









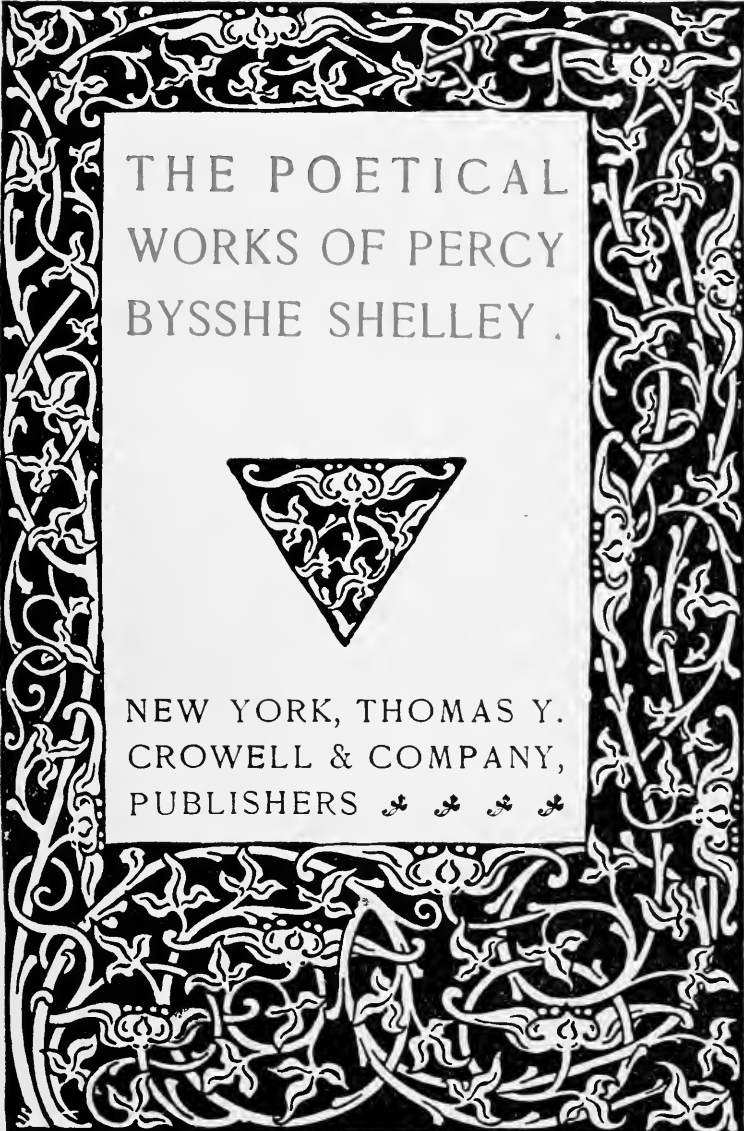








PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.



THE POETICAL  
WORKS OF PERCY  
BYSSHE SHELLEY .



NEW YORK, THOMAS Y.  
CROWELL & COMPANY,  
PUBLISHERS ❁ ❁ ❁ ❁

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY  
“

EDITED BY

EDWARD DOWDEN  
1



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## INTRODUCTION.

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ALTHOUGH Shelley wrote narrative poems and one great tragedy, his genius was primarily lyrical, and his poetry tells more to a reader who is acquainted with his character and the events of his life than to one who knows the poems only as if they had fallen out of the air from some invisible singer. No poet ever sang more directly out of his own feelings — his joys, his sorrows, his desires, his regrets ; and what he has written acquires a fuller meaning when we understand its source and its occasion. Shelley's poetry belongs also to a particular epoch in the world's history — the revolutionary epoch — and what may fairly be described as the body of doctrine which forms the intellectual background of his imaginative visions can be comprehended only when we consider his work in relation to the period of which it is the outcome. "A beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain" — so Matthew Arnold, with a variation of Joubert's sentence on Plato,<sup>1</sup> defined his conception of Shelley. The charm of the phrase must not render us insensible of its remoteness from the fact. Shelley was no angel, whether of celestial or diabolic race, but most human in his passions, his errors, his failures, his achievement. Nor was it in the void that he lived and moved; he belonged in an eminent degree to the revolutionary movement of his own day, and viewed apart from the teaching of that geometer of the Revolution whom he accepted as his master — William Godwin — the work of Shelley is only half intelligible.

Percy Bysshe Shelley was born on 4th August 1792, at Field Place, near Horsham, Sussex. The family was ancient and honorable, but no ancestor of the poet had ever given proof of literary genius. His grandfather, Bysshe Shelley, who received a baronetcy in 1806, had accumulated a large fortune, had married two heiresses, had quarrelled with his children, and now, troubled with gout and the infirmities of age, lived somewhat penuriously in a cottage-house at Horsham. Timothy Shelley, the poet's father, was a country gentleman — dull, consequential, irritable, but not unkindly in disposition, who in the House of Commons gave an unwavering vote for the Whig party, and who was secured from all risk of aberration from the social conventions by a happy inaccessibility to ideas. His wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Pilfold of Effingham, Surrey, was beautiful in person, and a woman of good sense, when her good sense was not obscured by temper. Though no lover of literature, she was an excellent letter-writer.

Percy, the eldest child, inherited his mother's beauty. He was slight of figure, of fair and ruddy complexion, with luminous blue eyes, and hair curling naturally,

<sup>1</sup> "Plato loses himself in the void, but one sees the play of his wings, one hears their rustle," quoted by Matthew Arnold in his essay on Joubert.

which changed from golden to a rich brown ; in temperament gentle yet excitable, of rare sensibility, prone to yield up his imagination to fantastic tale or vision, but not devoid of a certain quaint mirthfulness which took delight in oddity and surprises. Having acquired some knowledge of Latin from a neighboring country parson, he was sent at ten years old to Sion House Academy, Isleworth, where Dr. Greenlaw taught some fifty or sixty boys, chiefly of the social middle class, and where Shelley's cousin, Thomas Medwin, was a pupil. The rough tyranny of the elder lads, who looked on the new scholar as strange and unsocial because he was sensitive and shy, sometimes drove him to violent outbreaks of passion; yet, says his schoolfellow Rennie, "if treated with kindness, he was very amiable, noble, high-spirited, and generous." Here Shelley made some progress in classical learning; his sense of intellectual wonder was much stimulated by scientific lectures; and his heart awoke to the new and exquisite pleasure of romantic attachment to a boy of about his own age, whom he describes as of a character eminently generous, brave, and gentle.

In 1804 he passed from Sion House Academy to Eton, at that date under the headmastership of Dr. Goodall, an excellent scholar and kindly gentleman, but one who held the reins of authority perhaps somewhat too loosely. Shelley's tutor, George Bethell, with whom he boarded, was unluckily the dullest man in Eton; he had the merit, however, of being good-humored and well-meaning. At Eton as at Sion House Shelley stood apart from the throng of his schoolfellows. His spirit rose in rebellion against the system of fagging; he did not join in the school sports; he pursued studies in which his young coevals did not care to follow him. All things seemed to point out "mad Shelley" as a fit and proper victim upon whom the other boys might let loose their animal spirits. "I have seen him," wrote a schoolfellow, "surrounded, hooted, baited like a maddened bull." If it was his tormentors' wish to excite their victim to paroxysms of rage, they often attained the desired end. Yet here, as at his earlier school, he won the goodwill of a few of his schoolfellows, who describe him as generous and open-hearted, of remarkable tenderness of heart, possessed of much moral courage, and fearing nothing but what was false or low. No friend pleased him better than old Dr. Lind of Windsor, a man original in character and opinions, and of most amiable temper. Shelley has given idealized portraits of this friend of his boyhood in *Zonaras* of "Prince Athanase" and the aged hermit of "The Revolt of Islam."

Shelley's interest in what we may term the romantic side of modern science increased during the Eton years. He read the classics with a delight in the beauty of the poetry and a keen interest in the philosophical views of certain writers, — among these Lucretius and Pliny, — but without showing much capacity for minute exactness of scholarship. The chief masters of his intellect were those eighteenth-century thinkers who seem to bring into a certain harmony the destructive or sceptical criticism of the age and those boundless hopes for the future which sprung phantomlike from the ruins of the past. He was too young to have learned the lessons of experience derived from the facts of the French Revolution, as they developed themselves from day to day. He accepted the doctrine of the *Aufklärung* from Godwin's "Political Justice" with awed and delighted mind. With Condorcet he beheld as in a vision the endless progress of the human race. His dreams were bright and generous dreams of youth, and in truth they were not altogether of a baseless fabric. Much that has become actual in the nineteenth century has grown out of the visions and aspirations of the age of revolution; much perhaps remains to be realized.

Two moments of boyhood memorable in the development of his spirit have found record in Shelley's verse — that in which, escaping from the feelings of resentment and revenge excited by the persecutions and tyrannies of school, he

vowed, for his own part, to be just, gentle, wise, and free ; and that other moment when his imagination, escaping from the excitements of gross, fantastic horror, devoted its powers to the pursuit of spiritual beauty. The record of one of these moments will be found in the dedication of "The Revolt of Islam ;" the record of the other in the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty." Both of these inspirations of high resolve came in the springtime, when the awakened life of nature seemed to reinforce the vitality of the spirit.

Before leaving Eton Shelley was an author. The romance of "Zastrozzi," published in April 1810, was written, at least in great part, a year earlier. This and a second romance, "St. Irvyne, or the Rosicrucian," which appeared before the close of the same year, are indescribably but not unaccountably absurd in their crude efforts at sublimity, their over-wrought horrors, their pseudo-passion, their sentimental inanities. The author, still a boy, was yielding an untrained imagination to the romantic movement of his day, as represented by its worst models, just as he had yielded his intellect in bondage, which fancied itself liberty, to the revolutionary speculators and dreamers. Shelley's boyish romances cease to be inexplicably bad when we have made acquaintance with certain Minerva Press novels of the same date; we see that he was only a disciple, not a creator, of the fantastic-absurd, to which Mrs. Radcliffe and M. G. Lewis had given a vogue, and which just at this date was satirized in "Northanger Abbey," the earliest novel of our most exquisite humorist of domestic life. A poem in several cantos on the subject of "The Wandering Jew" was written (1810) by Medwin and Shelley in conjunction; four cantos appeared after Shelley's death, but it is uncertain whether they contain more than a few lines from his hand. A thin volume of verse entitled, "Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire," the work of Shelley and another, actually saw the light in September 1810; it was speedily withdrawn from circulation by the publisher on discovering the fact that one of the pieces was a transcript from the pages of M. G. Lewis. No copy of the "Original Poetry" is known to exist, and we can hardly regret the disappearance of verses which a reviewer describes, in all probability not unjustly, as "downright scribble."

It has been suggested that Shelley's coadjutor who assumed the feminine name "Cazire" was his cousin Harriet Grove, a beautiful girl of his own age, whom he loved with a boy's first ardor, and whom he would fain have made a partner in his own social, political, and religious beliefs and disbeliefs. The tone of his correspondence alarmed Harriet's family, and before long they had another settlement for her in view. Shelley suffered, or imagined that he suffered, much, declaimed against bigotry, and was resolved henceforth to wage bitter war against that destroyer of human happiness.

Having matriculated at University College, Oxford, in April 1810, Shelley entered on residence in Michaelmas term of the same year. In his fellow-student, Thomas Jefferson Hogg, son of a north-country gentleman of Tory politics, he found his closest ally. Hogg had high intellectual powers and a genuine love of literature; his type of mind and character was as remote from Shelley's as can well be conceived; he was keen-sighted, shrewd, sarcastic, but not devoid of some of the generosity of youth; and he was highly interested in observing such a singular and charming phenomenon among young Oxonians of the days of the Regency as the idealist Shelley. Every one who knows anything of Shelley's life knows Hogg's admirable portrayal of Shelley at Oxford; every one has been an intimate with Hogg in the college chambers, wildly confused with electrical and chemical apparatus; has heard the eager discourse of the young enthusiast concerning the mysteries of nature and the deeper mysteries of mind; has seen him at his favorite sports of skimming stones and sailing paper-boats on river or pond; has strode across country with the pair in their joyous winter walks, and shared the frugal sup-

per which they enjoyed on their return ; has witnessed " the divine poet's " sweet humanity towards those who needed the sustenance of hand or heart, and no less his sudden outbreaks of indignation against the wrongdoer and the oppressor; has smiled with the narrator at the quaint freaks and fancies of the immortal child.

" The devotion, the reverence, the religion with which he was kindled towards all the masters of intellect," says Hogg, " cannot be described." The biographer speaks of the purity and " sanctity " of Shelley's life, of his " meek seriousness " of heart, and " marvellous gentleness " of disposition. But with reverence for the self-elected masters of his intellect, and this marvellous gentleness Shelley united a contempt for inheritance and tradition, and an intellectual audacity which was unchecked by any adequate sense of the difficulties encompassing the great problems of human thought. His guides were the lights of the eighteenth-century illumination. Had he mastered Kant as well as Holbach, and submitted his intellect to Burke as he submitted it to Godwin, he might not have shot up as quickly, but his roots would have plunged deeper and embraced the soil more firmly. Yet it is hard to conceive Shelley as other than he actually was. And it may be that the logical gymnastic of his studies in eighteenth-century thinkers — and those especially of France — saved him in some degree from the dangers of an excessive tendency towards the visionary. " Had it not been for this sharp brushing away of intellectual cobwebs," writes Mr. Salt, " his genius, always prone to mysticism and metaphysical subtleties, might have lost itself . . . in a labyrinth of dreams and fantasies, and thus have wasted its store of moral enthusiasm." Only we must remember that in the eighteenth-century crusade against thrones and churches there was a good deal of visionary destructiveness, as events have proved, and that a part of Shelley's moral enthusiasm, as some of us venture to think, was not wisely directed.

Shelley's career at University College was brief. In February 1811 a small pamphlet entitled " The Necessity of Atheism " was issued from a provincial press at Worthing in Sussex. The author's name was not given, but in Oxford, where the pamphlet was offered for sale, it was known to be the work of Shelley. On being interrogated by the master of his college Shelley refused to answer the questions put to him. The same questions were put to Hogg, who had come forward to remonstrate with the authorities; he also declined to reply, and on 25th March both youths were expelled from University College for contumacy in refusing to answer questions and declining to disavow the publication.

" I *once* was an enthusiastic Deist," Shelley wrote a few weeks later, " but never a Christian." His atheism was the denial of a creator rather than the denial of a living spirit of the universe. A Christian he never became in the theological sense of that word; but certainly, at a later time, he deeply revered the personal character of Jesus. And his militant ardor against the historical developments of Christianity in some degree waned as he became better acquainted with the literature and art of mediæval Italy. His faith in later years had in it something of Plato's and of Berkeley's idealism; something perhaps also of the philosophic system of Spinoza.

A word must be said of the " Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson," which appeared in Shelley's first term at University College. Poems written with a serious intention, but bearing all the marks of immaturity, were put forth under cover of a jest, and were perhaps retouched — Hogg assisting — with a view to burlesque effect. Margaret Nicholson, a mad washerwoman, had attempted the King's life, and was now in Bedlam. It was decided that she should be the authoress of the verses, and that their publication should be posthumous, under the editorial supervision of an imaginary nephew, John Fitz-Victor. The pamphlet



was brought out in quarto form; the mystification perhaps delighted the author, but we do not find it difficult to credit the publisher's statement that the work was almost still-born.

On quitting Oxford the two college friends resided for a while together in London lodgings. Mr. Timothy Shelley refused to receive his son at Field Place unless he would undertake to break off all communication with Hogg, and submit himself to appointed tutors and governors. Such conditions Shelley declined to accept, and so remained in exile from his home with a sore feeling that he was unjustly punished for intellectual beliefs for which he was not morally responsible. On Hogg's departure to his friends, Shelley remained in lodgings alone. His younger sisters were schoolgirls at Clapham, and through them he had already made the acquaintance of their companion, Harriet Westbrook, a pink-and-white schoolgirl beauty of sixteen, with a pleasant temper, a bright smile, and a pretty manner,—the daughter of a retired London coffee-house keeper. Her guide and guardian, the elder Miss Westbrook, already thirty years old, showed a most affectionate interest in the young misbeliever, who was also a prospective baronet with a great property entailed, wrote to him, called on him with Harriet, conducted him to church, read under his guidance the works of heretics. When in the summer Shelley visited his cousin Mr. Grove at Cwm Elan in Radnorshire, the Westbrooks were also in Wales, and communications went to and fro between Shelley and the sisters. On the return of the Westbrooks to London urgent letters came from Harriet; she was persecuted in her home; they were about to force her to return to school where she was miserable; should she resist her father, or would it be wrong to put an end to her life? Another letter came in which she threw herself on Shelley's protection; she would fly with him if he were but willing. Shelley hastened to London, yet before he left Wales he found time to write to his cousin Charles telling him that if he devoted himself to Harriet it was not for love's sake but through a chivalrous motive of self-sacrifice. On seeing Harriet, he was shocked by her altered looks, which he ascribed to the suffering caused by domestic persecution; she now avowed that it was not so, that she loved him and feared that he could not return her love. They parted with a promise on Shelley's part that if she summoned him from the country he would come quickly and unite his fate with hers. Within a week the summons arrived. Immediately arrangements for flight by the northern mail-coach were made, and on the 28th of August 1811 Shelley and Harriet Westbrook, aged respectively nineteen and sixteen, joined hands as man and wife at Edinburgh, with such ceremony as the Scottish law required. It needed some straining of the principles of a disciple of William Godwin to submit to a legal form of marriage; but for the sake of Harriet's appearance in the eyes of the world he consented to what he regarded as an evil. He assured her that for his own part he did not consider the contract binding, if at some future time their union should prove a source of misery instead of happiness.<sup>1</sup> And in so far he was obedient to the teaching of his philosophic master.

In fact, at this time, Shelley was immeasurably more interested in a Sussex schoolmistress, Miss Hitchener, whom he had idealized into an Egeria or a Cythna, than in Harriet Westbrook. This very commonplace person became for his boyish imagination a type of all that is most exalted in womanhood, but his feeling was one of homage and rapture, not a feeling of love, which could descend to the commonplace of wedlock. "Blame me if thou wilt, dearest friend," he wrote to her, when apologizing for his marriage, "for *still* thou art dearest to me; yet *pity* even this error if thou blamest me." A closer acquaintance with Miss Hitchener,

<sup>1</sup> See Southey's last letter to Shelley in "Southey's Correspondence with Caroline Bowles."

a year later, resulted — after a fashion too common with Shelley — in an idealization of an opposite kind; the worthy woman assumed the form of a demon of selfishness and ignoble passion, an angel indeed still, but of the diabolic kind.

Shelley's father had allowed him two hundred pounds a year before his marriage; now he saw fit to give the rash boy a lesson by cutting off supplies. Ultimately the allowance was again given, and with two hundred pounds also from Mr. Westbrook, the young couple were not in danger of want.

From Edinburgh they journeyed to York, where they passed under the control of the evil providence of their wedded life, the elder sister, Eliza Westbrook; and where misconduct of Hogg's caused a temporary breach between him and Shelley. From York they passed to Keswick, attracted in part by the fact that there resided Southey, for whose poetry Shelley at the time had a strong admiration. Southey received the young people with characteristic kindness, but to Shelley he seemed a spent force, a withered branch, because he took little interest in metaphysical subtleties, and had lost his early confidence in the virtue of Revolutionary abstractions. A more congenial personal influence was that of William Godwin, with whom Shelley entered into correspondence while at Keswick; he laid bare his spirit before Godwin as before a philosophic confessor, listened to his direction with reverence, and hoped for the joy of a closer intimacy with this latest and greatest of the sages.

With his desire at once to translate his ideas into action for the service of the world, Shelley looked abroad for a battlefield where he might combat on behalf of freedom, and he found it, as he supposed, in Ireland. He prepared an Address to the Irish people, consisting, as he states it, "of the benevolent and tolerant deductions of philosophy reduced into the simplest language." He would plead on behalf of Catholic Emancipation, on behalf of the Repeal of the Union; he would endeavor to establish a system of societies in Ireland for the discussion of social, political, and moral questions; he would inculcate principles of virtue and benevolence. With such views he visited Dublin, scattered abroad a couple of pamphlets, spoke at a public meeting where O'Connell had harangued, dined with Curran and felt no liking for his host, discovered that the state of Irish politics and parties was not quite as simple as he had supposed, and, yielding to Godwin's advice and his own sense of failure, quitted Ireland, having effected little for the cause in which he was interested.

From Dublin Shelley, with Harriet and the inevitable Eliza Westbrook, crossed to Wales, and after a short residence amid wood and stream and mountain at Nantgwilt, proceeded to the coast of North Devon, and took up his abode (June 1812) in a cottage at Lynmouth, then a secluded fishing-village. The July and August days were among the happiest of Shelley's life; his regard for his young wife had deepened into sincere love; he was in communication with the immortal Godwin; his lady of light, Miss Hitchener, visited the cottage, and was not yet discovered to be an intolerable affliction; his mind was vigorously occupied with a prose pleading on behalf of liberty of speech — the "Letter to Lord Ellenborough," — and with certain ambitious enterprises in verse. Of these last some still remain in manuscript; but the most important, "Queen Mab," sufficiently exposes its author's spirit at this period, his convictions, his hopes, his dreams, his views of the past, his aspirations towards the future. "It is," I have said elsewhere, "a kind of synthesis which harmonizes the political and social fervors of the Irish expedition, with all their wisdom and folly, and the imaginative exaltation to which the grandeur and loveliness of Welsh hillsides and Devon cliffs and waves had given rise." It is a pamphlet in verse, but with some of the beauty of poetry underlying its declamatory prophesyings. Its pictorial effects are sometimes rather spectacular than in a high sense imaginative. Its thought is often

crude. It suffers from a moral shallowness, derived in part from Godwin, and arising from the supposition that evil exists less in human character than in human institutions. Its survey of the past history of society is superficial and one-sided; its hopes for the future are in great part fantastic. Yet the poem, which may be held to lie midway between Shelley's "Juvenilia" and the works of his adult years, has value in its deep sympathy with humanity and its imaginative setting forth of the idea of a cosmos, the unity of nature, the universality of law, the vast and ceaseless flow of Being ever subject to a process of evolution and development. In certain passages the writer ceases to be a doctrinaire rhetorician, and rises into a poet who can interpret alike the facts of external nature and the longings of the human heart. "Villainous trash," was Shelley's own description of "Queen Mab," when a pirated edition appeared in 1821; but time, the arbiter, has pronounced that it forms in fact an integral part of his gift to our literature. "Queen Mab" was finished in February 1813, and was printed in that year for private distribution.

Shelley's residence at Lynmouth came to an untimely end. He had amused himself — yet with a grave face — by launching into the Bristol Channel boxes and bottles, each laden with a copy of his broadsheet "Declaration of Rights," or his poem "The Devil's Walk," for the waves and winds to put into circulation. On 19th August his Irish servant was watched as he posted up about Barnstaple copies of the "Declaration," a statement on the subject of government and society drawn up on the model of French Revolutionary documents. The Irishman was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. His master, having done what he could to lighten Dan's sufferings in prison, hastily left the Lynmouth cottage, and took refuge in the little town of Tremadoc in the county of Carnarvon. Here for a time Shelley was much interested in the fortunes of the great embankment, designed to rescue a tract of land from the sea. He attempted to collect funds to carry on the undertaking, contributed himself out of all proportion to his means, and visited London in order to solicit further subscriptions. In London (October 1812) he saw Godwin face to face for the first time, and the impression on each side was favorable. He renewed his friendship with Hogg; finally broke with his once worshipped, now detested, Miss Hitchener; and added to the circle of his acquaintances the agreeable family of Mr. Newton, whose zeal on behalf of vegetarianism commended him to Shelley. During the winter in Wales he exerted himself generously on behalf of the suffering poor; he studied the philosophers of the French illumination, and, under Godwin's advice, endeavored to gain some real acquaintance with history, added to his store of manuscript poems, and prepared for publication a series of extracts from the Bible which were selected with a view to set forth a pure morality unencumbered by what Shelley held to be biblical mythology. On the night of 26th February 1813 the lonely house of Tanyrallt, which the Shelleys occupied, was entered by some villain bent on outrage. Alarmed by the noise, Shelley descended, pistols in hand, from his bedroom. Shots were fired and an encounter took place, which ended in the escape of the marauder. Attempts have been made to discredit the story of this adventure. There do not appear to be sufficient grounds for disbelief, but we may perhaps accept the theory that Shelley's overwrought nerves played tricks upon him after the attack, and that the alleged later attempt at assassination on the same night was a delusion of the brain.

On a second visit to Ireland Shelley travelled as far south as Killarney and Cork. In April he was again in London, where in June 1813 his first child, a girl, named Ianthe, was born. "He was extremely fond of his child," says Peacock, "and would walk up and down a room with it in his arms for a long time together, singing to it a monotonous melody of his own making." When Harriet had recov-

ered, she and her husband moved to Bracknell in Berkshire, attracted thither by the presence of Mrs. Boinville (sister-in-law of the vegetarian Newton) and her young married daughter Cornelia Turner. These new friends were cultivated, refined, enthusiastic, perhaps somewhat sentimental. With Cornelia as his fellow-student Shelley made progress in Ariosto, Tasso, Petrarch. It would have been a time of great enjoyment but that pecuniary troubles disturbed him; debts had accumulated, and he was forced to raise money at ruinous interest by post-obit bonds. In October he left Bracknell, wandered northwards to the English lakes, and thence proceeded to Edinburgh. But his stay in Scotland was not for long. Before the close of the year he was settled in a furnished house at Windsor, in the midst of his schoolboy haunts and at no great distance from Bracknell, where the Boinvilles still resided. For a time he occupied himself in writing the dialogue published in 1814 with the title "A Refutation of Deism," in which it is his aim to demonstrate that no *via media* can be found between Christianity and Atheism.

In order to raise money it was necessary to place beyond all doubt the legitimacy of any son and heir who might be born to Shelley; doubts were probably raised as to the validity of the Scotch wedding; and accordingly on 24th March 1814 Shelley went through the ceremony of marriage with Harriet according to the rites of the Church of England. But before this event his domestic happiness had been grievously clouded. Whatever intellectual and spiritual sympathy at any time existed between him and his young wife had now ceased to exist. She aspired to a more fashionable life than he could endure; her expenditure on dress, silver-plate, and a carriage plunged him deeper in debt, when debt had become a misery and a degradation. Eliza Westbrook had grown an intolerable presence in the household, and yet Eliza Westbrook was forever at hand. Shelley was urgent that Harriet should nurse her child, and Harriet insisted on hiring a wet-nurse. At length the managing elder sister withdrew, but Harriet maintained after her departure a hard and cold bearing as of one who had suffered wrong. Shelley sought for some imperfect consolation in the friendship of Mrs. Boinville and Mrs. Turner. In May he implored for a reconciliation, but without effect. Harriet quitted her home and went to reside in Bath, while her husband took refuge in London.

With characteristic generosity he was at this time endeavoring to succor Godwin who had pressing need of a large sum of money. In May or June Shelley first looked with interest on Mary, the daughter of Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft. She had just returned from a visit to Scotland—a girl in her seventeenth year, with golden hair, a pale, pure face, great forehead, and earnest eyes of hazel. She was vigorous of intellect, possessed of much mental courage, and much firmness of will, united with sensibility and ardor of heart. The second Mrs. Godwin had made Mary's home unhappy. She and Shelley drew towards each other in what at first seemed to be friendship, but quickly proved itself love. At the same time—if we may trust a statement of Mrs. Godwin's daughter, Claire Clairmont—Shelley had not only come to believe that Harriet had ceased to love him; he declared his belief that she had proved faithless to him, and had formed a connection with an Irish officer named Ryan. There is no proof that Shelley had evidence sufficient to support this charge, and Harriet herself asserted her fidelity. Her assertion is supported by Thornton Hunt, Hookham, Hogg, and others. But Godwin stated in 1817 that he knew from unquestionable authority, wholly unconnected with Shelley, that Harriet had proved unfaithful to her husband before their separation. We can readily suppose that Shelley might persuade himself of what was not the fact. He wrote to Harriet begging her to come to London. On her arrival (14th July) he told her that he could no longer regard her as his wife; that his heart was given to Mary Godwin; but that he would continue, as far as might be, to watch over her interests. The shock and agitation of Shelley's disclosure brought

an illness on Harriet, during which Eliza Westbrook was in constant attendance, and Shelley besought the sufferer to return to life and health. But his resolution to part from her remained unchanged. Having made arrangements for Harriet's material comfort, he prepared, without the knowledge of Godwin or his wife, for flight with Mary. On the morning of 28th July 1814 the fugitives were on their way to France. They had persuaded Claire Clairmont, the daughter of Godwin's wife by a previous marriage, to be their companion. An idealized record of Shelley's days of misery with Harriet is probably to be found in the confessions of the madhouse-prisoner of "Julian and Maddalo." A less obscure narrative of the causes of estrangement is given with altered names in Mrs. Shelley's novel of "Lodore."

Crossing from Dover to Calais in an open boat, the runaways made for Paris, and having there procured money, they travelled, Shelley on foot, Mary or Claire on muleback, towards Switzerland. From Troyes Shelley wrote to Harriet a letter which would be incomprehensible if coming from any other writer, in which he expressed a hope that she would follow them, and reside under his care in their immediate neighborhood. On reaching Brunnen on the Lake of Lucerne, the wanderers engaged rooms, but apprehending a difficulty of obtaining supplies at so great a distance from England, they hastily turned homewards, descended the Rhine as far as Cologne, and after an absence of six weeks reached London in the middle of September.

The months in London between mid-September and January 1815 were months of trial and vexation. Godwin was estranged; the intercourse with Harriet, who in November gave birth to Shelley's second child, a son, was of a troubled kind; there were sore straits for money, and during some days Shelley, while hiding from creditors, was parted from Mary. But the opening month of 1815 altered his circumstances. On 6th January his grandfather died, and Shelley became the immediate heir to a great property. By parting with his interest in a portion of the estates to his father, he secured an annual income of one thousand pounds, and also received a considerable sum for the payment of his debts. Unhappily, at the same time that his worldly goods increased, his health in some degree failed. In the summer he wandered through Devon, and early in August found a happy resting-place at Bishopsgate on the borders of Windsor Park. Accompanied by Mary and his friend Peacock, he spent some delightful days in a river excursion up the Thames as far as Lechlade, of which we have a memorial in one of the early lyrical pieces. On his return home he composed in the glades of Windsor Great Park the poem which first proves that his genius had attained to adult years, his "Alastor." It is, in its inmost sense, a pleading on behalf of human love — that love which he had himself sought and found; it is a rebuke to the man of genius — the seeker for beauty and the seeker for truth — who would live apart from human sympathy; yet the fate of the solitary idealist, Shelley tells us, is less mournful than that of one who should fatten in apathy, "instigated by no sacred thirst of doubtful knowledge, duped by no illustrious superstition." The poem is a record, marvellously exalted, of his experiences of the past year, — his thoughts of love and death, and the impressions derived from external nature amid Swiss lake and mountain, on the arrowy Reuss, among the rock-guarded passes of the Rhine, and in presence of the autumnal glories of Windsor Forest.

In January 1816 Mary gave birth to a boy, named William after her father. Still Godwin maintained his attitude of alienation from Shelley, though he deigned to accept liberal gifts of money. At length Shelley grew indignant, yet was not the less zealous in rendering Godwin what aid he could. It seemed that Mary and he would be happier in any other country than in England, where kinsfolk and former friends averted their faces in anger or in shame. Accordingly, it was de-

cided that trial should be made of a residence abroad; there would be a compensation in the diminished cost of living for the loss of English fields and skies. In the early days of May 1816 Shelley, with Mary, little William, and Claire Clairmont, was *en route* for Geneva by way of Paris.

Of Byron's intrigue with Miss Clairmont, Shelley and Mary, when they started from England, were in profound ignorance. But it was with a view of meeting Byron that Claire had been urgent with Shelley to take her abroad. At Sécheron, a small suburb of Geneva, the two great poets met. When Shelley moved into occupation of a cottage on the opposite side of the lake, and Byron took refuge from an importunate public at the Villa Diodati, they were in constant communication. They rowed or sailed together, and towards the close of June, circumnavigated the lake, during which excursion "The Prisoner of Chillon" was written. With Mary for his companion, Shelley visited Chamouni. The feelings with which Swiss scenery inspired him may be read in the poem "Mont Blanc," and the noble "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty." Mary also was moved to imaginative creation, and now conceived the design of her tale of "Frankenstein," undertaken in fulfilment of an agreement that each of the friends — herself, Byron, Shelley, and the young physician, Polidori — should produce a ghost-story. Notwithstanding the delights of Switzerland, the hearts of Shelley and Mary turned longingly towards England. Before quitting Geneva they had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of M. G. Lewis, the celebrated author of "The Monk," a book which Shelley, as a boy, had read with eager enjoyment. Early in September their feet were once more on English soil.

But it seemed as if they had returned only to encounter calamity. On 9th October Mary's half-sister, Fanny, the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft, who had been for some time past in depressed spirits, put an end to her life by poison in an inn in Swansea. Alarmed by a desponding letter Shelley had hastened from Bath, where he was residing, to meet her, but arrived too late. The shock of excitement and grief was for a time disastrous to his health, and it was well for him that at this moment he found a friend of bright and courageous temper in Leigh Hunt. Disaster, however, followed on disaster. In November Shelley was seeking to discover Harriet, who had disappeared from his ken and from the protection of her father. On 10th December her body was found in the Serpentine river. At first after the parting with Shelley she had hoped that he would return to her; when this hope faded away her unhappiness was great, she complained of the restraint to which she was subjected in her father's house, and already spoke of suicide. For some time before her death she had broken away from that restraint. Her daughter aged three, and her little boy of two years old, had been placed with a clergyman in Warwick. She herself lived openly for a time, Godwin tells a correspondent, with a certain colonel whom he names. Then she seems to have sunk lower, and to have been deserted. In informing Shelley of the terrible event, the bookseller, Hookham, mentioned that had she lived a little longer she would have given birth to a child.<sup>1</sup> The evidence at the coroner's inquest confirms the statement. Shelley was deeply moved, but not as though he were the author of the calamity. "I take God to witness, if such a Being is now regarding both you and me," he afterwards wrote to Southey, "and I pledge myself, if we meet, as perhaps you expect, before Him after death, to repeat the same in His presence — that you accuse me wrongfully. I am innocent of ill, either done or intended." It was now possible

<sup>1</sup> When I wrote my "Life of Shelley," I did not think it necessary to state some of the facts mentioned above, with the result that some critics, who did not take the trouble to examine the *Times* newspaper to which I referred, charged me with making false accusations against Harriet Shelley, whose faults I desired not to deny but to veil. Since then Mrs. Marshall has set forth the facts in her "Life and Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley," and I have now no motive for reserve.

for him to give Mary her right name of wife, and he lost no time in celebrating his marriage (30th December 1816). He claimed his children from the Westbrooks, but the claim was resisted. After tedious proceedings in Chancery, judgment was given by Lord Eldon to the effect that inasmuch as Shelley's professed opinions led to conduct which the law pronounced immoral, the children could not be placed in his immediate care; but since he had named suitable persons to educate them—a Dr. and Mrs. Hume—they should be intrusted to these custodians during their minority, and their father should be permitted at certain times to see them. The Chancellor's decision was not designed to be harsher than seemed necessary; but the loss of his children was a greater blow to Shelley than the death of their mother, and for a time he even feared that little William might also be taken from him.

While the Chancery affair was proceeding, Shelley resided at Great Marlow, on the Thames. Occasionally in London he visited Hunt, at whose house he met Keats and Hazlitt. He was now on amicable terms with Godwin, and gained a new and valuable friend in Horace Smith. At Marlow, notwithstanding the Chancery troubles, he had many happy days; he read much in classical and modern literature; designed and wrote some portions of "Prince Athanase" and of "Rosalind and Helen;" and while alone in his boat on the Thames or among the Bisham woods, he made steady progress with his ambitious epic of revolution and counter-revolution, "Laon and Cythna." "He saw, or thought he saw"—I quote words of my own previously written—"as the great fact of the age a vast movement towards the reconstruction of society, in which the French Revolution had been a startling incident—an incident fruitful of much evil and much good. It was his desire to rekindle in men the aspiration towards a happier condition of moral and political society, and at the same time to warn men of the dangers which arise in a movement of revolution from their own egoisms and greeds and baser passions; it was his desire to present the true ideal of revolution—a national movement based on moral principle, inspired by justice and charity, unstained by blood, unclouded by turbulence, and using material force only as the tranquil putting forth in act of spiritual powers. . . . Unhappily, with all that was admirable in the Revolutionary movement of his time—its enthusiasm of humanity, its recognition of a moral element in politics, its sentiment of the brotherhood of man—there are united in Shelley's poem all its shallow sophisms. Shelley's illusions are such as could now deceive no thinking mind. His generous ardors, the quivering music of his verse, the quick and flamelike beauty of his imagery, still bear gifts for the spirits of men."

Some few copies of "Laon and Cythna" had been issued when voices of protest alarmed Ollier the publisher. He insisted that certain alterations should be made. Violent attacks on theism and the Christian faith, as he held, were ill-judged and out of place; the relationship of the hero and heroine as brother and sister was a ground of grave and just offence. And it is true that in this last particular Shelley's poem gave a flagrant example of the unsoundness of the revolutionary way of thought, which with a solvent of abstract notions, erroneously deduced, proceeds to disintegrate social relations and sentiments that are among the finest products of the evolution of the race. By some strokes of the pen and a few cancel-pages "Laon and Cythna" was altered into "The Revolt of Islam." There was the loss of one or two admirable lines; but in yielding to the pressure of public feeling, acting through his publisher, Shelley removed an ethical blot which could not fail with many, and those not the least judicious, readers, to mar even the artistic effect of his poem.

During the early months of 1817 the effects of a bad harvest were keenly felt by the poor of Marlow, where lace-making was the principal industry. Shelley,

says Peacock, went continually among them, and to the extent of his ability relieved the most urgent cases of distress. He organized his relief into a system, and among those in need gave a preference to widows and children. The wrongs and sufferings of the toiling masses weighed heavily on his spirit. Yet in "A Proposal for putting Reform to the Vote," by "The Hermit of Marlow," he showed himself more moderate in his demands of immediate reform than many of his political contemporaries. This, indeed, was characteristic of Shelley. He was opposed to violence, and was well content with small gains as an instalment, though his vision of the remote future never permitted him to rest in any provisional advantage. Shelley's poetry expresses his visions as a seer of the far-off golden age; his prose writings express his thoughts as a practical reformer. In "An Address to the People on the Death of the Princess Charlotte," he laments the death of the young wife and mother; but he sees a more grievous calamity, and one worthy of deeper grief, in the condition of the people of England. Shelley's labors among the poor, his anxiety in connection with the Chancery affair, and the excitement of poetical composition, injuriously affected his health. It was even feared that seeds of consumption were being developed in his constitution. He resolved to leave Marlow, which evidently did not suit him, and make the experiment of a residence in Italy. Another motive tended to draw him in that direction — Byron was at Venice, and Shelley desired that Byron's daughter, Allegra, the child of Miss Clairmont, should be placed under her father's care. The mother, not without misgivings, consented. On 12th March Shelley looked for the last time on English skies and fields. Accompanied by Mary, little William, his infant daughter Clara (born 2d September 1817), and Miss Clairmont with her child, Shelley sailed to Dover, travelled south, and, having crossed Mont Cenis, reached Milan by the 4th of April 1818.

Shelley had hoped to settle on the shores of Como, but a suitable residence could not be found. Pisa and Leghorn were successively visited. In the latter city resided Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne, with the son of Mrs. Gisborne by a previous marriage, Henry Reveley, a young engineer. Mrs. Gisborne had been an old and valued friend of Godwin; she was a woman of fine character — sensitive, modest, cultivated, with much intellectual curiosity; it was indeed a piece of good fortune to find such an acquaintance in a strange land. The summer was spent delightfully at the Baths of Lucca, under green chestnut boughs, and within hearing of the Lima dashing upon its rocks. During these midsummer weeks Shelley wrote his translation of Plato's "Banquet" — a rendering which has much of the luminous beauty of the original. To please Mary he took up his unfinished "Rosalind and Helen," begun at Marlow, and quickly carried it to the close. This poem, partly suggested by circumstances in the life of Mary's friend, Isabel Booth (born Baxter), was published, together with the "Lines written among the Euganean Hills," the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty," and the sonnet "Ozymandias," in the spring of 1819.

Desirous to see her child Allegra, Miss Clairmont visited Venice in August, with Shelley as her companion of the way. It was proposed in a friendly mood by Byron that Shelley and his family should occupy his villa at Este, among the Euganean hills, and that Miss Clairmont should there for a time enjoy companionship with Allegra. The proposal was gladly accepted. Mary arrived with her children at Este, but little Clara was seriously ill. It was necessary to consult a physician at Venice; unfortunately the passport had been forgotten, but Shelley's impetuosity overcame the resistance of the soldiers. The anxious parents reached Venice on 24th September, only to learn that there was no hope, and within an hour little Clara lay dead in her mother's arms.

Shelley's impressions of Venice and of Byron at this period may be found in



his letters and in the admirable poem "Julian and Maddalo." The letters exhibit the coarser side of Byron's Venetian life. In the poem is given a portrait of Byron, drawn without the baser lines and darker colors. The incidents there recorded—the ride on the Lido, the glory of sunset, viewed from the gondola's covert, the visit to the dreary island of the bell and tower, the sight of Allegra in her bright childhood—are probably idealized from recollection of what had actually taken place. In the story of the maniac, Shelley interweaves memories of his own unhappy past.

Greater designs, however, occupied his thoughts—a tragedy of "Tasso" (of which we possess some fragments), a lyrical drama on a subject derived from the Book of Job, and the "Prometheus Unbound." In the summer-house at Este the first act of "Prometheus" was almost completed by the first days of October 1818. The fortitude of a heroic saviour of mankind, with his final victory, was a theme which interested Shelley's deepest feelings, and aroused the noblest powers of his imagination.

A warmer climate for the winter than that of North Italy seemed desirable, and in November Shelley and his family journeyed to the south. The greatness of antique Rome, as seen in its monuments, impressed him deeply, and he began a tale of the Coliseum, which, however, was never finished. But he had chosen Naples as his place of winter residence, and thither before the close of November he pursued his way. No prose writings in our language are more instinct with radiance and beauty than Shelley's letters which tell of his visit to Pompeii, Vesuvius, Pæstum. Reminiscences of the day at Pompeii appear in the "Ode to Naples," written two years later. Yet it is certain that Shelley's spirits often drooped during his stay at Naples, and this melancholy mood found poetical expression in one of the most pathetic of his lyrical pieces. In the spring of 1819 he returned to Rome, saw the ceremonies of Holy Week, and studied classical sculpture and Renaissance paintings. The second and third acts of "Prometheus Unbound" were written among the ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, then overgrown with flowers and blossoming shrubs. "The blue sky of Rome," he writes, "and the effect of the vigorous awakening of spring in that divinest climate, and the new life with which it drenches the spirit even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama." The fourth act—a sublime afterthought—was added in December, 1819, at Florence.

The days at Rome were darkened in June by the greatest sorrow of Shelley's later years. On the 7th of that month his beloved son William died; the father had watched during sixty hours of agony. In the English burial-ground, near the Porta San Paola, the little body was laid to rest. Mary's anguish was extreme, all her happiness seemed to be forever lost. In order that she might have Mrs. Gisborne's companionship, a little country house, the Villa Valsovano, at a short distance from Leghorn, was taken for three months, and here, in the glazed terrace at the top of the house, Shelley studied, meditated, and basked in the summer sunshine. The tragedy of "The Cenci," begun at Rome, and interrupted by the death of his son, now advanced rapidly. The exhibition of tyrannous power, in the person of the Count, and of martyr energy in Beatrice, born for gentleness and love, was admirably suited to the genius of Shelley. While essentially real and human, the drama moves among ideal passions. Horror is here ennobled by beauty, as Shelley himself describes it in his stanzas suggested by the Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci. A small edition of his tragedy was struck off in quarto at Leghorn and was sent to England to be sold by the Olliers.

But the work of Shelley's *annus mirabilis*, 1819, was not yet complete. At Florence, whither in October he had removed from the summer residence near Leghorn, he made notes upon the sculptures in the galleries. At the same time he did

not forget England, and its social and political needs. In the unfinished "Philosophical View of Reform" he attempted to investigate the causes of the distress of the English people, and to suggest the proper remedies. Tidings of the so-called "Manchester Massacre" affected Shelley deeply, and led him to write the admirable "Mask of Anarchy," in which he exhorts his countrymen to ways of peace and soberness — the true ways which lead to liberty. In the fantastic satire, "Peter Bell the Third," Wordsworth, turned a Tory, is taken as a type of the self-betrayal of genius to the stultifying influences of the world; the poem is an example, not altogether happy, of Shelley's handling of the humorous-grotesque. The great "Ode to the West Wind," in which there is a union of lyrical breadth with lyrical intensity unsurpassed in English song, was conceived and partly written in a wood that skirted the Arno on a day when the autumnal gale was gathering the vapors and rain-clouds; but to Shelley's imagination the wild wind of autumn becomes a harbinger of spring. Finally, in hours when he did not feel himself capable of creative work, he translated into graceful English verse Euripides' drama of "The Cyclops." Assuredly no greater gift to English poetry was ever given by a poet within a twelvemonth than Shelley's gift of 1819.

At Florence on 12th November the son who survived his father, and who was to comfort his mother in her sorrows, Percy Florence, was born. As winter advanced Shelley, suffering from the severe climate, decided to migrate to Pisa, where the air was mild, the water singularly pure, and an eminent physician, Vaccà Berlinghieri, might be consulted. The greater part of his life, from January 1820 to the close, was spent in Pisa. The presence of Mr. Tighe and Lady Mountcashell (a former pupil of Mary Wollstonecraft) added to the attractions of the place. In the summer of 1820 a move was made to the Gisbornes' house at Leghorn, then unoccupied. And here was written that most delightful of poetical epistles, the letter to Maria Gisborne. Mary had in part recovered her spirits, and little Percy was "the merriest babe in the world." The mother was not wholly occupied with domestic cares, for she threw herself with spirit into the study of Greek, while Shelley occupied himself with the holiday task, so happily executed, of translating the Homeric "Hymn to Mercury" into *ottava rima*. As the heats grew more trying, they took refuge at the Baths of San Giuliano, some four miles distant from Pisa. During an expedition to Monte San Pellegrino, the resort of pilgrims at certain seasons of the year, Shelley conceived the idea of the "Witch of Atlas;" the poem was written in the three days which immediately succeeded his return to the Baths. It would have pleased Mary better if he had chosen a theme less remote from human sympathy; she playfully reproached him, and her fault-finding drew forth the graceful rejoinder which may be read in the introductory stanzas. When a little later he dealt in a grotesque manner with events of contemporary history, the result was by no means so fortunate; "Œdipus Tyrannus, or Swellfoot the Tyrant," which dramatizes, with satirical intention, the affair of Queen Caroline, is among the least happy of its author's efforts, yet it has a certain value as presenting a curious facet of his mind. "Swellfoot" was published in London in 1820, but was almost immediately withdrawn from circulation by the publisher.

In the autumn (1820) Shelley, with his wife and infant son, returned to Pisa. They had been relieved of the presence of Miss Clairmont, who had taken a situation as governess at Florence; but Shelley corresponded with her, and took the kindest interest in all that concerned her. Friends and acquaintances gathered around him at Pisa — his cousin and former schoolfellow, Thomas Medwin, now a captain of dragoons, lately returned from India; the Irishman, Count Taaffe, who regarded himself as laureate of the city, and a learned critic of Italian literature; Sgricci, the celebrated *improvisatore*; and Prince Mavrocordato, son of the ex-hospodar of Wallachia, young, ardent, cultured, who was to become the fore-

most statesman of the Greek Revolution. Through a sometime Professor of Physics at the University of Pisa, Francesco Pacchiani, Shelley was introduced to Emilia, the daughter of Count Viviani, who had been confined for two years in the Convent of St. Anna. Mary and Shelley were both deeply interested in the beautiful Italian girl. Her youth, her charm, her sorrows awoke in Shelley all the idealizing power of his imagination; she became to him, as it were, a symbol of all that is radiant and divine, all that is to be pursued and never attained—the absolute of beauty, truth, and love. While for the man she was a living and breathing woman, fascinating, and an object of tenderest solicitude, for the poet she rose into the avatar of the ideal. With such a feeling towards Emilia he wrote his “Epipsychidion;” “It is,” he tells Mr. Gisborne, “a mystery; as to real flesh and blood, you know I do not deal in these articles. . . . I desired Ollier not to circulate this piece except to the *soveroi*, and even they, it seems, are inclined to approximate me to the circle of a servant-girl and her sweetheart.” As had happened so often before, Shelley in due time passed out of his idealizing mood. “The Epipsychidion,” he afterwards wrote, “I cannot look at; the person whom it celebrates was a cloud instead of a Juno; and poor Ixion starts from the centaur that was the offspring of his own embrace.” The same idealizing ardor which found poetical expression in “Epipsychidion,” gave its elevated tone to Shelley’s essay in criticism, the “Defence of Poetry,” written in February and March 1821 as a reply to Peacock’s “Four Ages of Poetry.” It is perhaps the most admirable of his prose writings, and serves as an undesigned exposition of the processes of his own mind as an imaginative creator.

The summer of 1821 like that of the preceding year was spent at the Baths of San Giuliano. A friendship had sprung up in Pisa between Shelley and a young half-pay lieutenant of dragoons, Edward Williams, who, with his wife, had been attracted to Italy partly by Medwin’s promise that he should be introduced to Shelley. The Williamses had taken a charming villa four miles from Shelley’s residence at the Baths, and communication was easy and delightful by means of a boat on the canal which was fed by the waters of the Serchio. Edward Williams was frank, simple, kind-hearted, and not without a lively interest in literature; Jane had a sweet insinuating grace, and could gratify Shelley’s ear with the melodies of her guitar. The days passed happily, and might have passed without a memorable incident save for an event not immediately connected with the dwellers at the Baths. In February 1821 occurred the death of Keats at Rome; but tidings did not reach Shelley until April. He had known Keats, but had never felt a deep personal affection for him. The genius of the young poet, however, was honored by Shelley, who, on hearing of his illness in the summer of 1820, had invited him to Pisa. Deeply moved, through his imagination rather than his affections, by the story of the death of Keats, Shelley did homage to his memory in the elegy of “Adonais,” which takes its place in literature beside the laments of Moschus for Bion and of Milton for Lycidas. Before its close the poem rises into an impassioned hymn not of death but of immortal life.

The pleasure of a visit to Byron at Ravenna in August was more than marred by Byron’s sudden disclosure of certain shocking accusations which had been brought against Shelley in his domestic life. An ardent letter of vindication, to be forwarded by Byron to the English Consul at Venice, was written by Mary; but it never reached Mr. Hoppner, for whom it was intended, and was found among Byron’s papers after his death. “That my beloved Shelley should stand thus slandered in your minds,”—so Mary wrote—“he the gentlest and most humane of creatures—is more painful to me, oh! far more painful than words can express.” If they could but escape to some solitude far from the world and its calumnies! Or, since this was impossible, if they could gather around them in their Pisan home

a little circle of true and loyal friends! Of these Byron — it was hoped — might be one, for he was about to quit Ravenna, and he desired them to hire a house for himself and the Countess Guiccioli at Pisa. Leigh Hunt, at home in England, had for some time past been seriously ill; he also might form one of their company, and the new periodical, *The Liberal*, of which there had been talk, might be started for his benefit by the literary coalition.

