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HEINRICH HEINE'S

Book of Songs.

A TRANSLATION BY

JOHN E. WALLIS.



LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.



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



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Translator's Preface.

MOST of the poems in this volume were translated in 1840, when I was a student at a German university, and the rest in the years immediately following. They were translated without any view to publication, not in the order in which they stand, but according to the impulse of the moment, and without any uniform plan for adjusting the respective claims of the letter, the spirit, and the melody of the original. These are the three victims of every translator,—all must suffer, and any partiality for any one can only be indulged at the expense of greater cruelty to one or both of the others. In 1852, I was persuaded by a German friend to revise and arrange my translations for publication in Germany. I did so; but Time, which had increased my sense of the difficulty of the task, and shown me the numberless faults and short-







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comings in my execution, had not taught me how to mend or avoid them, and I thought the "Book of Songs" had better remain unknown to the English public till some more competent artist had clothed it in a worthier dress than I had provided for it.

I have no very good reason to give for departing from this wise resolution ; I have not changed my opinion on the demerits of my work, and I cannot plead the excuse of being "obliged by hunger and request of friends." But in the last two years such frequent notices of Heine and his works have appeared in our literary journals,—such abundant recognition has been made, both of his high rank among German poets and of the extraordinary difficulty of translating from him, that I began to think an excuse was afforded for publication. I was further encouraged by the appearance, with favourable notices from critics, of translations from Heine, which included portions of the "Book of Songs ;" for I hoped where they had obtained high praise, mine might escape severe censure. But my chief reason was, that as the time had come when, in the judgment of a publisher, there was a demand for a translation of Heine, it was desirable to meet the demand by sup-







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plying a translation of his best book,—the one on which his earliest and most lasting reputation rests, and which contains so few of those blemishes which disfigure his other writings, that they can be omitted without changing the character or impairing the integrity of the work.

On this point there are differences of opinion. In a collection from Heine's Poems published a year or two ago, the principle of selection is recognized, but would seem to be exactly the opposite to that which has governed me; and in the complete translation of Heine's works now appearing in America, I see that the translator declares himself bound by a sense of literary fidelity to retain the passages "which the majority of his readers might wish omitted." I entirely repudiate this canon of criticism, but the omissions which I have made are very few. Some half-dozen poems are omitted altogether; their places are noted by the succession of the numerals: of these, three are omitted from mere inability to render adequately the author's meaning, when depending on a play upon the words. In some half-dozen instances I have also omitted a stanza, or a few lines, which, in my opinion, no duty of fidelity could







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bind a translator to reproduce, and the omission of which, instead of being an injury, is a service, both to the author and the public.

The life of Heine contains few facts for a biographer. He was born in 1799, of Jewish parents, at Dusseldorf, in Rhineland. He studied at Bonn, Berlin, and Göttingen, where he gained his degree as doctor of laws. In 1831 he took up his residence at Paris, to escape the dangers to which his liberal politics exposed him in his own country. During the last eight years of his life he was a prey to a painful and hopeless malady, which terminated in death in the present year. After arriving at manhood, he abjured Judaism, and became a Protestant. But this is not the place for tracking his many variations; after being a pupil of Hegel, and a Pantheist, he lived to declare German philosophy to be pure Atheism, and as such to renounce it. He married a Catholic wife according to the Catholic ritual, and subscribed the engagement that the offspring of the wedding should be Catholic; but so far as his religious convictions can be collected from his writings, he died in the faith in which he had been brought up—
a Jew.





TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

His works are numerous ; those in prose consist of—

SKETCHES OF TRAVEL, in 4 vols.

THE SALON, in 4 vols.

THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL.

LETTERS ON THE NOBLESSE.

A BOOK ON BÖRNE.

FRENCH AFFAIRS.

MISCELLANIES, 3 vols.

He was a constant contributor to journals and periodicals. His poems, beside the "Book of Songs," consist of—

ATTA TROLL.

NEUE GEDECHTE. 1844.



GERMANY ; A WINTER'S TALE. 1844.

ROMANZERO. 1851.

and twenty-three pieces among his Miscellanies, published in 1854.

A few words upon the Book of Songs.

From the first appearance, in 1827, of these poems in their collected form, they have enjoyed a popularity in Germany which is not likely to diminish. The theme is trite, viz., a poet's disappointed love ; but it has never been treated with more variety, freshness of feeling, or originality. Probably, the chief power of Heine, beside his extraordinary mastery over language and his technical skill as a versi-







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fier, lies in his impressionability, and in the immediateness with which his impressions are conveyed to the reader. Every thought that passed across his mind,—every object that struck his senses,—he possessed the faculty of instantly appropriating and turning into song, so vivid and natural and spontaneous, that there is nothing in German literature to compare with it.

The second half of the “Book of Songs” is full of instances of this power; in the “Return,” the poet in his travels is led from the Rhine, where the Lurlei, the sentinel, the forester’s hut, suggest nothing but thoughts of despairing gloom, to the seashore, where the same effect continues, and thence to the town where the object of his attachment had resided. He wanders through the streets,—he revisits her house,—he gazes on her picture; the parsonage in the churchyard supplies him with a picture of family misery; he looks out from his windows on the cheerless rainy night; and in the marketings of the old woman, and the selfish indolence of her lovely daughter, finds new food for his misanthropy.

In the earlier portions of the book the poet had been under the full influence of a present passion:







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in the "Return" this has already become a thing of the past; and towards the end, he is able to play with it, to lay it aside, or to resume it, without, however, for a moment escaping from its influence. Pathos and mockery, tenderness and sarcasm, cries of agony and bursts of wild laughter, chase one another through the book. His wanderings conduct him to the shores of the North Sea, and there he communes with Nature,—his only companions the waves, the skies, the winds, and the stars,—painting, in a series of his most characteristic poems, sun-pictures of every natural phenomenon, but never, in the wildest caprices of his fancy, losing his individuality, or forgetting his misfortune.

I have been speaking of Heine's poetry, and not of my translations; let the reader, who finds little of all this in the English version, master the original.

But who was she who could inspire a passion so absorbing? From the "Book of Songs" we can only gather that she was small, cold, and insignificant, with blue eyes, light hair, and a pretty face. Probably, in this absence of all character lay the strength of her charm, for on such a *tabula rasa* the poetical lover paints all the glories, splendours, and beauties





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of his own imaginings, and worships them in the belief that they are native qualities revealed only to him, the fortunate discoverer,—a delusion which would be impossible were the ground already occupied by a strongly-marked picture, with outline, colour, light and shade of its own. Such, at any rate, is Heine's own account.

In his latest poems, published in 1854, thirty years after the "Book of Songs" was written, he lays the misery of his life to her charge; he declares her fully acquitted at the Bar of Reason, and guiltless both in word and deed, but says, that she stood mute and passive while he burned, and that in his dreams an accusing voice charges her with his ruin, and adduces evidence of her guilt. He receives a letter from her, which he calls a lightning-flash illuming the abyss, and showing the depth of his misery. "Even thee," he says, "pity seizes thee, who in my life's wilderness hast stood so silent,—like a statue, marble fair and marble cool!" "How wretched must he be," he cries, "when even *she* begins to speak, when tears come from *her* eyes, when even the stone feels compassion for him."

And this is the picture which he draws of the lady :







TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

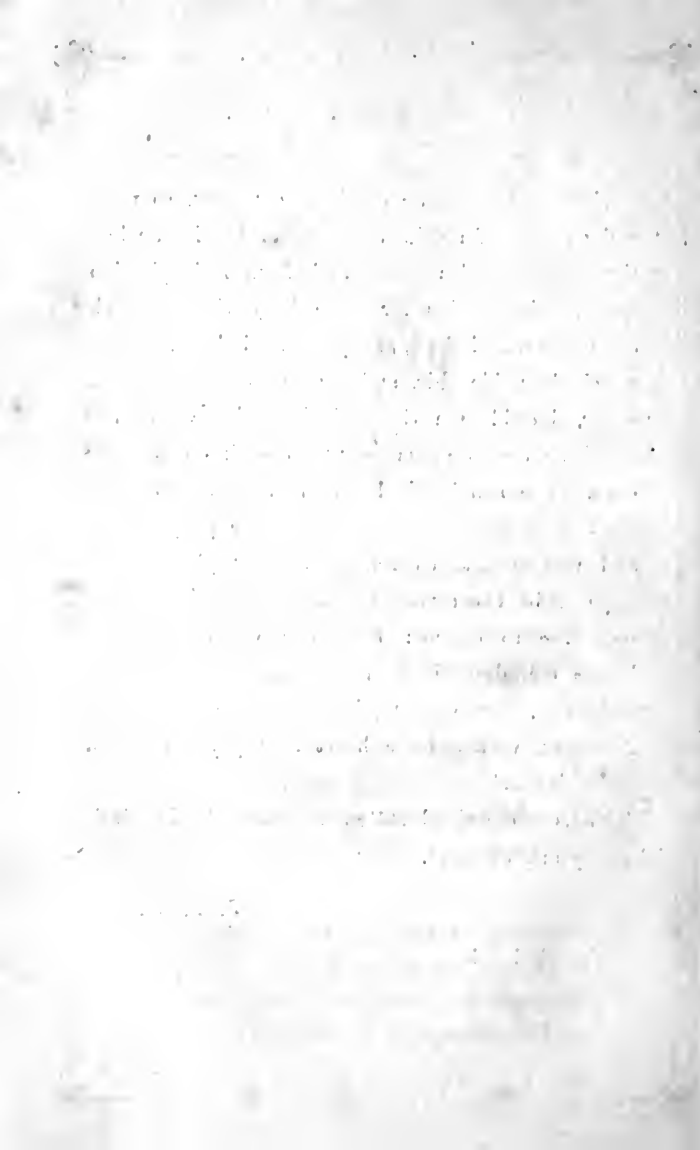
“Thou wast a blonde maiden, so proper, so neat,
“and so cool. In vain I waited for the hour when
“thy heart would uncloset, and from it inspiration
“spring — inspiration for those lofty things which
“common sense, indeed, and prose hold cheap, but for
“which the noble, fair, and good on this earth glow,
“suffer, bleed! On the Rhine’s banks, where the
“vine-hills rise, we were wont to walk on summer
“days. The sun laughed; from the loving cups of
“the flowers sweet scents gushed; the purple roses
“and nettles sent us red kisses that glowed like
“flames; in the sorriest dandelion there seemed an
“ideal life to bloom: but thou walkedst calmly
“beside me, dressed in white satin, full of propriety
“and taste, like a young lady’s picture painted by
“Netscher, with a little heart in thy stays like a
“little glacier.”



This is a one-sided statement, no doubt, but it is
the only one we have.

J. E. W.

March, 1856.







Preface.

THE forest of our Fairy Tales !
The Limes, with blossom full !
The flooding splendours of the Moon
My troubled spirits lull.

And on I went, and as I went,
Sweet music round me rose ;
The singing of the nightingale
Of love and lovers' woes.

She sings of love and lovers' woes,
Of laughter and of tears,
Jubilant sorrow and sobbing joy,—
Like dreams of bygone years.

BOOK OF SONGS.

And on I went, and as I went,
I saw before me lie,
Upon the plain, a palace fair,
With gables quaint and high ;

The windows closed, and everywhere
A silence that appals,—
As Death the only dweller were
In those deserted halls.

Before the gate there lay a Sphinx,—
A blending of beauty and dread,—
A lion's body, feet, and claws,
A woman's breasts and head :

A beautiful woman ! her white eyes gleam'd
With wild desires unspent ;
Her full, voluptuous lips were curved,
And smiled with a mute consent.

So sweetly sang the nightingale,
I could not choose but yield,—
And, as I kiss'd the lovely face,
I felt my doom was seal'd :



PREFACE.

For lo! the marble 'gan to live,—
The stone began to throb,—
She drank my burning kisses in
With many a thirsty sob.

She drain'd my very breath away,
And—all on fire—at last,
She grasp'd me with the lion's claws,
And, rending, held me fast.

Rapturous torture! blissful woe!
Pleasure and pain immense!
The kiss was ecstasy,—but the clasp,
Agony most intense!

The nightingale sang: "O lovely Sphinx!
"O love! what meaneth this;
"That thou shouldst mix a deadly pang
"With every taste of bliss?"




"O lovely Sphinx! the riddle read,
"And make the mystery clear;
"I've brooded o'er its hidden sense
"For many a thousand year."





YOUTHFUL SORROWS.

1817—1821.





Dreams.

I.

I DREAM'D in days of yore of wild love glowing,
Of myrtles, roses, fair locks floating long,—
Sweet lips, and bitter speeches from them flowing,
And mournful strains of melancholy song.

My dreams are flown, and broken are my slumbers,
Life's dearest vision long has pass'd away ;
Naught now remains, save what in plaintive numbers
I pour'd abroad in many a fleeting lay.

Thou lingerest, Orphan Song ! we, too, must sever ;
Go, seek the vision that I long have lost,
And greet it for me, shouldst thou find it ever,—
Breath, as thou art, I send thee to a Ghost !

II.

A DREAM of fearful mystery
Delighted and distracted me.
Strange forms of terror haunt me still,
And heart and bosom wildly thrill.

I saw a garden wondrous fair,
And I was fain to wander there ;
Uncounted flow'rets glisten'd bright,
And fill'd my senses with delight.

The birds, from many a leafy spray,
Sang many a loving roundelay ;
The sun with golden splendour glow'd,—
A thousand tints the flow'rets show'd.

Balsamic odours everywhere
Came floating on the summer air ;
And all was smiling, all was bright,
As eager to rejoice my sight.



DREAMS.

And, 'mid the flower-bespangled glade,
On marble floor a fountain play'd ;
And there I spied a maiden bright,—
She stoop'd, and wash'd a robe of white.

Her eyes were mild, her cheeks were fair,
Like pictured saint with golden hair ;
And, as I gaze, methinks I trace
A strange, and yet familiar face.

Her task, meanwhile, the maiden plies,
And chants a song in wondrous wise :
“ Flow, flow, water flow,
“ Wash the linen white as snow.”

With lingering step her side I seek,
And in a low-toned whisper speak :
“ O gentle maid ! so wondrous fair !
“ Say, who the robe of white shall wear ? ”

“ Be ready soon,” she spoke aloud ;
“ I wash for thee thy dying shroud ! ”
And scarcely had the words been said,—
Like wreaths of mist the vision fled.

BOOK OF SONGS.

The trance continued, and I stood
Deep in a wild and gloomy wood ;
Huge trees their arms above me cross'd,—
I stood beneath, in musings lost :

When hark ! a sullen echo woke,
Like far-off woodman's heavy stroke ;
Through brake and thicket swift I pace,
And gain, at length, an open space.

There, in the middle of the wood,
A mighty oak-tree towering stood ;
And there the wondrous maid I see,—
She hews the knotted old oak-tree.

Stroke follows stroke, as, swift and strong,
She swings her axe, and sings her song :
“ Blade, blade, broad and bright,
“ Hew the oaken plank aright.”

With lingering step her side I seek,
And in a low-toned whisper speak :
“ For whom, O maid ! so wondrous fair !
“ Dost thou the oaken plank prepare ? ”



DREAMS.

“Thy time is short,” swift answer’d she ;
“A coffin this,—and meant for thee !”
And scarcely had the words been said,
Like wreaths of mist the vision fled.

A dreary waste, without a bound,
A barren heath lay all around ;
In passive wonder there I stood,
And secret terror froze my blood.

Aroused, at length, I wander on
Where something faintly glimmering shone ;
And, hastening up, I see once more
The lovely maid I saw before.

Upon the barren heath the maid
Was digging with a sexton’s spade ;
I scarce dared gaze at what I saw,
She look’d so fair, yet full of awe.

Her task the lovely maiden plies,
And chants a song in wondrous wise :
“Spade, spade, sharp and strong,
“Dig the grave deep and long.”

BOOK OF SONGS.

With lingering step her side I seek,
And in a low-toned whisper speak :
“ Tell me, tell me, maiden dear !
“ What the grave betokens here.”

“ Be still, be still,” she answer'd me,
“ The grave I dig is dug for thee !”
And even as she thus replied,
The yawning chasm opens wide.

I gaze adown the fearful steep,
Cold shudderings o'er my heartstrings creep ;
And, while the dark abysses quake,
I plunge in headlong—and awake.



DREAMS.

III.

I HAD a dream,—and in my dream I spied
Myself in black tail-coat and silken vest,
With snow-white ruffles, for a party dress'd,—
And the loved Loved-One standing at my side.
Then, with a bow, I said, “Are you the Bride?
“You’ve my best wishes, I am sure,—my best!”
Yet scarcely from my suffocating breast
Could I drag forth the drawling words of pride.
And, on a sudden, burst the bitter tears,—
The bitter, burning tears from “darling’s” eyes,—
And the loved image fades, and disappears.
Oh, you sweet eyes; dear stars that shone so kindly!
Though you have told so many, many lies,
Asleep and waking, I believe ye blindly!

IV.

ONCE, in my dreams, a little man I spied,
Who walk'd on stilts, with steps whole yards apart;
He wore white linen, and his clothes were smart,—
But he was very foul and coarse inside :
Inside he was most pitiful and base,
Yet kept a show of much external state ;
Of honour and of courage he would prate,
And perk'd and strutted with affected grace.
“ And know'st thou who it is ? Come here and see ! ”
So spoke the God of Dreams, and slyly show'd
A picture in a magic frame to me.
The little man before the altar stood,—
My love was by him ; both said “ Yes,” and then
A thousand devils laugh'd, and cried “ Amen ! ”



DREAMS.

V.

WHAT makes my blood so madly flow?
What makes my heart so wildly glow?
Swift through my veins the life-stream pours,
A greedy flame my heart devours!

Fast flows my blood, wild glows the flame,
Because a Vision to me came;
There came the gloomy Son of Night,
And dragg'd me forth by magic might.

A stately mansion soon we found,
With mirth and music ringing round,
Lit up with torch and taper tall:
I stepp'd within the lofty hall,

And lo! a merry marriage feast,
And round the board full many a guest;
And when the wedded pair I spied,—
Ah, me! my true love was the Bride!

BOOK OF SONGS.

'Twas even she, and, well-a-day !
A stranger was the bridegroom gay ;
Hard by the bridal chair of state,
I stood, in silence, desolate.

And music rose around,—to me
The joyous strains were misery.
The bride, she look'd so glad, so bless'd,—
Her hand the happy bridegroom press'd.

The bridegroom fills the goblet up ;
He drinks, and gives the bride the cup ;
With sweetest smile, I see her thank—
Ah, woe is me ! my blood she drank !

A rosy apple from the board
The bride presents unto her lord ;
He takes his knife, the fruit to part,—
Ah, me ! he cuts into my heart !

They mingle glances fond and warm,
The bridegroom clasps her in his arm ;
On her fair cheek his kisses glow,—
O Death ! thy icy kiss I know.



DREAMS.

My lips were seal'd, my tongue was tied ;
To speak or move I vainly tried :
Hark ! 'tis the music of the dance,
And lo ! the happy pair advance.

And mute and motionless am I,
While round the merry dancers fly ;—
He whispers low, I hear not what,
She blushes, but reproves him not.

* * * *

VI.

IN happy sleep, in stilly night,
There came to me, by magic might,
By magic might, and gramarye,
The maid I loved so longingly.

I gaze on her with wild delight,
I see her smiling soft and bright,
She smiles, and oh! my heart beats high,
And fast and fierce leaps forth the cry:

“Take all, take everything that’s mine,
“All, all I have, be freely thine,
“Let me but clasp thee as my bride,
“From midnight until morning tide.”

Then gazes on me steadily,
So fondly, sadly, meaningly,
The lovely maid, and says but this:
“Give me thy everlasting bliss.”



DREAMS.

“ My life is sweet, my blood runs high,
“ I'll yield them both, without a sigh,
“ All, all, dear maid, I'll give for thee,—
“ But not my Immortality.”

Full soon the hasty words are said,
But lovelier blooms the lovely maid,
And ever, ever says but this :
“ Give me thy everlasting bliss.”

Her words upon my hearing knell,
And o'er my heart, with billowy swell,
Roll flames of fire ; 'twixt Life and Death,
Storm-toss'd I lie, and gasp for breath.

And lo ! a host of angels white
Come hovering round in rosy light ;
But close behind with greedy swoop,
A dark and furious hellish troop.

And now the battle rages high,
Till, ah ! the vanquish'd angels fly ;
And soon thereon the hellish crew
In wreaths of mist are lost to view.

BOOK OF SONGS.

But I, half-mad with joy's excess,
Enfold her in a fond caress,
And fondly clinging to my breast,
Her burning tears fall unrepres'd.

She weeps ; my heart the reason knows ;
Her rosy lips my kisses close.—
“ Oh ! check, my love, these idle tears ;
“ Oh ! yield thee to thy lover's prayers.”

“ Oh ! yield thee to my loving flame ”—
Then froze the blood through all my frame ;
The solid earth's foundations rock,
It rends in twain with thunder shock.

And from the black abyss arose
A hideous host of hellish foes ;
And lo ! the lovely maid is flown,
And I am left forlorn alone.

And thronging round with laugh and shout,
In circles dance the fiendish rout,
And crowding nigh they seize on me,
And laugh with yells of mockery.



DREAMS.

And ever closer grows the ring,
And still in horrid strain they sing :
“ Heaven is lost, and hope is o'er,
“ Ours thou art for evermore !”



VII.

THE money is paid thee ; what need of delay ?
Thou black sullen caitiff, why loiter and stay ?
All ready and ripe in my chamber I bide,
And midnight approaches, but where is the bride ?

The breeze of the churchyard is dreary, I ween ;—
Ye breezes, declare if my love ye have seen.
Pale phantoms a many throng round me and press,
And nodding and curtsying, gibber—" Oh yes ! "

Out with it ; what message, I fain would inquire,
Thou blackamoor rogue, with thy liv'ry of fire ?
" Her gracious ladyship sent me on ;
" Her six-dragon coach will arrive anon."

Grey Mannikin, what do you want of me ?
My old dead Pedagogue, what brings thee ?
He eyes me with silent and sorrowful look,
And shaking his head totters back to his nook.



DREAMS.

What makes my old hound so whimper and whine ?
Or the eyes of my tom-cat grimly shine ?
The howls of the women distractedly chime,
My nurse must needs sing me a nursery rhyme.

Oh, spare me your sing-song, my nursery friend,
Your Eia-po-peia came long to an end ;
To-day is my wedding, and then for the feast,—
And see there approaching each elegant guest.

Oh, look, how each of the noble band,
Instead of a hat, has his head in his hand !
You spindle-shank'd gentry in full gallows state,
The wind has been quiet, what makes you so late ?

See, here comes old Besom-stick, mother of fun,—
Come, bless me, my mother, am I not your son ?
Then quivers the mouth in the visage so wan :
“ Amen for Eternity ! ” grimly it ran.

Twelve fiddlers limp in, with bones bleach'd by
the wind,
A sightless old glee-woman totters behind.
Jack Pudding himself then, old Tricolour Jack,
Brings in the gravedigger astride on his back.

BOOK OF SONGS.

The crooked-back'd flower-girls dancing their reels,
Run wild round the room, turning head over heels.
You owls in the ivy with grasshopper shanks,
And rib-bones all clattering, spare me your pranks !

All Hell it is evident on me is loosed.
They scream and they crowd ; what a terrible host !
The waltz of damnation before me they start,—
Be still, then, and wait for the loved of my heart.

You rabble, be silent, or pack yourselves out !
My words are completely drown'd in the rout.
Stay, surely there rattles a carriage-and-four ;
Cook, Cooky, where are you ? run quick to the door.

Ah ! welcome, my dearest, how goes it to-day ?
Thrice welcome, your Rev'ence, be seated, I pray !
Sir Priest, with the tail, and the club-foot, and snout,
Believe me your worship's obsequious Trout !

My beautiful bride, why pale and dumb ?
The wedding is ready, the priest is come.
Full dearly I pay him, a terrible fee—
Yet deem it a trifle that wins for me thee.



DREAMS.

Kneel by me, my bride, oh ! close unto me kneel !
She kneels there, she sinks there ; what raptures I feel !
She sinks on my heart, on my full swelling breast,
I clasp her and hold her with shuddering zest.

Her gold waving ringlets our ecstasies hide ;
Our hearts throb in unison, bridegroom and bride :
They throb with the pangs and the transports of love,
And soar into Heaven united above.

Our hearts indeed swim in a sea of delight,
Above in God's city and sanctified height ;
But over our heads is a horrible spell,—
The hand that lies on them was branded in Hell.

'Tis the dark King of Terrors, fell monarch of night,
That acts as the priest in the ill-omen'd rite ;
From a blood-bedew'd Missal he murmurs the verse,
His prayer is blaspheming, his blessing is curse.

And they shriek and they howl, and their teeth
they gnash,

'Tis the roaring of ocean, the thunder's crash ;
Then glare on a sudden the lurid flames,—
“ Amen for Eternity ! ” mother exclaims.

VIII.

I PASS'D by the house of my lady fair,
And wander'd at midnight in crazed despair,
And lo! as I pass by the churchyard-gate,
The grave-stones beckon and bid me wait.

