of weak souls ;  
 And on the other,—light and Love Divine  
 Striving to pierce the darkness with the rays  
 Of perfect beauty, and yet leaving free  
 The darkened will to accept it or refuse.  
 Imagine in the gloom one sunlit spot—  
 A saint at prayer, imploring Light Divine  
 To shine upon the murky land around,  
 And bring forgiveness for the people's sins ;  
 Would not God's light at last find entrance there,  
 And spread beyond the halo of the saint  
 Into the darker coasts of Galilee,  
 Or wheresoever Satan had his realm ?



What said the holy Paul? "We wrestle not  
 'Gainst flesh and blood, but principalities,  
 Rulers of this world's darkness, and its powers."  
 These caused the Jews to crucify the Lord,  
 They tempted Rome to persecute the Church,  
 They tempt each Christian to deny the faith,  
 Instilling doubts and vain, unholy thoughts,—  
 We feel their onslaughts, brother, you and I.—  
 The Church itself they tempt to loose the reins  
 Of discipline, subservient to the State.  
 Is it not true, my brother, of the world,  
 Outside the hidden saintship of the Church,  
 That all is lying in the evil one?

Here in the desert dwell in holes and caves  
 Hundreds of hermits who have left for aye  
 The joys of home and all the sweets of life,—  
 Or social or domestic,—and await  
 In solitude, privation, heat and cold,  
 Hunger and thirst, the kindly hand of death.  
 Why live we thus apart from haunts of men?  
 Is it delightful unto flesh and blood?—  
 O brother, sometimes it is horrible,—  
 The solitude, the sense of wasted life,  
 The desolation and the weariness,  
 The longing for sweet human fellowship,  
 And friendly faces. In such gloomy hours  
 What thought sustains us? 'Tis the joy of prayer,  
 And that God-nearness which we find in prayer.

And think not, brother, when I speak of joy,  
 That selfishly we seek through tortured flesh  
 For spiritual joys in earth or heaven  
 Not caring for the troubles that beset  
 The fighting Church around us. Nay, one cause  
 That drives us to the wilderness for prayer

Is the great danger that besets the Church  
 Now freed from persecution : everywhere  
 Is licence coming in the wake of peace ;  
 And love is waxing cold. The words of Christ  
 No longer rule the Church : The marriage law,  
 Which by its purity once raised her high  
 Above the heathen cults, and made her fair,  
 E'en in the eyes of pagans, by the State  
 Has been degraded. Heathen rites and feasts  
 Receive a Christian setting and are brought  
 Under the Church's order to entice  
 The unconverted heathen to her ranks,  
 Who thus become a danger to her life.

And everywhere is self-indulgent ease,  
 And love of pleasure. Once self-sacrifice,  
 Learnt 'neath the Cross, ruled every Christian life ;  
 Now though the Church seems to have won the world,  
 I fear it is the world that wins the Church.  
 These are the things which call for ceaseless prayer  
 From those whom God keeps faithful. So we pray  
 To add the spiritual force of man  
 To that of God against the spirit force  
 Of evil men and fallen angels. Thus  
 We strive to work for God.

But there are times  
 'Twixt sleep and waking when dread visions come,  
 Apocalyptic, of a far-off day  
 When faith is cold, and then I see the Church  
 Throughout the East, and on the southern shore  
 Of that vast sea which swallows the Nile flood,  
 O'erthrown in dreadful ruin for her sins.  
 But when I strive to pierce the veil of dreams,  
 And learn the nature of the overthrow,  
 Naught can I see except a naked sword,

Flashing like lightning through a gloomy cloud,  
And on the sword is written " Antichrist."

O brother, is it better for men's souls  
To live in error separate from Christ,  
Than hold a false distorted Christian faith  
And live an evil life, though seeing light ?

And if the Church is evil may not God  
In mercy take her candle, and instead  
Send some false easy faith which men may hold  
With little pains, and thus avoid the pricks  
Of conscience, which unheeded kill the soul ?  
O God, I see the high ideal fade  
Which we have loved ; and all these eastern lands,  
Where once the Faith was glorious, sinking down  
To one dead level of low life and aims  
Drowned in the errors of a creed debased.

And when this vision dread disturbs my peace,  
And all seems murk, with holy John I cry  
" The whole world lieth in the evil one."

## A FANATIC ON THE "PULPIT ROCK."

*(In the Cynfael Valley, near Festiniog.)*

You ask, O grey-haired preacher of the Word,  
Whom from a distant town my fame has brought  
To this wild valley, why I stand all day  
Mid-stream upon the rock : know then, the cause  
Is this,—the doom of sinners and the wrath  
Divine on wicked men constraineth me  
To give God's message to the sinful folk,  
Who to the warning voice will pay no heed  
Unless the preacher startles their dull sense,  
Rousing dead consciences with actions strange.

The torrent roars between the blackened rocks,  
Descending swiftly like men's souls to death :  
But louder is my voice when fervent zeal  
For Heaven fills my spirit, as the flood  
From off the mountain when the clouds are black  
Fills the rock-channel of the boisterous stream.  
For when I see the sins of wicked men  
Swift to perdition leading, all my soul  
Is filled with dreadful horror, and perforce  
I fain must cry aloud and warn the world  
Of sinners' coming doom, so here I stand  
Daily upon this rock, and preach the Word  
That all who will may hear ; for if I fail

To warn the sinful people, their misdeeds  
On my lost soul will lie.

Not always seemed

The earth so evil : once 'twas very sweet  
To my hard heart, before the shadow came  
And made all joyless : then I loved the flowers  
That blossom in the meadow by the stream,  
And those bright ferns which deck the blackened rocks,  
Bringing sweet sunshine to the gloomy rifts  
Down which the angry waters grind their way.

And in that far-off day when I was young,  
A maiden used to sit beside the burn  
With me and gather flowers ; and many a rhyme  
I made to her sweet face and gentle heart.  
For then it seemed not sin to love a maid ;  
But now my thoughts of God and earth are changed ;  
Then earth seemed God's, the sunshine and the flowers,  
His also was the beauty of the maid,—  
The rushing water and the emerald ferns,  
Not then was I converted. Now I know  
That these things are but snares, deceitful wiles  
To draw dead souls away from living truth.  
I fondly fancied that the godly life  
Lay just in duty done and thankful joy  
In all earth gives of loveliness and bliss ;—  
That man can serve his God and this world take  
With all its sinless pleasures, having earth  
Now in its sweetness, and hereafter heaven.  
'Twas false, a black delusion of self-love,  
Whose untruth Heaven shrivelled up in wrath  
When, long years gone, I wandered by the lake  
At Capel Curig. Bathed was all the scene  
In sunlight, and the pale blue mere was still,  
Without a ripple on its gentle face.

On one side Moel Siabod massive stood,  
 And far away before me Snowdon's peaks  
 Rose grey with distance into the grey sky  
 From out the soft grey vale beyond the lake.  
 And round the dented margin of the pool  
 Bright flowers and emerald grass shone in the light  
 Of summer rays soft-tempered by thin mist :  
 And all the place seemed blest with God's great love.

False was the seeming : suddenly the vale  
 Was shadowed by a black cloud threatening woe ;  
 The thunder crashed and echoed through the hills,  
 Rain fell in cataracts like Rhaider Dhu,  
 The lightnings blazed upon the mountain-side,  
 Destroying trees and shattering solid rocks ;  
 And lo ! my friend, the treasure of my soul,  
 Who stood beside me at the water's marge,  
 In one great horror of terrific light  
 Fell at my feet a corpse,—not burnt or charred,  
 But fair in death as living. Then a cry,—  
 " One shall be taken and the other left,"—  
 Shrilled through the tempest, and I knew that God  
 Dwelleth in cloud and thunder, storm and fire,  
 Not in the peaceful beauty of the earth.  
 For He is angry at the sins of men,  
 And armed with lightning, sword and pestilence,  
 Will punish sinners and self-pleasing folk.  
 And I am set to warn the evil world  
 Henceforth, of death and judgment and dread doom.  
 And so I climb my pulpit, and the folk  
 From far and near come, drawn by itching ears,  
 And listen to my voice pronouncing woe,  
 As o'er the flood of waters it prevails,  
 And o'er the crash of thunder, but is weak  
 To reach the hearts of men in which the world

Singeth of pleasure with the Syren's voice.  
 So many scoff, and others hear and gape,  
 But few escape the slavery of sin.

So ceased the zealot whom the Lord had bruised ;  
 And he, the grey-haired preacher of the Word,  
 Who heard his story, shocked that zeal so keen  
 Was tainted with unworthy thoughts of God,  
 Took the fanatic home, and bathed his wounds  
 Of heart and mind, showing that love Divine  
 Resteth on all things, and that pain and joy  
 Both come from God to further His designs  
 Inscrutable ; so grief implies not wrath,  
 But may be sent in love since on it rests  
 The shadow of the Cross. Perhaps in ruth  
 The maid was taken suddenly from life,  
 To save her from some bitter cup of woe,  
 Unseen by any save the One Who knows.

With such blest thoughts the man was comforted,  
 And saw God's love again in earth and sky,  
 And in the sinless joys of gentle lives.

[This poem is entirely imaginary, and has no reference to any individual who may be associated by legend with the "Pulpit Rock."]

## HOLY COMMUNION.

“Beware of much talk; remain in some secret place and enjoy thy God; for thou hast Him Whom all the world cannot take from thee.”

THE echo of the angels' song  
 Has ceased ; God's people kneeling still  
 In meek submission to His Will  
 Around His altar linger long.

What find they in the silence deep  
 To still their souls, as on the walls  
 The morning sunlight painted falls  
 And wreaths of incense upward creep ?

Their souls have met the Lord of Love,  
 Unseen, they feel that He is there,  
 And kneeling still in earnest prayer  
 Are carried to the land above.

A wave of holy longing rolls  
 Like strains of music over all,  
 A strong desire,—an upward call ;  
 For God has come within their souls.

And infinite desires He brings  
 Of holiness and gifts of grace,  
 And patience in the heavenward race,  
 And aspiration's holy wings.



For God is near, He is within ;  
 How can His favoured people bear  
 To breathe again the outer air,  
 Polluted by the world of sin ?

So kneel they still and realise  
 A foretaste of the heavenly rest,  
 And join the concourse of the blest  
 In the bright fields of Paradise.

How can they linger yet below ?  
 Their souls have met the Lord of life ;  
 Can they dwell in the world of strife  
 Whose hearts the peace of heaven know ?

A little while their bodies here  
 Remain, and though their spirits stand  
 A moment in the Holy Land,  
 And see its beauty bright and clear,

They must to earth return again  
 And toil with patience, humbly bear  
 Their cross of keenest grief or care  
 From God, and learn to bless the pain.

But soon, the time of trial o'er,  
 The need of Sacraments shall cease,  
 And they shall see the Prince of Peace  
 In perfect beauty evermore.

## HYMN FOR THOSE AT SEA.

THEE we praise, Almighty Father,  
Who hast made the glorious sea,  
With its changeful, joyous utterance  
Evermore to worship Thee.

When the winds uplift the billows,  
And the tempests rage and swell,  
Voices loud of many waters  
To the earth Thy praises tell.

When a calm is on the ocean,  
And the waves are hushed to sleep,  
Still a whispered song of glory  
Moves upon the glassy deep.

So Thy people sing thanksgivings  
With a voice that shall not fail,  
Though an anxious prayer may often  
Mingle with their praises frail.

When the mighty ocean rages,  
Father, in Thy mercy save  
All Thy children who are tossing  
Helplessly upon the wave.

Let Thy strength support their weakness  
In the hour of need and fear :  
In the extremity of peril  
May they feel that Thou art near.

To the haven safely bring them,  
Where they long to be at rest,  
And hereafter gently lead them  
To the country of the blest.

There the praises of Thy people  
Shall a holier music be,—  
Grander, louder, more unceasing  
Than the voices of the sea.