"I am full of thoughts and plans," Shelley wrote to Hunt in August 1821. Not one of his larger designs was achieved, but in the summer or early autumn of that year he rapidly produced his "Hellas," remarkable as an idealized treatment of contemporary events. In the "Persæ" of Æschylus he found a precedent and to some extent a model for his poetic dealing with current facts. The phantom of Mahomet II. is suggested by the figure of Darius in the "Persians;" but instead of the ode of lamentation which closes the Greek play, the lyrical prophecy with which "Hellas" ends is a song of joy and love for the whole world.

"Lord Byron is established here," Shelley wrote from Pisa in January 1822, "and we are constant companions." They rode together; practised pistol-shooting or played billiards; interchanged their views on literary and social questions. Shelley felt towards Byron as towards a great creative power, which subdued him to admiration; yet there were times when he was repelled by proofs of the coarser fibre of Byron's moral nature. The opening year brought a new acquaintance to Pisa — Edward John Trelawny, a young Cornish gentleman, who had led a life of various adventure by sea and land. Trelawny, "with his knight-errant aspect, dark, handsome, and mustachioed," interested Shelley and Mary more than any acquaintance whom they had made since the departure of Mavrocordato. How Shelley charmed Trelawny may be read in the delightful "Recollections" of the latter, which give us the most vivid image of the poet in the closing months of his life. Trelawny, Williams, and Shelley were lovers of the sea. It was agreed that a boat should be built, and that a seaside house should be taken for the summer at Spezzia. Meanwhile Shelley worked now and again at his historical play of "Charles I.," and wrote some of those exquisite lyrical poems inspired by the grace and subtle attraction of Jane Williams, the wife of his young and bright-tempered companion.

Casa Magni, the house taken for the summer migrants, stands on the margin of the sea, near the fishing-village of San Terenzo on the eastern side of the Bay of Spezzia. The first days were saddened by a grief to all, but in a special degree a grief to Miss Clairmont — the death at the convent of Bagnacavallo of little Allegra. Mary was in delicate health, and found the lonely house by the sea oppressive to her spirits. Shelley's overwrought nerves conjured up visionary forms: on one occasion the figure of Allegra rose smiling upon him from the moonlit sea, clapping its hands for joy. But when the long-expected boat rounded the point of Porto Venere all was gladness and bustle of expectation. "We have now," wrote Williams, who with Jane occupied a part of Casa Magni, "a perfect plaything for the summer." While during the heats of the June days Shelley rested in his boat, or gazed from shore on the splendors of the sea, or on moonlight nights sat among the rocks, he wrote the noble fragments of his last great unfinished poem, "The Triumph of Life." It contains perhaps the wisest thoughts of his whole life; it expresses a mood of pathetic renunciation, with insight reached after error, and serenity attained through passion. In its general design and in the form of verse it follows Petrarch's "Triumph of Love;" in the details of its imagery it sometimes approaches the manner of Dante.

The return to Casa Magni of Claire, after a couple of weeks' absence, was almost immediately followed by a calamity which threatened serious risk to Mary's life — a dangerous miscarriage. By Shelley's energy and promptitude her life was

saved; but the strain upon his nerves again caused him to be troubled by frequent visions. On 19th June news came which rejoiced his heart—Leigh Hunt and his family had arrived in Italy. It was glorious midsummer weather; the boat, with Shelley and Williams on board, was put to sea, and after a prosperous run anchor was cast in the port of Leghorn. Next morning the long-parted friends, Hunt and Shelley, met. "I am inexpressibly delighted," cried Shelley, "you cannot think how inexpressibly happy it makes me." "He was looking better," wrote Hunt, "than I had ever seen him; we talked of a thousand things—we anticipated a thousand pleasures." On Monday, 8th July, the aspect of the sky seemed to portend a change of weather; but the breeze was favorable for a return to Lerici. Between one and two o'clock the boat left the harbor. It was observed about ten miles out at sea, off Via Reggio; then the haze of a summer storm hid it from view.

Meanwhile Mary, who had been loath to allow Shelley to leave her, and Jane Williams watched and waited. Days of misery and dreadful suspense went by. At length the widowed women could endure it no longer, and posted to Pisa to make inquiries of Byron and Hunt. Even then all hope was not extinct; the boat might have been blown to Corsica or Elba. Mary and Jane hastened back to Lerici, Trelawny having undertaken to renew the search in the direction of Leghorn. On the evening of 19th July he returned; "All was over," writes Mary; "all was quiet now; they had been found washed on shore."

Two bodies had been thrown upon the beach, one near Via Reggio, the other in Tuscan territory. The tall, slight, figure, the volume of Sophocles, and Keats's poems, identified the body of Shelley. According to the strict laws of Italian quarantine, the corpses should have remained under quicklime in the sands. But by special permission arrangements were made for their cremation. Trelawny, Byron, and Hunt were present. The heart of Shelley was snatched by Trelawny from the flames; the ashes were reverently collected. In the old Protestant burial-ground at Rome, where lay the body of Shelley's son, hard by the tomb of Caius Cestius, the casket containing the ashes was committed to the ground.

Mary Shelley survived her husband for nearly thirty years; she died on 21st February 1851. Charles Bysshe, the son of Shelley's first wife, died in early life. Shelley's last-born son, Percy Florence, succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his grandfather in April 1844. He died on 5th December 1889. A monument to Shelley, by Weekes, is erected in the parish church of Christchurch, Hants. The relics, portraits, journals, manuscripts, and letters of Shelley and Mary, duly ordered by Lady Shelley's hands, are preserved at Boscombe Manor, near Bournemouth.

All who love Shelley's poetry are under inexpressible obligations to Mary Shelley, who gave to the world the great body of his posthumous writings, edited his works with loving care, though not with infallible accuracy, and added the inestimable memorials of his life, which may be read in her notes to the poems. Our debt is also great to three distinguished Shelley scholars: to Dr. Garnett, whose "Relics of Shelley," recovered from manuscripts which are often a tangle of corrections, form the most precious addition to Shelley's poetical works which has appeared since the publication of the *Posthumous Poems*, 1824; to Mr. W. M. Rossetti, and to Mr. Forman. Mr. Rossetti increased the body of Shelley's published poetry by several pieces of value, and in particular added largely to the known fragments of Charles I. from a manuscript most difficult to decipher. His principles in dealing with the text led him to some changes which cannot be sustained, but in not a few instances he recovered the true text by happy emendation. Mr. Forman added to the published poems of Shelley the second part of the "Dæmon of the World," and some other pieces. His devotion to the author of his choice, his untiring zeal as a collector, his learning, his accuracy, his good

judgment, have made him our chief living authority on all that relates to Shelley's writings. The present volume has gained much from Mr. Forman's labors; it is impossible but that it should be so. In its general plan, however, it differs materially from his editions, which reprint in chronological order the several volumes published during Shelley's life. In giving "The Revolt of Islam" rather than "Laon and Cythna," which Mr. Forman reprints, we follow the example of Mrs. Shelley; but in Notes to the present volume the readings of "Laon and Cythna" will be found. Mr. Forman's annotated edition is unquestionably that to which appeal must be made in any question of doubt on any point of Shelley scholarship. But perhaps if Mr. Rossetti modified the text of the early editions somewhat too freely, Mr. Forman has sometimes been over-conservative of peculiarities of spelling and obvious errors of punctuation. When these cloud the sense, it seems permissible to make a correction in an edition designed for general use. Yet I should be slow to alter erroneous punctuation, if the meaning be not obscured, for such punctuation may have a metrical value. As to spelling, while in several instances (as "blosmy," "glode") it is desirable to preserve Shelley's spelling, it would be impossible, or at least intolerable, to follow his manuscripts in every instance ("thier" for "their," "mein" for "mien," etc.). A great poet is not of an age but for all time. While texts of Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope, prepared for specialists, may rightly retain the peculiarities of the early editions, there must also be texts of Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope, in which every obstacle to the reader's pleasure, caused by the early printers, ought to be removed.

All ascertained poems which have appeared in previous editions are included in the present volume. "The Wandering Jew" is not, and probably ought not, to be given as the work of Shelley. Two doubtful pieces — "The Dinner Party Anticipated, A Paraphrase of Horace's 19th Ode, B. III.," and "The Magic Horse, translated from the Italian of Cristofano Bronzino" (given in the appendix to Mr. Forman's library edition) — are excluded as of uncertain authorship. A considerable body of Shelley's early verse existing in a manuscript book owned by the poet's grandson, Mr. Esdaile, remains unprinted. Mr. Esdaile, who kindly allowed me to print certain poems of biographical interest in my "Life of Shelley," has expressed his desire that they should not be now reprinted. It was, as he believes, the wish of Shelley's daughter Iathe that the poems in this manuscript volume should not be included in an edition of her father's poetical works.

An arrangement of the poems differing somewhat from that of Mrs. Shelley has involved the displacing of a few paragraphs of her Notes, so that these paragraphs may be read in connection with the poems to which they refer. In this particular the treatment of Mr. Rossetti has been adopted. The fragments of verse are placed among the poems of the years to which they respectively belong, as they have been placed by Mr. Forman, but in a somewhat different order. They have perhaps a better chance of being read with interest in such an arrangement as this than when they are massed together as a group by themselves. The titles of the shorter fragments are those of Mr. Forman, in cases where his titles seemed inevitably right; I have not felt at liberty to adopt his titles in other cases, and have proposed, for convenience of reference, titles of my own devising. Perhaps I have ventured too far in naming a fragment on p. 531 "Song of the Furies." A few notes, chiefly textual, are added at the end of the volume. In preparing these use has been made of Mr. Woodberry's "Notes on the MS. Volume of Shelley's Poems in the Library of Harvard College." A few corrections in the text of some of the "Juvenilia" are made from Shelley's manuscript.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

## PREFACE BY MRS. SHELLEY

TO FIRST COLLECTED EDITION, 1839.

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OBSTACLES have long existed to my presenting the public with a perfect edition of Shelley's Poems. These being at last happily removed, I hasten to fulfil an important duty, — that of giving the productions of a sublime genius to the world, with all the correctness possible, and of, at the same time, detailing the history of those productions, as they sprang, living and warm, from his heart and brain. I abstain from any remark on the occurrences of his private life, except inasmuch as the passions which they engendered inspired his poetry. This is not the time to relate the truth; and I should reject any coloring of the truth. No account of these events has ever been given at all approaching reality in their details, either as regards himself or others; nor shall I further allude to them than to remark that the errors of action committed by a man as noble and generous as Shelley, may, as far as he only is concerned, be fearlessly avowed by those who loved him, in the firm conviction that, were they judged impartially, his character would stand in fairer and brighter light than that of any contemporary. Whatever faults he had ought to find extenuation among his fellows, since they prove him to be human; without them, the exalted nature of his soul would have raised him into something divine.

The qualities that struck any one newly introduced to Shelley were, — First, a gentle and cordial goodness that animated his intercourse with warm affection and helpful sympathy. The other, the eagerness and ardor with which he was attached to the cause of human happiness and improvement; and the fervent eloquence with which he discussed such subjects. His conversation was marked by its happy abundance, and the beautiful language in which he clothed his poetic ideas and philosophical notions. To defecate life of its misery and its evil was the ruling passion of his soul; he dedicated to it every power of his mind, every pulsation of his heart. He looked on political freedom as the direct agent to effect the happiness of mankind; and thus any new-sprung hope of liberty inspired a joy and an exultation more intense and wild than he could have felt for any personal advantage. Those who have never experienced the workings of passion on general and unselfish subjects cannot understand this; and it must be difficult of comprehension to the younger generation rising around, since they cannot remember the scorn and hatred with which the partisans of reform were regarded some few years ago, nor the persecutions to which they were exposed. He had been from youth the victim of the state of feeling inspired by the reaction of the French Revolution; and believing firmly in the justice and excellence of his views, it cannot be wondered that a nature as sensitive, as impetuous, and as generous as his, should put its whole force into the attempt to alleviate for others the evils of those systems from

which he had himself suffered. Many advantages attended his birth; he spurned them all when balanced with what he considered his duties. He was generous to imprudence, devoted to heroism.

These characteristics breathe throughout his poetry. The struggle for human weal; the resolution firm to martyrdom; the impetuous pursuit, the glad triumph in good; the determination not to despair; — such were the features that marked those of his works which he regarded with most complacency, as sustained by a lofty subject and useful aim.

In addition to these, his poems may be divided into two classes, — the purely imaginative, and those which sprang from the emotions of his heart. Among the former may be classed the "Witch of Atlas," "Adonais," and his latest composition, left imperfect, the "Triumph of Life." In the first of these particularly he gave the reins to his fancy, and luxuriated in every idea as it rose; in all there is that sense of mystery which formed an essential portion of his perception of life — a clinging to the subtler inner spirit, rather than to the outward form — a curious and metaphysical anatomy of human passion and perception.

The second class is, of course, the more popular, as appealing at once to emotions common to us all; some of these rest on the passion of love; others on grief and despondency; others on the sentiments inspired by natural objects. Shelley's conception of love was exalted, absorbing, allied to all that is purest and noblest in our nature, and warmed by earnest passion; such it appears when he gave it a voice in verse. Yet he was usually averse to expressing these feelings, except when highly idealized; and many of his more beautiful effusions he had cast aside unfinished, and they were never seen by me till after I had lost him. Others, as for instance "Rosalind and Helen" and "Lines written among the Euganean Hills," I found among his papers by chance; and with some difficulty urged him to complete them. There are others, such as the "Ode to the Skylark" and "The Cloud," which, in the opinion of many critics, bear a purer poetical stamp than any other of his productions. They were written as his mind prompted: listening to the carolling of the bird, aloft in the azure sky of Italy; or marking the cloud as it sped across the heavens, while he floated in his boat on the Thames.

No poet was ever warmed by a more genuine and unforced inspiration. His extreme sensibility gave the intensity of passion to his intellectual pursuits; and rendered his mind keenly alive to every perception of outward objects, as well as to his internal sensations. Such a gift is, among the sad vicissitudes of human life, the disappointments we meet, and the galling sense of our own mistakes and errors, fraught with pain; to escape from such, he delivered up his soul to poetry, and felt happy when he sheltered himself, from the influence of human sympathies, in the wildest regions of fancy. His imagination has been termed too brilliant, his thoughts too subtle. He loved to idealize reality; and this is a taste shared by few. We are willing to have our passing whims exalted into passions, for this gratifies our vanity; but few of us understand or sympathize with the endeavor to ally the love of abstract beauty, and adoration of abstract good, the *τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ καλόν* of the Socratic philosophers, with our sympathies with our kind. In this, Shelley resembled Plato; both taking more delight in the abstract and the ideal than in the special and tangible. This did not result from imitation; for it was not till Shelley resided in Italy that he made Plato his study. He then translated his "Symposium" and his "Ion;" and the English language boasts of no more brilliant composition than Plato's Praise of Love translated by Shelley. To return to his own poetry. The luxury of imagination, which sought nothing beyond itself (as a child burdens itself with spring flowers, thinking of no use beyond the enjoyment of gathering them), often showed itself in his verses: they will only be appreciated by minds which have resemblance to his own; and the mystic subtlety of many of his thoughts



will share the same fate. The metaphysical strain that characterizes much of what he has written was, indeed, the portion of his works to which, apart from those whose scope was to awaken mankind to aspirations for what he considered the true and good, he was himself particularly attached. There is much, however, that speaks to the many. When he would consent to dismiss these huntings after the obscure (which, entwined with his nature as they were, he did with difficulty), no poet ever expressed in sweeter, more heart-reaching, or more passionate verse, the gentler or more forcible emotions of the soul.

A wise friend once wrote to Shelley: "You are still very young, and in certain essential respects you do not yet sufficiently perceive that you are so." It is seldom that the young know what youth is, till they have got beyond its period; and time was not given him to attain this knowledge. It must be remembered that there is the stamp of such inexperience on all he wrote; he had not completed his nine-and-twentieth year when he died. The calm of middle life did not add the seal of the virtues which adorn maturity to those generated by the vehement spirit of youth. Through life also he was a martyr to ill health, and constant pain wound up his nerves to a pitch of susceptibility that rendered his views of life different from those of a man in the enjoyment of healthy sensations. Perfectly gentle and forbearing in manner, he suffered a good deal of internal irritability, or rather excitement, and his fortitude to bear was almost always on the stretch; and thus, during a short life, had gone through more experience of sensation than many whose existence is protracted. "If I die to-morrow," he said, on the eve of his unanticipated death, "I have lived to be older than my father." The weight of thought and feeling burdened him heavily; you read his sufferings in his attenuated frame, while you perceived the mastery he held over them in his animated countenance and brilliant eyes.

He died, and the world showed no outward sign. But his influence over mankind, though slow in growth, is fast augmenting; and, in the ameliorations that have taken place in the political state of his country, we may trace in part the operation of his arduous struggles. His spirit gathers peace in its new state from the sense that, though late, his exertions were not made in vain, and in the progress of the liberty he so fondly loved.

He died, and his place, among those who knew him intimately, has never been filled up. He walked beside them like a spirit of good to comfort and benefit—to enlighten the darkness of life with irradiations of genius, to cheer it with his sympathy and love. Any one, once attached to Shelley, must feel all other affections, however true and fond, as wasted on barren soil in comparison. It is our best consolation to know that such a pure-minded and exalted being was once among us, and now exists where we hope one day to join him;—although the intolerant, in their blindness, poured down anathemas, the Spirit of Good, who can judge the heart, never rejected him.

In the notes appended to the poems I have endeavored to narrate the origin and history of each. The loss of nearly all letters and papers which refer to his early life renders the execution more imperfect than it would otherwise have been. I have, however, the liveliest recollection of all that was done and said during the period of my knowing him. Every impression is as clear as if stamped yesterday, and I have no apprehension of any mistake in my statements as far as they go. In other respects I am indeed incompetent: but I feel the importance of the task, and regard it as my most sacred duty. I endeavor to fulfil it in a manner he would himself approve; and hope, in this publication, to lay the first stone of a monument due to Shelley's genius, his sufferings, and his virtues:

Se al seguir son tarda,  
Forse avverrà che 'l bel nome gentile  
Consacrerò con questa stanca penna.

## POSTSCRIPT IN SECOND EDITION OF 1839.

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IN revising this new edition, and carefully consulting Shelley's scattered and confused papers, I found a few fragments which had hitherto escaped me, and was enabled to complete a few poems hitherto left unfinished. What at one time escapes the searching eye, dimmed by its own earnestness, becomes clear at a future period. By the aid of a friend, I also present some poems complete and correct which hitherto have been defaced by various mistakes and omissions. It was suggested that the poem "To the Queen of my Heart" was falsely attributed to Shelley. I certainly find no trace of it among his papers; and, as those of his intimate friends whom I have consulted never heard of it, I omit it.

Two poems are added of some length, "Swellfoot the Tyrant" and "Peter Bell the Third." I have mentioned the circumstances under which they were written in the notes; and need only add that they are conceived in a very different spirit from Shelley's usual compositions. They are specimens of the burlesque and fanciful; but, although they adopt a familiar style and homely imagery, there shine through the radiance of the poet's imagination the earnest views and opinions of the politician and the moralist.

At my request the publisher has restored the omitted passages of Queen Mab. I now present this edition as a complete collection of my husband's poetical works, and I do not foresee that I can hereafter add to or take away a word or line.

PUTNEY, *November 6, 1839.*

PREFACE BY MRS. SHELLEY  
TO THE VOLUME OF POSTHUMOUS POEMS,  
PUBLISHED IN 1824.

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In nobil sangue vita umile e queta,  
Ed in alto intelletto un puro core;  
Frutto senile in sul giovenil fiore,  
E in aspetto pensoso anima lieta. — PETRARCA.

It had been my wish, on presenting the public with the Posthumous Poems of Mr. Shelley, to have accompanied them by a biographical notice; as it appeared to me that at this moment a narration of the events of my husband's life would come more gracefully from other hands than mine, I applied to Mr. Leigh Hunt. The distinguished friendship that Mr. Shelley felt for him, and the enthusiastic affection with which Mr. Leigh Hunt clings to his friend's memory, seemed to point him out as the person best calculated for such an undertaking. His absence from this country, which prevented our mutual explanation, has unfortunately rendered my scheme abortive. I do not doubt but that on some other occasion he will pay this tribute to his lost friend, and sincerely regret that the volume which I edit has not been honored by its insertion.

The comparative solitude in which Mr. Shelley lived was the occasion that he was personally known to few; and his fearless enthusiasm in the cause which he considered the most sacred upon earth, the improvement of the moral and physical state of mankind, was the chief reason why he, like other illustrious reformers, was pursued by hatred and calumny. No man was ever more devoted than he to the endeavor of making those around him happy; no man ever possessed friends more unfeignedly attached to him. The ungrateful world did not feel his loss, and the gap it made seemed to close as quickly over his memory as the murderous sea above his living frame. Hereafter men will lament that his transcendent powers of intellect were extinguished before they had bestowed on them their choicest treasures. To his friends his loss is irremediable: the wise, the brave, the gentle, is gone forever! He is to them as a bright vision, whose radiant track, left behind in the memory, is worth all the realities that society can afford. Before the critics contradict me, let them appeal to any one who had ever known him. To see him was to love him: and his presence, like Ithuriel's spear, was alone sufficient to disclose the falsehood of the tale which his enemies whispered in the ear of the ignorant world.

His life was spent in the contemplation of Nature, in arduous study, or in acts of kindness and affection. He was an elegant scholar and a profound metaphysician; without possessing much scientific knowledge, he was unrivalled in the just-

ness and extent of his observations on natural objects; he knew every plant by its name, and was familiar with the history and habits of every production of the earth; he could interpret without a fault each appearance in the sky; and the varied phenomena of heaven and earth filled him with deep emotion. He made his study and reading-room of the shadowed copse, the stream, the lake, and the waterfall. Ill health and continual pain preyed upon his powers; and the solitude in which we lived, particularly on our first arrival in Italy, although congenial to his feelings, must frequently have weighed upon his spirits; those beautiful and affecting "Lines written in Dejection near Naples" were composed at such an interval; but, when in health, his spirits were buoyant and youthful to an extraordinary degree.

Such was his love for Nature that every page of his poetry is associated, in the minds of his friends, with the loveliest scenes of the countries which he inhabited. In early life he visited the most beautiful parts of this country and Ireland. Afterwards the Alps of Switzerland became his inspirers. "Prometheus Unbound" was written among the deserted and flower-grown ruins of Rome; and, when he made his home under the Pisan hills, their roofless recesses harbored him as he composed the "Witch of Atlas," "Adonais," and "Hellas." In the wild but beautiful Bay of Spezzia, the winds and waves which he loved became his playmates. His days were chiefly spent on the water; the management of his boat, its alterations and improvements, were his principal occupation. At night, when the unclouded moon shone on the calm sea, he often went alone in his little shallop to the rocky caves that bordered it, and, sitting beneath their shelter, wrote the "Triumph of Life," the last of his productions. The beauty but strangeness of this lonely place, the refined pleasure which he felt in the companionship of a few selected friends, our entire sequestration from the rest of the world, all contributed to render this period of his life one of continued enjoyment. I am convinced that the two months we passed there were the happiest which he had ever known: his health even rapidly improved, and he was never better than when I last saw him, full of spirits and joy, embark for Leghorn, that he might there welcome Leigh Hunt to Italy. I was to have accompanied him; but illness confined me to my room, and thus put the seal on my misfortune. His vessel bore out of sight with a favorable wind, and I remained awaiting his return by the breakers of that sea which was about to engulf him.

He spent a week at Pisa, employed in kind offices toward his friend, and enjoying with keen delight the renewal of their intercourse. He then embarked with Mr. Williams, the chosen and beloved sharer of his pleasures and of his fate, to return to us. We waited for them in vain; the sea by its restless moaning seemed to desire to inform us of what we would not learn:—but a veil may well be drawn over such misery. The real anguish of those moments transcended all the fictions that the most glowing imagination ever portrayed; our seclusion, the savage nature of the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, and our immediate vicinity to the troubled sea, combined to imbue with strange horror our days of uncertainty. The truth was at last known,—a truth that made our loved and lovely Italy appear a tomb, its sky a pall. Every heart echoed the deep lament, and my only consolation was in the praise and earnest love that each voice bestowed and each countenance demonstrated for him we had lost,—not, I fondly hope, forever; his unearthly and elevated nature is a pledge of the continuation of his being, although in an altered form. Rome received his ashes; they are deposited beneath its weed-grown wall, and "the world's sole monument" is enriched by his remains.

I must add a few words concerning the contents of this volume. "Julian and Maddalo," the "Witch of Atlas," and most of the Translations, were written some years ago; and, with the exception of the "Cyclops," and the Scenes from

the "Magico Prodigioso," may be considered as having received the author's ultimate corrections. The "Triumph of Life" was his last work, and was left in so unfinished a state that I arranged it in its present form with great difficulty. All his poems which were scattered in periodical works are collected in this volume, and I have added a reprint of "Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude:" the difficulty with which a copy can be obtained is the cause of its republication. Many of the Miscellaneous Poems, written on the spur of the occasion, and never retouched, I found among his manuscript books, and have carefully copied. I have subjoined, whenever I have been able, the date of their composition.

I do not know whether the critics will reprehend the insertion of some of the most imperfect among them; but I frankly own that I have been more actuated by the fear lest any monument of his genius should escape me than the wish of presenting nothing but what was complete to the fastidious reader. I feel secure that the lovers of Shelley's poetry (who know how, more than any poet of the present day, every line and word he wrote is instinct with peculiar beauty) will pardon and thank me: I consecrate this volume to them.

The size of this collection has prevented the insertion of any prose pieces. They will hereafter appear in a separate publication.

MARY W. SHELLEY.

LONDON, *June 1, 1824.*



# SHELLEY'S POETICAL WORKS.

## QUEEN MAB:

A PHILOSOPHICAL POEM, WITH NOTES.

Écrasez l'infame!

*Correspondance de Voltaire.*

Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante  
Trita solo; juvat integros accedere fonteis;  
Atque haurire: juvatque novos decerpere flores.

Unde prius nulli velarint tempora musæ.  
Primum quod magnis doceo de rebus; et arctis  
Religionum animos nodis exsolvere pergo.

*Lucret. lib. iv.*

Δὸς ποῦ στῶ, καὶ κόσμον κινήσω.

*Archimedes.*

## TO HARRIET \* \* \* \* \*

WHOSE is the love that gleaming through  
the world,  
Wards off the poisonous arrow of its  
scorn?

Whose is the warm and partial praise,  
Virtue's most sweet reward?

Beneath whose looks did my reviving soul  
Riper in truth and virtuous daring grow?  
Whose eyes have I gazed fondly on,  
And loved mankind the more?

HARRIET! on thine:—thou wert my  
purer mind;

Thou wert the inspiration of my song;  
Thine are these early wilding flowers,  
Though garlanded by me.

Then press into thy breast this pledge of  
love;

And know, though time may change and  
years may roll,

Each floweret gathered in my heart  
It consecrates to thine.

## QUEEN MAB.

### I.

How wonderful is Death,  
Death and his brother Sleep!  
One, pale as yonder waning moon  
With lips of lurid blue!

The other, rosy as the morn  
When throned on ocean's wave  
It blushes o'er the world:  
Yet both so passing wonderful!

Hath then the gloomy Power  
Whose reign is in the tainted sepulchres  
Seized on her sinless soul?

Must then that peerless form  
Which love and admiration cannot view  
Without a beating heart, those azure  
veins

Which steal like streams along a field of  
snow,

That lovely outline, which is fair  
As breathing marble, perish?  
Must putrefaction's breath

Leave nothing of this heavenly sight  
But loathsomeness and ruin?

Spare nothing but a gloomy theme,  
On which the lightest heart might mor-  
alize?

Or is it only a sweet slumber  
 Stealing o'er sensation,  
 Which the breath of roseate morning  
 Chaseth into darkness?  
 Will Ianthe wake again,  
 And give that faithful bosom joy  
 Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch  
 Light, life and rapture from her smile?

Yes! she will wake again,  
 Although her glowing limbs are motion-  
 less,  
 And silent those sweet lips,  
 Once breathing eloquence,  
 That might have soothed a tiger's rage,  
 Or thawed the cold heart of a conqueror.  
 Her dewy eyes are closed,  
 And on their lids, whose texture fine  
 Scarce hides the dark blue orbs be-  
 neath,  
 The baby Sleep is pillowed:  
 Her golden tresses shade  
 The bosom's stainless pride,  
 Curling like tendrils of the parasite  
 Around a marble column.

Hark! whence that rushing sound?  
 'T is like the wondrous strain  
 That round a lonely ruin swells,  
 Which, wandering on the echoing  
 shore,

The enthusiast hears at evening:  
 'T is softer than the west wind's sigh;  
 'T is wilder than the unmeasured notes  
 Of that strange lyre whose strings  
 The genii of the breezes sweep:

Those lines of rainbow light  
 Are like the moonbeams when they fall  
 Through some cathedral window, but the  
 teints

Are such as may not find  
 Comparison on earth.

Behold the chariot of the Fairy Queen!  
 Celestial coursers paw the unyielding air;  
 Their filmy pennons at her word they furl,  
 And stop obedient to the reins of light:

These the Queen of spells drew in,  
 She spread a charm around the spot,  
 And leaning graceful from the ethereal  
 car,  
 Long did she gaze, and silently,  
 Upon the slumbering maid.

Oh! not the visioned poet in his dreams,  
 When silvery clouds float through the  
 wildered brain,  
 When every sight of lovely, wild and  
 grand  
 Astonishes, enraptures, elevates,  
 When fancy at a glance combines  
 The wondrous and the beautiful, —  
 So bright, so fair, so wild a shape  
 Hath ever yet beheld,  
 As that which reined the coursers of the  
 air,  
 And poured the magic of her gaze  
 Upon the maiden's sleep.

The broad and yellow moon  
 Shone dimly through her form —  
 That form of faultless symmetry;  
 The pearly and pellucid car  
 Moved not the moonlight's line:  
 'T was not an earthly pageant:  
 Those who had looked upon the sight,  
 Passing all human glory,  
 Saw not the yellow moon,  
 Saw not the mortal scene,  
 Heard not the night-wind's rush,  
 Heard not an earthly sound,  
 Saw but the fairy pageant,  
 Heard but the heavenly strains  
 That filled the lonely dwelling.

The Fairy's frame was slight, yon  
 fibrous cloud,  
 That catches but the palest tinge of even,  
 And which the straining eye can hardly  
 seize  
 When melting into eastern twilight's  
 shadow,  
 Were scarce so thin, so slight; but the  
 fair star  
 That gems the glittering coronet of morn,  
 Sheds not a light so mild, so powerful,  
 As that which, bursting from the Fairy's  
 form,  
 Spread a purpureal halo round the scene,  
 Yet with an undulating motion,  
 Swayed to her outline gracefully.

From her celestial car  
 The Fairy Queen descended,  
 And thrice she waved her wand  
 Circled with wreaths of amaranth:  
 Her thin and misty form



Moved with the moving air,  
And the clear silver tones,  
As thus she spoke, were such  
As are unheard by all but gifted ear.

FAIRY.

Stars! your balmiest influence shed!  
Elements! your wrath suspend!  
Sleep, Ocean, in the rocky bounds  
That circle thy domain!  
Let not a breath be seen to stir  
Around yon grass-grown ruin's height,  
Let even the restless gossamer  
Sleep on the moveless air!  
Soul of Ianthe! thou,  
Judged alone worthy of the envied boon,  
That waits the good and the sincere; that  
waits  
Those who have struggled, and with  
resolute will  
Vanquished earth's pride and meanness,  
burst the chains,  
The icy chains of custom, and have shone  
The day-stars of their age;—Soul of  
Ianthe!

Awake! arise!

Sudden arose  
Ianthe's Soul; it stood  
All beautiful in naked purity,  
The perfect semblance of its bodily frame.  
Instinct with inexpressible beauty and  
grace,

Each stain of earthliness  
Had passed away, it reassumed  
Its native dignity, and stood  
Immortal amid ruin.

Upon the couch the body lay  
Wrapt in the depth of slumber:  
Its features were fixed and meaningless,  
Yet animal life was there,  
And every organ yet performed  
Its natural functions: 't was a sight  
Of wonder to behold the body and soul.  
The self-same lineaments, the same  
Marks of identity were there:  
Yet, oh, how different! One aspires to  
Heaven,  
Pants for its sempiternal heritage,  
And ever-changing, ever-rising still,  
Wantons in endless being.

The other, for a time the unwilling sport  
Of circumstance and passion, struggles on;  
Fleets through its sad duration rapidly:  
Then like an useless and worn-out ma-  
chine,  
Rots, perishes, and passes.

FAIRY.

Spirit! who hast dived so deep;  
Spirit! who hast soared so high;  
Thou the fearless, thou the mild,  
Accept the boon thy worth hath earned,  
Ascend the car with me.

SPIRIT.

Do I dream? Is this new feeling  
But a visioned ghost of slumber?  
If indeed I am a soul,  
A free, a disembodied soul,  
Speak again to me.

FAIRY.

I am the Fairy MAB; to me 't is given  
The wonders of the human world to keep:  
The secrets of the immeasurable past,  
In the unflinching consciences of men,  
Those stern, unflattering chroniclers, I  
find:

The future, from the causes which arise  
In each event, I gather: not the sting  
Which retributive memory implants  
In the hard bosom of the selfish man;  
Nor that ecstatic and exulting throb  
Which virtue's votary feels when he sums  
up  
The thoughts and actions of a well-spent  
day

Are unforeseen, unregistered by me:  
And it is yet permitted me, to rend  
The veil of mortal frailty, that the spirit  
Clothed in its changeless purity, may know  
How soonest to accomplish the great end  
For which it hath its being, and may taste  
That peace, which in the end all life will  
share.

This is the meed of virtue; happy Soul,  
Ascend the car with me!

The chains of earth's immurement  
Fell from Ianthe's spirit;

They shrank and brake like bandages of  
straw

Beneath a wakened giant's strength.

She knew her glorious change,  
And felt in apprehension uncontrolled

New raptures opening round:  
Each day-dream of her mortal life,  
Each frenzied vision of the slumbers

That closed each well-spent day,  
Seemed now to meet reality.

The Fairy and the Soul proceeded;

The silver clouds departed;

And as the car of magic they ascended,

Again the speechless music swelled,

Again the coursers of the air

Unfurled their azure pennons, and the  
Queen

Shaking the beamy reins

Bade them pursue their way.

The magic car moved on.

The night was fair, and countless stars  
Studded heaven's dark blue vault, —

Just o'er the eastern wave

Peeped the first faint smile of morn:—

The magic car moved on —

From the celestial hoofs

The atmosphere in flaming sparkles flew,  
And where the burning wheels

Eddied above the mountain's loftiest  
peak,

Was traced a line of lightning.

Now it flew far above a rock,

The utmost verge of earth,

The rival of the Andes, whose dark  
brow

Lowered o'er the silver sea.

Far, far below the chariot's path,

Calm as a slumbering babe,

Tremendous Ocean lay.

The mirror of its stillness showed

The pale and waning stars,

The chariot's fiery track,

And the gray light of morn

Tingeing those fleecy clouds

That canopied the dawn.

Seemed it, that the chariot's way

Lay through the midst of an immense  
concave,

Radiant with million constellations, tinged

With shades of infinite color,

And semicircled with a belt  
Flashing incessant meteors.

The magic car moved on.

As they approached their goal

The coursers seemed to gather speed;  
The sea no longer was distinguished;  
earth

Appeared a vast and shadowy sphere;

The sun's unclouded orb

Rolled through the black con-  
cave;

Its rays of rapid light

Parted around the chariot's swifter  
course,

And fell, like ocean's feathery spray

Dashed from the boiling surge

Before a vessel's prow.

The magic car moved on.

Earth's distant orb appeared

The smallest light that twinkles in the  
heaven;

Whilst round the chariot's way

Innumerable systems rolled,

And countless spheres diffused

An ever-varying glory.

It was a sight of wonder: some

Were horned like the crescent moon;

Some shed a mild and silver beam

Like Hesperus o'er the western sea:

Some dashed athwart with trains of  
flame,

Like worlds to death and ruin driven;

Some shone like suns, and, as the chariot  
past,

Eclipsed all other light.

Spirit of Nature! here!

In this interminable wilderness

Of worlds, at whose immensity

Even soaring fancy staggers,

Here is thy fitting temple.

Yet not the lightest leaf

That quivers to the passing breeze

Is less instinct with thee:

Yet not the meanest worm

That lurks in graves and fattens on the  
dead

Less shares thy eternal breath.

Spirit of Nature! thou!

Imperishable as this scene,

Here is thy fitting temple.

II.

IF solitude hath ever led thy steps  
 To the wild ocean's echoing shore,  
 And thou hast lingered there,  
 Until the sun's broad orb  
 Seemed resting on the burnished  
 wave,  
 Thou must have marked the lines  
 Of purple gold, that motionless  
 Hung o'er the sinking sphere:  
 Thou must have marked the billowy  
 clouds  
 Edged with intolerable radiancy  
 Towering like rocks of jet  
 Crowned with a diamond wreath.  
 And yet there is a moment,  
 When the sun's highest point  
 Peeps like a star o'er ocean's western  
 edge,  
 When those far clouds of feathery gold,  
 Shaded with deepest purple, gleam  
 Like islands on a dark blue sea;  
 Then has thy fancy soared above the  
 earth,  
 And furled its wearied wing  
 Within the Fairy's fane.

Yet not the golden islands  
 Gleaming in yon flood of light,  
 Nor the feathery curtains  
 Stretching o'er the sun's bright  
 couch,  
 Nor the burnished ocean waves  
 Paving that gorgeous dome,  
 So fair, so wonderful a sight  
 As Mab's ethereal palace could afford.  
 Yet likest evening's vault, that faery  
 Hall!

As Heaven, low resting on the wave, it  
 spread  
 Its floors of flashing light,  
 Its vast and azure dome,  
 Its fertile golden islands  
 Floating on a silver sea;

Whilst suns their mingling beamings  
 darted  
 Through clouds of circumambient dark-  
 ness,  
 And pearly battlements around  
 Looked o'er the immense of Heaven.

The magic car no longer moved.  
 The Fairy and the Spirit  
 Entered the Hall of Spells:  
 Those golden clouds  
 That rolled in glittering billows  
 Beneath the azure canopy  
 With the ethereal footsteps trembled not:  
 The light and crimson mists,  
 Floating to strains of thrilling melody  
 Through that unearthly dwelling,  
 Yielded to every movement of the will.  
 Upon their passive swell the Spirit  
 leaned,  
 And, for the varied bliss that pressed  
 around,  
 Used not the glorious privilege  
 Of virtue and of wisdom.

Spirit! the Fairy said,  
 And pointed to the gorgeous dome,  
 This is a wondrous sight  
 And mocks all human grandeur;  
 But, were it virtue's only meed to dwell  
 In a celestial palace, all resigned  
 To pleasurable impulses, immured  
 Within the prison of itself, the will  
 Of changeless nature would be unful-  
 filled.  
 Learn to make others happy. Spirit,  
 come!  
 This is thine high reward:—the past  
 shall rise;  
 Thou shalt behold the present; I will  
 teach  
 The secrets of the future.

The Fairy and the Spirit  
 Approached the overhanging battle-  
 ment.—  
 Below lay stretched the universe!  
 There, far as the remotest line  
 That bounds imagination's flight,  
 Countless and unending orbs  
 In mazy motion intermingled,  
 Yet still fulfilled immutably  
 Eternal nature's law.  
 Above, below, around  
 The circling systems formed  
 A wilderness of harmony;  
 Each with undeviating aim,  
 In eloquent silence, through the depths  
 of space  
 Pursued its wondrous way.

There was a little light  
That twinkled in the misty distance :  
None but a spirit's eye  
Might ken that rolling orb ;  
None but a spirit's eye,  
And in no other place  
But that celestial dwelling, might behold  
Each action of this earth's inhabitants.  
But matter, space and time  
In those aërial mansions cease to act ;  
And all-prevailing wisdom, when it reaps  
The harvest of its excellence, o'erbounds  
Those obstacles, of which an earthly soul  
Fears to attempt the conquest.

The Fairy pointed to the earth.  
The Spirit's intellectual eye  
Its kindred beings recognized.  
The thronging thousands, to a passing  
view,  
Seemed like an anthill's citizens.  
How wonderful ! that even  
The passions, prejudices, interests,  
That sway the meanest being, the weak  
touch  
That moves the finest nerve,  
And in one human brain  
Causes the faintest thought, becomes a  
link  
In the great chain of nature.

Behold, the Fairy cried,  
Palmyra's ruined palaces ! —  
Behold ! where grandeur frowned ;  
Behold ! where pleasure smiled ;  
What now remains ? — the memory  
Of senselessness and shame —  
What is immortal there ?  
Nothing — it stands to tell  
A melancholy tale, to give  
An awful warning : soon  
Oblivion will steal silently  
The remnant of its fame.  
Monarchs and conquerors there  
Proud o'er prostrate millions trod —  
The earthquakes of the human race ;  
Like them, forgotten when the ruin  
That marks their shock is past.

Beside the eternal Nile,  
The Pyramids have risen.  
Nile shall pursue his changeless way :  
Those pyramids shall fall ;

Yea ! not a stone shall stand to tell  
The spot whereon they stood !  
Their very site shall be forgotten,  
As is their builder's name !

Behold yon sterile spot ;  
Where now the wandering Arab's tent  
Flaps in the desert-blast.  
There once old Salem's haughty fane  
Reared high to heaven its thousand  
golden domes,  
And in the blushing face of day  
Exposed its shameful glory.  
Oh ! many a widow, many an orphan  
cursed  
The building of that fane ; and many a  
father,  
Worn out with toil and slavery, implored  
The poor man's God to sweep it from  
the earth,  
And spare his children the detested task  
Of piling stone on stone, and poisoning  
The choicest days of life,  
To soothe a dotard's vanity.  
There an inhuman and uncultured race  
Howled hideous praises to their Demon-  
God ;  
They rushed to war, tore from the  
mother's womb  
The unborn child, — old age and infancy  
Promiscuous perished ; their victorious  
arms  
Left not a soul to breathe. Oh ! they  
were fiends :  
But what was he who taught them that  
the God  
Of nature and benevolence hath given  
A special sanction to the trade of  
blood ?  
His name and theirs are fading, and the  
tales  
Of this barbarian nation, which impos-  
ture  
Recites till terror credits, are pursuing  
Itself into forgetfulness.  
Where Athens, Rome, and Sparta  
stood,  
There is a moral desert now :  
The mean and miserable huts,  
The yet more wretched palaces,  
Contrasted with those ancient fanes,  
Now crumbling to oblivion ;  
The long and lonely colonnades,

Through which the ghost of Freedom stalks,  
 Seem like a well-known tune,  
 Which, in some dear scene we have loved to hear,  
 Remembered now in sadness.  
 But, oh! how much more changed,  
 How gloomier is the contrast  
 Of human nature there!  
 Where Socrates expired, a tyrant's slave,  
 A coward and a fool, spreads death around —  
 Then, shuddering, meets his own.  
 Where Cicero and Antoninus lived,  
 A cowed and hypocritical monk  
 Prays, curses and deceives.

Spirit! ten thousand years  
 Have scarcely passed away,  
 Since, in the waste where now the savage drinks  
 His enemy's blood, and aping Europe's sons,  
 Wakes the unholy song of war,  
 Arose a stately city,  
 Metropolis of the western continent:  
 There, now, the mossy column-stone,  
 Indented by time's unrelaxing grasp,  
 Which once appeared to brave  
 All, save its country's ruin;  
 There the wide forest scene,  
 Rude in the uncultivated loveliness  
 Of gardens long run wild,  
 Seems, to the unwilling sojourner, whose steps  
 Chance in that desert has delayed,  
 Thus to have stood since earth was what it is.  
 Yet once it was the busiest haunt,  
 Whither, as to a common centre, flocked  
 Strangers, and ships, and merchandise:  
 Once peace and freedom blest  
 The cultivated plain:  
 But wealth, that curse of man,  
 Blighted the bud of its prosperity:  
 Virtue and wisdom, truth and liberty,  
 Fled, to return not, until man shall know  
 That they alone can give the bliss  
 Worthy a soul that claims  
 Its kindred with eternity.

There's not one atom of yon earth  
 But once was living man;  
 Nor the minutest drop of rain,  
 That hangeth in its thinnest cloud,  
 But flowed in human veins:  
 And from the burning plains  
 Where Libyan monsters yell,  
 From the most gloomy glens  
 Of Greenland's sunless clime,  
 To where the golden fields  
 Of fertile England spread  
 Their harvest to the day,  
 Thou canst not find one spot  
 Whereon no city stood.

How strange is human pride!  
 I tell thee that those living things,  
 To whom the fragile blade of grass,  
 That springeth in the morn  
 And perisheth ere noon,  
 Is an unbounded world;  
 I tell thee that those viewless beings,  
 Whose mansion is the smallest particle  
 Of the impassive atmosphere,  
 Think, feel and live like man;  
 That their affections and antipathies,  
 Like his, produce the laws  
 Ruling their moral state;  
 And the minutest throb  
 That through their frame diffuses  
 The slightest, faintest motion,  
 Is fixed and indispensable  
 As the majestic laws  
 That rule yon rolling orbs.

The Fairy paused. The Spirit,  
 In ecstasy of admiration, felt  
 All knowledge of the past revived; the events  
 Of old and wondrous times,  
 Which dim tradition interruptedly  
 Teaches the credulous vulgar, were unfolded  
 In just perspective to the view;  
 Yet dim from their infinitude.  
 The Spirit seemed to stand  
 High on an isolated pinnacle;  
 The flood of ages combating below,  
 The depth of the unbounded universe  
 Above, and all around  
 Nature's unchanging harmony.

## III.

FAIRY! the Spirit said,  
 And on the Queen of spells  
 Fixed her ethereal eyes,  
 I thank thee. Thou hast given  
 A boon which I will not resign, and  
 taught  
 A lesson not to be unlearned. I know  
 The past, and thence I will essay to  
 glean  
 A warning for the future, so that man  
 May profit by his errors, and derive  
 Experience from his folly:  
 For, when the power of imparting joy  
 Is equal to the will, the human soul  
 Requires no other heaven.

## MAB.

Turn thee, surpassing Spirit!  
 Much yet remains unscanned.  
 Thou knowest how great is  
 man,  
 Thou knowest his imbecility:  
 Yet learn thou what he is;  
 Yet learn the lofty destiny  
 Which restless time prepares  
 For every living soul.

Behold a gorgeous palace, that, amid  
 Yon populous city, rears its thousand  
 towers  
 And seems itself a city. Gloomy troops  
 Of sentinels, in stern and silent ranks,  
 Encompass it around; the dweller there  
 Cannot be free and happy; hearest thou  
 not  
 The curses of the fatherless, the groans  
 Of those who have no friend? He  
 passes on:  
 The King, the wearer of a gilded chain  
 That binds his soul to abjectness, the fool  
 Whom courtiers nickname monarch,  
 whilst a slave  
 Even to the basest appetites — that man  
 Heeds not the shriek of penury; he  
 smiles  
 At the deep curses which the destitute  
 Mutter in secret, and a sullen joy  
 Pervades his bloodless heart when thou-  
 sands groan

But for those morsels which his wanton-  
 ness  
 Wastes in unjoyous revelry, to save  
 All that they love from famine: when he  
 hears  
 The tale of horror, to some ready-made  
 face  
 Of hypocritical assent he turns,  
 Smothering the glow of shame, that,  
 spite of him,  
 Flushes his bloated cheek.

Now to the meal  
 Of silence, grandeur, and excess, he drags  
 His palled unwilling appetite. If gold,  
 Gleaming around, and numerous viands  
 culled  
 From every clime, could force the loath-  
 ing sense  
 To overcome satiety, — if wealth  
 The spring it draws from poisons not, —  
 or vice,  
 Unfeeling, stubborn vice, converteth not  
 Its food to deadliest venom; then that  
 king  
 Is happy; and the peasant who fulfils  
 His unforced task, when he returns at  
 even  
 And by the blazing fagot meets again  
 Her welcome for whom all his toil is  
 sped,  
 Tastes not a sweeter meal.

Behold him now  
 Stretched on the gorgeous couch; his  
 fevered brain  
 Reels dizzily awhile; but ah! too soon  
 The slumber of intemperance subsides,  
 And conscience, that undying serpent,  
 calls  
 Her venomous brood to their nocturnal  
 task.  
 Listen! he speaks! oh! mark that fren-  
 zied eye —  
 Oh! mark that deadly visage.

## KING.

No cessation!  
 Oh! must this last forever! Awful death,  
 I wish, yet fear to clasp thee! — Not  
 one moment  
 Of dreamless sleep! O dear and blessed  
 peace!  
 Why dost thou shroud thy vestal purity

In penury and dungeons ? wherefore  
 lurkest  
 With danger, death, and solitude ; yet  
 shun'st  
 The palace I have built thee ? Sacred  
 peace !  
 Oh visit me but once, but pitying shed  
 One drop of balm upon my withered  
 soul.

Vain man ! that palace is the virtuous  
 heart,  
 And peace defileth not her snowy robes  
 In such a shed as thine. Hark ! yet he  
 mutters ;  
 His slumbers are but varied agonies,  
 They prey like scorpions on the springs  
 of life.  
 There needeth not the hell that bigots  
 frame  
 To punish those who err ; earth in itself  
 Contains at once the evil and the cure ;  
 And all-sufficing nature can chastise  
 Those who transgress her law, — she only  
 knows  
 How justly to proportion to the fault  
 The punishment it merits.

Is it strange  
 That this poor wretch should pride him  
 in his woe ?  
 Take pleasure in his abjectness, and hug  
 The scorpion that consumes him ? Is  
 it strange  
 That, placed on a conspicuous throne of  
 thorns,  
 Grasping an iron sceptre, and immured  
 Within a splendid prison, whose stern  
 bounds  
 Shut him from all that's good or dear on  
 earth,  
 His soul asserts not its humanity ?  
 That man's mild nature rises not in war  
 Against a king's employ ? No — 't is  
 not strange.  
 He, like the vulgar, thinks, feels, acts  
 and lives  
 Just as his father did ; the unconquered  
 powers  
 Of precedent and custom interpose  
 Between a *king* and virtue. Stranger  
 yet,  
 To those who know not nature, nor  
 deduce

The future from the present, it may seem,  
 That not one slave, who suffers from  
 the crimes  
 Of this unnatural being ; not one wretch,  
 Whose children famish, and whose nup-  
 tial bed  
 Is earth's unpitying bosom, rears an arm  
 To dash him from his throne !

Those gilded flies  
 That, basking in the sunshine of a court,  
 Fatten on its corruption ! — what are  
 they ?  
 — The drones of the community ; they  
 feed  
 On the mechanic's labor : the starved  
 hind  
 For them compels the stubborn glebe to  
 yield  
 Its unshared harvests ; and yon squalid  
 form,  
 Leaner than fleshless misery, that wastes  
 A sunless life in the unwholesome mine,  
 Drags out in labor a protracted death,  
 To glut their grandeur ; many faint with  
 toil,  
 That few may know the cares and woe  
 of sloth.