Was it the harper's old tombstone?
Was it the glimmering moon that shone?
Then rises a whisper: "I come, my friends!"
And a misty form from the grave ascends.

'Twas the harper himself, his grave he quits,
And perched aloft on his tombstone sits;
With rapid touch he sweeps the strings,
And in shrill and tuneless accents sings:

"Know ye, ye strings, so sad, so still,
"The strain that wildly used to thrill
 "Our hearts in the world above?
"Tis heavenly bliss where the angels dwell,
"The devils they call it the pain of Hell,
 "But its name on earth is *Love*."

DREAMS.

The last word scarce on his lips had died,
When the graves in a moment open'd wide ;
A ghostly throng from the earth swarm out,
Surround the harper and shrilly shout :

“ Love ! Love ! to thee we owe
“ That we sleep in death below :
“ Thine the hand that seal'd our eyes—
“ Wherefore call us to arise ? ”

Wailing and sobbing with howlings blend,
Shrieks and cries and roars ascend ;
The harper a maddening swarm surrounds,
And he strikes the chords till his harp resounds :

“ Bravo ! Bravo ! This is well !
“ Welcome all
“ Who heard the call,
“ And understood the spell !

“ Though as years go slowly by,
“ Still as mice below we lie,
“ These few hours in mirth shall fly !

“ If all approve,—
“ See that nought that lives is nigh.
“ Oh ! what fools were we when living,
“ Crazed, our every moment giving
“ To a crazy Love.

BOOK OF SONGS.

“ Sport is plentiful to-day,
“ Every one shall truly say,
 “ How here he earn'd his place.
“ How he was hunted and driven,
“ How he was mangled and riven,
 “ While crazy Love gave chase.”

Then hopp'd from the circle, as light as the wind,
A meagre being, that droned and whined :—

“ I was a tailor's apprentice,
 “ With needle and with shears ;
“ I was so quick and handy
 “ With needle and with shears ;
“ Then came my master's daughter,
 “ With needle and with shears ;
“ And to the heart she stuck me
 “ With needle and with shears.”

Loud laugh'd the ghosts in merry rout ;
The second with earnest mien stepp'd out :

“ Don Rinaldo Rinaldini,
“ Schinderhannes, Orlandini,
“ And especially Charles Moor,
“ Were my guiding stars of yore.



DREAMS.

“E’en as they—to use the expression—
“Have I felt the tender passion,
“And a maiden most divine
“Haunted this poor brain of mine.

“And I sigh’d and bill’d and coo’d,
“Till in Love’s distracted mood,
“I allow’d my hand to stray,
“Where my neighbour’s pocket lay.

“But the beadle’s rage flamed high,
“That I dared to seek to dry
“Tears of sympathy and grief
“With my neighbour’s handkerchief.

“So to ancient custom true,
“I was led ’twixt bailiffs two,
“Till the great and holy gaol
“Took me in her fostering pale.

“Lost in love, of passion full,
“There I sat and carded wool,
“Till Rinaldo’s spirit came,
“And released my soul from shame.”

BOOK OF SONGS.

Loud laugh'd the ghosts in merry rout ;
Tinsell'd and rouged the third stepp'd out :

“ I once was the King of the Drama,
“ And acted the lover's part ;
“ I shouted my wild, ‘ O Heavens !’
“ And sigh'd from the depths of my heart.

“ I liked to act Mortimer mostly,
“ Maria was always so fair !
“ Yet in spite of my natural gesture,
“ She ne'er for my meaning would care.

“ At the end once I shouted, despairing :
“ ‘ Maria, thou holiest star !’
“ And clutching the dagger alertly,
“ I stuck it a little too far.”

Loud laugh'd the ghosts in merry rout ;
The fourth in a pilot-coat stepp'd out :

“ From his chair aloft the Professor prated,
“ He prated, and I slept pleasantly there ;
“ And yet 'twould have pleased me a thousand times
better,
“ Had it been by the side of his daughter fair.



DREAMS.

“ From her window she tenderly nodded and duck’d,
“ The flower of all flowers my life’s bright light !
“ But the flower of all flowers at last was pluck’d
“ By a dry Philister, a wealthy wight.

“ So I cursed all women and rich Philisters,
“ And mix’d mandragora in my wine,—
“ And when I drank Brotherhood with Death,
“ He said : ‘ Fiducit, my name’s Friend Hein.’ ”

Loud laugh’d the ghosts in merry rout ;
With a rope round his neck the fifth stepp’d out :

“ Loud prated and boasted the Count at his wine,
“ Of his daughter fair and his diamonds fine.
“ What care I, O Count, for thy diamonds’ shine,
“ If the heart of thy daughter were but mine.

“ The Count kept both beneath lock and key,
“ And many a servant and guard had he ;
“ For no servant, nor lock, nor key did I care,
“ But mounted the ladder with cheerful air.

“ To her window I clamber, nor dream of fear,
“ When an angry cursing greets my ear :
“ ‘ Soft, soft, my lad, ’tis a game for two ;
“ ‘ I like fine diamonds as well as you.’ ”

BOOK OF SONGS.

“The Count thus mocks me caught in the fact,
“By a host of exulting slaves attack’d :
“‘Deuce take ye, I am no thief,’ I cried ;
“‘I only wanted to steal a bride.’

“In vain was talking, in vain advice,
“They got the rope prepared in a trice ;
“When the sun was risen he stared to see
“How I dangled dead from the gallows tree.”

Loud laugh’d the ghosts in merry rout ;
With his head in his hand the sixth stepped out :

“I was a poacher all through love,
“And gun in hand I beat the grove ;
“There comes from the branches a hollow croak :
“‘Heads off!—Heads off!’—the raven spoke.

“Oh! could I only find a dove,
“I’d take it home to give my love ;
“So thinking, full of fond desire,
“My quick eye roam’d o’er bush and brier.

“That cooing sound! that billing soft!—
“Two turtle-doves are sure aloft.
“With levell’d gun I steal more nigh ;
“And lo! my own betroth’d I spy.

DREAMS.

“ I saw my love, my dove, my bride,
“ A stranger clasp'd her to his side ;—
“ Now, ancient marksman, hit the mark !—
“ There lay the stranger stiff and stark.

“ And soon the hangman's stern array
 (“ I had the leading part to play)
“ Came through the grove. With hollow croak,—
“ “ Heads off ! ” “ heads off ! ” the raven spoke.”

Loud laugh'd the ghosts in merry rout ;
 'Twas the Harper himself that now stepp'd out :

“ I once could sing with the best,
“ But ne'er a song have I :
“ When the heart is torn from the breast,
“ 'Tis time for song to fly.”

And wilder the madd'ning laughter peal'd,
And the ghostly throngs in circles wheel'd ;
When the clock strikes one from the miinster dome,
And plunges each ghost with a howl in his tomb.

IX.

I LAY and slept—a blesséd sleep—
It hull'd my grief and care ;
When lo ! a vision to me came,
A maid divinely fair.

As marble was the maiden pale,
And wondrous to behold ;
Her eyes were bright with pearly tears,
Her locks were waving gold.

And lowly, lowly, gliding on,
The maid as marble pale,
She lies upon my heaving heart,
The maid as marble pale.

How thrills and throbs, with joy and pain,
My heart in furious glow !
Nor thrills nor throbs the beauty's breast—
'Tis cold as driven snow.



DREAMS.

“ My bosom neither thrills nor throbs,
“ ’Tis ice-cold to the sense ;
“ Yet well I know the joys of love,
“ And love’s omnipotence.

“ No rosy tinge is on my cheek,
“ And in my heart no blood ;
“ Yet struggle not with shuddering fear ;
“ To thee I’m kind and good.”

And wilder still she clings to me,
My senses ’gin to fail ;
Loud crows the cock—then melts in air
The maid as marble pale.



BOOK OF SONGS.

X.

FULL many a death-pale phantom
I've raised with words of might ;
They now refuse to leave me,
And seek their wonted night.

The wizard master's sentence
Escaped me in my dread ;
The ghosts of my creation
Now drag me to the dead.

Desist, ye gloomy demons !
Nor tear me thus away ;
Some joys may yet await me
Here in the rosy day.

I still must seek untiring
The flower so fair to see—
What aim has my existence,
Save that of loving thee ?



DREAMS.

Oh, could I but embrace thee,
And press thee to my heart !
But kiss thy lips and forehead
With what enraptured smart !

But from that mouth so lovely
One loving word obtain,—
I'd seek with joy directly,
Ye ghosts, your gloomy reign.

The ghosts have understood me,
And nod with horrid glee ;
Behold me come, my dearest ;
My dearest, lov'st thou me ?



Songs.

I.

EVERY morn I ask the question,
Shall I see my dear ?
Every eve I sigh the answer,
She has not been here.

All the night, in sleepless sorrow,
Lone I watch and weep ;
All the day I wander dreaming,
Tired, and half-asleep.



SONGS.

II.

It drives me restless to and fro!

Yet a few hours and she'll be here ;

Herself, the dearest of maidens dear.

Thou faithful heart, why beat'st thou so ?.

Oh, but the hours are an idle crew,

Easily sauntering through the day ;

Lazily yawning on their way.

Hurry ye, hurry ye, idle crew !

Rage and impatience goad my breast.

Oh, but the hours were never in love ;

Leagued in a cruel pact they move,

Spitefully mocking a lover's unrest.

III.

I WANDER'D one morn in the Forest,
Alone with my bosom's smart ;
The dreams of the past pursued me,
And crept to my secret heart.

Who taught ye the strain ye are singing,
Ye birds, that ye warble it so ?
Be still ; if my heart should hear ye,
'Twould only increase its woe.

“ There came once a fair girl singing,
“ She sang it again and again ;
“ We birds all listen'd and learn'd it,—
“ The beautiful golden strain.”

Oh, never again must you say so,
False bird on the old oak bough ;
Ye would rob me, I know, of my sorrow,—
But I trust nobody now.



SONGS.

IV.

LOVE, lay thy hand on my bosom here ;
List what a knocking and noise is there.
There dwells a carpenter strange to see ;
He hammers a coffin that's meant for me.

He knocks and hammers both night and day ;
He's driven already my sleep away.
Oh, master carpenter, hasten fast,
That I may slumber and rest at last.



BOOK OF SONGS.

V.

LOVELY cradle of my sorrows,
Grave where all my pleasures dwell ;
Lovely town, I now must leave thee,—
Here I breathe my last farewell.

Fare thee well, thou sacred threshold,
That my cherish'd love hast held ;
Fare thee well, thou spot so sacred,
Where I first her form beheld.

Had I never, never seen thee,
Lovely queen of every heart,
I had never been so wretched,—
Never known my present smart.

Yet thy love I never hoped for,
To thy hand I ne'er aspired ;
But to live, and know thee near me,
Was the utmost I desired.



SONGS.

But thou forcedst me to leave thee,
Proud and harsh thou bad'st farewell :
Madness riots in my senses,
And my heart is rent and ill.

Fainting, worn, a hopeless wand'rer,
O'er my cheerless path I roam,
Till my wearied head reposes
In a cold and distant tomb.



VI.

TARRY, thou impatient sailor,
I will follow thee anon ;
Virgins twain I leave behind me,—
Europe, and a dearer one.

Flow, ye tears of blood, flow freely,
Gush, my blood, from every vein ;
Let me write in blood the story
Of my unrelenting pain.

Nay, my love, why shrink and shudder
Just to-day to see my blood ?
Think how many a year before thee,
With a bleeding heart I've stood !

Know'st thou still the ancient story
Of the snake in Paradise,
Who, with gift of luring apples,
Led our father into vice ?



SONGS.

Oh ! what woes these apples bring us !
Eve brought death to all mankind ;
Eris flames to Priam's city ;
Thou both death and flames combined.



VII.

Rock and castle gaze beneath them,
At the clear and crystal Rhine,
And my bark sails gladly onwards,
And the sunlit waters shine.

Calm I watch the golden billows,
Curling in their restless play ;
Thoughts arise, which long neglected,
Buried in my bosom lay.

Kindly greeting and alluring,
Shines the river soft and bright ;
But I know its outward splendour
Inwardly is deadly night.

Stream, thou art my sweetheart's image !
Outward joy and inward guile ;
She can also nod so friendly,
And so kind and gently smile.



SONGS.

VIII.

AT first I fancied in despair
I ne'er should learn my fate to bear,
Yet I have learn'd to bear it now,—
But, oh! you must not ask me how!



IX.

WITH myrtles and roses, sweet and fair,
With fragrant cypress and gilding rare,
I would deck this book like a funeral shrine,
And bury within it these songs of mine.

Oh ! could I join with them my love and its woes.
On the grave of love springs the flower of repose :
For others, it blooms on the grave of love ;
For me, it will blossom my grave above.

These are the songs that so wild of yore,
Like the lava-floods that from Etna pour,
Burst from my inmost heart to light,
And scatter'd abroad their sparkles bright.

Now, they all lie there, mute and cold,
Pallid and death-like to behold ;
But the ancient fire will glow renew'd,
When o'er them the Spirit of Love shall brood.



SONGS.

And a secret voice in my heart I hear,
That the Spirit of Love will again be near,
The day when this book shall reach thy hand,
Thou loved of my soul, in thy far, far land.

And then, from the spell that enchains them free,
These dead, cold letters shall gaze on thee ;
Entreatingly gaze in thy lovely eyes,
And whisper around thee in lovelorn sighs.



Ballads.

I.

THE MOURNER.

PITY fills each feeling bosom,
When the wan and wasted face
Of the lonesome one approaches,
Mark'd by sorrow's searing trace.

Pitying breezes floating round him,
Gently lave his burning brow ;
Coyest maidens long to soothe him,
And their tender zeal avow.

From the town's distressing tumult
To the forest's depths he flies ;
Boughs and branches rustle cheerful,
Cheerful strains of music rise.



BALLADS.

But the song is hush'd to silence,
Sadly rustle branch and bough,
When the lonesome one approaches,
Searing sorrow on his brow.



BOOK OF SONGS.

II.

MOUNTAIN ECHO.

WITH dreary pace adown the glen
There rode a horseman brave :—
“Oh! haste I to my true love’s arms,
“Or to the gloomy grave?”

The echo answer gave :
“The gloomy grave!”

And further still the horseman rode,
And sigh’d with heavy breast :
“And must I to the grave so soon,—
“Well! in the grave is rest.”

It spoke in tones suppress’d :
“The grave is rest!”

A tear there roll’d adown his cheek,
That cheek so worn and pale :—
“If rest be in the grave alone,
“For me the grave is well.”

Swift came the answering knell :
“The grave is well!”

BALLADS.

III.

THE TWO BROTHERS.

High upon the mountain summit
Stands the castle wrapt in night ;
Fitful gleams illumine the valley,—
Angry swords are flashing bright.

Brothers twain, inflamed with fury,
There, in deadly combat stand.
Wherefore, tell me, do the brothers
Try the issue sword in hand ?

Ah ! the eyes of Countess Laura
Lit the fratricidal flame ;
Both were fired with equal passion
For the lovely noble dame.

But to whom inclines her bosom ?
Who shall claim her bridal vow ?
No researches can determine—
Trusty sword, determine thou.

BOOK OF SONGS.

And they fight with reckless daring,—
Blows on blows incessant pour ;
Have a care, ye reckless swordsmen,
Evil rules the midnight hour.

Woe ! ah, woe ! ye bloodstain'd brothers !
Bloodstain'd valley ! night abhorr'd !
Both the warriors sink expiring,
Each upon a brother's sword.

Many an age since then has fleded,
Many a race has sunk in night ;
Lonely stands the dreary castle,
Frowning from its mountain height.

But beneath it, in the valley,
Still the ghostly vision glides ;
Still, upon the stroke of midnight,
Fight the ruthless fratricides.



BALLADS.

IV.

POOR PETER.

1.

JACK and his Madge are dancing,
And screaming for joy they talk ;
Poor Peter, he stands dumbfounded,—
His face is as white as chalk.

Jack and his Madge are married,
And deck'd with ribands and bows ;
Poor Peter, he bites his nails, as
He mopes in his workday clothes.

Then low to himself says Peter,
And looks on the pair and sighs :
“ I should do myself a mischief,
“ If I were not too wise.”

BOOK OF SONGS.

2.

Inside my heart I feel a smart,
It's like to burst my breast ;
Where'er I stray, where'er I stay,
It will not let me rest.

It brings me near unto my dear,
That Madge may heal the pain ;
And yet, if I but meet her eye,
I'm forced to leave again.

I clamber up the mountain-top,
Where no one can come nigh,
And standing still upon the hill,
I stand there still and cry.

3.

Lo ! where poor Peter totters by,
All languid, deadly pale, and shy,
You'll see the people in the street
Turn round to watch him when they meet.



BALLADS.

Girls whisper with averted head,—
“ He’s just arisen from the dead ! ”
An error this, dear girls, for why,—
The man is just about to die.

For since his love has proved unkind,
He fain a quiet grave would find ;
The fittest place his bones to lay,
And sleep until the judgment-day.



BOOK OF SONGS.

V.

THE PRISONER'S LAY. .

WHEN my grandmother our Liz bewitch'd,
The people resolved to burn her.
The magistrate wasted his ink in vain,
For nought to confession could turn her.

When into the caldron she was thrust,
She lustily shriek'd and hollo'd ;
But when the pitchy smoke arose,
She rose as a raven and follow'd.

My feathery grand-dam, small and black !
Oh, fly to the tower and hail me ;
Oh, fly to me through the window-bars,
And with cake and cheese regale me.

My feathery grand-dam, small and black,
Be watchful in your sorrow,
For fear that my aunt picks out my eyes,
When I dance upon air to-morrow.



BALLADS.

VI.

THE GRENADIERS.

Two grenadiers restored to France,
From Russian bondage came,
And when they trod on the German sod,
They hung their heads in shame.

For there were the mournful tidings told,
That Fortune had France forsaken,
That the army was routed and overthrown,
And even the Emperor taken.

Full bitterly wept the grenadiers,
The sorrowful news to learn.
Said one : " What bitter pangs I feel,
" How my old wound does burn."

The other said : " The game is lost,
" And fain would I die with thee,
" But I have a wife and child at home,
" Whose life depends on me."

BOOK OF SONGS.

“ I care not—I—for wife or child,
“ Far loftier hopes awaken ;
“ Let wife and child go beg for bread,—
“ My Emperor—art thou taken ?

“ Promise me, brother, before I die,
“ To grant me my dying prayer,
“ To carry me back to my native France,
“ And bury my body there.

“ The cross of honour on my heart,
“ With its riband of red must lie ;
“ My trusty musket in my hand,
“ My good sword on my thigh.

“ There will I watch, like a sentinel,
“ And listen with patient heed,
“ Till the cannon’s roar I hear once more,
“ And the tramp of the neighing steed.

“ Then over my grave, amid clashing swords,
“ I shall hear my Emperor ride ;
“ And ready I’ll stand, with my arms in hand,
“ To fight by my Emperor’s side.”



BALLADS.

VII.

THE MESSAGE.

UP, up, my page ! and saddle quick,
And mount my fleetest steed,
And over field, and over fell,
To Duncan's castle speed.

Lurk in the stable, till thou spy
Some horse-boy of the train,
Then ask him, which the bride may be
Of Duncan's daughters twain ?

And should he say, "The olive maid,"
Ride back without delay ;
But should he say, "The fair-hair'd girl,"
Then linger by the way.

Then hie thee to the ropeyard, boy,
And purchase me a cord ;
Ride slowly home, and give it me,
But do not speak a word.

BOOK OF SONGS.

VIII.

THE MARRIAGE.

I go, my love, but not alone,
 Thou must go with me,
To the dear old cell so narrow,
To the sad cold house of sorrow,
Where, at the door, my mother stern,
Crouching, waits her son's return.

Leave me, leave me, man of gloom !
 Who has summon'd thee ?
Thy hands are ice, and fire thy breath,
Thine eye is flame, thy cheek is death ;
But I will pass the merry hours
In sunshine, and in rosy bowers.

Leave sun to shine, and rose to bloom,
 My light and dainty love !
Wrap thou thy wide white veil around,
Then let the thrilling chords resound,
And raise a wedding carol high ;
The tune shall be the night wind's sigh.

BALLADS.

IX.

DON RAMIRO.

“ DONNA CLARA ! Donna Clara !

“ Loved so fondly many a year !

“ Thou art bent on my destruction,

“ And it costs thee not a tear.

“ Donna Clara ! Donna Clara !

“ Life is sweet to young and old !

“ But below dwells shuddering horror,

“ And the grave is drear and cold.

“ Donna Clara ! on the morrow

“ Will Fernando, to thee plighted,

“ Claim thy promise at the altar—

“ Am I to the feast invited ?”

“ Don Ramiro ! Don Ramiro !

“ Thou canst speak in bitter strain,

“ Harsher than the stars, whose sentence

“ Overrules my wishes vain.

BOOK OF SONGS.

“ Don Ramiro ! Don Ramiro !
“ Fling this shadow from thy heart ;
“ On the earth are maidens many,
“ But 'tis Heaven that bids us part.

“ Don Ramiro ! thou hast conquer'd
“ Many a Moor in bloody fight ;
“ Conquer now thy own proud spirit,—
“ Come to-morrow to the rite.”

“ Donna Clara ! yes, I swear it,
“ Hear me, Heaven, and hear it, Hell !
“ Thou and I will dance together ;—
“ Till to-morrow, fare thee well.”

“ Then good night !” the window sounded ;
Deeply sighing stood the knight,
Stood as one deprived of motion,
Then pass'd slowly into night.

And at last with lengthen'd struggles,
Darkness yielded unto day ;
Like a blooming flower-garden,
Wide outspread Toledo lay.

BALLADS.

Many a stately house and palace
Glitters in the sunny beam ;
And the domes of lofty churches,
As if newly gilded, gleam.

Like a swarm of bees loud humming,
Mingling peal the festal bells,
And the sound of prayer and music
From the temples softly swells.

Lo ! from out the market chapel
Peals the hum of voices loud,
And like broken waves commingled,
Issues forth the motley crowd.

Gallant knights and lovely ladies,
Courtiers gaily glancing round,
And the merry joy-bells mingle
With the sacred organ's sound.

And the struggling crowd dividing,
That with reverence yields them place,
Donna Clara, Don Fernando,
Newly wedded, move with grace.

BOOK OF SONGS.

To the bridegroom's palace-gateway
On the crowd and tumult roll'd ;
There the wedding-feast commences,
With the pomp of days of old.

Knightly games and well-fill'd tables,
Alternate 'mid sounds of mirth ;
Hours unwatch'd fly swiftly onwards,
Until night descends on earth.

For the dance the guests assemble,
And they fill the lofty hall ;
And the rays of thousand torches
On their glittering dresses fall.

Proudly sit the bride and bridegroom,
Raised the other guests above,
Donna Clara, Don Fernando,
And they mingle words of love.

Round the hall in whirling eddies
Fly the glittering dancers gay :
Rolls the drum its martial thunder,
And the thrilling trumpets bray.

BALLADS.

“ Wherefore, prythee, lovely lady,
“ Bend so fixedly thine eyes
“ On the hall’s remotest corner ?”
So the knight in wonder cries.

“ Seest thou yonder Don Ramiro,
“ One in sable mantle dight ?”
“ Nay, ’tis but a shadow, dearest,”
Answers with a smile the knight.

But the shadow moves towards them,
’Tis a guest in robes of woe ;
And she knows and greets Ramiro,
And her cheeks and forehead glow.

And the dance is form’d already,
And the merry pairs fly round
In the waltz’s giddy circles,
And the trembling floors resound.

“ Gladly will I, Don Ramiro,
“ Join with thee the festive throng ;
“ But to come in sable mantle
“ ’Mid our joyous guests was wrong.”

BOOK OF SONGS.

And upon the Fair, Ramiro
Gazes stern with brow of gloom,
Clasps her round, and darkly murmurs :
“ Thou hast said that I should come.”

In the dance's giddy tumult,
Lo ! the pair are borne away ;
Rolls the drum its martial thunder,
And the thrilling trumpets bray.

“ Snow-white are thy cheeks, Ramiro !”
Whispers Clare in secret dread.
“ Thou hast bidden me come hither !”
In a hollow voice he said.

In the hall the torches glitter
Through the flooding throng alway ;
Rolls the drum its martial thunder,
And the thrilling trumpets bray.

“ Ice-cold are thy hands, Ramiro !”
Says the Fair, in timid tone.
“ Thou hast bidden me come hither !”
And the torrent sweeps them on.

BALLADS.

“ Leave me, leave me, Don Ramiro !

“ These are odours of the tomb !”

And again the fatal answer :

“ Thou hast said that I should come !”

And the floors are smoking, glowing,

And the frantic music peals ;

Like a scene of mad enchantment,

Every object spins and reels.

“ Leave me, leave me, Don Ramiro !”

And she struggles with her doom.

Don Ramiro answers ever :

“ Thou hast said that I should come !”

“ Go then, and may God defend me !”

Loud she cried in steadfast tone ;

And the words were scarcely utter'd

Ere Ramiro's form was flown.

Clara sinks in death-like pallor,

Cold and trembling, night around,

In the realms of dull obstruction

Soul and body lie spell-bound.