## ALONE ON THE MOUNTAIN.

“And when He had sent the multitude away, He went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the even was come He was there alone.”

THE toilsome day had passed, and now had come  
 The hour of rest ; for all the crowd had gone  
 At His command, back to their distant home,  
 And in the desert He remained alone.

And He was weary, for throughout the day  
 He'd wandered 'mid the throng upon the plain,  
 Teaching the poor, and where the sick folk lay  
 By words of love and power had cured their pain.

Now they had gone to rest, but in the waste  
 Alone He rested not, for on the height  
 Above the sea, bathed in the moonlight chaste,  
 He fain would pass in solitude the night.

For oft His patient heart had grieved that men  
 Whom He had gently guided to aspire  
 To heavenly sweetness, swift to earth again  
 'Cast down their eyes, allured by vain desire.

Unlike these fickle wanderers from true light,  
 The quiet mountain pointed to the sky  
 In ceaseless adoration of the might  
 Of Him Who dwells for evermore on high ;

And Jesus loved it : from its meadows still  
 He watched the moon, through Him created, shine,  
 And saw in perfect harmony the will  
 Of silent Nature with the Will Divine.

And seeking in the higher, purer air  
 Above the world that slept in sin and crime,  
 A quiet haven for His midnight prayer  
 He would, though weary, the steep pathway climb.

No sleep for Him. The eagle gained his nest  
 Among the crags upon the mountain-side,  
 And in their holes the foxes found their rest,  
 But He 'neath Heaven's canopy would bide.

At length the summit reached, in prayer He knelt,  
 And faith can fancy how in that blest hour,  
 When with His Father His pure spirit dwelt,  
 His words were winged with charity and power.

For He could see with clear prophetic eye  
 The sorrows that His people would oppress  
 Through all the future ; He could hear their cry  
 In that still night, and pity their distress.

And who can tell, how o'er our sorrows now  
 The peace of that most holy prayer may fall,  
 Till comfort soothes the mourner's aching brow,  
 And joy revives the heart that had lost all ?

## HOW FARES IT WITH THE HAPPY DEAD ?

SHE is gone to her rest. Oh, the mystery deep  
 Of the life of departed souls !  
 Around her the mourners uncomforted weep  
 And the bell in the steeple tolls.

Yet the bright sun shines on the beautiful earth  
 As it did when our hearts were gay,  
 And from far comes the sound of the children's mirth  
 On the old village green at play.

But where is the soul that has gone from us now ?  
 Does she talk with the dead who were dear ?  
 Ethereal, intangible, bodiless,—how  
 Can she see and remember and hear ?

And is the fair home of departed souls far ?—  
 The beautiful Paradise glad ?  
 Do they rest on the face of some radiant star  
 In garments of blessedness clad ?

And without sight or sound, by the potence of thought,  
 And the force of their love deep and strong,  
 Do they commune with Christ Whom on earth they have  
 sought,  
 And the friends loved and lost for so long ?

Or else do the souls who have gone from us rest  
    In the bliss of a joyous sleep,  
Made glad by a vision unspeakably blest  
    In the land where they no more weep ?

It all is as dim as a dream in the night,  
    But in this we may rest secure,—  
Through the Father's love and His infinite might  
    There is joy for the souls washed pure.

And if at the Vision of God there is pain  
    Through the memory of bygone sins,  
There is joy in the suffering that cleanses the stain,  
    And the bliss of eternity wins.

For the pain of the living, and grief of the dead  
    Were sanctified once by the Cross,  
And since the God-Man for His sinful folk bled,  
    To suffer is gain and not loss.

## THE OPEN GRAVE.

MOURNFULLY drops the falling rain,  
 The leaves are shrunk and die,  
 " Earth's labour pangs are all in vain "  
 The breezes sadly sigh.

The world is full of toil and fear  
 As men pass to and fro ;  
 The leaves say,—" Death is ever near,  
 The end of joy and woe."

We worked and toiled with anxious hearts,  
 Success seemed far away ;  
 We hurried on to bear our parts  
 In the burden of the day.

We hurried on,—beside the road  
 There lay an open tomb :  
 For whom is built that strait abode  
 That warns of coming doom ?

Beside the narrow home of death  
 Upon our way we stayed,  
 And softly spoke with bated breath  
 Of him whom there they laid.

How little seemed the things of earth  
 For which we strive and toil ;  
 A sudden glimpse of their true worth  
 Came from the clammy soil.



## REQUIESCANT IN PACE.

WE kneel to Thee, O Lord, in prayer  
 For faithful warriors slain in fight,  
 Beseeching Thee their souls to spare,  
 And bring them into Thy full light.

In battle far from home they fell,  
 And where they bravely died they lie ;  
 On arid hill and grassy dell  
 They rest beneath the southern sky.

The lives of some in Thee were hid,  
 But some were ignorant and wild ;  
 Alas ! they knew not what they did,  
 When sin their precious souls defiled.

Pardon, O Lord, in each poor life  
 The evil, look not on the sin,  
 But on their faithfulness in strife,  
 The little germ of good within,

The courage and self-sacrifice,  
 The willingness to suffer pain,  
 At duty's summons to arise,  
 And death to dare for others' gain.

The winter frost the bud has killed  
 That might have blossomed fair for Thee,  
 If loving care and culture skilled  
 Had been expended on the tree.

Transplant it to a better land,  
 Where all the germs of good will grow  
 Beneath Thy ever fostering Hand,  
 To fairer bloom than earth can show.

With fearful suddenness death came  
 In all the rush of eager fight,  
 As with stern front and eyes aflame,  
 They struggled up the deadly height.

No space had they for penitence,  
 No time in prayer to bend the knee :  
 A shell or bullet sent them hence,  
 Unhouseled, unassoiled to Thee.

Forgive their evil, and their good  
 Accept for His dear sake Who died,  
 A sacrifice upon the Rood,  
 That sinners might be sanctified.

Grant them, O Lord, eternal rest,  
 Upon them let Thy Glory shine ;  
 Give them a place among the blest ;  
 Take them to Thee, and make them Thine.

## HEAVEN.

THINK not of Heaven as a far-off place  
 Fixed on a wandering comet or a star,  
 For heaven is round us, God is near not far,  
 Though flesh obscures the glory of His Face,  
 And cloaks the sweet song of the angel race.  
 But He Who rose without Elijah's car  
 Broke, as He passed to heaven, the earthly bar  
 That hid the glory of the abode of grace.

Since then the saints have seen it, Paul and John,  
 And many a martyr dying in his pain,—  
 And we in the fair places of God's earth  
 Have caught a glimpse of heaven in the birth  
 Of some pure joy that on the soul has shone,  
 As for a moment she has burst her chain.



POEMS ON INDIAN SUBJECTS.



## CAWNPORE.

(*The Mutiny*, 1857. *Consecration of All Saints' Memorial Church*, 1875.)

DYING is sharp, but the fame of a glorious death lives for  
 aye,  
 And heroes in battle for women and babies will joyfully  
 die.  
 And even if death is delayed and they see it slowly  
 appear,  
 Clad in the horrible robes of violence, hatred, and fear,  
 Fell, with the terrible dread of the murder of those who  
 are dear,  
 It is swift as the flash of a star in the infinite sky,  
 Compared with the limitless age of a happy eternity.

Then let the cannon roar, and the cruel fanatics yell,  
 And the multitude shout for rage like demons let loose  
 from hell,  
 For calm are the hearts of the heroes intent on duty and  
 right,  
 And clear is each steadfast eye, lit up with a holy light,  
 For naught in the malice of man or of devils can them  
 affright.

There was but a handful of heroes whom hatred did  
 unfold,  
 And some looked on to the peace beyond while the  
 thunder rolled,  
 Seeing their comrades fall down at their guns and grow  
 stiff and cold  
 And not even time to bury them solemnly in the mould ;  
 And some in their agony thought of their happy native  
 land,  
 Glad that the noble acts of her sons in the memory stand  
 Of England, for ever, and glad that each brave deed of  
 renown  
 Is an additional jewel of light in the national crown.  
 And so they willingly died in the fight, or when it was  
 done  
 Were cruelly butchered by light of the blood-red setting  
 sun.

A flash in the sky and a tempest, a line of lurid light  
 In the East, with shadows below and black clouds up in  
 the height.  
 The victims' shriek is rending the sky and the chasms of  
 earth,  
 And as it travels, it changes to mourning the voices of  
 mirth,  
 And birds and animals weep as it reaches the land of  
 their birth.

A shriek from the shambles accurst at the slaughter of  
 mother and child !—  
 The cry of women and babes, as they see the flashing wild  
 Of the butchers' crimson knives in the pitiless hands,  
 defiled



With rivers of innocent blood flowing down to the ocean  
of death—

A shriek and a stifled prayer,—the meeting of terror and  
faith,—

For they, like the King on the Cross, for their murderers  
prayed—

Rose up from the graves of the living where dying and  
dead were laid,

Rose up with a cry to the mercy of God and the justice  
of man,

Till the listening heaven and earth at the cry grew pale  
and wan.

Toll a bell for the dead, it tolled not before at their  
dying,

Sing a requiem soft in the place where their bodies are  
lying :

Let the religious tones of the organ resound in the nave  
Of a noble shrine dedicate to the souls of those in the  
grave ;—

To the souls that are blest in the keeping of Him Who  
was able to save.

Pray for the glorious dead, who in bitterest agony died,  
Pray for the murdered hero and murdered wife at his side,  
For the bliss of the dead may grow, and love must be  
purified.

To memory much may be lost as the changeful years  
roll by,

And thoughts that are new are born, and old generations  
die,

But it never shall be forgotten till time shall be no more  
How nobly Britain's sons and daughters suffered at  
Cawnpore.

## A SOLDIERS' GRAVEYARD.

(On a lonely disused graveyard in the Himalayas; marked by a stone cross.)

FAR from their homes, far from their native land,  
 Brave soldiers rest upon the mountain-side;  
 Nor mother's voice, nor sister's gentle hand  
 Was near to soothe their sufferings when they died

But far away from all they cherished most,  
 By duty exiled to a foreign clime,  
 They bore their pain, and perished at their post,  
 Struck down by deadly sickness in their prime.

Hot tears fell for them in their island home,  
 Lone wept a mother by the murmuring sea,  
 And in the coppice where they used to roam,  
 The maiden mourned her lover secretly.

In the trim cottage by the riverside  
 The old man's eye watched vacantly the wave,  
 His heart was broken, for his son, his pride,  
 Was buried far off in a foreign grave.

But there were none beside their tombs to mourn  
 Save comrades of the camp and battle dread,  
 Who soon across the ocean wide were borne,  
 Leaving to solitude the exiled dead.

Only the pure white mountains from afar  
For ever watch the soldiers' lonely rest ;  
And through the night looks down the warrior star  
Upon his sons asleep on Nature's breast.

The ferns wave o'er them and the bright flowers bloom,  
The grasses glisten in the morning dew,  
The little gentian nestles on the tomb,  
And looks to heaven with its eye of blue.

And high above them stands the sign of faith,  
To speak of hope, and show that soldiers brave,  
Who in the path of duty meet their death,  
Shall never be forgotten in the grave.

Find peace, brave men, your countrymen revere  
The steadfastness of those who give their lives  
In fight or sickness for their country dear,  
So in true hearts your memory survives.

And when the traveller nears your place of rest,  
And sees the sacred symbol on the height,  
He fain will pray your spirits may be blest  
In God's glad garden, waiting perfect light.

## SUNDAY EVENING IN AN INDIAN FOREST.

THE sun is setting redly beyond the western hills,  
 But at home the golden glory still the summer noonday  
 fills.

The forest trees are gilded by the last touch of light ;  
 And, beneath, the darkening shadows tell of the approach  
 of night.

The sun is sinking slowly,—it is the hour of prayer ;  
 When at home the bells are ringing sweetly in the balmy  
 air.

And I almost think I hear them chiming far away,  
 For I know that they are sounding, and are bidding me  
 to pray.