Whence think'st thou, kings and para-  
 sites arose ?  
 Whence that unnatural line of drones  
 who heap  
 Toil and unvanquishable penury  
 On those who build their palaces, and  
 bring  
 Their daily bread ? — From vice, black  
 loathsome vice ;  
 From rapine, madness, treachery, and  
 wrong ;  
 From all that genders misery, and makes  
 Of earth this thorny wilderness ; from  
 lust,  
 Revenge, and murder. . . . And when  
 reason's voice,  
 Loud as the voice of nature, shall have  
 waked  
 The nations ; and mankind perceive that  
 vice  
 Is discord, war, and misery ; that virtue  
 Is peace, and happiness and harmony ;  
 When man's maturer nature shall disdain  
 The playthings of its childhood ; — kingly  
 glare

Will lose its power to dazzle; its au-  
 thority  
 Will silently pass by; the gorgeous  
 throne  
 Shall stand unnoticed in the regal hall,  
 Fast falling to decay; whilst falsehood's  
 trade  
 Shall be as hateful and unprofitable  
 As that of truth is now.

Where is the fame  
 Which the vainglorious mighty of the  
 earth  
 Seek to eternize? Oh! the faintest sound  
 From time's light footfall, the minutest  
 wave  
 That swells the flood of ages, whelms in  
 nothing  
 The unsubstantial bubble. Ay! to-day  
 Stern is the tyrant's mandate, red the  
 gaze  
 That flashes desolation, strong the arm  
 That scatters multitudes. To-morrow  
 comes!  
 That mandate is a thunder-peal that died  
 In ages past; that gaze, a transient flash  
 On which the midnight closed, and on  
 that arm  
 The worm has made his meal.

The virtuous man,  
 Who, great in his humility, as kings  
 Are little in their grandeur; he who leads  
 Invincibly a life of resolute good,  
 And stands amid the silent dungeon-  
 depths  
 More free and fearless than the trem-  
 bling judge,  
 Who, clothed in venal power, vainly  
 strove  
 To bind the impassive spirit; when he  
 falls,  
 His mild eye beams benevolence no  
 more:  
 Withered the hand outstretched but to  
 relieve;  
 Sunk reason's simple eloquence, that  
 rolled  
 But to appal the guilty. Yes! the grave  
 Hath quenched that eye, and death's  
 relentless frost  
 Withered that arm: but the unfading  
 fame  
 Which virtue hangs upon its votary's  
 tomb;

The deathless memory of that man,  
 whom kings  
 Call to their mind and tremble; the  
 remembrance  
 With which the happy spirit contemplates  
 Its well-spent pilgrimage on earth,  
 Shall never pass away.

Nature rejects the monarch, not the man;  
 The subject, not the citizen: for kings  
 And subjects, mutual foes, forever play  
 A losing game into each other's hands,  
 Whose stakes are vice and misery. The  
 man  
 Of virtuous soul commands not, nor  
 obeys.  
 Power, like a desolating pestilence,  
 Pollutes whate'er it touches; and obe-  
 dience,  
 Bane of all genius, virtue, freedom,  
 truth,  
 Makes slaves of men, and, of the human  
 frame,  
 A mechanized automaton.

When Nero,  
 High over flaming Rome, with savage  
 joy  
 Lowered like a fiend, drank with en-  
 raptured ear  
 The shrieks of agonizing death, beheld  
 The frightful desolation spread, and felt  
 A new created sense within his soul  
 Thrill to the sight, and vibrate to the  
 sound;  
 Think'st thou his grandeur had not over-  
 come  
 The force of human kindness? and, when  
 Rome,  
 With one stern blow, hurled not the  
 tyrant down,  
 Crushed not the arm red with her dearest  
 blood,  
 Had not submissive abjectness destroyed  
 Nature's suggestions?

Look on yonder earth:  
 The golden harvests spring; the unfaul-  
 ing sun  
 Sheds light and life; the fruits, the  
 flowers, the trees,  
 Arise in due succession; all things speak  
 Peace, harmony, and love. The uni-  
 verse,  
 In nature's silent eloquence, declares



That all fulfil the works of love and joy —  
 All but the outcast man. He fabricates  
 The sword which stabs his peace; he  
 cherisheth  
 The snakes that gnaw his heart; he  
 raiseth up  
 The tyrant, whose delight is in his woe,  
 Whose sport is in his agony. Yon sun,  
 Lights it the great alone? Yon silver  
 beams,  
 Sleep they less sweetly on the cottage  
 thatch  
 Than on the dome of kings? Is mother  
 earth  
 A step-dame to her numerous sons, who  
 earn  
 Her unshared gifts with unremitting toil;  
 A mother only to those puling babes  
 Who, nursed in ease and luxury, make  
 men  
 The playthings of their babyhood, and  
 mar,  
 In self-important childishness, that peace  
 Which men alone appreciate?

Spirit of Nature! no.  
 The pure diffusion of thy essence throbs  
 Alike in every human heart.  
 Thou aye erectest there  
 Thy throne of power unappealable:  
 Thou art the judge beneath whose nod  
 Man's brief and frail authority  
 Is powerless as the wind  
 That passeth idly by.  
 Thine the tribunal which surpasseth  
 The show of human justice,  
 As God surpasses man.

Spirit of Nature! thou  
 Life of interminable multitudes;  
 Soul of those mighty spheres  
 Whose changeless paths thro' Heaven's  
 deep silence lie;  
 Soul of that smallest being,  
 The dwelling of whose life  
 Is one faint April sun-gleam; —  
 Man, like these passive things,  
 Thy will unconsciously fulfilleth:  
 Like theirs, his age of endless peace,  
 Which time is fast maturing,  
 Will swiftly, surely come;  
 And the unbounded frame, which thou  
 pervadest,

Will be without a flaw  
 Marring its perfect symmetry.

IV.

How beautiful this night! the balmiest  
 sigh,  
 Which vernal zephyrs breathe in even-  
 ing's ear,  
 Were discord to the speaking quietude  
 That wraps this moveless scene. Heaven's  
 ebon vault,  
 Studded with stars unutterably bright,  
 Through which the moon's unclouded  
 grandeur rolls,  
 Seems like a canopy which love had  
 spread  
 To curtain her sleeping world. Yon  
 gentle hills,  
 Robed in a garment of untrodden snow;  
 Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles  
 depend,  
 So stainless, that their white and glitter-  
 ing spires  
 Tinge not the moon's pure beam; yon  
 castled steep,  
 Whose banner hangeth o'er the time-  
 worn tower  
 So idly, that rapt fancy deemeth it  
 A metaphor of peace;—all form a scene  
 Where musing solitude might love to lift  
 Her soul above this sphere of earthli-  
 ness;  
 Where silence undisturbed might watch  
 alone,  
 So cold, so bright, so still.  
 The orb of day,  
 In southern climes, o'er ocean's waveless  
 field  
 Sinks sweetly smiling: not the faintest  
 breath  
 Steals o'er the unruffled deep; the clouds  
 of eve  
 Reflect unmoved the lingering beam of  
 day;  
 And vesper's image on the western main  
 Is beautifully still. To-morrow comes:  
 Cloud upon cloud, in dark and deepen-  
 ing mass,  
 Roll o'er the blackened waters; the  
 deep roar  
 Of distant thunder mutters awfully;

Tempest unfolds its pinion o'er the  
 gloom  
 That shrouds the boiling surge; the  
 pitiless fiend,  
 With all his winds and lightnings, tracks  
 his prey;  
 The torn deep yawns, — the vessel finds  
 a grave  
 Beneath its jagged gulph.  
 Ah! whence yon glare  
 That fires the arch of heaven? — that  
 dark red smoke  
 Blotting the silver moon? The stars are  
 quenched  
 In darkness, and the pure and spangling  
 snow  
 Gleams faintly through the gloom that  
 gathers round!  
 Hark to that roar, whose swift and  
 deafening peals  
 In countless echoes through the moun-  
 tains ring,  
 Startling pale midnight on her starry  
 throne!  
 Now swells the intermingling din; the  
 jar  
 Frequent and frightful of the bursting  
 bomb;  
 The falling beam, the shriek, the groan,  
 the shout,  
 The ceaseless clangor, and the rush of  
 men  
 Inebriate with rage: — loud, and more  
 loud  
 The discord grows; till pale death shuts  
 the scene,  
 And o'er the conqueror and the con-  
 quered draws  
 His cold and bloody shroud. — Of all  
 the men  
 Whom day's departing beam saw bloom-  
 ing there,  
 In proud and vigorous health; of all the  
 hearts  
 That beat with anxious life at sunset  
 there;  
 How few survive, how few are beating  
 now!  
 All is deep silence, like the fearful calm  
 That slumbers in the storm's portentous  
 pause;  
 Save when the frantic wail of widowed  
 love

Comes shuddering on the blast, or the  
 faint moan  
 With which some soul bursts from the  
 frame of clay  
 Wrapt round its struggling powers.  
 The gray morn-  
 Dawns on the mournful scene; the sul-  
 phurous smoke  
 Before the icy wind slow rolls away,  
 And the bright beams of frosty morning  
 dance  
 Along the spangling snow. There  
 tracks of blood  
 Even to the forest's depth, and scattered  
 arms,  
 And lifeless warriors, whose hard linea-  
 ments  
 Death's self could change not, mark the  
 dreadful path  
 Of the outsallying victors: far behind,  
 Black ashes note where their proud city  
 stood.  
 Within yon forest is a gloomy glen —  
 Each tree which guards its darkness  
 from the day  
 Waves o'er a warrior's tomb.  
 I see thee shrink,  
 Surpassing Spirit! — wert thou human  
 else?  
 I see a shade of doubt and horror fleet  
 Across thy stainless features: yet fear not;  
 This is no unconnected misery,  
 Nor stands uncaused, and irretrievable.  
 Man's evil nature, that apology  
 Which kings who rule, and cowards who  
 crouch, set up  
 For their unnumbered crimes, sheds not  
 the blood  
 Which desolates the discord-wasted land.  
 From kings, and priests, and statesmen,  
 war arose,  
 Whose safety is man's deep unbettered  
 woe,  
 Whose grandeur his debasement. Let  
 the axe  
 Strike at the root, the poison-tree will  
 fall;  
 And where its venom'd exhalations  
 spread  
 Ruin, and death, and woe, where mil-  
 lions lay  
 Quenching the serpent's famine, and  
 their bones

Bleaching unburied in the putrid blast,  
A garden shall arise, in loveliness  
Surpassing fabled Eden.

Hath Nature's soul,  
That formed this world so beautiful,  
that spread  
Earth's lap with plenty, and life's small-  
est chord  
Strung to unchanging unison, that gave  
The happy birds their dwelling in the  
grove,  
That yielded to the wanderers of the deep  
The lovely silence of the unfathomed  
main,  
And filled the meanest worm that crawls  
in dust  
With spirit, thought, and love; on Man  
alone,  
Partial in causeless malice, wantonly  
Heaped ruin, vice, and slavery; his soul  
Blasted with withering curses; placed  
afar  
The meteor-happiness, that shuns his  
grasp,  
But serving on the frightful gulph to  
glare,  
Rent wide beneath his footsteps?

Nature! — no!  
Kings, priests, and statesmen, blast the  
human flower  
Even in its tender bud; their influence  
darts  
Like subtle poison through the bloodless  
veins  
Of desolate society. The child,  
Ere he can lisp his mother's sacred name,  
Swells with the unnatural pride of crime,  
and lifts  
His baby-sword even in a hero's mood.  
This infant-arm becomes the bloodiest  
scourge  
Of devastated earth; whilst specious  
names,  
Learnt in soft childhood's unsuspecting  
hour,  
Serve as the sophisms with which man-  
hood dims  
Bright reason's ray, and sanctifies the  
sword  
Upraised to shed a brother's innocent  
blood.  
Let priest-led slaves cease to proclaim  
that man

Inherits vice and misery, when force  
And falsehood hang even o'er the  
cradled babe,  
Stifling with rudest grasp all natural good.

Ah! to the stranger-soul, when first it  
peeps  
From its new tenement, and looks  
abroad  
For happiness and sympathy, how stern  
And desolate a tract is this wide world!  
How withered all the buds of natural  
good!  
No shade, no shelter from the sweeping  
storms  
Of pitiless power! On its wretched  
frame,  
Poisoned, perchance, by the disease  
and woe  
Heaped on the wretched parent whence  
it sprung  
By morals, law, and custom, the pure  
winds  
Of heaven, that renovate the insect  
tribes  
May breathe not. The untainting light  
of day  
May visit not its longings. It is bound  
Ere it has life; yea, all the chains are  
forged  
Long ere its being: all liberty and love  
And peace is torn from its defenceless-  
ness;  
Cursed from its birth, even from its cra-  
dle doomed  
To abjectness and bondage!

Throughout this varied and eternal world  
Soul is the only element: the block  
That for uncounted ages has remained  
The moveless pillar of a mountain's  
weight  
Is active, living spirit. Every grain  
Is sentient both in unity and part,  
And the minutest atom comprehends  
A world of loves and hatreds; these  
beget  
Evil and good: hence truth and false-  
hood spring;  
Hence will and thought and action, all  
the germs  
Of pain or pleasure, sympathy or hate,  
That variegate the eternal universe.

Soul is not more polluted than the beams  
Of heaven's pure orb, ere round their  
rapid lines  
The taint of earth-born atmospheres arise.

Man is of soul and body, formed for  
deeds

Of high resolve, on fancy's boldest wing  
To soar unwearied, fearlessly to turn  
The keenest pangs to peacefulness, and  
taste

The joys which mingled sense and spirit  
yield.

Or he is formed for abjectness and woe,  
To grovel on the dunghill of his fears,  
To shrink at every sound, to quench the  
flame

Of natural love in sensualism, to know  
That hour as blest when on his worthless  
days

The frozen hand of death shall set its  
seal,

Yet fear the cure, though hating the dis-  
ease.

The one is man that shall hereafter be;  
The other, man as vice has made him  
now.

War is the statesman's game, the priest's  
delight,

The lawyer's jest, the hired assassin's  
trade,

And, to those royal murderers, whose  
mean thrones

Are bought by crimes of treachery and  
gore,

The bread they eat, the staff on which  
they lean.

Guards, garbed in blood-red livery, sur-  
round

Their palaces, participate the crimes  
That force defends, and from a nation's  
rage

Secure the crown, which all the curses  
reach

That famine, frenzy, woe and penury  
breathe.

These are the hired bravos who defend  
The tyrant's throne — the bullies of his  
fear:

These are the sinks and channels of worst  
vice,

The refuse of society, the dregs

Of all that is most vile: their cold hearts  
blend

Deceit with sternness, ignorance with  
pride,

All that is mean and villanous with rage  
Which hopelessness of good, and self-  
contempt,

Alone might kindle; they are decked in  
wealth,

Honor and power, then are sent abroad  
To do their work. The pestilence that  
stalks

In gloomy triumph through some eastern  
land

Is less destroying. They cajole with  
gold,

And promises of fame, the thoughtless  
youth

Already crushed with servitude; he knows  
His wretchedness too late, and cherishes  
Repentance for his ruin, when his doom  
Is sealed in gold and blood!

Those too the tyrant serve, who, skilled  
to snare

The feet of justice in the toils of law,  
Stand, ready to oppress the weaker still;  
And right or wrong will vindicate for gold,  
Sneering at public virtue, which beneath  
Their pitiless tread lies torn and trampled,  
where

Honor sits smiling at the sale of truth.

Then grave and hoary-headed hypocrites,  
Without a hope, a passion, or a love,  
Who, through a life of luxury and lies,  
Have crept by flattery to the seats of  
power,

Support the system whence their honors  
flow. . . .

They have three words: — well tyrants  
know their use,

Well pay them for the loan, with usury  
Torn from a bleeding world! — God,  
Hell, and Heaven.

A vengeful, pitiless, and almighty fiend,  
Whose mercy is a nickname for the rage  
Of tameless tigers hungering for blood.

Hell, a red gulph of everlasting fire,  
Where poisonous and undying worms  
prolong

Eternal misery to those hapless slaves  
Whose life has been a penance for its  
crimes.

And Heaven, a meed for those who dare  
 belie  
 Their human nature, quake, believe, and  
 cringe  
 Before the mockeries of earthly power.

These tools the tyrant tempers to his  
 work,  
 Wields in his wrath, and as he wills  
 destroys,  
 Omnipotent in wickedness: the while  
 Youth springs, age moulders, manhood  
 famely does  
 His bidding, bribed by short-lived joys  
 to lend  
 Force to the weakness of his trembling  
 arm.

They rise, they fall; one generation  
 comes  
 Yielding its harvest to destruction's  
 scythe.  
 It fades, another blossoms: yet behold!  
 Red glows the tyrant's stamp-mark on  
 its bloom,  
 Withering and cankering deep its passive  
 prime.  
 He has invented lying words and modes,  
 Empty and vain as his own coreless  
 heart;  
 Evasive meanings, nothings of much  
 sound,  
 To lure the heedless victim to the toils  
 Spread round the valley of its paradise.

Look to thyself, priest, conqueror, or  
 prince!  
 Whether thy trade is falsehood, and thy  
 lusts  
 Deep wallow in the earnings of the poor,  
 With whom thy master was: — or thou  
 delight'st  
 In numbering o'er the myriads of thy  
 slain,  
 All misery weighing nothing in the scale  
 Against thy short-lived fame; or thou  
 dost load  
 With cowardice and crime the groaning  
 land,  
 A pomp-fed king. Look to thy wretched  
 self!  
 Ay, art thou not the veriest slave that  
 e'er

Crawled on the loathing earth? Are not  
 thy days  
 Days of unsatisfying listlessness?  
 Dost thou not cry, ere night's long rack  
 is o'er,  
 When will the morning come? Is not  
 thy youth  
 A vain and feverish dream of sensualism?  
 Thy manhood blighted with unripe dis-  
 ease?  
 Are not thy views of unregretted death  
 Drear, comfortless, and horrible? Thy  
 mind,  
 Is it not morbid as thy nerveless frame,  
 Incapable of judgment, hope, or love?  
 And dost thou wish the errors to survive  
 That bar thee from all sympathies of  
 good,  
 After the miserable interest  
 Thou hold'st in their protraction? When  
 the grave  
 Has swallowed up thy memory and thy-  
 self,  
 Dost thou desire the bane that poisons  
 earth  
 To twine its roots around thy coffined  
 clay,  
 Spring from thy bones, and blossom on  
 thy tomb,  
 That of its fruit thy babes may eat and  
 die?

V.

THUS do the generations of the earth  
 Go to the grave, and issue from the  
 womb,  
 Surviving still the imperishable change  
 That renovates the world; even as the  
 leaves  
 Which the keen frost-wind of the wan-  
 ing year  
 Has scattered on the forest soil, and  
 heaped  
 For many seasons there, though long  
 they choke,  
 Loading with loathsome rottenness the  
 land,  
 All germs of promise, yet when the tall  
 trees  
 From which they fell, shorn of their  
 lovely shapes,

Lie level with the earth to moulder  
there,  
They fertilize the land they long de-  
formed,  
Till from the breathing lawn a forest  
springs  
Of youth, integrity, and loveliness,  
Like that which gave it life, to spring  
and die.

Thus suicidal selfishness, that blights  
The fairest feelings of the opening heart,  
Is destined to decay, whilst from the soil  
Shall spring all virtue, all delight, all  
love,  
And judgment cease to wage unnatural  
war

With passion's unsubduable array.  
Twin-sister of religion, selfishness!  
Rival in crime and falsehood, aping all  
The wanton horrors of her bloody play;  
Yet frozen, unimpassioned, spiritless,  
Shunning the light, and owning not its  
name,

Compelled, by its deformity, to screen  
With flimsy veil of justice and of right,  
Its unattractive lineaments, that scare  
All, save the brood of ignorance: at  
once

The cause and the effect of tyranny;  
Unblushing, hardened, sensual, and  
vile;

Dead to all love but of its abjectness,  
With heart impassive by more noble  
powers

Than unshaped pleasure, sordid gain, or  
fame;

Despising its own miserable being,  
Which still it longs, yet fears to dis-  
enthral.

Hence commerce springs, the venal  
interchange

Of all that human art or nature yield;  
Which wealth should purchase not, but  
want demand,

And natural kindness hasten to supply  
From the full fountain of its boundless  
love,

Forever stifled, drained, and tainted now.  
Commerce! beneath whose poison-  
breathing shade

No solitary virtue dares to spring,  
But poverty and wealth with equal hand

Scatter their withering curses, and unfold  
The doors of premature and violent  
death,

To pining famine and full-fed disease,  
To all that shares the lot of human life,  
Which poisoned, body and soul, scarce  
drags the chain,  
That lengthens as it goes and clanks  
behind.

Commerce has set the mark of selfish-  
ness,

The signet of its all-enslaving power  
Upon a shining ore, and called it gold:  
Before whose image bow the vulgar  
great,

The vainly rich, the miserable proud,  
The mob of peasants, nobles, priests,  
and kings,

And with blind feelings reverence the  
power

That grinds them to the dust of misery.  
But in the temple of their hireling hearts  
Gold is a living god, and rules in scorn  
All earthly things but virtue.

Since tyrants, by the sale of human life,  
Heap luxuries to their sensualism, and  
fame

To their wide-wasting and insatiate pride,  
Success has sanctioned to a credulous  
world

The ruin, the disgrace, the woe of war.  
His hosts of blind and unresisting dupes  
The despot numbers; from his cabinet  
These puppets of his schemes he moves  
at will,

Even as the slaves by force or famine  
driven,

Beneath a vulgar master, to perform  
A task of cold and brutal drudgery;—  
Hardened to hope, insensible to fear,  
Scarce living pulleys of a dead machine,  
Mere wheels of work and articles of  
trade,

That grace the proud and noisy pomp of  
wealth!

The harmony and happiness of man  
Yields to the wealth of nations; that  
which lifts

His nature to the heaven of its pride  
Is bartered for the poison of his soul;

The weight that drags to earth his towering hopes,  
 Blighting all prospect but of selfish gain,  
 Withering all passion but of slavish fear,  
 Extinguishing all free and generous love  
 Of enterprise and daring, even the pulse  
 That fancy kindles in the beating heart  
 To mingle with sensation, it destroys, —  
 Leaves nothing but the sordid lust of self,  
 The grovelling hope of interest and gold,  
 Unqualified, unmingled, unredeemed  
 Even by hypocrisy.

And statesmen boast  
 Of wealth! The wordy eloquence, that  
 lives  
 After the ruin of their hearts, can gild  
 The bitter poison of a nation's woe,  
 Can turn the worship of the servile mob  
 To their corrupt and glaring idol fame,  
 From virtue, trampled by its iron tread,  
 Although its dazzling pedestal be raised  
 Amid the horrors of a limb-strewn field,  
 With desolated dwellings smoking round.  
 The man of ease, who, by his warm fire-  
 side,  
 To deeds of charitable intercourse  
 And bare fulfilment of the common laws  
 Of decency and prejudice, confines  
 The struggling nature of his human heart,  
 Is duped by their cold sophistry; he  
 sheds  
 A passing tear perchance upon the wreck  
 Of earthly peace, when near his dwell-  
 ing's door  
 The frightful waves are driven, — when  
 his son  
 Is murdered by the tyrant, or religion  
 Drives his wife raving mad. But the  
 poor man,  
 Whose life is misery, and fear, and care;  
 Whom the morn wakens but to fruitless  
 toil;  
 Who ever hears his famished offspring's  
 scream,  
 Whom their pale mother's uncomplain-  
 ing gaze  
 Forever meets, and the proud rich man's  
 eye  
 Flashing command, and the heart-break-  
 ing scene  
 Of thousands like himself;—he little  
 heeds

The rhetoric of tyranny; his hate  
 Is quenchless as his wrongs; he laughs  
 to scorn  
 The vain and bitter mockery of words,  
 Feeling the horror of the tyrant's deeds,  
 And unrestrained but by the arm of  
 power,  
 That knows and dreads his enmity.

The iron rod of penury still compels  
 Her wretched slave to bow the knee to  
 wealth,  
 And poison, with unprofitable toil,  
 A life too void of solace to confirm  
 The very chains that bind him to his  
 doom.

Nature, impartial in munificence,  
 Has gifted man with all-subduing will.  
 Matter, with all its transitory shapes,  
 Lies subjected and plastic at his feet,  
 That, weak from bondage, tremble as  
 they tread.

How many a rustic Milton has passed by,  
 Stiffing the speechless longings of his  
 heart,  
 In unremitting drudgery and care!  
 How many a vulgar Cato has compelled  
 His energies, no longer tameless then,  
 To mould a pin, or fabricate a nail!  
 How many a Newton, to whose passive  
 ken  
 Those mighty spheres that gem infinity  
 Were only specks of tinsel, fixed in  
 heaven  
 To light the midnights of his native  
 town!

Yet every heart contains perfection's  
 germ:  
 The wisest of the sages of the earth,  
 That ever from the stores of reason drew  
 Science and truth, and virtue's dreadless  
 tone,  
 Were but a weak and inexperienced boy,  
 Proud, sensual, unimpassioned, unim-  
 bued  
 With pure desire and universal love,  
 Compared to that high being, of cloud-  
 less brain,  
 Untainted passion, elevated will,  
 Which death (who even would linger  
 long in awe  
 Within his noble presence, and beneath

His changeless eyebeam) might alone  
subdue.

Him, every slave now dragging through  
the filth

Of some corrupted city his sad life,  
Pining with famine, swoln with luxury,  
Blunting the keenness of his spiritual  
sense

With narrow schemings and unworthy  
cares,

Or madly rushing through all violent  
crime,

To move the deep stagnation of his  
soul, —

Might imitate and equal.

But mean lust  
Has bound its chains so tight around  
the earth,

That all within it but the virtuous man  
Is venal: gold or fame will surely reach  
The price prefixed by selfishness, to all  
But him of resolute and unchanging  
will;

Whom, nor the plaudits of a servile  
crowd,

Nor the vile joys of tainting luxury,  
Can bribe to yield his elevated soul

To tyranny or falsehood, though they  
wield

With blood-red hand the sceptre of the  
world.

All things are sold: the very light of  
heaven

Is venal; earth's unsparing gifts of love,  
The smallest and most despicable things  
That lurk in the abysses of the deep,  
All objects of our life, even life itself,  
And the poor pittance which the laws  
allow

Of liberty, the fellowship of man,  
Those duties which his heart of human  
love

Should urge him to perform instinctively,  
Are bought and sold as in a public mart  
Of undisguising selfishness, that sets  
On each its price, the stamp-mark of  
her reign.

Even love is sold; the solace of all woe  
Is turned to deadliest agony, old age  
Shivers in selfish beauty's loathing arms,  
And youth's corrupted impulses prepare  
A life of horror from the blighting bane

Of commerce; whilst the pestilence that  
springs

From unenjoying sensualism, has filled  
All human life with hydra-headed woes.

Falsehood demands but gold to pay the  
pangs

Of outraged conscience; for the slavish  
priest

Sets no great value on his hireling faith:  
A little passing pomp, some servile souls,  
Whom cowardice itself might safely  
chain,

Or the spare mite of avarice could bribe  
To deck the triumph of their languid zeal,  
Can make him minister to tyranny.

More daring crime requires a loftier  
meed:

Without a shudder, the slave-soldier  
lends

His arm to murderous deeds, and steels  
his heart,

When the dread eloquence of dying men,  
Low mingling on the lonely field of  
fame,

Assails that nature, whose applause he  
sells

For the gross blessings of a patriot mob,  
For the vile gratitude of heartless kings,  
And for a cold world's good word, —  
viler still!

There is a nobler glory, which survives  
Until our being fades, and solacing

All human care, accompanies its change;  
Deserts not virtue in the dungeon's  
gloom,

And, in the precincts of the palace,  
guides

Its footsteps through that labyrinth of  
crime;

Imbues his lineaments with dauntless-  
ness,

Even when, from power's avenging  
hand, he takes

Its sweetest, last and noblest title —  
death;

— The consciousness of good, which  
neither gold,

Nor sordid fame, nor hope of heavenly  
bliss,

Can purchase; but a life of resolute  
good.



Unalterable will, quenchless desire  
Of universal happiness, the heart  
That beats with it in unison, the brain,  
Whose ever wakeful wisdom toils to  
change  
Reason's rich stores for its eternal weal.

This commerce of sincerest virtue needs  
No mediative signs of selfishness,  
No jealous intercourse of wretched gain,  
No balancings of prudence, cold and  
long;  
In just and equal measure all is weighed,  
One scale contains the sum of human  
weal,  
And one, the good man's heart.

How vainly seek  
The selfish for that happiness denied  
To aught but virtue! Blind and hard-  
dened, they,  
Who hope for peace amid the storms of  
care,  
Who covet power they know not how  
to use,  
And sigh for pleasure they refuse to  
give,—  
Madly they frustrate still their own  
designs;  
And, where they hope that quiet to enjoy  
Which virtue pictures, bitterness of soul,  
Pining regrets, and vain repentances,  
Disease, disgust, and lassitude, pervade  
Their valueless and miserable lives.

But hoary-headed selfishness has felt  
Its death-blow, and is tottering to the  
grave :  
A brighter morn awaits the human day,  
When every transfer of earth's natural  
gifts  
Shall be a commerce of good words and  
works ;  
When poverty and wealth, the thirst of  
fame,  
The fear of infamy, disease and woe,  
War with its million horrors, and fierce  
hell  
Shall live but in the memory of time.  
Who, like a penitent libertine, shall start,  
Look back, and shudder at his younger  
years.

VI.

ALL touch, all eye, all ear,  
The Spirit felt the Fairy's burning speech.  
O'er the thin texture of its frame,  
The varying periods painted changing  
glows,  
As on a summer even,  
When soul-enfolding music floats around,  
The stainless mirror of the lake  
Re-images the eastern gloom,  
Mingling convulsively its purple hues  
With sunset's burnished gold.

Then thus the Spirit spoke:  
It is a wild and miserable world!  
Thorny, and full of care,  
Which every fiend can make his prey at  
will.  
O Fairy ! in the lapse of years,  
Is there no hope in store ?  
Will yon vast suns roll on  
Interminably, still illuming  
The night of so many wretched souls,  
And see no hope for them ?  
Will not the universal Spirit e'er  
Revivify this withered limb of Heaven?

The Fairy calmly smiled  
In comfort, and a kindling gleam of hope  
Suffused the Spirit's lineaments.  
Oh! rest thee tranquil; chase those fear-  
ful doubts,  
Which ne'er could rack an everlasting  
soul,  
That sees the chains which bind it to its  
doom.  
Yes ! crime and misery are in yonder  
earth,  
Falsehood, mistake, and lust;  
But the eternal world  
Contains at once the evil and the cure.  
Some eminent in virtue shall start up,  
Even in perversest time:  
The truths of their pure lips, that never  
die,  
Shall bind the scorpion falsehood with  
a wreath  
Of ever-living flame,  
Until the monster sting itself to death.

How sweet a scene will earth become !  
 Of purest spirits a pure dwelling-place,  
 Symphonious with the planetary spheres;  
 When man, with changeless nature coalescing,  
 Will undertake regeneration's work,  
 When its ungenial poles no longer point  
 To the red and baleful sun  
 That faintly twinkles there.

Spirit ! on yonder earth,  
 Falsehood now triumphs : deadly  
 power  
 Has fixed its seal upon the lip of truth !  
 Madness and misery are there !  
 The happiest is most wretched ! Yet  
 confide,  
 Until pure health-drops, from the cup  
 of joy,  
 Fall like a dew of balm upon the world.  
 Now, to the scene I show, in silence  
 turn,  
 And read the blood-stained charter of  
 all woe,  
 Which nature soon, with recreating hand,  
 Will blot in mercy from the book of  
 earth.  
 How bold the flight of passion's wander-  
 ing wing,  
 How swift the step of reason's firmer  
 tread,  
 How calm and sweet the victories of life,  
 How terrorless the triumph of the grave !  
 How powerless were the mightiest  
 monarch's arm,  
 Vain his loud threat, and impotent his  
 frown !  
 How ludicrous the priest's dogmatic  
 roar !  
 The weight of his exterminating curse,  
 How light ! and his affected charity,  
 To suit the pressure of the changing  
 times,  
 What palpable deceit ! — but for thy aid,  
 Religion ! but for thee, prolific fiend,  
 Who peopled earth with demons, hell  
 with men,  
 And heaven with slaves !  
 Thou taintest all thou look'st upon ! —  
 the stars,  
 Which on thy cradle beamed so brightly  
 sweet,

Were gods to the distempered playful-  
 ness  
 Of thy untutored infancy : the trees,  
 The grass, the clouds, the mountains,  
 and the sea,  
 All living things that walk, swim, creep,  
 or fly,  
 Were gods : the sun had homage, and  
 the moon  
 Her worshipper. Then thou becamest,  
 a boy,  
 More daring in thy frenzies : every  
 shape,  
 Monstrous or vast, or beautifully wild,  
 Which, from sensation's relics, fancy  
 culls ;  
 The spirits of the air, the shuddering  
 ghost,  
 The genii of the elements, the powers  
 That give a shape to nature's varied  
 works,  
 Had life and place in the corrupt belief  
 Of thy blind heart : yet still thy youthful  
 hands  
 Were pure of human blood. Then man-  
 hood gave  
 Its strength and ardor to thy frenzied  
 brain ;  
 Thine eager gaze scanned the stupen-  
 dous scene  
 Whose wonders mocked the knowledge  
 of thy pride :  
 Their everlasting and unchanging laws  
 Reproached thine ignorance. Awhile  
 thou stood'st  
 Baffled and gloomy ; then thou didst  
 sum up  
 The elements of all that thou didst know ;  
 The changing seasons, winter's leafless  
 reign,  
 The budding of the heaven-breathing  
 trees,  
 The eternal orbs that beautify the night,  
 The sunrise, and the setting of the moon,  
 Earthquakes and wars, and poisons and  
 disease,  
 And all their causes, to an abstract  
 point,  
 Converging, thou didst bend and called  
 it God !  
 The self-sufficing, the omnipotent,  
 The merciful, and the avenging God !  
 Who, prototype of human misrule, sits

High in heaven's realm upon a golden throne,  
 Even like an earthly king ; and whose dread work,  
 Hell, gapes forever for the unhappy slaves  
 Of fate, whom he created, in his sport,  
 To triumph in their torments when they fell !  
 Earth heard the name ; earth trembled, as the smoke  
 Of his revenge ascended up to heaven,  
 Blotting the constellations ; and the cries  
 Of millions, butchered in sweet confidence  
 And unsuspecting peace, even when the bonds  
 Of safety were confirmed by wordy oaths  
 Sworn in his dreadful name, rung through the land ;  
 Whilst innocent babes writhed on thy stubborn spear,  
 And thou didst laugh to hear the mother's shriek  
 Of maniac gladness, as the sacred steel  
 Felt cold in her torn entrails !

Religion ! thou wert then in manhood's prime :  
 But age crept on : one God would not suffice  
 For senile puerility ; thou framedst  
 A tale to suit thy dotage, and to glut  
 Thy misery-thirsting soul, that the mad fiend  
 Thy wickedness had pictured might afford  
 A plea for sating the unnatural thirst  
 For murder, rapine, violence, and crime,  
 That still consumed thy being, even when  
 Thou heard'st the step of fate ; — that flames might light  
 Thy funeral scene, and the shrill horrent shrieks  
 Of parents dying on the pile that burned  
 To light their children to thy paths, the roar  
 Of the encircling flames, the exulting cries  
 Of thine apostles, loud commingling there,

Might sate thine hungry ear  
 Even on the bed of death !

But now contempt is mocking thy gray hairs ;  
 Thou art descending to the darksome grave,  
 Unhonored and unpitied, but by those  
 Whose pride is passing by like thine, and sheds,  
 Like thine, a glare that fades before the sun  
 Of truth, and shines but in the dreadful night  
 That long has lowered above the ruined world.

Throughout these infinite orbs of mingling light,  
 Of which yon earth is one, is wide diffused  
 A spirit of activity and life,  
 That knows no term, cessation, or decay ;  
 That fades not when the lamp of earthly life,  
 Extinguished in the dampness of the grave,  
 Awhile there slumbers, more than when the babe  
 In the dim newness of its being feels  
 The impulses of sublunary things,  
 And all is wonder to unpractised sense :  
 But, active, steadfast, and eternal, still  
 Guides the fierce whirlwind, in the tempest roars,  
 Cheers in the day, breathes in the balmy groves,  
 Strengthens in health, and poisons in disease ;  
 And in the storm of change, that ceaselessly  
 Rolls round the eternal universe, and shakes  
 Its undecaying battlement, presides,  
 Apportioning with irresistible law  
 The place each spring of its machine shall fill ;  
 So that when waves on waves tumultuous heap  
 Confusion to the clouds, and fiercely driven  
 Heaven's lightnings scorch the uprooted ocean-fords,

Whilst, to the eye of shipwrecked  
 mariner,  
 Lone sitting on the bare and shuddering  
 rock,  
 All seems unlinked contingency and  
 chance:  
 No atom of this turbulence fulfils  
 A vague and unnecessitated task,  
 Or acts but as it must or ought to act.  
 Even the minutest molecule of light,  
 That in an April sunbeam's fleeting glow  
 Fulfils its destined, though invisible  
 work,  
 The universal Spirit guides; nor less,  
 When merciless ambition, or mad zeal,  
 Has led two hosts of dupes to battle-  
 field,  
 That, blind, they there may dig each  
 other's graves,  
 And call the sad work glory, does it rule  
 All passions: not a thought, a will, an  
 act,  
 No working of the tyrant's moody mind,  
 Nor one misgiving of the slaves who  
 boast  
 Their servitude, to hide the shame they  
 feel,  
 Nor the events enchaining every will,  
 That from the depths of unrecorded  
 time  
 Have drawn all-influencing virtue, pass  
 Unrecognized, or unforeseen by thee,  
 Soul of the Universe! eternal spring  
 Of life and death, of happiness and woe,  
 Of all that chequers the phantasmal  
 scene  
 That floats before our eyes in wavering  
 light,  
 Which gleams but on the darkness of  
 our prison,  
 Whose chains and massy walls  
 We feel, but cannot see.  
  
 Spirit of Nature! all-sufficing Power,  
 Necessity! thou mother of the world!  
 Unlike the God of human error, thou  
 Requirest no prayers or praises; the  
 caprice  
 Of man's weak will belongs no more to  
 thee  
 Than do the changeful passions of his  
 breast  
 To thy unvarying harmony: the slave,

Whose horrible lusts spread misery o'er  
 the world,  
 And the good man, who lifts, with vir-  
 tuous pride,  
 His being, in the sight of happiness,  
 That springs from his own works; the  
 poison-tree,  
 Beneath whose shade all life is withered  
 up,  
 And the fair oak, whose leafy dome  
 affords  
 A temple where the vows of happy love  
 Are registered, are equal in thy sight:  
 No love, no hate thou cherishest; revenge  
 And favoritism, and worst desire of  
 fame  
 Thou knowest not: all that the wide  
 world contains  
 Are but thy passive instruments, and  
 thou  
 Regard'st them all with an impartial eye,  
 Whose joy or pain thy nature cannot  
 feel,  
 Because thou hast not human sense,  
 Because thou art not human mind.

Yes! when the sweeping storm of time  
 Has sung its death-dirge o'er the ruined  
 fane  
 And broken altars of the almighty fiend,  
 Whose name usurps thy honors, and the  
 blood  
 Through centuries clotted there, has  
 floated down  
 The tainted flood of ages, shalt thou live  
 Unchangeable! A shrine is raised to  
 thee,  
 Which, nor the tempest breath of time,  
 Nor the interminable flood,  
 Over earth's slight pageant rolling,  
 Availeth to destroy, —  
 The sensitive extension of the world.  
 That wondrous and eternal fane,  
 Where pain and pleasure, good and evil  
 join,  
 To do the will of strong necessity,  
 And life, in multitudinous shapes,  
 Still pressing forward where no term  
 can be,  
 Like hungry and unresting flame  
 Curls round the eternal columns of its  
 strength.

VII.

SPIRIT.

I WAS an infant when my mother went  
 To see an atheist burned. She took me  
 there:  
 The dark-robed priests were met around  
 the pile;  
 The multitude was gazing silently;  
 And as the culprit passed with dauntless  
 mien,  
 Tempered disdain in his unaltering eye,  
 Mixed with a quiet smile, shone calmly  
 forth:  
 The thirsty fire crept round his manly  
 limbs;  
 His resolute eyes were scorched to blind-  
 ness soon;  
 His death-pang rent my heart! the in-  
 sensate mob  
 Uttered a cry of triumph, and I wept.  
 Weep not, child! cried my mother, for  
 that man  
 Has said, There is no God.

FAIRY.

There is no God!  
 Nature confirms the faith his death-groan  
 sealed:  
 Let heaven and earth, let man's revolv-  
 ing race,  
 His ceaseless generations tell their tale;  
 Let every part depending on the chain  
 That links it to the whole, point to the  
 hand  
 That grasps its term! let every seed that  
 falls  
 In silent eloquence unfold its store  
 Of argument: infinity within,  
 Infinity without, belie creation;  
 The exterminable spirit it contains  
 Is nature's only God; but human pride  
 Is skilful to invent most serious names  
 To hide its ignorance.

The name of God  
 Has fenced about all crime with holiness,  
 Himself the creature of his worshippers,  
 Whose names and attributes and pas-  
 sions change,  
 Seeva, Buddh, Foh, Jehovah, God, or  
 Lord,

Even with the human dupes who build  
 his shrines,  
 Still serving o'er the war-polluted world  
 For desolation's watchword; whether  
 hosts  
 Stain his death-blushing chariot-wheels,  
 as on  
 Triumphantlly they roll, whilst Brahmins  
 raise  
 A sacred hymn to mingle with the  
 groans;  
 Or countless partners of his power divide  
 His tyranny to weakness; or the smoke  
 Of burning towns, the cries of female  
 helplessness,  
 Unarmed old age, and youth, and in-  
 fancy,  
 Horribly massacred, ascend to heaven  
 In honor of his name; or, last and worst,  
 Earth groans beneath religion's iron age,  
 And priests dare babble of a God of  
 peace,  
 Even whilst their hands are red with  
 guiltless blood,  
 Murdering the while, uprooting every  
 germ  
 Of truth, exterminating, spoiling all,  
 Making the earth a slaughter-house!

O Spirit! through the sense  
 By which thy inner nature was apprised  
 Of outward shows, vague dreams have  
 rolled,  
 And varied reminiscences have waked  
 Tablets that never fade;  
 All things have been imprinted there,  
 The stars, the sea, the earth, the sky,  
 Even the unshapeliest lineaments  
 Of wild and fleeting visions  
 Have left a record there  
 To testify of earth.

These are my empire, for to me is given  
 The wonders of the human world to  
 keep,  
 And fancy's thin creations to endow  
 With manner, being, and reality;  
 Therefore a wondrous phantom, from  
 the dreams  
 Of human error's dense and purblind  
 faith,  
 I will evoke, to meet thy questioning.  
 Ahasuerus, rise!

A strange and woe-worn wight  
 Arose beside the battlement,  
 And stood unmoving there.  
 His inessential figure cast no shade  
 Upon the golden floor;  
 His port and mien bore mark of many  
 years,  
 And chronicles of untold ancientness  
 Were legible within his beamless eye:  
 Yet his cheek bore the mark of youth;  
 Freshness and vigor knit his manly  
 frame;  
 The wisdom of old age was mingled  
 there  
 With youth's primeval dauntlessness;  
 And inexpressible woe,  
 Chastened by fearless resignation, gave  
 An awful grace to his all-speaking brow.

## SPIRIT.

Is there a God?

## AHASUERUS.

Is there a God! — ay, an almighty God,  
 And vengeful as almighty! Once his  
 voice  
 Was heard on earth: earth shuddered  
 at the sound;  
 The fiery-visaged firmament expressed  
 Abhorrence, and the grave of nature  
 yawned  
 To swallow all the dauntless and the  
 good  
 That dared to hurl defiance at his throne,  
 Girt as it was with power. None but  
 slaves  
 Survived, — cold-blooded slaves, who  
 did the work  
 Of tyrannous omnipotence; whose souls  
 No honest indignation ever urged  
 To elevated daring, to one deed  
 Which gross and sensual self did not  
 pollute.  
 These slaves built temples for the om-  
 nipotent fiend,  
 Gorgeous and vast: the costly altars  
 smoked  
 With human blood, and hideous pæans  
 rung  
 Through all the long-drawn aisles. A  
 murderer heard

His voice in Egypt, one whose gifts and  
 arts  
 Had raised him to his eminence in power,  
 Accomplice of omnipotence in crime,  
 And confidant of the all-knowing one.  
 These were Jehovah's words.

“ From an eternity of idleness  
 I, God, awoke; in seven days' toil made  
 earth  
 From nothing; rested, and created man:  
 I placed him in a paradise, and there  
 Planted the tree of evil, so that he  
 Might eat and perish, and my soul pro-  
 cure  
 Wherewith to sate its malice, and to turn,  
 Even like a heartless conqueror of the  
 earth,  
 All misery to my fame. The race of men  
 Chosen to my honor, with impunity  
 May sate the lusts I planted in their  
 heart.  
 Here I command thee hence to lead  
 them on,  
 Until, with hardened feet, their conquer-  
 ing troops  
 Wade on the promised soil through  
 woman's blood,  
 And make my name be dreaded through  
 the land.  
 Yet ever-burning flame and ceaseless woe  
 Shall be the doom of their eternal souls,  
 With every soul on this ungrateful earth,  
 Virtuous or vicious, weak or strong, —  
 even all  
 Shall perish, to fulfil the blind revenge  
 (Which you, to men, call justice) of  
 their God.”

The murderer's brow  
 Quivered with horror.

“ God omnipotent,  
 Is there no mercy? must our punishment  
 Be endless? will long ages roll away,  
 And see no term? Oh! wherefore hast  
 thou made  
 In mockery and wrath this evil earth?  
 Mercy becomes the powerful — be but  
 just:  
 O God! repent and save.”

“ One way remains:  
 I will beget a son, and he shall bear  
 The sins of all the world; he shall arise

In an unnoticed corner of the earth,  
 And there shall die upon a cross, and  
 purge  
 The universal crime; so that the few  
 On whom my grace descends, those who  
 are marked  
 As vessels to the honor of their God,  
 May credit this strange sacrifice, and  
 save  
 Their souls alive: millions shall live and  
 die,  
 Who ne'er shall call upon their Saviour's  
 name,  
 But, unredeemed, go to the gaping grave.  
 Thousands shall deem it an old woman's  
 tale,  
 Such as the nurses frighten babes withal:  
 These in a gulph of anguish and of  
 flame  
 Shall curse their reprobation endlessly,  
 Yet tenfold pangs shall force them to  
 avow,  
 Even on their beds of torment, where  
 they howl,  
 My honor, and the justice of their doom.  
 What then avail their virtuous deeds,  
 their thoughts  
 Of purity, with radiant genius bright,  
 Or lit with human reason's earthly ray?  
 Many are called, but few will I elect.  
 Do thou my bidding, Moses!"

Even the murderer's cheek  
 Was blanched with horror, and his quiver-  
 ing lips  
 Scarce faintly uttered — "O almighty  
 one,  
 I tremble and obey!"

O Spirit! centuries have set their seal  
 On this heart of many wounds, and  
 loaded brain,  
 Since the Incarnate came: humbly he  
 came,  
 Veiling his horrible Godhead in the  
 shape  
 Of man, scorned by the world, his name  
 unheard,  
 Save by the rabble of his native town,  
 Even as a parish demagogue. He led  
 The crowd; he taught them justice,  
 truth, and peace,  
 In semblance; but he lit within their  
 souls

The quenchless flames of zeal, and blest  
 the sword  
 He brought on earth to satiate with the  
 blood  
 Of truth and freedom his malignant soul.  
 At length his mortal frame was led to  
 death.  
 I stood beside him: on the torturing  
 cross  
 No pain assailed his unterrestrial sense;  
 And yet he groaned. Indignantly I  
 summed  
 The massacres and miseries which his  
 name  
 Had sanctioned in my country, and I  
 cried,  
 "Go! go!" in mockery.  
 A smile of godlike malice reillumined  
 His fading lineaments. — "I go," he  
 cried,  
 "But thou shalt wander o'er the unquiet  
 earth  
 Eternally." — The dampness of the  
 grave  
 Bathed my imperishable front. I fell,  
 And long lay tranced upon the charmed  
 soil.  
 When I awoke hell burned within my  
 brain,  
 Which staggered on its seat; for all  
 around  
 The mouldering relics of my kindred lay,  
 Even as the Almighty's ire arrested  
 them,  
 And in their various attitudes of death  
 My murdered children's mute and eye-  
 less skulls  
 Glared ghastly upon me.

But my soul,  
 From sight and sense of the polluting  
 woe  
 Of tyranny, had long learned to prefer  
 Hell's freedom to the servitude of  
 heaven.  
 Therefore I rose, and dauntlessly began  
 My lonely and unending pilgrimage,  
 Resolved to wage unwearable war  
 With my almighty tyrant, and to hurl  
 Defiance at his impotence to harm  
 Beyond the curse I bore. The very  
 hand  
 That barred my passage to the peaceful  
 grave

Has crushed the earth to misery, and  
 given  
 Its empire to the chosen of his slaves.  
 These have I seen, even from the earliest  
 dawn  
 Of weak, unstable and precarious power;  
 Then preaching peace, as now they prac-  
 tise war,  
 So, when they turned but from the  
 massacre  
 Of unoffending infidels, to quench  
 Their thirst for ruin in the very blood  
 That flowed in their own veins, and piti-  
 less zeal  
 Froze every human feeling, as the wife  
 Sheathed in her husband's heart the  
 sacred steel,  
 Even whilst its hopes were dreaming of  
 her love;  
 And friends to friends, brothers to  
 brothers stood  
 Opposed in bloodiest battle-field, and  
 war,  
 Scarce satiable by fate's last death-  
 draught waged,  
 Drunk from the winepress of the Al-  
 mighty's wrath;  
 Whilst the red cross, in mockery of  
 peace,  
 Pointed to victory! When the fray was  
 done,  
 No remnant of the exterminated faith  
 Survived to tell its ruin, but the flesh,  
 With putrid smoke poisoning the at-  
 mosphere,  
 That rotted on the half-extinguished pile.  
 Yes! I have seen God's worshippers  
 unsheathe  
 The sword of his revenge, when grace  
 descended,  
 Confirming all unnatural impulses,  
 To sanctify their desolating deeds;  
 And frantic priests waved the ill-omened  
 cross  
 O'er the unhappy earth: then shone the  
 sun  
 On showers of gore from the up flashing  
 steel  
 Of safe assassination, and all crime  
 Made stingless by the spirits of the Lord,  
 And blood-red rainbows canopied the  
 land.

Spirit! no year of my eventful being  
 Has passed unstained by crime and  
 misery,  
 Which flows from God's own faith. I've  
 marked his slaves  
 With tongues whose lies are venomous,  
 beguile  
 The insensate mob, and, whilst one hand  
 was red  
 With murder, feign to stretch the other  
 out  
 For brotherhood and peace; and that  
 they now  
 Babble of love and mercy, whilst their  
 deeds  
 Are marked with all the narrowness and  
 crime  
 That freedom's young arm dare not yet  
 chastise,  
 Reason may claim our gratitude, who  
 now  
 Establishing the imperishable throne  
 Of truth, and stubborn virtue, maketh  
 vain  
 The unprevailing malice of my foe,  
 Whose bootless rage heaps torments for  
 the brave,  
 Adds impotent eternities to pain,  
 Whilst keenest disappointment racks his  
 breast  
 To see the smiles of peace around them  
 play,  
 To frustrate or to sanctify their doom.

Thus have I stood, — through a wild  
 waste of years  
 Struggling with whirlwinds of mad  
 agony,  
 Yet peaceful, and serene, and self-  
 enshrined,  
 Mocking my powerless tyrant's horrible  
 curse  
 With stubborn and unalterable will,  
 Even as a giant oak, which heaven's  
 fierce flame  
 Had scathèd in the wilderness, to stand  
 A monument of fadeless ruin there;  
 Yet peacefully and movelessly it braves  
 The midnight conflict of the wintry storm.  
 As in the sunlight's calm it spreads  
 Its worn and withered arms on high  
 To meet the quiet of a summer's noon.