BOOK OF SONGS.

And at length the stupor passes,
And she lifts her eyes with pain ;
But astonishment and terror
Close the lovely orbs again.

For since first the dance had sounded,
She had never left her seat,
And she sits beside the bridegroom,
And she hears the knight entreat :

“ Wherefore are thy cheeks so pallid ?
“ Wherefore, love, this air of gloom ? ”
“ And Ramiro ? ” falters Clara,—
And her terror strikes her dumb.

Darkly frowning at the question,
Stern and brief the knight replied :
“ Lady, ask not bloody tidings,
“ For at noon Ramiro died.”



BALLADS.

X.

BELSHAZZAR.

THE midnight hour was drawing on ;
Hush'd in repose lay Babylon.

But in the palace of the King
The herd of courtiers shout and sing.

There, in his royal banquet-hall,
Belshazzar holds high festival.

The servants sit in glittering rows,
The beakers are drain'd, the red wine flows ;

The beakers clash, and the servants sing,—
A pleasing sound to the moody king.

The king's cheeks flush, and his wild eyes shine ;
His spirit waxes bold with wine ;

Until, by maddening passion stung,
He blasphemes God with impious tongue ;

BOOK OF SONGS.

And his proud heart swells as he wildly raves,
'Mid shouts of applause from his fawning slaves.

He spoke the word, and his eyes flash'd flame!
The ready servant went and came;

Vessels of massy gold he bore,
Jehovah's temple's plunder'd store;

And, seizing a consecrated cup,
The king, in his fury, fills it up.

He fills, and hastily drains it dry,—
From his foaming lips leaps forth the cry,

“Jehovah! at thee my scorn I fling!
I am Belshazzar, Babylon's king!”

Yet scarce had the impious words been said,
When the king's heart shrunk with a secret dread.

Suddenly died the shout and yell;
A death-like hush on the tumult fell.

And lo! on the wall, as they gazed aghast,
What seem'd like a human hand went past,



BALLADS.

And wrote—and wrote,—in sight of all,
Letters of fire upon the wall !

The king sat still, with a stony look,—
His trembling knees with terror shook.

The menial throng nor spoke nor stirr'd,
Fear froze their blood,—no sound was heard !

The Magians came, but none of all
Could read the writing on the wall :

But, by the servants of his train,
Belshazzar, the king, that night was slain !



XI.

THE MINSTRELS.

To the strife of song invited,
See, the Troubadours repair ;
'Tis, indeed, a strange encounter,
And a tournament most rare !

Phantasy, a tameless courser,
Bounds beneath her minstrel lord ;
Art the shield he holds before him,
And the word his battle-sword.

From the balcony, delighted,
Many a lovely dame looks down ;
But the fairest is not 'mid them,
With the fairest laurel-crown.

Others, full of health and vigour,
Seek the lists where fame is won ;
But the minstrel's heart is wounded
Ere the battle is begun ;



BALLADS.

And who from his inmost bosom
Pours, like blood, his tuneful lays,—
He is victor, and his guerdon
From the fairest, sweetest praise.



XII. .

AT THE WINDOW.

FAIR Hedwig at the window stood,
As pass'd the pale-faced Hector.
"God help the man," she softly said,
"He's pale as any spectre."

But up to Hedwig's window then
A love-lorn look cast Hector ;
And Hedwig, pierced with loving pain,
Turn'd pale as any spectre.

Now Hedwig at her window stood,
And watch'd all day for Hector ;
But shortly in his arms she lies,
And clasps all night the spectre.

BALLADS.

XIII.

THE WOUNDED KNIGHT.

I KNOW of an old, old story,
A sad and cheerless tale ;
A knight who in love lies burning ;
A maiden whose faith is frail.

As faithless he needs must scorn her,
Who yet is his soul's best part,
Must stifle as base and craven
The sorrow that rends his heart.

How fain in the lists he'd enter,
And loud 'mid the knights exclaim,
" Let him for the fight prepare him
" Who dares to impeach her fame."

All round would be still, save only
The pangs by himself confess'd ;
He must level his lance, and aim it
At his own accusing breast.

XIV.

THE VOYAGE.

I STOOD on the vessel's deck,
And counted each wave that pass'd.
Adieu ! adieu ! my native land !
The good ship travels fast.

I pass by my darling's house,
The windows brightly shine ;
I look till my eyes are nearly blind,—
Nobody makes a sign.

Out of my eyes, ye tears,
Cease thus to vainly flow ;
Break not my wounded heart,
From all excessive woe.

BALLADS.

XV.

THE LAY OF REPENTANCE.

SIR Ulrich through the greenwood rides,
Glad wave the green leaves dancing ;
He sees a lovely girlish face
Athwart the branches glancing.

The youth exclaims : " Ah well I know
" That face of blooming gladness ;
" It haunts the scenes of crowded glee,
" The scenes of lonely sadness.

" Two roses red are yonder lips
" Unnumber'd charms revealing ;
" But many a harsh and bitter word
" Comes often from them stealing.

" And thus that mouth resembles oft
" A rose-tree sweetly flowering,
" That hides the sly and venom'd snake
" Beneath its shelter covering.

BOOK OF SONGS.

“ In yonder dimple wondrous fair,
“ The lovely cheek adorning,
“ I see the grave wherein I fell
“ With frantic passion burning.

“ In yonder lovely locks of hair
“ Around the fair brow shaken,
“ I see the magic nets wherein
“ By Satan I was taken.

“ And yonder eye of liquid blue,
“ A well of inspiration,
“ I thought the gate of Heaven,—it proved
“ The portal of Damnation.”

Sir Ulrick hastens through the wood,
The leaves wave rustling o'er him ;
He sees afar a second face
Glide pale and sad before him.

Then cries the youth : “ O mother mine,
“ That loved with mother's blindness ;
“ Whose heart by wicked word and deed
“ I sadden'd with unkindness !



BALLADS.

“ Oh, could I dry those eyes so wet,
“ With flames of sorrow glowing !
“ Oh, could I tinge those cheeks so pale
“ With my best heart’s blood flowing !”

And further as Sir Ulrick rides,
The shades of night surround him,
Mysterious voices strike his ear,
Soft sigh the night-winds round him.

The startled youth hears every word
Repeated round him ringing.
The mocking forest birds it was,
All twittering low and singing.

Sir Ulrick sings a charming song,
A song of pain and sorrow ;
And should he end the song to-day,
He’ll sing it anew to-morrow.

XVI.

TO A LADY, AS SHE SANG AN OLD BALLAD.

As first she met my wond'ring gaze—
Methinks I see the enchantress now.—
How the full notes divinely rang ;
How the heart melted as she sang ;
Tears to my eyes unbidden sprang,—
 I felt I knew not how.

A dream had rapt my list'ning soul :
I dream'd I was a happy child ;
I dream'd I sat by lamplight dim,
In mother's chamber warm and trim,
And read old tales and legends grim,
While night and storm were raging wild.

The legend kindled into life,
The knights came thronging from the grave ;
At Roncesvalles begins the fight,
There rides Sir Roland, peerless knight :
Around him many a warrior wight,
And 'mid them Ganelon the knave.



BALLADS.

His felon stroke lays Roland low ;
He swims in blood, his life ebbs fast :
His horn's faint blast across the heath
Bears mighty Charles the tale of death.
The dying hero yields his breath,—
 And so the vision pass'd.

A tumult of commingling sounds
Awake my senses from their sleep,
E'en as the last sweet cadence dies.
The audience clap their hands, and cries
Of "Brava!" "Brava!" round me rise ;
 The songstress curtseys deep.





BOOK OF SONGS.

XVII.

LAY OF THE DUCATS.

OH, my golden ducats bright,
Whither have ye taken flight?

Are ye with the golden fish,
Who so merry in the river
Up and down are diving ever?

Are ye with the golden flowers,
Ever fair and ever new,
Glist'ning in the morning dew?

Are ye with the golden birds,
Who on sunlit pinions roam
'Neath the blue ethereal dome?

Are ye with the golden stars,
Who, a bright and busy throng,
Smile from Heaven all night long?



BALLADS.

Ah ! my golden ducats, ye
Swim not in the running stream,
Nor in daisied meadows gleam ;
Smile not from the heavens above,
Nor 'neath skies of azure rove ;
For the Manichæan crew
Keep too tight a hold of you.



BOOK OF SONGS.

XVIII.

DIALOGUE ON THE PADERBORN HEATH.

HEAR'ST thou not the distant music,
Like the lute and harpsichord ?
Many an elfin beauty yonder
Dances on the spangled sward.

“ Nay, my friend, 'tis all delusion :
“ Naught I hear of what you speak,
“ Save the old pigs that are grunting,
“ And the little pigs that squeak.”

Hear'st thou not the bugle ringing ?
Hunters to the chase proceed ;
Lo, the gentle lambkins frisking,
While the shepherd plays his reed.

“ Thou hast heard nor reed nor bugle,
“ And it is, as I opine,
“ But the pig-boy, who approaches,
“ Driving home a herd of swine.”

BALLADS.

Hear'st thou not the distant singing ?
'Tis the song of rival swains ;
Angels wave their wings delighted
With the rich harmonious strains.

“ Nay, my friend, your fancied shepherds,
“ That so sweetly strive in song,
“ Are a pair of urchins singing,
“ As they drive their geese along.”

Hear'st thou not the church-bells, pealing
Clearly through the mellow air,
As the villagers devoutly
To the village church repair ?

“ Those church-bells, my friend, are tinkling
“ From the necks of patient kine,
“ Who, with drooping heads, sedately
“ Seek their stalls at day's decline.”

See'st thou not that gentle nodding ?
See'st thou not the waving veil ?
'Tis the dearest, standing lonely,
All in tears, distress'd and pale.



BOOK OF SONGS.

“ Nay, my friend, I see there nodding
“ Only Kate, the poor old crone,
“ Pale and shrunken, on her crutches,
“ Limping through the field alone.”

Thou mayst laugh to see how fancy
Plays in me her busy part ;
But thou canst not turn to nothing
That which lives within my heart.





BALLADS.

XIX.

LIFE-LONG GREETING.

In an Album.

WE are passengers on the earth,
And the world is a great highway ;
We gallop and run from the day of our birth,
As couriers do for pay.

We cross in our coaches, and smile,
And glances of greeting cast ;
We long to embrace, and pause awhile,
But are borne like lightning past.

Thus scarce have we by the roadside met,
My dearest Prince Alexander,
Than the post-boy's horn to his lips is set,
And blows us for ever asunder.

BOOK OF SONGS.

XX.

VERILY !

WHEN the sunny spring comes with a gentle glow,
The bright little flowers bud forth and blow ;
When the moon rides high in her silver car,
After her follows each watchful star ;
When the poet sees two sweet blue eyes,
A thousand songs in his heart's depth rise :
But songs, and stars, and the flow'rets small,
Sunshine, and moonshine, bright eyes and all,
Though far from being amiss,
Make a very small part of a world like this.

SONNETS.

Sonnets.

TO A. W. VON SCHLEGEL.

IN hoop and train, with flowers superbly graced,
With beauty-spots upon her painted face,
With high-heel'd shoes, and all behung with lace,
With tower-high head-dress, and with wasp-like waist :
Thus was the Mock-muse deck'd in wretched taste,
And came to woo thee to her fond embrace.
But thou didst shun her, and with rapid pace
Didst wander lonely o'er the desert waste :
But in the desert stood a castle fair,
And like a marble statue, resting there,
A lovely maid in magic sleep did lie ;
At thy approach the magic slumber broke ;
The real German Muse with smiles awoke,
And sank upon thy breast in ecstasy.

BOOK OF SONGS.

TO MY MOTHER, B. HEINE, *née* VON GELDERN.

I.

I KNOW I bear my head somewhat too high,
My hasty temper ne'er a cross will brook ;
Should a king seek to daunt me with his look,
I should encounter him with steadfast eye.
Yet, dearest Mother, be the truth proclaim'd,
Let my pride chafe and bluster as it will,
In thy sweet, peaceful, happy presence, still
I feel myself grow diffident and tamed.
Is it thy spirit that subdues my mind :
Thy lofty spirit, that no chains can bind,
That soars unto the Source of Light above ?
Is it that I remember many a deed
By which I've caused that gentle heart to bleed,
That noble heart, that loved me with such love ?



SONNETS.

II.

IN vain delusion from thy side I went
To wander restlessly the whole world round,
To see if love could anywhere be found ;
To conquer love by love was my intent.
I sought love everywhere, at every gate
I stretch'd my hands out with a yearning sigh,
And begg'd a little love for charity ;
But mockingly they only gave me hate.
And ever, evermore, for love I sought,
But found love nowhere ; then with sorrow fraught,
And weary bosom, homewards I return'd.
There, at the threshold, I encounter thee,
And shining in thy tearful eyes I see
The love for which my heart had always yearn'd.



BOOK OF SONGS.

TO H. S.

THY book I open, and before my eyes
Many familiar images arise,
And golden visions of my childhood's days,
That boyish dreams were often wont to raise.
Pointing to Heaven I see the mighty dome
Where German faith has built herself a home ;
I hear the bells ring, and the organ sound,
And love's sweet plainings seem to float around.
Full well I see the busy dwarfish race,
That swarm around the building, and deface
The fretted pinnacles and mouldings fair ;
Yet though ye strip the mighty oak-tree bare,
Though all his leafy spoils bestrew the plain,
Let the spring come, he puts forth leaves again.



SONNETS.

FRESCO SONNETS TO CHRISTIAN S.

I.

I KEEP aloof, nor own these puppets' sway,
Outside all golden, and inside but sand ;
I will not clasp each rascal's proffer'd hand
Who tries to filch my honest name away.
I bow not down before each wanton she,
Who insolently glories in her shame ;
I join not in the insensate mob's acclaim
Round each new idol's car of victory.
I know full well the oak uprooted lies,
While by the stream the reed that bends will rise
After the storm, and stand erect again ;—
But to what future does that reed attain ?
A coxcomb's cane it first parades the street,
Then helps the flunkey dusty coats to beat.



BOOK OF SONGS.

II.

GIVE me a mask, I mean to wear the face
Of a low rascal, lest the rabble rout,
Who in their borrow'd plumage strut about,
Should think that they and I are of one race.
Give me coarse language, give me manners base ;
I mean to act the common ruffian's part,
And hide all higher gifts of mind or heart,
That these poor coxcombs copy and disgrace.
So will I join the great world's *bal masqué*,
Jostled by Monk and King, by Turk and Jew,
Greeted by Harlequin, and known by few ;
Swinging their swords of lath they charge their prey ;
And that's the joke,—for if my mask should fall,
'Twould strike the rogues dumbfounded, one and all.



SONNETS.

III.

I LAUGH at all the foolish foppish pack,
Who with their goatish faces at me stare ;
I laugh at the sly foxes' pious air,
Who mischievously snuffle on my track.
I laugh at each thrice-learned monkey's claim,
Who puffs himself up with a critic's pride ;
I laugh at the base miscreants, who have tried
Their poison'd weapons on my honest name.
For when fair Fortune's gifts are from us reft,
And broken by the hand of destiny ;
And when the fragments at our feet are flung ;
And when the heart within our breast is wrung,
Wrung, rent, and wounded irrecoverably,—
A bitter laugh is all that we have left.

IV.

A WONDROUS tale is running in my head ;
And in the tale a wondrous ballad comes ;
And in the ballad lives and breathes and blooms
A wondrous, beautiful, and graceful maid.
And in the maiden is a little heart,
But in her heart no love will ye behold ;
For in that loveless character so cold,
Nothing but pride and haughtiness have part.
Hear'st thou, how in my head the story sings ?
And how the plaintive ballad sadly rings ?
And how the heartless maiden titters low ?
My only fear is, lest my head they crack ;
For it would be a most distressing blow,
Should my wits wander from the beaten track.



SONNETS.

V.

In the still melancholy evening hour,
The long-forgotten strains around me ring,
And tears unwonted from their deep founts spring,
And streams of blood from my old heart-wounds
pour.

And, as upon a magic mirror's ground,
I see the image of a lovely dame ;
In her red bodice, at the embroidery frame,
She sits, and loving silence dwells around.
But suddenly she rises from her chair,
Cuts from her lovely head a lovely lock,
And gives it me ; I thrill with rapture's shock !
Mephisto turns that rapture to despair ;
Those lovely hairs into a rope he twists,
And ever after drags me where he lists.

VI.

“As we two met once more twelve months ago,
“I was not welcomed by one kiss of thine.”
I spoke, and from my darling’s lips on mine
I felt the sweetest of all kisses glow ;
And, with a smile, a myrtle-branch she broke
From a fair myrtle that was flow’ring nigh :
“Take this from me, and plant it safe and dry,
“And put a glass upon it.” Thus she spoke.
’Tis long ago. The branch soon died i’ the pot,
And since we parted many a year has fled ;
Yet still her kiss burns in my aching head ;
And lately it impell’d me to the spot
Where my love lives. I stood the live-long night
Before her house, nor left till morning light.



SONNETS.

VIII.

THOU oft hast seen me with a host in strife
Of poodles spectacled, and cats rouged deep,
Who try my honest name in filth to steep,
And with their foul tongues ruin me for life.
Thou oft hast seen how pedants round me crush,
How fools with cap and bells press on my heels,
How many a serpent to my bosom steals,
How from a thousand wounds my life-streams gush.
But thou hast always stood fast like a tower,
Thy head my lighthouse in the hurricane,
Thy faithful heart a port of certain rest.
Around that haven roars the tempest's power ;
Only a few its shelter'd depths can gain,
But once inside, one sleeps with trustful breast.

IX.




I FAIN would weep, yet not a tear will fall ;
I fain would spread my wings and soar on high,
But cannot do it ; on the earth I lie,
While loathsome vermin round me croak and crawl.
I fain would float around, and hover o'er
My life's bright light, my beautiful, my love,
And in her sweet breath live and breathe and
move,—

But cannot, and my sick heart hopes no more.
I feel my hot blood from my broken heart
Flow fast ; I feel my ebbing life depart ;
I feel the mists of death my eyes o'erspread ;
And with a thrill of secret awe I pine
For the dim region, where the silent dead
Their soft and loving arms around me twine.



LYRICAL INTERMEZZO.

1822—1823.



ENCLOSURE

1892

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. in relation to the above mentioned matter. I am sorry to hear that you are unable to attend to the same at present. I will endeavor to do all in my power to expedite the same as soon as possible.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. H. [Name]
[Address]



INTERMEZZO.

Prologue.



THERE once was a silent, sad-soul'd knight,
Pallid and wasted away,
A listless loitering lazy wight,
Dreaming in open day ;
So awkward, clumsy, and stiff was he,
The maidens and flowers, in tittering glee,
Laugh'd as he blunder'd past.

At home, in the darkest corner crouch'd,
The sight of mankind he fled,
And yearningly stretch'd his longing arms,
But never a word he said.
But aye, as the midnight hour came round,
Sweet strains of music began to sound,
And knocks at his chamber-door.

And she that he loves glides gently in,
In robes as the sea-foam pale ;
Fair as a rose she blooms and glows
Beneath her jewell'd veil.
Her golden tresses flow unconfi'd,
Her sweet eyes sparkle with greetings kind,—
They sink in each other's arms.

And the knight enfolds her with loving strength,
His awkwardness changes to fire ;
The pale one is crimson,—the dreamer awakes,
His shyness is daring desire.
But she, with a playful witching grace,
Has softly cast o'er her lover's face
The folds of her jewell'd veil.

In a crystal palace beneath the waves
Suddenly stands the knight ;
He starts, and covers his dazzled eyes,
That shrink from the blaze of light ;
But the fairy, embracing him, clings to his side ;
The knight is the bridegroom, the fairy is bride ;
Her virgins are playing the lyre.



INTERMEZZO.

And playing and singing, and singing so sweet,
They dance in glittering rings ;
And the knight, as his senses reel and swim,
To his bride more fondly clings,—
When, sudden, the lights die out in gloom,
And the knight is sitting alone at home,
In his cheerless poet's nook.



BOOK OF SONGS.

I.

'Twas in the lovely month of May,
When blossoms deck the grove,
Oh, then it was that in my heart
I felt the birth of love !

'Twas in the lovely month of May,
Loud sang the feather'd choir,
Oh, then it was I own'd to her
My longing and desire !





INTERMEZZO.

II.

WHERE'ER my bitter tear-drops fall,
The fairest flowers arise ;
And into choirs of nightingales
Are turn'd my bosom's sighs.

And wilt thou love me, thine shall be
The fairest flowers that spring,
And at thy windows evermore
The nightingales shall sing.

III.

THE rose and the lily, the sun and the dove,
I sigh'd to them oft in the fervour of love.
I love them no more, for I worship alone
The fair one, the dear one, the true one—mine own.
Oh, she is the essence, the fountain of love,—
My rose and my lily, my sun and my dove !

BOOK OF SONGS.

IV.

WHEN I gaze into thine eyes,
All my pain and sorrow flies ;
When thy rosy lips I kiss,
All is health and strength and bliss.

When I lean upon thy breast,
'Tis the rapture of the bless'd ;
When thou say'st thou lovest me,
I must needs weep bitterly.

V.

ON that gentle face upraised,
In a dream I lately gazed ;
Mild and angel-like its air,
Yet so pale, so sadly fair.

And thy lips alone are red,
That shall soon be cold and dead.
Soon the heavenly light shall die
Beaming from thy loving eye.



INTERMEZZO.

VI.

LAY thy cheek to my cheek,
Our tears together shall flow, love ;
Press thy heart to my heart,
The flames together shall glow, love.

And when on the mighty flame shall flow
The stream that our tears shall make, love ;
And when in my arms I clasp thee fast,
My longing heart shall break, love.

VII.

I'LL breathe my soul and its secret
In the lily's chalice white ;
The lily shall thrill and re-echo
A song of my heart's delight.

The song shall quiver and tremble,
Even as did the kiss,
That her rosy lips once gave me
In a moment of wondrous bliss.

VIII.

THE stars have shone unchanging
Thousands of years above,
Each gazing on the other
With looks of tender love.

And there they speak a language,
So rich and so inspired ;
Yet none of our gifted sages
This language has acquired.

But I have learn'd it, and no time
Its memory shall efface ;
The grammar that I studied was
My sweet love's lovely face.



INTERMEZZO.

IX.

ON the wings of song, my dearest,
I'll bear thee away, away
To the banks of the sacred Ganges,
The loveliest haunts of day.

All bright in the moonshine blooming,
A garden of joys is there ;
The lotos-flowers are longing
To welcome their sister fair.

The violets whisper and whisper,
And gaze at the stars above ;
The roses all softly murmur
Their stories of fragrant love.

And spyingly bound around us
The tender and wise gazelles ;
The sound of the sacred Ganges
Like distant thunder swells.

BOOK OF SONGS.

And there will we sink to slumber,
And sleep 'neath a palm-tree high,
And lull'd by the loving silence,
Dream dreams of the days gone by.





INTERMEZZO.

X.

THE timid lotos trembles
When day is shining bright ;
With downcast head, and drooping,
She dreamily waits for night.

The moon is her chosen lover,
And waked by her lover's rays,
To him does the flower uncover
Her modest and friendly face.

She blooms, and glows, and sparkles,
And silently gazes above ;
She weeps, and sighs, and trembles,
With mingled pain and love.

XI.

THE Rhine is a noble river,
The pride of our German home ;
On its banks is a noble city,
Cologne, with its mighty Dom.

In the Dom, on a ground all golden,
Is a painting of high renown,
Whence once on my dark existence
A comforting ray shone down.

Our Lady is seated 'mid flowers,
With angels around and above ;
Her eyes, and her lips, and each feature,
Perfectly like my love.



INTERMEZZO.

XII.

THOU lov'st me not, thou lov'st me not,
'Tis quite a trifling thing ;
For if I do but see thy face,
I'm happy as a king.

Thou hatest me, thou hatest me,
So spoke thy lips to-day ;
Well, only let me kiss them now,
I'll bear it as I may.



XIII.

OH, swear no more, but kiss me now,
For I believe no woman's vow !
Thy word is sweet, but sweeter this,
Which now I take, thy willing kiss ;
And having that, therein I trust,
But words are empty smoke and dust.

Oh, swear my love with every breath,
For I believe with constant faith !
I sink upon thy lovely breast,
And I believe that I am bless'd ;
Believe, that through eternity,
And longer, thou wilt love but me.





INTERMEZZO.

XIV.

I'VE written on my darling's eyes
Such verses as all ladies prize ;
And on my darling's lips so rosy,
Tropes and figures quite a posy ;
And upon her cheeks so fair,
Stanzas very quaint and rare ;
And had she but had a heart, upon it
I would have made a perfect sonnet.

XV.

THE world is dull, the world is blind,
Its folly still increases !
It says thy character, my child,
Has long been crack'd to pieces.

The world is dull, the world is blind,
Thy merits it never will know, love ;
It knows not the sweets that thy kisses yield,
Nor how they enrapturing glow, love.

XVI.

TELL me, love, and tell me truly,
Art thou not a dream, as vain
As in days of sultry summer
Ever cross'd a poet's brain ?

No, indeed, a mouth so lovely,
Eyes that so divinely beam,
Such a maid, so sweet and gentle,
Never yet could poet dream.