The church door wide is open, the people gather round ;  
 From afar they come to worship, summoned by the  
 bells' glad sound.

We have no shrine to pray in, here in the forest still,  
 No roll of the organ's music the resounding spaces fill.

But painted lights of sunset through arching branches  
 shine,

Like a floriated window high above the eastern shrine :  
 And the ensculptured canopy of foliage dark and grave,  
 Throws a soft religious shadow o'er the lonely vaulted  
 nave.

The church is very lovely that God Himself has made ;  
Veiled image of the mansions where His light shall never  
fade,

And in the quiet stillness of Nature's temple high,  
The great Creative Spirit cometh ever very nigh.

So may the lonely exile rejoice in grassy glade,  
Bedight with flowers and lichens, and cool with leafy  
shade.

And yet I fain would travel beyond the forest grand,  
Would leave the eastern splendour gladly for my native  
land ;

Would give up gleams of sunset in Oriental skies,  
And tropical magnificence to refresh my weary eyes  
By seeing in the homeland one dear old church I love,  
Where friends this night are praying unto God Who  
reigns above.

## THE BROWN MAN.

THE brown man lives in his tiny mud hut  
 Beneath the o'ershadowing palm,  
 With his patient wife and his little brown brats,  
 And he labours all day on the farm.

His back he bares to the pitiless sun,  
 As he follows the oxen slow,  
 But he is not vexed by his toilsome life,  
 For he works that his babes may grow.

They are playing beneath a mimosa bush,—  
 Their brown little bodies all bare,—  
 With a milk-white goat and a coal-black kid,  
 Untroubled by sorrow or care.

Their mother is washing a few ragged clothes  
 In the runnel beneath the trees ;  
 Of what does she think as she stoops at her task  
 With the water around her knees ?

And what are the thoughts of her lord as he guides  
 Through the furrows his obsolete plough ?  
 They are thinking of pice and the cost of food,  
 And their only remaining cow :

They are wondering when the monsoon will begin,  
They are hoping for suitable rain.  
And then comes the thought of their merry brown babes  
With a joy that is almost pain.

For potent is love in the brown man's heart,  
And he fears neither heat nor cold,  
As he dreams how the sons he has nourished and fed  
Will support him when weak and old.

And he looks beyond to the time of death,  
And knows that the funeral rite  
Will be duly performed for the peace of his soul  
When his pyre by the flood they light.

## THE INDIAN RYOT.

THE bullocks slowly drag the plough,  
 Unchanged in shape since Akbar's days ;  
 The ryot unchanged in his ways  
 Follows through the stumps of jau.

Thus all the day he'll slowly toil,  
 The fierce sun beating on his back,  
 As generations trod the track  
 Of labour on the self-same soil.

At midday comes his wife, the drudge,  
 With water and his simple food,  
 And with her comes a naked brood  
 Of babies laughing as they trudge.

What occupies the ryot's mind  
 As hour by hour and day by day  
 He moves along the self-same way ?  
 His thoughts are few and hard to find.

We cannot scan the bullock's thought,  
 As patiently he moves along  
 His way, uncheered by word or song ;  
 We fancy he can think of naught,



But who can tell ? Perhaps he may  
 Take comfort in the thought of rest,  
 Or deem the moment will be blest  
 When he may have his sweet new hay.

And has the man no thoughts but these ?  
 Is his the level of the beast,  
 A creature that can only feast,  
 And find its joy in thoughts of ease ?

Whence cometh thought ? From change of scene,  
 Or by the pressure of the will  
 That cannot let the mind be still  
 To vegetate in paths serene ?

What killeth thought ? A dull routine,  
 A plodding on from year to year,  
 With stifled hope and deadened fear,  
 And memory blank to what has been ?

How can the untaught ryot think ?  
 His dull life glideth as a stream  
 Through arid plains, without a gleam,  
 Without a flower upon the brink.

For him no dreams of Paradise,  
 No thoughts of heaven drawing near  
 Can come his dreary life to cheer,  
 And make him from the dust arise.

One thought he has,—domestic love,  
 His naked babies and his wife  
 Are flowers around his barren life,  
 To lead him to his home above.

Throughout the weary day he'll look  
    To see them coming through the corn,  
    His eldest and the babe new-born,  
Beside the artificial brook.

And on the feast day of his god  
    A little rice before the shrine  
    He lays and asks the thing Divine  
To bless for them the fertile sod,

To keep them from the evil eye,  
    To rob the demon of his prey,—  
    The cruel fiend that loves to slay,  
And make them slowly waste and die.

And so for generations past  
    The ryots lived and toiled and died,  
    Without a dream of aught beside  
Their children, and the grave at last.

## A STREAM BELOW CHAKRATA

(In the Himalayas).

THE sun is shining brightly,  
The insects hum their glee,  
The water trickles merrily  
Beneath the tall oak tree.

The butterflies are dancing  
Around the white dog rose,  
The moss-grown rock high overhead  
In morning sunlight glows.

The cuckoo tells of England  
Among the glistening leaves,  
The spider round the blackberry  
Her silver network weaves.

The ferns and bright green ringalls  
Are waving o'er the rill,  
Which glides between the blackened rocks,  
Then rushes down the hill.

The dove coos in the holly  
To mate in distant thorn,  
The bell-owl in the ivy sits,  
And rings his note forlorn.

The oak tree looks down kindly  
In his old age serene ;  
The ivy climbs about his trunk,  
Each leaf a jewel green.

Unceasingly the cicala  
Chirps in his mossy bed,  
And sadly cries a gentle bird  
That his dear mate is dead.

For sounds there are of sorrow  
On earth however fair ;  
And flowers must fade and woods decay,  
For death is everywhere.

Yet 'neath the beauty of the earth  
A hidden life is shining,  
And when its sweetness meets the soul  
It stills the heart's repining.

## SUNSET IN THE HIMALAYAS.

THE even falls, and all the mountain vast,  
 White clad, is brilliant with the sunset glow,  
 While from beneath, the shadows creeping fast,  
 Will soon cast ashy paleness o'er the snow.

Down in the valley underneath the trees  
 A village rests beside the murmuring stream,  
 From which, ascending on the evening breeze,  
 A sound of wailing greets the soft moonbeam

A tuneless drum with tuneless voices pour  
 Sad sounds of grief, which up the hillside roll ;  
 They tell a tale of human sorrow o'er,—  
 Of dawning light upon a darkened soul.

Deep is the sorrow,—some have lost a friend,  
 Some mourn a father or a brother dear ;  
 To them death cometh as a cheerless end :  
 Beyond it lieth neither hope nor fear.

Poor heathen spirit living in the gloom  
 And sleeping,—then awaking to the light :  
 How strangely through the silence of the tomb,  
 Celestial rays will dawn upon thy sight.

Is there for those who knew not Christ below  
 The sweetness of the beatific rest ?  
 Or do less perfect spirits only know  
 A fainter image of the vision blest ?

Dark are the mysteries of life and death ;  
 Vainly the living ponder the unknown,  
 But to the soul that now gave up its breath  
 A glimpse of the inscrutable is shown.

What sees he now ? A view of love Divine,  
 With present sorrow fitting him for bliss ?  
 Or has a look, his grossness to refine,  
 Disclosed the terrors of the deep abyss ?

If on his course, without a light to guide,  
 The parted soul has wandered from the right,  
 Show mercy, Jesus, let Thy Love abide  
 On one who sinning, sinned without the light.

## THE PUNKAH COOLIE.

PULL, pull, pull, at the punkah for my bread ;  
 Kainch, kainch, kainch, I must pull till I am dead ;  
 Pull, pull, pull, by day and perhaps by night ;  
 Kainch, kainch, kainch, I must pull with all my might.

Oh, why was I born to pull  
 At a punkah all my day,  
 When I feel I could do better things  
 If I only knew the way ?

Indoors it is shady and cool  
 But the hot air scorches here,  
 And the sun shines down through the mat,  
 Which above my head I rear.

And yet I am willing to pull,  
 For a baby sleeps within,  
 A gentle and beautiful boy,  
 Who is sickly, pale, and thin ;

And if on my going away  
 There came another than I,  
 Perhaps he would sleep at his task,  
 And the gentle boy might die.

And so I'll continue to work  
As my father did before,  
And I know that the time will come  
When I shall labour no more.

For when he was feeble with age,  
And his eyes were pale and dim,  
To the marge of the sacred river  
I wearily carried him.

At last when the sun was setting,  
And the holy river flowed  
Away to the golden beauty  
Where the evening radiance glowed,

As he watched the fading sunlight,  
On his face I saw a gleam  
Of delight pass quickly over,  
As the sweetness of a dream.

Then the darkness fell around us,  
And I knew that he had gone  
Away to the river's gladness,  
Where the royal glory shone ;

Beyond the wearisome city,  
To a land of peace and light,  
Did the mighty river bear him  
In the darkness of the night.



## THE INDIAN MISSION FIELD.

THE fields are barren on the plain :  
 All summer the hot fiery blast  
 Has scorched them, will they smile again  
 In beauty, when the heat has passed ?

And untaught hearts are barren there ;  
 For ages sin has withered love,  
 They cannot rise to heights of prayer,  
 Or visions sweet of God above.

In patient toil throughout the day  
 Men plough their land and sow their seeds,  
 Their lives are like the scorched clay,  
 They bear no fruit of noble deeds.

From cooling wells they pour a stream  
 Of water on the thirsty land,  
 But little do their dark souls dream  
 How living waters from God's Hand

Flow earthward from the wells of Life,  
 And strengthen weary souls to gain  
 The victory in the long sad strife  
 With evil in a world of pain.

The blade will spring, the fields grow green,  
 And then the corn the ear will fill ;  
 But sadness spoils the joyous scene,  
 For heathen hearts are barren still.

At harvest time the golden hue  
 Of grain will brighten all the land,  
 A picture of the harvest true,  
 When golden deeds shall clearly stand

In light of heaven. In that hour  
 How shall the heathen bear to feel  
 The awful justice and the power,  
 Which one dread moment shall reveal ?

And how shall those who had the light,  
 But let it not on darkness shine,  
 Regardless of the heathen's night,  
 Endure to hear the voice Divine ?

We hope in mercy : who can say  
 A life was barren ? All unknown  
 Except by Him to Whom we pray  
 A fruitful seedling may have grown

In rocky soil, and bravely fought  
 Against the scorching sun, and fed  
 With dew of heaven, gently brought  
 On evening breezes, may have led

A life of duty known to Him  
 Who sees our trials and our sighs,  
 And Who with joys that grow not dim  
 Rewards the smallest sacrifice.

## TO THE WIND IN AN INDIAN HOT WEATHER.

PLEASANT balmy breeze  
Floating through the trees,  
Playing with the leaves  
Where the cushat grieves,  
    Fan the fevered cheek  
    Of a maiden weak.

Gentle summer gale  
Spreading out the sail,  
Wafting seagulls white  
O'er the ocean bright,  
    Kiss her softly now,  
    Cool her aching brow.

Northern mountain air  
Born 'mid icefields bare  
And eternal snows  
Whence the cool stream flows,  
    Leave your mountains grand  
    For a tropic land.

Zephyrs kind and good  
Sighing through the wood  
And the leafy bowers  
Scented with sweet flowers,  
    O'er her gently sigh  
    Till her fever die.

Stormy wind and bleak  
Rushing o'er the peak  
Into valleys deep  
With a roaring sweep,  
    Waft a healthful breath,  
    Save my love from death.

## FAREWELL TO KASHMIR.

## I.

O LOVELY valley, bright with fruits and flowers,  
 Blue waters and green meadows, where strong trees  
 Stand motionless or shiver when the breeze  
 Whispers of angels and celestial powers,  
 And Love Divine, through the long summer hours :  
 O happy valley, home of kine and bees,  
 Flowing with milk and honey are thy leas,  
 And rich with wine and fruit thy shady bowers.