The Fairy waved her wand:  
 Ahasuerus fled  
 Fast as the shapes of mingled shade and  
 mist,  
 That lurk in the glens of a twilight grove,  
 Flee from the morning beam:  
 The matter of which dreams are made  
 Not more endowed with actual life  
 Than this phantasmal portraiture  
 Of wandering human thought.

VIII.

THE present and the past thou hast  
 beheld:

It was a desolate sight. Now, Spirit,  
 learn

The secrets of the future. — Time!  
 Unfold the brooding pinion of thy gloom,  
 Render thou up thy half-devoured babes,  
 And from the cradles of eternity,

Where millions lie lulled to their por-  
 tioned sleep

By the deep murmuring stream of pass-  
 ing things,

Tear thou that gloomy shroud. — Spirit,  
 behold

Thy glorious destiny!

Joy to the Spirit came.

Through the wide rent in Time's eternal  
 veil,

Hope was seen beaming through the  
 mists of fear:

Earth was no longer hell;

Love, freedom, health, had given

Their ripeness to the manhood of its  
 prime,

And all its pulses beat

Symphonious to the planetary spheres:

Then dulcet music swelled

Concordant with the life-strings of the  
 soul;

It throbb'd in sweet and languid beat-  
 ings there,

Catching new life from transitory  
 death, —

Like the vague sighings of a wind at  
 even,

That wakes the wavelets of the slumber-  
 ing sea

And dies on the creation of its breath,

And sinks and rises, fails and swells by  
 fits:

Was the pure stream of feeling  
 That sprung from these sweet  
 notes,

And o'er the Spirit's human sympathies  
 With mild and gentle motion calmly  
 flowed.

Joy to the Spirit came, —

Such joy as when a lover sees  
 The chosen of his soul in happiness,

And witnesses her peace

Whose woe to him were bitterer than  
 death,

Sees her unfaded cheek

Glow mantling in first luxury of health,  
 Thrills with her lovely eyes,

Which like two stars amid the heaving  
 main

Sparkle through liquid bliss.

Then in her triumph spoke the Fairy  
 Queen:

I will not call the ghost of ages gone  
 To unfold the frightful secrets of its lore;

The present now is past,

And those events that desolate the earth  
 Have faded from the memory of Time,

Who dares not give reality to that  
 Whose being I annul. To me is given

The wonders of the human world to  
 keep;

Space, matter, time, and mind. Futurity  
 Exposes now its treasure; let the sight

Renew and strengthen all thy failing  
 hope.

O human Spirit! spur thee to the goal  
 Where virtue fixes universal peace,

And midst the ebb and flow of human  
 things,

Show somewhat stable, somewhat certain  
 still,

A lighthouse o'er the wild of dreary  
 waves.

The habitable earth is full of bliss;  
 Those wastes of frozen billows that were

hurled

By everlasting snowstorms round the  
 poles,

Where matter dared not vegetate or live,  
 But ceaseless frost round the vast solitude

Bound its broad zone of stillness, are  
unloosed;  
And fragrant zephyrs there from spicy  
isles  
Ruffle the placid ocean-deep, that rolls  
Its broad, bright surges to the sloping  
sand,  
Whose roar is wakened into echoings  
sweet  
To murmur through the heaven-breath-  
ing groves  
And melodize with man's blest nature  
there.

Those deserts of immeasurable sand,  
Whose age-collected fervors scarce  
allowed  
A bird to live, a blade of grass to spring,  
Where the shrill chirp of the green  
lizard's love  
Broke on the sultry silentness alone,  
Now teem with countless rills and shady  
woods,  
Cornfields and pastures and white cot-  
tages;  
And where the startled wilderness beheld  
A savage conqueror stained in kindred  
blood,  
A tigress sating with the flesh of lambs  
The unnatural famine of her toothless  
cubs,  
Whilst shouts and howlings through the  
desert rang,  
Sloping and smooth the daisy-spangled  
lawn,  
Offering sweet incense to the sunrise,  
smiles  
To see a babe before his mother's door,  
Sharing his morning's meal  
With the green and golden basilisk  
That comes to lick his feet.

Those trackless deeps, where many a  
weary sail  
Has seen above the illimitable plain,  
Morning on night, and night on morning  
rise,  
Whilst still no land to greet the wanderer  
spread  
Its shadowy mountains on the sun-  
bright sea,  
Where the loud roarings of the tempest-  
waves

So long have mingled with the gusty  
wind  
In melancholy loneliness, and swept  
The desert of those ocean solitudes,  
But vocal to the sea-bird's harrowing  
shriek,  
The bellowing monster, and the rushing  
storm,  
Now to the sweet and many-mingling  
sounds  
Of kindest human impulses respond.  
Those lonely realms bright garden-isles  
begem,  
With lightsome clouds and shining seas  
between,  
And fertile valleys, resonant with bliss,  
Whilst green woods overcanopy the wave,  
Which like a toil-worn laborer leaps to  
shore,  
To meet the kisses of the flowrets there.

All things are recreated, and the flame  
Of consentaneous love inspires all life:  
The fertile bosom of the earth gives suck  
To myriads, who still grow beneath her  
care,  
Rewarding her with their pure perfect-  
ness:  
The balmy breathings of the wind inhale  
Her virtues, and diffuse them all abroad:  
Health floats amid the gentle atmosphere,  
Glows in the fruits, and mantles on the  
stream:  
No storms deform the beaming brow of  
heaven,  
Nor scatter in the freshness of its pride  
The foliage of the ever-verdant trees;  
But fruits are ever ripe, flowers ever fair,  
And autumn proudly bears her matron  
grace,  
Kindling a flush on the fair cheek of  
spring,  
Whose virgin bloom beneath the ruddy  
fruit  
Reflects its tint and blushes into love.

The lion now forgets to thirst for blood:  
There might you see him sporting in the  
sun  
Beside the dreadless kid; his claws are  
sheathed,  
His teeth are harmless, custom's force  
has made

His nature as the nature of a lamb.  
Like passion's fruit, the nightshade's  
tempting bane

Poisons no more the pleasure it bestows:  
All bitterness is past; the cup of joy  
Unmingled mantles to the goblet's brim,  
And courts the thirsty lips it fled before.

But chief, ambiguous man, he that can  
know

More misery, and dream more joy than  
all;

Whose keen sensations thrill within his  
breast

To mingle with a loftier instinct there,  
Lending their power to pleasure and to  
pain,

Yet raising, sharpening, and refining  
each;

Who stands amid the ever-varying world,  
The burthen or the glory of the earth;

He chief perceives the change, his being  
notes

The gradual renovation, and defines  
Each movement of its progress on his  
mind.

Man, where the gloom of the long polar  
night

Lowers o'er the snow-clad rocks and  
frozen soil,

Where scarce the hardiest herb that  
braves the frost

Basks in the moonlight's ineffectual glow,  
Shrank with the plants, and darkened  
with the night;

His chilled and narrow energies; his  
heart,

Insensible to courage, truth, or love,  
His stunted stature and imbecile frame,  
Marked him for some abortion of the

earth,  
Fit compeer of the bears that roamed  
around,

Whose habits and enjoyments were his  
own:

His life a feverish dream of stagnant  
woe,

Whose meagre wants but scantily ful-  
filled,

Apprized him ever of the joyless length  
Which his short being's wretchedness

had reached;

His death a pang which famine, cold  
and toil

Long on the mind, whilst yet the vital  
spark

Clung to the body stubbornly, had  
brought:

All was inflicted here that earth's revenge  
Could wreak on the infringers of her law;  
One curse alone was spared — the name  
of God.

Nor where the tropics bound the realms  
of day

With a broad belt of mingling cloud and  
flame,

Where blue mists through the unmoving  
atmosphere

Scattered the seeds of pestilence, and  
fed

Unnatural vegetation, where the land  
Teemed with all earthquake, tempest

and disease,

Was man a nobler being; slavery  
Had crushed him to his country's blood-  
stained dust;

Or he was bartered for the fame of power,  
Which all internal impulses destroying,

Makes human will an article of trade;

Or he was changed with Christians for  
their gold,

And dragged to distant isles, where to  
the sound

Of the flesh-mangling scourge, he does  
the work

Of all-polluting luxury and wealth,  
Which doubly visits on the tyrants'  
heads

The long-protracted fulness of their woe;  
Or he was led to legal butchery,

To turn to worms beneath that burning  
sun,

Where kings first leagued against the  
rights of men,

And priests first traded with the name of  
God.

Even where the milder zone afforded  
man

A seeming shelter, yet contagion there,  
Blighting his being with unnumbered  
ills,

Spread like a quenchless fire; nor truth  
till late

Availed to arrest its progress, or create  
 That peace which first in bloodless victory waved  
 Her snowy standard o'er this favored clime:  
 There man was long the train-bearer of slaves,  
 The mimic of surrounding misery,  
 The jackal of ambition's lion-rage,  
 The bloodhound of religion's hungry zeal.

Here now the human being stands adorning  
 This loveliest earth with taintless body and mind;  
 Blest from his birth with all bland impulses,  
 Which gently in his noble bosom wake  
 All kindly passions and all pure desires.  
 Him, still from hope to hope the bliss pursuing  
 Which from the exhaustless lore of human weal  
 Draws on the virtuous mind, the thoughts that rise  
 In time-destroying infiniteness, gift  
 With self-enshrined eternity, that mocks  
 The unprevailing hoariness of age,  
 And man, once fleeting o'er the transient scene  
 Swift as an unremembered vision, stands  
 Immortal upon earth: no longer now  
 He slays the lamb that looks him in the face,  
 And horribly devours his mangled flesh,  
 Which, still avenging nature's broken law,  
 Kindled all putrid humors in his frame,  
 All evil passions, and all vain belief,  
 Hatred, despair, and loathing in his mind,  
 The germs of misery, death, disease, and crime.  
 No longer now the wingèd habitants,  
 That in the woods their sweet lives sing away,  
 Flee from the form of man; but gather round,  
 And prune their sunny feathers on the hands  
 Which little children stretch in friendly sport

Towards these dreadless partners of their play.  
 All things are void of terror: man has lost  
 His terrible prerogative, and stands  
 An equal amidst equals: happiness  
 And science dawn though late upon the earth;  
 Peace cheers the mind, health renovates the frame;  
 Disease and pleasure cease to mingle here,  
 Reason and passion cease to combat there;  
 Whilst each unfettered o'er the earth extend  
 Their all-subduing energies, and wield  
 The sceptre of a vast dominion there;  
 Whilst every shape and mode of matter lends  
 Its force to the omnipotence of mind,  
 Which from its dark mine drags the gem of truth  
 To decorate its paradise of peace.

## IX.

O HAPPY Earth! reality of Heaven!  
 To which those restless souls that ceaselessly  
 Throng through the human universe, aspire;  
 Thou consummation of all mortal hope!  
 Thou glorious prize of blindly-working will!  
 Whose rays, diffused throughout all space and time,  
 Verge to one point and blend forever there:  
 Of purest spirits thou pure dwelling-place!  
 Where care and sorrow, impotence and crime,  
 Languor, disease, and ignorance dare not come:  
 O happy Earth, reality of Heaven!  
 Genius has seen thee in her passionate dreams,  
 And dim forebodings of thy loveliness  
 Haunting the human heart, have there entwined

Those rooted hopes of some sweet place  
of bliss  
Where friends and lovers meet to part  
no more.  
Thou art the end of all desire and will,  
The product of all action; and the souls  
That by the paths of an aspiring change  
Have reached thy haven of perpetual  
peace,  
There rest from the eternity of toil  
That framed the fabric of thy perfect-  
ness.

Even Time, the conqueror, fled thee in  
his fear;  
That hoary giant, who, in lonely pride,  
So long had ruled the world, that nations  
fell  
Beneath his silent footstep. Pyramids,  
That for millenniums had withstood the  
tide  
Of human things, his storm-breath drove  
in sand  
Across that desert where their stones  
survived  
The name of him whose pride had  
heaped them there.  
Yon monarch, in his solitary pomp,  
Was but the mushroom of a summer  
day,  
That his light-wingèd footstep pressed  
to dust:  
Time was the king of earth: all things  
gave way  
Before him, but the fixed and virtuous  
will,  
The sacred sympathies of soul and sense,  
That mocked his fury and prepared his  
fall.

Yet slow and gradual dawned the morn  
of love;  
Long lay the clouds of darkness o'er the  
scene,  
Till from its native heaven they rolled  
away:  
First, crime triumphant o'er all hope  
careered  
Unblushing, undisguising, bold and  
strong;  
Whilst falsehood, tricked in virtue's  
attributes,  
Long sanctified all deeds of vice and woe,

Till done by her own venomous sting to  
death,  
She left the moral world without a law,  
No longer fettering passion's fearless  
wing,  
Nor searing reason with the brand of  
God.  
Then steadily the happy ferment worked;  
Reason was free; and wild though pas-  
sion went  
Through tangled glens and wood-em-  
bosomed meads,  
Gathering a garland of the strangest  
flowers,  
Yet like the bee returning to her queen,  
She bound the sweetest on her sister's  
brow,  
Who meek and sober kissed the sportive  
child,  
No longer trembling at the broken rod.

Mild was the slow necessity of death:  
The tranquil spirit failed beneath its  
grasp.  
Without a groan, almost without a fear,  
Calm as a voyager to some distant land,  
And full of wonder, full of hope as he.  
The deadly germs of languor and disease  
Died in the human frame, and purity  
Blest with all gifts her earthly worship-  
pers.  
How vigorous then the athletic form of  
age!  
How clear its open and unwrinkled brow!  
Where neither avarice, cunning, pride,  
nor care,  
Had stamped the seal of gray deformity  
On all the mingling lineaments of time.  
How lovely the intrepid front of youth!  
Which meek-eyed courage decked with  
freshest grace;  
Courage of soul, that dreaded not a  
name,  
And elevated will, that journeyed on  
Through life's phantasmal scene in fear-  
lessness,  
With virtue, love, and pleasure, hand in  
hand.

Then, that sweet bondage which is free-  
dom's self,  
And rivets with sensation's softest tie  
The kindred sympathies of human souls,

Needed no fetters of tyrannic law :  
 Those delicate and timid impulses  
 In nature's primal modesty arose,  
 And with undoubted confidence dis-  
     closed  
 The growing longings of its dawning  
     love,  
 Unchecked by dull and selfish chastity,  
 That virtue of the cheaply virtuous,  
 Who pride themselves in senselessness  
     and frost.  
 No longer prostitution's venomed bane  
 Poisoned the springs of happiness and  
     life;  
 Woman and man, in confidence and love,  
 Equal and free and pure together trod  
 The mountain-paths of virtue, which no  
     more  
 Were stained with blood from many a  
     pilgrim's feet.

Then, where, through distant ages, long  
     in pride  
 The palace of the monarch-slave had  
     mocked  
 Famine's faint groan, and penury's silent  
     tear,  
 A heap of crumbling ruins stood, and  
     threw  
 Year after year their stones upon the field,  
 Wakening a lonely echo; and the leaves  
 Of the old thorn, that on the topmost  
     tower  
 Usurped the royal ensign's grandeur,  
     shook  
 In the stern storm that swayed the top-  
     most tower  
 And whispered strange tales in the whirl-  
     wind's ear.

Low through the lone cathedral's roof-  
     less aisles  
 The melancholy winds a death-dirge  
     sung :  
 It were a sight of awfulness to see  
 The works of faith and slavery, so vast,  
 So sumptuous, yet so perishing withal !  
 Even as the corpse that rests beneath its  
     wall.  
 A thousand mourners deck the pomp of  
     death  
 To-day, the breathing marble glows above  
 To decorate its memory, and tongues

Are busy of its life: to-morrow, worms  
 In silence and in darkness seize their  
     prey.

Within the massy prison's mouldering  
     courts,  
 Fearless and free the ruddy children  
     played,  
 Weaving gay chaplets for their innocent  
     brows  
 With the green ivy and the red wall-  
     flower,  
 That mock the dungeon's unavailing  
     gloom;  
 The ponderous chains, and gratings of  
     strong iron,  
 There rusted amid heaps of broken stone  
 That mingled slowly with their native  
     earth :  
 There the broad beam of day, which  
     feebly once  
 Lighted the cheek of lean captivity  
 With a pale and sickly glare, then freely  
     shone  
 On the pure smiles of infant playfulness :  
 No more the shuddering voice of hoarse  
     despair  
 Pealed through the echoing vaults, but  
     soothing notes  
 Of ivy-fingered winds and gladsome birds  
 And merriment were resonant around.

These ruins soon left not a wreck behind :  
 Their elements, wide scattered o'er the  
     globe,  
 To happier shapes were moulded, and  
     became  
 Ministrant to all blissful impulses :  
 Thus human things were perfected, and  
     earth,  
 Even as a child beneath its mother's  
     love,  
 Was strengthened in all excellence, and  
     grew  
 Fairer and nobler with each passing year.

Now Time his dusky pennons o'er the  
     scene  
 Closes in steadfast darkness, and the past  
 Fades from our charmed sight. My  
     task is done :  
 Thy lore is learned. Earth's wonders  
     are thine own,

With all the fear and all the hope they  
 bring.  
 My spells are past: the present now  
 recurs.  
 Ah me! a pathless wilderness remains  
 Yet unsubdued by man's reclaiming hand.  
 Yet, human Spirit, bravely hold thy  
 course,  
 Let virtue teach thee firmly to pursue  
 The gradual paths of an aspiring change:  
 For birth and life and death, and that  
 strange state  
 Before the naked soul has found its  
 home,  
 All tend to perfect happiness, and urge  
 The restless wheels of being on their  
 way,  
 Whose flashing spokes, instinct with  
 infinite life,  
 Bicker and burn to gain their destined  
 goal:  
 For birth but wakes the spirit to the sense  
 Of outward shows, whose unexperienced  
 shape  
 New modes of passion to its frame may  
 lend;  
 Life is its state of action, and the store  
 Of all events is aggregated there  
 That variegates the eternal universe;  
 Death is a gate of dreariness and gloom,  
 That leads to azure isles and beaming  
 skies  
 And happy regions of eternal hope.  
 Therefore, O Spirit! fearlessly bear on:  
 Though storms may break the primrose  
 on its stalk,  
 Though frosts may blight the freshness  
 of its bloom,  
 Yet spring's awakening breath will woo  
 the earth,  
 To feed with kindest dews its favorite  
 flower,  
 That blooms in mossy banks and dark-  
 some glens,  
 Lighting the green wood with its sunny  
 smile.  
 Fear not then, Spirit, death's disrobing  
 hand,  
 So welcome when the tyrant is awake,  
 So welcome when the bigot's hell-torch  
 burns;  
 'T is but the voyage of a darksome hour,

The transient gulph-dream of a startling  
 sleep.  
 Death is no foe to virtue: earth has  
 seen  
 Love's brightest roses on the scaffold  
 bloom,  
 Mingling with freedom's fadeless laurels  
 there,  
 And presaging the truth of visioned bliss.  
 Are there not hopes within thee, which  
 this scene  
 Of linked and gradual being has con-  
 firmed?  
 Whose stings bade thy heart look  
 further still,  
 When, to the moonlight walk by Henry  
 led,  
 Sweetly and sadly thou didst talk of  
 death?  
 And wilt thou rudely tear them from thy  
 breast,  
 Listening supinely to a bigot's creed,  
 Or tamely crouching to the tyrant's rod,  
 Whose iron thongs are red with human  
 gore?  
 Never: but bravely bearing on, thy will  
 Is destined an eternal war to wage  
 With tyranny and falsehood, and uproot  
 The germs of misery from the human  
 heart.  
 Thine is the hand whose piety would  
 soothe  
 The thorny pillow of unhappy crime,  
 Whose impotence an easy pardon gains,  
 Watching its wanderings as a friend's  
 disease:  
 Thine is the brow whose mildness would  
 defy  
 Its fiercest rage, and brave its sternest  
 will,  
 When fenced by power and master of  
 the world.  
 Thou art sincere and good; of resolute  
 mind,  
 Free from heart-withering custom's cold  
 control,  
 Of passion lofty, pure and unsubdued.  
 Earth's pride and meanness could not  
 vanquish thee,  
 And therefore art thou worthy of the  
 boon  
 Which thou hast now received: virtue  
 shall keep

Thy footsteps in the path that thou hast  
trod,  
And many days of beaming hope shall  
bless

Thy spotless life of sweet and sacred love.  
Go, happy one, and give that bosom joy  
Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch  
Light, life and rapture from thy smile.

The Fairy waves her wand of charm.  
Speechless with bliss the Spirit mounts  
the car,

That rolled beside the battlement,  
Bending her beamy eyes in thankfulness.  
Again the enchanted steeds were  
yoked,

Again the burning wheels inflame  
The steep descent of heaven's untrodden  
way.

Fast and far the chariot flew:  
The vast and fiery globes that rolled  
Around the Fairy's palace-gate  
Lessened by slow degrees and soon  
appeared

Such tiny twinklers as the planet orbs  
That there attendant on the solar power  
With borrowed light pursued their nar-  
rower way.

Earth floated then below:  
The chariot paused a moment there;  
The Spirit then descended:  
The restless coursers pawed the ungenial  
soil,  
Snuffed the gross air, and then, their  
errand done,  
Unfurled their pinions to the winds of  
heaven.

The Body and the Soul united then,  
A gentle start convulsed Ianthé's frame:  
Her veiny eyelids quietly unclosed;  
Moveless awhile the dark blue orbs re-  
mained:  
She looked around in wonder and be-  
held  
Henry, who kneeled in silence by her  
couch,  
Watching her sleep with looks of speech-  
less love,  
And the bright beaming stars  
That through the casement shone.

## SHELLEY'S NOTES.

## I. — PAGE 30.

*The sun's unclouded orb  
Rolled through the black concave.*

BEYOND our atmosphere the sun would appear a rayless orb of fire in the midst of a black concave. The equal diffusion of its light on earth is owing to the refraction of the rays by the atmosphere, and their reflection from other bodies. Light consists either of vibrations propagated through a subtle medium, or of numerous minute particles repelled in all directions from the luminous body. Its velocity greatly exceeds that of any substance with which we are acquainted: observations on the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites have demonstrated that light takes up no more than  $8' 7''$  in passing from the sun to the earth, a distance of 95,000,000 miles. — Some idea may be gained of the immense distance of the fixed stars when it is computed that many years would elapse before light could reach this earth from the nearest of them; yet in one year light travels 5,422,400,000,000 miles, which is a distance 5,707,600 times greater than that of the sun from the earth.

## I. — PAGE 30.

*Whilst round the chariot's way  
Innumerable systems rolled.*

The plurality of worlds, — the indefinite immensity of the universe is a most awful subject of contemplation. He who rightly feels its mystery and grandeur is in no danger of seduction from the falsehoods of religious systems, or of deifying the principle of the universe. It is impossible to believe that the Spirit that pervades this infinite machine begat a son upon the body of a Jewish woman; or is angered at the consequences of that necessity, which is a synonym of itself. All that miserable tale of the Devil, and Eve, and an Intercessor, with the childish mummeries of the God of the Jews,



is irreconcilable with the knowledge of the stars. The works of his fingers have borne witness against him.

The nearest of the fixed stars is inconceivably distant from the earth, and they are probably proportionably distant from each other. By a calculation of the velocity of light, Sirius is supposed to be at least 54,224,000,000,000 miles from the earth.<sup>1</sup> That which appears only like a thin and silvery cloud streaking the heaven is in effect composed of innumerable clusters of suns, each shining with its own light, and illuminating numbers of planets that revolve around them. Millions and millions of suns are ranged around us, all attended by innumerable worlds, yet calm, regular, and harmonious, all keeping the paths of immutable necessity.

#### IV. — PAGE 40.

*These are the hired bravos who defend  
The tyrant's throne.*

To employ murder as a means of justice is an idea which a man of an enlightened mind will not dwell upon with pleasure. To march forth in rank and file, and all the pomp of streamers and trumpets, for the purpose of shooting at our fellowmen as a mark; to inflict upon them all the variety of wound and anguish; to leave them weltering in their blood; to wander over the field of desolation, and count the number of the dying and the dead, — are employments which in thesis we may maintain to be necessary, but which no good man will contemplate with gratulation and delight. A battle we suppose is won: — thus truth is established, thus the cause of justice is confirmed! It surely requires no common sagacity to discern the connection between this immense heap of calamities and the assertion of truth or the maintenance of justice.

“Kings, and ministers of state, the real authors of the calamity, sit unmolested in their cabinet, while those against whom the fury of the storm is directed are, for

the most part, persons who have been trepanned into the service, or who are dragged unwillingly from their peaceful homes into the field of battle. A soldier is a man whose business it is to kill those who never offended him, and who are the innocent martyrs of other men's iniquities. Whatever may become of the abstract question of the justifiableness of war, it seems impossible that the soldier should not be a depraved and unnatural being.

“To these more serious and momentous considerations it may be proper to add a recollection of the ridiculousness of the military character. Its first constituent is obedience: a soldier is, of all descriptions of men, the most completely a machine; yet his profession inevitably teaches him something of dogmatism, swaggering, and self-consequence: he is like the puppet of a showman, who, at the very time he is made to strut and swell and display the most farcical airs, we perfectly know cannot assume the most insignificant gesture, advance either to the right or the left, but as he is moved by his exhibitor.”  
— Godwin's *Enquirer*, Essay v.

I will here subjoin a little poem, so strongly expressive of my abhorrence of despotism and falsehood, that I fear lest it never again may be depicted so vividly. This opportunity is perhaps the only one that ever will occur of rescuing it from oblivion.

#### FALSEHOOD AND VICE.

##### A DIALOGUE.

WHILST monarchs laughed upon their  
thrones

To hear a famished nation's groans,  
And hugged the wealth wrung from the  
woe

That makes its eyes and veins o'erflow, —  
Those thrones, high built upon the heaps  
Of bones where frenzied Famine sleeps,  
Where Slavery wilds her scourge of iron,  
Red with mankind's unheeded gore,  
And war's mad fiends the scene environ,  
Mingling with shrieks a drunken roar,

<sup>1</sup> See Nicholson's *Encyclopedia*, art. Light.

There Vice and Falsehood took their  
stand,  
High raised above the unhappy land.

## FALSEHOOD.

Brother! arise from the dainty fare,  
Which thousands have toiled and bled to  
bestow;  
A finer feast for thy hungry ear  
Is the news that I bring of human woe.

## VICE.

And, secret one, what hast thou done,  
To compare, in thy tumid pride, with me?  
I, whose career, through the blasted year,  
Has been tracked by despair and agony.

## FALSEHOOD.

What have I done! — I have torn the  
robe  
From baby Truth's unsheltered form,  
And round the desolated globe  
Borne safely the bewildering charm:  
My tyrant-slaves to a dungeon-floor  
Have bound the fearless innocent,  
And streams of fertilizing gore  
Flow from her bosom's hideous rent,  
Which this unfailing dagger gave. —  
I dread that blood! — no more — this day  
Is ours, though her eternal ray  
Must shine upon our grave.  
Yet know, proud Vice, had I not given  
To thee the robe I stole from heaven,  
Thy shape of ugliness and fear  
Had never gained admission here.

## VICE.

And know, that had I disdained to toil,  
But sate in my loathsome cave the while,  
And ne'er to these hateful sons of heaven  
GOLD, MONARCHY, and MURDER,  
given;  
Hadst thou with all thine art essayed  
One of thy games then to have played,  
With all thine overweening boast,  
Falsehood! I tell thee thou hadst lost! —  
Yet wherefore this dispute? — we tend,  
Fraternal, to one common end;  
In this cold grave beneath my feet,

Will our hopes, our fears, and our labors,  
meet.

## FALSEHOOD.

I brought my daughter, RELIGION, on  
earth:  
She smothered Reason's babes in their  
birth;  
But dreaded their mother's eye severe, —  
So the crocodile slunk off slyly in fear,  
And loosed her bloodhounds from the  
den. . . .  
They started from dreams of slaughtered  
men,  
And, by the light of her poison eye,  
Did her work o'er the wide earth fright-  
fully:  
The dreadful stench of her torches' flare,  
Fed with human fat, polluted the air:  
The curses, the shrieks, the ceaseless cries  
Of the many-mingling miseries,  
As on she trod, ascended high  
And trumpeted my victory! —  
Brother, tell what thou hast done.

## VICE.

I have extinguished the noonday sun,  
In the carnage-smoke of battles won:  
Famine, murder, hell and power  
Were glutted in that glorious hour  
Which searchless fate had stamped for me  
With the seal of her security. . . .  
For the bloated wretch on yonder throne  
Commanded the bloody fray to rise.  
Like me he joyed at the stifled moan  
Wrung from a nation's miseries;  
While the snakes, whose slime even him  
*defiled,*  
In ecstasies of malice smiled:  
They thought 'twas theirs, — but mine  
the deed!  
Theirs is the toil, but mine the meed —  
Ten thousand victims madly bled.  
They dream that tyrants goad them there  
With poisonous war to taint the air:  
These tyrants, on their beds of thorn,  
Swell with the thoughts of murderous  
fame,  
And with their gains to lift my name  
Restless they plan from night to morn:  
I — I do all; without my aid

Thy daughter, that relentless maid,  
 Could never o'er a death-bed urge  
 The fury of her venom'd scourge.

## FALSEHOOD.

Brother, well: — the world is ours;  
 And whether thou or I have won,  
 The pestilence expectant lours  
 On all beneath yon blasted sun.  
 Our joys, our toils, our honors meet  
 In the milk-white and wormy winding-  
 sheet:

A short-lived hope, unceasing care,  
 Some heartless scraps of godly prayer,  
 A moody curse, and a frenzied sleep  
 Ere gapes the grave's unclosing deep,  
 A tyrant's dream, a coward's start,  
 The ice that clings to a priestly heart,  
 A judge's frown, a courtier's smile,  
 Make the great whole for which we toil;  
 And, brother, whether thou or I  
 Have done the work of misery,  
 It little boots: thy toil and pain,  
 Without my aid, were more than vain;  
 And but for thee I ne'er had sate  
 The guardian of heaven's palace gate.

## V. — PAGE 41.

*Thus do the generations of the earth  
 Go to the grave, and issue from the womb.*

One generation passeth away and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south and turneth about unto the north, it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; unto the place whence the rivers come, thither shall they return again.— *Ecclesiastes*, chap. i. 4-7.

## V. — PAGE 41.

*Even as the leaves  
 Which the keen frost-wind of the waning  
 year  
 Has scattered on the forest soil.*

Οἷη περ φθλλων γενεῆ, τοιῆδε καὶ ἀνδρῶν.  
 Φύλλα τὰ μὲν τ' ἀνιμος χαράδις χεῖι, ἄλλα δέ  
 θ' ἔλη  
 Τηλεθώωσα φέει, ἔαρος δ' ἐπιγίγνεται ὥρη.  
 "Ὡς ἀνδρῶν γενεῆ, ἣ μὲν φέει, ἣδ' ἀπολύγει.  
 ΙΑΙΑΔ. Ζ', l. 146.

## V. — PAGE 42.

*The mob of peasants, nobles, priests, and  
 kings.*

Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora  
 ventis  
 E terra magnum alterius spectare labo-  
 rem;  
 Non quia vexari quemquam 'st jucunda  
 voluptas,  
 Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere  
 suave 'st.  
 Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri,  
 Per campos instructa, tua sine parte  
 pericli;  
 Sed nil dulcius est bene quam munita  
 tenere  
 Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena;  
 Despicere unde queas alios, passimque  
 videre  
 Errare atque viam palanteis quærere vitæ;  
 Certare ingenio; contendere nobilitate;  
 Nocteis atque dies niti præstante labore  
 Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque  
 potiri.  
 O miseris hominum menteis! O pectora  
 cæca! LUC. lib. ii. 1-14.

## V. — PAGE 43.

*And statesmen boast  
 Of wealth!*

There is no real wealth but the labor of man. Were the mountains of gold and the valleys of silver, the world would not be one grain of corn the richer; no one comfort would be added to the human race. In consequence of our consideration for the precious metals, one man is enabled to heap to himself luxuries at the expense of the necessaries of his neighbor; a system admirably fitted to produce all the varieties of disease and crime, which never fail to characterize the two extremes of opulence and penury. A speculator takes pride to

himself as the promoter of his country's prosperity, who employs a number of hands in the manufacture of articles avowedly destitute of use, or subservient only to the unhallowed cravings of luxury and ostentation. The nobleman, who employs the peasants of his neighborhood in building his palaces, until "*jam pauca aratro jugera regie moles relinquunt*," flatters himself that he has gained the title of a patriot by yielding to the impulses of vanity. The show and pomp of courts adduce the same apology for its continuance; and many a fête has been given, many a woman has eclipsed her beauty by her dress, to benefit the laboring poor and to encourage trade. Who does not see that this is a remedy which aggravates, whilst it palliates the countless diseases of society? The poor are set to labor, — for what? Not the food for which they famish: not the blankets for want of which their babes are frozen by the cold of their miserable hovels: not those comforts of civilization without which civilized man is far more miserable than the meanest savage; oppressed as he is by all its insidious evils, within the daily and taunting prospect of its innumerable benefits assiduously exhibited before him: — no; for the pride of power, for the miserable isolation of pride, for the false pleasures of the hundredth part of society. No greater evidence is afforded of the wide extended and radical mistakes of civilized man than this fact: those arts which are essential to his very being are held in the greatest contempt; employments are lucrative in an inverse ratio to their usefulness: <sup>1</sup> the jeweller, the toyman, the actor gains fame and wealth by the exercise of his useless and ridiculous art; whilst the cultivator of the earth, he without whom society must cease to subsist, struggles through contempt and penury, and perishes by that famine which but for his unceasing exertions would annihilate the rest of mankind.

I will not insult common sense by in-

sisting on the doctrine of the natural equality of man. The question is not concerning its desirableness, but its practicability: so far as it is practicable, it is desirable. That state of human society which approaches nearer to an equal partition of its benefits and evils should, *ceteris paribus*, be preferred: but so long as we conceive that a wanton expenditure of human labor, not for the necessities, not even for the luxuries of the mass of society, but for the egotism and ostentation of a few of its members, is defensible on the ground of public justice, so long we neglect to approximate to the redemption of the human race.

Labor is required for physical, and leisure for moral improvement: from the former of these advantages the rich, and from the latter the poor, by the inevitable conditions of their respective situations, are precluded. A state which should combine the advantages of both would be subjected to the evils of neither. He that is deficient in firm health, or vigorous intellect, is but half a man: hence it follows that to subject the laboring classes to unnecessary labor is wantonly depriving them of any opportunities of intellectual improvement; and that the rich are heaping up for their own mischief the disease, lassitude, and ennui by which their existence is rendered an intolerable burden.

English reformers exclaim against sin-cures, — but the true pension list is the rent-roll of the landed proprietors: wealth is a power usurped by the few, to compel the many to labor for their benefit. The laws which support this system derive their force from the ignorance and credulity of its victims: they are the result of a conspiracy of the few against the many, who are themselves obliged to purchase this pre-eminence by the loss of all real comfort.

"The commodities that substantially contribute to the subsistence of the human species form a very short catalogue: they demand from us but a slender portion of industry. If these only were produced, and sufficiently pro-

<sup>1</sup> See Rousseau, *De l'Inégalité parmi les Hommes*, note 7.

duced, the species of man would be continued. If the labor necessarily required to produce them were equitably divided among the poor, and, still more, if it were equitably divided among all, each man's share of labor would be light, and his portion of leisure would be ample. There was a time when this leisure would have been of small comparative value: it is to be hoped that the time will come when it will be applied to the most important purposes. Those hours which are not required for the production of the necessaries of life may be devoted to the cultivation of the understanding, the enlarging our stock of knowledge, the refining our taste, and thus opening to us new and more exquisite sources of enjoyment.

"It was perhaps necessary that a period of monopoly and oppression should subsist, before a period of cultivated equality could subsist. Savages perhaps would never have been excited to the discovery of truth and the invention of art but by the narrow motives which such a period affords. But surely, after the savage state has ceased, and men have set out in the glorious career of discovery and invention, monopoly and oppression cannot be necessary to prevent them from returning to a state of barbarism."—Godwin's *Enquirer*, Essay ii. See also *Political Justice*, book VIII. chap. ii.

It is a calculation of this admirable author, that all the conveniences of civilized life might be produced, if society would divide the labor equally among its members, by each individual being employed in labor two hours during the day.

V.—PAGE 43.

*or religion*  
*Drives his wife raving mad.*

I am acquainted with a lady of considerable accomplishments, and the mother of a numerous family, whom the Christian religion has goaded to

incurable insanity. A parallel case is, I believe, within the experience of every physician.

Nam jam sæpe homines patriam, carosque  
parentes  
Prodiderunt, vitare Acherusia templa  
petentes.

LUCRETIUS, iii., 85.

V.—PAGE 44.

*Even love is sold.*

Not even the intercourse of the sexes is exempt from the despotism of positive institution. Law pretends even to govern the indisciplinable wanderings of passion, to put fetters on the clearest deductions of reason, and, by appeals to the will, to subdue the involuntary affections of our nature. Love is inevitably consequent upon the perception of loveliness. Love withers under constraint: its very essence is liberty: it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear: it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality, and unreserve.

How long then ought the sexual connection to last? what law ought to specify the extent of the grievances which should limit its duration? A husband and wife ought to continue so long united as they love each other: any law which should bind them to cohabitation for one moment after the decay of their affection would be a most intolerable tyranny, and the most unworthy of toleration. How odious an usurpation of the right of private judgment should that law be considered which should make the ties of friendship indissoluble, in spite of the caprices, the inconstancy, the fallibility, and capacity for improvement of the human mind. And by so much would the fetters of love be heavier and more unendurable than those of friendship, as love is more vehement and capricious, more dependent on those delicate peculiarities of imagination, and less capable of reduction to the ostensible merits of the object.

The state of society in which we exist is a mixture of feudal savageness and imperfect civilization. The narrow and unenlightened morality of the Christian religion is an aggravation of these evils. It is not even until lately that mankind have admitted that happiness is the sole end of the science of ethics, as of all other sciences; and that the fanatical idea of mortifying the flesh for the love of God has been discarded. I have heard, indeed, an ignorant collegian adduce, in favor of Christianity, its hostility to every worldly feeling!<sup>1</sup>

But if happiness be the object of morality, of all human unions and disunions; if the worthiness of every action is to be estimated by the quantity of pleasurable sensation it is calculated to produce, then the connection of the sexes is so long sacred as it contributes to the comfort of the parties, and is naturally dissolved when its evils are greater than its benefits. There is nothing immoral in this separation. Constancy has nothing virtuous in itself, independently of the pleasure it confers, and partakes of the temporizing spirit of vice in proportion as it endures tamely moral defects of magnitude in the object of its indiscreet choice. Love is free: to promise forever to love the same woman is not less absurd than to promise to believe the same creed: such a vow, in both cases, excludes us from all inquiry. The language of the votarist is this: The woman I now love may be infinitely inferior to many others; the creed I now profess may be a mass of errors and absurdities; but I exclude myself from all future information as to the amiability of the one and the truth of the other, resolving

blindly, and in spite of conviction, to adhere to them. Is this the language of delicacy and reason? Is the love of such a frigid heart of more worth than its belief?

The present system of constraint does no more, in the majority of instances, than make hypocrites or open enemies. Persons of delicacy and virtue, unhappily united to one whom they find it impossible to love, spend the loveliest season of their life in unproductive efforts to appear otherwise than they are, for the sake of the feelings of their partner or the welfare of their mutual offspring: those of less generosity and refinement openly avow their disappointment, and linger out the remnant of that union, which only death can dissolve, in a state of incurable bickering and hostility. The early education of their children takes its color from the squabbles of the parents; they are nursed in a systematic school of ill-humor, violence, and falsehood. Had they been suffered to part at the moment when indifference rendered their union irksome, they would have been spared many years of misery: they would have connected themselves more suitably, and would have found that happiness in the society of more congenial partners which is forever denied them by the despotism of marriage. They would have been separately useful and happy members of society, who, whilst united, were miserable and rendered misanthropical by misery. The conviction that wedlock is indissoluble holds out the strongest of all temptations to the perverse: they indulge without restraint in acrimony, and all the little tyrannies of domestic life, when they know that their victim is without appeal. If this connection were put on a rational basis, each would be assured that habitual ill-temper would terminate in separation, and would check this vicious and dangerous propensity.

Prostitution is the legitimate offspring of marriage and its accompanying errors. Women, for no other crime than having followed the dictates of a natural appetite, are driven with fury from the comforts and sympathies of society. It is less

<sup>1</sup> The first Christian emperor made a law by which seduction was punished with death; if the female pleaded her own consent, she was also punished with death; if the parents endeavored to screen the criminals, they were banished and their estates were confiscated; the slaves who might be accessory were burned alive, or forced to swallow melted lead. The very offspring of an illegal love were involved in the consequences of the sentence. — Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, etc. vol. ii. p. 210. See also, for the hatred of the primitive Christians to love and even marriage, p. 269.

venial than murder; and the punishment which is inflicted on her who destroys her child to escape reproach is lighter than the life of agony and disease to which the prostitute is irrecoverably doomed. Has a woman obeyed the impulse of unerring nature;—society declares war against her, pitiless and eternal war: she must be the tame slave, she must make no reprisals; theirs is the right of persecution, hers the duty of endurance. She lives a life of infamy: the loud and bitter laugh of scorn scares her from all return. She dies of long and lingering disease; yet *she* is in fault, *she* is the criminal, *she* the froward and untamable child, — and society, forsooth, the pure and virtuous matron, who casts her as an abortion from her undefiled bosom! Society avenges herself on the criminals of her own creation; she is employed in anathematizing the vice to-day, which yesterday she was the most zealous to teach. Thus is formed one-tenth of the population of London: meanwhile the evil is twofold. Young men, excluded by the fanatical idea of chastity from the society of modest and accomplished women, associate with these vicious and miserable beings, destroying thereby all those exquisite and delicate sensibilities whose existence cold-hearted worldlings have denied; annihilating all genuine passion, and debasing that to a selfish feeling which is the excess of generosity and devotedness. Their body and mind alike crumble into a hideous wreck of humanity; idiocy and disease become perpetuated in their miserable offspring, and distant generations suffer for the bigoted morality of their forefathers. Chastity is a monkish and evangelical superstition, a greater foe to natural temperance even than unintellectual sensuality; it strikes at the root of all domestic happiness, and consigns more than half of the human race to misery, that some few may monopolize according to law. A system could not well have been devised more studiously hostile to human happiness than marriage.

I conceive that from the abolition of marriage, the fit and natural arrangement of sexual connection would result. I by

no means assert that the intercourse would be promiscuous: on the contrary, it appears, from the relation of parent to child, that this union is generally of long duration, and marked above all others with generosity and self-devotion. But this is a subject which it is perhaps premature to discuss. That which will result from the abolition of marriage will be natural and right; because choice and change will be exempted from restraint.

In fact, religion and morality, as they now stand, compose a practical code of misery and servitude: the genius of human happiness must tear every leaf from the accursed book of God ere man can read the inscription on his heart. How would morality, dressed up in stiff stays and finery, start from her own disgusting image should she look in the mirror of nature!

#### VI. — PAGE 46.

*To the red and baleful sun  
That faintly twinkles there.*

The north polar star, to which the axis of the earth, in its present state of obliquity, points. It is exceedingly probable, from many considerations, that this obliquity will gradually diminish, until the equator coincides with the ecliptic: the nights and days will then become equal on the earth throughout the year, and probably the seasons also. There is no great extravagance in presuming that the progress of the perpendicularity of the poles may be as rapid as the progress of intellect; or that there should be a perfect identity between the moral and physical improvement of the human species. It is certain that wisdom is not compatible with disease, and that, in the present state of the climates of the earth, health, in the true and comprehensive sense of the word, is out of the reach of civilized man. Astronomy teaches us that the earth is now in its progress, and that the poles are every year becoming more and more perpendicular to the ecliptic. The strong evidence afforded by the history of mythology, and geological researches, that some event of this nature has taken place

already, affords a strong presumption that this progress is not merely an oscillation, as has been surmised by some late astronomers.<sup>1</sup> Bones of animals peculiar to the torrid zone have been found in the north of Siberia, and on the banks of the river Ohio. Plants have been found in the fossil state in the interior of Germany, which demand the present climate of Hindostan for their production.<sup>2</sup> The researches of M. Bailly<sup>3</sup> establish the existence of a people who inhabited a tract in Tartary 49° north latitude, of greater antiquity than either the Indians, the Chinese, or the Chaldeans, from whom these nations derived their sciences and theology. We find, from the testimony of ancient writers, that Britain, Germany, and France were much colder than at present, and that their great rivers were annually frozen over. Astronomy teaches us also that since this period the obliquity of the earth's position has been considerably diminished.

#### VI. — PAGE 48.

*No atom of this turbulence fulfils  
A vague and unnecessitated task,  
Or acts but as it must and ought to act.*

“Deux exemples serviront à nous rendre plus sensible le principe qui vient d'être posé; nous emprunterons l'une du physique et l'autre du moral. Dans un tourbillon de poussière qu'élève un vent impétueux, quelque confus qu'il paraisse à nos yeux; dans la plus affreuse tempête excitée par des vents opposés qui soulèvent les flots, il n'y a pas une seule molécule de poussière ou d'eau qui soit placée au *hasard*, qui n'ait sa cause suffisante pour occuper le lieu où elle se trouve, et qui n'agisse rigoureusement de la manière dont elle doit agir. Une géomètre qui connaîtrait exactement les différentes forces qui agissent dans ces deux cas, et les propriétés des molécules qui sont mues, démontrerait que d'après des causes données, chaque molécule agit

<sup>1</sup> Laplace, *Système du Monde*.

<sup>2</sup> Cabanis, *Rapports du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme*, vol. ii. p. 406.

<sup>3</sup> Bailly, *Lettres sur les Sciences, à Voltaire*.

précisément comme elle doit agir, et ne peut agir autrement qu'elle ne fait.

Dans les convulsions terribles qui agitent quelquefois les sociétés politiques, et qui produisent souvent le renversement d'un empire, il n'y a pas une seule action, une seule parole, une seule pensée, une seule volonté, une seule passion dans les agens qui concourent à la révolution comme destructeurs ou comme victimes, qui ne soit nécessaire, qui n'agisse comme elle doit agir, qui n'opère infalliblement les effets qu'elle doit opérer, suivant la place qu'occupent ces agens dans ce tourbillon moral. Cela paraîtrait évident pour une intelligence qui serait en état de saisir et d'apprécier toutes les actions et réactions des esprits et des corps de ceux qui contribuent à cette révolution.” — *Système de la Nature*, vol. i. p. 44.

#### VI. — PAGE 48.

*Necessity! thou mother of the world!*

He who asserts the doctrine of Necessity means that, contemplating the events which compose the moral and material universe, he beholds only an immense and uninterrupted chain of causes and effects, no one of which could occupy any other place than it does occupy, or act in any other place than it does act. The idea of necessity is obtained by our experience of the connection between objects, the uniformity of the operations of nature, the constant conjunction of similar events, and the consequent inference of one from the other. Mankind are therefore agreed in the admission of necessity, if they admit that these two circumstances take place in voluntary action. Motive is to voluntary action in the human mind what cause is to effect in the material universe. The word liberty, as applied to mind, is analogous to the word chance as applied to matter: they spring from an ignorance of the certainty of the conjunction of antecedents and consequents.

Every human being is irresistibly impelled to act precisely as he does act:



in the eternity which preceded his birth a chain of causes was generated, which, operating under the name of motives, make it impossible that any thought of his mind, or any action of his life, should be otherwise than it is. Were the doctrine of Necessity false, the human mind would no longer be a legitimate object of science; from like causes it would be in vain that we should expect like effects; the strongest motive would no longer be paramount over the conduct; all knowledge would be vague and undeterminate; we could not predict with any certainty that we might not meet as an enemy to-morrow him with whom we have parted in friendship to-night; the most probable inducements and the clearest reasonings would lose the invariable influence they possess. The contrary of this is demonstrably the fact. Similar circumstances produce the same unvariable effects. The precise character and motives of any man on any occasion being given, the moral philosopher could predict his actions with as much certainty as the natural philosopher could predict the effects of the mixture of any particular chemical substances. Why is the aged husbandman more experienced than the young beginner? Because there is a uniform, undeniable necessity in the operations of the material universe. Why is the old statesman more skilful than the raw politician? Because, relying on the necessary conjunction of motive and action, he proceeds to produce moral effects, by the application of those moral causes which experience has shown to be effectual. Some actions may be found to which we can attach no motives, but these are the effects of causes with which we are unacquainted. Hence the relation which motive bears to voluntary action is that of cause to effect; nor, placed in this point of view, is it, or ever has it been, the subject of popular or philosophical dispute. None but the few fanatics who are engaged in the herculean task of reconciling the justice of their God with the misery of man, will longer outrage common sense by the supposition of an event without

a cause, a voluntary action without a motive. History, politics, morals, criticism, all grounds of reasonings, all principles of science, alike assume the truth of the doctrine of Necessity. No farmer carrying his corn to market doubts the sale of it at the market price. The master of a manufactory no more doubts that he can purchase the human labor necessary for his purposes than that his machinery will act as they have been accustomed to act.

But, whilst none have scrupled to admit necessity as influencing matter, many have disputed its dominion over mind. Independently of its militating with the received ideas of the justice of God, it is by no means obvious to a superficial inquiry. When the mind observes its own operations, it feels no connection of motive and action: but as we know "nothing more of causation than the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other, as we find that these two circumstances are universally allowed to have place in voluntary action, we may be easily led to own that they are subjected to the necessity common to all causes." The actions of the will have a regular conjunction with circumstances and characters; motive is to voluntary action what cause is to effect. But the only idea we can form of causation is a constant conjunction of similar objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other: wherever this is the case necessity is clearly established.

The idea of liberty, applied metaphorically to the will, has sprung from a misconception of the meaning of the word power. What is power?—*id quod potest*, that which can produce any given effect. To deny power is to say that nothing can or has the power to be or act. In the only true sense of the word power, it applies with equal force to the loadstone as to the human will. Do you think these motives, which I shall present, are powerful enough to rouse him? is a question just as common as, Do you think this lever has the power of raising this weight? The advocates of free-will

assert that the will has the power of refusing to be determined by the strongest motive: but the strongest motive is that which, overcoming all others, ultimately prevails; this assertion therefore amounts to a denial of the will being ultimately determined by that motive which does determine it, which is absurd. But it is equally certain that a man cannot resist the strongest motive as that he cannot overcome a physical impossibility.

The doctrine of Necessity tends to introduce a great change into the established notions of morality, and utterly to destroy religion. Reward and punishment must be considered, by the Necessarian, merely as motives which he would employ in order to procure the adoption or abandonment of any given line of conduct. Desert, in the present sense of the word, would no longer have any meaning; and he who should inflict pain upon another for no better reason than that he deserved it, would only gratify his revenge under pretence of satisfying justice. It is not enough, says the advocate of free-will, that a criminal should be prevented from a repetition of his crime: he should feel pain, and his torments, when justly inflicted, ought precisely to be proportioned to his fault. But utility is morality; that which is incapable of producing happiness is useless; and though the crime of Damians must be condemned, yet the frightful torments which revenge, under the name of justice, inflicted on this unhappy man cannot be supposed to have augmented, even at the long run, the stock of pleasurable sensation in the world. At the same time, the doctrine of Necessity does not in the least diminish our disapprobation of vice. The conviction which all feel that a viper is a poisonous animal, and that a tiger is constrained, by the inevitable condition of his existence, to devour men, does not induce us to avoid them less sedulously, or, even more, to hesitate in destroying them: but he would surely be of a hard heart who, meeting with a serpent on a desert island, or in a situation where it was incapable of injury, should wantonly deprive it of

existence. A Necessarian is inconsequent to his own principles if he indulges in hatred or contempt; the compassion which he feels for the criminal is unmixed with a desire of injuring him: he looks with an elevated and dreadless composure upon the links of the universal chain as they pass before his eyes; whilst cowardice, curiosity, and inconsistency only assail him in proportion to the feebleness and indistinctness with which he has perceived and rejected the delusions of free-will.