Hideous basilisks and dragons,
Monsters horrible and fell,
All the wild conceits of fable,
In the poet's fancy dwell.

Thou, alas ! and thy allurements,
And thy face, so fair and bright,
And thy faithless, artless glances,—
They exceed the poet's might.

INTERMEZZO.

XVII.

As the daughter of the ocean
Beams my love in beauty's pride ;
For a stranger hath obtain'd her,
And she's now his promised bride.

Heart, my heart, thou much enduring,
Still thy indignation rule ;
Still endure it, and excuse it ;
Oh, forgive the lovely fool !

XVIII.

I'LL not repine, no, though my heart-strings break,
My love for ever lost ! I'll not repine.
Beam as thou wilt, yet 'mid thy diamonds' blaze,
No ray of gladness on thy heart shall shine.

I've known it long ; I've seen it in my dreams ;
I've mark'd the midnight darkness of thy heart ;
I've seen the serpent that thy bosom gnaws ;
I've seen how wretched and how lost thou art.

XIX.

YES, thou art wretched, but I'll not complain ;—
My love, we'll both be wretched and forlorn !
Till death shall ease our suffering hearts from pain,
My love, we'll both be wretched and forlorn.

I see the scorn, that on each feature dwells,
I see the haughty flashes of thine eye,
I see the pride, with which thy bosom swells,—
Yet art thou wretched, wretched e'en as I.

For pangs unseen around those features swim,
With secret wounds that haughty breast is torn,
With secret tears those brilliant eyes are dim,—
My love, we both are wretched and forlorn.



INTERMEZZO.

XX.

FIDDLES and flutes are shrilling,
The thrilling trumpets bray ;
And she I loved is dancing
Upon her wedding-day.

'Mid shawms and ringing cymbals,
As the music swells and dies,
You may hear a lowly sobbing,
'Tis her guardian angel's sighs.

XXI.

AND hast thou forgotten, forsworn as thou art,
How long and how fondly I lived in thy heart,
Thy heart so sweet and so false and mean,
So sweet was never so false I ween.

And hast thou forgotten the love and the woe,
That wrung the heart in my bosom so :
Which was the greater I cannot tell ;
That both were painful, I know too well.

XXII.

IF the sweet little flowers could see
How deep is the wound of my heart,
In pity they'd weep with me,
To heal the cruel smart.

Could the nightingales only know
My sorrowful bosom's pains,
They'd raise, to cheer my woe,
Their soul-enlivening strains.

If the golden stars on high
Could hear my tale of grief,
They'd quit the vaulted sky
To minister relief.

None of them e'er will know ;
But one can know my smart,—
'Tis she, that struck the blow,
That rent in twain my heart.



INTERMEZZO.

XXIII.

Oh, why are the roses grown so pale—
Oh, tell me, dearest, why?
And why, beneath the green, green grass,
So dumb the blue violets lie?

Why sings with such a sorrowful note
The lark in yonder skies?
Why from the fragrant meadow-sweet
Do charnel odours rise?

Why frowns the sun upon the mead
With chilling and angry gloom?
And why is the earth so cold and gray,
And dreary as the tomb?

And why am e'en I so sick, so sad,
Beloved, only speak;
O tell me, my heart's own dearest love,
Why did'st thou me forsake?

XXIV.

THEY'VE told thee a deal about me,
Nor aught that they knew conceal'd ;
But what in my soul was raging,
That they have not reveal'd.

They raised a mighty outcry,
And sigh'd o'er the sinner's fall ;
They call'd me a fiend, a demon,
And thou hast believed it all.

And yet my capital error
None of them even guess'd ;
That worst of my faults and follies
Lay buried within my breast.





INTERMEZZO.

XXV.

THE limes they blossom'd, the nightingales sung,
The sun smiled bright with enlivening ray ;
Warm was thy kiss, as thy arms to me clung,
As strain'd to thy bosom in transport I lay.

The ravens croak'd, and the dead leaves fell,
The sun frown'd down with an angry ray ;
We frostily bade one another "Farewell !"
And graciously glancing you glided away.

XXVI.

WE have felt for each other a deal through life,
And yet behaved ourselves as we ought ;
We often have play'd at husband and wife,
And yet we never have wrangled or fought.
We have shared together, in mirth and bliss,
The fondest embrace and the sweetest kiss ;
And to end the matter, from childish pique
We have played with each other at hide and seek ;
And have hidden so well, that at last 'tis plain
We never shall find one another again.

XXVII.

THOU hast kept thy truth to the end,
And often my cause hast pleaded ;
And when comfort and help were needed,
Hast constantly stood my friend.

Thou hast fed me, and lent me, alas !
Thy money whenever I lack'd it,—
Hast mended my linen, and pack'd it,
And got me my travelling-pass.

Whatever my lot may be,
My darling, may God protect thee,
And never in wrath reject thee
For having been kind to me !



INTERMEZZO.

XXIX.

As I so long, so long delay'd,
In distant lands romanced and play'd,
My darling found Old Time too slow,
And 'gan her wedding robe to sew ;
And then with gentle arms embrace
The dullest fool of folly's race.

My darling is so mild and fair,
Her image haunts me everywhere ;
Her rosy cheeks, her violet eyes,
Glow with a charm that never dies.
The loss of such a love must be
The dullest act of foolish me.



BOOK OF SONGS.

XXX.

HER eyes are two violets blue,
Her cheeks two roses red,
Her hands two lilies, so pure and white ;
And these are all living, and bloom so bright,
Only her heart is dead.

XXXI.

THE world was so fair, and the heavens so blue,
And so mild and balmy the zephyrs blew,
And the flowers of the field so flourish'd and grew,
And glisten'd and shone in the morning dew,
And joy was on every face I knew,—
Yet I pray'd of the earth my woes to hide,
And longed for a grave by a dead love's side.



INTERMEZZO.

XXXII.

My sweetest love, whene'er the grave,
The gloomy grave, shall hold thee,
I'll come to seek thee in the grave,
And in my arms enfold thee.

I kiss thee, thou pale cold silent corpse,
I kiss thee, and clasp thee untiring ;
I tremble with rapture, I weep with joy,
Then sink on thy breast expiring.

The dead arise at midnight's call,
Their ghostly dances joining ;
We stay together in the grave,
Our loving arms entwining.

The dead arise, for the judgment-day
Calls them to bliss or woe, love ;
But little we reckon of it or them,
But embrace, and remain below, love.

XXXIII.

A PINE-TREE stands in the North,
All lone on a naked height :
He sleeps ; and the ice and snow
Clothe him in robes of white.

He dreams of a slender palm,
In India's burning zone,
That stands on a scorching cliff,
Mourning in silence lone.



INTERMEZZO.

XXIV.

Says the Head :

AH, might I but the footstool be,
Whereon my darling's feet repose !
However hard she stamp'd on me,
I would not murmur nor oppose.

Says the Heart :

Ah, might I but the cushion be,
In which my darling's needles stick !
However deep she stuck them in,
I'd joy the more at every prick.

Says the Song :

Could I the piece of paper be,
That she employs as papilotte !
I'd softly whisper in her ear
All that I feel yet utter not.

BOOK OF SONGS.

XXXV.

WHEN my darling left the spot,
How to smile I quite forgot ;
Many a punster flash'd his wit,
But I could not smile at it.

When I lost her, when she died,
All my tears for ever dried ;
Though my heart is rent with woe,
Not a single tear will flow.

XXXVI.

OUT of my mighty smart
I fashion my tiny lays ;
Their musical wings they raise,
And flutter to seek her heart.

They always find their way ;
Then they return to me moaning,
Moaning, but still not owning
What in her heart's depth lay.



INTERMEZZO.

XXXVII.

IN holiday suit the Philisters
Go forth for a Sunday walk ;
As frisky as kids they gambol,
And nature is all their talk.

They note with their blinking peepers
The beauty and bloom of spring ;
Their long ears listen, delighted,
To hear how the sparrows sing.

I cover my chamber-windows
With sable hangings, and stay
Awaiting the ghostly visions,
That visit me e'en 'by day.

Then she that I loved comes to me,
She comes from her grave aloft,
She comes, and she weeps beside me,
And weeps till my heart grows soft.

XXXVIII.

THE shades of times forgotten
Oft from their graves ascend,
And show me how, when near thee,
My life I used to spend.

By day I wander'd, dreaming,
O'er every street and square ;
The people eyed in wonder
My sad and silent air.

At night-time it was better,
For then the streets were lone ;
I and my shadow wander'd
In silence o'er the town.

With loud resounding footsteps,
Across the bridge I'd stray ;
The moon, from clouds emerging,
Look'd down with earnest ray.



INTERMEZZO.

Before thy house I halted,
And, gazing, there remained ;
I gazed up at thy window,
My heart was rack'd and pain'd.

I know that from thy window
Thou'st often look'd below,
And seen me in the moonshine,
An obelisk of woe.



XXXIX.

A YOUNG man loves a maiden,
But she for another has sigh'd ;
That other, he loves another,
And makes her at length his bride.

The maiden marries, in anger,
The first adventurous wight,
That chance may fling before her ;
The youth is in piteous plight.

The story is old as ages,
Yet happens again and again ;
The last to whom it happen'd,
His heart is rent in twain.

INTERMEZZO.

XL.

WHENEVER I hear them singing
The song the loved one sang,
I feel that my heart is breaking,
So fearful is the pang.

Impell'd by a moody yearning,
I climb the mountain's crest ;
Then tears gush forth, and lighten
My overburthen'd breast.



XLI.

I DREAM'D—'twas of a royal maid,
With pallid, tearful face ;
We sate beneath the linden shade,
Entwined in love's embrace.

“ I do not seek thy father's throne,
“ His sceptre tempts not me ;
“ I will not have his jewell'd crown,
“ But thee, love, only thee !”

“ That cannot be,” she answered me,
“ I lie deep, deep below ;
“ Only by night I come to thee,
“ Because I love thee so.



INTERMEZZO.

XLII.

My love, we sat together,
Alone in our fragile bark.
The night was still, and we floated
Over the waters dark.

The spirit Isle, the lovely,
Lay dim in moonlight trance ;
Sweet sounded magic music,
And waved the misty dance.

The music grew sweeter and sweeter
The dance waved to and fro ;
But we, on the wide, wide ocean,
Floated in silent woe.

XLIII.

THE stories of our childhood
 Invite with beck'ning hand,
And sing to softest music
 About a magic land ;

Where full-blown flow'rets languish
 In evening's golden light,
And mingle lovelorn glances,
 In bridal beauty bright ;

Where all the trees are vocal,
 And all in concert sing,
And tuned to blithest music,
 The limpid fountains spring ;

And love-strains ring melodious,
 Sweet as no tongue can tell,
Till love's resistless longings
 Possess thee like a spell.



INTERMEZZO.

And, oh ! could I be yonder,
And lighten there my breast,
And free from every torture,
Be happy and at rest !

Alas ! that land enchanted,
Full oft my dreams display ;
But with the dawn of morning,
Like mist it melts away.



XLIV.

I'VE loved thee long, and I love thee still ;
And when the world shall in ruins lie,
Over the wreck of the ruin'd world
The flame of my love shall mount on high.

XLV.

I ROAM on a bright summer morning,
Alone with my thoughts through the grove ;
The flowers they all whisper and whisper,
But silent and pensive I rove.

The flowers all whisper and whisper,
And sympathize all they can :
Oh, do not be cross with our sister,
Thou sorrowful careworn man !

INTERMEZZO.

XLVI.

My love is sadly shining,
And beams with gloomy light,
'Tis like a mournful legend
Told on a summer's night.

“ There stray'd in magic gardens
“ Two lovers mute and lone ;
“ The nightingales were singing,
“ The glimmering moonbeams shone.

“ The maiden stands as sculptured,
“ The knight unto her sighs :
“ Then comes the desert giant,—
“ The timid maiden flies.

“ The knight to earth sinks bleeding,
“ The giant tramps away,”—
The story will be ended
Upon my dying day.

XLVII.

THEY have driven me almost mad,
And forced me to curse my fate,
Some of them with their love,
Some of them with their hate.

They have poison'd the cup I drank,
They have poison'd the food I ate,
Some of them with their love,
Some of them with their hate.

But she who has tortured, vex'd,
And wounded me deepest, she
Has never been known to hate,
Nor feel any love for me.





INTERMEZZO.

XLVIII.

THE glow of summer's heat
Upon thy fair cheek plays ;
While in thy little heart
The frost of winter stays.

But this, my best beloved,
Will not be always so.
The winter will be on thy cheek,
While inwardly thou wilt glow.

XLIX.

WHEN two are about to part,
What shaking of hands is there,
And then they begin to weep,
And sigh with a hopeless air.

But we, we sigh'd no sighs,
We wept no briny tears ;
The tears and the sighs with us
Were kept for our after-years.

L.

WE sat and we sipp'd our tea,
And the subject of love being on,
The gentlemen took the æsthetical line,
The ladies in sentiment shone.

“Love ought to be platonic,”
The wither'd justice cried ;
His lady, with a sarcastic smile,
In audible answer sigh'd.

The parson open'd his mouth :—
“Love never too warm should grow,
“Or it injures the constitution.”
A pretty girl lisp'd—“How so ?”

Said the countess, in plaintive tone—
“Love is a passion !” said she ;
And graciously handed the Baron
A cup of her strong Bohea.



INTERMEZZO.

A place at the board was vacant ;
You should have been there, my dear.
What a treat 'twould have been, my darling,
Your notions of love to hear.

LI.

My songs are poison'd, are they ?
And pray what should they be ;
When my life itself has been poison'd,
And poison'd, my love, by thee ?

My songs are poison'd, are they ?
And pray what should they be,
When the singer has snakes in his bosom,
And mid them, my sweetest, thee ?

LII.

I DREAM'D the old familiar dream,
It was a night in May, love ;
We sate beneath a flowering lime,
And swore to be true for aye, love.

Swearing and swearing evermore,
Kissing with vows low spoken ;
Lest I should ever forget my vows
Thou hast bitten my hand for a token.

Oh, lady with the lovely eyes,
So fair, and so malicious ;
To swear and kiss was well enough,
To bite was injudicious.



INTERMEZZO.

LIII.

I STAND on the mountain-top,
In a sentimental strain ;
“ If I were a tiny bird ! ”
I murmur again and again.

If I were a swallow now,
I'd fly to thee, sweetheart mine,
And build me a pleasant nest,
Where the panes of thy windows shine.

If I were a nightingale,
My darling, I'd fly to thee,
And sing thee my lays all night,
Down from the linden-tree.

If I were a cocksparrow pert,
I'd fly direct to thy heart ;
Thou'rt fond of cocksparrows, I know,
And takest each cocksparrow's part.

LIV.

THE carriage rolls on slowly,
Through pleasant forests green,
Through flowering vales, that gaily
Shine bright in the sunny sheen.

I sit, and in dreamy musings
I think of my maiden dear ;
When lo ! at the carriage-window
Three spectral shades appear.

They nod and make grimaces,
So mocking, yet so shy ;
Then roll'd like mists together,
They flutter and rustle by.



INTERMEZZO.

LV.

A DREAM has made me weep ;
I dream'd that thou wert dead !
And when I awoke, my cheeks
Were wet with the tears I'd shed.

A dream has made me weep ;
I dream'd that thou wert gone !
And when I awoke from sleep,
I bitterly still wept on.

A dream has made me weep ;
I dream'd that thou wert true !
I woke and wept, and even now
My tears break forth anew.

LVI.

ALL night I see thee in my dreams,
And see thee smile in welcome sweet,
And loud outweeping, fling myself
Before thee at thy feet.

Thou lookest down so mournfully,
And sadly shak'st thy lily head ;
And on me fall the pearly tears
Thy lovely eyes have shed.

Thou breathest soft some secret words,
And givst me a branch of cypress hoar ;
I wake, and find the branch is gone,
And remember the words no more.



INTERMEZZO.

LVII.

THE stormy winds are raging,
The night is dark and wild ;
Oh, where is she this moment,
That poor unhappy child ?

I see her at the window
Of her lone and cheerless room,
Gazing, with eyes fast filling,
Forth on a world of gloom.

LVIII.

THE trees wave in the autumn wind,
The night is damp and chill ;
Wrapp'd in my cloak, I ride along
The forest lone and still.

And whilst I ride, with rapid pace
My thoughts ride on before ;
And bear me lightly merrily
Unto my true-love's door.

BOOK OF SONGS.

Loud bark the dogs ; the servants come ;
The torches glimmer round :
And up the narrow winding stairs
With ringing spurs I bound.

The tapestried chamber shines so bright,
So fragrant and so warm,
And there the loved one stands and waits—
I clasp her in my arm.

The wind it whistles through the trees,
The oak-tree mutters low—
“Why ridest thou with thy foolish dream,
“Thou foolish rider, so ?”





INTERMEZZO.

LIX.

Lo ! yonder falling star,
Hurl'd from its glittering height ;
It is the star of love,
That falls from Heaven to-night.

And from the apple-tree
Fall leaf and blossoms gay ;
Then cometh the wanton breeze
And drives them away, away.

Soft sings the stately swan,
As to and fro he steers ;
And softly, softly singing,
Dives down and disappears.

All is so still and dark,
Blossom and leaf are gone ;
Quench'd is the falling star,
And hush'd the dying swan.

BOOK OF SONGS.

LX.

THE dream-god brought me to a castle proud,
Where magic odours fill'd the sultry air ;
And torches glitter'd, and a motley crowd
Stream'd through a labyrinth of chambers fair.
Wringing their hands, with terror wailing loud,
The pale-faced multitude seeks exit there ;
Virgins and knights shine glittering 'mid the throng,
And in the tumult I am borne along.

Yet suddenly I stand alone, for lo !
Swift as a dream, the crowd has pass'd away ;
Alone I wander on, and quickly go
Through lofty rooms, that strangely order'd lay.
With leaden feet, my heart oppress'd with woe,
Almost despairing e'er to find my way,
I thread them all, and to the door draw near,
I pass without—Oh, God ! who meets me here ?



INTERMEZZO.

It was the loved one, standing at the door :

Her brow with care, her lips were wrung with pain ;
To turn and fly, her outstretch'd hands implore,—


I know not if in warning or disdain.

But her sweet eyes gaze on me evermore,

With looks that pierce my bosom and my brain ;
And as they gaze with meaning stern and deep,
And yet so lovingly, I wake from sleep.

LXI.

THE midnight hour is cold and black,
Sighing I tread the forest track ;
The sleeping trees my footsteps wake,
O'er me in pity their heads they shake.



LXII.

THE suicide lies at the cross-roads,
Interr'd at the midnight hour ;
And there a blue flowret blossoms—
The poor sinner's flower.

I stood at the cross-roads sighing,
'Twas hard on the midnight hour ;
There waved in the moonlight slowly
The poor sinner's flower.

LXIII.

EVERYWHERE a chilling darkness
Thick and heavy round me lies,
Since no more there shines upon me
All the lustre of thine eyes.

And extinguish'd is the gentle
Star of love's resplendent light ;
Yawning chasms gape around me :
Take me, thou primeval night !



INTERMEZZO.

LXIV.

My eyes were veil'd by night,
My lips were seal'd with lead ;
With frozen heart and brain,
I lay amid the dead.

How long I cannot tell,
I lay by slumber bound ;
I woke, and in my grave
Heard hasty knocks resound.

“ Henry, wilt not arise,
“ ’Tis now eternal day ;
“ The dead are risen up,
“ Eternal joy bears sway.”

I cannot rise, my love,
With me it still is night ;
My eyes have wept until
I've wholly lost my sight.

BOOK OF SONGS.

“ But, Henry, I will kiss
“ The darkness from thy eyes ;
“ The angels thou shalt see,
“ And light of paradise.”

My love, I cannot rise,
The wound bleeds evermore,
Where thou with pointed word
Didst smite my heart full sore.

“ But, Henry, I will lay
“ My hand upon thy heart ;
“ It then will bleed no more,
“ And heal'd will be the smart.”

My love, I cannot rise,
I'm bleeding from my brain ;
I fired the fatal shot,
As thou from me wast ta'en.

“ But, Henry, with my hair
“ I'll stop the gaping wound ;
“ I'll staunch the stream of blood,
“ And make thee whole and sound.”



INTERMEZZO.

So sweet, so soft her voice,
I could not say her no ;
I tried to rise and stand,
And to my darling go.

Then all my wounds unclosed ;
A sanguine torrent broke
Wildly from breast and head,
And suddenly I woke.



LXV.

THOSE old and cruel songs of mine,
Those evil dreams so drear,
Come now, and let us bury them,—
Bring me the coffin here.

Inside it I have much to lay,
Though what, I'll tell to none ;
The coffin must be bigger than
The Heidelberg great Tun.

And let me also have a bier
Of sturdy planks and strong,
And ye must make it longer than
The bridge at Mainz is long.

Twelve giants, also, ye must bring,
In muscle and in bone,
Stronger than good St. Christopher,
In the minster at Cologne.



INTERMEZZO.

And they shall bear the coffin forth,
And sink it 'neath the wave ;
For such a mighty coffin well
Deserves a mighty grave.

Why must the coffin be so big ?
And why so hard to move ?
Because inside it I have laid
My sorrows and my love !








THE BOSTON

1851-1852



THE RETURN.

1823—1824.



THE FOUNTAIN

When the flowers are in bloom
And the birds are in song
You will find the fountain
In the heart of the wood.

Always let your heart be true
And to love with all your power
For that is the fountain
That gives life to the flowers.

I am not a fountain
In the heart of the wood
Though the water is sweet
Still it has a price.



THE RETURN.

I.

O'ER my gloomy dark existence
Once there shone an image bright ;
Now the gentle form has faded,
I am wholly sunk in night.

Children in the dark and lonely
Always feel their spirits cowed,
And to chase away their terror,
Sing their simple songs aloud.

I, as mere a child as any,
In the dark am singing here ;
Though the tune be nowise pleasing,
Still it has dispell'd my fear.

II.

I CANNOT tell the reason
Why I'm so sad to-day ;
A tale of days departed
I cannot drive away.

The air is cool and darkling,
The Rhine flows calm and bright ;
The mountain-tops are sparkling
In evening's golden light.

On yonder rock is seated
A maiden wondrous fair ;
Her golden robes are gleaming,—
She combs her golden hair.

With golden comb she combs it,
And sings a magic song ;
Its strain is wild and wondrous,
So thrilling and so strong.



THE RETURN.

The boatman in his shallop
It fills with wild delight ;
The rocky reef he sees not,
He gazes at the height.

I believe, that at last the billows
Boatman and boat destroy ;
And this with her wondrous singing
Was wrought by Lorelei.

III.

My heart, my heart is heavy,
Though brightly smiles the May ;
I lean against the lime-tree,
High on the bastion gray.

Below, the deep blue river
Flows languidly and still ;
A boy in his boat is rowing,
And fishing and whistling shrill.

BOOK OF SONGS.

Across, in motley mixture,
There rise before the ken,
Meadows, and woods, and oxen,
Villas, and parks, and men.

The maids are bleaching linen,
And dance on the grassy floor ;
The mill-wheel scatters diamonds,
I hear its distant roar.

A sentry-box is standing,
Yon old gray tower below ;
A young and lusty red-coat
Is marching to and fro.

He's playing with his rifle,
It gleams in the sunshine red ;
And now he presents and shoulders—
I wish he would shoot me dead.



THE RETURN.

IV.

I WANDER and weep in the forest ;
The throstle-bird sits on her tree,
And sings, as she flits through the branches :
What is amiss with thee ?

“ The swallows, fair bird, are thy sisters,
“ And they can the cause divine ;
“ The snug little nests that they dwell in
“ Are built where her windows shine.”

V.

THE night is wild and wet,
No star is in the sky ;
Beneath the murmuring forest trees,
Silent I roam and sigh.

There glimmers a light afar
From the hunter's lonely cot ;
It shall not tempt me near it,
It seems but a cheerless spot.

BOOK OF SONGS.

There sits in her leathern arm-chair,
The grandmother blind and weak,
Ghost-like and stiff, as if made of stone,
And never is heard to speak.

The forester's red-haired son
Angrily walks about,
And flings his gun at the wall,
And laughs with a savage shout.

The beautiful daughter weeps,
And moistens her flax with tears ;
While whimpering up from her feet
Her father's terrier peers.

VI.

As once on a journey I happened
The friends of my love to meet ;
Sister, and father, and mother
Came joyfully forward to greet.



THE RETURN.

They asked me how had my health been,
And added, with smiling grace,
That I was in no way alter'd,
Though rather pale in the face.

I ask'd after uncles and cousins,
And many a tedious spark,
And after the little puppy,
Famed for his tiny bark.

Then after my married sweetheart
I ask'd, as was only kind ;
And quite in a friendly manner,
They said she was just confined.

I wish'd them joy sincerely,
And lisp'd in the kindest way :
I sent her a thousand good wishes,
Which they would, I hoped, convey.

The sister, interrupting,
Cried out, that the little hound
Had grown up wild and savage,
And in the Rhine been drown'd.



BOOK OF SONGS.

The little one's like her sister,
And most when she laughs in glee ;
Her eyes are the same precisely
As those that ruin'd me.