To thee with grief I bid my last farewell,  
 For never more shall I thy beauty see,  
 Nor watch the sunrise as it gently streaks  
 With golden light thy snowy mountain peaks,  
 Nor will thy flowing river again tell  
 My heart of life, God and eternity.

## II.

When to the fairest lands I bid adieu,  
 And know that I shall see them not again,  
 This thought will sometimes come to lessen pain,  
 That God perhaps may this fair earth endue  
 In some mysterious way with bodies two,—  
 The corporal, which to mortal eye is plain,  
 And spirit-born of which they only gain  
 Who die in peace of God the glorious view,—

The underlying glory of the seen  
 Fills mortal eyes with longing : it were blest  
 To see it with the unclouded vision keen  
 Of spiritual potence, wandering free  
 In the bright days of immortality  
 Through happy lands with those we have loved best.

## III.

In one fair world life on two different planes,  
 Distinct, and though so near, yet separate  
 One from the other ! 'Twere a mystery great  
 Yet mystery everywhere in Nature reigns,  
 In birth, in death, in life's delights and pains,  
 In moral forces, will and love and hate,  
 In mystic powers which this world animate,  
 And God's high Will which every force maintains.

And if He wills that His new earth be born  
 In spiritual likeness to the known,  
 It can no more to our dull sight be shown  
 Than ether or the force of gravity,  
 Or the dread Will that rules eternally,  
 Alike in chaos and creation's morn.

## IV.

But could the spirits who have gone before,—  
 The souls of those we love, if now they rest  
 On earth amid the beauty all unguessed  
 Of spiritual-bodied sea and shore,  
 Mountain and valley that they loved of yore  
 Embodied, with their trees and flowers all blest  
 With spiritual grace, see even the best  
 Of those they loved, and not be grievèd sore

At all their evil? Surely it were so,  
But 'tis perchance as hard for naked souls  
To see the world of matter as for men  
The spiritual : only angels know,  
And God, how painfully the round world rolls  
And all thereon. 'Tis not in dead men's ken.

## OOTACAMUND.

FAIR Ooty, girt with darkly wooded hills,  
     Bright with sweet gardens and thy silvery lake  
     Upon whose bosom tiny wavelets break,  
 Dancing to music sung by sparkling rills  
 Thy tender beauty the rapt spirit fills,  
     Bidding the silent memories awake  
     Of home and all we love for home's sweet sake  
 Blue lakes, green pastures, woods and flowery dells.

Yet thy fair face with dreamy sadness moves  
 The exile's soul, making his full heart burn  
 With yearning for fair forms no longer near,  
 Thy mocking likeness to the land he loves  
 His spirit pains, that fain would home return  
 Where the bright faces smile which he holds dear.



## THE TWO CHILDREN.

“ One shall be taken and the other left.”

## I.

BLOW softly, gentle winds, beneath the moon,  
 And kiss the vessel with her golden freight ;  
 Ask of the waves before it is too late  
 O kindly breezes, ask their blessed boon,

The gift of health. A golden-headed child  
 Is lying there ; a fever from the mere  
 Lay waiting, and we blindly brought her near ;  
 Her face is pallid, and her eye is wild.

Oh, will she live, my golden-headed child,  
 She left me scarce a minute, and my tear  
 Lies still upon her bed,—perchance her bier :—  
 It seems an age since she looked up and smiled.

Now she is gone, gone to another land ;  
 The cruel waves are driving us apart,  
 The cord that bound is severed, and my heart  
 Is very sad as on the shore I stand.

## II.

The ship has gone, I saw it fade away  
 Behind a grove of palm trees on the shore,  
 And still I watched when I could see no more  
 The white speck waving through the sea mist grey.

No flag of truce from a beleaguered town  
 E'er told a deeper grief.—I knew the sign,—  
 My wife's desire and sorrow spoke to mine,  
 And found a grief and love to meet her own.

Why must our griefs be double? It is woe  
 Enough for me to lose what I hold dear,  
 But oh! the pain of dreading what I fear,  
 And knowing how my loved one's sorrows grow.

## III.

Oh! Was it a voice of the night  
 In a dream, or an angel's song,  
 Or a whisper of love in its might  
 Overcoming the ocean strong

That I heard in the moonlight clear,  
 As under the palm tree's shade  
 I watched a weird shadowy fear  
 Move ghostlike along the glade?

Oh! Strong is the ocean, but kind,  
 And perhaps he has carried to me,  
 To solace my suffering mind,  
 Glad tidings from over the sea;

For I know that my love would send,  
 If it might be, a message of hope,  
 An electric flash from the end  
 Of a silver love-woven rope.

So I know that the golden head  
 Will gleam in the sun once more ;  
 I shall see her before I am dead  
 At her play on my native shore.

\* \* \* \* \*

But under the boughs as they wave  
 There cometh a shadowy fear,  
 And I seem to look into the grave  
 Of some one that I hold dear.

## IV.

I scarcely slept after I walked  
 Under the trees where the spectre stalked  
 In the shadow cast by the pale  
 Light of the moon through a misty veil.

I lay awake until the morn,  
 But saw a dream in the cold sad dawn :  
 And in my dream a little grave  
 Restlessly cut in an ocean wave ;

And oh ! its sides were narrow and steep  
 Down to the base of the unknown deep.  
 And there it seemed, 'mid shell and flower,  
 A corpse might rest till the judgment-hour

In unbroken stillness and peace,  
 Where grief must end and sorrow must cease.  
 In the twilight I saw a face  
 Moving down from surface to base,—

A face I love, it haunts me now,  
 A baby face with a snowy brow.

## V.

I weep for my baby dead, he had never spoken a word,  
 But he used to sing to himself in his crib like a joyous  
 bird,  
 A song that the angels knew well, and carried to God  
 above,  
 A song that was fitter for heaven than earth, being  
 brimful of love.  
 Daily he sang like a lark when the beautiful morning sun  
 Painted a rosy glory beside my innocent one,  
 And when I came nearer to list to the glad inarticulate  
 sound,  
 And the eye of the babe caught mine, from the depths of  
 the blue profound,  
 I saw the joy of a soul unto which a glimpse has been  
 shown.  
 Of the everlasting sweetness of the infinite unknown.

And oh! on the innocent face what a beautiful smile  
 there grew,  
 As he answered the love of my heart with a guileless love  
 and true ;  
 A love that it maybe was learnt in a period long gone by  
 When he lived as a sweet emanation of God's love in  
 the sky.

## VI.

That he must learn how to talk in the heavenly land  
 seems strange,  
 And everything learn of wisdom : but doubtless a wider  
 range

Of faculties shall be his in the glorious spirit land,  
 Where a strong and holy angel shall lead him by the  
 hand.

And when we shall see him again he will surely have  
 learnt far more  
 Than we who have wearily wandered upon the shadowy  
 shore.

## VII.

What a number of things to learn  
 Has a baby of six months old :  
 Will he suddenly truth discern,  
 Or will his mind slowly unfold ?

Will he childishly lisp at first  
 The words of the heavenly choir,  
 Or will the gift of language burst  
 On his soul like a flame of fire ?

In the midnight gloom I would fain  
 Know what is the heavenly tongue,  
 And hear the words of the joyous strain  
 Which the choirs at creation sung.

He has heard it now, but I fear  
My baby will never learn there  
The language that I hold dear,  
That I breathed with my native air.

## VIII.

Has he much to learn? I can see  
On his face such a beautiful smile,  
So glad and so spotless of guile,  
That the sweet thought comforteth me

That they who have learnt to love  
Even man in this world below,  
Have at least begun to know  
The key of the wisdom above.

## THE SACRIFICE OF RÂTH.

*(A Tale of Pachmarhi.)*

THERE was sorrow in the valley where the blue Nerbudda  
 flows  
 Death and anguish,—yet the people's cry for mercy  
 vainly rose.

For it seemed the will of Heaven that a famine curse the  
 land,  
 And a plague before whose terror not the stoutest heart  
 might stand.

So, a while they suffered weeping, till the sons of Agor  
 cried :

“ Let us hasten to the mountain where the holy hermit  
 died,

“ Where the sages five are dwelling, each within his  
 sacred cave ;

Let us ask the ascetics saintly how the people we may  
 save.”

Râth and Heera, sons of Agor, ruled by wisdom and  
 strong arm,

Nought the brothers' hearts could sever, nought their  
 trustful love might harm.

So the men and women journeyed to the sacred mountain  
 high,  
 And beside her father, blithely, stepped Alita fair and  
 shy.

Both the brave young brothers loved her, for no veil yet  
 cursed the land,  
 But a man might ask the maiden whom he chose to give  
 her hand.

Sweet Alita both the youths held dear, but in the  
 damsel's sight  
 Râth was like a brother, Heera stood in love's sweet  
 golden light.

Râth perceived Alita's secret ere she knew it, but his  
 grief  
 Struggling fiercely, in unselfish love for Heera found  
 relief.

Came the people to Pachmarhi, where they found the  
 hermits wise,  
 Rapt in deathlike trance beholding, dimly, far-off  
 mysteries.

Silently they heard the voices telling of the people's woe,  
 And their forms were fixed and rigid as the rocks of  
 Mahadeo.

Long the people stood expectant, till at length the oldest  
 sage,  
 Gaunt and dried and deeply wrinkled through long fast  
 and mystic age,



Rose and cried,—“ The Gods are angry, for the people  
is profane,  
Sacrifice has been forgotten, so they weep and call in  
vain :

“ Man for man must die, descending headlong from the  
awful height  
Down the gulf of Andikho, down to black and endless  
night.”

Pale then grew the gentle people, thinking of the dreadful  
leap ;  
But they drew the lot in silence for the victim of the  
deep.

On the noble sons of Agor fell the lot, then all men stood  
Wondering which of the brave brothers twain should  
perish for their good.

Heera draws the fatal pebble, Râth is saved, his glances  
fly  
Swiftly to the fair Alita, oh ! the horror in her eye :

There he reads that if he perish she will be a little sad,  
But if Heera die the maiden's heart will never more be  
glad.

Falls the night 'mid dance and music, but a sad voice  
fills the cave ;  
“ Holy sages, might a brother die his brother's life to  
save ? ”

Answering comes a hollow echo : “ It is whispered from  
the grave  
That a brother freely dying has unmeasured power to  
save ;

“ ’Tis a mystery of the ages, life from out of death will  
rise ;  
Light and sweetness spring from sorrow, when a good  
man freely dies.”

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

O'er the blue plain, like the billowed ocean, stretching  
far away,  
Redly rose the sun next morning, as the folk at break of  
day,

Gathered round the awful chasm where a man should  
die ere night,  
Bravely for the sinful people, leaping from the fearful  
height.

Heera, Râth, and pale Alita on the cliff edge hand in  
hand,  
Gaze on the expectant people ;—nigh the dreamy sages  
stand.

They wait a sign ; dark clouds from heaven hide the  
lion of Dhup Ghur,  
And a mighty peal of thunder rolls down Mahadeo's  
spur.

Then the oldest sage awaking, cries aloud,—“ O people,  
hear,  
God is calling from the heaven, He to us draws very  
near :

“ He is pleased that one is willing out of purest love to die,  
So upon your land He sendeth blessed rain-clouds from  
on high.

“ Let the sacrifice be finished.”—Bravely Heera turns to greet  
For the last time dear Alita, and his tears fall at her feet.

Oh ! the bitterness of parting. Oh ! the awful gulf  
below,  
The sheer unbroken precipice, the unknown depth of  
Andikho !

Sadly Râth for one short moment looks upon them, then  
he cries :  
Live and love, for life is pleasant, willingly your brother  
dies,

“ Dearest Heera and Alita, and you folk who love me  
well ” ;  
Thus he spoke, then leaping wildly, down the dreadful  
steep he fell.

Swiftly grew the sky o’ershadowed, fell the rain, the  
wind grew cold ;  
Livid lightning struck the mountain, loud the awful  
thunder rolled.