Religion is the perception of the relation in which we stand to the principle of the universe. But if the principle of the universe be not an organic being, the model and prototype of man, the relation between it and human beings is absolutely none. Without some insight into its will respecting our actions religion is nugatory and vain. But will is only a mode of animal mind; moral qualities also are such as only a human being can possess; to attribute them to the principle of the universe is to annex to it properties incompatible with any possible definition of its nature. It is probable that the word God was originally only an expression denoting the unknown cause of the known events which men perceived in the universe. By the vulgar mistake of a metaphor for a real being, of a word for a thing, it became a man, endowed with human qualities and governing the universe as an earthly monarch governs his kingdom. Their addresses to this imaginary being, indeed, are much in the same style as those of subjects to a king. They acknowledge his benevolence, deprecate his anger, and supplicate his favor.

But the doctrine of Necessity teaches us that in no case could any event have happened otherwise than it did happen, and that, if God is the author of good, he is also the author of evil; that, if he is entitled to our gratitude for the one, he is entitled to our hatred for the other; that, admitting the existence of this hypothetical being, he is also subjected to the dominion of an immutable necessity. It is plain that the same arguments which

prove that God is the author of food, light, and life, prove him also to be the author of poison, darkness, and death. The wide-wasting earthquake, the storm, the battle, and the tyranny, are attributable to this hypothetic being in the same degree as the fairest forms of nature, sunshine, liberty, and peace.

But we are taught, by the doctrine of Necessity, that there is neither good nor evil in the universe, otherwise than as the events to which we apply these epithets have relation to our own peculiar mode of being. Still less than with the hypothesis of a God will the doctrine of Necessity accord with the belief of a future state of punishment. God made man such as he is, and then damned him for being so; for to say that God was the author of all good, and man the author of all evil, is to say that one man made a straight line and a crooked one, and another man made the incongruity.

A Mahometan story, much to the present purpose, is recorded, wherein Adam and Moses are introduced disputing before God in the following manner. Thou, says Moses, art Adam, whom God created, and animated with the breath of life, and caused to be worshipped by the angels, and placed in Paradise, from whence mankind have been expelled for thy fault. Whereto Adam answered, Thou art Moses, whom God chose for his apostle, and intrusted with his word, by giving thee the tables of the law, and whom he vouchsafed to admit to discourse with himself. How many years dost thou find the law was written before I was created? Says Moses, Forty. And dost thou not find, replied Adam, these words therein, And Adam rebelled against his Lord and transgressed? Which Moses confessing, Dost thou therefore blame me, continued he, for doing that which God wrote of me that I should do, forty years before I was created, nay, for what was decreed concerning me fifty thousand years before the creation of heaven and earth? — Sale's *Prelim. Disc. to the Koran*, p. 164.

## VII. — PAGE 49.

*There is no God!*

This negation must be understood solely to affect a creative Deity. The hypothesis of a pervading Spirit coëternal with the universe remains unshaken.

A close examination of the validity of the proofs adduced to support any proposition is the only secure way of attaining truth, on the advantages of which it is unnecessary to descant: our knowledge of the existence of a Deity is a subject of such importance that it cannot be too minutely investigated; in consequence of this conviction we proceed briefly and impartially to examine the proofs which have been adduced. It is necessary first to consider the nature of belief.

When a proposition is offered to the mind, it perceives the agreement or disagreement of the ideas of which it is composed. A perception of their agreement is termed *belief*. Many obstacles frequently prevent this perception from being immediate; these the mind attempts to remove in order that the perception may be distinct. The mind is active in the investigation in order to perfect the state of perception of the relation which the component ideas of the proposition bear to each, which is passive: the investigation being confused with the perception has induced many falsely to imagine that the mind is active in belief, — that belief is an act of volition, — in consequence of which it may be regulated by the mind. Pursuing, continuing this mistake, they have attached a degree of criminality to disbelief; of which, in its nature, it is incapable: it is equally incapable of merit.

Belief, then, is a passion, the strength of which, like every other passion, is in precise proportion to the degrees of excitement.

The degrees of excitement are three.

The senses are the sources of all knowledge to the mind; consequently their evidence claims the strongest assent.

The decision of the mind, founded

upon our own experience, derived from these sources, claims the next degree.

The experience of others, which addresses itself to the former one, occupies the lowest degree.

(A graduated scale, on which should be marked the capabilities of propositions to approach to the test of the senses, would be a just barometer of the belief which ought to be attached to them.)

Consequently no testimony can be admitted which is contrary to reason; reason is founded on the evidence of our senses.

Every proof may be referred to one of these three divisions: it is to be considered what arguments we receive from each of them, which should convince us of the existence of a Deity.

1st, The evidence of the senses. If the Deity should appear to us, if he should convince our senses of his existence, this revelation would necessarily command belief. Those to whom the Deity has thus appeared have the strongest possible conviction of his existence. But the God of Theologians is incapable of local visibility.

2d, Reason. It is urged that man knows that whatever is must either have had a beginning, or have existed from all eternity: he also knows that whatever is not eternal must have had a cause. When this reasoning is applied to the universe, it is necessary to prove that it was created: until that is clearly demonstrated we may reasonably suppose that it has endured from all eternity. We must prove design before we can infer a designer. The only idea which we can form of causation is derivable from the constant conjunction of objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other. In a case where two propositions are diametrically opposite, the mind believes that which is least incomprehensible; — it is easier to suppose that the universe has existed from all eternity than to conceive a being beyond its limits capable of creating it: if the mind sinks beneath the weight of one, is it an alleviation to increase the intolerability of the burden?

The other argument, which is founded

on a man's knowledge of his own existence, stands thus. A man knows not only that he now is, but that once he was not; consequently there must have been a cause. But our idea of causation is alone derivable from the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other; and, reasoning experimentally, we can only infer from effects causes exactly adequate to those effects. But there certainly is a generative power which is effected by certain instruments: we cannot prove that it is inherent in these instruments; nor is the contrary hypothesis capable of demonstration: we admit that the generative power is incomprehensible; but to suppose that the same effect is produced by an eternal, omniscient, omnipotent being leaves the cause in the same obscurity, but renders it more incomprehensible.

3d, Testimony. It is required that testimony should not be contrary to reason. The testimony that the Deity convinces the senses of men of his existence can only be admitted by us if our mind considers it less probable that these men should have been deceived than that the Deity should have appeared to them. Our reason can never admit the testimony of men, who not only declare that they were eye-witnesses of miracles, but that the Deity was irrational; for he commanded that he should be believed, he proposed the highest rewards for faith, eternal punishments for disbelief. We can only command voluntary actions; belief is not an act of volition; the mind is even passive, or involuntarily active; from this it is evident that we have no sufficient testimony, or rather that testimony is insufficient to prove the being of a God. It has been before shown that it cannot be deduced from reason. They alone, then, who have been convinced by the evidence of the senses can believe it.

Hence it is evident that, having no proofs from either of the three sources of conviction, the mind *cannot* believe the existence of a creative God: it is also evident that, as belief is a passion of the mind, no degree of criminality is attach-

able to disbelief; and that they only are reprehensible who neglect to remove the false medium through which their mind views any subject of discussion. Every reflecting mind must acknowledge that there is no proof of the existence of a Deity.

God is an hypothesis, and, as such, stands in need of proof: the *onus probandi* rests on the theist. Sir Isaac Newton says: *Hypotheses non fingo, quicquid enim ex phænomenis non deducitur hypothesis vocanda est, et hypothesis vel metaphysicæ, vel physicæ, vel qualitatum occultarum, seu mechanicæ, in philosophiâ locum non habent.* To all proofs of the existence of a creative God apply this valuable rule. We see a variety of bodies possessing a variety of powers: we merely know their effects; we are in a state of ignorance with respect to their essences and causes. These Newton calls the phenomena of things; but the pride of philosophy is unwilling to admit its ignorance of their causes. From the phenomena, which are the objects of our senses, we attempt to infer a cause, which we call God, and gratuitously endow it with all negative and contradictory qualities. From this hypothesis we invent this general name, to conceal our ignorance of causes and essences. The being called God by no means answers with the conditions prescribed by Newton; it bears every mark of a veil woven by philosophical conceit, to hide the ignorance of philosophers even from themselves. They borrow the threads of its texture from the anthropomorphism of the vulgar. Words have been used by sophists for the same purposes, from the occult qualities of the peripatetics to the *effluvium* of Boyle and the *cxinities* or *nebulæ* of Herschel. God is represented as infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; he is contained under every *predicate in non* that the logic of ignorance could fabricate. Even his worshippers allow that it is impossible to form any idea of him: they exclaim with the French poet,

*Pour dire ce qu'il est, il faut être lui-même.*

Lord Bacon says that atheism leaves to man reason, philosophy, natural piety, laws, reputation, and everything that can serve to conduct him to virtue; but superstition destroys all these, and erects itself into a tyranny over the understandings of men: hence atheism never disturbs the government, but renders man more clear-sighted, since he sees nothing beyond the boundaries of the present life. — Bacon's *Moral Essays*.

La première théologie de l'homme lui fit d'abord craindre et adorer les éléments même, des objets matériels et grossiers; il rendit ensuite ses hommages à des agents présidents aux éléments, à des génies inférieurs, à des héros, ou à des hommes doués de grandes qualités. A force de réfléchir il crut simplifier les choses en soumettant la nature entière à un seul agent, à une intelligence souveraine, à un esprit, à une âme universelle, qui mettait cette nature et ses parties en mouvement. En remontant de causes en causes, les mortels ont fini par ne rien voir; et c'est dans cette obscurité qu'ils ont placé leur Dieu; c'est dans cette abîme ténébreux que leur imagination inquiète travaille toujours à se fabriquer des chimères, que les affligeront jusqu'à ce que la connaissance de la nature les détrompe des fantômes qu'ils ont toujours si vainement adorés.

Si nous voulons nous rendre compte de nos idées sur la Divinité, nous serons obligés de convenir que, par le mot *Dieu*, les hommes n'ont jamais pu désigner que la cause la plus cachée, la plus éloignée, la plus inconnue des effets qu'ils voyaient: ils ne font usage de ce mot, que lorsque le jeu des causes naturelles et connues cesse d'être visible pour eux; dès qu'ils perdent le fil de ces causes, ou dès que leur esprit ne peut plus en suivre la chaîne, ils tranchent leur difficulté, et terminent leurs recherches en appelant Dieu la dernière des causes, e'est-à-dire celle qui est au-delà de toutes les causes qu'ils connaissent; ainsi ils ne font qu'assigner une dénomination vague à une cause ignorée, à laquelle leur paresse ou les bornes de leurs connaissances les

forcent de s'arrêter. Toutes les fois qu'on nous dit que Dieu est l'auteur de quelque phénomène, cela signifie qu'on ignore comment un tel phénomène a pu s'opérer par le secours des forces ou des causes que nous connaissons dans la nature. C'est ainsi que le commun des hommes, dont l'ignorance est la part, attribue à la Divinité non seulement les effets surprenants qui les frappent, mais encore les événemens les plus simples, dont les causes sont les plus faciles à connaître pour quiconque a pu les méditer. En un mot, l'homme a toujours respecté les causes inconnues des effets surprenants, que son ignorance l'empêchait de démêler. Ce fut sur les débris de la nature que les hommes élevèrent le colosse imaginaire de la Divinité.

Si l'ignorance de la nature donna la naissance aux dieux, la connaissance de la nature est faite pour les détruire. A mesure que l'homme s'instruit, ses forces et ses ressources augmentent avec ses lumières; les sciences, les arts conservateurs, l'industrie, lui fournissent des secours; l'expérience le rassure ou lui procure des moyens de résister aux efforts de bien des causes qui cessent de l'alarmer dès qu'il les a connues. En un mot, ses terreurs se dissipent dans la même proportion que son esprit s'éclaire. L'homme instruit cesse d'être superstitieux.

Ce n'est jamais que sur parole que des peuples entiers adorent le Dieu de leurs pères et de leurs prêtres: l'autorité, la confiance, la soumission, et l'habitude leur tiennent lieu de conviction et de preuves; ils se prosternent et prient, parceque leurs pères leur ont appris à se prosterner et à prier: mais pourquoi ceux-ci se sont-ils mis à genoux? C'est que dans les temps éloignés leurs législateurs et leurs guides leur en ont fait un devoir. "Adorez et croyez," ont-ils dit, "des dieux que vous ne pouvez comprendre; rapportez-vous-en à notre sagesse profonde; nous en savons plus que vous sur la divinité." Mais pourquoi m'en rapporterais-je à vous? C'est que Dieu le veut ainsi, c'est que Dieu vous punira si vous osez résister. Mais ce

Dieu n'est-il donc pas la chose en question? Cependant les hommes se sont toujours payés de ce cercle vicieux; la paresse de leur esprit leur fit trouver plus court de s'en rapporter au jugement des autres. Toutes les notions religieuses sont fondées uniquement sur l'autorité; toutes les religions du monde défendent l'examen et ne veulent pas que l'on raisonne; c'est l'autorité qui veut qu'on croie en Dieu; ce Dieu n'est lui-même fondé que sur l'autorité de quelques hommes qui prétendent le connaître, et venir de sa part pour l'annoncer à la terre. Un Dieu fait par les hommes, a sans doutes besoin des hommes pour se faire connaître aux hommes.

Ne serait-ce donc que pour des prêtres, des inspirés, des métaphysiciens que serait réservée la conviction de l'existence d'un Dieu, que l'on dit néanmoins si nécessaire à tout le genre humain? Mais trouvons-nous de l'harmonie entre les opinions théologiques des différents inspirés, ou des penseurs répandus sur la terre? Ceux même que font profession d'adorer le même Dieu, sont-ils d'accord sur son compte? Sont-ils contents des preuves que leurs collègues apportent de son existence? Souscrivent-ils unanimement aux idées qu'ils présentent sur sa nature, sur sa conduite, sur la façon d'entendre ses prétendus oracles? Est-il une contrée sur la terre où la science de Dieu se soit réellement perfectionnée? A-t-elle pris quelque part la consistance et l'uniformité que nous voyons prendre aux connaissances humaines, aux arts les plus futiles, aux métiers les plus méprisés? Ces mots d'*esprit d'immatérialité, de création, de prédestination, de grâce*; cette foule de distinctions subtiles dont la théologie s'est partout remplie dans quelques pays, ces inventions si ingénieuses, imaginées par des penseurs que se sont succédés depuis tant de siècles, n'ont fait, hélas! qu'embrouiller les choses, et jamais la science la plus nécessaire aux hommes n'a jusqu'ici pu acquérir la moindre fixité. Depuis des milliers d'années ces rêveurs oisifs se sont perpétuellement relayés pour méditer la Divinité, pour deviner ses voies cachées, pour inventer des hypothèses propres à

développer cette énigme importante. Leur peu de succès n'a point découragé la vanité théologique; toujours on a parlé de Dieu: on s'est disputé, on s'est égorgé pour lui, et cet être sublime demeure toujours le plus ignoré et le plus discuté.

Les hommes auraient été trop heureux, si, se bornant aux objets visibles qui les intéressent, ils eussent employé à perfectionner leurs sciences réelles, leurs loix, leur morale, leur éducation, la moitié des efforts qu'ils ont mis dans leurs recherches sur la Divinité. Ils auraient été bien plus sages encore, et plus fortunés, s'ils eussent pu consentir à laisser leurs guides désœuvrés se quereller entre eux, et sonder des profondeurs capables de les étourdir, sans se mêler de leurs disputes insensées. Mais il est de l'essence de l'ignorance d'attacher de l'importance à ce qu'elle ne comprend pas. La vanité humaine fait que l'esprit se roidit contre des difficultés. Plus un objet se dérobe à nos yeux, plus nous faisons d'efforts pour le saisir, parce que dès-lors il aiguillonne notre orgueil, il excite notre curiosité, il nous paraît intéressant. En combattant pour son Dieu chacun ne combattit en effet que pour les intérêts de sa propre vanité, qui de toutes les passions produites par la mal-organisation de la société, est la plus prompte à s'allarmer, et la plus propre à produire de très grandes folies.

Si écartant pour un moment les idées fâcheuses que la théologie nous donne d'un Dieu capricieux, dont les décrets partiels et despotiques décident du sort des humains, nous ne voulons fixer nos yeux que sur la bonté prétendue, que tous les hommes, même en tremblant devant ce Dieu, s'accordent à lui donner; si nous lui supposons le projet qu'on lui prête, de n'avoir travaillé que pour sa propre gloire, d'exiger les hommages des êtres intelligents; de ne chercher dans ses œuvres que le bien-être du genre humain; comment concilier ces vues et ces dispositions avec l'ignorance vraiment invincible dans laquelle ce Dieu, si glorieux et si bon, laisse la plupart des hommes sur son compte? Si Dieu veut être connu, chéri, remercié, que ne se montre-t-il sous des traits favorables à tous ces

êtres intelligents dont il veut être aimé et adoré? Pourquoi ne point se manifester à toute la terre d'une façon non équivoque, bien plus capable de nous convaincre que ces révélations particulières qui semblent accuser la Divinité d'une partialité fâcheuse pour quelqu'unes de ses créatures? Le tout-puissant n'aurait-il donc pas des moyens plus convainquants de se montrer aux hommes que ces métamorphoses ridicules, ces incarnations prétendues, qui nous sont attestées par des écrivains si peu d'accord entre eux dans les récits qu'ils en font? Au lieu de tant de miracles, inventés pour prouver la mission divine de tant de législateurs révévés par les différens peuples du monde, le souverain des esprits ne pouvait-il pas convaincre tout d'un coup l'esprit humain des choses qu'il a voulu lui faire connaître? Au lieu de suspendre un soleil dans la voûte du firmament; au lieu de répandre sans ordre les étoiles et les constellations qui remplissent l'espace, n'eût-il pas été plus conforme aux vues d'un Dieu si jaloux de sa gloire et si bien-intentionné pour l'homme; d'écrire d'une façon non sujette à dispute, son nom, ses attributs, ses volontés permanentes en caractères ineffaçables, et lisibles également pour tous les habitants de la terre? Personne alors n'aurait pu douter de l'existence d'un Dieu, de ses volontés claires, de ses intentions visibles. Sous les yeux de ce Dieu si terrible, personne n'aurait eu l'audace de violer ses ordonnances; nul mortel n'eût osé se mettre dans le cas d'attirer sa colère: enfin nul homme n'eût eu le front d'en imposer en son nom, ou d'interpréter ses volontés suivant ses propres fantaisies.

En effet, quand même on admettrait l'existence du Dieu théologique et la réalité des attributs si discordants qu'on lui donne, l'on ne peut en rien conclure, pour autoriser la conduite ou les cultes qu'on prescrit de lui rendre. La théologie est vraiment *le tonneau des Danaïdes*. A force de qualités contradictoires et d'assertions hasardées, elle a, pour ainsi dire, tellement garrotté son Dieu qu'elle l'a mis dans l'impossibilité d'agir. S'il est infiniment bon, quelle

raison aurions-nous de le craindre? S'il est infiniment sage, de quoi nous inquiéter sur notre sort? S'il sait tout, pourquoi l'avertir de nos besoins, et le fatiguer de nos prières? S'il est partout, pourquoi lui élever des temples? S'il est maître de tout, pourquoi lui faire des sacrifices et des offrandes? S'il est juste, comment croire qu'il punisse des créatures qu'il a remplies de faiblesses? Si la grâce fait tout en elles, quelle raison aurait-il de les récompenser? S'il est tout-puissant, comment l'offenser, comment lui résister? S'il est raisonnable, comment se mettrait-il en colère contre des aveugles, à qui il a laissé la liberté de déraisonner? S'il est immuable, de quel droit prétendrions-nous faire changer ses décrets? S'il est inconcevable, pourquoi nous en occuper? S'IL A PARLÉ, POURQUOI L'UNIVERS N'EST-IL PAS CONVAINCU? Si la connaissance d'un Dieu est la plus nécessaire, pourquoi n'est-elle pas la plus évidente et la plus claire?—*Système de la Nature, par M. Mirabaud* (Baron d'Holbach), London, 1781.

The enlightened and benevolent Pliny thus publicly professes himself an atheist:—Quapropter effigiem Dei formamque quærere imbecillitatis humanæ reor. Quisquis est Deus, si modo est alius, et quacumque in parte, totus est sensus, totus est visus, totus auditus, totus animæ, totus animi, totus sui. . . . Imperfectæ vero in homine naturæ præcipua solatia ne deum quidem posse omnia. Namque nec sibi potest mortem consciscere, si velit, quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ pœnis: nec mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos; nec facere ut qui vixit non vixerit, qui honores gessit non gesserit, nullumque habere in præterita jus, præterquam oblivionis, atque (ui facietis quoque argumentis societas hæc cum deo copuletur) ut bis dena viginti non sint, ac multa similiter efficere non posse: per quæ declaratur haud dubie naturæ potentiam idque esse quod Deum vocamus.—*PLIN. Nat. Hist. II. cap. 7 (de Deo).*

The consistent Newtonian is necessarily an atheist. See Sir W. Drummond's "Academical Questions," chap. iii.—Sir W. seems to consider the atheism to which it leads as a sufficient presumption of the falsehood of the system of gravitation; but surely it is more consistent with the good faith of philosophy to admit a deduction from facts than an hypothesis incapable of proof, although it might militate with the obstinate preconceptions of the mob. Had this author, instead of inveighing against the guilt and absurdity of atheism, demonstrated its falsehood, his conduct would have been more suited to the modesty of the sceptic and the toleration of the philosopher.

Omnia enim per Dei potentiam facta sunt. O imo quia naturæ potentia nulla est nisi ipsa Dei potentia, certum est nos eatenus Dei potentiam non intelligere, quatenus causas naturales ignoramus; adeoque stulte ad eandem Dei potentiam recurritur, quando rei alicujus, causam naturalem, hoc est, ipsam Dei potentiam ignoramus.—*SPINOZA, Tract. Theologico-Pol. cap. i. p. 14.*

## VII. — PAGE 49.

### *Ahasuerus, rise!*

"Ahasuerus the Jew crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel. Near two thousand years have elapsed since he was first goaded by never-ending restlessness to rove the globe from pole to pole. When our Lord was wearied with the burden of his ponderous cross, and wanted to rest before the door of Ahasuerus, the unfeeling wretch drove him away with brutality. The Saviour of mankind staggered, sinking under the heavy load, but uttered no complaint. An angel of death appeared before Ahasuerus, and exclaimed indignantly, 'Barbarian! thou hast denied rest to the Son of man: be it denied thee also, until he comes to judge the world.'

"A black demon, let loose from hell upon Ahasuerus, goads him now from country to country; he is denied the consolation which death affords, and precluded from the rest of the peaceful grave.



“Ahasuerus crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel — he shook the dust from his beard — and taking up one of the skulls heaped there hurled it down the eminence: it rebounded from the earth in shivered atoms. This was my father! roared Ahasuerus. Seven more skulls rolled down from rock to rock; while the infuriate Jew, following them with ghastly looks, exclaimed — And these were my wives! He still continued to hurl down skull after skull, roaring in dreadful accents — ‘And these, and these, and these were my children! They *could die*; but I, reprobate wretch, alas! I cannot die! Dreadful beyond conception is the judgment that hangs over me. Jerusalem fell — I crushed the sucking babe, and precipitated myself into the destructive flames. I cursed the Romans — but, alas! alas! the restless curse held me by the hair, — and I could not die!

“Rome the giantess fell — I placed myself before the falling statue — she fell and did not crush me. Nations sprang up and disappeared before me; — but I remained and did not die. From cloud-encircled cliffs did I precipitate myself into the ocean; but the foaming billows cast me upon the shore, and the burning arrow of existence pierced my cold heart again. I leaped into Etna’s flaming abyss, and roared with the giants for ten long months, polluting with my groans the Mount’s sulphureous mouth — ah! ten long months! The volcano fermented, and in a fiery stream of lava cast me up. I lay torn by the torture-snakes of hell amid the glowing cinders, and yet continued to exist. — A forest was on fire: I darted on wings of fury and despair into the crackling wood. Fire dropped upon me from the trees, but the flames only singed my limbs; alas! it could not consume them. — I now mixed with the butchers of mankind, and plunged in the tempest of the raging battle. I roared defiance to the infuriate Gaul, defiance to the victorious German; but arrows and spears rebounded in shivers from my body. The Saracen’s flaming sword broke upon my skull; balls in vain hissed upon me; the lightnings of battle glared harmless

around my loins; in vain did the elephant trample on me, in vain the iron hoof of the wrathful steed! The mine, big with destructive power, burst upon me, and hurled me high in the air — I fell on heaps of smoking limbs, but was only singed. The giant’s steel club rebounded from my body; the executioner’s hand could not strangle me, the tiger’s tooth could not pierce me, nor would the hungry lion in the circus devour me. I cohabited with poisonous snakes, and pinched the red crest of the dragon. — The serpent stung, but could not destroy me. The dragon tormented, but dared not to devour me. — I now provoked the fury of tyrants: I said to Nero, Thou art a bloodhound! I said to Christiern, Thou art a bloodhound! I said to Muley Ismail, Thou art a bloodhound! — The tyrants invented cruel torments, but did not kill me. — Ha! not to be able to die — not to be able to die — not to be permitted to rest after the toils of life — to be doomed to be imprisoned forever in the clay-formed dungeon — to be forever clogged with this worthless body, its load of diseases and infirmities — to be condemned to [be]hold for millenniums that yawning monster Sameness, and Time, that hungry hyena, ever bearing children, and ever devouring again her offspring! — Ha! not to be permitted to die! Awful avenger in heaven, hast thou in thine armory of wrath a punishment more dreadful? then let it thunder upon me, command a hurricane to sweep me down to the foot of Carmel, that I there may lie extended; may pant, and writhe, and die!”

This fragment is the translation of part of some German work, whose title I have vainly endeavored to discover. I picked it up, dirty and torn, some years ago, in Lincoln’s-Inn Fields.

#### VII. — Page 50.

*I will beget a son, and he shall bear  
The sins of all the world.*

A book is put into our hands when children, called the Bible, the purport of whose history is briefly this: That God made the earth in six days, and there

planted a delightful garden, in which he placed the first pair of human beings. In the midst of the garden he planted a tree, whose fruit, although within their reach, they were forbidden to touch. That the Devil, in the shape of a snake, persuaded them to eat of this fruit; in consequence of which God condemned both them and their posterity yet unborn to satisfy his justice by their eternal misery. That, four thousand years after these events (the human race in the meanwhile having gone unredeemed to perdition), God engendered with the betrothed wife of a carpenter in Judea (whose virginity was nevertheless uninjured), and begat a son, whose name was Jesus Christ; and who was crucified and died, in order that no more men might be devoted to hell-fire, he bearing the burden of his Father's displeasure by proxy. The book states, in addition, that the soul of whoever disbelieves this sacrifice will be burned with everlasting fire.

During many ages of misery and darkness this story gained implicit belief; but at length men arose who suspected that it was a fable and imposture, and that Jesus Christ, so far from being a god, was only a man like themselves. But a numerous set of men, who derived and still derive immense emoluments from this opinion, in the shape of a popular belief, told the vulgar that if they did not believe in the Bible they would be damned to all eternity; and burned, imprisoned, and poisoned all the unbiassed and unconnected inquirers who occasionally arose. They still oppress them, so far as the people, now become more enlightened, will allow.

The belief in all that the Bible contains is called Christianity. A Roman governor of Judea, at the instance of a priest-led mob, crucified a man called Jesus eighteen centuries ago. He was a man of pure life, who desired to rescue his countrymen from the tyranny of their barbarous and degrading superstitions. The common fate of all who desire to benefit mankind awaited him. The rabble, at the instigation of the priests, demanded his death, although his very judge made public acknowledgment of his inno-

cence. Jesus was sacrificed to the honor of that God with whom he was afterwards confounded. It is of importance, therefore, to distinguish between the pretended character of this being as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and his real character as a man, who, for a vain attempt to reform the world, paid the forfeit of his life to that overbearing tyranny which has since so long desolated the universe in his name. Whilst the one is a hypocritical demon, who announces himself as the God of compassion and peace, even whilst he stretches forth his blood-red hand with the sword of discord to waste the earth, having confessedly devised this scheme of desolation from eternity; the other stands in the foremost list of those true heroes who have died in the glorious martyrdom of liberty, and have braved torture, contempt, and poverty in the cause of suffering humanity.<sup>1</sup>

The vulgar, ever in extremes, became persuaded that the crucifixion of Jesus was a supernatural event. Testimonies of miracles, so frequent in unenlightened ages, were not wanting to prove that he was something divine. This belief, rolling through the lapse of ages, met with the reveries of Plato and the reasonings of Aristotle, and acquired force and extent, until the divinity of Jesus became a dogma, which to dispute was death, which to doubt was infamy.

*Christianity* is now the established religion: he who attempts to impugn it must be contented to behold murderers and traitors take precedence of him in public opinion: though, if his genius be equal to his courage, and assisted by a peculiar coalition of circumstances, future ages may exalt him to a divinity, and persecute others in his name, as he was persecuted in the name of his predecessor in the homage of the world.

The same means that have supported every other popular belief have supported Christianity. War, imprisonment, assassination, and falsehood; deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity have

<sup>1</sup> Since writing this note I have some reason to suspect that Jesus was an ambitious man, who aspired to the throne of Judea.

made it what it is. The blood shed by the votaries of the God of mercy and peace, since the establishment of his religion, would probably suffice to drown all other sectaries now on the habitable globe. We derive from our ancestors a faith thus fostered and supported: we quarrel, persecute, and hate for its maintenance. Even under a government which, whilst it infringes the very right of thought and speech, boasts of permitting the liberty of the press, a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a deist, and no one raises his voice in the indignation of outraged humanity. But it is ever a proof that the falsehood of a proposition is felt by those who use coercion, not reasoning, to procure its admission; and a dispassionate observer would feel himself more powerfully interested in favor of a man who, depending on the truth of his opinions, simply stated his reasons for entertaining them, than in that of his aggressor who, daringly avowing his unwillingness or incapacity to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the energies and break the spirit of their promulgator by that torture and imprisonment whose infliction he could command.

Analogy seems to favor the opinion that as, like other systems, Christianity has arisen and augmented, so like them it will decay and perish; that as violence, darkness, and deceit, not reasoning and persuasion, have procured its admission among mankind, so, when enthusiasm has subsided, and time, that infallible controverter of false opinions, has involved its pretended evidences in the darkness of antiquity, it will become obsolete; that Milton's poem alone will give permanency to the remembrance of its absurdities; and that men will laugh as heartily at grace, faith, redemption, and original sin, as they now do at the metamorphoses of Jupiter, the miracles of Romish saints, the efficacy of witchcraft, and the appearance of departed spirits.

Had the Christian religion commenced and continued by the mere force of reasoning and persuasion, the preceding

analogy would be inadmissible. We should never speculate on the future obsolescence of a system perfectly conformable to nature and reason: it would endure so long as they endured; it would be a truth as indisputable as the light of the sun, the criminality of murder, and other facts, whose evidence, depending on our organization and relative situations, must remain acknowledged as satisfactory so long as man is man. It is an incontrovertible fact, the consideration of which ought to repress the hasty conclusions of credulity, or moderate its obstinacy in maintaining them, that, had the Jews not been a fanatical race of men, had even the resolution of Pontius Pilate been equal to his candor, the Christian religion never could have prevailed, it could not even have existed: on so feeble a thread hangs the most cherished opinion of a sixth of the human race! When will the vulgar learn humility? When will the pride of ignorance blush at having believed before it could comprehend?

Either the Christian religion is true, or it is false: if true, it comes from God, and its authenticity can admit of doubt and dispute no further than its omnipotent author is willing to allow. Either the power or the goodness of God is called in question, if he leaves those doctrines most essential to the well-being of man in doubt and dispute; the only ones which, since their promulgation, have been the subject of unceasing cavil, the cause of irreconcilable hatred. *If God has spoken, why is the universe not convinced?*

There is this passage in the Christian Scriptures: "Those who obey not God, and believe not the Gospel of his Son, shall be punished with everlasting destruction." This is the pivot upon which all religions turn: they all assume that it is in our power to believe or not to believe; whereas the mind can only believe that which it thinks true. A human being can only be supposed accountable for those actions which are influenced by his will. But belief is utterly distinct from and unconnected

with volition: it is the apprehension of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas that compose any proposition. Belief is a passion, or involuntary operation of the mind, and, like other passions, its intensity is precisely proportionate to the degrees of excitement. Volition is essential to merit or demerit. But the Christian religion attaches the highest possible degrees of merit and demerit to that which is worthy of neither, and which is totally unconnected with the peculiar faculty of the mind, whose presence is essential to their being.

Christianity was intended to reform the world: had an all-wise Being planned it, nothing is more improbable than that it should have failed: omniscience would infallibly have foreseen the inutility of a scheme which experience demonstrates, to this age, to have been utterly unsuccessful.

Christianity inculcates the necessity of supplicating the Deity. Prayer may be considered under two points of view; — as an endeavor to change the intentions of God, or as a formal testimony of our obedience. But the former case supposes that the caprices of a limited intelligence can occasionally instruct the Creator of the world how to regulate the universe; and the latter, a certain degree of servility analogous to the loyalty demanded by earthly tyrants. Obedience indeed is only the pitiful and cowardly egotism of him who thinks that he can do something better than reason.

Christianity, like all other religions, rests upon miracles, prophecies, and martyrdoms. No religion ever existed which had not its prophets, its attested miracles, and, above all, crowds of devotees who would bear patiently the most horrible tortures to prove its authenticity. It should appear that in no case can a discriminating mind subscribe to the genuineness of a miracle. A miracle is an infraction of nature's law, by a supernatural cause; by a cause acting beyond that eternal circle within which all things are included. God breaks through the law of nature, that he may convince mankind of the truth of that

revelation which, in spite of his precautions, has been, since its introduction, the subject of unceasing schism and cavil.

Miracles resolve themselves into the following question:<sup>1</sup> — Whether it is more probable the laws of nature, hitherto so immutably harmonious, should have undergone violation, or that a man should have told a lie? Whether it is more probable that we are ignorant of the natural cause of an event, or that we know the supernatural one? That, in old times, when the powers of nature were less known than at present, a certain set of men were themselves deceived, or had some hidden motive for deceiving others; or that God begat a son, who, in his legislation, measuring merit by belief, evidenced himself to be totally ignorant of the powers of the human mind — of what is voluntary, and what is the contrary?

We have many instances of men telling lies; — none of an infraction of nature's laws, those laws of whose government alone we have any knowledge or experience. The records of all nations afford innumerable instances of men deceiving others either from vanity or interest, or themselves being deceived by the limitedness of their views and their ignorance of natural causes; but where is the accredited case of God having come upon earth, to give the lie to his own creations? There would be something truly wonderful in the appearance of a ghost; but the assertion of a child that he saw one as he passed through the churchyard is universally admitted to be less miraculous.

But even supposing that a man should raise a dead body to life before our eyes, and on this fact rest his claim to being considered the son of God; — the Humane Society restores drowned persons, and because it makes no mystery of the method it employs, its members are not mistaken for the sons of God. All that we have a right to infer from our ignorance of the cause of any event is that we do not know it: had the Mexicans attended to this simple rule when they heard the cannon of the Spaniards, they would

<sup>1</sup> See Hume's *Essays*, vol. ii. p. 121.

not have considered them as gods: the experiments of modern chemistry would have defied the wisest philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome to have accounted for them on natural principles. An author of strong common sense has observed that "a miracle is no miracle at second hand;" he might have added that a miracle is no miracle in any case; for until we are acquainted with all natural causes, we have no reason to imagine others.

There remains to be considered another proof of Christianity — Prophecy. A book is written before a certain event, in which this event is foretold; how could the prophet have foreknown it without inspiration? how could he have been inspired without God? The greatest stress is laid on the prophecies of Moses and Hosea on the dispersion of the Jews, and that of Isaiah concerning the coming of the Messiah. The prophecy of Moses is a collection of every possible cursing and blessing; and it is so far from being marvellous that the one of dispersion should have been fulfilled, that it would have been more surprising if, out of all these, none should have taken effect. In Deuteronomy, chap. xxviii. ver. 64, where Moses explicitly foretells the dispersion, he states that they shall there serve gods of wood and stone: "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other, and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even gods of wood and stone." The Jews are at this day remarkably tenacious of their religion. Moses also declares that they shall be subjected to these curses for disobedience to his ritual: "And it shall come to pass if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all the commandments and statutes which I command you this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee." Is this the real reason? The third, fourth, and fifth chapters of Hosea are a piece of immodest confession. The indelicate type might apply in a hundred senses to

a hundred things. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is more explicit, yet it does not exceed in clearness the oracles of Delphos. The historical proof that Moses, Isaiah, and Hosea did write when they are said to have written is far from being clear and circumstantial.

But prophecy requires proof in its character as a miracle; we have no right to suppose that a man foreknew future events from God, until it is demonstrated that he neither could know them by his own exertions, nor that the writings which contain the prediction could possibly have been fabricated after the event pretended to be foretold. It is more probable that writings, pretending to divine inspiration, should have been fabricated after the fulfilment of their pretended prediction than that they should have really been divinely inspired, when we consider that the latter supposition makes God at once the creator of the human mind and ignorant of its primary powers, particularly as we have numberless instances of false religions, and forged prophecies of things long past, and no accredited case of God having conversed with men directly or indirectly. It is also possible that the description of an event might have foregone its occurrence: but this is far from being a legitimate proof of a divine revelation, as many men, not pretending to the character of a prophet, have nevertheless, in this sense, prophesied.

Lord Chesterfield was never yet taken for a prophet, even by a bishop, yet he uttered this remarkable prediction: "The despotic government of France is screwed up to the highest pitch; a revolution is fast approaching; that revolution, I am convinced, will be radical and sanguinary." This appeared in the letters of the prophet long before the accomplishment of this wonderful prediction. Now, have these particulars come to pass, or have they not? If they have, how could the Earl have foreknown them without inspiration? If we admit the truth of the Christian religion on testimony such as this, we must admit, on the same strength of evidence, that God has af-

fixed the highest rewards to belief, and the eternal tortures of the never-dying worm to disbelief, both of which have been demonstrated to be involuntary.

The last proof of the Christian religion depends on the influence of the Holy Ghost. Theologians divide the influence of the Holy Ghost into its ordinary and extraordinary modes of operation. The latter is supposed to be that which inspired the Prophets and Apostles; and the former to be the grace of God, which summarily makes known the truth of his revelation to those whose mind is fitted for its reception by a submissive perusal of his word. Persons convinced in this manner can do anything but account for their conviction, describe the time at which it happened, or the manner in which it came upon them. It is supposed to enter the mind by other channels than those of the senses, and therefore professes to be superior to reason founded on their experience.

Admitting, however, the usefulness or possibility of a divine revelation, unless we demolish the foundations of all human knowledge, it is requisite that our reason should previously demonstrate its genuineness; for, before we extinguish the steady ray of reason and common sense, it is fit that we should discover whether we cannot do without their assistance, whether or no there be any other which may suffice to guide us through the labyrinth of life: for, if a man is to be inspired upon all occasions, if he is to be sure of a thing because he is sure, if the ordinary operations of the Spirit are not to be considered very extraordinary modes of demonstration, if enthusiasm is to usurp the place of proof, and madness that of sanity, all reasoning is superfluous. The Mahometan dies fighting for his prophet, the Indian immolates himself at the chariot-wheels of Brahma, the Hottentot worships an insect, the Negro a bunch of feathers, the Mexican sacrifices human victims! Their degree of conviction must certainly be very strong: it cannot arise from reasoning, it must

<sup>1</sup> See Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*, book iv. chap. xix., on Enthusiasm.

from feelings, the reward of their prayers. If each of these should affirm, in opposition to the strongest possible arguments, that inspiration carried internal evidence, I fear their inspired brethren, the orthodox Missionaries, would be so uncharitable as to pronounce them obstinate.

Miracles cannot be received as testimonies of a disputed fact, because all human testimony has ever been insufficient to establish the possibility of miracles. That which is incapable of proof itself is no proof of anything else. Prophecy has also been rejected by the test of reason. Those, then, who have been actually inspired are the only true believers in the Christian religion.

Mox numine viso  
Virginei tumuere sinus, innuptaque mater  
Arcano stupuit compleri viscera partu,  
Auctorem paritura suum. Mortalia corda  
Artificem texere poli, latuitque sub uno  
Pectore, qui totum late complectitur  
orbem.

CLAUDIAN, *Carmen Paschale*.

Does not so monstrous and disgusting  
an absurdity carry its own infamy and  
refutation with itself?

#### VIII. — PAGE 56.

*Him, still from hope to hope the bliss  
pursuing,  
Which from the exhaustless lore of human  
weal  
Draws on the virtuous mind, the thoughts  
that rise  
In time-destroying infiniteness, gift  
With self-enshrined eternity, etc.*

Time is our consciousness of the succession of ideas in our mind. Vivid sensation, of either pain or pleasure, makes the time seem long, as the common phrase is, because it renders us more acutely conscious of our ideas. If a mind be conscious of an hundred ideas during one minute, by the clock, and of two hundred during another, the latter of these spaces would actually occupy so much greater extent in the mind as two exceed one in quantity. If, therefore,

the human mind, by any future improvement of its sensibility, should become conscious of an infinite number of ideas in a minute, that minute would be eternity. I do not hence infer that the actual space between the birth and death of a man will ever be prolonged; but that his sensibility is perfectible, and that the number of ideas which his mind is capable of receiving is indefinite. One man is stretched on the rack during twelve hours; another sleeps soundly in his bed: the difference of time perceived by these two persons is immense; one hardly will believe that half an hour has elapsed, the other could credit that centuries had flown during his agony. Thus, the life of a man of virtue and talent, who should die in his thirtieth year, is, with regard to his own feelings, longer than that of a miserable priest-ridden slave, who dreams out a century of dullness. The one has perpetually cultivated his mental faculties, has rendered himself master of his thoughts, can abstract and generalize amid the lethargy of every-day business; — the other can slumber over the brightest moments of his being, and is unable to remember the happiest hour of his life. Perhaps the perishing ephemerone enjoys a longer life than the tortoise.

Dark flood of time!

Roll as it listeth thee — I measure not  
By months or moments thy ambiguous  
course.

Another may stand by me on the brink  
And watch the bubble whirled beyond  
his ken

That pauses at my feet. The sense of  
love,

The thirst for action, and the impassioned  
thought

Prolong my being: if I wake no more,  
My life more actual living will contain  
Than some gray veteran's of the world's  
cold school,

Whose listless hours unprofitably roll,  
By one enthusiast feeling unredeemed.

See Godwin's *Pol. Jus.* vol. i. p. 411;  
and Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un Tableau  
Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Hu-  
main*, époque ix.

## VIII. — PAGE 56.

*No longer now*

*He slays the lamb that looks him in the face.*

I hold that the depravity of the physical and moral nature of man originated in his unnatural habits of life. The origin of man, like that of the universe of which he is a part, is enveloped in impenetrable mystery. His generations either had a beginning, or they had not. The weight of evidence in favor of each of these suppositions seems tolerably equal; and it is perfectly unimportant to the present argument which is assumed. The language spoken, however, by the mythology of nearly all religions seems to prove that at some distant period man forsook the path of nature, and sacrificed the purity and happiness of his being to unnatural appetites. The date of this event seems to have also been that of some great change in the climates of the earth, with which it has an obvious correspondence. The allegory of Adam and Eve eating of the tree of evil, and entailing upon their posterity the wrath of God and the loss of everlasting life, admits of no other explanation than the disease and crime that have flowed from unnatural diet. Milton was so well aware of this that he makes Raphael thus exhibit to Adam the consequence of his disobedience: —

Immediately a place

Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome,  
dark;

A lazar-house it seemed; wherein were laid  
Numbers of all diseased — all maladies  
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture,  
qualms

Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,  
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,  
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,  
Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,  
And moon-struck madness, pining atro-  
phy,

Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,  
Dropsies and asthmas, and joint-racking  
rheums.

And how many thousands more might  
not be added to this frightful catalogue!

The story of Prometheus is one likewise which, although universally admitted to be allegorical, has never been satisfactorily explained. Prometheus stole fire from heaven, and was chained for this crime to Mount Caucasus, where a vulture continually devoured his liver, that grew to meet its hunger. Hesiod says that, before the time of Prometheus, mankind were exempt from suffering; that they enjoyed a vigorous youth, and that death, when at length it came, approached like sleep, and gently closed their eyes. Again, so general was this opinion that Horace, a poet of the Augustan age, writes —

Audax omnia perpeti,  
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas;  
Audax Iapeti genus  
Ignem fraude mala gentibus intulit:  
Post ignem ætheria domo  
Subductum, macies et nova febrim  
Terris incubuit cohors,  
Semotique prius tarda necessitas  
Lethi corripuit gradum.

How plain a language is spoken by all this! Prometheus (who represents the human race) effected some great change in the condition of his nature, and applied fire to culinary purposes; thus inventing an expedient for screening from his disgust the horrors of the shambles. From this moment his vitals were devoured by the vulture of disease. It consumed his being in every shape of its loathsome and infinite variety, inducing the soul-quelling sinkings of premature and violent death. All vice arose from the ruin of healthful innocence. Tyranny, superstition, commerce, and inequality were then first known, when reason vainly attempted to guide the wanderings of exacerbated passion. I conclude this part of the subject with an extract from Mr. Newton's *Defence of Vegetable Regimen*, from whom I have borrowed this interpretation of the fable of Prometheus. "Making allowance for such transposition of the events of the allegory as time might produce after the important truths were forgotten, which this portion of the

ancient mythology was intended to transmit, the drift of the fable seems to be this: — Man at his creation was endowed with the gift of perpetual youth; that is, he was not formed to be a sickly suffering creature as we now see him, but to enjoy health, and to sink by slow degrees into the bosom of his parent earth without disease or pain. Prometheus first taught the use of animal food (*primus bovem occidit Prometheus*<sup>1</sup>) and of fire, with which to render it more digestible and pleasing to the taste. Jupiter, and the rest of the gods, foreseeing the consequences of these inventions, were amused or irritated at the short-sighted devices of the newly-formed creature, and left him to experience the sad effects of them. Thirst, the necessary concomitant of a flesh diet" (perhaps of all diet vitiated by culinary preparation), "ensued; water was resorted to, and man forfeited the inestimable gift of health which he had received from heaven: he became diseased, the partaker of a precarious existence, and no longer descended slowly to his grave."<sup>2</sup>

But just disease to luxury succeeds,  
And every death its own avenger breeds;  
The fury passions from that blood began,  
And turned on man a fiercer savage — man.

Man, and the animals whom he has infected with his society, or depraved by his dominion, are alone diseased. The wild hog, the mouflon, the bison, and the wolf, are perfectly exempt from malady, and invariably die either from external violence or natural old age. But the domestic hog, the sheep, the cow, and the dog, are subject to an incredible variety of distempers; and, like the corrupters of their nature, have physicians who thrive upon their miseries. The supereminence of man is like Satan's, a supereminence of pain; and the majority of his species, doomed to penury, disease, and crime, have reason to curse the untoward event that, by enabling him to communicate his sensations, raised him above the level

<sup>1</sup> Plin. *Nat. Hist.* lib. vii. sect. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Return to Nature.* Cadell, 1811.



of his fellow animals. But the steps that have been taken are irrevocable. The whole of human science is comprised in one question: — How can the advantages of intellect and civilization be reconciled with the liberty and pure pleasures of natural life? How can we take the benefits and reject the evils of the system, which is now interwoven with all the fibres of our being? — I believe that abstinence from animal food and spirituous liquors would in a great measure capacitate us for the solution of this important question.

It is true that mental and bodily derangement is attributable in part to other deviations from rectitude and nature than those which concern diet. The mistakes cherished by society respecting the connection of the sexes, whence the misery and diseases of unsatisfied celibacy, unenjoying prostitution, and the premature arrival of puberty, necessarily spring; the putrid atmosphere of crowded cities; the exhalations of chemical processes; the muffling of our bodies in superfluous apparel; the absurd treatment of infants: — all these and innumerable other causes contribute their mite to the mass of human evil.

Comparative anatomy teaches us that man resembles frugivorous animals in everything, and carnivorous in nothing; he has neither claws wherewith to seize his prey, nor distinct and pointed teeth to tear the living fibre. A Mandarin of the first class, with nails two inches long, would probably find them alone inefficient to hold even a hare. After every subterfuge of gluttony, the bull must be degraded into the ox, and the ram into the wether, by an unnatural and inhuman operation, that the flaccid fibre may offer a fainter resistance to rebellious nature. It is only by softening and disguising dead flesh by culinary preparation that it is rendered susceptible of mastication or digestion; and that the sight of its bloody juices and raw horror does not excite intolerable loathing and disgust. Let the advocate of animal food force himself to a decisive experiment on its fitness, and, as Plutarch recommends, tear a living lamb with his teeth, and plunging his head into its vitals

slake his thirst with the steaming blood; when fresh from the deed of horror, let him revert to the irresistible instincts of nature that would rise in judgment against it, and say, "Nature formed me for such work as this." Then, and then only, would he be consistent.

Man resembles no carnivorous animal. There is no exception, unless man be one, to the rule of herbivorous animals having cellulated colons.

The orang-outang perfectly resembles man both in the order and number of his teeth. The orang-outang is the most anthropomorphous of the ape tribe, all of which are strictly frugivorous. There is no other species of animals, which live on different food, in which this analogy exists.<sup>1</sup> In many frugivorous animals, the canine teeth are more pointed and distinct than those of man. The resemblance also of the human stomach to that of the orang-outang is greater than to that of any other animal.

The intestines are also identical with those of herbivorous animals, which present a larger surface for absorption and have ample and cellulated colons. The cæcum also, though short, is larger than that of carnivorous animals; and even here the orang-outang retains its accustomed similarity.

The structure of the human frame, then, is that of one fitted to a pure vegetable diet, in every essential particular. It is true that the reluctance to abstain from animal food, in those who have been long accustomed to its stimulus, is so great in some persons of weak minds as to be scarcely overcome; but this is far from bringing any argument in its favor. A lamb, which was fed for some time on flesh by a ship's crew, refused its natural diet at the end of the voyage. There are numerous instances of horses, sheep, oxen, and even wood-pigeons, having been taught to live upon flesh, until they have loathed their natural aliment. Young children evidently prefer pastry, oranges, apples, and other fruit, to the flesh of

<sup>1</sup> Cuvier, *Leçons d'Anat. Comp.* tom. iii. pp. 169, 373, 448, 465, 480. Rees's *Cyclopædia*, art. Man.

animals; until, by the gradual depravation of the digestive organs, the free use of vegetables has for a time produced serious inconveniences; *for a time*, I say, since there never was an instance wherein a change from spirituous liquors and animal food to vegetables and pure water has failed ultimately to invigorate the body, by rendering its juices bland and consentaneous, and to restore to the mind that cheerfulness and elasticity which not one in fifty possesses on the present system. A love of strong liquors is also with difficulty taught to infants. Almost every one remembers the wry faces which the first glass of port produced. Unsophisticated instinct is invariably unerring; but to decide on the fitness of animal food from the perverted appetites which its constrained adoption produces, is to make the criminal a judge in his own cause: it is even worse, it is appealing to the infatuated drunkard in a question of the salubrity of brandy.