VII.

WE sat by the fisher's cottage,
And watch'd the seas and skies ;
And mark'd the mists of evening
Around us chilly rise.

The lights within the lighthouse
Grew gradually bright,
And in the furthest distance
One ship was still in sight.

We spoke of storm and shipwreck,
And of the sailor's life,
Tossing 'twixt joys and sorrows,
With seas and skies in strife.



THE RETURN.

We spoke of distant countries,—
North, south, and everywhere ;
And of the wondrous customs,
And wondrous beings there.

By the bright and fragrant Ganges,
The giant palm-trees tower,
And silent graceful natives
Kneel to the lotos-flower.

In Lapland, people are filthy,
Wide-mouth'd, flat-headed, and small ;
They crouch, and bake their fishes,
And shriek, and squeak, and squall.

The maidens earnestly listen'd,
And nobody spoke at last ;
The vessel was seen no longer,
The night had set in so fast.

VIII.

THOU lovely fisher maiden,
Come bring thy boat to land ;
Come to me, and sit beside me,
And talk to me hand in hand.

Lay thy head upon my bosom,
And, maiden, fear not me ;
When thou confidest fearless
Each day in the wild, wild sea.

My heart is like the ocean,
Has storm, and ebb, and flow ;
And many a pearl, my sweet one,
Lies hidden deep below.



THE RETURN.

IX.

THE glorious moon is risen,
And beams upon the wave ;
I hold embraced my darling,—
Our hearts together heave.

In the arms of the lovely maiden
I lie on the lonely strand ;
What hearest thou in the night-wind ?
Why waves thy lily hand ?

“’Tis not the sigh of the night-wind,
“ It is the mermaid’s song ;
“ And the mermaids are my sisters,
“ Whom the waves have swallow’d long.”



BOOK OF SONGS.

X.

THE wind he puts his breeches on,
His white and watery breeches ;
He lashes the sea with all his might,
It howls and roars and screeches.

The black'ning skies shed floods of rain
Upon the wild commotion ;
It is as if the hoary night
Would drown the hoary ocean.

The sea-mew clambers to the mast,
And screams while screeches last her ;
Her fluttering wings and screamings seem
To prophesy disaster.



THE RETURN.

XI.

THE storm has call'd for a dance,
And whistles and shouts with might ;
Hurrah ! how swift the good ship flies,—
'Tis a wild and lusty night.

Like living water-mountains,
The raging billows rise ;
Now yawning in black abysses,
Now rearing all white to the skies.

And cursings, and retchings, and prayers,
Up from the cabin come ;
While I lay hold of the mast,
And wish I were safe at home.

XII.

THE shades of evening darken,
The mists o'er ocean creep ;
The low-voiced billows murmur,
Then rises a shape from the deep.

The mermaid rises from ocean,
She sits on the shore by my side ;
Her floating veil uncovers
Her white breast's flowing pride.

She presses me, and she clasps me,
Till almost in pain I say—
Clasp me, but not so closely,
Thou beautiful water-fay !

“ I clasp my arms around thee,
“ And closely and strongly hold ;
“ I want that thou shouldst warm me,—
“ The night is so bitter cold.”



THE RETURN.

The moon growing paler and paler,
Shines faint from her cloudy height ;
Thy eyes grow dimmer and moister,
Thou beautiful water sprite !

“ They are not growing dimmer and moister ;
“ My eyes are moist and dim,
“ Because, since I rose from the water,
“ Two drops in my eyelids swim.”

The wail of the sea-mew mingles
With the roar of the breakers white ;
Thy heart is wildly throbbing,
Thou beautiful water sprite !

“ My heart is wildly throbbing,
“ My heart is throbbing wild,
“ Because I love thee madly,
“ Thou dearest mortal child !”

XIII.

WHEN early in the morning
I pass thy dwelling by,
To see thee at the window
Is pleasant to my eye.

Thy dark brown eyes accost me,
And searchingly they scan ;
Who art thou, and what ails thee,
Thou strange and sickly man ?

“ I am a German poet,
“ Known in all German lands ;
“ And when they name their greatest,
“ My name among them stands :

“ And what, thou fairy, ails me,
“ Is many a German's share ;
“ Who names the worst afflictions
“ Will name the pangs I bear.”



THE RETURN.

XIV.

THE ocean glitter'd far and wide
In evening's parting glow ;
Beside the lonely fisher-house,
We sate in silent woe.

The mists arose, the waters swell'd,
The mews flew to and fro ;
And from thy eyes the loving tears
Fell warm in rapid flow.

I watch'd them fall upon thy hand,
And on my knee I sank,
And from thy white and fairy hand
The scalding tears I drank.

Since then my wasted body pines,
My soul no comfort cheers ;
The hapless maid has poison'd me,
With those ill-omen'd tears.

BOOK OF SONGS.

XV.

ON the top of yonder mountain
Stands a castle proud and fair,
And three ladies fair live in it,
And their hearts I used to share.

Saturday I gave to Henny,
Julia liked a Sunday kiss ;
Cunigund, upon the Monday,
Almost smother'd me with bliss.

Now on Tuesday was a party,
At the ladies' castle fair ;
All the neighb'ring dames and nobles
Found themselves assembled there.

I alone was not invited,—
Greater blunder could not be !
All the tattling aunts and cousins
Saw, and laugh'd maliciously.



THE RETURN.

XVI.

DIM on the far horizon,
Lies, like a misty cloud,
The town with all its steeples,
That evening's vapours shroud.

The chilling breezes ripple
The sheet of waters gray ;
With measured stroke my boatman
Cleaves mournfully his way.

The sun, as he sets, uprises,
Bright from his cloudy bier,
And gleams on the spot where I parted
With all that my heart held dear.



XVIII.

I PASS once more the well-known streets
The road I oft have taken ;
I come before my darling's house,—
'Tis lonely and forsaken.

How close and dreary are the streets,
The pavement is past all bearing ;
The houses totter o'er my head—
I fly from the spot despairing !

XIX.

I ENTER'D the halls I knew so well,
'Twas there she vow'd to be true for aye ;
And from the spot where her tear-drops fell,
A brood of serpents crawl'd away.



THE RETURN.

XX.

CALM the night, the streets are tranquil,
Here my darling used to dwell ;
She has long the town forsaken,
But the house is standing still.

And a man, too, stands there gazing,
Wrings his hands in frenzied woe ;
Well may I to see him shudder,—
'Tis myself the moonbeams show.

Double man, thou pale-faced spectre !
Why thus ape the pangs I bore,
Pangs of love, which rack'd my bosom
Many a night in times of yore ?



XXI.

How canst thou sleep in quiet,
And know that I'm alive?
My ancient rage arises,
And then my bonds I'll rive!

Know'st thou the ancient story,
How once in midnight's gloom,
A dead youth seized his darling,
And bore her to the tomb?

Believe me, thou wondrous lovely,
Thou wondrous gentle maid,
I live, and am far stronger
Than any of the dead!





THE RETURN.

XXII.

THE maiden sleeps in her chamber,
The moon peeps trembling in ;
Without is a ringing and singing,
Like waltzers' merry din.

“ I'll try to see from the window,
“ Whence all the uproar springs ! ”
She sees there a skeleton standing—
He fiddles and scrapes and sings.

“ A dance to me thou hast promised,
“ And never hast kept thy vow ;
“ To-night is a ball in the churchyard,
“ Then come, and we'll dance it now. ”

It works on the maiden wildly,
It lures her forth from the door ;
She comes, and the skeleton singing
And fiddling marches before.

BOOK OF SONGS.

He fiddles and hops and ambles,
And rattles each dried-up bone ;
And nods and nods with his gleaming skull,
That horribly mocks the moon.

XXIII.

I STOOD before her portrait
Absorb'd in dreams of woe,
Until the lovely face began
With hidden life to glow.

Around her lips a wondrous smile
Play'd like a gleam of light,
And as suffused with pensive tears,
Her eyes shone doubly bright.

And down my cheeks the bitter tears
Came flowing fast and free ;
And oh ! I cannot yet believe
That thou art lost to me !

THE RETURN.

XXIV.

I MOST unhappy Atlas!—what a world,
An universe of sorrow I must bear ;
I bear things insupportable ; my heart
Is rack'd, and soon will break.

Thou haughty spirit, thou hast will'd it so !
Thou wouldst be happy—infinately bless'd,
Or infinitely wretched, haughty heart !
And now thou art most wretched.

XXV.

GENERATIONS pass away,
Years arrive and then depart ;
But never shall the love decay
That's rooted in my heart.

Could I but meet thee once again,
I'd kneel upon one knee,
And falter with my dying breath—
“ Madam, ich liebe Sie ! ”

XXVI.

THE moon was dim, and each kindly star
Shone down with a mournful ray ;
I dream'd that I came to my true love's town,
Hundreds of miles away.

I dream'd that I came to the very house,
And kiss'd the steps of the door,
That the hem of her robe, and her tiny feet,
Had hallow'd for evermore.

The night was long, the night was cold,
And cold was the threshold stone ;
Her pale sad face to the window came,
And on it the pale moon shone.





THE RETURN.

XXVII.

WHAT will this tear so lonely ?
It does but dim my sight ;
A pledge of days departed,
It linger'd till to-night.

It once had brilliant sisters,
But all of them are gone ;
With all my joys and sorrows,
In night and storm they've flown.

I've seen like misty shadows
The azure stars depart,
That smiled those joys and sorrows
Deep in my longing heart.

My love herself has vanish'd,
Flown like a passing dream ;
Thou tear, so old and lonely,
'Tis time to do the same !

XXVIII.

THE pale autumnal moon
Peers through the clouded skies ;
In the churchyard all alone
The silent parsonage lies.

The mother her Bible reads,
Her son stares full at the light ;
One daughter sleepily stretches,
Her sister cries outright :—

“ Oh, God, how one’s days drag on,
“ So wearisome and so drear ;
“ ’Tis only when some one’s buried,
“ That we see anything here ! ”

The mother replies as she reads—
“ Not so ; but four have died,
“ Since the day when thy father was laid
“ By the gate at the churchyard side ! ”



THE RETURN.

The elder daughter yawns—

“I cannot stay starving here ;
“To-morrow I’ll go to the count,
“He’s rich, and will buy me dear !”

“Three jägers drink at the Star,”
The son with a loud laugh said ;
“They can make money, and I
“Shall ask to be taught their trade !”

The mother her Bible flings
In his face so hollow and wan :—
“And wilt thou, accursed of Heaven,
“Become a highwayman ?”

A tapping is heard at the window,
And a hand is seen to wave ;
In his minister’s robes the father
Has risen from out his grave.

XXIX.

WHAT weather, what weather this is,
With its wind and rain and snow ;
I sit at the window and watch
The darkling streets below.

There glimmers a lonely light,
I follow its feeble flame,
As, lantern in hand, across the street,
Totters an aged dame.

Butter and eggs and meal
She buys, as I think, to make
Some more than wonted dainty,
For her grown-up daughter's sake.

But she, in her soft arm-chair,
Sleepily eyes the light ;
While over her lovely face
The golden locks flow bright.



THE RETURN.

XXX.

THEY tell me I am cross'd in love,
And pining day by day,
Till I at last myself believe
What other people say.

Thou fairy with the witching eyes,
I've told thee o'er and o'er,
I loved thee, till with loving thee
My very heart was sore.

But only in my lonely room
Such language did I dare ;
And ah ! my lips were always dumb
When thou thyself wast there.

It was some wicked angel's will
My courage so to cow ;
Ah ! through that wicked angel's skill
Am I so wretched now.

XXXI.

Oh, those fairy finger-tips !
Could I press them to my lips ;
Could I press them to my heart,
And in silent tears depart !

Oh, those violet eyes so bright !
Still they haunt me day and night ;
And I strive in vain to glean
What the sweet blue riddles mean.

XXII.

“ Has she then made no admission
“ Touching thy forlorn condition ?
“ Couldst thou never in her eyes
“ E'en a spark of love surprise ?

“ Could'st thou never learn the art
“ Through her eyes to reach her heart ?—
“ Thou, who in such things wert once
“ Anything except a dunce !”



THE RETURN.

XXXIII.

THEY both of them loved, but neither
The truth to the other would say ;
They met so proudly and coldly,
While both were pining away.

They parted at length, and in future
Encounter'd in dreams alone ;
They died long since, and to neither
The fate of the other was known.

XXXIV.

WHEN I told thee my woes in good plain prose,
You yawn'd without any reply ;
When I learn'd to rehearse them in jingling verse,
You praised me up to the sky.

XXXV.

I CALL'D the devil, and he came,
And a thrill of astonishment through me ran.
He is not ugly, he is not lame,
But a perfectly charming agreeable man.
A man whose prime is not yet gone by,
With worldly knowledge and breeding high.
As a good diplomatist he's of weight,
And argues soundly on church and state.
He is somewhat pale, but then, you know,
He has work'd at Sanskrit and Hegel so.
His favourite poet is still Fouqué ;
But the critical science he means to lay
Aside, and his studious zeal to smother
In favour of Hecate, his dear grandmother.
My legal learning with praise he noted,
He, too, to the law had his time devoted.
He said that my friendship in his eyes
Was a boon he could not too deeply prize ;
Then asks if we have not met before,
At the house of the Spanish Ambassador ?
Whereon, when I look at him, it appears
He is a man that I've known for years.



THE RETURN.

XXXVI.

MORTAL, do not mock the devil,
For the span of life is short ;
And eternal hell, believe me,
Is no theme for idle sport.

Mortal, pay the debts thou owest,
For the span of life is long ;
And thou'lt want when old to borrow,
Even as thou did'st when young.



XXXVIII.

My child, we once were children,
Two little children gay ;
And creeping inside the henhouse,
Lay hidden beneath the hay.

We used to crow like bantams,
At people on the road :
Ki, ki, ri, ki!—they fancied,
That real bantams crow'd.

We paper'd the packing-cases
That in our court-yard lay ;
And lived together in them,
In a style of great display.

There many a friendly visit
Our neighbour's tabby paid ;
What stately bows and curtsseys,
And compliments we made.



THE RETURN.

We press'd her with kind inquiries
On the state of her nerves and head ;
Since then to numberless tabbies
The very same we've said.

We sat like ancient cronies,
Talking and grumbling on :
Deploring how things were alter'd,
Since the good old days long gone.

How love and faith and honour
Had vanish'd into air ;
How high the price of coffee,
And money, alas ! how rare.

Our childish sports are over,
And all is on the move ;—
Time, and the world, and money,
Honesty, faith, and love.

XXXIX.

My heart is oppress'd, and with longing
I think of the days that are gone,
When earth was so gay and delightful,
And men lived light-heartedly on.

Now all is so grim and so gloomy,
So jumbled and musty and cold ;
Excepting what love we have left us,
There's nothing by which we can hold.





THE RETURN.

XL.

As the moon emerges, radiant,
From the cloud that round it lowers,
So, 'mid gloomy days arises
Now the thought of happier hours.

On the deck together seated,
O'er the Rhine we proudly rode ;
And the banks in summer greenness,
In the setting sunshine glow'd.

At the feet I sat reflecting
Of a maiden fair and mild ;
O'er her face so pale and lovely,
Bright the ruddy sunbeams smiled.

Lutes were ringing, youths were singing,
Wondrous was the mirth and glee ;
Deeper azure tinged the heavens,
And the soul roam'd wide and free.

BOOK OF SONGS.

Mountains, castles, woods, and valleys,
As by magic hurried by ;
And the whole glow'd bright before me,
In the lovely maiden's eye.

XLI.

I SAW in a dream the loved one,
All wither'd and fallen away ;
A sorrowful careworn woman,
The maid so blooming and gay.

She bore a babe at her bosom,
And one of her hand had hold ;
Her face and her dress and her bearing,
Of sorrows and poverty told.

She met me, as over the market
Her faltering way she took,
And gazed upon me, while calmly,
Yet painfully thus I spoke :



THE RETURN.

Come with me at once to my dwelling,
Thou art pale and ready to sink ;
I'll try by steadily working,
To earn for thee food and drink.

I'll willingly keep and care for
Thy innocent babes so mild :
But thee before every other,—
Thou poor unfortunate child !

And never, I promise, before thee
Shall a word of my love be said ;
But I'll visit the grave where thou liest,
And weep for thee when thou art dead.



BOOK OF SONGS.

XLII.

“ WORTHY friend, how can it help you,
“ Still these stale old songs to fashion ?
“ Wilt thou sit for ever, brooding
“ O'er the addled eggs of passion ?

“ Why, it's one eternal hatching !
“ From the shells the chickens shake them :
“ And they chirp about and flutter,
“ And straight in a book you bake them.”

XLIII.

Do not thou be so impatient,
If the thought of ancient pains
Somewhat prominently mingles
Even with my newest strains.

Wait, and soon these dying echoes
Of my woes shall cease to ring ;
And my heart with songs shall blossom,
Bright as in a second spring.



THE RETURN.

XLIV.

'Tis time at length from Folly's bonds
My common sense to free ;
Too long I've play'd the actor's part,
And acted a part with thee.

The splendidly-painted scenes recall'd
The old romantic time ;
My knightly mantle glean'd with gold,
My sentiments were sublime.

And now that I, in a sober fit,
Take leave of the foolish game,
I feel as if I were acting still,
And wretched just the same.

Oh, Heavens ! although it was all in jest,
I've acted a genuine part ;
The Dying Gladiator's death
I've play'd with a death-struck heart.

XLV.

THE great king Wismawitra,
With bent and anxious brow,
Attempts by toil and daring
To gain Wasichta's cow.

Oh, royal Wismawitra !
Oh, what a bull art thou,
To struggle, strive, and strain so,—
And all about a cow !

XLVI.

HEART, my heart, oh, be not troubled !
Bear thy lot, though hard it be ;
Spring will give thee back redoubled
All that winter took from thee.

Think how lovely is creation !
Think what joys await thy call !
All things bring thee consolation,
Thou art free to love them all !



THE RETURN.

XLVII.

THOU'RT like a tender flow'ret,
So pure, so fair, so bless'd ;
I gaze on thee, and sadness
Steals slowly o'er my breast.

I feel as if I ought to lay
My hand upon thy brow,
And pray that God would guard thee
As pure and fair as now.

XLVIII.

MAIDEN, it would be thy ruin,
And I strive most earnestly,
To prevent thy gentle bosom
Ever feeling love for me.

But that this should be so easy,
Rather hurts me, I confess ;
And I ne'er the less would like it,
Wouldst thou love me ne'er the less.

XLIX.

WHEN on my couch extended,
I lie enwrapp'd in night,
A lovely graceful image
Hovers before my sight.

And when refreshing slumber
Has closed my weary eyes,
With all my dreams this image
Mingles in wondrous wise.

But with the dreams of morning
It never melts away ;
I bear it in my bosom
Through all the live-long day.



THE RETURN.

L.

MAIDEN with rosy lips,
Eyes sweet and clear,
Ever I think of thee,
Maiden most dear.

Long is the winter night ;
Fain would I be
Now in thy little room,
Seated by thee.

Pressing my lips to thy
Small white hand,
Weeping warm tears on thy
Small white hand.

BOOK OF SONGS.

LI.

LET the streets be block'd with snow,
Let it hail and let it blow,
Let my shatter'd windows break,
I have no complaint to make ;
While within my heart I bear
Her I love, 'tis spring time there.

LIII.

WAS not the secret of my love
Told by my blanching cheek ?
And wouldst thou that this haughty mouth
The beggar's prayer should speak ?

Oh, no ! these lips are far too proud,
And can but kiss and jest ;
E'en now they jeer the mortal wound
That rankles in my breast.



THE RETURN.

LIV.

WORTHY friend, thou art in love,
Wounded by a recent dart ;
All grows darker in thy head,
All grows lighter in thy heart.

Worthy friend, thou art in love,
And 'tis vain to answer no,
When I see the amorous flame
Through your very waistcoat glow.



LV.

I FAİN would have linger'd by thee,
And wish'd to prolong my stay ;
You said you had much to attend to,
You said you must hasten away.

I said that the hopes of my being
For ever to thee were bound ;
You laugh'd in my face for an answer,
And curtsey'd down to the ground.

You have even increased and heighten'd
The pangs of my love-sick heart ;
You have even refused to give me
A kiss when about to part.

Think not I shall blow my brains out,
If even I felt it more ;
All this, as it happens, dear lady,
Has happen'd to me before.



THE RETURN.

LVI.

YES, sapphires are those eyes of thine,
The charming soft and sweet ;
Oh, thrice, thrice happy is the man,
Whom they with love may greet !

A diamond is that heart of thine,
Bright flashes round it throws ;
Oh, thrice, thrice happy is the man,
For whom with love it glows !

And rubies are those lips of thine,
More beautiful are none ;
Oh, thrice, thrice happy is the man,
To whom thy love they own !

Oh, if I knew this happy man,
Oh, could I meet this lover,
So all alone, in forest green,
His luck would soon be over !

LVII.

I HAVE lied to thee so fondly,
That I've lied my heart away ;
That my own deceit has snared me,
And to earnest turn'd my play.

So that when, with perfect reason,
Lightly now from me thou turnest,
Powers of darkness seize their victim,
And I shoot myself in earnest.



THE RETURN.

LVIII.

THIS world, this life, are fragments unconnected,
But I a German teacher have selected ;
The scatter'd fragments he together tags,
In an intelligible combination :
And with his night-gown, and his night-cap's rags,
Stops all the holes up, and completes creation.

LIX.

NIGHT and day my brain I've wearied,
And a thousand schemes revolved,
Till, by thy dear eyes enlighten'd,
I am settled and resolved.

And I mean to live contented,
Basking in thy eyes of blue ;
I in love again ! Ye Heavens !
Can it possibly be true ?

LX.

TO-NIGHT they have a party,
The house is fill'd with light ;
Above, before the window,
There moves an image bright.

Thou seest me not, as, lonely,
I stand in the gloom below ;
Still less canst thou discover
My gloomy bosom's woe.

My heart so gloomy loves thee,
It loves thee, and it aches ;
And—but thou canst not see it—
It quivers, bleeds, and breaks !



THE RETURN.

LXI.

OH, would that I, in a single word,
The sum of my griefs could say !
That word I'd give to the restless winds,
To carry for ever away.

They'll carry to thee that word of woe,
My love, in their restless race ;
Thou'lt hear it strike with every hour,
And echo in every place.

And when thou hast closed thy weary eyes,
And liest in slumber light,
That word will mingle with every dream,
And haunt thee the livelong night.

LXII:

THOU hast thy pearls and diamonds,
Hast all that men implore ;
Thy eyes are superhuman—
My love, what wilt thou more ?

And on those eyes so lovely,
I've written many a score
Of deathless songs and ballads—
My love, what wilt thou more ?

And with those eyes so lovely,
Thou hast tortured me full sore ;
Till at last thou hast wrought my ruin—
My love, what wilt thou more ?

THE RETURN.

LXIII.

HE who once loves well, though vainly,
Almost may be deemed a god ;
Who a second time loves vainly,
Him I call a clod.

I, again, unloved am loving,—
Such a cursed clod am I ;
Sun and moon and stars are laughing,
I laugh too—and die !



LXIV.

THEY gave me advice and edification,
And show'd me the greatest consideration ;
They told me to wait for a better day,
And announced that I was their protégé.

But with all their protection and kind dictation,
I should have died of mere starvation,
If a worthy man, with a kindly heart,
Hadn't stepp'd forward to take my part.

Kind friend, he gave me both food and drink !
Of his goodness I never shall cease to think !
I should like to embrace him—but that can't be,
For it happens that I myself am he !

THE RETURN.

LXV.

To a youth of such endowments,
Every honour I would show ;
Oft with oysters he regales me,
Rhenish wine and Curaçao.

Coat and trowsers always faultless,
And his necktie passes telling ;
Every morn, to ask the question
How I am, he seeks my dwelling :

Speaks about my reputation,
Of my wit, and powers of pleasing ;
Ever busied in my service,
With attentions never ceasing :

And at every evening party,
To the ladies he rehearses,
With enthusiastic feeling,
My incomparable verses.

BOOK OF SONGS.

Oh, 'tis cheering still to meet with
Persons of such real worth,
At a time, too, when good people
Daily grow more scarce on earth.

LXVII.

I LEFT you all in warm July :
'Tis winter, and I come to town ;
You then were all in a glow of heat,
You now are mightily cool'd down.

I go once more, and my return
Will find you neither warm nor cold ;
And I shall walk among your graves,
And feel my own heart poor and old.



THE RETURN.

LXVIII.

To leave those dear lips, to be torn away
From those dear arms, that my retreat would bar !
I fain would linger for another day,
But here the carriage and the horses are.

And such is life ! one grief from first to last :
One endless parting, one prolong'd farewell !—
And had thy heart no power to bind me fast,
Could not thy eyes my happiness compel ?

LXIX.

ALONE in the dark together,
We travell'd the livelong night,
Sleeping, and waking, and laughing,
And jesting till morning light.

But at the dawn of morning
How did we stare, to find
A passenger sitting between us,—
Cupid, the urchin blind.

LXX.

How on earth shall I discover
Where the silly jade is flown ?
Swearing with disgust, I've sought her
In each corner of the town.