Straight the people hurried homeward, stricken with  
supernal dread ;  
Only Heera and Alita stayed to mourn the noble dead.

And beside them stood like statues, carved from out the  
rocky hill,  
The five sages deeply musing on the mystery of ill.

Little light they had and cruel was their creed ; but  
from above  
Shone a gleam of truth lit for them by Râth's sacrifice of  
love.

Centuries have passed, and changes come upon the  
eastern lands,  
But of all the warring forces, sacrifice still mightiest  
stands.

## TIGER HILL.

*(A Tale of Sikkim.)*

## I.

THE clouds lay thick on Senchal height,  
And softly through the misty gloom,  
The night wind took the balmy scent  
Of sweet magnolia bloom,

And brought it to a forest glade,  
Where, amid flowers and silver fern,  
The grass hut of a shepherd stood  
Beside a little burn.

The night wind kissed the lovely face  
Of gentle Rita, who lay there  
Asleep within her father's hut,  
Clad in her raven hair.

The sweetest maid in Sikkim land  
She lay, her bright eyes closed in rest,  
And love had painted her fair cheek  
As sunset, Everest.

For young Aruna loved her well,  
The shepherd lad from Sandakfoo ;  
He'd fought the borderers of Nepal,  
His heart was strong and true.

From off the heights they took his flock  
 Away into their valleys deep,  
 He followed after them at night  
 And rescued his lost sheep.

What led him from his home to pass  
 Beyond Tongloo and Goompahar ?  
 A dream at night, or voice of love  
 Low-whispering from afar ?

He crossed the wooded hills and found  
 Amid the trees on Senchal slope,  
 The maiden decked with flowers : his heart  
 Was stirred with fear and hope.

Their glances met, their glances fell,  
 First wonder moved, then awe, but soon  
 Love came, and hand in hand they walked  
 Beneath the argent moon.

Their love grew deeper day by day ;  
 The flowers had never seemed so bright,  
 The mountains never shone before  
 With such a holy light.

He plucked the orchids from the trees,  
 And bound them in her glossy hair,  
 Then laid a lily from the wood  
 Upon her forehead fair.

There as she sat upon a rock,  
 With starry flowers of gold behind,  
 And at her feet the fragile ferns,  
 Swayed gently by the wind,

Aruna gazed upon her face,  
 With all a lover's tender pride,  
 And swore that he would either die,  
 Or make her his own bride.

She smiled for love, she laughed for joy,  
 She laughed, and named a happy hour :  
 The sun was setting o'er the hills,  
 Deep blushed her snow-white flower.

## II.

The sun had set behind the hills,  
 And through the trees the moon shone bright,  
 The night wind blew the cold grey mist  
 Across dark Senchal's height.

And Rita slept, and dreamed of love,  
 Alone beside her father's flock ;  
 There came a tiger stealthily  
 From out a hollow rock.

He came, but when he saw her face,  
 His cruel purpose 'gan to fail ;  
 'Fore beauty joined to innocence  
 The fiercest heart will quail.

O young Aruna, leave alone  
 Thy lover's innocence to fight,  
 'Tis stronger than an armed man :—  
 He could not sleep that night ;

He wandered through the forest glade,  
And ever of his love he thought,  
He sauntered towards the maiden's home,  
By love's true instinct brought.

He saw the tiger at the door,  
And knew his love in danger lay,  
He rushed upon the savage beast,  
It met him in the way.

A dagger in the moonlight flashed,  
A roar resounded from the hill,  
A groan was heard, and then a shriek,—  
And then the night was still.

The mist had passed and from the sky  
Looked down in grief the pallid moon,  
And saw the dying beast, and saw  
Aruna in death's swoon,

And over him the maiden bent,  
And as she washed his wounds she wept ;  
Her hot tears fell upon his face,  
But still her lover slept.

Shine out, kind moon, and golden stars,  
Shine from your azure home above,  
That she may see and cherish long  
His look of deathless love.

In agony she kissed his face,  
And cried,—“ Oh, speak to me again,  
My brave Aruna,” and her tears  
Fell over him like rain.



He woke and told her of his love,  
    Low whispering with his dying breath,  
A smile of joy passed o'er his face,  
    Love dieth not in death.

Blow, gentle winds, and bring the mists  
    To hide the bright eyes of the sky,  
For oh ! the maiden's heart will break  
    To see her lover die.

The strong winds blew, and o'er the ridge,  
    Past rock and tree and knoll, there fled  
Pale ghostly unsubstantial clouds,  
    Like spirits of the dead.

Long Sikkim mourned the lovers' fate ;  
    And still is named high Senchal Hill  
After the tiger who too late  
    Repented him of ill.

## ELSIE MAY.

## PROEM.

LYING 'twixt the Tonse and Sutlej is a glorious mountain  
land  
On whose slopes the happy homesteads of the forest  
city stand.  
There is beauty, there is pleasure, music and the merry  
dance,  
There the silent cedars calmly watch o'er many a life's  
romance.

Yet about this pleasant country memory weaves a  
woeful tale,  
Sorrow poisons human gladness, through all music  
sounds a wail :  
Is there not a mood of sadness on the fairest spots of  
earth ?  
Does not melancholy meet us even in the hours of mirth ?

## I.

Lovely and bright was Elsie May,  
With laughing lips and clear blue eye,  
And well she knew to sip the sweets  
Of life like some gay butterfly.

The youth of Almis, all in love,  
 Saw sweet simplicity in art,  
 Her lady friends without a voice  
 Dissentient, said she had no heart.

False was it ; see the rosy tint  
 Upon her lovely cheek of pearl,  
 A heart she had although of flint,  
 She loved the first-born of an Earl.

Much had she flirted, hearts were sad,  
 Brave youths with grief had lost their health ;  
 But when the Viscount came, she thought,  
 " He shall be mine with all his wealth."

How could he 'scape ? For she was fair,  
 And witching when she chose to please ;  
 Danced like a sylph, and gaily rode,—  
 A goddess 'neath the cedar trees.

They rode together day by day,  
 They walked upon the mountain-side,  
 And all the world of Almis knew  
 That she was promised as his bride.

Lord Ronald, if you live to wed,  
 How sad will your awakening be,  
 You are in love, but she, alas !  
 Can only love herself, not thee.

Upon a fatal day they rode  
 To Shobra's forest one fair morn,  
 And as he fondly spoke of love,  
 The maiden's heart was filled with scorn

And anger, for she found him dull ;  
 For he was serious, she was light,  
 She dared not give her tongue the rein,  
 And knew not where to vent her spite.

An aged fakir, on the way,  
 Whose hut stood near a giant pine,  
 Held out his bony hand and asked  
 An alms with melancholy whine.

She struck him rudely with her whip,—  
 (It was a cruel, vicious deed)—  
 He saw her face, he read her eye,  
 And knew her lovcless heart and greed.

As flashes the electric spark  
 From cloud to cloud, so evil flies  
 From soul to soul when hate is there,  
 And love is gone, and pity dies.

The fakir cursed her by his gods,—  
 It was an awful curse, and loud,—  
 Cursed her by the demons dwelling  
 In the thunder and the cloud ;

And in earth's abysses dreadful :  
 Ronald heard and Elsie May,  
 And the air seemed full of curses  
 As they homeward rode that day.

## II.

Swiftly passed the weeks, and Elsie  
Hid her soul 'neath practised smiles,  
And her lover thought her perfect :  
Man is weak 'fore woman's wiles.

So she felt secure, and laughing,  
Scorned the fakir's futile threat.—  
Rather weep, each evil action  
Must in due time pay its debt.

Alone she wandered through the wood  
A week before her bridal hour :  
The beggar stood beneath the pine,  
Dark was his face with evil power.

Beside him sat a woman old,  
With body bent and eyes of fire,  
And Elsie saw in their fierce hate  
A prophesy of peril dire ;

And shuddered, though the sun shone bright  
On moss and flower, on tree and fern ;  
“ O ! fool to fear,” she laughed, “ I'll walk  
Straight through the forest ere I turn.”

A fair Pahari girl she passed,  
A lovely maid in garments white ;  
“ It is my bridal day,” she said,  
“ I dwell beneath yon rocky height,

“Come, see my home,” and Elsie went,  
 She wished, but had no power, to stay ;  
 The sun was hid, the clouds grew black,  
 The thunder muttered far away ;

And dark and weird the broken pines  
 With dead limbs arched the forest road,  
 But Elsie followed sick with fear,  
 Forced onwards by an unseen goad.

They paused beneath a hollow rock,  
 Whereto, like witches’ tresses clung,  
 Drowned in a mere, dank ferns and weeds ;  
 Beside them, ropelike mosses hung.

A blasted tree to heaven upreared  
 Its leafless arms as if to ban  
 The stranger, and a gaunt black hound  
 Around its base in circles ran.

Loud cracked the thunder, lightnings flashed,  
 From lurid heavens crashed the hail,  
 And o’er the summit of the crag  
 Roared the wild voices of the gale.

Fear-struck, to the Pahari girl  
 Did Elsie cling ; for one so fair,  
 She thought, could not maliciously,  
 With fell intent have brought her there.

’Tis strange,—the hill maid seems to wane  
 Beneath her grasp ; their faces meet  
 In one short kiss,—O ! horror dread !  
 Is this the maid who seemed so sweet,

This dreadful hag with wrinkled face,  
 Keen, wicked eyes and cruel frown,  
 And skinny body bent to earth,  
 All hideous 'neath her tattered gown ?

A shriek is borne upon the wind,  
 Prone to the ground falls Elsie May ;  
 Alas, the maiden may not swoon,  
 The witch-eye holds her for its prey.

What loathly sights, what gruesome sounds  
 Were round her on that dreadful night ;  
 What visitants from other worlds  
 The witch conjured to blind her sight,

And freeze her blood, oh, who can say ?  
 But in the morning on the ground,  
 Senseless beside the fakir's hut,  
 By Ronald was the maiden found.

### III.

What she had seen she ne'er would say,  
 But quickly did she pine away,  
 And on her hoped-for bridal day  
 To rest beneath a pine tree grey,  
 Her weeping friends bore Elsie May.

Lord Ronald wept beside her bier,  
 And mourned her sadly for a year,  
 But then he found a comfort new  
 In one fair maiden good and true,  
 Who loved him as a maiden should,  
 Because she knew him wise and good.

## EPILOGUE.

So dire a punishment for fault so slight ?

The bounds of law and mercy none can see ;  
'Tis better loveless souls should cease to be,  
Than work confusion on the earth they blight.  
No fault that shows a cruel heart is light :

Crime dwells in will, and human will is free,  
Though fear and custom, each with potent plea,  
Check evil act that would the will delight.

A foolish tale, you say, and all untrue,  
Based on dead superstition ; then explain  
The difference 'twixt thinking that one hears,  
And hearing. To the tale as told a clue  
May lie in hidden powers of will and brain,  
Known to the eastern sage from twilight years.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



## THE SEER AND THE AGE.

ON a summer day I had wandered far in a moorland wild  
 and bare,  
 When I came to a glen where a pine wood dark, shut  
 out the midday glare ;  
 Beneath its shadow a cottage stood by the side of a  
 murmuring brook,  
 And, enclosed with privet, a garden gay shone bright in  
 a sheltered nook.  
 I had come to visit an aged friend from public life retired,  
 Who with the love of wisdom's light from his youth had  
 been inspired.  
 The ancient man with a snow-white beard and brilliant  
 deep-set eyes  
 Would often talk of the riddles of life, and his words  
 were keen and wise ;  
 For much he had read, and deeply had thought, and  
 appeared at times to see  
 A vision fair in the sunny air, which none could behold  
 but he.  
 What was it he saw ? a real scene, or only an old man's  
 dream ?  
 Who knows ? for his heart was fixed on things that men  
 unreal deem ;  
 But worldly joys and concerns of weight, like money  
 and house and lands,  
 Appeared to him like the children's toys, or their castles  
 in the sands.