What is the cause of morbid action in the animal system? Not the air we breathe, for our fellow denizens of nature breathe the same uninjured; not the water we drink (if remote from the pollutions of man and his inventions<sup>1</sup>), for the animals drink it too; not the earth we tread upon; not the unobscured sight of glorious nature, in the wood, the field, or the expanse of sky and ocean; nothing that we are or do in common with the undiseased inhabitants of the forest. Something, then, wherein we differ from them: our habit of altering our food by fire, so that our appetite is no longer a just criterion for the fitness of its gratification. Except in children, there remain no traces of that instinct which determines, in all other animals, what aliment is natural or otherwise; and so perfectly obliterated are they in the reasoning adults of our species, that it has become necessary to urge considerations drawn from compara-

<sup>1</sup> The necessity of resorting to some means of purifying water, and the disease which arises from its adulteration in civilized countries, is sufficiently apparent. See Dr. Lambe's *Reports on Cancer*. I do not assert that the use of water is in itself unnatural, but that the unperverted palate would swallow no liquid capable of occasioning disease.

tive anatomy to prove that we are naturally frugivorous.

Crime is madness. Madness is disease. Whenever the cause of disease shall be discovered, the root, from which all vice and misery have so long overshadowed the globe, will lie bare to the axe. All the exertions of man, from that moment, may be considered as tending to the clear profit of his species. No sane mind in a sane body resolves upon a real crime. It is a man of violent passions, bloodshot eyes, and swollen veins, that alone can grasp the knife of murder. The system of a simple diet promises no Utopian advantages. It is no mere reform of legislation, whilst the furious passions and evil propensities of the human heart, in which it had its origin, are still unassuaged. It strikes at the root of all evil, and is an experiment which may be tried with success, not alone by nations, but by small societies, families, and even individuals. In no cases has a return to vegetable diet produced the slightest injury; in most it has been attended with changes undeniably beneficial. Should ever a physician be born with the genius of Locke, I am persuaded that he might trace all bodily and mental derangements to our unnatural habits, as clearly as that philosopher has traced all knowledge to sensation. What prolific sources of disease are not those mineral and vegetable poisons that have been introduced for its extirpation! How many thousands have become murderers and robbers, bigots and domestic tyrants, dissolute and abandoned adventurers, from the use of fermented liquors; who, had they slaked their thirst only with pure water, would have lived but to diffuse the happiness of their own unperverted feelings! How many groundless opinions and absurd institutions have not received a general sanction from the sottishness and intemperance of individuals! Who will assert that, had the populace of Paris satisfied their hunger at the ever-furnished table of vegetable nature, they would have lent their brutal suffrage to the proscription-list of Robespierre? Could a set of men, whose passions were not perverted by unnatural stimuli, look

with coolness on an *auto da fé*? Is it to be believed that a being of gentle feelings, rising from his meal of roots, would take delight in sports of blood? Was Nero a man of temperate life? Could you read calm health in his cheek, flushed with ungovernable propensities of hatred for the human race? Did Muley Ismail's pulse beat evenly, was his skin transparent, did his eyes beam with healthfulness, and its invariable concomitants, cheerfulness and benignity? Though history has decided none of these questions, a child could not hesitate to answer in the negative. Surely the bile-suffused cheek of Buonaparte, his wrinkled brow, and yellow eye, the ceaseless inquietude of his nervous system, speak no less plainly the character of his unresting ambition than his murders and his victories. It is impossible, had Buonaparte descended from a race of vegetable feeders, that he could have had either the inclination or the power to ascend the throne of the Bourbons. The desire of tyranny could scarcely be excited in the individual, the power to tyrannize would certainly not be delegated by a society neither frenzied by inebriation nor rendered impotent and irrational by disease. Pregnant indeed with inexhaustible calamity is the renunciation of instinct, as it concerns our physical nature; arithmetic cannot enumerate, nor reason perhaps suspect, the multitudinous sources of disease in civilized life. Even common water, that apparently innocuous pabulum, when corrupted by the filth of populous cities, is a deadly and insidious destroyer.<sup>1</sup> Who can wonder that all the inducements held out by God himself in the Bible to virtue should have been vainer than a nurse's tale; and that those dogmas, by which he has there excited and justified the most ferocious propensities, should have alone been deemed essential; whilst Christians are in the daily practice of all those habits which have infected with disease and crime, not only the reprobate sons, but these favored children of the common Father's love? Omnipotence itself could not save them

from the consequences of this original and universal sin.

There is no disease, bodily or mental, which adoption of vegetable diet and pure water has not infallibly mitigated, wherever the experiment has been fairly tried. Debility is gradually converted into strength; disease into healthfulness; madness, in all its hideous variety, from the ravings of the fettered maniac to the unaccountable irrationalities of ill-temper, that make a hell of domestic life, into a calm and considerate evenness of temper, that alone might offer a certain pledge of the future moral reformation of society. On a natural system of diet, old age would be our last and our only malady; the term of our existence would be protracted; we should enjoy life, and no longer preclude others from the enjoyment of it; all sensational delights would be infinitely more exquisite and perfect; the very sense of being would then be a continued pleasure, such as we now feel it in some few and favored moments of our youth. By all that is sacred in our hopes for the human race, I conjure those who love happiness and truth to give a fair trial to the vegetable system. Reasoning is surely superfluous on a subject whose merits an experience of six months would set forever at rest. But it is only among the enlightened and benevolent that so great a sacrifice of appetite and prejudice can be expected, even though its ultimate excellence should not admit of dispute. It is found easier, by the short-sighted victims of disease, to palliate their torments by medicine than to prevent them by regimen. The vulgar of all ranks are invariably sensual and indocile; yet I cannot but feel myself persuaded that when the benefits of vegetable diet are mathematically proved, when it is as clear that those who live naturally are exempt from premature death as that nine is not one, the most sottish of mankind will feel a preference towards a long and tranquil, contrasted with a short and painful, life. On the average, out of sixty persons four die in three years. Hopes are entertained that, in April, 1814, a statement will be given

<sup>1</sup> Lambe's *Reports on Cancer*.

that sixty persons, all having lived more than three years on vegetables and pure water, are then *in perfect health*. More than two years have now elapsed; *not one of them has died*; no such example will be found in any sixty persons taken at random. Seventeen persons of all ages (the families of Dr. Lambe and Mr. Newton) have lived for seven years on this diet without a death, and almost without the slightest illness. Surely, when we consider that some of these were infants, and one a martyr to asthma now nearly subdued, we may challenge any seventeen persons taken at random in this city to exhibit a parallel case. Those who may have been excited to question the rectitude of established habits of diet, by these loose remarks, should consult Mr. Newton's luminous and eloquent essay.<sup>1</sup>

When these proofs come fairly before the world, and are clearly seen by all who understand arithmetic, it is scarcely possible that abstinence from aliments demonstrably pernicious should not become universal. In proportion to the number of proselytes, so will be the weight of evidence; and when a thousand persons can be produced, living on vegetables and distilled water, who have to dread no disease but old age, the world will be compelled to regard animal flesh and fermented liquors as slow but certain poisons. The change which would be produced by simpler habits on political economy is sufficiently remarkable. The monopolizing eater of animal flesh would no longer destroy his constitution by devouring an acre at a meal, and many loaves of bread would cease to contribute to gout, madness and apoplexy, in the shape of a pint of porter, or a dram of gin, when appeasing the long-protracted famine of the hard-working peasant's hungry babes. The quantity of nutritious vegetable matter, consumed in fattening the carcass of an ox, would afford ten times the sustenance, undepraving indeed, and incapable of generating disease, if gathered

immediately from the bosom of the earth. The most fertile districts of the habitable globe are now actually cultivated by men for animals, at a delay and waste of aliment absolutely incapable of calculation. It is only the wealthy that can, to any great degree, even now, indulge the unnatural craving for dead flesh, and they pay for the greater license of the privilege by subjection to supernumerary diseases. Again, the spirit of the nation that should take the lead in this great reform would insensibly become agricultural; commerce, with all its vice, selfishness, and corruption, would gradually decline; more natural habits would produce gentler manners, and the excessive complication of political relations would be so far simplified that every individual might feel and understand why he loved his country, and took a personal interest in its welfare. How would England, for example, depend on the caprices of foreign rulers if she contained within herself all the necessaries, and despised whatever they possessed of the luxuries, of life? How could they starve her into compliance with their views? Of what consequence would it be that they refused to take her woollen manufactures, when large and fertile tracts of the island ceased to be allotted to the waste of pasturage? On a natural system of diet we should require no spices from India; no wines from Portugal, Spain, France, or Madeira; none of those multitudinous articles of luxury, for which every corner of the globe is rifled, and which are the causes of so much individual rivalry, such calamitous and sanguinary national disputes. In the history of modern times, the avarice of commercial monopoly, no less than the ambition of weak and wicked chiefs, seems to have fomented the universal discord, to have added stubbornness to the mistakes of cabinets, and indocility to the infatuation of the people. Let it ever be remembered that it is the direct influence of commerce to make the interval between the richest and the poorest man wider and more unconquerable. Let it be remembered that it is a foe to everything

<sup>1</sup> *Return to Nature, or Defence of Vegetable Regimen.* Cadell, 1811.

of real worth and excellence in the human character. The odious and disgusting aristocracy of wealth is built upon the ruins of all that is good in chivalry or republicanism; and luxury is the forerunner of a barbarism scarce capable of cure. Is it impossible to realize a state of society, where all the energies of man shall be directed to the production of his solid happiness? Certainly, if this advantage (the object of all political speculation) be in any degree attainable, it is attainable only by a community which holds out no factitious incentives to the avarice and ambition of the few, and which is internally organized for the liberty, security, and comfort of the many. None must be intrusted with power (and money is the completest species of power) who do not stand pledged to use it exclusively for the general benefit. But the use of animal flesh and fermented liquors directly militates with this equality of the rights of man. The peasant cannot gratify these fashionable cravings without leaving his family to starve. Without disease and war, those sweeping curtailers of population, pasturage would include a waste too great to be afforded. The labor requisite to support a family is far lighter<sup>1</sup> than is usually supposed. The peasantry work, not only for themselves, but for the aristocracy, the army, and the manufacturers.

The advantage of a reform in diet is obviously greater than that of any other. It strikes at the root of the evil. To remedy the abuses of legislation, before we annihilate the propensities by which they are produced, is to suppose that by taking away the effect the cause will cease to operate. But the efficacy of this system depends entirely on the pros-

elytism of individuals, and grounds its merits, as a benefit to the community, upon the total change of the dietetic habits in its members. It proceeds securely from a number of particular cases to one that is universal, and has this advantage over the contrary mode, that one error does not invalidate all that has gone before.

Let not too much, however, be expected from this system. The healthiest among us is not exempt from hereditary disease. The most symmetrical, athletic, and long-lived is a being inexpressibly inferior to what he would have been, had not the unnatural habits of his ancestors accumulated for him a certain portion of malady and deformity. In the most perfect specimen of civilized man; something is still found wanting by the physiological critic. Can a return to nature, then, instantaneously eradicate predispositions that have been slowly taking root in the silence of innumerable ages? — Indubitably not. All that I contend for is, that from the moment of the relinquishing all unnatural habits no new disease is generated; and that the predisposition to hereditary maladies gradually perishes, for want of its accustomed supply. In cases of consumption, cancer, gout, asthma, and scrofula, such is the invariable tendency of a diet of vegetables and pure water.

Those who may be induced by these remarks to give the vegetable system a fair trial, should, in the first place, date the commencement of their practice from the moment of their conviction. All depends upon breaking through a pernicious habit resolutely and at once. Dr. Trotter<sup>1</sup> asserts that no drunkard was ever reformed by gradually relinquishing his dram. Animal flesh, in its effects on the human stomach, is analogous to a dram. It is similar in the kind, though differing in the degree, of its operation. The proselyte to a pure diet must be warned to expect a temporary diminution of muscular strength. The subtraction of a powerful stimulus will suffice to account for this event. But it is only

<sup>1</sup> It has come under the author's experience that some of the workmen on an embankment in North Wales, who, in consequence of the inability of the proprietor to pay them, seldom received their wages, have supported large families by cultivating small spots of sterile ground by moonlight. In the notes to Pratt's Poem, "Bread, or the Poor," is an account of an industrious laborer who, by working in a small garden, before and after his day's task, attained to an enviable state of independence.

<sup>1</sup> See Trotter on the Nervous Temperament.

temporary, and is succeeded by an equable capability for exertion, far surpassing his former various and fluctuating strength. Above all, he will acquire an easiness of breathing, by which such exertion is performed, with a remarkable exemption from that painful and difficult panting now felt by almost every one after hastily climbing an ordinary mountain. He will be equally capable of bodily exertion, or mental application, after as before his simple meal. He will feel none of the narcotic effects of ordinary diet. Irritability, the direct consequence of exhausting stimuli, would yield to the power of natural and tranquil impulses. He will no longer pine under the lethargy of ennui, that unconquerable weariness of life, more to be dreaded than death itself. He will escape the epidemic madness, which broods over its own injurious notions of the Deity, and "realizes the hell that priests and beldams feign." Every man forms, as it were, his god from his own character; to the divinity of one of simple habits no offering would be more acceptable than the happiness of his creatures. He would be incapable of hating or persecuting others for the love of God. He will find, moreover, a system of simple diet to be a system of perfect epicurism. He will no longer be incessantly occupied in blunting and destroying those organs from which he expects his gratification. The pleasures of taste to be derived from a dinner of potatoes, beans, peas, turnips, lettuces, with a dessert of apples, gooseberries, strawberries, currants, raspberries, and in winter, oranges, apples and pears, is far greater than is supposed. Those who wait until they can eat this plain fare with the sauce of appetite will scarcely join with the hypocritical sensualist at a lord-mayor's feast, who declaims against the pleasures of the table. Solomon kept a thousand concubines, and owned in despair that all was vanity. The man whose happiness is constituted by the society of one amiable woman would find some difficulty in sympathizing with the disappointment of this venerable debauchee.

I address myself not only to the young enthusiast, the ardent devotee of truth and virtue, the pure and passionate moralist, yet unvitiated by the contagion of the world. He will embrace a pure system, from its abstract truth, its beauty, its simplicity, and its promise of wide-extended benefit; unless custom has turned poison into food, he will hate the brutal pleasures of the chase by instinct; it will be a contemplation full of horror, and disappointment to his mind, that beings capable of the gentlest and most admirable sympathies should take delight in the death-pangs and last convulsions of dying animals. The elderly man, whose youth has been poisoned by intemperance, or who has lived with apparent moderation, and is afflicted with a variety of painful maladies, would find his account in a beneficial change produced without the risk of poisonous medicines. The mother, to whom the perpetual restlessness of disease and unaccountable deaths incident to her children are the causes of incurable unhappiness, would on this diet experience the satisfaction of beholding their perpetual healths and natural playfulness.<sup>1</sup> The most valuable lives are daily destroyed by diseases that it is dangerous to palliate and impossible to cure by medicine. How much longer will man continue to pimp for the gluttony of Death, his most insidious, implacable, and eternal foe?

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Newton's book. His children are the most beautiful and healthy creatures it is possible to conceive; the girls are perfect models for a sculptor; their dispositions are also the most gentle and conciliating; the judicious treatment, which they experience in other points, may be a correlative cause of this. In the first five years of their life, of 18,000 children that are born, 7,500 die of various diseases; and how many more of those that survive are not rendered miserable by maladies not immediately mortal? The quality and quantity of a woman's milk are materially injured by the use of dead flesh. In an island near Iceland, where no vegetables are to be got, the children invariably die of tetanus before they are three weeks old, and the population is supplied from the mainland. — Sir G. Mackenzie's *Hist. of Iceland*. See also *Emile*, chap. i. pp. 53, 54, 56.

Ἄλλῃ δρόκοντας ἀγρίους καλεῖτε, καὶ παρδά-  
 λεις, καὶ λέοντας, αὐτοὶ δὲ μαιφονεῖτε εἰς ὠμότητα,  
 καταλιπόντες ἐκείνους οὐδέν· ἐκείνοις μὲν γὰρ ὁ  
 φόνος τροφή, ἡμῖν δ' ὄψων ἐστίν. . . . Ὅτι γὰρ  
 οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπων κατὰ φύσιν τὸ σαρκοφαγεῖν,  
 πρῶτον μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν σωμάτων δηλοῦνται τῆς  
 κατασκευῆς. Οὐδέναι γὰρ ἔοικε τὸ ἀνθρώπου  
 σῶμα τῶν ἐπὶ σαρκοφαγία γεγονότων, οὐ γροσπότης  
 χείλους, οὐκ ὀξύτης ὄνυχος, οὐ τραχύτης ὀδόντων  
 πρόσσεστιν, οὐ κοιλίας εὐτονία καὶ πνεύματος  
 θερμότης, τρέφει καὶ κατεργάσασθαι δυνατὴ  
 τὸ βαρὺ καὶ κρεῶδες· ἀλλ' αὐτόθεν ἡ φύσις τῇ  
 λειότητι τῶν ὀδόντων, καὶ τῇ σμικρότητι τοῦ  
 στόματος, καὶ τῇ μαλακότητι τῆς γλώσσης, καὶ τῇ  
 πρὸς πέψιν ἀμβλύτητι τοῦ πνεύματος, ἐξήκονται  
 τὴν σαρκοφαγίαν. Εἰ δὲ λέγεις πεφυκέναι  
 σεαυτὸν ἐπὶ τοιαύτην ἐδωδὴν, ὃ βούλει φαγεῖν,  
 πρῶτον αὐτὸς ἀπόκειναι· ἀλλ' αὐτὸς διὰ σεαυτοῦ,  
 μὴ χρῆσάμενος κοπίδι, μηδὲ τυσανίῳ τιγί, μηδὲ  
 πέλκει· ἀλλὰ, ὡς λέκοι καὶ ἄρκοι καὶ λέοντες αὐτοὶ  
 ἴσα ἐσθίουσι φονεύουσιν, ἄνελε δὴγματι βοῦν, ἢ  
 στόματι σὺν, ἢ ἄρνα ἢ λαγῶν διάρρηξον, καὶ  
 φάγε προσπεισῶν ἐτι ζῶντος ὡς ἐκεῖνα. . . .  
 Ἡμεῖς δὲ οὕτως ἐν τῷ μαιφῶνι τροφῶμεν, ὥστ'  
 ὄψων τὸ κρέας προσαγορεύομεν, εἴτ' ὄψων πρὸς  
 αὐτὸ τὸ κρέας δεόμεθα, ἀναμιγνύντες ἔλαιον,  
 ὄνον, μέλι, γάρον, ὄξος, ἡδύσμασι Συριακοῖς,  
 Ἀρραβικοῖς, ὥσπερ ἄνωγος νεκρὸν ἐνταφιάζοντες.  
 Καὶ γὰρ οὕτως αὐτῶν διαλυθέντων καὶ μαλαχθέν-  
 των καὶ τρόπον τινὰ κρεοσαπέντων ἔργον ἐστὶ τὴν  
 πέψιν κρατῆσαι. καὶ διακρατηθείσης δὲ δεινὰς  
 βαρῆτητας ἐμποεῖ καὶ νοσῶδεις ἀπεψίας. . . .  
 Οὕτω τὸ πρῶτον ἄγριον τι ζῶον ἐβρώθη καὶ  
 κικουόργον εἴτ' ὄρνις τις ἢ ἰχθὺς εἰλκυστο· καὶ  
 γενόμενον, οὕτω καὶ προεμελτήσαν ἐν ἐκείνοις τὸ  
 ρονικὸν ἐπὶ βοῦν ἐργάτην ἦλθε, καὶ τὸ κόσμοιν  
 πρόβατον, καὶ τὸν οἰκουρον ἀλεκτρυνα· καὶ  
 κατα μικρὸν οὕτω τὴν ἀπλησίαν τουώσαντες, ἐπὶ  
 σφαγὰς ἀνθρώπων, καὶ φόνους, καὶ πολέμους  
 προήλθον. — Πλούτ. περὶ τῆς Σαρκοφαγίας.

NOTE ON QUEEN MAB, BY MRS.  
SHELLEY.

SHELLEY was eighteen when he wrote  
 "Queen Mab;" he never published it.  
 When it was written, he had come to the  
 decision that he was too young to be a  
 "judge of controversies;" and he was  
 desirous of acquiring "that sobriety of  
 spirit which is the characteristic of true

heroism." But he never doubted the  
 truth or utility of his opinions; and, in  
 printing and privately distributing "Queen  
 Mab," he believed that he should further  
 their dissemination, without occasioning  
 the mischief either to others or himself  
 that might arise from publication. It is  
 doubtful whether he would himself have  
 admitted it into a collection of his works.  
 His severe classical taste, refined by the  
 constant study of the Greek poets, might  
 have discovered defects that escape the  
 ordinary reader; and the change his  
 opinions underwent in many points would  
 have prevented him from putting forth  
 the speculations of his boyish days. But  
 the poem is too beautiful in itself, and  
 far too remarkable as the production of  
 a boy of eighteen, to allow of its being  
 passed over: besides that, having been  
 frequently reprinted, the omission would  
 be vain. In the former edition certain  
 portions were left out, as shocking the  
 general reader from the violence of their  
 attack on religion. I myself had a pain-  
 ful feeling that such erasures might be  
 looked upon as a mark of disrespect  
 towards the author, and am glad to have  
 the opportunity of restoring them. The  
 notes also are reprinted entire — not be-  
 cause they are models of reasoning or  
 lessons of truth, but because Shelley  
 wrote them, and that all that a man at  
 once so distinguished and so excellent  
 ever did deserves to be preserved. The  
 alterations his opinions underwent ought  
 to be recorded, for they form his history.

A series of articles was published in  
 the *New Monthly Magazine* during the  
 autumn of the year 1832, written by a  
 man of great talent, a fellow-collegian  
 and warm friend of Shelley: they describe  
 admirably the state of his mind during  
 his collegiate life. Inspired with ardor  
 for the acquisition of knowledge, endow-  
 ed with the keenest sensibility and  
 with the fortitude of a martyr, Shelley  
 came among his fellow-creatures, con-  
 gregated for the purposes of education,  
 like a spirit from another sphere; too  
 delicately organized for the rough treat-  
 ment man uses towards man, especially  
 in the season of youth, and too resolute

in carrying out his own sense of good and justice, not to become a victim. To a devoted attachment to those he loved he added a determined resistance to oppression. Refusing to fag at Eton, he was treated with revolting cruelty by masters and boys: this roused instead of taming his spirit, and he rejected the duty of obedience when it was enforced by menaces and punishment. To aversion to the society of his fellow-creatures, such as he found them when collected together in societies, where one egged-on the other to acts of tyranny, was joined the deepest sympathy and compassion; while the attachment he felt for individuals, and the admiration with which he regarded their powers and their virtues, led him to entertain a high opinion of the perfectibility of human nature; and he believed that all could reach the highest grade of moral improvement, did not the customs and prejudices of society foster evil passions and excuse evil actions.

The oppression which, trembling at every nerve yet resolute to heroism, it was his ill-fortune to encounter at school and at college, led him to dissent in all things from those whose arguments were blows, whose faith appeared to engender blame and hatred. "During my existence," he wrote to a friend in 1812, "I have incessantly speculated, thought, and read." His readings were not always well chosen; among them were the works of the French philosophers: as far as metaphysical argument went, he temporarily became a convert. At the same time, it was the cardinal article of his faith that, if men were but taught and induced to treat their fellows with love, charity, and equal rights, this earth would realize paradise. He looked upon religion, as it is professed, and above all practised, as hostile instead of friendly to the cultivation of those virtues which would make men brothers.

Can this be wondered at? At the age of seventeen, fragile in health and frame, of the purest habits in morals, full of devoted generosity and universal kindness, glowing with ardor to attain wisdom, resolved at every personal sacrifice to do

right, burning with a desire for affection and sympathy,—he was treated as a reprobate, cast forth as a criminal.

The cause was that he was sincere; that he believed the opinions which he entertained to be true. And he loved truth with a martyr's love; he was ready to sacrifice station and fortune, and his dearest affections, at its shrine. The sacrifice was demanded from, and made by, a youth of seventeen. It is a singular fact in the history of society in the civilized nations of modern times that no false step is so ir retrievable as one made in early youth. Older men, it is true, when they oppose their fellows and transgress ordinary rules, carry a certain prudence or hypocrisy as a shield along with them. But youth is rash; nor can it imagine, while asserting what it believes to be true, and doing what it believes to be right, that it should be denounced as vicious, and pursued as a criminal.

Shelley possessed a quality of mind which experience has shown me to be of the rarest occurrence among human beings: this was his *unworldliness*. The usual motives that rule men, prospects of present or future advantage, the rank and fortune of those around, the taunts and censures, or the praise, of those who were hostile to him, had no influence whatever over his actions, and apparently none over his thoughts. It is difficult even to express the simplicity and directness of purpose that adorned him. Some few might be found in the history of mankind, and some one at least among his own friends, equally disinterested and scornful, even to severe personal sacrifices, of every baser motive. But no one, I believe, ever joined this noble but passive virtue to equal active endeavors for the benefit of his friends and mankind in general, and to equal power to produce the advantages he desired. The world's brightest gauds and its most solid advantages were of no worth in his eyes, when compared to the cause of what he considered truth, and the good of his fellow-creatures. Born in a position which, to his inexperienced mind, afforded the greatest facilities to practise



the tenets he espoused, he boldly declared the use he would make of fortune and station, and enjoyed the belief that he should materially benefit his fellow creatures by his actions; while, conscious of surpassing powers of reason and imagination, it is not strange that he should, even while so young, have believed that his written thoughts would tend to disseminate opinions which he believed conducive to the happiness of the human race.

If man were a creature devoid of passion, he might have said and done all this with quietness. But he was too enthusiastic, and too full of hatred of all the ills he witnessed, not to scorn danger. Various disappointments tortured, but could not tame, his soul. The more enmity he met, the more earnestly he became attached to his peculiar views, and hostile to those of the men who persecuted him.

He was animated to greater zeal by compassion for his fellow-creatures. His sympathy was excited by the misery with which the world is burning. He witnessed the sufferings of the poor, and was aware of the evils of ignorance. He desired to induce every rich man to despoil himself of superfluity, and to create a brotherhood of property and service, and was ready to be the first to lay down the advantages of his birth. He was of too uncompromising a disposition to join any party. He did not in his youth look forward to gradual improvement: nay, in those days of intolerance, now almost forgotten, it seemed as easy to look forward to the sort of millennium of freedom and brotherhood which he thought the proper state of mankind as to the present reign of moderation and improvement. Ill-health made him believe that his race would soon be run; that a year or two was all he had of life. He desired that these years should be useful and illustrious. He saw, in a fervent call on his fellow-creatures to share alike the blessings of the creation, to love and serve each other, the noblest work that life and

time permitted him. In this spirit he composed "Queen Mab."

He was a lover of the wonderful and wild in literature, but had not fostered these tastes at their genuine sources—the romances and chivalry of the middle ages—but in the perusal of such German works as were current in those days. Under the influence of these he, at the age of fifteen, wrote two short prose romances of slender merit. The sentiments and language were exaggerated, the composition imitative and poor. He also wrote a poem on the subject of Ahasuerus—being led to it by a German fragment he picked up, dirty and torn, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. This fell afterwards into other hands, and was considerably altered before it was printed. Our earlier English poetry was almost unknown to him. The love and knowledge of Nature developed by Wordsworth—the lofty melody and mysterious beauty of Coleridge's poetry—and the wild fantastic machinery and gorgeous scenery adopted by Southey—composed his favorite reading; the rhythm of "Queen Mab" was founded on that of "Thalaba" and the first few lines bear a striking resemblance in spirit, though not in idea, to the opening of that poem. His fertile imagination, and ear tuned to the finest sense of harmony, preserved him from imitation. Another of his favorite books was the poem of "Gebir" by Walter Savage Landor. From his boyhood he had a wonderful facility of versification, which he carried into another language; and his Latin school-verses were composed with an ease and correctness that procured for him prizes, and caused him to be resorted to by all his friends for help. He was, at the period of writing "Queen Mab," a great traveller within the limits of England, Scotland, and Ireland. His time was spent among the loveliest scenes of these countries. Mountain and lake and forest were his home; the phenomena of Nature were his favorite study. He loved to inquire into their causes, and was addicted to pursuits of natural philosophy and chemistry, as far

as they could be carried on as an amusement. These tastes gave truth and vivacity to his descriptions, and warmed his soul with that deep admiration for the wonders of Nature which constant association with her inspired.

He never intended to publish "Queen Mab" as it stands; but a few years after, when printing "Alastor," he extracted a small portion which he entitled "The Dæmon of the World." In this he changed somewhat the versification, and made other alterations scarcely to be called improvements.

Some years after, when in Italy, a bookseller published an edition of "Queen Mab" as it originally stood. Shelley was hastily written to by his friends, under the idea that, deeply injurious as the mere distribution of the poem had proved, the publication might awaken fresh persecutions. At the suggestion of these friends he wrote a letter on the subject, printed in the *Examiner* newspaper — with which I close this history of his earliest work.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "EXAMINER."

SIR,

Having heard that a poem entitled "Queen Mab" has been surreptitiously published in London, and that legal proceedings have been instituted against the publisher, I request the favor of your insertion of the following explanation of the affair, as it relates to me.

A poem entitled "Queen Mab" was written by me at the age of eighteen, I dare say in a sufficiently intemperate spirit — but even then was not intended for publication, and a few copies only were struck off, to be distributed among my personal friends. I have not seen this production for several years. I doubt not but that it is perfectly worthless in point of literary composition; and that, in all that concerns moral and political speculation, as well as in the subtler discriminations of metaphysical and religious doctrine, it is still more crude and immature. I am a devoted enemy to religious,

political and domestic oppression; and I regret this publication, not so much from literary vanity, as because I fear it is better fitted to injure than to serve the sacred cause of freedom. I have directed my solicitor to apply to Chancery for an injunction to restrain the sale; but, after the precedent of Mr. Southey's "Wat Tyler" (a poem written, I believe, at the same age, and with the same unreflecting enthusiasm), with little hope of success.

Whilst I exonerate myself from all share in having divulged opinions hostile to existing sanctions, under the form, whatever it may be, which they assume in this poem, it is scarcely necessary for me to protest against the system of inculcating the truth of Christianity or the excellence of Monarchy, however true or however excellent they may be, by such equivocal arguments as confiscation and imprisonment, and invective and slander, and the insolent violation of the most sacred ties of Nature and society.

Sir,

I am your obliged and obedient servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

*Pisa, June 22, 1821.*

## THE DÆMON OF THE WORLD.

A FRAGMENT.<sup>1</sup>

PART I.

Nec tantum prodere vati,  
Quantum scire licet. Venit ætas omnis in unam  
Congeriem, miserumque premunt tot sæcula  
pectus.

LUCAN, *Phars.* L. v. l. 176-178.

How wonderful is Death,  
Death and his brother Sleep!  
One pale as yonder wan and horned  
moon,  
With lips of lurid blue,  
The other glowing like the vital morn  
When throned on ocean's wave  
It breathes over the world;

<sup>1</sup> A fragment of *Queen Mab* revised.—*Ed.*

Yet both so passing strange and wonder-  
ful!

Hath then the iron-sceptred Skeleton,  
Whose reign is in the tainted sepulchres,  
To the hell dogs that couch beneath his  
throne

Cast that fair prey? Must that divinest  
form,

Which love and admiration cannot view  
Without a beating heart, whose azure  
veins

Steal like dark streams along a field of  
snow,

Whose outline is as fair as marble clothed  
In light of some sublimest mind, decay?  
Nor putrefaction's breath

Leave aught of this pure spectacle  
But loathsomeness and ruin?—  
Spare aught but a dark theme,

On which the lightest heart might  
moralize?

Or is it but that downy-wingèd slumbers  
Have charmed their nurse coy Silence,  
near her lids

To watch their own repose?

Will they, when morning's beam

Flows through those wells of light,  
Seek far from noise and day some west-  
ern cave,

Where woods and streams with soft and  
pausing winds

A lulling murmur weave?—

Ianthe doth not sleep

The dreamless sleep of death:

Nor in her moonlight chamber silently  
Doth Henry hear her regular pulses  
throb,

Or mark her delicate cheek

With interchange of hues mock the broad  
moon,

Outwatching weary night,

Without assured reward.

Her dewy eyes are closed;

On their translucent lids, whose texture  
fine

Scarce hides the dark blue orbs that burn  
below

With unapparent fire,

The baby Sleep is pillowed:

Her golden tresses shade

The bosom's stainless pride,

Twining like tendrils of the parasite  
Around a marble column.

Hark! whence that rushing sound?  
'T is like a wondrous strain that  
sweeps

Around a lonely ruin

When west winds sigh and evening waves  
respond

In whispers from the shore:

'T is wilder than the unmeasured notes  
Which from the unseen lyres of dells and  
groves

The genii of the breezes sweep.

Floating on waves of music and of light  
The chariot of the Dæmon of the World  
Descends in silent power:

Its shape reposed within: slight as some  
cloud

That catches but the palest tinge of day  
When evening yields to night;

Bright as that fibrous woof when stars  
endue

Its transitory robe.

Four shapeless shadows bright and beau-  
tiful

Draw that strange car of glory, reins of  
light

Check their unearthly speed; they stop  
and fold

Their wings of braided air:

The Dæmon leaning from the ethereal car  
Gazed on the slumbering maid.

Human eye hath ne'er beheld

A shape so wild, so bright, so beautiful,  
As that which o'er the maiden's charmed  
sleep

Waving a starry wand,

Hung like a mist of light.

Such sounds as breathed around like  
odoriferous winds

Of wakening spring arose,

Filling the chamber and the moonlight  
sky.

“Maiden, the world's supremest spirit  
Beneath the shadow of her wings  
Folds all thy memory doth inherit

From ruin of divinest things,

Feelings that lure thee to betray,

And light of thoughts that pass  
away.

“For thou hast earned a mighty boon,  
The truths which wisest poets see  
Dimly, thy mind may make its own,  
Rewarding its own majesty,  
Entranced in some diviner mood  
Of self-oblivious solitude.

“Custom, and Faith, and Power thou  
spurnest;  
From hate and awe thy heart is free;  
Ardent and pure as day thou burnest,  
For dark and cold mortality  
A living light, to cheer it long,  
The watch-fires of the world  
among.

“Therefore from nature’s inner shrine,  
Where gods and fiends in worship  
bend,  
Majestic spirit, be it thine  
The flame to seize, the veil to rend,  
Where the vast snake Eternity  
In charmed sleep doth ever lie.

“All that inspires thy voice of love,  
Or speaks in thy unclosing eyes,  
Or through thy frame doth burn or move,  
Or think or feel, awake, arise!  
Spirit, leave for mine and me  
Earth’s unsubstantial mimicry!”

It ceased, and from the mute and move-  
less frame  
A radiant spirit arose,  
All Beautiful in naked purity.  
Robed in its human hues it did ascend,  
Disparting as it went the silver clouds  
It moved towards the car, and took its  
seat  
Beside the Dæmon shape.

Obedient to the sweep of æry song,  
The mighty ministers  
Unfurled their prismatic wings.  
The magic car moved on;  
The night was fair, innumerable stars  
Studded heaven’s dark blue vault;  
The eastern wave grew pale  
With the first smile of morn.

The magic car moved on,  
From the swift sweep of wings  
The atmosphere in flaming sparkles flew;

And where the burning wheels  
Eddied above the mountain’s loftiest  
peak  
Was traced a line of lightning.  
Now far above a rock the utmost verge  
Of the wide earth it flew,  
The rival of the Andes, whose dark brow  
Frowned o’er the silver sea.

Far, far below the chariot’s stormy path,  
Calm as a slumbering babe,  
Tremendous ocean lay.  
Its broad and silent mirror gave to view  
The pale and waning stars,  
The chariot’s fiery track,  
And the gray light of morn  
Tingeing those fleecy clouds  
That cradled in their folds the infant  
dawn.

The chariot seemed to fly  
Through the abyss of an immense con-  
cave,  
Radiant with million constellations,  
tinged  
With shades of infinite color,  
And semicircled with a belt  
Flashing incessant meteors.

As they approached their goal  
The winged shadows seemed to gather  
speed.  
The sea no longer was distinguished;  
earth  
Appeared a vast and shadowy sphere,  
suspended  
In the black concave of heaven  
With the sun’s cloudless orb,  
Whose rays of rapid light  
Parted around the chariot’s swifter course,  
And fell like ocean’s feathery spray  
Dashed from the boiling surge  
Before a vessel’s prow.

The magic car moved on.  
Earth’s distant orb appeared  
The smallest light that twinkles in the  
heavens,  
Whilst round the chariot’s way  
Innumerable systems widely rolled,  
And countless spheres diffused,  
An ever varying glory.  
It was a sight of wonder! Some were  
horned,

And, like the moon's argentine crescent  
 hung  
 In the dark dome of heaven; some did  
 shed  
 A clear mild beam like Hesperus, while  
 the sea  
 Yet glows with fading sunlight; others  
 dashed  
 Athwart the night with trains of bicker-  
 ing fire,  
 Like spherèd worlds to death and ruin  
 driven;  
 Some shone like stars, and as the chariot  
 passed  
 Bedimmed all other light.

Spirit of Nature! here  
 In this interminable wilderness  
 Of worlds, at whose involved immensity  
 Even soaring fancy staggers,  
 Here is thy fitting temple.  
 Yet not the lightest leaf  
 That quivers to the passing breeze  
 Is less instinct with thee, —  
 Yet not the meanest worm,  
 That lurks in graves and fattens on the  
 dead  
 Less shares thy eternal breath.  
 Spirit of Nature! thou  
 Imperishable as this glorious scene,  
 Here is thy fitting temple.

If solitude hath ever led thy steps  
 To the shore of the immeasurable sea,  
 And thou hast lingered there  
 Until the sun's broad orb  
 Seemed resting on the fiery line of  
 ocean  
 Thou must have marked the braided  
 webs of gold  
 That without motion hang  
 Over the sinking sphere:  
 Thou must have marked the billowy  
 mountain clouds,  
 Edged with intolerable radiancy,  
 Towering like rocks of jet  
 Above the burning deep:  
 And yet there is a moment  
 When the sun's highest point  
 Peers like a star o'er ocean's western  
 edge,  
 When those far clouds of feathery purple  
 gleam

Like fairy lands girt by some heavenly  
 sea:  
 Then has thy rapt imagination soared  
 Where in the midst of all existing things  
 The temple of the mightiest Dæmon  
 stands.

Yet not the golden islands  
 That gleam amid yon flood of purple  
 light,  
 Nor the feathery curtains  
 That canopy the sun's resplendent couch,  
 Nor the burnished ocean waves  
 Paving that gorgeous dome,  
 So fair, so wonderful a sight  
 As the eternal temple could afford.  
 The elements of all that human thought  
 Can frame of lovely or sublime, did join  
 To rear the fabric of the fane, nor aught  
 Of earth may image forth its majesty.  
 Yet likest evening's vault that faëry hall,  
 As heaven low resting on the wave it  
 spread  
 Its floors of flashing light,  
 Its vast and azure dome;  
 And on the verge of that obscure abyss  
 Where crystal battlements o'erhang the  
 gulf  
 Of the dark world, ten thousand spheres  
 diffuse  
 Their lustre through its adamantine  
 gates.

The magic car no longer moved;  
 The Dæmon and the Spirit  
 Entered the eternal gates.  
 Those clouds of aëry gold  
 That slept in glittering billows  
 Beneath the azure canopy,  
 With the ethereal footsteps trembled not;  
 While slight and odorous mists  
 Floated to strains of thrilling melody  
 Through the vast columns and the  
 pearly shrines.

The Dæmon and the Spirit  
 Approached the overhanging battlement.  
 Below lay stretched the boundless uni-  
 verse!  
 There, far as the remotest line  
 That limits swift imagination's flight,  
 Unending orbs mingled in mazy motion,  
 Immutably fulfilling

Eternal Nature's law.  
 Above, below, around,  
 The circling systems formed  
 A wilderness of harmony,  
 Each with undeviating aim  
 In eloquent silence through the depths  
 of space  
 Pursued its wondrous way. —

Awhile the Spirit paused in ecstasy.  
 Yet soon she saw, as the vast spheres  
 swept by,  
 Strange things within their belted orbs  
 appear.  
 Like animated frenzies, dimly moved  
 Shadows, and skeletons, and fiendly  
 shapes,  
 Thronging round human graves, and o'er  
 the dead  
 Sculpturing records for each memory  
 In verse, such as malignant gods pro-  
 nounce,  
 Blasting the hopes of men, when heaven  
 and hell  
 Confounded burst in ruin o'er the world:  
 And they did build vast trophies, in-  
 struments  
 Of murder, human bones, barbaric gold,  
 Skins torn from living men, and towers  
 of skulls  
 With sightless holes gazing on blinder  
 heaven,  
 Mitres, and crowns, and brazen chariots  
 stained  
 With blood, and scrolls of mystic wick-  
 edness,  
 The sanguine codes of venerable crime.  
 The likeness of a throned king came by,  
 When these had past, bearing upon his  
 brow  
 A threefold crown; his countenance was  
 calm,  
 His eye severe and cold; but his right  
 hand  
 Was charged with bloody coin, and he  
 did gnaw  
 By fits, with secret smiles, a human  
 heart  
 Concealed beneath his robe; and motley  
 shapes,  
 A multitudinous throng, around him  
 knelt,

With bosoms bare, and bowed heads,  
 and false looks  
 Of true submission, as the sphere rolled  
 by,  
 Brooking no eye to witness their foul  
 shame,  
 Which human hearts must feel, while  
 human tongues  
 Tremble to speak, they did rage horribly,  
 Breathing in self contempt fierce blas-  
 phemies  
 Against the Dæmon of the World, and  
 high  
 Hurling their armed hands where the  
 pure Spirit,  
 Serene and inaccessiblely secure,  
 Stood on an isolated pinnacle,  
 The flood of ages combating below,  
 The depth of the unbounded universe  
 Above, and all around  
 Necessity's unchanging harmony.

## PART II.

O HAPPY Earth! reality of Heaven!  
 To which those restless powers that  
 ceaselessly  
 Throng through the human universe,  
 aspire;  
 Thou consummation of all mortal hope!  
 Thou glorious prize of blindly-working  
 will!  
 Whose rays, diffused throughout all space  
 and time,  
 Verge to one point and blend forever  
 there!  
 Of purest spirits thou pure dwelling-  
 place,  
 Where care and sorrow, impotence and  
 crime,  
 Languor, disease, and ignorance dare not  
 come:  
 O happy Earth, reality of Heaven!

Genius has seen thee in her passionate  
 dreams,  
 And dim forebodings of thy loveliness  
 Haunting the human heart have there  
 entwined  
 Those roined hopes, that the proud  
 Power of Evil  
 Shall not forever on this fairest world

Shake pestilence and war, or that his  
 slaves  
 With blasphemy for prayer, and human  
 blood  
 For sacrifice, before his shrine forever  
 In adoration bend, or Erebus  
 With all its banded fiends shall not uprising  
 To overwhelm in envy and revenge  
 The dauntless and the good, who dare to  
 hurl  
 Defiance at his throne, girt tho' it be  
 With Death's omnipotence. Thou hast  
 beheld  
 His empire, o'er the present and the  
 past;  
 It was a desolate sight — now gaze on  
 mine,  
 Futurity. Thou hoary giant Time,  
 Render thou up thy half-devoured  
 babes, —  
 And from the cradles of eternity,  
 Where millions lie lulled to their por-  
 tioned sleep  
 By the deep murmuring stream of pass-  
 ing things,  
 Tear thou that gloomy shroud. — “ Spirit,  
 behold  
 Thy glorious destiny ! ”

The Spirit saw

The vast frame of the renovated world  
 Smile in the lap of Chaos, and the sense  
 Of hope thro' her fine texture did suffuse  
 Such varying glow, as summer evening  
 casts  
 On undulating clouds and deepening  
 lakes.  
 Like the vague sighings of a wind at  
 even,  
 That wakes the wavelets of the slumber-  
 ing sea  
 And dies on the creation of its breath,  
 And sinks and rises, fails and swells by  
 fits,  
 Was the sweet stream of thought that  
 with wild motion  
 Flowed o'er the Spirit's human sympa-  
 thies.  
 The mighty tide of thought had paused  
 awhile,  
 Which from the Dæmon now like Ocean's  
 stream  
 Again began to pour. —

“ To me is given  
 The wonders of the human world to  
 keep —  
 Space, matter, time and mind — let the  
 sight  
 Renew and strengthen all thy failing  
 hope.  
 All things are recreated, and the flame  
 Of consentaneous love inspires all life :  
 The fertile bosom of the earth gives suck  
 To myriads, who still grow beneath her  
 care,  
 Rewarding her with their pure perfect-  
 ness :  
 The balmy breathings of the wind inhale  
 Her virtues, and diffuse them all abroad :  
 Health floats amid the gentle atmosphere,  
 Glows in the fruits, and mantles on the  
 stream :  
 No storms deform the beaming brow of  
 heaven,  
 Nor scatter in the freshness of its pride  
 The foliage of the undecaying trees ;  
 But fruits are ever ripe, flowers ever fair,  
 And Autumn proudly bears her matron  
 grace,  
 Kindling a flush on the fair cheek of  
 Spring,  
 Whose virgin bloom beneath the ruddy  
 fruit  
 Reflects its tint and blushes into love.

The habitable earth is full of bliss ;  
 Those wastes of frozen billows that were  
 hurled  
 By everlasting snow-storms round the  
 poles,  
 Where matter dared not vegetate nor  
 live,  
 But ceaseless frost round the vast solitude  
 Bound its broad zone of stillness, are  
 unloosed ;  
 And fragrant zephyrs there from spicy  
 isles  
 Ruffle the placid ocean-deep, that rolls  
 Its broad, bright surges to the sloping  
 sand,  
 Whose roar is wakened into echoings  
 sweet  
 To murmur through the heaven-breathing  
 groves  
 And melodize with man's blest nature  
 there.

"The vast tract of the parched and  
 sandy waste  
 Now teems with countless rills and shady  
 woods,  
 Corn-fields and pastures and white cot-  
 tages;  
 And where the startled wilderness did  
 hear  
 A savage conqueror stained in kindred  
 blood,  
 Hymning his victory, or the milder snake  
 Crushing the bones of some frail antelope  
 Within his brazen folds — the dewy lawn,  
 Offering sweet incense to the sunrise,  
 smiles  
 To see a babe before his mother's door,  
 Share with the green and golden basilisk  
 That comes to lick his feet, his morning's  
 meal.

"Those trackless deeps, where many  
 a weary sail  
 Has seen above the illimitable plain,  
 Morning on night, and night on morning  
 rise,  
 Whilst still no land to greet the wanderer  
 spread  
 Its shadowy mountains on the sun-bright  
 sea,  
 Where the loud roarings of the tempest-  
 waves  
 So long have mingled with the gusty  
 wind  
 In melancholy loneliness, and swept  
 The desert of those ocean solitudes,  
 But vocal to the sea-bird's harrowing  
 shriek,  
 The bellowing monster, and the rushing  
 storm,  
 Now to the sweet and many-mingling  
 sounds  
 Of kindest human impulses respond:  
 Those lonely realms bright garden-isles  
 begem,  
 With lightsome clouds and shining seas  
 between,  
 And fertile valleys, resonant with bliss,  
 Whilst green woods overcanopy the  
 wave,  
 Which like a toil-worn laborer leaps to  
 shore,  
 To meet the kisses of the flowerets there.

"Man chief perceives the change; his  
 being notes  
 The gradual renovation, and defines  
 Each movement of its progress on his  
 mind.  
 Man, where the gloom of the long polar  
 night  
 Lowered o'er the snow-clad rocks and  
 frozen soil,  
 Where scarce the hardest herb that  
 braves the frost  
 Basked in the moonlight's ineffectual  
 glow,  
 Shrank with the plants, and darkened  
 with the night;  
 Nor where the tropics bound the realms  
 of day  
 With a broad belt of mingling cloud and  
 flame,  
 Where blue mists through the unmoving  
 atmosphere  
 Scattered the seeds of pestilence, and  
 fed  
 Unnatural vegetation, where the land  
 Teemed with all earthquake, tempest and  
 disease,  
 Was man a nobler being; slavery  
 Had crushed him to his country's blood-  
 stained dust.

"Even where the milder zone afforded  
 man  
 A seeming shelter, yet contagion there,  
 Blighting his being with unnumbered ills,  
 Spread like a quenchless fire; nor truth  
 availed  
 Till late to arrest its progress, or create  
 That peace which first in bloodless vic-  
 tory waved  
 Her snowy standard o'er this favored  
 clime:  
 There man was long the train-bearer of  
 slaves,  
 The mimic of surrounding misery,  
 The jackal of ambition's lion-rage,  
 The bloodhound of religion's hungry zeal.

"Here now the human being stands  
 adorning  
 This loveliest earth with taintless body  
 and mind;  
 Blest from his birth with all bland im-  
 pulses,



Which gently in his noble bosom wake  
 All kindly passions and all pure desires.  
 Him, still from hope to hope the bliss pur-  
 suing,  
 Which from the exhaustless lore of  
 human weal  
 Draws on the virtuous mind, the thoughts  
 that rise  
 In time-destroying infiniteness, gift  
 With self-enshrined eternity, that mocks  
 The unprevailing hoariness of age,  
 And man, once fleeting o'er the tran-  
 sient scene  
 Swift as an unremembered vision, stands  
 Immortal upon earth: no longer now  
 He slays the beast that sports around his  
 dwelling  
 And horribly devours its mangled flesh,  
 Or drinks its vital blood, which like a  
 stream  
 Of poison thro' his fevered veins did  
 flow  
 Feeding a plague that secretly consumed  
 His feeble frame, and kindling in his  
 mind  
 Hatred, despair, and fear and vain  
 belief,  
 The germs of misery, death, disease,  
 and crime.  
 No longer now the wingèd habitants,  
 That in the woods their sweet lives sing  
 away,  
 Flee from the form of man; but gather  
 round,  
 And prune their sunny feathers on the  
 hands  
 Which little children stretch in friendly  
 sport  
 Towards these dreadless partners of their  
 play.  
 All things are void of terror: man has  
 lost  
 His desolating privilege, and stands  
 An equal amidst equals: happiness  
 And science dawn though late upon the  
 earth;  
 Peace cheers the mind, health renovates  
 the frame;  
 Disease and pleasure cease to mingle  
 here,  
 Reason and passion cease to combat  
 there;

Whilst mind unfettered o'er the earth  
 extends  
 Its all-subduing energies, and wields  
 The sceptre of a vast dominion there.

“Mild is the slow necessity of death:  
 The tranquil spirit fails beneath its  
 grasp,  
 Without a groan, almost without a fear,  
 Resigned in peace to the necessity,  
 Calm as a voyager to some distant land,  
 And full of wonder, full of hope as he.  
 The deadly germs of languor and disease  
 Waste in the human frame, and Nature  
 gifts  
 With choicest boons her human wor-  
 shippers.  
 How vigorous now the athletic form of  
 age!  
 How clear its open and unwrinkled  
 brow!  
 Where neither avarice, cunning, pride,  
 or care,  
 Had stamped the seal of gray deformity  
 On all the mingling lineaments of time!  
 How lovely the intrepid front of youth!  
 How sweet the smiles of taintless in-  
 fancy!