Every single inn I've been to,
Tramping through the dirt and rain ;
And of every saucy waiter
Ask'd about her all in vain.

Ha ! I see her at the window,
Nodding with her laughing face ;
How could I expect to find you,
Love, in such a splendid place ?

THE RETURN.

LXXI.

LIKE gloomy dreams the houses
Extend in lengthen'd row ;
Deep folded in my mantle,
In silence on I go.

The midnight hour is sounding
Full from the minster dome ;
My love with her charms and kisses
Awaits me at her home.

The moon is my companion,
And lights me with friendly flame ;
I reach at length her dwelling,
And joyfully exclaim :

I thank thee, old and trusty friend,
For lighting me again ;
But now I must dismiss thee,
Light now the rest of men.

BOOK OF SONGS.

And shouldst thou hear a lover
All lone his woes deplore,
Then cheer him, as so often
Thou cheeredst me of yore.

LXXII.

WHEN thou art once my lawful wife,
Thy bliss shall know no measure ;
Thy days will pass in a whirl of joy,
In a circle of endless pleasure.

And if thou scoldest, and turnest a shrew,
I'll bear it with resignation ;
But if thou wilt not praise my songs,
I'll sue for a separation.

THE RETURN.

LXXIII.

UPON thy snow-white shoulder
My head reclining lies,
And I hear the secret longings
That in thy heart arise.

“ The bugles are merrily sounding,
“ And the bold hussars ride in,
“ And to-morrow my heart’s own idol
“ A rival will woo and win.

“ And though I shall lose thee to-morrow,
“ At least thou art mine to-day,
“ And I mean to be doubly happy
“ By loving thee while I may.”



LXXIV.

THE bugles are merrily sounding,
The bold hussars depart ;
I bring thee a wreath of roses,
Thou idol of my heart.

'Twas a time of wild disorder,
Soldiers and martial din ;
And I see that thy heart has taken
A billeting-party in.

LXXV.

AND I, too, in days of yore
Many cruel torments bore,
To love's wild flames a prey.
But the price of coals is high,
And the fire is like to die ;
Ma foi ! I hope it may.



THE RETURN.

Therefore, beauty, think of this,
Quick those silly tears dismiss,
Those silly love-dreams chase.
And since life is spared you yet,
Haste your old love to forget,
Ma foi ! in my embrace.

LXXVI.

Dost thou really feel such hatred ?
Art thou really changed so sadly ?
I will call the world to witness
That you use me very badly.

Oh, you wicked lips, shame on ye !
What ungrateful conduct this is,
To abuse a man so vilely,
Who has given you such kisses !

LXXVII.

YES, they are the eyes once more,
That were wont so kind to greet ;
And they are the lips once more,
That of old made life so sweet.

And it is the voice once more,
Whose sweet tones like music ran ;
But it is myself no more,
I return an alter'd man.

While her white and lovely arms
Twine around me warm and close,
On her loving heart I lie,
Dull and gloomy, and morose.



THE RETURN.

LXXVIII.

By you I often was misunderstood,
And you by me were seldom comprehended ;
But when we both were stuck fast in the mud,
Our mutual footing was directly mended.

LXXIX.

As soon as I raised my voice to sing,
The eunuchs all complain'd ;
It never would do, said they, my voice
Was far too harsh and strain'd.

And gently then they uplifted all
Their sweet little pipes, and sang
A die-away, quavering, melting strain,
That as clear as crystal rang.

They sang about love and its wild desires,
Of love and its gushing joys ;
'Twas a triumph of art, and the ladies round
Applauded with streaming eyes.

LXXX.

ON the walls of Salamanca
Mild and balmy is the air ;
Thither, with my lovely Donna,
In the evening I repair.

Round the Beauty's slender body
My adventurous arm is press'd ;
And a throng of sweet emotions,
Agitate her gentle breast.

But a sullen murmur rises,
Rustling through the linden-grove,
And the sullen stream beneath us
Darkly murmurs as we rove.

Ah ! Senhora, dark forebodings
Tell me I shall be expell'd ;
On the walls of Salamanca
No more meetings will be held.



THE RETURN.

LXXXI.

NEXT to me lives Don Henriquez,
Whom they Handsome Harry call ;
Neighbourlike, our rooms are parted
Only by a party-wall.

Salamanca's ladies flutter
As he walks his daily rounds,
Ringing spurs, and curling whiskers,
Follow'd by two giant hounds.

But at home, in soft seclusion,
Rapt he waits the evening star ;
In his soul delicious fancies,
In his hands his new guitar :

And he strikes the chords ecstatic,
And the thrilling strains begin :
Oh, he fairly turns me seasick
With his caterwauling din.

LXXXII.

WE scarcely had met, ere thy voice and eye
Let me perceive that thou hatedst me not ;
Had not thy mother—the harpy !—been by,
We should have kiss'd, I believe, on the spot.

And to-morrow, again I must leave the town,
And again on my weary wanderings go ;
But I know from her window she'll peep down,
And a parting kiss from the street I'll throw.

LXXXIII.

THE sun already tops the hill,
The lambs already crown its brow ;
Thou gentlest lamb, thou sunniest sun,
I would that I could see thee now !

I gaze on high with longing looks—
Farewell ! Farewell ! It needs must be !
'Tis vain : the lattice opens not ;
She sleeps, she sleeps—and dreams of me ?

THE RETURN.

LXXXIV.

At Halle, upon the market-place,
Two lions stand in stone.
Alas! thou lion pride of Halle,
How humble thou art grown!

At Halle, upon the market-place,
There stands a giant wight.
He has a sword, and draws it not,
He's petrified with fright.

At Halle, upon the market-place,
There stands a minster fair.
The Burschenschaft, and the Landsmannschaft,
Have plenty of room for prayer.

LXXXV:

SUMMER twilight glimmering lies
O'er the woods and meadows green ;
Golden moon, from azure skies,
Floods with loving light the scene.

By the stream the crickets chirp,
And the water's depths are stirr'd,
And a splash, and breathings deep,
Through the stilly hush are heard.

Yonder, by the stream, at night,
Lonely bathes the lovely Fay ;
O'er her arms and shoulders white,
Loving moonbeams trembling play.



THE RETURN.

LXXXVI.

DARKNESS veils the path before me,
Sinking heart and weary feet—
Lo! like silent blessings o'er me,
Lovely moon, thou smilest sweet.

Lovely moon, thy bright rays banish
All the host of nightly fears ;
All my pains and sorrows vanish,
And my eyes dissolve in tears.

LXXXVII.

DEATH is the cooling night,
And life the sultry day :
'Tis growing dusk, I long to sleep,
Day wears my strength away.

Over my couch is a spreading tree,
A nightingale sings above ;
E'en in my dreams I hear her sing,
She sings all night of love.

LXXXVIII.

SAY, where is she, so fair, so bright,
On whom such praises you bestow'd,—
What time those flames of magic might
So wildly in your bosom glow'd?

Those flames, alas! no more they burn;
This heart, alas! is dead and cold;
This book it is the funeral urn,
The ashes of my love to hold.



THE ECLIPSE OF FAITH.

THE merry May comes with its golden lights,
Its balmy airs and aromatic scents ;
And kindly woos us with its hawthorn-bloom,
And greets us with a thousand violet eyes.
It spreads its grassy carpet, bright with flowers,
Tissue of sunshine and of morning dew,
And summons to it all the human race.
The silly people all obey the call.
The men straightway their nankeen trowsers don,
And Sunday coats, with gilded metal buttons.
The women wear the white of innocence.
The youthful coxcomb curls his spring moustache ;
The virgin bids her flowing bosom heave ;
While the town poet in his pocket sticks
Pencil and paper and lorgnette : and so
The mix'd array stream briskly to the gates.
Then, camp'd without upon the grassy sward,
They wonder at the trees' industrious growth,
Play with the many-colour'd tender flowers,
Hark to the singing of the merry birds,
And prate and scream to the blue vault of Heaven.

BOOK OF SONGS.

Me, too, the May sought out. He came, and thrice
Knock'd at my door, and cried—"My name is May.
"Thou pale-faced dreamer, come to my embrace!"
I kept my door fast bolted, and replied—
Vainly thou temptest me, thou evil guest ;
I have seen through thee, and have seen through all
The wide world's scheme, and I have seen too much,
And look'd too deep, and all my joys are flown,
And endless torment has possess'd my heart.
I have look'd through the hard and stony rinds
Of human houses, and of human hearts,
And seen in both lies misery and fraud.
Upon men's faces I have read their thoughts
Most wicked. In the virgin's blush of shame,
I see the greedy thrill of secret lust ;
On the proud youth's poetic head I see
The nodding party-colour'd cap and bells :
And naught I see on earth save masks grotesque,
And sickly shadows, and I cannot tell
Is earth a madhouse or a hospital.

I see into the old world's deepest depths,
As through a crystal globe, and see the horrors
That, with its joyous green, the merry May
So fain would cover. I behold the dead :



BOOK OF SONGS.

They in their narrow coffins lie below,
Stretch'd out, with folded hands and open eyes ;
White are their shrouds, and white each ghastly face ;
And through the dumb lips crawl the yellow worms.
I see the son sit with his leman down
To wanton dalliance on his father's grave.
The nightingales sing songs of mocking scorn ;
The meadow flow'rets laugh malignantly :
The buried father startles in his grave ;
And earth, our aged mother, thrills with pain.

Poor mother Earth ! I know thy sufferings well.
I see the flames that in thy bosom rage ;
I see thee bleeding from a thousand pores ;
I see how all thy gaping wounds unclose,
And flame and smoke and blood stream wildly forth.
I see the primal race, thy giant sons,
Rise in defiance from their gloomy caves,
And brandish fiery torches in their hands :
They lay their scaling-ladders to the sky,
And storm the lofty citadels of Heaven ;
The grim dwarfs follow them, and, with a crash,
Are burst and scatter'd all the golden stars.
Audacious hands tear down the golden veil,
That screens the tent of Jove. The angel host



BOOK OF SONGS.

Fall prostrate, with an outcry of dismay.
The pallid God sits trembling on his throne,
Flings far his crown, and tears his silver'd locks ;
And nearer still press the ferocious bands.
The giants hurl their torches far and wide,
Through the vast heavens, while the cruel dwarfs
With fiery scourges lash the angelic host,
Who writhe and moan and cower beneath the strokes,
And are dragg'd onward by their lovely hair.
And my own angel 'mid the throng I view,
With his sweet features, and his flaxen hair,
And on his lips the smile of deathless love,
And everlasting bliss in his blue eye :
And lo ! a horrible and grimy fiend
Snatches him up, that trembling angel pale,
Glares with an eye of fury o'er his form,
And crushes life out in one savage hug.
Then rings a wild shriek through the universe ;
The pillars break, the heavens and earth crash down
In common ruin, and night reigns supreme.



RATCLIFF.

THE god of dreams once brought me to a country,
Where weeping willows in sad welcome waved,
With long green pendent arms ; where silent flowers,
With modest sister glances, watch'd my steps ;
Where the birds warbled in familiar notes,
And e'en the barking of the dogs seem'd known ;
And many forms and voices hail'd me, as
A well-known friend ; yet all and everything
Was strange to me, so wonderfully strange.
I stood before a pleasant rural house :
My heart beat wildly, but impassive calm
Reign'd in my soul. Composedly I shook
The dust and gravel from my way-worn dress.
The bell rang shrilly, and the door unclosed.

And there were men and women—many a face
Well known of old. On all lay silent grief,
And secret, shy alarm. With troubled mien
They eyed me—almost with a pitying glance ;
So that I shudder'd in my inmost heart,
With a presentiment of unknown ill.

BOOK OF SONGS.

The old nurse Margaret I recognized,
And eyed inquiringly ; but no, she spoke not.
“Where is Maria ?” then I ask’d. She spoke not,
But gently seized my hand, and led me swift
Through many a long and brilliant room of state,
Where pomp and pride and deathlike silence reign’d ;
Until she brought me to a darken’d room,
And sadly pointed, with averted face,
Towards the form that on the sofa sat.
“Are you Maria ?” Inwardly I shook
At the unnatural composedness,
With which I spoke ; and lo ! a voice replied,
Hollow and choked : “The people call me so.”
A cutting anguish froze through every limb,
For ah ! you cold and hollow voice was still
Maria’s own, that used to be so sweet.
Yes ; and that woman in the faded gown,
In slovenly attire, with hanging breasts,
With glassy staring eyes, with fallen cheeks,—
Alas ! that woman once had been the fair,
The blooming, gentle, idolized Maria !
“You have been travelling long,” she loudly cried,
With cold repulsively-familiar voice ;
“You look no more so languishing, my friend,
“Your health is better, and your portly calves

BOOK OF SONGS.

“Bespeak a steady life.” A sickly smile
Now quiver'd round the pallid yellow mouth.
In my confused distress the words escaped :
“They tell me you are married.” “Yes,” she cried
Aloud, with cold indifference, and laugh'd.
“I've got a wooden stick, that's neatly bound
“With leather, call'd a husband : but it's wood,
“It's only wood !” and gratingly she laugh'd,
So that chill terror froze me to the core ;
And doubtingly I thought : are these her lips,
Maria's lips, as chaste as morning flowers ?
But she arose, snatch'd hastily her shawl,
Flung it around her neck, then took my arm,
And led me onwards, through the open door,
Forth from the house, through meadows, plains, and
groves.

The glowing sun's red disc already shed
Declining beams, and cast a purple shade
Upon the woods and flow'rets, and the stream,
That flow'd afar majestically calm.
“See you the great gold eye, that yonder swims
“In the blue water ?” hastily she cried.
“Be still, thou hapless being ;” and I saw
In the dim twilight an unearthly motion ;

BOOK OF SONGS.

And misty phantoms rose above the fields,
And clasp'd each other with white tender arms.
The violets softly sigh'd, the lily cups
Bent longingly together ; flames of love
Glow'd bright round every rose ; so that the plants
And herbs around grew fiery from their breath ;
All flow'rets revelled in voluptuous scents ;
All wept together silent tears of bliss ;
And all, in concert, spoke of love, of love !
The butterflies came fluttering, and the bright
Gold fireflies humm'd their charming fairy tales,
The winds of evening sigh'd, the oak-tree shook,
And meltingly the nightingale sang down ;
And mid the whispering, rustling, singing sounds,
With cold, unmusical, and leaden tone,
Prated the wither'd woman on my arm :
" I know your nightly exploits in the fort.
" The long thin shadow is a good old boy ;
" He nods and winks whatever you may do.
" The blue coat is an angel. He in red,
" With naked sword, detests you in his soul."
And yet more strange fantastical remarks
Uninterruptedly she spoke ; at length,
Wearied, she sat beside me on the bench,
That stands, moss cover'd, 'neath the hoary oak.



BOOK OF SONGS.

And there we sat together, sad and silent,
And eyed each other, and grew sadder still.
The oak-tree moan'd like sighs of dying men,
The nightingale sang notes of agony ;
Then through the branches fiery flashes broke,
And beaming on Maria's pallid face,
Call'd light once more into her glassy eye,
Till with her old melodious voice she spoke :
“ How couldst thou know my utter wretchedness ?
“ I lately read it in thy cruel songs.”

My blood ran cold, and terror fill'd my heart
At my own madness, which had thus beheld
What was to be ;—my labouring brain gave way,
And, wild with very horror—I awoke.



BOOK OF SONGS.

DONNA CLARA.

EVE descends, and in the garden
The Alcalde's daughter roams ;
And the sound of drums and trumpets
Pealing from the castle comes.

“Hateful now is dance and music,
“Hateful now the sound of praise,
“And the knights who say my beauty
“Far outshines the solar rays.

“Everything is stale and weary,
“Since I saw—that fatal night!—
“Him, whose lute before my window
“Woke my slumbers to delight.

“Standing there, so brave and graceful,
“As his dark eyes brightly beam'd,
“With his pale and noble features,—
“Like the good St. George he seem'd.”

BOOK OF SONGS.

Thus, with downcast eyes, did Clara
Meditate in pensive mood ;
When she raised her eyes, before her,
Lo ! the graceful stranger stood.

Hand in hand, with loving whispers,
'Neath the moonlight on they go ;
And the zephyrs fan them fondly,
And the conscious roses glow.

Lo ! the conscious roses greet us,
Like Love's messengers they blush :
But what thought has summon'd dearest,
To thy cheeks that sudden flush ?

“ 'Twas a gnat that bit me, dearest ;
“ And in summer, gnats, to me,
“ Are as utterly detested,
“ As a long-nosed Jew could be.”

Think not we of gnats or Jews, love,
Says the knight, and clasps her round ;
From the almond-trees a thousand
Pink-white blossoms strew the ground.



Thousand pink-white almond blossoms
To the air their sweets impart ;
But, belovéd, tell me truly,
Dost thou give me all thy heart ?

“ Yes, I love thee, love ; I'd swear it,
“ Were it with my dying breath,
“ By that Saviour, whom the malice
“ Of the false Jews did to death.”

Think not we of Jews or Saviour,
Says the knight, caressingly ;
Lo, the lilies in the distance,
Bathed in light, wave dreamingly.

Bathed in light, the tall white lilies
Gaze upon the starry skies ;
But confess to me, beloved,
Dost thou speak without disguise ?

“ There is nothing false in me, love,
“ And my heart contains no trace
“ Of the blood of Moor or Paynim,
“ Or the filthy Jewish race !”



BOOK OF SONGS.

Speak not we of Jews or Paynims,
Says the knight, and fondly smiles ;
And the neighbouring bower of myrtles
To its shade their steps beguiles.

There his nets he draws around her,
By the arts that lovers know ;
Short their words, and long their kisses,
And their full hearts overflow.

And the nightingales around them,
Melting hymeneals sing ;
And the glow-worms shine and flutter,
Dancing in a torchlit ring.

All is hush'd within the arbour,
Save the conscious myrtles shy,
Interchanging stolen whispers,
And the flowers that breathe and sigh.

Suddenly, within the castle,
Drum and trumpet sound alarm,
And awake and startle Clara
From the knight's encircling arm.

BOOK OF SONGS.

“Hark, they summon me, beloved ;
“Yet before we part, I pray,
“Name the honour’d name thou bearest :
“Thou hast veil’d it till to-day.”

And the knight, serenely smiling,
Kisses first her lovely hand ;
Kisses next her lips and forehead,
And replies to her demand :

I, Senora, your devoted,
Am the son of one known well,
As the great and learned Rabbi,
Saragossa’s Israel !





BOOK OF SONGS.

ALMANSOR.

I.

IN the minster at Cordova,
There are thirteen hundred pillars,
Thirteen hundred giant columns
Bear the mighty cupola.

From the summit to the pavement,
On the dome, and wall, and pillars,
Spread the Arabic Koran's verses
Wreath'd in flowery harmony.

Moorish kings, in days forgotten,
Built the dome to Allah's glory,
But in time's relentless whirlpool
All is changed and changeable.

From the watch-tower, where the watcher
Call'd the hour of prayer to Allah,
Sounds the melancholy pealing
Of the bells of Christendom.

BOOK OF SONGS.

On the steps, where once believers
Sang the praises of the Prophet,
Priests are singing solemn masses,
Mystic rites of sacrifice.

In the minster of Cordova,
Stands Almansor Ben Abdallah,
Silent eyes the rows of pillars,
Grimly inly murmuring :

“ Oh, ye strong and giant pillars,
“ Once adorn'd to Allah's glory,
“ Forced to deck with servile homage
“ This detested Christendom !

“ Lo ! ye yield to time and fortune,
“ Patient bear your galling burden ;
“ Surely then should I, yet weaker,
“ Calmly bear my destiny ! ”

And Almansor Ben Abdallah,
In the minster of Cordova,
Bows his head with cheerful smiling,
O'er the font of baptism.



BOOK OF SONGS.



II.

Hastily he left the minster,
And his rapid courser goaded,
Till his dripping locks flew streaming,
And his plumes waved stormfully.

On the road to Alcolea,
All along the Guadalquivir,
Where the milk-white almonds blossom,
And the golden oranges.

Yonder speeds the knight lighthearted,
Laughs and sings and gaily whistles,
Whilst the birds' accompanying music
Mingles with the waterfalls.

And in Alcolea's castle
Dwelleth Clara de Alvarez,
In Navarre her father fighting
Leaves her greater liberty.

And Almansor hears at distance
Cymbals mix'd with clarions sounding,
And he sees the castle windows
Glittering through the foliage.

BOOK OF SONGS.

Lo ! in Alcolea's castle
Lovely ladies twelve are dancing,
Twelve resplendent knights their partners,
And Almansor gracefullest.

Wing'd he seems by gayest humour,
Round the hall he lightly flutters,
None of all the lovely ladies
'Scapes his luscious flattery.

Isabella's hand he kisses,
And escaping lightly leaves her,
Seats himself before Elvira,
Smiling in her countenance.

Laughing, questions Leonora,
If to-day he suits her fancy ;
Shows the cross upon his mantle
Work'd in richest 'broidery.

And he vows to every lady,
That his heart contains her image ;
Swearing thirty times and upwards,
" By his word as Christian ! "

III.

Now from Alcolea's castle
Mirth and music have departed ;
Lords and ladies all are vanish'd,
And the lamps extinguishéd.

Donna Clara and Almansor,
In the hall, alone, are seated,
Where a lamp, the last remaining,
Shines above them drearily.

On the sofa sits the lady,
And the knight upon the footstool ;
On her knees his head reposes,
As he slumbers heavily.

And the lady, sadly pensive,
Pours upon his wavy ringlets
Oil of roses from her flasket ;
And he sighs in agony.

And the lady, sadly pensive,
On his brown and wavy ringlets
Stamps her sweet and lingering kisses ;
And his brow glooms awfully.

BOOK OF SONGS.

And the lady, sadly pensive,
O'er his brown and wavy ringlets
Weeps in floods of loving sorrow ;
 And his lip curls scornfully.

And he dreams once more he's standing,
Crouching o'er the font and dripping,
In the minster at Cordova,
 Stun'd with angry murmuring.

For the lofty giant pillars
Murmur round in grim displeasure,
Start at once from long endurance,
 Reeling, trembling, tottering.

Down they come in thundering ruin,
Priests and people quake in terror,
And the Christian idols shiver
 'Neath the crashing cupola.

THE PILGRIMAGE TO KEVLAAR.

I.

THE mother stood at the window,

Her son on sick-bed lay :

“Wilt not arise, my William ;

“The pilgrims come this way ?”

“I am so ill, my mother,

“I neither can hear nor see ;

“I think of dead Margaret always,

“And woe is my heart in me.”

“Come, then, and we'll go to Kevlaar,

“Thy prayer-book and rosary take ;

“The Mother of God will free thee

“Thy heart from its every ache.”

Banners and flags are waving,

And hymns and chants arise ;

By the banks of the Rhine at Cöllen,

The long procession hies.

The mother comes following after,
Leading her son so pale,
And both of them join in the chorus—
“Hail to thee, Mary, hail!”

II.

The Mother of God at Kevlaar
Is robed in her best to-day ;
She has much to do for the numbers
Of sick that have come to pray.

And sick and ailing people
Bring to her offerings meet,
Waxen limbs and figures,
And waxen hands and feet.

And whoso a wax hand offers,
His hand is free from sore ;
And whoso a wax foot offers,
His foot is lame no more.

BOOK OF SONGS.

There went upon crutches to Kevlaar
Full many, who leap and bound ;
And many are playing the viol,
Who had not a finger sound.

The mother took a taper,
And shaped therewith a heart :
“ Give that to our Blessed Lady,
“ And she will heal thy smart.”

Sighing, he took the wax heart,
Knelt down with fervent air ;
Tears from his eyes came gushing,
And from his heart the prayer :

“ Thou blessed above all others,
“ Thou pure and spotless maid ;
“ To thee, thou Queen of Heaven,
“ Be all my sorrows said !

“ I lived along with my mother
“ At Cöllen on the Rhine,
“ The town that has hundreds of churches
“ And chapels fair of thine ;

BOOK OF SONGS.

“ And Margaret lived beside us,
“ Until—but she is dead ;
“ I bring thee a wax heart, Mary,—
“ My heart’s disease is said.

“ Heal my sick heart, bless’d Mother,
“ And never will we fail,
“ Fervently praying and singing—
“ Hail to thee, Mary, hail !”

III.

Now in their lowly chamber
The son and mother slept,
When softly o’er the threshold
God’s blessed Mother stept.

Her gentle hand she rested,
As o’er his form she bent,
Lovingly on his bosom,
And sweetly smiled, and went.

BOOK OF SONGS.

The mother saw all while dreaming,
And more that none may know ;
She started from her slumber,
The dogs were barking so.

And there lay stretch'd before her,
Her son,—and he was dead ;
His pallid face was glowing
In early morning's red.

Her hands the mother folded,
She felt she knew not how ;
Softly she sang, devoutly—
“ Hail, Mary, bless'd art thou ! ”



THE JOURNAL OF THE



FROM

THE TOUR IN THE HARTZ.

1824.



CHAPTER 1

There is a certain man
whose name is known
in the land of the living
and whose fame is spread
in the land of the dead.

For he is a man of power
and a man of might
and a man of wisdom
and a man of understanding.