He was talking now to a concourse of men of every  
 political shade,  
 Who had come from the nearest market town to obtain  
 support and aid  
 For a brand-new unsectarian school, which "agnostic  
 ideas should nourish,  
 And where the marvellous science and skill of this  
 glorious age would flourish."  
 Their spokesman, a rich loquacious youth, was applaud-  
 ing modern thought,  
 And spoke with pride of the wealth and ease that science  
 to man had brought ;  
 He boasted, too, of the sceptical age, from the bands of  
 faith set free,  
 And the shackles of that which was bound with faith,—  
 the old morality.  
 The ancient looked at me and smiled, but I saw that his  
 hawk-eyes flashed,  
 And then he spoke such scathing words that his hearers  
 stood abashed.  
 I cannot speak with the sage's fire, nor his eloquent  
 phrases find,  
 But this was the meaning of what he said,—the thought  
 that was in his mind.—

And so the age considers itself an epoch grand and free,  
 Then let it look in the well of truth, and strive its defects  
 to see :  
 For dreams of pride are a fall indeed from the heights of  
 wisdom true,  
 And the age that boasts sees every theme in a false  
 distorted view.  
 You brag of its progress in science and art, and its vast  
 reserves of wealth,

But these may ruin the national life, and spiritual health,  
 For they tend to engulf a people's thoughts in vain  
 material things,  
 Like a viscid sap in which insects fall and lose their  
 diaphanous wings.  
 If softness and luxury follow on wealth, and a thriftless  
 indolence,  
 And love of amusement in place of toil, and desire for the  
 pleasures of sense ;  
 If zeal for perfection in work has gone, and pride in  
 doing the best,  
 And instead there is shirking and eye-service, and work  
 which fails in the test,  
 The nation is set on a dangerous path which is easy to  
 descend,  
 A precipitous way to the gulf of shame that in ruin and  
 death must end.  
 For a country's place in the universe depends not on  
 silver and gold,  
 But upon the aims towards which it strives,—the ideals  
 its people hold ;  
 If these be noble and high and pure, the land will be  
 truly great,  
 But a petty goal of enjoyment and ease will ruin a  
 prosperous State.

You vaunt your wealth : is a nobler life the result for the  
 men of leisure ?  
 Do they strive to accomplish the good they might with  
 their gifts of time and treasure ?  
 Are they seeking to bridge the terrible gulfs that class  
 from class divide,  
 And letting the measure of duty and right the trend of  
 their acts decide ?

Or as bees from a flower do they seek to extract from the  
 world what pleasure they can,  
 Esteeming a life of amusement right and fit for a mortal  
 man ?

Are they heedless of all the sorrow and pain which sadden  
 the suffering earth ?

Contented if they can immunity gain, and revel in  
 sensuous mirth ?

Do they ever seek ease from another's loss, or enjoyment  
 from someone's fall ?

Do they ask if their wealth has been righteously gained,  
 or does justice for vengeance call ?

And the women, whom all would fain regard as the type  
 of the pure and good,

Do they seek to act in the rôle of men, despising their  
 motherhood ?

Or has the decadent nation reared a brood of hysterical  
 shrews,

Who careless of courtesy, justice, and right, with violence  
 urge their views ?

You speak of improvements which science brings, does  
 happiness come in their train ?

What joys do the millions of toiling folk in the cities and  
 factories gain ?

They are driven perforce to the festering towns by your  
 fiscal laws unwise,

From the country fair, with its health-giving air, and the  
 joy of its open skies.

Their hearts are dulled by mechanical toil, and their  
 pleasures are poor and mean,

For infidel teaching has dimmed or destroyed their faith  
 in the things unseen.

So in drinking and gambling and betting on games their  
 leisure they employ,  
 Which only the zest of excitement bring, but never real  
 joy.

Do you shut your eyes when you boast of the age, and  
 cannot you even see  
 Its gigantic injustice, the poor half starved and the rich  
 in luxury ?

Can you flatter an age which compels the poor to live in  
 a dreadful slum,—

A rabbit warren of human beings,—the worthy mixed  
 up with the scum ?

Can a nation boast of its growth in wealth when wretched  
 women and men

Are spending more dreadful winter nights than a wild  
 beast in its den,

Exposed to the pitiless frosty skies, or the rain and  
 drizzle and snow,

With mansions behind them bathed in light, and the  
 cold, dark river below ?

When the body is numb, and the heart is cold, and hope  
 is well-nigh dead,

For continual misery casts out hope, and enthrones  
 despair instead ?

What wonder if desperate, suffering souls sunk deep in  
 sin and sorrow

In the gloomy water, still and dead, are found on the  
 fearful morrow ?

So poised on the edge of a precipice steep, unsafely the  
 toilers dwell,

All eagerly thrusting their neighbours down to 'scape  
 from the " Englishman's hell."

But a season of illness or failure of work may plunge  
 them into the void,  
 And make them in misery sink to the ranks of the hopeless  
 unemployed.

They are mocked with votes, does that bring peace and  
 contentment to their souls ?

Does it even bring good government, or secure wise men  
 at the polls ?

O foolish nation, to put your faith in the votes of men  
 untaught !

To imagine the voice of a shallow crowd God's voice is  
 a crazy thought.

And when the workmen are out on strike, do you find  
 in their reckless deeds

The signs of the wisdom, justice, and truth that rational  
 government needs ?

The labouring man or the artizan is concerned about  
 food and wage,

I blame him not, he is not a sot, but neither is he a  
 sage.

For government good you want wisdom deep and  
 spiritual sight,

Will you look for these among horny-handed men of  
 muscular might ?

Can they foresee what the country needs for its safety  
 from arrogant foes ?

Are you waiting for them to tell you how to escape an  
 invader's blows ?

And when the toilers are in distress, and the bread-  
 winners out of work,

Will the voters tell you the hidden cause, and how its  
 effects to shirk ?



But perhaps although unskilled themselves, their minds  
 are sufficiently keen  
 To move them to choose wise men to vote in the national  
 voting machine ?  
 Vain fancy, they just know what they want,—more  
 wages and leisure and ease,  
 And so they will vote for the windbag false who promises  
 what they please ;  
 Till duping electors becomes an art among skilled  
 parliamentary hacks,  
 Who will promise the needy voting man whatever he  
 thinks he lacks ;  
 And others will sell their honour and truth for trumpery  
 Party gains,  
 Regardless of national union and weal,—mere slaves in  
 their Party chains.  
 Well fee'd by their leaders from national funds, and  
 bribed with the Church's spoils,  
 They vote as they're told, and behave as required, held  
 fast in degrading toils ;  
 So the loyal descendants of Britain's sons in Erin's  
 unhappy land  
 They would place beneath the disloyal rule of a wild and  
 lawless band.  
 Alas, that the English Parliament, which once had an  
 honoured name,  
 Degraded by its hireling cliques, has become the country's  
 shame !

And lo ! the dreadful day draws nigh when a fearful  
 national crash,  
 With poverty, famine, and ruin, will come as a lightning  
 flash :

For ominous voices are heard in the land, which warn you  
 that danger is rife,  
 In your puny strength among armèd States, and un-  
 readiness for the strife ;  
 Your ships are the walls of your beautiful land and on  
 them your hopes are stayed,  
 Yet you leave your navy imperfectly manned, and your  
 sailors underpaid :  
 The words of your warrior sage you scorn, but when the  
 mendacious placemen cry,—  
 “ Peace, you are safe,” though the risk is great, you  
 hear and believe the official lie.  
 They flatter and cringe for your ignorant votes, like the  
 fawning slaves of an eastern king,  
 And they dare not tell you unwelcome truth, for like  
 limpets to office they cling.  
 And though your peril is near at hand, and wisdom cries  
 loudly, “ Beware ! ”  
 Their powers are devoted to wrecking the State, and you  
 do not even care.  
 Your ease-loving men in their folly refuse to learn how  
 to fight for their homes,  
 So their arms will be powerless to save the State when  
 the day of disaster comes ;  
 And the Britons whose bravery lay in songs about ruling  
 the ocean waves,  
 Ignoble in deed, must learn in shame to behave as  
 conquered slaves.  
 O England, those whom the heavens have doomed  
 they render insane with pride,  
 So madness is come upon you now, you are dancing  
 with Ruin as bride.

But why are your people by folly ruled, and in such an  
evil case ?

'Tis because they have forgotten their Lord, and His  
goodness to their race,

And have lost the religious dread of sin, and the fear of  
offending God,

And the spirit-force which raises man from the standing  
of a clod.

For their rulers have robbed the children poor of the  
faith which should guide their lives,

So the men are now like rudderless ships on the deep  
when the tempest drives.

They worship idols,—enjoyment and wealth,—and  
barter their peace for gain,

And now, as ever, idolatry brings vast evils in its  
train,—

Blindness of soul to the light of truth, and deafness to  
wisdom's cry,

Strife and disunion, with envy and greed, and selfish  
luxury.

And in their titular Christian land, the paliament of  
the Lord

Is slashed and torn to a hundred shreds with a wild  
sectarian sword,

Which not alone His vesture rends, but His Truth itself  
would mutilate,

The Truth for which martyrs died of old to hand it down  
inviolate.

And though the bequest of the ancient Faith is righteous-  
ness and peace,

Fanatical men in ungodly spite are striving the Church  
to fleece,

Imposing a sacrilegious hand upon that which to God  
was given,

A crime which will bring on the impious State the  
punishment just of Heaven.

O fatuous people who scorn the Faith that once was  
your defence,

And drown your souls in material aims, and the vapid  
joys of sense.

You forget that the only availing cure for your social  
and national ills

Will be found in the power of brotherhood to soften  
human wills ;

And this no social cult can give, for it cannot the " self "   
subdue ;

It can only be gained when faith and love your earth-  
bound hearts renew.

Your need is faith, yet divines abound who hold not the  
Truth intact,

But value a critical German's guess above sacred Gospel  
fact,

And scarcely dare to maintain the Creed revealed to the  
saints of yore,

If some destructive pedant has shown that he credits it  
no more.

They fondly imagine that scholarship causes their  
negative critical pose,

Ignoring the deadly materialistic bane that in luxury  
grows,

Ruining life, and fettering faith, and making miracles  
seem,

In the gloom of their pantheistic thought, an almost  
impossible dream.

So their doubts have infected the national mind, and  
many begin to say,

That humanity now is the wise man's cult, as the  
 Church has had its day ;  
 And faith in the Book of books grows dim, and its  
 warnings they despise,  
 And man, not God, is the central fact upon which they  
 fix their eyes ;  
 And many neglect on the day of rest to unite in prayer  
 and praise,  
 But in barren amusements which deaden the soul, they  
 waste their joyless days.  
 They cannot perceive that their loss of the Faith, and  
 slight of the sacred page  
 Is merely the tribute they feebly pay to the spirit of the  
 age.  
 And since the body and bodily things are what they  
 chiefly love,  
 They forget that life is a pilgrimage to a better land  
 above ;  
 A time for growth through the struggle with sin, and  
 learning the cross to endure,  
 A time to subdue the mutinous will, and daily to grow  
 more pure.  
 So pain and sorrow and suffering sore are riddles without  
 a key,  
 And men lose hope in the God of Love, Who is veiled in  
 mystery.

Can an age presume to judge of the Faith which worships  
 silver and gold,  
 And the sweets they bring, the comfort and ease and  
 pleasures which life enfold ?  
 Believe as Christians ? Nay, ye behave as decadent  
 heathens might,

For the men are afraid that a father's cares might lessen  
 their life's delight,  
 And the women fear pain, and the trouble of babes, and  
 stinting their ease and leisure,  
 Renouncing the holiest joys for those that afford but  
 transient pleasure.  
 Can man judge the Faith in a libertine age, that is  
 smirched by the Divorce Court,  
 And numbers its fallen by tens of thousands?—with  
 ruin its men make sport.