“Within the massy prison's mouldering  
 courts,  
 Fearless and free the ruddy children  
 play,  
 Weaving gay chaplets for their innocent  
 brows  
 With the green ivy and the red wall-  
 flower,  
 That mock the dungeon's unavailing  
 gloom;  
 The ponderous chains, and gratings of  
 strong iron,  
 There rust amid the accumulated ruins  
 Now mingling slowly with their native  
 earth;  
 There the broad beam of day, which  
 feebly once  
 Lighted the cheek of lean captivity  
 With a pale and sickly glare, now freely  
 shines  
 On the pure smiles of infant playfulness:  
 No more the shuddering voice of hoarse  
 despair

Peals through the echoing vaults, but  
soothing notes  
Of ivy-fingered winds and gladsome  
birds  
And merriment are resonant around.

“The fanes of Fear and Falsehood  
hear no more  
The voice that once waked multitudes to  
war  
Thundering thro’ all their aisles: but  
now respond  
To the death dirge of the melancholy  
wind:

It were a sight of awfulness to see  
The works of faith and slavery, so vast,  
So sumptuous, yet withal so perishing!  
Even as the corpse that rests beneath  
their wall!

A thousand mourners deck the pomp of  
death

To-day, the breathing marble glows  
above

To decorate its memory, and tongues  
Are busy of its life; tomorrow, worms  
In silence and in darkness seize their prey.  
These ruins soon leave not a wreck be-  
hind:

Their elements, wide-scattered o’er the  
globe,

To happier shapes are moulded, and be-  
come

Ministrant to all blissful impulses:  
Thus human things are perfected, and  
earth,

Even as a child beneath its mother’s  
love,

Is strengthened in all excellence, and  
grows

Fairer and nobler with each passing year.

“Now Time his dusky pennons o’er  
the scene

Closes in steadfast darkness, and the  
past

Fades from our charmed sight. My task  
is done:

Thy lore is learned. Earth’s wonders  
are thine own,

With all the fear and all the hope they  
bring.

My spells are past: the present now re-  
curs.

Ah me! a pathless wilderness remains  
Yet unsubdued by man’s reclaiming  
hand.

“Yet, human Spirit, bravely hold thy  
course,

Let virtue teach thee firmly to pursue  
The gradual paths of an aspiring change:  
For birth and life and death, and that  
strange state

Before the naked powers that thro’ the  
world

Wander like winds, have found a human  
home,

All tend to perfect happiness, and urge  
The restless wheels of being on their  
way,

Whose flashing spokes, instinct with in-  
finite life,

Bicker and burn to gain their destined  
goal:

For birth but wakes the universal mind  
Whose mighty streams might else in  
silence flow

Thro’ the vast world, to individual sense  
Of outward shows, whose unexperienced  
shape

New modes of passion to its frame may  
lend;

Life is its state of action, and the store  
Of all events is aggregated there  
That variegate the eternal universe;  
Death is a gate of dreariness and gloom,  
That leads to azure isles and beaming  
skies

And happy regions of eternal hope.

Therefore, O Spirit! fearlessly bear on:  
Though storms may break the primrose  
on its stalk,

Though frosts may blight the freshness  
of its bloom,

Yet spring’s awakening breath will woo  
the earth,

To feed with kindest dews its favorite  
flower,

That blooms in mossy banks and dark-  
some glens,

Lighting the green wood with its sunny  
smile.

“Fear not then, Spirit, death’s disrob-  
bing hand,

So welcome when the tyrant is awake,

So welcome when the bigot's hell-torch  
 flares;  
 'Tis but the voyage of a darksome hour,  
 The transient gulf-dream of a startling  
 sleep.  
 For what thou art shall perish utterly,  
 But what is thine may never cease to be;  
 Death is no foe to virtue: earth has seen  
 Love's brightest roses on the scaffold  
 bloom,  
 Mingling with freedom's fadeless laurels  
 there,  
 And presaging the truth of visioned bliss.  
 Are there not hopes within thee, which  
 this scene  
 Of linked and gradual being has con-  
 firmed?  
 Hopes that not vainly thou, and living  
 fires  
 Of mind, as radiant and as pure as thou  
 Have shone upon the paths of men—  
 return,  
 Surpassing Spirit, to that world, where  
 thou  
 Art destined an eternal war to wage  
 With tyranny and falsehood, and uproot  
 The germs of misery from the human  
 heart.  
 Thine is the hand whose piety would  
 soothe  
 The thorny pillow of unhappy crime,  
 Whose impotence an easy pardon gains,  
 Watching its wanderings as a friend's  
 disease:  
 Thine is the brow whose mildness would  
 defy  
 Its fiercest rage, and brave its sternest  
 will,  
 When fenced by power and master of  
 the world.  
 Thou art sincere and good; of resolute  
 mind,  
 Free from heart-withering custom's cold  
 control,  
 Of passion lofty, pure and unsubdued.  
 Earth's pride and meanness could not  
 vanquish thee,  
 And therefore art thou worthy of the  
 boon  
 Which thou hast now received: virtue  
 shall keep

Thy footsteps in the path that thou hast  
 trod,  
 And many days of beaming hope shall  
 bless  
 Thy spotless life of sweet and sacred  
 love.  
 Go, happy one, and give that bosom joy  
 Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch  
 Light, life and rapture from thy  
 smile."

The Dæmon called its winged minis-  
 ters.  
 Speechless with bliss the Spirit mounts  
 the car,  
 That rolled beside the crystal battlement,  
 Bending her beamy eyes in thankfulness.  
 The burning wheels inflame  
 The steep descent of Heaven's untrod-  
 den way.  
 Fast and far the chariot flew:  
 The mighty globes that rolled  
 Around the gate of the Eternal Fane  
 Lessened by slow degrees, and soon ap-  
 peared  
 Such tiny twinklers as the planet orbs  
 That ministering on the solar power  
 With borrowed light pursued their nar-  
 rower way.  
 Earth floated then below:  
 The chariot paused a moment;  
 The Spirit then descended:  
 And from the earth departing  
 The shadows with swift wings  
 Speded like thought upon the light of  
 Heaven.

The Body and the Soul united then,  
 A gentle start convulsed Ianthe's frame:  
 Her veiny eyelids quietly unclosed;  
 Moveless awhile the dark blue orbs re-  
 mained:  
 She looked around in wonder and beheld  
 Henry, who kneeled in silence by her  
 couch,  
 Watching her sleep with looks of speech-  
 less love,  
 And the bright beaming stars  
 That through the casement shone.

## ALASTOR;

OR

## THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE.

## PREFACE.

THE poem entitled *Alastor* may be considered as allegorical of one of the most interesting situations of the human mind. It represents a youth of uncorrupted feelings and adventurous genius led forth by an imagination inflamed and purified through familiarity with all that is excellent and majestic, to the contemplation of the universe. He drinks deep of the fountains of knowledge, and is still insatiate. The magnificence and beauty of the external world sinks profoundly into the frame of his conceptions, and affords to their modifications a variety not to be exhausted. So long as it is possible for his desires to point towards objects thus infinite and unmeasured, he is joyous, and tranquil, and self-possessed. But the period arrives when these objects cease to suffice. His mind is at length suddenly awakened and thirsts for intercourse with an intelligence similar to itself. He images to himself the Being whom he loves. Conversant with speculations of the sublimest and most perfect natures, the vision in which he embodies his own imaginations unites all of wonderful, or wise, or beautiful, which the poet, the philosopher, or the lover could depicture. The intellectual faculties, the imagination, the functions of sense, have their respective requisitions on the sympathy of corresponding powers in other human beings. The Poet is represented as uniting these requisitions, and attaching them to a single image. He seeks in vain for a prototype of his conception. Blasted by his disappointment, he descends to an untimely grave.

The picture is not barren of instruction to actual men. The Poet's self-centred seclusion was avenged by the furies of an irresistible passion pursuing him to speedy ruin. But that Power

which strikes the luminaries of the world with sudden darkness and extinction, by awakening them to too exquisite a perception of its influences, dooms to a slow and poisonous decay those meaner spirits that dare to abjure its dominion. Their destiny is more abject and inglorious as their delinquency is more contemptible and pernicious. They who, deluded by no generous error, instigated by no sacred thirst of doubtful knowledge, duped by no illustrious superstition, loving nothing on this earth, and cherishing no hopes beyond, yet keep aloof from sympathies with their kind, rejoicing neither in human joy nor mourning with human grief; these, and such as they, have their apportioned curse. They languish, because none feel with them their common nature. They are morally dead. They are neither friends, nor lovers, nor fathers, nor citizens of the world, nor benefactors of their country. Among those who attempt to exist without human sympathy, the pure and tender-hearted perish through the intensity and passion of their search after its communities, when the vacancy of their spirit suddenly makes itself felt. All else, selfish, blind, and torpid, are those unforeseeing multitudes who constitute, together with their own, the lasting misery and loneliness of the world. Those who love not their fellow-beings live unfruitful lives, and prepare for their old age a miserable grave.

“ The good die first,  
And those whose hearts are dry as summer dust,  
Burn to the socket ! ”

December 14, 1815.

Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, quærebam quid amarem, amans amare. — *Confess. St. August.*

EARTH, ocean, air, belovèd brotherhood!

If our great Mother has imbued my soul  
With aught of natural piety to feel  
Your love, and recompense the boon  
with mine;

If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and even,  
 With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,  
 And solemn midnight's tingling silent-  
 ness;  
 If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere  
 wood,  
 And winter robing with pure snow and  
 crowns  
 Of starry ice the gray grass and bare  
 boughs;  
 If spring's voluptuous pantings when  
 she breathes  
 Her first sweet kisses, have been dear  
 to me;  
 If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast  
 I consciously have injured, but still  
 loved  
 And cherished these my kindred; then  
 forgive  
 This boast, belovèd brethren, and with-  
 draw  
 No portion of your wonted favor now!

Mother of this unfathomable world!  
 Favor my solemn song, for I have  
 loved  
 Thee ever, and thee only; I have  
 watched  
 Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy  
 steps,  
 And my heart ever gazes on the depth  
 Of thy deep mysteries. I have made  
 my bed  
 In charnels and on coffins, where black  
 death  
 Keeps record of the trophies won from  
 thee,  
 Hoping to still these obstinate ques-  
 tionings  
 Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone  
 ghost,  
 Thy messenger, to render up the tale  
 Of what we are. In lone and silent  
 hours,  
 When night makes a weird sound of its  
 own stillness,  
 Like an inspired and desperate alche-  
 mist  
 Staking his very life on some dark hope,  
 Have I mixed awful talk and asking  
 looks

With my most innocent love, until  
 strange tears  
 Uniting with those breathless kisses,  
 made  
 Such magic as compels the charmèd night  
 To render up thy charge: and, tho' ne'er  
 yet  
 Thou hast unveiled thy inmost sanctuary,  
 Enough from incommunicable dream,  
 And twilight phantasms, and deep noon-  
 day thought,  
 Has shone within me, that serenely now  
 And moveless, as a long-forgotten lyre  
 Suspended in the solitary dome  
 Of some mysterious and deserted fane,  
 I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that my  
 strain  
 May modulate with murmurs of the air,  
 And motions of the forests and the sea  
 And voice of living beings, and woven  
 hymns  
 Of night and day, and the deep heart of  
 man.

There was a Poet whose untimely tomb  
 No human hands with pious reverence  
 reared,  
 But the charmed eddies of autumnal  
 winds  
 Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyra-  
 mid  
 Of mouldering leaves in the waste wilder-  
 ness: —  
 A lovely youth, — no mourning maiden  
 decked  
 With weeping flowers, or votive cypress  
 wreath,  
 The lone couch of his everlasting sleep: —  
 Gentle, and brave, and generous, — no  
 lorn bard  
 Breathed o'er his dark fate one melodious  
 sigh:  
 He lived, he died, he sung, in solitude.  
 Strangers have wept to hear his passion-  
 ate notes,  
 And virgins, as unknown he passed, have  
 pined  
 And wasted for fond love of his wild eyes.  
 The fire of those soft orbs has ceased to  
 burn,  
 And Silence, too enamored of that voice,  
 Locks its mute music in her rugged cell.

By solemn vision, and bright silver dream,  
 His infancy was nurtured. Every sight  
 And sound from the vast earth and ambient air  
 Sent to his heart its choicest impulses.  
 The fountains of divine philosophy  
 Fled not his thirsting lips, and all of great,  
 Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past  
 In truth or fable consecrates, he felt  
 And knew. When early youth had passed, he left  
 His cold fireside and alienated home  
 To seek strange truths in undiscovered lands.  
 Many a wide waste and tangled wilderness  
 Has lured his fearless steps; and he has bought  
 With his sweet voice and eyes, from savage men,  
 His rest and food. Nature's most secret steps  
 He like her shadow has pursued, where'er  
 The red volcano overcanopies  
 Its fields of snow and pinnacles of ice  
 With burning smoke, or where bitumen lakes  
 On black bare pointed islets ever beat  
 With sluggish surge, or where the secret caves  
 Rugged and dark, winding among the springs  
 Of fire and poison, inaccessible  
 To avarice or pride, their starry domes  
 Of diamond and of gold expand above  
 Numberless and immeasurable halls,  
 Frequent with crystal column, and clear shrines  
 Of pearl and thrones radiant with chrysolite.  
 Nor had that scene of ampler majesty  
 Than gems or gold, the varying roof of heaven  
 And the green earth lost in his heart its claims  
 To love and wonder; he would linger long  
 In lonesome vales, making the wild his home,  
 Until the doves and squirrels would partake

From his innocuous hand his bloodless food,  
 Lured by the gentle meaning of his looks,  
 And the wild antelope, that starts when-e'er  
 The dry leaf rustles in the brake, suspend  
 Her timid steps to gaze upon a form  
 More graceful than her own.  
 His wandering step  
 Obedient to high thoughts, has visited  
 The awful ruins of the days of old:  
 Athens, and Tyre, and Balbec, and the waste  
 Where stood Jerusalem, the fallen towers  
 Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids,  
 Memphis and Thebes, and whatsoever of strange,  
 Sculptured on alabaster obelisk,  
 Or jasper tomb, or mutilated sphinx,  
 Dark Æthiopia in her desert hills  
 Conceals. Among the ruined temples there,  
 Stupendous columns, and wild images  
 Of more than man, where marble dæmons watch  
 The Zodiac's brazen mystery, and dead men  
 Hang their mute thoughts on the mute walls around,  
 He lingered, poring on memorials  
 Of the world's youth; through the long burning day  
 Gazed on those speechless shapes; nor, when the moon  
 Filled the mysterious halls with floating shades  
 Suspended he that task, but ever gazed  
 And gazed, till meaning on his vacant mind  
 Flashed like strong inspiration, and he saw  
 The thrilling secrets of the birth of time.  
 Meanwhile an Arab maiden brought  
 his food,  
 Her daily portion, from her father's tent,  
 And spread her matting for his couch,  
 and stole  
 From duties and repose to tend his steps:—  
 Enamored, yet not daring for deep awe  
 To speak her love:— and watched his nightly sleep,

Sleepless herself, to gaze upon his lips  
 Parted in slumber, whence the regular  
 breath  
 Of innocent dreams arose: then, when  
 red morn  
 Made paler the pale moon, to her cold  
 home  
 Wildered and wan and panting, she re-  
 turned.

The Poet wandering on, through Arabia  
 And Persia, and the wild Carmanian  
 waste,  
 And o'er the aerial mountains which pour  
 down  
 Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,  
 In joy and exultation held his way;  
 Till in the vale of Cashmire, far within  
 Its loneliest dell, where odorous plants  
 entwine  
 Beneath the hollow rocks a natural  
 bower,  
 Beside a sparkling rivulet he stretched  
 His languid limbs. A vision on his sleep  
 There came, a dream of hopes that never  
 yet  
 Had flushed his cheek. He dreamed a  
 veiled maid  
 Sate near him, talking in low solemn  
 tones.  
 Her voice was like the voice of his own  
 soul  
 Heard in the calm of thought; its music  
 long,  
 Like woven sounds of streams and  
 breezes, held  
 His inmost sense suspended in its web  
 Of many-colored woof and shifting hues.  
 Knowledge and truth and virtue were  
 her theme,  
 And lofty hopes of divine liberty,  
 Thoughts the most dear to him, and  
 poesy,  
 Herself a poet. Soon the solemn mood  
 Of her pure mind kindled through all her  
 frame  
 A permeating fire: wild numbers then  
 She raised, with voice stifled in tremu-  
 lous sobs  
 Subdued by its own pathos: her fair  
 hands  
 Were bare alone, sweeping from some  
 strange harp .

Strange symphony, and in their branch-  
 ing veins  
 The eloquent blood told an ineffable tale.  
 The beating of her heart was heard to fill  
 The pauses of her music, and her breath  
 Tumultuously accorded with those fits  
 Of intermitted song. Sudden she rose,  
 As if her heart impatiently endured  
 Its bursting burden: at the sound he  
 turned,  
 And saw by the warm light of their own  
 life  
 Her glowing limbs beneath the sinuous  
 veil  
 Of woven wind, her outspread arms now  
 bare,  
 Her dark locks floating in the breath of  
 night,  
 Her beamy bending eyes, her parted lips  
 Outstretched and pale, and quivering  
 eagerly.  
 His strong heart sunk and sickened with  
 excess  
 Of love. He reared his shuddering limbs  
 and quelled  
 His gasping breath, and spread his arms  
 to meet  
 Her panting bosom: . . . she drew back  
 awhile,  
 Then, yielding to the irresistible joy,  
 With frantic gesture and short breathless  
 cry  
 Folded his frame in her dissolving arms.  
 Now blackness veiled his dizzy eyes, and  
 night  
 Involved and swallowed up the vision;  
 sleep,  
 Like a dark flood suspended in its course,  
 Rolled back its impulse on his vacant  
 brain.

Roused by the shock he started from  
 his trance —  
 The cold white light of morning, the blue  
 moon  
 Low in the west, the clear and garish hills,  
 The distinct valley and the vacant woods,  
 Spread round him where he stood.  
 Whither have fled  
 The hues of heaven that canopied his  
 bower  
 Of yesternight? The sounds that soothed  
 his sleep,

The mystery and the majesty of Earth,  
The joy, the exultation? His wan eyes  
Gaze on the empty scene as vacantly  
As ocean's moon looks on the moon in  
heaven.

The spirit of sweet human love has sent  
A vision to the sleep of him who spurned  
Her choicest gifts. He eagerly pursues  
Beyond the realms of dream that fleeting  
shade;

He overleaps the bounds. Alas! alas!  
Were limbs, and breath, and being inter-  
twined

Thus treacherously? Lost, lost, forever  
lost,

In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep,  
That beautiful shape! Does the dark gate  
of death

Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,  
O Sleep? Does the bright arch of rain-  
bow clouds,

And pendent mountains seen in the calm  
lake,

Lead only to a black and watery depth,  
While death's blue vault, with loathliest  
vapors hung,

Where every shade which the foul grave  
exhales

Hides its dead eye from the detested day,  
Conducts, O Sleep, to thy delightful  
realms?

This doubt with sudden tide flowed on his  
heart;

The insatiate hope which it awakened  
stung

His brain even like despair.

While daylight held  
The sky, the Poet kept mute conference  
With his still soul. At night the passion  
came,

Like the fierce fiend of a distempered  
dream,

And shook him from his rest, and led  
him forth

Into the darkness. — As an eagle, grasped  
In folds of the green serpent, feels her  
breast

Burn with the poison, and precipitates  
Through night and day, tempest and  
calm and cloud,

Frantic with dizzying anguish, her blind  
flight

O'er the wide æry wilderness: thus  
driven

By the bright shadow of that lovely dream,  
Beneath the cold glare of the desolate  
night,

Through tangled swamps and deep pre-  
cipitous dells,

Startling with careless step the moon-light  
snake,

He fled. Red morning dawned upon his  
flight,

Shedding the mockery of its vital hues  
Upon his cheek of death. He wandered  
on

Till vast Aornos seen from Petra's steep  
Hung o'er the low horizon like a cloud;  
Through Balk, and where the desolated  
tombs

Of Parthian kings scatter to every wind  
Their wasting dust, wildly he wandered  
on,

Day after day, a weary waste of hours,  
Bearing within his life the brooding care  
That ever fed on its decaying flame.

And now his limbs were lean; his scat-  
tered hair

Sered by the autumn of strange suffering  
Sung dirges in the wind; his listless hand  
Hung like dead bone within its withered  
skin;

Life, and the lustre that consumed it,  
shone

As in a furnace burning secretly  
From his dark eyes alone. The cottagers,  
Who ministered with human charity

His human wants, beheld with wondering  
awe

Their fleeting visitant. The mountaineer,  
Encountering on some dizzy precipice  
That spectral form, deemed that the  
Spirit of wind

With lightning eyes, and eager breath,  
and feet

Disturbing not the drifted snow, had  
paused

In its career: the infant would conceal  
His troubled visage in his mother's robe  
In terror at the glare of those wild eyes,  
To remember their strange light in many  
a dream

Of after-times; but youthful maidens,  
taught



By nature, would interpret half the woe  
That wasted him, would call him with  
false names  
Brother, and friend, would press his pal-  
lid hand  
At parting, and watch, dim through tears,  
the path  
Of his departure from their father's door.

At length upon the lone Chorasmian  
shore  
He paused, a wide and melancholy waste  
Of putrid marshes. A strong impulse  
urged  
His steps to the sea-shore. A swan was  
there,  
Beside a sluggish stream among the reeds.  
It rose as he approached, and with strong  
wings  
Scaling the upward sky, bent its bright  
course  
High over the immeasurable main.  
His eyes pursued its flight, — "Thou  
hast a home,  
Beautiful bird; thou voyagest to thine  
home,  
Where thy sweet mate will twine her  
downy neck  
With thine, and welcome thy return with  
eyes  
Bright in the lustre of their own fond joy.  
And what am I that I should linger here,  
With voice far sweeter than thy dying  
notes,  
Spirit more vast than thine, frame more  
attuned  
To beauty, wasting these surpassing  
powers  
In the deaf air, to the blind earth, and  
heaven  
That echoes not my thoughts?" A  
gloomy smile  
Of desperate hope wrinkled his quivering  
lips.  
For sleep, he knew, kept most relent-  
lessly  
Its precious charge, and silent death ex-  
posed,  
Faithless perhaps as sleep, a shadowy  
lure,  
With doubtful smile mocking its own  
strange charms.

Startled by his own thoughts he looked  
around.  
There was no fair fiend near him, not a  
sight  
Or sound of awe but in his own deep  
mind.  
A little shallop floating near the shore  
Caught the impatient wandering of his  
gaze.  
It had been long abandoned, for its sides  
Gaped wide with many a rift, and its  
frail joints  
Swayed with the undulations of the tide.  
A restless impulse urged him to embark  
And meet lone Death on the drear  
ocean's waste;  
For well he knew that mighty Shadow  
loves  
The slimy caverns of the populous deep.

The day was fair and sunny; sea and  
sky  
Drank its inspiring radiance, and the  
wind  
Swept strongly from the shore, blacken-  
ing the waves.  
Following his eager soul, the wanderer  
Leaped in the boat; he spread his cloak  
aloft  
On the bare mast, and took his lonely  
seat,  
And felt the boat speed o'er the tranquil  
sea  
Like a torn cloud before the hurricane.

As one that in a silver vision floats  
Obedient to the sweep of odorous winds  
Upon resplendent clouds, so rapidly  
Along the dark and ruffled waters fled  
The straining boat. A whirlwind swept  
it on,  
With fierce gusts and precipitating force,  
Through the white ridges of the chafed  
sea.  
The waves arose. Higher and higher  
still  
Their fierce necks writhed beneath the  
tempest's scourge  
Like serpents struggling in a vulture's  
grasp.  
Calm and rejoicing in the fearful war  
Of wave ruining on wave, and blast on  
blast

Descending, and black flood on whirl-  
 pool driven  
 With dark obliterating course, he sate:  
 As if their genii were the ministers  
 Appointed to conduct him to the light  
 Of those belovèd eyes, the Poet sate  
 Holding the steady helm. Evening came  
 on,  
 The beams of sunset hung their rainbow  
 hues  
 High 'mid the shifting domes of sheeted  
 spray  
 That canopied his path o'er the waste  
 deep;  
 Twilight, ascending slowly from the east,  
 Entwined in duskier wreaths her braided  
 locks  
 O'er the fair front and radiant eyes of  
 day;  
 Night followed, clad with stars. On  
 every side  
 More horribly the multitudinous streams  
 Of ocean's mountainous waste to mutual  
 war  
 Rushed in dark tumult thundering, as to  
 mock  
 The calm and spangled sky. The little  
 boat  
 Still fled before the storm; still fled, like  
 foam  
 Down the steep cataract of a wintry river;  
 Now pausing on the edge of the riven  
 wave;  
 Now leaving far behind the bursting  
 mass  
 That fell, convulsing ocean; safely  
 fled—  
 As if that frail and wasted human form,  
 Had been an elemental god.  
 At midnight  
 The moon arose: and lo! the ethereal  
 cliffs  
 Of Caucasus, whose icy summits shone  
 Among the stars like sunlight, and around  
 Whose caverned base the whirlpools and  
 the waves  
 Bursting and eddying irresistibly  
 Rage and resound forever. — Who shall  
 save? —  
 The boat fled on, — the boiling torrent  
 drove, —  
 The crags closed round with black and  
 jagged arms,

The shattered mountain overhung the  
 sea,  
 And faster still, beyond all human speed,  
 Suspended on the sweep of the smooth  
 wave,  
 The little boat was driven. A cavern  
 there  
 Yawned, and amid its slant and winding  
 depths  
 Ingulfed the rushing sea. The boat  
 fled on  
 With unrelaxing speed. — “Vision and  
 Love!”  
 The Poet cried aloud, “I have beheld  
 The path of thy departure. Sleep and  
 death  
 Shall not divide us long!”  
 The boat pursued  
 The windings of the cavern. Daylight  
 shone  
 At length upon that gloomy river's flow;  
 Now, where the fiercest war among the  
 waves  
 Is calm, on the unfathomable stream  
 The boat moved slowly. Where the  
 mountain, riven,  
 Exposed those black depths to the azure  
 sky,  
 Ere yet the flood's enormous volume fell  
 Even to the base of Caucasus, with sound  
 That shook the everlasting rocks, the  
 mass  
 Filled with one whirlpool all that ample  
 chasm;  
 Stair above stair the eddying waters rose,  
 Circling immeasurably fast, and laved  
 With alternating dash the gnarlèd roots  
 Of mighty trees, that stretched their giant  
 arms  
 In darkness over it. I' the midst was  
 left,  
 Reflecting, yet distorting every cloud,  
 A pool of treacherous and tremendous  
 calm.  
 Seized by the sway of the ascending  
 stream,  
 With dizzy swiftness, round and round  
 and round,  
 Ridge after ridge the straining boat arose,  
 Till on the verge of the extremest curve,  
 Where, through an opening of the rocky  
 bank,

The waters overflow, and a smooth spot  
 Of glassy quiet mid those battling tides  
 Is left, the boat paused shuddering.—  
     Shall it sink  
 Down the abyss! Shall the reverting  
 stress  
 Of that resistless gulf embosom it?  
 Now shall it fall? — A wandering stream  
     of wind,  
 Breathed from the west, has caught the  
 expanded sail,  
 And, lo! with gentle motion, between  
 banks  
 Of mossy slope, and on a placid stream,  
 Beneath a woven grove it sails, and,  
 hark!  
 The ghastly torrent mingles its far roar,  
 With the breeze murmuring in the musi-  
 cal woods.  
 Where the embowering trees recede, and  
 leave  
 A little space of green expanse, the cove  
 Is closed by meeting banks, whose yellow  
 flowers  
 Forever gaze on their own drooping eyes,  
 Reflected in the crystal calm. The  
 wave  
 Of the boat's motion marred their pen-  
 sive task,  
 Which naught but vagrant bird, or wanton  
 wind,  
 Or falling spear-grass, or their own decay  
 Had e'er disturbed before. The Poet  
 longed  
 To deck with their bright hues his with-  
 ered hair,  
 But on his heart its solitude returned,  
 And he forbore. Not the strong impulse  
 hid  
 In those flushed cheeks, bent eyes, and  
 shadowy frame  
 Had yet performed its ministry: it hung  
 Upon his life, as lightning in a cloud  
 Gleams, hovering ere it vanish, ere the  
 floods  
 Of night close over it.

The noonday sun

Now shone upon the forest, one vast  
 mass  
 Of mingling shade, whose brown mag-  
 nificence  
 A narrow vale embosoms. There, huge  
 caves,

Scooped in the dark base of their aëry  
 rocks  
 Mocking its moans, respond and roar  
 forever.  
 The meeting boughs and implicated  
 leaves  
 Wove twilight o'er the Poet's path, as, led  
 By love, or dream, or God, or mightier  
 Death,  
 He sought in Nature's dearest haunt,  
 some bank,  
 Her cradle, and his sepulchre. More  
 dark  
 And dark the shades accumulate. The  
 oak,  
 Expanding its immense and knotty arms,  
 Embraces the light beech. The pyra-  
 mids  
 Of the tall cedar overarching frame  
 Most solemn domes within, and far  
 below,  
 Like clouds suspended in an emerald  
 sky,  
 The ash and the acacia floating hang  
 Tremulous and pale. Like restless  
 serpents, clothed .  
 In rainbow and in fire, the parasites,  
 Starred with ten thousand blossoms, flow  
 around  
 The gray trunks, and, as gamesome  
 infants' eyes,  
 With gentle meanings, and most innocent  
 wiles,  
 Fold their beams round the hearts of  
 those that love,  
 These twine their tendrils with the  
 wedded boughs,  
 Uniting their close union; the woven  
 leaves  
 Make net-work of the dark blue light of  
 day,  
 And the night's noontide clearness,  
 mutable  
 As shapes in the weird clouds. Soft  
 mossy lawns  
 Beneath these canopies extend their  
 swells,  
 Fragrant with perfumed herbs, and eyed  
 with blooms  
 Minute yet beautiful. One darkest glen  
 Sends from its woods of musk-rose,  
 twined with jasmine,  
 A soul-dissolving odor, to invite

To some more lovely mystery. Through  
 the dell,  
 Silence and Twilight here, twin-sisters,  
 keep  
 Their noonday watch, and sail among  
 the shades,  
 Like vaporous shapes half seen; beyond,  
 a well,  
 Dark, gleaming, and of most translucent  
 wave,  
 Images all the woven boughs above,  
 And each depending leaf, and every  
 speck  
 Of azure sky, darting between their  
 chasms;  
 Nor aught else in the liquid mirror laves  
 Its portraiture, but some inconstant star  
 Between one foliaged lattice twinkling  
 fair,  
 Or painted bird, sleeping beneath the  
 moon,  
 Or gorgeous insect floating motionless,  
 Unconscious of the day, ere yet his wings  
 Have spread their glories to the gaze of  
 noon.

Hither the Poet came. His eyes  
 beheld  
 Their own wan light through the re-  
 flected lines  
 Of his thin hair, distinct in the dark  
 depth  
 Of that still fountain; as the human  
 heart,  
 Gazing in dreams over the gloomy grave,  
 Sees its own treacherous likeness there.  
 He heard  
 The motion of the leaves, the grass that  
 sprung  
 Startled and glanced and trembled even  
 to feel  
 An unaccustomed presence, and the  
 sound  
 Of the sweet brook that from the secret  
 springs  
 Of that dark fountain rose. A Spirit  
 seemed  
 To stand beside him—clothed in no  
 bright robes  
 Of shadowy silver or enshrining light,  
 Borrowed from aught the visible world  
 affords

Of grace, or majesty, or mystery;—  
 But undulating woods, and silent well,  
 And leaping rivulet, and evening gloom  
 Now deepening the dark shades, for  
 speech assuming,  
 Held commune with him, as if he and it  
 Were all that was,—only . . . when  
 his regard  
 Was raised by intense pensiveness, . . .  
 two eyes,  
 Two starry eyes, hung in the gloom of  
 thought,  
 And seemed with their serene and azure  
 smiles  
 To beckon him.

Obedient to the light  
 That shone within his soul, he went,  
 pursuing  
 The windings of the dell. The rivulet  
 Wanton and wild, through many a green  
 ravine  
 Beneath the forest flowed. Sometimes it  
 fell  
 Among the moss with hollow harmony  
 Dark and profound. Now on the pol-  
 ished stones  
 It danced, like childhood laughing as it  
 went:  
 Then through the plain in tranquil  
 wanderings crept,  
 Reflecting every herb and drooping bud  
 That overhung its quietness.—“O stream!  
 Whose source is inaccessibly profound,  
 Whither do thy mysterious waters tend?  
 Thou imagest my life. Thy darksome  
 stillness,  
 Thy dazzling waves, thy loud and hollow  
 gulfs,  
 Thy searchless fountain, and invisible  
 course  
 Have each their type in me: and the  
 wide sky,  
 And measureless ocean may declare as  
 soon  
 What oozy cavern or what wandering  
 cloud  
 Contains thy waters, as the universe  
 Tell where these living thoughts reside,  
 when stretched  
 Upon thy flowers my bloodless limbs  
 shall waste  
 I’ the passing wind!”

Beside the grassy shore  
 Of the small stream he went; he did  
 impress  
 On the green moss his tremulous step,  
 that caught  
 Strong shuddering from his burning  
 limbs. As one  
 Roused by some joyous madness from  
 the couch  
 Of fever, he did move; yet not like him  
 Forgetful of the grave, where, when the  
 flame  
 Of his frail exultation shall be spent,  
 He must descend. With rapid steps he  
 went  
 Beneath the shade of trees, beside the  
 flow  
 Of the wild babbling rivulet; and now  
 The forest's solemn canopies were  
 changed  
 For the uniform and lightsome evening  
 sky.  
 Gray rocks did peep from the spare  
 moss, and stemmed  
 The struggling brook: tall spires of  
 windlestrae  
 Threw their thin shadows down the  
 rugged slope,  
 And naught but gnarlèd roots of ancient  
 pines  
 Branchless and blasted, clenched with  
 grasping roots  
 The unwilling soil. A gradual change  
 was here,  
 Yet ghastly. For, as fast years flow  
 away,  
 The smooth brow gathers, and the hair  
 grows thin  
 And white, and where irradiate dewy  
 eyes  
 Had shone, gleam stony orbs: — so from  
 his steps  
 Bright flowers departed, and the beauti-  
 ful shade  
 Of the green groves, with all their odorous  
 winds  
 And musical motions. Calm, he still  
 pursued  
 The stream, that with a larger volume now  
 Rolled through the labyrinthine dell; and  
 there  
 Fretted a path through its descending  
 curves,

With its wintry speed. On every side  
 now rose  
 Rocks, which, in unimaginable forms,  
 Lifted their black and barren pinnacles  
 In the light of evening, and, its precipice  
 Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,  
 Mid toppling stones, black gulfs and  
 yawning caves,  
 Whose windings gave ten thousand vari-  
 ous tongues  
 To the loud stream. Lo! where the pass  
 expands  
 Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain  
 breaks,  
 And seems, with its accumulated crags,  
 To overhang the world: for wide expand  
 Beneath the wan stars and descending  
 moon  
 Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty  
 streams,  
 Dim tracts and vast, robed in the lustrous  
 gloom  
 Of leaden-colored even, and fiery hills  
 Mingling their flames with twilight, on  
 the verge  
 Of the remote horizon. The near scene,  
 In naked and severe simplicity,  
 Made contrast with the universe. A  
 pine,  
 Rock-rooted, stretched athwart the  
 vacancy  
 Its swinging boughs, to each inconstant  
 blast  
 Yielding one only response, at each pause  
 In most familiar cadence, with the howl,  
 The thunder and the hiss of homeless  
 streams  
 Mingling its solemn song, whilst the  
 broad river,  
 Foaming and hurrying o'er its rugged  
 path,  
 Fell into that immeasurable void  
 Scattering its waters to the passing winds.

Yet the gray precipice and solemn pine  
 And torrent were not all; — one silent  
 nook  
 Was there. Even on the edge of that  
 vast mountain,  
 Upheld by knotty roots and fallen rocks,  
 It overlooked in its serenity  
 The dark earth, and the bending vault  
 of stars.

It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to smile

Even in the lap of horror. Ivy clasped  
The fissured stones with its entwining  
arms,

And did embower with leaves forever  
green,

And berries dark, the smooth and even  
space

Of its inviolated floor; and here  
The children of the autumnal whirlwind  
bore,

In wanton sport, those bright leaves,  
whose decay,

Red, yellow, or ethereally pale,  
Rivals the pride of summer. 'T is the  
haunt

Of every gentle wind, whose breath can  
teach

The wilds to love tranquillity. One step,  
One human step alone, has ever broken  
The stillness of its solitude; — one voice  
Alone inspired its echoes; — even that  
voice

Which hither came, floating among the  
winds,

And led the loveliest among human  
forms

To make their wild haunts the depository  
Of all the grace and beauty that endued  
Its motions, render up its majesty,  
Scatter its music on the unfeeling storm,  
And to the damp leaves and blue cavern  
mould,

Nurses of rainbow flowers and branching  
moss,

Commit the colors of that varying cheek,  
That snowy breast, those dark and droop-  
ing eyes.

The dim and hornèd moon hung low,  
and poured

A sea of lustre on the horizon's verge  
That overflowed its mountains. Yellow  
mist

Filled the unbounded atmosphere, and  
drank

Wan moonlight even to fulness: not a  
star

Shone, not a sound was heard; the very  
winds,

Danger's grim playmates, on that preci-  
pice

Slept, clasped in his embrace. — O, storm  
of death!

Whose sightless speed divides this sullen  
night:

And thou, colossal Skeleton, that, still  
Guiding its irresistible career  
In thy devastating omnipotence,  
Art king of this frail world! from the red  
field

Of slaughter, from the reeking hospital,  
The patriot's sacred couch, the snowy  
bed

Of innocence, the scaffold and the throne,  
A mighty voice invokes thee. Ruin calls  
His brother Death. A rare and regal  
prey

He hath prepared, prowling around the  
world;

Glutted with which thou mayst repose,  
and men

Go to their graves like flowers or creep-  
ing worms,

Nor ever more offer at thy dark shrine  
The unheeded tribute of a broken heart.

When on the threshold of the green  
recess

The wanderer's footsteps fell, he knew  
that death

Was on him. Yet a little, ere it fled,  
Did he resign his high and holy soul  
To images of the majestic past,  
That paused within his passive being now,  
Like winds that bear sweet music, when  
they breathe

Through some dim latticed chamber. He  
did place

His pale lean hand upon the rugged trunk  
Of the old pine. Upon an ivied stone  
Reclined his languid head, his limbs did  
rest,

Diffused and motionless, on the smooth  
brink

Of that obscurest chasm; — and thus he  
lay,

Surrendering to their final impulses  
The hovering powers of life. Hope and  
Despair,

The torturers, slept; no mortal pain or  
fear

Marred his repose, the influxes of sense,  
And his own being, unalloyed by pain,  
Yet feebler and more feeble, calmly fed

The stream of thought, till he lay  
 breathing there  
 At peace, and faintly smiling. His last  
 sight  
 Was the great moon, which o'er the  
 western line  
 Of the wide world her mighty horn sus-  
 pended,  
 With whose dun beams inwoven dark-  
 ness seemed  
 To mingle. Now upon the jagged hills  
 It rests, and still as the divided frame  
 Of the vast meteor sunk, the Poet's  
 blood,  
 That ever beat in mystic sympathy  
 With nature's ebb and flow, grew feebler  
 still:  
 And when two lessening points of light  
 alone  
 Gleamed through the darkness, the  
 alternate gasp  
 Of his faint respiration scarce did stir  
 The stagnate night:—till the minutest  
 ray  
 Was quenched, the pulse yet lingered  
 in his heart.  
 It paused—it fluttered. But when  
 heaven remained  
 Utterly black, the murky shades involved  
 An image, silent, cold, and motionless,  
 As their own voiceless earth and vacant  
 air.  
 Even as a vapor fed with golden beams  
 That ministered on sunlight, ere the west  
 Eclipses it, was now that wondrous  
 frame—  
 No sense, no motion, no divinity—  
 A fragile lute, on whose harmonious  
 strings  
 The breath of heaven did wander—a  
 bright stream  
 Once fed with many-voicèd waves—a  
 dream  
 Of youth, which night and time have  
 quenched forever,  
 Still, dark, and dry, and unremembered  
 now.

O, for Medea's wondrous alchemy,  
 Which wheresoe'er it fell made the earth  
 gleam  
 With bright flowers, and the wintry  
 boughs exhale

From vernal blooms fresh fragrance! O,  
 that God,  
 Profuse of poisons, would concede the  
 chalice  
 Which but one living man has drained,  
 who now,  
 Vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that  
 feels  
 No proud exemption in the blighting  
 curse  
 He bears, over the world wanders for-  
 ever,  
 Lone as incarnate death! O, that the  
 dream  
 Of dark magician in his visioned cave,  
 Raking the cinders of a crucible  
 For life and power, even when his feeble  
 hand  
 Shakes in its last decay, were the true law  
 Of this so lovely world! But thou art  
 fled  
 Like some frail exhalation, which the  
 dawn  
 Robes in its golden beams,—ah! thou  
 hast fled!  
 The brave, the gentle, and the beautiful,  
 The child of grace and genius. Heart-  
 less things  
 Are done and said i' the world, and  
 many worms  
 And beasts and men live on, and mighty  
 Earth  
 From sea and mountain, city and wilder-  
 ness,  
 In vesper low or joyous orison,  
 Lifts still its solemn voice:—but thou  
 art fled—  
 Thou canst no longer know or love the  
 shapes  
 Of this phantasmal scene, who have to  
 thee  
 Been purest ministers, who are, alas!  
 Now thou art not. Upon those pallid  
 lips  
 So sweet even in their silence, on those  
 eyes  
 That image sleep in death, upon that  
 form  
 Yet safe from the worm's outrage, let no  
 tear  
 Be shed—not even in thought. Nor  
 when those hues  
 Are gone, and those divinest lineaments,

Worn by the senseless wind, shall live  
alone  
In the frail pauses of this simple strain,  
Let not high verse, mourning the  
memory  
Of that which is no more, or painting's  
wo  
Or sculpture, speak in feeble imagery  
Their own cold powers. Art and elo-  
quence,  
And all the shows o' the world are frail  
and vain  
To weep a loss that turns their lights to  
shade.  
It is a wo too "deep for tears," when  
all  
Is reft at once, when some surpassing  
Spirit,  
Whose light adorned the world around  
it, leaves  
Those who remain behind, not sobs or  
groans,  
The passionate tumult of a clinging  
hope;  
But pale despair and cold tranquillity,  
Nature's vast frame, the web of human  
things,  
Birth and the grave, that are not as they  
were.

NOTE ON ALASTOR BY MRS.  
SHELLEY.

"Alastor" is written in a very different tone from "Queen Mab." In the latter, Shelley poured out all the cherished speculations of his youth—all the irrepressible emotions of sympathy, censure, and hope, to which the present suffering, and what he considers the proper destiny, of his fellow-creatures, gave birth. "Alastor," on the contrary, contains an individual interest only. A very few years, with their attendant events, had checked the ardor of Shelley's hopes, though he still thought them well grounded, and that to advance their fulfilment was the noblest task man could achieve.

This is neither the time nor place to speak of the misfortunes that checkered

his life. It will be sufficient to say that, in all he did, he at the time of doing it believed himself justified to his own conscience; while the various ills of poverty and loss of friends brought home to him the sad realities of life. Physical suffering had also considerable influence in causing him to turn his eyes inward; inclining him rather to brood over the thoughts and emotions of his own soul than to glance abroad, and to make, as in "Queen Mab," the whole universe the object and subject of his song. In the spring of 1815 an eminent physician pronounced that he was dying rapidly of a consumption; abscesses were formed on his lungs, and he suffered acute spasms. Suddenly a complete change took place; and, though through life he was a martyr to pain and debility, every symptom of pulmonary disease vanished. His nerves, which nature had formed sensitive to an unexampled degree, were rendered still more susceptible by the state of his health.

As soon as the peace of 1814 had opened the Continent, he went abroad. He visited some of the more magnificent scenes of Switzerland, and returned to England from Lucerne, by the Reuss and the Rhine. The river-navigation enchanted him. In his favorite poem of "Thalaba," his imagination had been excited by a description of such a voyage. In the summer of 1815, after a tour along the southern coast of Devonshire and a visit to Clifton, he rented a house on Bishopgate Heath, on the borders of Windsor Forest, where he enjoyed several months of comparative health and tranquil happiness. The later summer months were warm and dry. Accompanied by a few friends, he visited the source of the Thames, making a voyage in a wherry from Windsor to Cricklade. His beautiful stanzas in the churchyard of Lechlade were written on that occasion. "Alastor" was composed on his return. He spent his days under the oak-shades of Windsor Great Park; and the magnificent woodland was a fitting study to inspire the various descriptions of forest-scenery we find in the poem.



None of Shelley's poems is more characteristic than this. The solemn spirit that reigns throughout, the worship of the majesty of nature, the broodings of a poet's heart in solitude—the mingling of the exulting joy which the various aspects of the visible universe inspire, with the sad and struggling pangs which human passion imparts, give a touching interest to the whole. The death which he had often contemplated during the last months as certain and near he here represented in such colors as had, in his lonely musings, soothed his soul to peace. The versification sustains the solemn spirit which breathes throughout: it is peculiarly melodious. The poem ought rather to be considered didactic than narrative: it was the outpouring of his own emotions, embodied in the purest form he could conceive, painted in the ideal hues which his brilliant imagination inspired, and softened by the recent anticipation of death.

## THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

A POEM IN TWELVE CANTOS.

Ὅσαις δὲ βορᾶν ἔθνος ἀγλαίαις ἀπτόμεσθα  
 Περαινεῖ πρὸς ἔσχατον  
 Πλῶν· ναοὶ δ' οὔτε πέζος ἰὼν ἂν εἴροισ  
 Ἐς ὑπερβορέων ἀγῶνα θαυματῶν δδόν.  
 Πινδ. Πυθ. x.

### PREFACE.

THE poem which I now present to the world is an attempt from which I scarcely dare to expect success, and in which a writer of established fame might fail without disgrace. It is an experiment on the temper of the public mind, as to how far a thirst for a happier condition of moral and political society survives, among the enlightened and refined, the tempests which have shaken the age in which we live. I have sought to enlist the harmony of metrical language, the ethereal combinations of the fancy, the rapid and subtle transitions of human passion, all those elements which essen-

tially compose a Poem, in the cause of a liberal and comprehensive morality; and in the view of kindling within the bosoms of my readers a virtuous enthusiasm for those doctrines of liberty and justice, that faith and hope in something good, which neither violence nor misrepresentation nor prejudice can ever totally extinguish among mankind.

For this purpose I have chosen a story of human passion in its most universal character, diversified with moving and romantic adventures, and appealing, in contempt of all artificial opinions or institutions, to the common sympathies of every human breast. I have made no attempt to recommend the motives which I would substitute for those at present governing mankind, by methodical and systematic argument. I would only awaken the feelings, so that the reader should see the beauty of true virtue, and be incited to those inquiries which have led to my moral and political creed, and that of some of the sublimest intellects in the world. The Poem therefore (with the exception of the first canto, which is purely introductory) is narrative, not didactic. It is a succession of pictures illustrating the growth and progress of individual mind aspiring after excellence, and devoted to the love of mankind; its influence in refining and making pure the most daring and uncommon impulses of the imagination, the understanding, and the senses; its impatience at "all the oppressions that are done under the sun;" its tendency to awaken public hope, and to enlighten and improve mankind; the rapid effects of the application of that tendency; the awakening of an immense nation from their slavery and degradation to a true sense of moral dignity and freedom; the bloodless dethronement of their oppressors, and the unveiling of the religious frauds by which they had been deluded into submission; the tranquillity of successful patriotism, and the universal toleration and benevolence of true philanthropy; the treachery and barbarity of hired soldiers; vice not the object of punishment and hatred, but kindness and pity; the faithfulness of

tyrants; the confederacy of the Rulers of the World, and the restoration of the expelled Dynasty by foreign arms; the massacre and extermination of the patriots, and the victory of established power; the consequences of legitimate despotism, — civil war, famine, plague, superstition, and an utter extinction of the domestic affections; the judicial murder of the advocates of Liberty; the temporary triumph of oppression, that secure earnest of its final and inevitable fall; the transient nature of ignorance and error, and the eternity of genius and virtue. Such is the series of delineations of which the Poem consists. And, if the lofty passions with which it has been my scope to distinguish this story shall not excite in the reader a generous impulse, an ardent thirst for excellence, an interest profound and strong such as belongs to no meaner desires, let not the failure be imputed to a natural unfitness for human sympathy in these sublime and animating themes. It is the business of the Poet to communicate to others the pleasure and the enthusiasm arising out of those images and feelings in the vivid presence of which within his own mind consists at once his inspiration and his reward.

The panic which, like an epidemic transport, seized upon all classes of men during the excesses consequent upon the French Revolution, is gradually giving place to sanity. It has ceased to be believed that whole generations of mankind ought to consign themselves to a hopeless inheritance of ignorance and misery, because a nation of men who had been dupes and slaves for centuries were incapable of conducting themselves with the wisdom and tranquillity of freemen so soon as some of their fetters were partially loosened. That their conduct could not have been marked by any other characters than ferocity and thoughtlessness is the historical fact from which liberty derives all its recommendations, and falsehood the worst features of its deformity. There is a reflux in the tide of human things which bears the shipwrecked hopes of men into a secure haven after the storms are past. Me-

thinks, those who now live have survived an age of despair.

The French Revolution may be considered as one of those manifestations of a general state of feeling among civilized mankind produced by a defect of correspondence between the knowledge existing in society and the improvement or gradual abolition of political institutions. The year 1788 may be assumed as the epoch of one of the most important crises produced by this feeling. The sympathies connected with that event extended to every bosom. The most generous and amiable natures were those which participated the most extensively in these sympathies. But such a degree of unmingled good was expected as it was impossible to realize. If the Revolution had been in every respect prosperous, then misrule and superstition would lose half their claims to our abhorrence, as fetters which the captive can unlock with the slightest motion of his fingers, and which do not eat with poisonous rust into the soul. The revulsion occasioned by the atrocities of the demagogues, and the re-establishment of successive tyrannies in France, was terrible, and felt in the remotest corner of the civilized world. Could they listen to the plea of reason who had groaned under the calamities of a social state according to the provisions of which one man riots in luxury whilst another famishes for want of bread? Can he who the day before was a trampled slave suddenly become liberal-minded, forbearing, and independent? This is the consequence of the habits of a state of society to be produced by resolute perseverance and indefatigable hope, and long-suffering and long-believing courage, and the systematic efforts of generations of men of intellect and virtue. Such is the lesson which experience teaches now. But, on the first reverses of hope in the progress of French liberty, the sanguine eagerness for good overleaped the solution of these questions, and for a time extinguished itself in the unexpectedness of their result. Thus, many of the most ardent and tender-hearted of the worshippers of public good have been morally

ruined by what a partial glimpse of the events they deplored appeared to show as the melancholy desolation of all their cherished hopes. Hence gloom and misanthropy have become the characteristics of the age in which we live, the solace of a disappointment that unconsciously finds relief only in the wilful exaggeration of its own despair. This influence has tainted the literature of the age with the hopelessness of the minds from which it flows. Metaphysics,<sup>1</sup> and inquiries into moral and political science, have become little else than vain attempts to revive exploded superstitions, or sophisms like those<sup>2</sup> of Mr. Malthus, calculated to lull the oppressors of mankind into a security of everlasting triumph. Our works of fiction and poetry have been overshadowed by the same infectious gloom. But mankind appear to me to be emerging from their trance. I am aware, methinks, of a slow, gradual, silent change. In that belief I have composed the following poem.