For he is a man of
great renown
and a man of great fame
and a man of great honor.

For he is a man of
great strength
and a man of great courage
and a man of great valor.

PROLOGUE.

BLACK dress-coats and silken stockings,
Frills and ruffles, white and smart,
Honied speeches and caresses,—
Had they only any heart!

Had they only hearts, and in them
Did a spark of feeling glow :
Oh! 'tis death to hear their stories
Of their lying love and woe.

I will climb the hoary mountain,
Where the humble cottage stands ;
There the mountain-breeze blows freely,
Freely there the heart expands.

I will climb the hoary mountain,
There the Tannen tower on high ;
Streams are gushing, birds are singing,
And the clouds drive grandly by.

BOOK OF SONGS.

Fare ye well, ye gilded chambers,
Petty lords, and ladies small !
I will climb the hoary mountain,
And look down upon you all.





THE TOUR IN THE HARTZ.

MOUNTAIN IDYL.

I.

ON the mountain stands a cottage,
In it lives a miner old ;
Round it rustle lofty Tannen,
And the moon sheds floods of gold.

And a chair is in the cottage,
Richly carved, and soft and high ;
He that sits in it is bappy,
And that happy one an I !

On the footstool sits a fairy,
On my knees her arms repose ;
Bright her eyes like stars of azure,
And her mouth a purple rose.

And the stars so blue and lovely,
Heavenly planets, on me gaze ;
Slyly then the lily finger
On the purple rose she lays.

BOOK OF SONGS.

No, your mother does not see us,
See how swift she spins away ;
And your father tunes his viol,
And he hums some ancient lay.

And the little fairy whispers
Softly, and with timid tone ;
Many and many a weighty secret
Are already to me known.

“ Yes, but since we lost my cousin,
“ We have never, never been
“ To the mansion-house at Goslar,—
“ Oh ! ’twas quite a fairy scene.

“ But the mountain here is lonely,
“ Cold and drear the tempests blow,
“ And in winter we are wholly
“ Buried as it were in snow.

“ And I’m but a girl, and timid,
“ And I tremble with affright
“ At the wicked mountain spirits,
“ That are busy in the night.”



THE TOUR IN THE HARTZ.

Suddenly, the little fairy
Shrinks from what her lips have said,
And her little hands she presses
On her eyes with panic dread.

And the tannen rustle louder,
And the spindle snores and creaks,
With them hums the ancient ballad,
And the ancient viol squeaks.

Fear not thou, thou little fairy,
Fear no wicked spirits' might !
Angels watch thee, lovely fairy,
Angels watch thee day and night !

II.

Tannen-tree, with leafy finger,
Taps against the window bright ;
And the moon, the silent watcher,
Pours within her gentle light.

BOOK OF SONGS.

Father, mother, in their chamber,
 Snoring low their slumber take ;
Happy we together chatting,
 Keep each other wide awake.

“That thou prayest much or often,
 “That, I own, I rather doubt :
“Oh ! those quivering lips sarcastic,
 “Never, never were devout.

“Oh ! those lips so cold and cruel,
 “Often, often give me pain :
“Then thy kind eyes look upon me,
 “And I feel relieved again.

“Still I doubt if thou believest,—
 “Or thy faith is weak at most ;
“Thou believ’st in God the Father,
 “In the Son and Holy Ghost ?”

Ah ! my child, while yet an infant
 At my mother’s knee I stood,
I believed in God the Father,
 Who rules o’er us, great and good ;



THE TOUR IN THE HARTZ.

Who the beauteous earth created,
And the beauteous human race,
Who to sun and moon and planets
Show'd their tracks through boundless space.

And as I grew greater, darling,
Knowledge more and more I won !
Then I came to understanding,
And believed in God the Son ;

In the Son beloved, who, loving,
Came amidst us to abide,
And, as is the people's custom,
In return was crucified.

Now that I have grown to manhood,
Read, and travell'd more than most,
I believe, with loving bosom,
Also in the Holy Ghost :

He has wrought the greatest marvels,
And yet greater we shall see ;
He destroy'd the tyrant's strongholds,
And the fetter'd slave set free.

BOOK OF SONGS.

Ancient wounds of death he healeth,
Gives its ancient right to earth ;
All men now are free and equal,
All are noble from their birth.

He dispels the baleful vapours,
Drives the spectral forms away,
That have poison'd love and pleasure,
Grinning at us night and day.

And a thousand knights of valour
Has he chosen from the rest,
And inspired their souls with courage
To fulfil his high behest.

How they wave their flashing broadswords,
Wave their banners free and bold !
Ha ! methinks my love is longing,
Knights so gallant to behold.

Well then, look at me, my darling ;
Kiss me quick, and look at me,—
Knight companion of this noble
Order of the Saint Esprit.

III.

Now behind the lofty Tannen,
Still and slow the moon declines,
And the lamp within the chamber
Flickers faint, and scarcely shines.

But my blue and lovely planets
Radiate with clearer light,
And the purple roses open,
And thus speaks the maiden bright :

“ Wee wee people, wicked brownies,
“ Steal away our meat and bread ;
“ At night it's safe within the closet,
“ And at morning, lo ! it's fled.

“ From the milk the wee wee people
“ Sip the freshest cream and best ;
“ Then they leave the bowls uncover'd,
“ And our tabby drinks the rest.

BOOK OF SONGS.

“ She’s a wicked wretch, our tabby,
“ For at midnight’s stormy hour,
“ Soft she slinks unto the mountain,
“ To the old and ruin’d tower.

“ There was once a stately castle,
“ Full of joy and weapon’d show ;
“ Steel-clad knights and dames and pages,
“ Dancing by the torches’ glow.

“ Till there came a cross enchantress,
“ Cursed them by some fatal spell ;
“ Naught she left but crumbling ruins,
“ Where the dreary night-owls dwell.

“ Yet my cousin often told me,
“ Could the proper words be found,
“ At the proper midnight moment,
“ On the proper spot of ground,

“ Yonder heaps of shatter’d ruins
“ Would be disenchant’d straight ;
“ Through the halls would knights and ladies
“ Dance again in jewell’d state.



THE TOUR IN THE HARTZ.

“ Whoso shall the spell discover,
“ Him shall knights and all obey ;
“ Drums and trumpets loud shall hail him,
“ And proclaim his sovereign sway.”

Thus do fairy legends blossom
On her lips so rosy red,
While her star-like eyes upon me
All their azure radiance shed.

Round my hand the little fairy
Twines her hair with elfish skill ;
Gives the fingers tender nicknames,
Laughs and kisses, and is still.

And within the silent chamber
All such friendly aspect wears ;
Half I deem them old acquaintance—
Chests and tables, stools and chairs.

And the clock goes kindly ticking,
And the viol's gentle sound
Rings spontaneous, and I sit there
As in magic slumber bound.

Now, 'tis now the proper moment,
 This the proper spot, I know ;
 From my lucky lips, believe me,
 Now the proper words shall flow.

Seest thou, sweetest, how the midnight,
 Glimmering, quivering, o'er us breaks ?
 Stream and tannen rustle louder,
 And the aged mountain wakes.

Song of elves and dwarfish music
 From the rocky fissures ring ;
 See, there sprouts a fairy forest,
 As in some enchanted spring !

Wondrous flowrets forced by passion,
 Quivering, sensitive, and bright,
 With their spreading leaves fantastic,
 Crowding, struggle into sight.

Roses wild, like flames outpouring,
 From the mixed confusion rise ;
 Lilies tall as crystal columns
 Shoot majestic to the skies.



THE TOUR IN THE HARTZ.

And the stars to suns expanding,
Longingly look down below ;
In the lilies' cups gigantic,
See their floods of radiance flow.

Wondrous is the transformation !
Greater still is mine and thine ;
Gold and silver gleam around us,
Glittering torches round us shine.

Thou art now a royal princess,
And this hut a palace-hall ;
Stately knights and dames and pages
Dance again the joyous ball.

Thou art mine, and mine the castle,
Stately knight and jewel'd dame ;
Drum and trumpet loudly hail me,
And my sovereign sway proclaim.

THE SHEPHERD BOY.

THE shepherd is a very King,
A grassy hill his throne ;
The sun suspended overhead
His great gold crown.

The sheep are crouching at his feet,
A red-cross'd flattering throng ;
The silly calves are chamberlains,
And proudly strut along.

The court comedians are the kids ;
The birds and patient kine,
With flute-like notes and tinkling bells,
As court musicians shine.

A ringing sound, a singing sound,
Blends with the murmur deep
Of waterfall and tannen-tree,
And lulls the King to sleep.



THE TOUR IN THE HARTZ.

Meanwhile his minister must reign—
The shaggy wakeful hound,
Whose sharp and sullen bark is heard
Re-echoing around.

The young King mutters sleepily—
“ How hard it is to reign !
“ Oh, would that I were now at home,
“ And with my Queen again !

“ My royal head upon her breast
“ So softly pillow'd lies,
“ And my illimitable realm
“ Is in her lovely eyes !”



ON THE BROCKEN.

MORNING breaks ; its feeble glimmer
Slowly lights the eastern sky ;
Far and wide the mountain summits
In a misty ocean lie.

Had I boots of seven-leagued swiftness,
Swifter than the winds I'd race
Over yonder mountain summits,
To the dear girl's dwelling-place.

Softly I would draw the curtain
From the bed on which she sleeps,
Softly kiss her lovely forehead,
Softly kiss her ruby lips.

And with soft and loving whisper
In her lily ear I'd sigh—
“ Dream our hearts were ne'er divided,
“ Dream our love shall never die.”

THE ILSÉ.

OH, I am the Princess Ilsé,
My home is at Ilsenstein ;
Come with me to my castle,
What pleasure shall be thine !

With all my crystal wavelets,
Thy aching brows I'll lave ;
Thou'lt there forget thy sorrows,
Thou mortal stern and grave !

And in my arms so snowy,
And on my bosom white,
Thou'lt lie, and dream in slumber
Of ancient tales' delight.

I'll kiss thee and caress thee,
As long since I caress'd
My true love, Emperor Henry,
Whose soul is now at rest.



BOOK OF SONGS.

The dead are dead and buried,
And only the living lives ;
And I am fair and blooming,
My laughing bosom heaves.

Come down then to my castle,
My crystal castle, come ;
There maids and knights are dancing,
There revel' youths in bloom.



There silken robes are rustling,
The spurs of iron ring ;
Dwarfs sound the drum and trumpet,
And play the horn and sing.

But thee shall my arms encircle,
They clasp'd the Emperor, too ;
I closed his ears and trembled
Whenever the trumpets blew.



THE NORTH SEA.

1825—1826.



THE HISTORY OF
THE
CITY OF
NEW YORK
FROM 1624 TO 1898
BY
JOHN B. HOGAN
NEW YORK
GROVER BROS. PUBLISHERS
1898

The history of the city of New York from 1624 to 1898 is a story of growth and development. It begins with the first Dutch settlement in 1624 and continues through the years of British rule, the American Revolution, and the early years of the United States. The city grows from a small village to a major metropolis, and its history is a testament to the resilience and spirit of its people.

The city of New York has been a center of commerce and industry since its founding. It has been a place of innovation and progress, and its history is a story of the triumph of the human spirit. The city has been a place of great achievement and a source of inspiration for generations.

The history of the city of New York is a story of the triumph of the human spirit. It is a story of the city that has grown from a small village to a major metropolis, and of the people who have made it what it is today.

THE NORTH SEA.

First Cycle.

I.

THE CORONATION.

AWAKE, ye songs of mine, arise and arm !
Bid the shrill trumpets peal a loud alarm,
And of your bucklers make a throne
For this young maiden, whom alone
My whole heart owns as queen.


Hail to thee, youthful queen !

From the sun's resplendent throne
I tear the gold and jewels down,
And make a diadem to crown
Thy consecrated head.
From the silken canopy azure blue,
That the diamonds of night are shining through,
A costly piece I shred,



BOOK OF SONGS.

For my queen to wear on her shoulders fair—
A coronation-mantle rare.
I form thee a court, with a bright array
Of tightlaced sonnets, and stanzas gay ;
Thy running footman shall be my wit,
My fancy, thy fool, at thy feet shall sit ;
My humour, thy herald, shall praise thy charms,
With a tear and a smile for his coat of arms.
But I, at thy feet, thou lovely maid,
Will kneel on a cushion of velvet red,
And paying thee homage with humble mien,
I'll offer, as tribute to my queen,
Such fragments of sense as yet remain
After thy predecessor's reign.





THE NORTH SEA.

II.

TWILIGHT.

UPON the sad sea-shore
In troubled thought I sate alone ;
The sun was setting, and upon the waves
Flung streaks of crimson light.
The white wide waves,
Urged by the flowing tide,
Nearer and nearer foamed and roared.
A wondrous, whispering, whistling sound,
Laughter and murmurings, sighs and shouts,
And amidst it all a mysterious strain,
Like the chime of an ancient nursery song.
I thought of the legends of early days,
My old, old favourite tales,
Which once, as a happy child, I heard
The neighbours' children tell,
When we on a summer eve,
Upon the house-door steps,
Crouch'd for a quiet talk,



BOOK OF SONGS.

With little listening hearts,
And wise inquisitive eyes ;
While right across the street
The grown-up maidens sat,
Screen'd by the fragrant flowers
Before the window ranged ;
Rose faces bright with smiles,
And kindling to the moon.





THE NORTH SEA.

III.

SUNSET.

THE ruddy glowing sun
Sinks on the pale gray breast
Of the far-heaving sea ;
Rose-tinted airy shapes
Sweep after him ; while in the distant east,
With sad face deadly pale,
Breaks forth the moon ;
And far behind her—little points of light—
In misty distance shine the twinkling stars.

Once in the heavens there gleamed,
In wedded bliss conjoin'd,
Luna the goddess, and the sun-god Sol ;
And flocking round them danced the happy stars,
Their little children, innocent and bright.

But wicked whispering tongues dissension bred
Between the high imperial pair, and so
They parted foes.

And now by day, in splendid loneliness,
 The Sun-god traverses his course on high ;
 For his magnificence
 Bepraised in countless anthems, and besung
 By proud men, whom prosperity makes hard.
 But every night,
 Luna, the hapless mother, climbs the sky
 With all her children, the poor orphan stars,
 And beams in silent sorrow o'er the world ;
 And gentle poets, and all loving maids,
 Pay her the tribute of their songs and tears.

The gentle Luna ! With a woman's truth,
 She still loves fondly her majestic spouse.
 Towards evening, trembling, pale,
 Screen'd by a silver cloud, she gazes forth,
 And sadly watches her departing lord,
 And fain would cry to him in anguish—"Come !
 Oh, come ! our little children long for thee !"
 But the proud God of day
 Glows, at the sight of his deserted spouse,
 With deeper crimson, in disdain and wrath ;
 And hastening on, inexorably stern,
 Seeks his cold widow'd bed beneath the waves.

* * * *



THE NORTH SEA.

Thus wicked whispering tongues
Brought grief and ruin home
E'en to immortal gods.
And the poor gods, in their high heaven above,
Wander, in torture inconsolable,
Their dreary endless paths,
And cannot die,
And drag with them their load
Of splendid misery.

But I, a man,
Born in a lower sphere, and bless'd with death,—
I will not murmur more.



IV.

A NIGHT ON THE SEA-SHORE.

STARLESS and cold is the night !
Wide yawns the sea ;
And flat on his belly, upon the sea,
The shapeless north wind lies :
And secretly, with gasping stifled voice,
Like an old grumbler in good-humour'd fit,
Keeps prating to the flood ;
And many a madly-waggish story tells,—
Old giant stories murderously droll,
Norwegian Sagas of primeval eld ;
And ever and anon he laughs, and howls
Spells from the Edda, runic sentences,
So darkly daring, of such magic force,
That the white sea-sprites leap
High o'er the billows, screaming with delight,
And drunk with wanton joy.

Meanwhile, along the beach,
Over the wave-drench'd sand,
There strides a stranger ; in his breast a heart
Wilder than winds or waves.



THE NORTH SEA.

Where'er he steps
The sea-shells crackle and the red sparks fly ;
And warmly shrouded in his mantle's folds,
He paces stoutly through the stormy night,
Securely guided by the feeble ray
That shimmers fondly and invitingly
From the lone fisher's hut.

Father and brother are both out at sea :
And there, without another living soul,
The fisher's daughter tarries all alone—
The fisher's daughter wonderfully fair.
Upon the hearth she sits,
And listens to the humming kettle's song—
A sweet foreboding and mysterious strain,—
And flings the crackling brushwood on the fire,
And blows it up,
Till the red flickering light
With magic beauty gleams
Upon her blooming face,
And delicate white shoulder, that peeps out
With touching grace
Forth from the coarse gray shift,
And gleams upon the little careful hand,
That faster binds her petticoat
Around her slender hips.

But suddenly the door flies wide,
 And the night-wanderer enters in. His eye
 Dwells with love's steady glance upon the fair
 Slim maiden, that stands shuddering in his sight ;
 And, like a frighten'd lily, shakes and shrinks :
 And flinging down his mantle on the ground,
 He laughs and speaks :

See'st thou, my child, I keep my word.
 I come, and with me comes
 The old, old time, when the bright gods of Heaven
 Came down to the daughters of men,
 And embraced the daughters of men,
 Begetting on them
 A long descent of sceptre-bearing kings,
 And mighty heroes, wonders of the world.
 But now, my child,
 Wonder no more at my divinity :
 And, I beseech thee, make me tea with rum ;
 For it was cold outside,
 And in the cold night-air
 E'en the eternal gods are apt to freeze,
 And often catch a most divine catarrh,
 And an immortal cough.



THE NORTH SEA.

V.

POSEIDON.

THE sunlights play'd
Over the far-away-rolling sea ;
Out in the roadstead gleam'd the ship
That was to bear me home ;
But as yet the wind was foul.
And I sat calmly on the yellow sand,
Upon the lonely shore,
And read the lay of Odysseus,
The old, old lay, for ever young,
Through every page of which the mighty roar
Of ocean's waves resounds ;
From which there ever rise rejoicingly
The breath of happy gods,
The brilliant spring-time of the human race,
And blooming skies of Greece.

My noble heart kept trusty company
With old Laertes' son,
In all his devious voyages and woes,

Sat with him, dark of soul,
 Upon the hospitable hearth,
 Where queens were spinning purple ;
 Help'd him to lie, and luckily escape
 From giants' caverns, and from nymphs' fond arms ;
 Follow'd him on into Cimmerian night,
 Through shipwreck, and through storm,
 And bore with him unspeakable distress.

Sighing I said : " Poseidon, angry god !
 " Thy wrath is terrible ;
 " And I myself am troubled in my soul
 " About my own return."

Scarce had the words escaped,
 When the sea foamed,
 And from the white waves rose
 The sea-god's head sedge-crowned,—
 And scornfully he cried :

" Fear not, little poet !
 " I will not in the least endanger
 " Thy poor little ship,
 " Nor frighten thy dear little life,
 " With an all-too-alarming tossing.



THE NORTH SEA.

“ For thou, little poet, hast never provoked me,
“ Thou hast not injured a single tower
“ Of the sacred city of Priam ;
“ Not a single hair has been singed by thee
“ In the eye of my son Polyphemus ;
“ And never hast thou been counsell'd or help'd
“ By the goddess of wisdom, Pallas Athene.”

Thus spake Poseidon,
And dived into the sea ;
And at his vulgar sailorlike joke,
Laugh'd underneath the water
Amphitrite, the fat fishfag,
And the thick-skull'd daughters of Nereus.



VI.

DECLARATION.

THE glimmering eve closed in,
More wildly raged the flood,
And seated on the shore I gazed
Upon the wave's white dance ;
And a deep longing seized upon my soul
For thee, thou lovely form,
Hovering over me everywhere,
Calling unto me everywhere,
Everywhere, everywhere :
In the rush of the wind, in the roar of the sea,
In the sighs of my own sad heart.

With fragile reed I wrote upon the sand :
" Agnes, I love thee !"
But angry waves came pouring on,
And o'er the sweet confession roll'd,
And blotted it from sight.



THE NORTH SEA.

Too fragile reed, too changeful sand,
Too melting billows, you I trust no more !
The heavens grow darker, and my heart more wild,
And out of Norway's woods, with strong right hand,
I pluck the loftiest pine, and plunge it deep
In Etna's boiling gulf ;
And with that giant pen flame-pointed, write
High on the sable canopy of Heaven :
" Agnes, I love thee !"

Thereafter every night for evermore,
Flames in the sky the everlasting text,
And the remotest generations read,
With shouts of ecstasy, the heavenly words--
" Agnes, I love thee !"



BOOK OF SONGS.

VII. .

AT NIGHT IN THE CABIN.

THE sea can boast its pearls,
The heavens can boast their stars,
But my heart, my heart,
My heart can boast its love.

Great are the seas and heavens,
Yet greater is my heart,
And fairer far than pearl or star
Flashes and beams my love.

Thou young and tender maiden,
Come to my mighty heart ;
My heart and the seas and the heavens
Are dying away with love.

* * * *

To the azure vault of heaven,
Where the lovely stars are shining,
I could press my lips in transport,
Wildly, passionately weeping.



THE NORTH SEA.

Yonder stars so brightly shining
Are the eyes of my beloved,
Twinkling with a thousand greetings
From the azure vault of heaven.

To the azure vault of heaven,
To the eyes of my beloved,
I uplift my arms devoutly,
And implore them and entreat them.

Lovely eyes, ye lights benignant,
Fill my happy soul with blessings,
Let me die, and gain by dying
You and all your blissful heaven.

* * * *

From the heavenly eyes above me,
Fall like snowflakes through the darkness
Golden sparks, and love transported
Soars my soul in boundless freedom.

Oh, ye heavenly eyes above me !
Weep into my soul, and fill it
With your tears of starry rapture,
Till my soul is overflowing.

* * * *

BOOK OF SONGS.

Cradled by the ocean billows,
Softly lull'd by dreamy fancies,
Silently I lie secluded
In the cabin's corner hammock.

Through the open port beside me
I behold the bright stars shining,
And the sweet loved eyes look on me
Of my sweetest best beloved.

And the sweet eyes loved so fondly,
Keep their silent watches o'er me,
And they glitter and they twinkle
From the azure vault of heaven.

At the azure vault of heaven
Whole hours long I gaze delighted,
Till a sheet of wreathing vapour
Hides at length the dear eyes from me.

* * * *

Against the vessel's side,
Where lies my dreamy head,
The waves, the wild waves surge,
And murmur, rushing past :
" Infatuated man !



THE NORTH SEA.

“The heavens are distant, and thy arm is short,
“And the bright stars are nail’d and driven fast
“With golden nails;—
“Vain are thy longings, vain are all thy sighs,
“Far better go to sleep.”

* * * *

I dream’d of a far-spreading lonely heath,
Cover’d all over with white silent snow,
And I lay buried ’neath the white, white snow,
And slept the cold and lonely sleep of death.

But from the gloomy heavens overhead,
The starry eyes gazed down upon my grave,
The sweet eyes glowing with victorious light,
Serene and cheerful, but still full of love.



VIII.

S T O R M .

THE storm rages,
And lashes the billows,
And the billows, rearing and foaming with rage,
Tower aloft,
And the white water-mountains
Heave with life,
And the vessel climbs them,
Hurriedly toiling,
And suddenly plunges below
In the flood's black yawning abysses.

O Sea !
Mother of beauty, the foam-sprung goddess !
Grandmother of love ! Spare me !
There flutters already, carrion-scenting,
The white spectral sea-mew,
And whets on the mast her beak,
And latches with hunger-greed for the heart,



THE NORTH SEA.

That resounds with the fame of the daughter ;
And that thy grandson, the little rogue,
Chose for his plaything.

In vain my entreaties and prayers !
My cries are drown'd in the raging storm,
In the battle-din of the winds,
Roars and whistling, and rattling and howls,
Like a madhouse of crazy sounds !
And amidst it all I distinctly hear
Alluring harp-tones,
And snatches of passionate song,
Soul melting, soul rending ;
And I know the voice.

Far on the rockbound Scottish coast,
Where the grey castle frowns
Over the surging sea,
There, in the high-arch'd window, stands
A lovely, sickly dame,
Frail and transparent, and as marble pale.
She plays the harp and sings,
And the wind wantons with her long black locks,
And floats her mournful strains
Far over the stormy sea.

BOOK OF SONGS.

IX.

C A L M.

CALM the sea ! the sun is streaming
Golden light upon the water,
Through the heaving, glowing mass
Ploughs the ship its furrows green.

By the rudder lies the boatswain,
On his belly softly snoring ;
Mending sails beside the mast,
Crouches down the cabin-boy :

Through the dirt his cheeks are blushing.
Round his wide mouth sorrow quivers,
And his wounded feelings look
From his open handsome eyes.

For the captain stands before him,
Storming, cursing, scolding : " Rascal,
" Rascal, thou hast prigg'd a herring,
" Prigg'd a herring from the cask."



THE NORTH SEA.

Calm the sea! and from the waters,
Lo! a little fish emerges,
Gladly warms his little head,
Gaily wags his little tail.