O Isles of the sea, your ruin dire will come from your  
 factious strife,  
 Your schisms and sects at war with the Church in your  
 vague religious life ;  
 Your Parties in politics, ceaseless strikes, and toilers  
 enraged at Fate,  
 With your howling demagogues hounding them on to  
 bitterness and hate ;  
 For the patriot spirit is dying or dead through the  
 worship of pleasure and gold,  
 And the heart of the country beats not as it did in the  
 glorious days of old.  
 Alas! there is gloom in the changeful sky: dread  
 portents of ruin appear :  
 There are storms within, and tempests without, for  
 destruction draweth near.  
 I see it coming through cloud and mist, aflame with the  
 fury of fire,—  
 Disaster on ocean, and on the land a vast calamity dire.  
 And in this lies the cause of the nation's risk,—its  
 divided and godless state,  
 For only a people God-fearing and one can ever be truly  
 great.

The old man ceased and his face was sad, and it seemed  
 as though he saw  
 Far off a scene which filled his heart with grief, and his  
 soul with awe.  
 A dark cloud over the pine trees rose, and vivid lightnings  
 played,  
 The thunder echoed among the hills, and the wind blew  
 up the glade ;  
 And I thought with alarm of the social storm, and the  
 tempest of alien foes  
 Which the mystic saw in his vision dread of calamities  
 and woes.

O country dear, O beautiful land, I would that your sons  
 might come,—  
 Both those in the dim sectarian light, and those in  
 agnostic gloom,—  
 To the Church that was founded to give men peace, and  
 unite them all in one,  
 That brotherly love might daily increase, and the Will  
 Divine be done,—  
 To the ancient Church, which in England's realm since  
 your Saxon fathers' day,  
 The lamp of Truth in the State and home has upraised  
 to light men's way,  
 And has taught them their duty to God and man in  
 their journey here below,  
 Has shown the beauty of goodness and faith, and joys  
 that from charity flow,  
 United the Nation and joined it in one, and made the  
 people free,  
 And still is the hope of the national life in the days that  
 are yet to be.

For justice and mercy, religion and truth, and reliance  
on Powers unseen,  
And a high ideal of duty's call, and a scorn of the base  
and mean,  
Are the only things that a nation can keep from ruin in  
war or peace,  
For if these are not found, all else is in vain, and the  
national life must cease.



## THE CHILD AND THE CROWN.

THEY have crowned the good king, and a little child  
 In the joy of his realm may share ;  
 I will pray God to bless him and give him peace,  
 And make his crown easy to wear.

Though I may not the beautiful diadem see,  
 I would I knew how it is made.  
 I will ask my mother, and playmates kind  
 In the garden and woodland glade.

O Mother, of what do they make the crown ?  
 “ Of gold, my child, and velvet fair,  
 All skilfully wrought by the deffest hands,  
 And adorned with jewels rare.”

O nightingale singing alone in the wood,  
 What formeth the good king's crown ?  
 “ It is made, my dear, of his people's love,  
 In country and village and town.”

And how do you fashion it, wise old rook,  
 That croakest upon the pine ?  
 “ The noblest crown is of sorrow and pain,  
 And of sacrifice Divine.”

O what is the crown, gentle dove, cooing low  
 To thy mate in the coppice green ?  
 " It is fashioned of justice, and jewelled with peace,  
 And of concord is its sheen."

O butterfly sipping the wild eglantine,  
 Just whisper me what you think :—  
 " Oh, the crown of life is the bright sunshine,  
 And honey to eat and drink."

Then truthfully tell me you dear old oak,  
 That shadowest all the glen :—  
 " Vigour and strength, and a purpose high,  
 Are the crown of a king of men."

O canny old owl in the oak tree's bole,  
 When you hoot in the dead of night,  
 Ponder the answers of all my friends,  
 And tell me which is right.

" My dear little child, they are all telling true,  
 For the fairest crown may fade ;—  
 Of jewels and gold and a nation's love,  
 And of peace it now is made :

" And of vigour and joy ; but a time has been  
 When a royal crown to wear  
 Was sorrow and pain to endure in the heart,  
 And thorns on the brow to bear.

" Now all who are dwelling in English woods,  
 The creatures that fly and sing,  
 The forest trees, and the blossoming herbs,  
 Wish joy to the English king."

Then an angel flew from the heart of a rose  
And whispered to the child :—

“ There is also a glorious crown for you,—  
The meed of the undefiled ;

“ For when duty is done there’s a fairer prize  
On earth than a crown of gold ;  
And a garland of joy in a better land,  
More lovely than can be told.”

## WAR.

WHEN an armed and warlike nation is assembled near  
     our shore,  
 Seeking world-wide domination, fearing not the battle's  
     roar,  
 Can we fail to see war's shadow falling on our fatherland ?  
 Dare we slight the voice of duty calling us to take our  
     stand,—  
 One and all our arms preparing that the onslaught we  
     may check,  
 Learning to do deeds of daring to defend our homes  
     from wreck ?

What is war ? 'Tis sudden dying by the bullet and the  
     sword,  
 On the field of carnage lying, where the blood of friends  
     is poured,  
 Falling wounded, sorely smitten, dying slowly in our  
     pain,  
 Seeing in Fate's volume written,—“ Failure ! Life and  
     death are vain ! ”  
 What is war ? 'Tis woman's sorrow, and the cry of  
     babes in want ;  
 Hopeless looking for the morrow ; tears from an unfailing  
     font ;

Ruined homesteads, savage burnings, blackened fields  
 where once was corn ;  
 Scattered all the patient earnings of a life in one fell  
 morn.

What is war? Does naught but weeping mark its  
 shadow on the world ?

Nay, for heroes idly sleeping, waken at the flag unfurled.  
 What of good has war to offer to atone for pain and woe ?  
 This ;—that men will gladly suffer death, will let their  
 life-blood flow

For the cause that noble seemeth, for the country of  
 their birth,

For the ideal each man deemeth worthiest of the things  
 on earth.

Better 'tis that men be willing for a noble cause to die,  
 Than to live, their coffers filling with the gains of cheat  
 and lie.

In the melting cauldron mingle silver coins from many a  
 land,

Heat the furnace, soon a single casting glitters in the  
 sand :

So the children of a nation molten in the fire of strife,  
 In the glow of war's probation, union find, and fuller  
 life.

Side by side the peasant marches with the noble to the  
 fight,

Both the starlit sky o'erarches in the bivouac at night :  
 Both would gladly for the other shed his blood in battle  
 fell,

Every comrade is a brother, love can death's grim terrors  
 quell.

Look upon the field of battle ; see a wounded soldier  
 fall,  
 Listen how the bullets rattle all around him on the wall ;  
 Must he die ? A brother yeoman, heedless of the peril  
 dire,  
 Through the hailstorm of the foemen, rushing, saves  
 him from their fire.  
 Lo ! the conflict fierce is ending : where are fury now,  
 and hate ?  
 Watch that crippled man befriending one with whom he  
 fought but late,  
 Binding up his wounds, and water offering, his most  
 precious boon,  
 Reckless of the thirst and torture that himself must  
 suffer soon.

He Who rules in heavenly beauty turns the ills of war  
 to gain,  
 Making sacrifice to duty glorious, crowning death and  
 pain ;  
 Bringing many a high emotion into wild unthinking  
 souls,  
 Filling them with self-devotion when the battle-thunder  
 rolls.  
 War is more than strife of nations, 'tis the land's refining  
 fire,  
 Burning up her false foundations, pride, ease, luxury,  
 desire.

In our years of war and sorrow, have we learnt through  
 grief and care  
 Not to wait until the morrow ere for battle we prepare,—  
 Not to rest in fatuous weakness when we should be  
 brave and strong,

Nor to think a nation's meekness will avail to save it  
long ?

Learnt that courage and endurance, trust in God and  
love of right

Give a people strong assurance, and in days of battle,  
might ?

Is our country's love expelling love of luxury and greed,  
And each citizen compelling to defend her in her need ?

Or are we too fond of pleasure, gambling, racing, playing  
games,

Getting wealth and hoarding treasure to attend to  
nobler aims ?

Happy is the nation learning out of failure to arise,

And,—its errors past discerning,—strong in purpose to  
be wise.

## UNDYING LOVE.

THE night is dark, and the wind is cold,  
 And a cruel storm sweeps over the sea ;  
 It will freeze the heart of the sailor bold,  
 However bold he be.

'Twill freeze the heart of the sailor bold  
 To see the tall iceberg come floating by,  
 For seldom has mariner young or old  
 Seen iceberg loom so high.

It comes as a phantom of the storm,  
 All suddenly seen in the lurid light,  
 As the clouds flash fire on its jagged form,  
 Half black, half ghostly white.

Young Roland sits in the vessel's prow ;  
 He has fled from his gentle lady fair ;  
 The maiden weeps, he has broken his vow,  
 Inconstant as the air.

She thought him true, now she weeps and prays,  
 In her lonely bower on a southern sea,  
 Through tearful nights and long desolate days,  
 " Oh, bring him back to me."



But Roland stands on the plunging prow ;  
 Though he fears neither wave nor iceberg high,  
 Unhappiness sits on his marble brow,  
 'Tis sad for the false to die.

He thinks of the maiden far away,  
 Then dreams of an innocent love betrayed,  
 And a humble grave near the old church grey,  
 Where she who loved was laid.

A shudder suddenly thrills his frame,  
 An icy hand is placed on his own,  
 And he hears through the tempest his whispered name,  
 And his heart is turned to stone.

Who rides with Roland upon the deep ?  
 When the sailors behold the ghostly form,  
 Their blood will grow cold, and their flesh will creep :—  
 A spirit drives the storm !

They see her now, a shadowy thing,  
 That on Roland sheds an unearthly light,  
 The captain cries,—“ Hither the wizard bring,  
 For he must die to-night.”

The boat they lower on the raging wave,  
 And in it leaps Roland, he is not alone !  
 A spirit is there, “ Will it kill or save ? ”  
 The night winds screech and moan.

Long time they watch the luminous speck  
 Rise high, fall low on the wild rushing sea.  
 The icebergs crash on the wind-driven wreck,  
 But still the boat rides free.

And Roland utters nor word nor cry,  
 He thinks of a bygone pleasure and pain,  
 His heart tells true her name who is nigh,  
 For there she once had lain.

Cold is the wind and dark is the night,  
 Neither moon nor stars in the sky appear,  
 But round them there hovers a ghostly light,  
 And thunder crashes near.

The sun o'er the water rises red,  
 The foaming billows are white like snow,  
 The threatening waves hover high overhead,  
 And oh ! the gulf below.

High hangs the boat on the mountain's crest,  
 Then is hurled far on to an iceberg chill.  
 Oh ! here is the young man's terrible rest,  
 And the spirit haunts him still.

The mountain of ice moves swiftly on  
 Past tempest and clouds to a sunlit sea,  
 Where nautilus sail 'neath a brilliant sun,  
 And the waves move dreamily.

But Roland sees not the silken sail,  
 Nor knows how his refuge dwindles away ;  
 Weary with hunger, weak, fainting and pale,  
 He sleeps throughout the day.

The iceberg is gone, the boat once more  
 On the boundless ocean is all alone :  
 Who lifts up the sail, and who plies the oar ?  
 No form of flesh and bone.

The maiden fair in her castle sleeps,  
 And dreams of a boat on a lonely strand,  
 A weeping spirit beside her creeps,  
 And takes her by the hand.

The moon is high, the shadows are dark,  
 And the wind comes sadly over the sea,  
 The maiden, she shivers, the watch dogs bark,  
 The owl shrieks in the tree.

Alone the maid quits the gloomy keep :  
 'Tis the dead of night and the beach is still,  
 And scarcely a ripple ruffles the deep ;  
 The moon shines o'er the hill.

She passes under the awesome cliff,  
 And starts at her form in the brackish mere,  
 On the shining sand is a little skiff  
 Beside the water clear.

What has she found in the little skiff ?  
 The face that is dearest as pale as the moon.  
 Oh ! can he be dead ? he is cold and stiff,—  
 She loves too much to swoon.

She chafes his hands, she calls through the night  
 To the watchman high on her lonely tower ;  
 Over the sandhills there glimmers a light,  
 They'll fetch him to her bower.

The night is past, low sinketh the moon,  
 And Roland is sleeping in safety now,  
 But a mournful wail sweeps over the dune,  
 And cold lips touch his brow.

'Twas a last farewell.

Now weeks have sped,  
 There is joy in the castle beside the shore,  
 For the lady fair and the youth will wed,  
 He will not leave her more.

But sometimes he'll go to pray and weep  
 'Neath a marble cross by a nameless grave,  
 To pray for the soul that came over the deep,  
 An erring friend to save.

\* \* \* \* \*

Unselfish love is a heavenly balm,  
 For guilt-stricken mortals it pardon wins,  
 The wanderer wild it protects from harm ;  
 And covers a cloud of sins.

## THE LEGEND OF LLYN CWELLYN.

## I.

THE summit of Snowdon was wrapped in mist,  
 And a heavy cloud lay on Mynydd Mawr,  
 As lightly the delicate dewdrops kissed  
 Llyn Cwellyn's wan face at the midnight hour.

'Twas the midnight hour but it was not dark,  
 For the moonbeams shone through the vapour grey,  
 And over the water there flickered a spark,  
 And a white flame danced in the torrent's spray.

But the night was still, not a sound was heard  
 Save the musical flow of the rippling stream,  
 And away on the moorland a lonely bird  
 Aroused by the moonlight uttered a scream.

Young Meredith walked through the drizzling rain  
 To his lonely home by true Gellert's tomb ;  
 The cloud-covered rocks were like ghosts : a strain  
 Of mystical music he heard in the gloom.

What meant the sweet strain and the flickering flame ?  
 The sprites of the lake were at play that night,  
 And Meredith's pulses beat high as he came  
 To a glade that was full of unearthly light ;

Where glittering dewdrops like diamonds shone,  
 And a little pond lay like a mirror of glass,  
 And around, giant boulders looked ghostly and wan,  
 And clouds flitted lightly across the grass.

Oh, why grew the cheek of the traveller pale ?  
 There was something unearthly behind the cloud,  
 For aerial forms that were fair and frail  
 Danced there as the music grew wild and loud.

From a shadowy boulder he watched at play  
 The bright water-maidens in soft raiment dight,  
 Their arms were entwined, and their smiles were gay ;  
 'Twas a vision of joy in the silver light.

A vision of delicate forms that swayed  
 In time to a wild Æolian air,  
 Fair feet that in regular cadence played,  
 And glittering tresses of golden hair.

As the dancers drew nigh to the boulder grey  
 A beautiful maiden sat down to rest ;  
 Then a human kiss met the brow of the fay,  
 And a hand was laid on her gentle breast.

A thick cloud suddenly darkened the night,  
 The sweet vision faded, the strain was still,  
 But the youth whispered love to the fairy bright,  
 And kneeling awaited her soft " I will."

" Can a mere-maid marry a mortal mate ? "  
 " Oh, yes, if they really love," he said.  
 But she,— " My sire dwells in the mountain spate,  
 My mother was born in the haunted glade.

“ I now am a maiden, but often have seen,  
 As I sailed on a cloud in the morning wind,  
 My Meredith tread on the mountain green,  
 And for mortal's love I have bitterly pined.

“ Through love I am yours, and through love you are  
 mine,  
 But a word of distrust will turn joy into pain,  
 For your dear self and home I must sadly resign,  
 And weeping return to the fayland again.”

“ Oh ! never can anger come 'twixt us, my dear,”  
 He answered, so straight to his home in the vale  
 With Meredith went the fair maid of the mere :—  
 There were voices that night in the summer gale.

## II.

The happiest home in that country fair  
 Was Meredith's cot by the murmuring stream ;  
 For beauty and love and delight were there,  
 And life was as sweet as a joyous dream.

The home of contentment it was that shone  
 With an infant's smile and sweet innocent life,  
 With a mother's joy in her little one,  
 With the tender love of a beautiful wife.

And Meredith prospered, his lambs on the wild  
 Were ever as safe as if penned in fold,  
 The rain fell softly, the frosts were mild,  
 His cornfields in autumn shone yellow as gold.

For kind were the fairies, and oft he saw  
 Sweet faces smile on him from out the spate,  
 But clear through the grey mist on Mynydd Mawr  
 Shone terrible eyes glowing fiercely with hate.

His wife whispered wildly,—“ Your rival is there,  
 His spirit is crafty, his potence is dread,  
 He rode on the tempest, he came in the air,  
 He wooed me, but ever his presence I fled.

“ Beware of his craft and his cruel power,  
 He ever is striving to ruin our bliss.  
 If wrath come between us, in that fell hour  
 I fain must submit to his odious kiss.”

He shuddered, her voice came as hollow and wild  
 As o'er the black ocean the sea-mew's cry :  
 He kissed her and tenderly clasped his child,  
 To banish the fear from his wife's blue eye.

The days flitted by and he saw no more  
 The terrible eyes, the weird voices were still ;  
 There was peace and quiet and joy as before,  
 And content in the homestead beneath the hill.

### III.

The bud may be blighted before it flower,  
 The seeds sown in autumn may perish with frost,  
 And so to each mortal there cometh an hour  
 When joys may be deepened or peace may be lost.



So fell it to Meredith : one wild eve,  
 When crossing the ridge of the windy mount,  
 He fancied he saw,—How it made him grieve !—  
 His wife by the side of the murmuring fount.

('Twas only a wile of his crafty foe),  
 But her musical voice he believed he heard,  
 Returning with utterance sweet and low  
 An impassioned reply to a passionate word ;

And her gentle face in the moonlight glowed,  
 So it seemed, with a look that he knew right well,  
 While from out the grot where the fountain flowed  
 The eyes of his foe cast their terrible spell.

In anger he rushed towards the phantom form,  
 But full in the light of the silver moonbeam,  
 As swift as a cloud in a mountain storm  
 Before him it fled towards his home by the stream.

All desolate seemed the fair earth that night,  
 As he wearily hurried adown the steep,  
 And bitterly thought of a broken plight,  
 For the anguish of doubting in love is deep.

So home he came ; oh, how fatally blind  
 Is the mortal whose spirit is dark with ire !  
 His dear wife sat with her arms entwined  
 Around his babe by the homestead fire ;

And softly she sang to her sleeping child,  
 A ditty of love to a fairyland air,  
 And sweetly, as Meredith came, she smiled,  
 And bright was his home with her womanly care.

But her truth and her love from his sight were hid  
By the phantom seen in the moon's sad rays,  
And his own true wife he cruelly chid,  
Forgetting the sweetness of bygone days.

There was woeful pain in her gentle face,  
As she laid her child in his little bed,  
Then clasped him again in a last embrace,  
As sadly as one who hangs over the dead.

A cloud flitted slowly across the hall,  
And a cry of agony rent the air,  
The door was of oak, and of stone the wall,  
But gone from his home was the Undine fair.

And Meredith never again may see,  
The light of her beauty his chamber fill,  
But often when clouds lie on mountain and lea  
He feels that she loves and is near him still.

## THE OUTCAST.

## I.

SLOWLY and sadly she wandered that day  
From the house of the gallant who'd led her astray,  
For her he had spurned in his selfish dismay  
When he saw how her beauty had faded away.

For a terrible sickness had laid her low ;—  
'Twas a year since she left her glad home to go,  
In the dead of the night that none might know,  
With the man she loved with a passionate glow.—

And during her sickness he never came near,  
Though she waited and wondered with many a tear :  
And then came across her the terrible fear  
That perhaps he no longer held her dear.

Her beauty had passed like the sunset glow,  
When she saw him again, but she could not know  
How hard was his heart ;—Oh ! the dreadful blow  
Which struck her dumb, when he bade her go.

Tottering feebly, his threshold she crossed,  
Into the desolate winter and frost :  
Her soul was with cruellest agony tossed,  
As sadly and wildly she wailed " I am lost."

Oh ! where should she seek for a refuge that night ?  
 She looked at the moon with its cold cruel light,  
 And she thought of her home, and remembered her flight,  
 In a moment of madness, from duty and right.

Tearless agony came with the thought,  
 And despair settled down on her soul distraught,  
 As through the dark maze of her mind she sought  
 For guidance, but none in her anguish was brought.

No hope came to comfort,—of light not a gleam ;—  
 The past lay behind as a horrible dream,  
 The future could never its errors redeem ;  
 She saw but despair in the misty moonbeam.

She wearily wandered she knew not where,  
 Through the silent, deserted thoroughfare,  
 Till she came to a bridge, and stopping there,  
 Sat down in her grief on the cold water-stair.

Though the night was dark and the wind was chill,  
 She longed but for peace in the world of ill.  
 She looked at the water ; it flowed so still,  
 It seemed like a strong, irresistible will :

It bound her thoughts as she wildly gazed,  
 And it fixed itself in her mind amazed,  
 As a peaceful home for a soul half crazed,  
 As a peaceful home.—With her hand she raised

A pebble and dropped it into the wave,  
 The water flowed on,—“ What a quiet grave,”  
 She thought,—“ but a moment I need be brave,  
 I will end my grief.”—Is there none to save ?

Far away that night a mother's prayer  
 Was carried by angels swift through the air,  
 That God, in His infinite mercy, would spare  
 A wandering child who had left her care.

"Sister, oh, why are you here all alone,"  
 And the voice had a tender compassionate tone,  
 "Whatever your sorrow I'll make it my own,  
 And show you joys sweeter than aught you have known."

The nun, in her charity, spoke not in vain,  
 'Twas her mission to comfort where'er she saw pain,  
 Her tender compassion would gently regain,  
 The heart that had long in its bitterness lain.

There was joy among angels, and triumph in hell ;—  
 But love is resistless, and none can tell  
 The might of the penitent's prayer as it fell,  
 Daily for him she had loved but too well.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sadly and wearily drifted the years ;  
 Never the scarring of sin disappears,  
 For the penitent's joy must be mingled with tears,  
 And hopes of forgiveness are shadowed by fears.

\* \* \* \* \*

## II.

The moon shone bright upon the ocean deep,  
 As a lone hermit waking from short sleep,  
 Knelt in his cave upon the headland steep,  
 That through the night-watch he might pray and weep.

Far off that night a convent passing bell,  
 For dying sister tolled a mournful knell,  
 The hermit caught the echo as it fell,  
 By angels wafted over hill and dell.

And with the echo, strange and undefined,  
 There passed an awe mysterious o'er his mind,  
 As if a spirit came upon the wind,  
 Who with his guilty past had been entwined.

A misty shadow fell upon the wall,  
 He heard a voice whose sweet tones did recall  
 The memory of days before his fall,  
 And then a pallid corpse in funeral pall

Passed slow before him, and his heart grew cold  
 With agonised remembrance, and behold,  
 As far away the deep bell sadly tolled,  
 A gentle voice brought back the days of old.—

“ We meet again to part for evermore ;  
 It may be on a brighter, happier shore,  
 When years of pain ecstatic being o'er,  
 Upborne by love immortal we shall soar

“ For ever upwards. In the angelic strain,  
 Perchance in echo we shall catch again  
 Each other's voices, or on Heaven's plain  
 Rapt in a vision blest we may regain

“ The sense of some diviner gift we knew,  
 And in each other loved : 'Tis not for you  
 And me, whose love was sinful, to renew  
 In heaven the bliss of earth, as they may do,

“ Whose love below was holy, so we part  
For ever.” The form faded, and a dart  
Of bitterest anguish, and remorseful smart  
Pierced the ascetic’s soul and broke his heart.

The brilliant morning dawned and cast its glow  
Within the cave, the ocean rolled below  
Majestic, but the scene will never know  
Again the ancient hermit or his woe.







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