But the seagull, quickly swooping,
Pounces on the little victim,
Bears him in his greedy beak
Writhing to the upper sky.



X.

M I R A G E.

BUT I, I lay upon the vessel's side,
 And gazed with dreamy eye upon the sea
 Clear as a mirror, deep and deeper still,
 Till, piercing to the ocean's deepest depths,
 I saw, at first as through the mists of eve,
 Yet gradually clear and more defined,
 Church spires and turrets rising o'er the rest,
 And soon as clear as day a town complete—
 An ancient Flemish town, alive with men.—
 Considerate men, wrapp'd in their short black cloaks,
 With white shirt-collars, and with chains of gold,
 With lengthy swords, and faces lengthier still,
 Paced o'er the swarming busy market-place,
 To gain the high steps of the Council House,
 Where stone-carved figures of old emperors,
 With sword and sceptre, kept unsleeping ward.
 Near, in the front of long-extending rows
 Of houses, whose bright windows gleam'd again,
 Were lime-trees, clipp'd and trimm'd to pyramids ;



THE NORTH SEA.

And maids in rustling silks were moving there,—
Slim shapes, their faces modestly inclosed
In their black caps and festoon'd yellow hair.
Gay gallants prank'd before in Spanish dress ;
And aged crones, in brown and faded garb,
Psalm-book and rosary in either hand,
Totter'd with feeble steps towards the Dom—
The mighty minster, summon'd by the sound
Of ringing bells and swelling organ's tones.

And on me also strike the distant sounds
With secret meaning and mysterious dread !
An endless longing, an untold desire,
Preys on my heart—my heart as yet unheal'd ;
'Tis as if kisses from familiar lips
Had ripp'd up all its wounds to bleed afresh
With hot red drops, that slowly trickle down,
And fall upon an antique house below,
Deep in yon ancient city of the sea,—
An old high-gabled house, that stands alone
Deserted, melancholy, void of life,
Save where a maiden at the lattice sits,
And leans her lovely head upon her arm
In plaintive woe, a poor forsaken child,—
And ah ! I know thee, poor forsaken child !

BOOK OF SONGS.

And is it thou? So deep, I cried, so deep
Hast hid from me in childish wilfulness,
Till thou no more couldst rise into the light,
And there, a stranger amongst stranger folk,
Hast dwelt and sorrow'd many a weary year ;
Whilst I, with gnawing anguish in my soul,
Sought for thee, restless, o'er the whole wide world,
And ever sought thee—thee, the ever loved,
The long, long lost, at last discover'd one.
Now I have found thee, and behold again
Thy sweet face, and thy true and tender eyes,
Thy gentle smile, and never more will leave thee.
I come to thee, and with extended arms
Fling myself on thy heart.

But just in time
The captain seized my foot, and dragg'd me back
From the ship's side, and with an angry laugh,
Cried : " Doctor, are you mad ?"





THE NORTH SEA.

XI.

PURIFICATION.

TARRY thou, prison'd in thy sea-deep cell,
Thou dream insane !
Thou, who so many a night
My heart has tortur'd with deceitful bliss,
And now, as a sea spectre, com'st once more
E'en in the light of day to threaten me.
Dwell thou below to all eternity,
And I will further fling
Down to thee all my sorrows and my sins,
Aye, and the cap and bells, my folly's pride,
That have been tinkling in my ears so long,
And the cold slimy serpent's skin
Of base hypocrisy,
That has so long enshrouded my sick soul—
My God denying, angel denying,
Miserable soul.
Hoiho ! Hoiho ! here comes the wind !
Up with the sails ! They flutter and they swell !
Over the treacherously-calm expanse
Rushes the ship :
And the freed soul exults.

XII.

P E A C E.

HIGH in the heavens stood the sun
By billowy white clouds girt :
The sea was still,
And I lay musing at the vessel's stern,
Dreamily musing ; and while half awake
And half asleep, I saw
The world-Redeemer, Christ.
In flowing white robes clad,
He floated giant high
Over land and sea ;
His head out-topp'd the sky,
His hands were stretch'd to bless
Over land and sea ;
The heart he bore within his breast
Was the great sun—
The ruddy, flaming sun ;
And the red-flaming sun, the Saviour's heart,
Pour'd down its beams of grace,



THE NORTH SEA.

And its pure loving rays,
Diffusing light and warmth
Over land and sea.

Sweet music as of pealing bells drew on,—
Drew on, like swans by bands of roses yoked,
The softly gliding ship,
And pealing, drew it to a grassy shore
Peopled with men, in a high-turreted
And stately town.

O miracle of peace! How still the town!
Hush'd was the hollow din
Of brawling sultry trades;
And through the clean resounding streets men pass'd
Bearing palm-branches, clothed in robes of white;
And when two met they changed
Glances of meditative sympathy;
And thrilling with self-sacrifice and love,
Each on the other's forehead press'd a kiss,
And gazed aloft,
Up to the sun-heart of the Saviour,
Which flush'd its reconciling red blood down:
And they, thrice happy, cried—
“Praise be to Jesus Christ!”

Second Cycle.

I.

MORNING GREETING.

THALATTA! Thalatta!
I bid thee hail, thou everlasting sea!
I bid thee hail ten thousand times
From my exulting heart,
As once there bade thee hail
Ten thousand Grecian hearts,—
Fortune-braving, home-yearning,
World-famous Grecian hearts.

The waves were rolling,
Rolling and roaring;
The sun pour'd swiftly down
His dancing rosy rays;
The startled sea-mews flapp'd their wings,
And fled with cries of fear;



THE NORTH SEA.

Pranced all the horses, rang the clashing shields ;
And like a battle slogan rose the cry :
“Thalatta ! Thalatta !”

I bid thee hail, thou everlasting sea !
Thy waters speak in my home's native tongue,
And like my childhood's dreams I see them flash
Over thy roaring billowy domain ;
And memory retraces in my mind
All the loved splendid toys,
All the bright Christmas gifts,
All the red coral-trees,
Gold fishes, pearls, and many-colour'd shells,
That thou mysteriously hast stored
Deep in thy crystal halls.

Oh ! how have I in dreary exile pined !
My heart lay in my breast,
Like to a wither'd flower
In the botanist's tin case.
I am like a man who a winter through
Has languish'd sick in a dark sick-room ;
And now on a sudden I wander forth,
And there strikes upon me with dazzling light
The emerald spring, by the sunbeams waked ;

Cheerily rustle the blossoming trees,
 And the bright young flowers all gaze on me
 With their fragrant eyes of a thousand hues,
 While the happy birds in the blue sky sing :
 " Thalatta ! Thalatta ! "

Brave heart of the great retreat !
 How oft, how bitterly oft
 Hast thou been hardly press'd
 By the North's barbarous dames !
 From their great conquering eyes
 They shot their burning arrows after me ;
 With scimitar-fashion'd words
 They strove to pierce my breast ;
 Their arrow-headed billets well nigh cleft
 My poor bewilder'd brain ;—
 Vainly I held my shield to ward the blows,
 The arrows whistled, and the blows hailed down :
 And by the fair barbarians of the North
 Have I been press'd and driven to the sea ;
 And breathing free, once more I hail the sea—
 The welcome, saving sea :
 Thalatta ! Thalatta !



THE NORTH SEA.

II.

THUNDERSTORM.

THE storm lies dead on the sea ;
And through the black cloud-wall
Quivers the zigzag lightning flash,
And quickly glares and quickly dies,
Like a joke from Kronion's head.
Over the heaving watery waste
Bellowing thunders roll ;
The white wave-courers leap,
Whom Boreas himself begot
Out of Ericthon's wanton mares ;
And the sea-fowl timidly flutter
Like ghosts on the Stygian shore
Rejected from Charon's boat.

Poor little lively ship !
She dances yonder a perilous dance.
Æolus sends her partners wild,
That play the maddest of dancing-tunes ;



BOOK OF SONGS.

One of them whistles, one sounds the horn,
And a third performs on the mighty bass ;
At the rudder the reeling sailor stands,
And steadfastly at the compass looks,
The quivering soul of the ship,
And raises his hand to Heaven and prays :
“ Oh, save me, Castor, equestrian chief,
“ And Pollux, the Boxer’s pride ! ”



III.

SHIPWRECKED.

My heart is broken ! my hopes are wreck'd !
And, like a corse that the waves reject,
And fling from their breast with an angry roar,
I lie on the barren and dreary shore.
Before me the watery waste is spread ;
Grief and misery frown behind :
While, dark and lowering o'er my head,
The gray clouds drive before the wind.
Misshapen daughters of the air !
Their leaky vessels of mist they bear,
And dip them down in the mighty main,
And heavy with water rise again,
And carry it hither, and carry it thither,
And pour it back in the ocean brine,—
A drear unrest, a toil unblest,
And useless as this life of mine.

BOOK OF SONGS.

The waves they murmur, the sea-mews moan,
Old memories waken at the sound ;
Dreams forgotten and forms long flown,
Painfully sweet, come crowding round.

There lives in the North a woman fair,
A queenly woman of beauty rare ;
Slender and tall as a cypress-tree,
Her loose white robes all flowing free.
Her hair is wreathed like a royal crown,
And streams in its sable fulness down,
Like a happy night, while with dreamy grace
Her ringlets curl on her sweet pale face ;
And from that face so fair to see
Her eye, with its glance of majesty,
Like a bright black sun, beams lustroously.

Dark sun, how often have I quaff'd
From thy bright rays the flaming draught
Of inspiration and desire,
And stood and reel'd as drunk with fire.
Then o'er thy curling lips of pride
A dove-like smile would come,
And from those curling lips of pride
Would words as soft as moonbeams glide,
And sweet as roses bloom ;



THE NORTH SEA.

And then my happy soul would rise,
And like an eagle soar into the skies.

Be still, ye waves, ye sea-mews cease to moan !
All, all is over ! Hope and Love are flown !
I lie upon the strand,
A weary, shipwreck'd, and heart-broken man,
And press my burning face, so worn and wan,
Upon the cold damp sand.



IV.

SUNSET.

The beauteous sun
Sinks calmly in the sea ;
The heaving waters are already tinged
With night's dark stain,
Save where the evening red
Scatters its golden streaks ;
The flood-tide's force
Drives the white billows roaring to the shore,
And merrily and hurriedly they leap,
Like woolly flocks of lambs,
That singing shepherds' boys
Drive to their homes at eve.

“ How lovely is the sun ! ”
Thus did my friend a lengthen'd silence break ;
My friend, who wander'd with me on the shore :
And half in joke, and half in plaintive strain,
He told me that the Sun
Was a fair woman, whom the old sea-god
Had married in days past from convenance.



THE NORTH SEA.

“ The livelong day,” said he, “ she gladly roams
“ In crimson splendour through the lofty skies,
“ And glitters diamond bright ;
“ Loved and admired by all created things :
“ While all created things
“ Bask in the light and warmth her glances shed ;
“ But at the hour of eve, disconsolate,
“ She hies reluctant to her cold damp home,
“ And drear embraces of her hoary spouse.

“ You may believe me,” so my friend went on,
And laugh’d and sigh’d, and full soon laugh’d again :
“ Those two down there
“ Lead a most exemplary wedded life !
“ Either they sleep, or else they quarrel so
“ That the sea foams and rages up above,
“ And ’mid the crashing waves the sailor hears
“ How the old greybeard rates his lovely wife :
“ ‘ Round Harlot of the World,
“ ‘ Wantoning with thy rays !
“ ‘ Thou’rt all on fire for others all day long,
“ ‘ And tired and frosty all the night to me !’
“ Now at a curtain-lecture in this strain,
“ Of course the haughty Sun bursts into tears,
“ And wails her wretchedness,

BOOK OF SONGS.

“ And wails at such a miserable length,
“ That the sea-god, to desperation driven,
“ Jumps suddenly from bed,
“ And hurriedly to the sea-surface swims,
“ To get fresh air and recollect himself.

“ So I myself beheld him yester night,
“ Breast high above the waves ;
“ He wore a yellow flannel vest,
“ A nightcap lily white,
“ And a lean wither'd face.”





THE NORTH SEA.

V.

SONG OF THE OCEANIDES.

PALE over ocean spreads the dim grey eve,
And all alone with his own lonely soul
There sits a man upon the barren shore,
And gazes, with a dead cold glance, aloft
Unto the far-off dead cold vault of Heaven,
And gazes on the far-off heaving sea ;
And o'er the far-off heaving sea his sighs,
Like hardy aeronauts, pursue their course,
And back return, a melancholy train,
As having found the frozen heart fast barred,
Where they had hoped for anchorage and rest.
And bitterly he moans, and moans so loud,
That the white sea-mews in their sandy nests
Are startled, and come flying round in flocks,
And he addresses them in laughing words :

“ Ye blackleg birds !

“ Fluttering o'er ocean with your wide white wings

“ Swilling sea-water with your crooked beaks,

“ Gorging the carcasses of rancid seals,

" Your life is bitter as your sustenance !
 " But I, the happy one, taste naught but sweets !
 " I taste the sweetest fragrance of the rose,
 " That feeds on moonlight ; of the rose, the bride
 " Of the sweet nightingale ; and sweeter still,
 " I taste meringues fill'd with the sweetest cream ;
 " And sweetest of all sweets, I also taste
 " The sweets of love, the sweets of love return'd !

" She loves me ! yes, she loves me, the dear girl !
 " At the house-corner even now she stands,
 " Peering athwart the twilight down the road,
 " List'ning and longing for me—absolutely !
 " In vain her prying glances rove ; she sighs,
 " And sighing, to the garden takes her way,
 " And wanders in the moonlight 'mid the flowers,
 " And speaks unto the flowers, and tells them all
 " How I, the loved one, am so kind and dear,
 " And then so amiable—absolutely !
 " Afterwards, in her bed, asleep, in dreams,
 " My dear, dear image haunts the happy maid ;
 " Even next morning, at her morning meal,
 " Upon each shining slice of bread-and-butter
 " She sees depicted my dear smiling face,
 " And from mere love she eats it—absolutely !"



THE NORTH SEA.

And thus he boasts and boasts,
And ever and anon the sea-mew's cry
Comes like a titter of cold irony.
The mists of twilight slowly climb the skies ;
Forth from a violet cloud the uncanny moon
Shows her sick face of greenish yellow hue !
The foaming ocean billows leap aloft,
And from the depths of the upheaving sea
The sea-nymph's song resounds—
The water-women fair and pitiful :
And over all the sweet voice peals distinct
Of Peleus' silverfooted spouse ;
And thus they sigh and sing :

“ O fool, O fool, thou boastful fool !
“ Thou sorrow-tortured fool !
“ Murder'd are all thy hopes—
“ The little prattling infants of thy heart ;
“ And ah ! thy heart, like Niobe,
“ Is petrified with woe !
“ Darkness involves thy head,
“ And through the darkness flash
“ The lightnings of insanity ;
“ And in thy pains thou utterest empty boasts !
“ O fool, O fool, thou boastful fool !

“ Stiffneck’d art thou as was thy ancestor,
“ The haughty Titan, he who stole from gods
“ Celestial fire, and gave unto mankind ;
“ And vulture-tortured, rock-imprison’d, still
“ Olympus-high his proud defiance hurl’d,
“ And still defied them, and defying groan’d
“ Till we o’erheard it in the deep, deep sea,
“ And came to comfort him with soothing song.
“ O fool, O fool, thou boastful fool !
“ For thou art e’en more impotent than he ;
“ And thou wert wise to reverence the gods,
“ And patient bear thy load of misery :
“ And bear it patiently, so long, so long,
“ Till e’en old Atlas has his patience lost,
“ And from his shoulders flings the heavy world
“ Into eternal night.”

So sang the daughters of Oceanus—
The water-women fair and pitiful,—
Till the waves’ louder roarings drown’d the strain ;
The moon withdrew behind a lowering cloud,
The black night yawn’d,
And I long linger’d in the dark, and wept.



THE NORTH SEA.

VI.

THE GODS OF GREECE.

BEAUTIFUL moon ! in thy radiant beams,
Like liquid gold the ocean gleams ;
And on the level beach they dwell,
Like daylight dimm'd by magic spell.
O'er the starless heavens above
Clouds in fleecy whiteness move ;
Like colossal shapes divine
Wrought in marble, lo ! they shine.

Clouds they are not. Well-a-day !
Hellas' ancient gods are they,
Who in gladness ruled the world.
Now athwart the northern sky,
Gloomy phantoms, lo ! they fly,
From their thrones of glory hurled.

Strangely startled and amazed,
At the airy forms I gazed ;

Silent, stern, inspiring awe,
 All the giant shapes I saw.
 Kronion, king of heaven, behold !
 Silver'd now the locks of gold,
 With which Olympus shook of old,
 As told in ancient story.
 Still he grasps with wasted hand
 The extinguish'd levin brand ;
 And upon his kingly face
 Shines, 'mid searing sorrow's trace,
 Still the pride of glory.
 Ah ! how alter'd from the time,
 Thunderer, of thy royal prime,
 Golden days of sateless joys,
 Blushing nymphs and blooming boys !
 Not to e'en the gods of heaven
 Is eternal empire given ;
 And the truth will ever hold,
 That the young dethrone the old,
 E'en as thou in youthful pride,
 Jupiter the parricide !
 Didst thy aged sire displace
 And the haughty Titan race.
 Thou too, Juno, proud as fair !
 Spite of all thy jealous care,



THE NORTH SEA.

Lo ! thy sceptred rule is o'er,
Thou art queen of heaven no more.
No more thy full round eye can charm,
And wasted is thy milk-white arm,—
Thy throne another's won :
And little skills thy rage, I ween,
Against the spotless Virgin Queen
And wonder-working Son.
Jove-born Pallas ! Wise in vain !
Weak thy ægis to sustain
Fate's resistless will !
Aphrodite, fallen too !
Silver'd now thy golden hue,
Pale but lovely still !
The girdle of beauty decks thee still,
But with secret dread at thy sight I thrill ;
And shouldst thou give to my favour'd arms
Thy beautiful body and all its charms,
As thou to heroes as brave as I
Often hast given them, I should die.
The Goddess of the Dead art thou,
Venus Libitina, now !
Lo ! where the gloomy god of arms,
Cold and silent, stands apart,
Nor casts one look upon the charms
Which once so fired his heart.

Phœbus, ever young and fair!—
 Ah! how changed and sad thy air!
 Ah! how mute the golden lyre,
 That amid the heavenly choir
 Once so blithely rung!
 Sadder still is Vulcan's brow:
 A limping god indeed art thou!
 And never more among
 The bright abodes, with busy pace,
 Shalt thou usurp fair Hebe's place,
 Nor pour the golden nectar out
 For happy gods to quaff;
 How mute is now the merry shout,
 And quench'd the quenchless laugh!

Ne'er did I, ye powers above,
 Feel for you a spark of love;
 For the Greeks I never prized,
 And the Romans I despised:
 But with holy pity and sympathy
 My inmost heart is torn,
 When I see ye gazing down on me
 So helpless, so forlorn,—
 Night-wandering shadows, death-like ghostly forms,
 Weak foggy phantoms, playthings of the storms!



THE NORTH SEA.

From immemorial time ye gods of old !
In all the wars and struggles of mankind,
The winning party found you always kind ;
But man is cast in a more generous mould,
And in the battle of the gods, my heart
Sides with the vanquish'd, and I take your part.

As I spoke a flush of shame
O'er each pallid phantom came ;
And their dying eyes on mine
Gazed in agony divine,
Glowing with unearthly light ;
And they vanish'd from my sight
In the darkening north.
Even then a sable cloud
Wrapp'd the pale moon like a shroud ;
The waves upheaving foamed on high ;
And brightly o'er the purple sky
The eternal stars shone forth.

VII.

QUESTIONS.

BESIDE the sea, the dreary sea, upon the barren
shore,

A poet comes to watch the waves and learn their
mystic lore,

His brain o'erfraught with cruel doubts, his bosom
rack'd with woe,

And thus in gloomy strain he hails the billows as
they flow :

“ Oh solve me ye, for sure ye can, the mystery of
life,

“ The riddle of the days of old, beset with doubt
and strife ;

“ Whereon so many learned heads with useless
science stored,

“ In Egypt's hieroglyphic caps or black berettes
have pored,

“ Heads in perukes with flowing curls, or trim bar-
wigs attired,

“ Or all the thousand wigs in which poor mortals
e'er perspired.



THE NORTH SEA.

“Tell me, what signifies mankind? whence comes
he? whither bent?”

“Who lives in yonder golden stars, and wherefore
are they meant?”

The waves they murmur restlessly their everlasting
song,

The wind blows steadily, and sweeps the drifting
clouds along,

The stars in cold indifference shine proudly from
the sky,

And on the shore a blockhead stands and waits for
a reply.



VIII.

THE PHENIX.

A BIRD comes flying from the west,
Flying towards the east,—
His eastern garden home ;
Where fragrant spices grow,
Where palm-trees wave and cooling fountains gush.
And as he flies, the bird of wonder sings :

She loves him ! She loves him !
She wears his image in her little heart,
And wears it hidden—sweetly, secretly,
And knows it not !
But in her dreams she sees him at her side,
And prays, and weeps, and tries to kiss his hands,
And calls upon his name,
And calling on him, wakes, and lies amazed,
And wonderingly rubs her lovely eyes—
She loves him ! She loves him !

Leaning against the mast, upon the deck,
I stood, and listen'd to the wild bird's song.



THE NORTH SEA.

Like dark-green horses, silver-maned,
Leap'd the white-crested waves ;
Like flights of swans the Helgolander's ships—
Bold nomads of the north—
With glittering sails pass'd by.
Above me, in the everlasting blue,
Floated the light white clouds
And shone the eternal sun—
Heaven's fiery blossom-rose,
Reflected in the sea :—
And heaven and ocean, and my heart of hearts,
Re-echo'd loudly the resounding strain :
She loves him ! She loves him !



IX.

IN PORT.

HAPPY the man who has reach'd the port,
And left behind him the waves and wind,
And is quietly seated safe and warm
In the mansion-house cellar at Bremen.

How pleasant and bright in the Roman glass
Sparkles the whole reflected world ;
How does the dancing microcosm
Sunnily flood the thirsty heart !
All, all may be seen in the glass ;
All world history old and new—
Turks and Greeks, and Hegel and Gans,
Lemon-tree forests and dress parades,
Tunis and Hamburg, and e'en Berlin—
But chiefly the image of her I love,
Chiefly the beautiful angel head
On a ground of Rhine-wine gold.

Oh, thou art fair—how fair, my love !
Fair as a lovely rose ;



THE NORTH SEA.

But not the rose of Schiraz,
The nightingale bride that Hafiz sings ;
But not the rose of Sharon,
The red-rose theme of prophecy ;
Thou art like, my love, to the rose
In the mansion-house cellar of Bremen—
That is the rose of roses ;
The older she grows the fairer she blooms,
And her heavenly odours have wrapt my soul,
Have fired my spirit and turn'd my head ;
And but for the hold on my pigtail kept
By the good cellar-master of Bremen,
I should have lost my legs !

That worthy man ! Together we sat
And drank like brothers ; and drank and sat,
And spoke about high mysterious things,
And wept, and sank in each other's arms,
And he brought me round to the faith of love.
I drank to the weal of my bitterest foes,
And all bad poets I forgave,
Even as I am to be forgiven.
I wept with piety, and at last
The gates of mercy oped to me,
Where the twelve apostles, the holy casks,

Silently preach, with a sense so clear
To all the tribes of earth.*

Those are men !
Outwardly plain, in jackets of wood,
They shine with a radiant inner light
That none of the Temple Levites match,
Nor all the host of Herod's guards,
Robed in purple, bedeck'd with gold.

* * * *

Hallelujah !
How fondly o'er me wave
The palm-trees of Beth El !
Sweet is the scent of Hebron's myrrh !
The rushing Jordan reels with joy !
Till 'gins my immortal soul to reel,
And I reel with it, and with me reels
Up the stairs to the light of day,
The town cellar-master of Bremen.

Thou brave cellar-master of Bremen !
See'st thou, on the tops of the houses sit

* The twelve lesser casks, which surround the celebrated Rose of Bremen in the Town Cellar, and out of which the wine drawn from the Rose is replaced, are called the "Twelve Apostles."—TR.



THE NORTH SEA.

The angels, and all are tipsy, and sing ;
The glowing sun in the skies above
Is only a fiery fuddled nose—
The nose of the great world's soul ;
And round the world's soul's fiery nose
Circles and spins a tipsy world.



X.

EPILOGUE.

As the blades of wheat in the field,
E'en so in the soul of man
Rise and ripen his thoughts ;
But the tender thoughts of love
Are the flowers of purple and red,
That brightly bloom in the midst.



Flowers of purple and red !
The surly reaper rejects you as useless !
The flail of the clodpole derisively spurns you ;
Even the wanderer, needy and weary—
He whom the sight of you soothes and refreshes,
Shaking his head at you, says you are weeds ;
But the country maiden, the twiner of garlands,
Honours you, gathers you,
Binding up with you her beautiful hair :
And deck'd with your beauty she hastes to the dance,





THE NORTH SEA.

To the joyous strains of the tabor and pipe,
Or to the silent grove,
Where the voice of her lover more sweetly sounds
Than either tabor or pipe.





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