I do not presume to enter into competition with our greatest contemporary Poets. Yet I am unwilling to tread in the footsteps of any who have preceded me. I have sought to avoid the imitation of any style of language or versification peculiar to the original minds of which it is the character; designing that, even if what I have produced be worthless, it should still be properly my own. Nor have I permitted any system relating to mere words to divert the attention of the reader, from whatever interest I may have succeeded in creating, to my own ingenuity in contriving to disgust him according to the rules of criticism. I have simply clothed my thoughts in what ap-

peared to me the most obvious and appropriate language. A person familiar with nature, and with the most celebrated productions of the human mind, can scarcely err in following the instinct, with respect to selection of language, produced by that familiarity.

There is an education peculiarly fitted for a Poet, without which genius and sensibility can hardly fill the circle of their capacities. No education, indeed, can entitle to this appellation a dull and unobservant mind, or one, though neither dull nor unobservant, in which the channels of communication between thought and expression have been obstructed or closed. How far it is my fortune to belong to either of the latter classes I cannot know. I aspire to be something better. The circumstances of my accidental education have been favorable to this ambition. I have been familiar from boyhood with mountains and lakes and the sea, and the solitude of forests: Danger, which sports upon the brink of precipices, has been my playmate. I have trodden the glaciers of the Alps, and lived under the eye of Mont Blanc. I have been a wanderer among distant fields. I have sailed down mighty rivers, and seen the sun rise and set, and the stars come forth, whilst I have sailed night and day down a rapid stream among mountains. I have seen populous cities, and have watched the passions which rise and spread, and sink and change, amongst assembled multitudes of men. I have seen the theatre of the more visible ravages of tyranny and war; cities and villages reduced to scattered groups of black and roofless houses, and the naked inhabitants sitting famished upon their desolated thresholds. I have conversed with living men of genius. The poetry of ancient Greece and Rome, and modern Italy, and our own country, has been to me, like external nature, a passion and an enjoyment. Such are the sources from which the materials for the imagery of my Poem have been drawn. I have considered Poetry in its most comprehensive sense; and have read the poets and the historians and the meta-

<sup>1</sup> I ought to except Sir W. Drummond's *Academical Questions*; a volume of very acute and powerful metaphysical criticism.

<sup>2</sup> It is remarkable, as a symptom of the revival of public hope, that Mr. Malthus has assigned, in the later editions of his work, an indefinite dominion to moral restraint over the principle of population. This concession answers all the inferences from his doctrine unfavorable to human improvement, and reduces the *Essay on Population* to a commentary illustrative of the unanswerableness of *Political Justice*.

physicians<sup>1</sup> whose writings have been accessible to me, and have looked upon the beautiful and majestic scenery of the earth, as common sources of those elements which it is the province of the Poet to embody and combine. Yet the experience and the feelings to which I refer do not in themselves constitute men Poets, but only prepare them to be the auditors of those who are. How far I shall be found to possess that more essential attribute of Poetry, the power of awakening in others sensations like those which animate my own bosom, is that which, to speak sincerely, I know not; and which, with an acquiescent and contented spirit, I expect to be taught by the effect which I shall produce upon those whom I now address.

I have avoided, as I have said before, the imitation of any contemporary style. But there must be a resemblance, which does not depend upon their own will, between all the writers of any particular age. They cannot escape from subjection to a common influence which arises out of an infinite combination of circumstances belonging to the times in which they live; though each is in a degree the author of the very influence by which his being is thus pervaded. Thus, the tragic poets of the age of Pericles; the Italian revivers of ancient learning; those mighty intellects of our own country that succeeded the Reformation, the translators of the Bible, Shakspeare, Spenser, the dramatists of the reign of Elizabeth, and Lord Bacon;<sup>2</sup> the colder spirits of the interval that succeeded;—all resemble each other, and differ from every other in their several classes. In this view of things, Ford can no more be called the imitator of Shakspeare than Shakspeare the imitator of Ford. There were perhaps few other points of resemblance between these two men than that which

the universal and inevitable influence of their age produced. And this is an influence which neither the meanest scribbler nor the sublimest genius of any era can escape; and which I have not attempted to escape.

I have adopted the stanza of Spenser (a measure inexpressibly beautiful), not because I consider it a finer model of poetical harmony than the blank verse of Shakspeare and Milton, but because in the latter there is no shelter for mediocrity; you must either succeed or fail. This perhaps an aspiring spirit should desire. But I was enticed also by the brilliancy and magnificence of sound which a mind that has been nourished upon musical thoughts can produce by a just and harmonious arrangement of the pauses of this measure. Yet there will be found some instances where I have completely failed in this attempt; and one, which I here request the reader to consider as an erratum, where there is left, most inadvertently, an alexandrine in the middle of a stanza.

But in this as in every other respect I have written fearlessly. It is the misfortune of this age that its writers, too thoughtless of immortality, are exquisitely sensible to temporary praise or blame. They write with the fear of Reviews before their eyes. This system of criticism sprang up in that torpid interval when poetry was not. Poetry, and the art which professes to regulate and limit its powers, cannot subsist together. Longinus could not have been the contemporary of Homer, nor Boileau of Horace. Yet this species of criticism never presumed to assert an understanding of its own: it has always, unlike true science, followed, not preceded, the opinion of mankind, and would even now bribe with worthless adulation some of our greatest Poets to impose gratuitous fetters on their own imaginations, and become unconscious accomplices in the daily murder of all genius either not so aspiring or not so fortunate as their own. I have sought therefore to write, as I believe that Homer, Shakspeare, and Milton, wrote, in utter disregard of anonymous

<sup>1</sup> In this sense there may be such a thing as perfectibility in works of fiction, notwithstanding the concession often made by the advocates of human improvement, that perfectibility is a term applicable only to science.

<sup>2</sup> Milton stands alone in the age which he illumined.

censure. I am certain that calumny and misrepresentation, though it may move me to compassion cannot disturb my peace. I shall understand the expressive silence of those sagacious enemies who dare not trust themselves to speak. I shall endeavor to extract, from the midst of insult and contempt and maledictions, those admonitions which may tend to correct whatever imperfections such censurers may discover in this my first serious appeal to the public. If certain critics were as clear-sighted as they are malignant, how great would be the benefit derived from their virulent writings! As it is, I fear I shall be malicious enough to be amused with their paltry tricks and lame invectives. Should the public judge that my composition is worthless, I shall indeed bow before the tribunal from which Milton received his crown of immortality; and shall seek to gather, if I live, strength from that defeat, which may nerve me to some new enterprise of thought which may *not* be worthless. I cannot conceive that Lucretius, when he meditated that poem whose doctrines are yet the basis of our metaphysical knowledge, and whose eloquence has been the wonder of mankind, wrote in awe of such censure as the hired sophists of the impure and superstitious noblemen of Rome might affix to what he should produce. It was at the period when Greece was led captive, and Asia made tributary to the Republic, fast verging itself to slavery and ruin, that a multitude of Syrian captives, bigoted to the worship of their obscene Ashtaroth, and the unworthy successors of Socrates and Zeno, found there a precarious subsistence by administering, under the name of freedmen, to the vices and vanities of the great. These wretched men were skilled to plead, with a superficial but plausible set of sophisms, in favor of that contempt for virtue which is the portion of slaves, and that faith in portents, the most fatal substitute for benevolence in the imaginations of men, which, arising from the enslaved communities of the East, then

first began to overwhelm the western nations in its stream. Were these the kind of men whose disapprobation the wise and lofty-minded Lucretius should have regarded with a salutary awe? The latest and perhaps the meanest of those who follow in his footsteps would disdain to hold life on such conditions.

The Poem now presented to the public occupied little more than six months in the composition. That period has been devoted to the task with unremitting ardor and enthusiasm. I have exercised a watchful and earnest criticism on my work as it grew under my hands. I would willingly have sent it forth to the world with that perfection which long labor and revision is said to bestow. But I found that, if I should gain something in exactness by this method, I might lose much of the newness and energy of imagery and language as it flowed fresh from my mind. And, although the mere composition occupied no more than six months, the thoughts thus arranged were slowly gathered in as many years.

I trust that the reader will carefully distinguish between those opinions which have a dramatic propriety in reference to the characters which they are designed to elucidate, and such as are properly my own. The erroneous and degrading idea which men have conceived of a Supreme Being, for instance, is spoken against, but not the Supreme Being itself. The belief which some superstitious persons whom I have brought upon the stage entertain of the Deity, as injurious to the character of his benevolence, is widely different from my own. In recommending also a great and important change in the spirit which animates the social institutions of mankind, I have avoided all flattery to those violent and malignant passions of our nature which are ever on the watch to mingle with and to alloy the most beneficial innovations. There is no quarter given to Revenge, or Envy, or Prejudice. Love is celebrated everywhere as the sole law which should govern the moral world.

## DEDICATION.

There is no danger to a man that knows  
 What life and death is: there's not any  
 law  
 Exceeds his knowledge: neither is it lawful  
 That he should stoop to any other law.

CHAPMAN.

## TO MARY. ———

## I.

So now my summer task is ended,  
 Mary,  
 And I return to thee, mine own  
 heart's home;  
 As to his Queen some victor Knight of  
 Faëry,  
 Earning bright spoils for her en-  
 charmed dome;  
 Nor thou disdain that, ere my fame  
 become  
 A star among the stars of mortal night,  
 If it indeed may cleave its natal  
 gloom,  
 Its doubtful promise thus I would  
 unite  
 With thy belovèd name, thou Child of  
 love and light.

## II.

The toil which stole from thee so many  
 an hour  
 Is ended — and the fruit is at thy  
 feet!  
 No longer where the woods to frame  
 a bower  
 With interlacèd branches mix and  
 meet,  
 Or where, with sound like many  
 voices sweet,  
 Waterfalls leap among wild islands  
 green  
 Which framed for my lone boat a  
 lone retreat  
 Of moss-grown trees and weeds, shall  
 I be seen:  
 But beside thee, where still my heart  
 has ever been.

## III.

Thoughts of great deeds were mine,  
 dear Friend, when first  
 The clouds which wrap this world  
 from youth did pass.  
 I do remember well the hour which  
 burst  
 My spirit's sleep: a fresh May-dawn  
 it was,  
 When I walked forth upon the glit-  
 tering grass,  
 And wept, I knew not why: until  
 there rose  
 From the near schoolroom voices  
 that, alas!  
 Were but one echo from a world of  
 woes —  
 The harsh and grating strife of tyrants  
 and of foes.

## IV.

And then I clasped my hands, and  
 looked around,  
 But none was near to mock my  
 streaming eyes,  
 Which poured their warm drops on the  
 sunny ground —  
 So, without shame, I spake: — “I  
 will be wise,  
 And just, and free, and mild, if in  
 me lies  
 Such power, for I grow weary to be-  
 hold  
 The selfish and the strong still  
 tyrannize  
 Without reproach or check.” I then  
 controlled  
 My tears, my heart grew calm, and I  
 was meek and bold.

## V.

And from that hour did I with earnest  
 thought  
 Heap knowledge from forbidden  
 mines of lore,  
 Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or  
 taught  
 I cared to learn, but from that secret  
 store

Wrought linkèd armor for my soul,  
 before  
 It might walk forth to war among  
 mankind;  
 Thus power and hope were strength-  
 ened more and more  
 Within me, till there came upon my  
 mind  
 A sense of loneliness, a thirst with which  
 I pined.

## VI.

Alas that love should be a blight and  
 snare  
 To those who seek all sympathies in  
 one! —  
 Such once I sought in vain; then black  
 despair,  
 The shadow of a starless night, was  
 thrown  
 Over the world in which I moved  
 alone: —  
 Yet never found I one not false to me,  
 Hard hearts, and cold, like weights  
 of icy stone  
 Which crushed and withered mine,  
 that could not be  
 Aught but a lifeless clog, until revived  
 by thee.

## VII.

Thou Friend, whose presence on my  
 wintry heart  
 Fell, like bright Spring upon some  
 herbless plain,  
 How beautiful and calm and free thou  
 wert  
 In thy young wisdom, when the  
 mortal chain  
 Of Custom thou didst burst and  
 rend in twain,  
 And walk as free as light the clouds  
 among,  
 Which many an envious slave then  
 breathed in vain  
 From his dim dungeon, and my spirit  
 sprung  
 To meet thee from the woes which had  
 begirt it long!

## VIII.

No more alone through the world's  
 wilderness,  
 Although I trod the paths of high  
 intent,  
 I journeyed now: no more companion-  
 less,  
 Where solitude is like despair, I  
 went. —  
 There is the wisdom of a stern con-  
 tent  
 When Poverty can blight the just and  
 good,  
 When Infamy dares mock the inno-  
 cent,  
 And cherished friends turn with the  
 multitude  
 To trample: this was ours, and we un-  
 shaken stood!

## IX.

Now has descended a serener hour,  
 And, with inconstant fortune, friends  
 return;  
 Though suffering leaves the knowledge  
 and the power  
 Which says, "Let scorn be not re-  
 paid with scorn."  
 And from thy side two gentle babes  
 are born  
 To fill our home with smiles, and thus  
 are we  
 Most fortunate beneath life's beam-  
 ing morn:  
 And these delights, and thou, have  
 been to me  
 The parents of the Song I consecrate  
 to thee.

## X.

Is it that now my inexperienced fin-  
 gers  
 But strike the prelude of a loftier  
 strain?  
 Or must the lyre on which my spirit  
 lingers  
 Soon pause in silence, ne'er to sound  
 again,  
 Though it might shake the Anarch  
 Custom's reign,

And charm the minds of men to Truth's  
own sway,  
Holier than was Amphion's? I  
would fain  
Reply in hope — but I am worn away,  
And Death and Love are yet contending  
for their prey.

## XI.

And what art thou? I know, but dare  
not speak:  
Time may interpret to his silent  
years.  
Yet in the paleness of thy thoughtful  
cheek,  
And in the light thine ample fore-  
head wears,  
And in thy sweetest smiles, and in  
thy tears,  
And in thy gentle speech, a prophecy  
Is whispered, to subdue my fondest  
fears:  
And, through thine eyes, even in thy  
soul I see  
A lamp of vestal fire burning internally.

## XII.

They say that thou wert lovely from  
thy birth,  
Of glorious parents, thou aspiring  
Child.  
I wonder not — for One then left this  
earth  
Whose life was like a setting planet  
mild,  
Which clothed thee in the radiance  
undefiled  
Of its departing glory; still her fame  
Shines on thee, through the tempests  
dark and wild  
Which shake these latter days; and  
thou canst claim  
The shelter, from thy Sire, of an immor-  
tal name.

## XIII.

One voice came forth from many a  
mighty spirit  
Which was the echo of three-thou-  
sand years;

And the tumultuous world stood mute  
to hear it,  
As some lone man who in a desert  
hears  
The music of his home: — unwonted  
fears  
Fell on the pale oppressors of our race,  
And Faith and Custom and low-  
thoughted cares,  
Like thunder-stricken dragons, for a  
space  
Left the torn human heart, their food  
and dwelling-place.

## XIV.

Truth's deathless voice pauses among  
mankind!  
If there must be no response to my  
cry —  
If men must rise and stamp, with fury  
blind,  
On his pure name who loves them,  
— thou and I,  
Sweet friend! can look from our  
tranquillity  
Like lamps into the world's tempestu-  
ous night, —  
Two tranquil stars, while clouds are  
passing by  
Which wrap them from the foundering  
seaman's sight,  
That burn from year to year with unex-  
tinguished light.

## CANTO I.

## I.

WHEN the last hope of trampled France  
had failed  
Like a brief dream of unremaining  
glory,  
From visions of despair I rose, and  
scaled  
The peak of an aërial promontory,  
Whose caverned base with the next  
surge was hoary;  
And saw the golden dawn break forth,  
and waken  
Each cloud and every wave: — but  
transitory



The calm: for sudden the firm earth  
was shaken,  
As if by the last wreck its frame were  
overtaken.

## II.

So as I stood, one blast of muttering  
thunder  
Burst in far peals along the wave-  
less deep,  
When, gathering fast, around, above,  
and under,  
Long trains of tremulous mist began  
to creep,  
Until their complicating lines did  
steep  
The orient sun in shadow: — not a  
sound  
Was heard; one horrible repose did  
keep  
The forests and the floods, and all  
around  
Darkness more dread than night was  
poured upon the ground.

## III.

Hark! 't is the rushing of a wind that  
sweeps  
Earth and the ocean. See! the  
lightnings yawn  
Deluging Heaven with fire, and the  
lashed deeps  
Glitter and boil beneath; it rages  
on,  
One mighty stream, whirlwind and  
waves upthrown,  
Lightning and hail, and darkness ed-  
dying by.  
There is a pause — the sea-birds,  
that were gone  
Into their caves to shriek, come forth,  
to spy  
What calm has fallen on earth, what  
light is in the sky.

## IV.

For, where the irresistible storm had  
cloven  
That fearful darkness, the blue sky  
was seen

Fretted with many a fair cloud inter-  
woven  
Most delicately, and the ocean  
green,  
Beneath that opening spot of blue  
serene,  
Quivered like burning emerald: calm  
was spread  
On all below; but far on high,  
between  
Earth and the upper air, the vast clouds  
fled,  
Countless and swift as leaves on au-  
tumn's tempest shed.

## v.

For ever, as the war became more fierce  
Between the whirlwinds and the  
rack on high,  
That spot grew more serene; blue  
light did pierce  
The woof of those white clouds,  
which seemed to lie  
Far, deep, and motionless; while  
through the sky  
The pallid semicircle of the moon  
Passed on, in slow and moving  
majesty;  
Its upper horn arrayed in mists, which  
soon  
But slowly fled, like dew beneath the  
beams of noon.

## VI.

I could not choose but gaze; a fascina-  
tion  
Dwelt in that moon and sky and  
clouds, which drew  
My fancy thither, and in expectation  
Of what, I knew not, I remained:  
the hue  
Of the white moon, amid that heaven  
so blue,  
Suddenly stained with shadow did  
appear;  
A speck, a cloud, a shape, approach-  
ing grew,  
Like a great ship in the sun's sink-  
ing sphere  
Beheld afar at sea, and swift it came  
anear.

## VII.

Even like a bark, which from a chasm  
of mountains,  
Dark, vast, and overhanging, on a  
river  
Which there collects the strength of  
all its fountains,  
Comes forth, whilst with the speed  
its frame doth quiver,  
Sails, oars, and stream, tending to  
one endeavor;  
So, from that chasm of light a wingèd  
Form,  
On all the winds of heaven approach-  
ing ever,  
Floated, dilating as it came: the storm  
Pursued it with fierce blasts, and light-  
nings swift and warm.

## VIII.

A course precipitous, of dizzy speed,  
Suspending thought and breath; a  
monstrous sight!  
For in the air do I behold indeed  
An Eagle and a Serpent wreathed  
in fight: —  
And now, relaxing its impetuous  
flight  
Before the aërial rock on which I  
stood,  
The Eagle, hovering, wheeled to  
left and right,  
And hung with lingering wings over  
the flood,  
And startled with its yells the wide air's  
solitude.

## IX.

A shaft of light upon its wings de-  
scended,  
And every golden feather gleamed  
therein —  
Feather and scale inextricably blended.  
The Serpent's mailed and many-  
colored skin  
Shone through the plumes its coils  
were twined within  
By many a swoln and knotted fold,  
and high  
And far the neck, receding lithe and  
thin,

Sustained a crested head, which warily  
Shifted and glanced before the Eagle's  
steadfast eye.

## X.

Around, around, in ceaseless circles  
wheeling  
With clang of wings and scream,  
the Eagle sailed  
Incessantly — sometimes on high con-  
cealing  
Its lessening orbs, sometimes, as if  
it failed,  
Drooped through the air; and still  
it shrieked and wailed,  
And, casting back its eager head, with  
beak  
And talon unremittingly assailed  
The wreathèd Serpent, who did ever  
seek  
Upon his enemy's heart a mortal wound  
to wreak.

## XI.

What life, what power, was kindled  
and arose  
Within the sphere of that appalling  
fray!  
For, from the encounter of those won-  
drous foes,  
A vapor like the sea's suspended  
spray  
Hung gathered: in the void air, far  
away,  
Floated the shattered plumes: bright  
scales did leap,  
Where'er the Eagle's talons made  
their way,  
Like sparks into the darkness; — as  
they sweep,  
Blood stains the snowy foam of the  
tumultuous deep.

## XII.

Swift chances in that combat — many  
a check,  
And many a change, a dark and wild  
turmoil;  
Sometimes the Snake around his ene-  
my's neck

Locked in stiff rings his adamantine  
coil,  
Until the Eagle, faint with pain and  
toil,  
Remitted his strong flight, and near  
the sea  
Languidly fluttered, hopeless so to  
foil  
His adversary, who then reared on  
high  
His red and burning crest, radiant with  
victory.

## XIII.

Then on the white edge of the burst-  
ing surge,  
Where they had sunk together,  
would the Snake  
Relax his suffocating grasp, and  
scourge  
The wind with his wild writhings;  
for, to break  
That chain of torment, the vast bird  
would shake  
The strength of his unconquerable  
wings  
As in despair, and with his sinewy  
neck  
Dissolve in sudden shock those linkèd  
rings, —  
Then soar as swift as smoke from a  
volcano springs.

## XIV.

Wile baffled wile, and strength encoun-  
tered strength,  
Thus long, but unprevailing: — the  
event  
Of that portentous fight appeared at  
length:  
Until the lamp of day was almost  
spent  
It had endured, when lifeless, stark,  
and rent,  
Hung high that mighty Serpent, and  
at last  
Fell to the sea, — while o'er the  
continent,  
With clang of wings and screams, the  
Eagle past,  
Heavily borne away on the exhausted  
blast.

## XV.

And with it fled the tempest, so that  
ocean  
And earth and sky shone through  
the atmosphere —  
Only 't was strange to see the red  
commotion  
Of waves like mountains o'er the  
sinking sphere  
Of sunset sweep, and their fierce  
roar to hear  
Amid the calm: — down the steep path  
I wound  
To the sea-shore — the evening was  
most clear  
And beautiful; and there the sea I  
found  
Calm as a cradled child in dreamless  
slumber bound.

## XVI.

There was a Woman, beautiful as  
morning,  
Sitting beneath the rocks upon the  
sand  
Of the waste sea — fair as one flower  
adorning  
An icy wilderness — each delicate  
hand  
Lay crossed upon her bosom, and  
the band  
Of her dark hair had fallen, and so  
she sate,  
Looking upon the waves; on the  
bare strand  
Upon the sea-mark a small boat did  
wait,  
Fair as herself, like Love by Hope left  
desolate.

## XVII.

It seemed that this fair Shape had  
looked upon  
That unimaginable fight, and now  
That her sweet eyes were weary of  
the sun,  
As brightly it illustrated her woe;  
For in the tears, which silently to  
flow  
Paused not, its lustre hung: she,  
watching aye

The foam-wreaths which the faint  
 tide wove below  
 Upon the spangled sands, groaned  
 heavily,  
 And after every groan looked up over  
 the sea.

## XVIII.

And when she saw the wounded Ser-  
 pent make  
 His path between the waves, her  
 lips grew pale,  
 Parted, and quivered: the tears ceased  
 to break  
 From her immovable eyes; no voice  
 of wail  
 Escaped her; but she rose, and,  
 on the gale  
 Loosening her star-bright robe and  
 shadowy hair,  
 Poured forth her voice; the caverns  
 of the vale  
 That opened to the ocean caught it  
 there,  
 And filled with silver sounds the over-  
 flowing air.

## XIX.

She spake in language whose strange  
 melody  
 Might not belong to earth. I heard  
 alone —  
 What made its music more melodious  
 be —  
 The pity and the love of every tone;  
 But to the Snake those accents  
 sweet were known  
 His native tongue and hers: nor did  
 he beat  
 The hoar spray idly then, but, wind-  
 ing on  
 Through the green shadows of the  
 waves that meet  
 Near to the shore, did pause beside her  
 snowy feet.

## XX.

Then on the sands the Woman sate  
 again,  
 And wept and clasped her hands,  
 and, all between,

Renewed the unintelligible strain  
 Of her melodious voice and eloquent  
 mien;  
 And she unveiled her bosom, and  
 the green  
 And glancing shadows of the sea did  
 play  
 O'er its marmoreal depth — one  
 moment seen:  
 For ere the next the Serpent did obey  
 Her voice, and, coiled in rest, in her  
 embrace it lay.

## XXI.

Then she arose, and smiled on me,  
 with eyes  
 Serene yet sorrowing, like that  
 planet fair,  
 While yet the daylight lingereth in  
 the skies,  
 Which cleaves with arrowy beams  
 the dark-red air, —  
 And said: "To grieve is wise, but  
 the despair  
 Was weak and vain which led thee  
 here from sleep:  
 This shalt thou know, and more,  
 if thou dost dare,  
 With me and with this Serpent, o'er  
 the deep,  
 A voyage divine and strange, compan-  
 ionship to keep."

## XXII.

Her voice was like the wildest, saddest  
 tone,  
 Yet sweet, of some loved voice  
 heard long ago.  
 I wept. "Shall this fair woman all  
 alone  
 Over the sea with that fierce Ser-  
 pent go?  
 His head is on her heart, and who  
 can know  
 How soon he may devour his feeble  
 prey?"  
 Such were my thoughts, when the  
 tide 'gan to flow;  
 And that strange boat like the moon's  
 shade did sway  
 Amid reflected stars that in the water  
 lay. —

## XXIII.

A boat of rare device, which had no sail  
 But its own curvèd prow of thin moonstone,  
 Wrought like a web of texture fine and frail,  
 To catch those gentlest winds which are not known  
 To breathe, but by the steady speed alone  
 With which it cleaves the sparkling sea; and, now  
 We are embarked, the mountains hang and frown  
 Over the starry deep that gleams below  
 A vast and dim expanse, as o'er the waves we go.

## XXIV.

And, as we sailed, a strange and awful tale  
 That Woman told, like such mysterious dream  
 As makes the slumberer's cheek with wonder pale!  
 'T was midnight, and around, a shoreless stream,  
 Wide ocean rolled, when that majestic theme  
 Shrined in her heart found utterance, and she bent  
 Her looks on mine; those eyes a kindling beam  
 Of love divine into my spirit sent,  
 And, ere her lips could move, made the air eloquent.

## XXV.

"Speak not to me, but hear! Much shalt thou learn,  
 Much must remain unthought, and more untold,  
 In the dark Future's ever-flowing urn:  
 Know then that from the depth of ages old  
 Two Powers o'er mortal things dominion hold,  
 Ruling the world with a divided lot, —  
 Immortal, all-pervading, manifold,

Twin Genii, equal Gods — when life and thought  
 Sprang forth, they burst the womb of inessential Naught.

## XXVI.

"The earliest dweller of the world, alone,  
 Stood on the verge of chaos. Lo! afar  
 O'er the wide wild abyss two meteors shone,  
 Sprung from the depth of its tempestuous jar:  
 A blood-red Comet and the Morning Star  
 Mingling their beams in combat — As he stood,  
 All thoughts within his mind waged mutual war  
 In dreadful sympathy — when to the flood  
 That fair Star fell, he turned and shed his brother's blood.

## XXVII.

"Thus evil triumphed, and the Spirit of evil,  
 One Power of many shapes which none may know,  
 One Shape of many names; the Fiend did revel  
 In victory, reigning o'er a world of woe,  
 For the new race of man went to and fro,  
 Famished and homeless, loathed and loathing, wild,  
 And hating good — for his immortal foe  
 He changed from starry shape, beautiful and mild,  
 To a dire Snake, with man and beast unreconciled.

## XXVIII.

"The darkness lingering o'er the dawn of things  
 Was Evil's breath and life; this made him strong

To soar aloft with overshadowing wings:

And the great Spirit of Good did creep among

The nations of mankind, and every tongue

Curst and blasphemed him as he past; for none

Knew good from evil, though their names were hung

In mockery o'er the fane where many a groan

As King, and Lord, and God the conquering Fiend did own, —

XXIX.

“The Fiend, whose name was Legion; Death, Decay,

Earthquake, and Blight, and Want, and Madness pale,

Wingèd and wan diseases, an array Numerous as leaves that strew the autumnal gale;

Poison, a snake in flowers, beneath the veil

Of food and mirth hiding his mortal head;

And, without whom all these might naught avail,

Fear, Hatred, Faith, and Tyranny, who spread

Those subtle nets which snare the living and the dead.

XXX.

“His spirit is their power, and they his slaves

In air, and light, and thought, and language, dwell;

And keep their state from palaces to graves,

In all resorts of men — invisible, But when, in ebon mirror, Night-mare fell

To tyrant or impostor bids them rise, Black wingèd demon forms — whom,

from the hell,

His reign and dwelling beneath nether skies,

He loosens to their dark and blasting ministries.

XXXI.

“In the world's youth his empire was as firm

As its foundations. Soon the Spirit of Good,

Though in the likeness of a loathsome worm,

Sprang from the billows of the formless flood,

Which shrank and fled, — and with that Fiend of blood

Renewed the doubtful war. Thrones then first shook,

And earth's immense and trampled multitude

In hope on their own powers began to look,

And Fear, the demon pale, his sanguine shrine forsook.

XXXII.

“Then Greece arose, and to its bards and sages,

In dream, the golden-pinioned Genii came,

Even where they slept amid the night of ages,

Steeping their hearts in the divinest flame

Which thy breath kindled, Power of holiest name!

And oft in cycles since, when darkness gave

New weapons to thy foe, their sun-like fame

Upon the combat shone — a light to save,

Like Paradise spread forth beyond the shadowy grave.

XXXIII.

“Such is this conflict — when mankind doth strive

With its oppressors in a strife of blood,

Or when free thoughts, like lightnings, are alive,

And in each bosom of the multitude Justice and truth with custom's

hydra brood

Wage silent war; when priests and  
kings dissemble

In smiles or frowns their fierce dis-  
quietude,

When round pure hearts a host of  
hopes assemble,

The Snake and Eagle meet — the world's  
foundations tremble!

xxxiv.

“Thou hast beheld that fight — when  
to thy home

Thou dost return, steep not its hearth  
in tears;

Though thou may'st hear that earth is  
now become

The tyrant's garbage, which to his  
compeers,

The vile reward of their dishonored  
years,

He will dividing give. — The victor  
Fiend,

Omnipotent of yore, now quails, and  
fears

His triumph dearly won, which soon  
will lend

An impulse swift and sure to his ap-  
proaching end.

xxxv.

“List, stranger, list! mine is a human  
form,

Like that thou wearest — touch me  
— shrink not now!

My hand thou feel'st is not a ghost's,  
but warm

With human blood. — 'T was many  
years ago

Since first my thirsting soul aspired  
to know

The secrets of this wondrous world,  
when deep

My heart was pierced with sympathy  
for woe

Which could not be mine own — and  
thought did keep,

In dream, unnatural watch beside an  
infant's sleep.

xxxvi.

“Woe could not be mine own, since  
far from men

I dwelt, a free and happy orphan  
child,

By the seashore, in a deep mountain-  
glen;

And near the waves and through the  
forests wild

I roamed, to storm and darkness  
reconciled:

For I was calm while tempest shook  
the sky:

But, when the breathless heavens in  
beauty smiled,

I wept sweet tears, yet too tumultu-  
ously

For peace, and clasped my hands aloft  
in ecstasy.

xxxvii.

“These were forebodings of my fate —  
Before

A woman's heart beat in my virgin  
breast,

It had been nurtured in divinest lore:  
A dying poet gave me books, and  
blest

With wild but holy talk the sweet  
unrest

In which I watched him as he died  
away —

A youth with hoary hair — a fleeting  
guest

Of our lone mountains: and this lore  
did sway

My spirit like a storm, contending there  
always.

xxxviii.

“Thus the dark tale which history doth  
unfold

I knew, but not, methinks, as others  
know,

For they weep not; and Wisdom had  
unrolled

The clouds which hide the gulf of  
mortal woe, —

To few can she that warning vision  
show —

For I loved all things with intense  
devotion;

So that, when Hope's deep source in  
fullest flow,

Like earthquake, did uplift the stag-  
nant ocean  
Of human thoughts, mine shook beneath  
the wide emotion.

## XXXIX.

“When first the living blood through  
all these veins  
Kindled a thought in sense, great  
France sprang forth,  
And seized, as if to break, the ponder-  
ous chains  
Which bind in woe the nations of  
the earth.  
I saw, and started from my cottage-  
hearth;  
And to the clouds and waves in tame-  
less gladness  
Shrieked, till they caught immeasur-  
able mirth,  
And laughed in light and music; soon  
sweet madness  
Was poured upon my heart, a soft and  
thrilling sadness.

## XL.

“Deep slumber fell on me; — my  
dreams were fire,  
Soft and delightful thoughts did rest  
and hover  
Like shadows o’er my brain; and  
strange desire,  
The tempest of a passion raging over  
My tranquil soul, its depths with  
light did cover, —  
Which past; and calm and darkness,  
sweeter far,  
Came — then I loved; but not a  
human lover!  
For, when I rose from sleep, the  
Morning Star  
Shone through the woodbine-wreaths  
which round my casement were.

## XLI.

“’T was like an eye which seemed to  
smile on me.  
I watcht till, by the sun made pale,  
it sank  
Under the billows of the heaving sea;

But from its beams deep love my  
spirit drank,  
And to my brain the boundless world  
now shrank  
Into one thought — one image — yes,  
forever!  
Even like the dayspring poured on  
vapors dank,  
The beams of that one Star did shoot  
and quiver  
Through my benighted mind — and were  
extinguished never.

## XLII.

“The day past thus: at night, me-  
thought in dream  
A shape of speechless beauty did  
appear;  
It stood like light on a careering stream  
Of golden clouds which shook the  
atmosphere; —  
A winged youth, his radiant brow  
did wear  
The Morning Star: a wild dissolving  
bliss  
Over my frame he breathed, ap-  
proaching near,  
And bent his eyes of kindling tender-  
ness  
Near mine, and on my lips imprest a  
lingering kiss, —

## XLIII.

“And said: ‘A spirit loves thee,  
mortal maiden:  
How wilt thou prove thy worth?’  
Then joy and sleep  
Together fled, my soul was deeply  
laden,  
And to the shore I went to muse and  
weep;  
But, as I moved, over my heart did  
creep  
A joy less soft but more profound and  
strong  
Than my sweet dream, and it forbade  
to keep  
The path of the sea-shore: that Spirit’s  
tongue  
Seemed whispering in my heart, and  
bore my steps along.



## XLIV.

“How, to that vast and peopled city  
led  
Which was a field of holy warfare  
then,  
I walked among the dying and the  
dead,  
And shared in fearless deeds with  
evil men,  
Calm as an angel in the dragon’s  
den —  
How I braved death for liberty and  
truth,  
And spurned at peace and power and  
fame — and, when  
Those hopes had lost the glory of their  
youth,  
How sadly I returned — might move the  
hearer’s ruth.

## XLV.

“Warm tears throng fast! the tale  
may not be said —  
Know then that, when this grief had  
been subdued,  
I was not left, like others, cold and  
dead.  
The Spirit whom I loved in solitude  
Sustained his child: the tempest-  
shaken wood,  
The waves, the fountains, and the  
hush of night —  
These were his voice; and well I  
understood  
His smile divine when the calm sea  
was bright  
With silent stars, and Heaven was  
breathless with delight.

## XLVI.

“In lonely glens, amid the roar of  
rivers,  
When the dim nights were moonless,  
have I known  
Joys which no tongue can tell; my  
pale lip quivers  
When thought revisits them:— know  
thou alone  
That, after many wondrous years  
were flown,  
I was awakened by a shriek of woe;

And over me a mystic robe was  
thrown  
By viewless hands, and a bright Star  
did glow  
Before my steps — the Snake then met  
his mortal foe.”

## XLVII.

“Thou fearest not then the Serpent on  
thy heart?”  
“Fear it!” she said with brief and  
passionate cry, —  
And spake no more: that silence made  
me start —  
I lookt, and we were sailing pleas-  
antly,  
Swift as a cloud between the sea and  
sky,  
Beneath the rising moon seen far away;  
Mountains of ice, like sapphire, piled  
on high,  
Hemming the horizon round, in silence  
lay  
On the still waters, — these we did ap-  
proach alway.

## XLVIII.

And swift and swifter grew the vessel’s  
motion,  
So that a dizzy trance fell on my  
brain —  
Wild music woke me: we had passed  
the ocean  
Which girds the pole, Nature’s re-  
motest reign —  
And we glode fast o’er a pellucid  
plain  
Of waters, azure with the noontide day.  
Ethereal mountains shone around —  
a Fane  
Stood in the midst, girt by green isles  
which lay  
On the blue sunny deep, resplendent far  
away.

## XLIX.

It was a Temple such as mortal hand  
Has never built, nor ecstasy nor dream  
Reared in the cities of enchanted land:  
’T was likest heaven ere yet day’s  
purple stream

Ebbs o'er the western forest, while  
 the gleam  
 Of the unrisen moon among the clouds  
 Is gathering—when with many a  
 golden beam  
 The thronging constellations rush in  
 crowds,  
 Paving with fire the sky and the mar-  
 moreal floods:

## L.

Like what may be conceived of this  
 vast dome  
 When from the depths which thought  
 can seldom pierce  
 Genius beholds it rise, his native home,  
 Girt by the deserts of the Universe,  
 Yet nor in painting's light, or  
 mightier verse,  
 Or sculpture's marble language, can  
 invest  
 That shape to mortal sense—such  
 glooms immerse  
 That incommunicable sight, and rest  
 Upon the laboring brain and over-bur-  
 dened breast.

## LI.

Winding among the lawny islands fair,  
 Whose blosmy forests starred the  
 shadowy deep,  
 The wingless boat paused where an  
 ivory stair  
 Its fretwork in the crystal sea did  
 steep  
 Encircling that vast Fane's aerial  
 heap:  
 We disembarked, and through a portal  
 wide  
 We past—whose roof, of moon-  
 stone carved, did keep  
 A glimmering o'er the forms on every  
 side,  
 Sculptures like life and thought, immov-  
 able, deep-eyed.

## LII.

We came to a vast hall whose glorious  
 roof  
 Was diamond, which had drunk the  
 lightning's sheen

In darkness, and now poured it  
 through the woof  
 Of spell-inwoven clouds hung there  
 to screen  
 Its blinding splendor—through  
 such veil was seen  
 That work of subtlest power, divine  
 and rare;  
 Orb above orb, with starry shapes  
 between,  
 And hornèd moons, and meteors  
 strange and fair,  
 On night-black columns poised—one  
 hollow hemisphere!

## LIII.

Ten thousand columns in that quiver-  
 ing light  
 Distinct—between whose shafts  
 wound far away  
 The long and labyrinthine aisles,  
 more bright  
 With their own radiance than the  
 Heaven of Day;  
 And on the jasper walls around  
 there lay  
 Paintings, the poesy of mightiest  
 thought,  
 Which did the Spirit's history dis-  
 play;  
 A tale of passionate change, divinely  
 taught,  
 Which in their wingèd dance uncon-  
 scious Genii wrought.

## LIV.

Beneath there sate on many a sapphire  
 throne  
 The Great who had departed from  
 mankind,  
 A mighty Senate; some, whose white  
 hair shone  
 Like mountain snow, mild, beauti-  
 ful, and blind;  
 Some, female forms, whose gestures  
 beamed with mind;  
 And ardent youths, and children bright  
 and fair;  
 And some had lyres whose strings  
 were intertwined  
 With pale and clinging flames, which  
 ever there

Waked faint yet thrilling sounds that  
pierced the crystal air.

## LV.

One seat was vacant in the midst, a  
throne

Reared on a pyramid like sculptured  
flame,

Distinct with circling steps which  
rested on

Their own deep fire — Soon as the  
Woman came

Into that hall, she shrieked the  
Spirit's name,

And fell; and vanished slowly from  
the sight.

Darkness arose from her dissolving  
frame, —

Which, gathering, filled that dome of  
woven light,

Blotting its spherèd stars with super-  
natural night.

## LVI.

Then first two glittering lights were  
seen to glide

In circles on the amethystine floor,  
Small serpent eyes trailing from side  
to side,

Like meteors on a river's grassy  
shore,

They round each other rolled,  
dilating more

And more — then rose, commingling  
into one,

One clear and mighty planet hang-  
ing o'er

A cloud of deepest shadow which was  
thrown

Athwart the glowing steps and the crys-  
talline throne.

## LVII.

The cloud which rested on that cone  
of flame

Was cloven: beneath the planet  
sate a Form

Fairer than tongue can speak or  
thought may frame,

The radiance of whose limbs rose-  
like and warm

Flowed forth, and did with softest  
light inform

The shadowy dome, the sculptures,  
and the state

Of those assembled shapes — with  
clinging charm

Sinking upon their hearts and mine.  
He sate

Majestic yet most mild — calm yet com-  
passionate.

## LVIII.

Wonder and joy a passing faintness  
threw

Over my brow — a hand supported  
me,

Whose touch was magic strength: an  
eye of blue

Looked into mine, like moonlight,  
soothingly;

And a voice said: — “Thou must a  
listener be

This day — two mighty Spirits now  
return,

Like birds of calm, from the world's  
raging sea,

They pour fresh light from Hope's  
immortal urn;

A tale of human power — despair not —  
list and learn!”

## LIX.

I looked, and lo! one stood forth elo-  
quently,

His eyes were dark and deep, and  
the clear brow

Which shadowed them was like the  
morning sky,

The cloudless Heaven of Spring,  
when in their flow

Through the bright air the soft  
winds as they blow

Wake the green world: his gestures  
did obey

The oracular mind that made his  
features glow,

And, where his curvèd lips half-open  
lay,

Passion's divinest stream had made im-  
petuous way.

## LX.

Beneath the darkness of his outspread  
hair  
He stood thus beautiful: but there  
was One  
Who sate beside him like his shadow  
there,  
And held his hand — far lovelier —  
she was known  
To be thus fair by the few lines  
alone  
Which through her floating locks and  
gathered cloak,  
Glances of soul-dissolving glory,  
shone: —  
None else beheld her eyes — in him  
they woke  
Memories which found a tongue as thus  
he silence broke.

## CANTO II.

## I.

THE star-light smile of children, the  
sweet looks  
Of women, the fair breast from  
which I fed,  
The murmur of the unreposing brooks,  
And the green light which, shifting  
overhead,  
Some tangled bower of vines around  
me shed,  
The shells on the sea-sand, and the  
wild flowers,  
The lamp-light through the rafters  
cheerly spread,  
And on the twining flax — in life's  
young hours  
These sights and sounds did nurse my  
spirit's folded powers.

## II.

In Argolis beside the echoing sea,  
Such impulses within my mortal  
frame  
Arose, and they were dear to memory,  
Like tokens of the dead: — but  
others came  
Soon, in another shape: the won-  
drous fame

Of the past world, the vital words and  
deeds  
Of minds whom neither time nor  
change can tame,  
Traditions dark and old whence evil  
creeds  
Start forth, and whose dim shade a  
stream of poison feeds.

## III.

I heard, as all have heard, the various  
story  
Of human life, and wept unwilling  
tears.  
Feeble historians of its shame and  
glory,  
False disputants on all its hopes and  
fears,  
Victims who worshipt ruin, chron-  
iclers  
Of daily scorn, and slaves who loathed  
their state,  
Yet, flattering Power, had given its  
ministers  
A throne of judgment in the grave —  
't was fate  
That among such as these my youth  
should seek its mate.

## IV.

The land in which I lived by a fell  
bane  
Was withered up. Tyrants dwelt  
side by side,  
And stabled in our homes — until the  
chain  
Stifled the captive's cry, and to  
abide  
That blasting curse men had no  
shame — all vied  
In evil, slave and despot; fear with lust  
Strange fellowship through mutual  
hate had tied,  
Like two dark serpents tangled in the  
dust,  
Which on the paths of men their min-  
gling poison thrust.

## V.

Earth, our bright home, its mountains  
and its waters,

And the ethereal shapes which are  
suspended  
Over its green expanse, and those fair  
daughters,  
The clouds, of Sun and Ocean, who  
have blended  
The colors of the air since first ex-  
tended  
It cradled the young world, none wan-  
dered forth  
To see or feel: a darkness had de-  
scended  
On every heart: the light which shows  
its worth  
Must among gentle thoughts and fear-  
less take its birth.

## VI.

This vital world, this home of happy  
spirits,  
Was as a dungeon to my blasted  
kind.  
All that Despair from murdered Hope  
inherits  
They sought, and, in their helpless  
misery blind,  
A deeper prison and heavier chains  
did find,  
And stronger tyrants:—a dark gulf  
before,  
The realm of a stern Ruler, yawned;  
behind,  
Terror and Time conflicting drove,  
and bore  
On their tempestuous flood the shriek-  
ing wretch from shore.

## VII.

Out of that ocean's wrecks had Guilt  
and Woe  
Framed a dark dwelling for their  
homeless thought,  
And, starting at the ghosts which to  
and fro  
Glide o'er its dim and gloomy strand,  
had brought  
The worship thence which they each  
other taught.  
Well might men loathe their life! well  
might they turn  
Even the ill again from which  
they sought

Such refuge after death! well might  
they learn  
To gaze on this fair world with hopeless  
unconcern!

## VIII.

For they all pined in bondage; body  
and soul,  
Tyrant and slave, victim and tor-  
turer, bent  
Before one Power, to which supreme  
control  
Over their will by their own weak-  
ness lent  
Made all its many names omnipotent;  
All symbols of things evil, all divine;  
And hymns of blood or mockery,  
which rent  
The air from all its fanes, did inter-  
twine  
Imposture's impious toils round each  
discordant shrine.

## IX.

I heard, as all have heard, life's vari-  
ous story,  
And in no careless heart transcribed  
the tale;  
But from the sneers of men who had  
grown hoary  
In shame and scorn, from groans of  
crowds made pale  
By famine, from a mother's deso-  
late wail  
O'er her polluted child, from innocent  
blood  
Poured on the earth, and brows  
anxious and pale  
With the heart's warfare, did I gather  
food  
To feed my many thoughts — a tameless  
multitude!

## X.

I wandered through the wrecks of  
days departed  
Far by the desolated shore, when  
even  
O'er the still sea and jagged islets  
darted

The light of moonrise; in the north-  
ern heaven,  
Among the clouds near the horizon  
driven,  
The mountains lay beneath one planet  
pale;  
Around me broken tombs and col-  
umns riven  
Looked vast in twilight, and the sor-  
rowing gale  
Waked in those ruins gray its everlast-  
ing wail!

## XI.

I knew not who had framed these  
wonders then,  
Nor had I heard the story of their  
deeds;  
But dwellings of a race of mightier  
men,  
And monuments of less ungentle  
creeds,  
Tell their own tale to him who  
wisely heeds  
The language which they speak; and  
now to me  
The moonlight making pale the  
blooming weeds,  
The bright stars shining in the breath-  
less sea,  
Interpreted those scrolls of mortal mys-  
tery.

## XII.

Such man has been, and such may yet  
become!  
Ay, wiser, greater, gentler, even  
than they  
Who on the fragments of yon shattered  
dome  
Have stamped the sign of power —  
I felt the sway  
Of the vast stream of ages bear away  
My floating thoughts — my heart beat  
loud and fast —  
Even as a storm let loose beneath  
the ray  
Of the still moon, my spirit onward  
past  
Beneath truth's steady beams upon its  
tumult cast.

## XIII.

It shall be thus no more! too long,  
too long,  
Sons of the glorious dead, have  
ye lain bound  
In darkness and in ruin! — Hope is  
strong,  
Justice and Truth their wingèd child  
have found! —  
Awake! arise! until the mighty  
sound  
Of your career shall scatter in its gust  
The thrones of the oppressor, and  
the ground  
Hide the last altar's unregarded dust,  
Whose Idol has so long betrayed **your**  
impious trust!

## XIV.

It must be so — I will arise and waken  
The multitude, and, like a sulphur-  
ous hill  
Which on a sudden from its snows  
has shaken  
The swoon of ages, it shall burst,  
and fill  
The world with cleansing fire; it  
must, it will —  
It may not be restrained! — and who  
shall stand  
Amid the rocking earthquake stead-  
fast still,  
But Laon? on high Freedom's desert  
land  
A tower whose marble walls the leaguèd  
storms withstand!

## XV.

One summer night, in commune with  
the hope  
Thus deeply fed, amid those ruins  
gray  
I watched, beneath the dark sky's  
starry cope;  
And ever, from that hour, upon me  
lay  
The burden of this hope, and night  
or day,  
In vision or in dream, clove to my  
breast:

Among mankind, or when gone far  
away  
To the lone shores and mountains,  
't was a guest  
Which followed where I fled, and  
watcht when I did rest.

## XVI.

These hopes found words through  
which my spirit sought  
To weave a bondage of such sym-  
pathy  
As might create some response to the  
thought  
Which ruled me now — and as the  
vapors lie  
Bright in the outspread morning's  
radiancy,  
So were these thoughts invested with  
the light  
Of language; and all bosoms made  
reply  
On which its lustre streamed, when-  
e'er it might  
Through darkness wide and deep those  
trancèd spirits smite.

## XVII.

Yes, many an eye with dizzy tears was  
dim,  
And oft I thought to clasp my own  
heart's brother,  
When I could feel the listener's senses  
swim,  
And hear his breath its own swift  
gaspings smother  
Even as my words evoked them —  
and another,  
And yet another, I did fondly deem,  
Felt that we all were sons of one  
great mother;  
And the cold truth such sad reverse  
did seem  
As to awake in grief from some delight-  
ful dream.

## XVIII.

Yes, oft beside the ruined labyrinth  
Which skirts the hoary caves of the  
green deep

Did Laon and his friend, on one gray  
plinth,  
Round whose worn base the wild  
waves hiss and leap,  
Resting at eve, a lofty converse  
keep:  
And that this friend was false may now  
be said  
Calmly — that he, like other men,  
could weep  
Tears which are lies, and could betray  
and spread  
Snares for that guileless heart which for  
his own had bled.

## XIX.

Then, had no great aim recompensed  
my sorrow,  
I must have sought dark respite  
from its stress  
In dreamless rest, in sleep that sees no  
morrow —  
For to tread life's dismaying wilder-  
ness  
Without one smile to cheer, one  
voice to bless,  
Amid the snares and scoffs of human-  
kind,  
Is hard — but I betrayed it not, nor  
less,  
With love that scorned return, sought  
to unbind  
The interwoven clouds which make its  
wisdom blind.

## XX.

With deathless minds, which leave  
where they have past  
A path of light, my soul communion  
knew;  
Till from that glorious intercourse, at  
last,  
As from a mine of magic store, I  
drew  
Words which were weapons; —  
round my heart there grew  
The adamant armor of their power,  
And from my fancy wings of golden  
hue  
Sprang forth — yet not alone from  
wisdom's tower,

A minister of truth, these plumes young  
Laon bore.

## XXI.

An orphan with my parents lived,  
whose eyes  
Were lodestars of delight which  
drew me home  
When I might wander forth; nor did  
I prize  
Aught human thing beneath  
heaven's mighty dome  
Beyond this child: so, when sad  
hours were come,  
And baffled hope like ice still clung to  
me,  
Since kin were cold, and friends  
had now become  
Heartless and false, I turned from all  
to be,  
Cythna, the only source of tears and  
smiles to thee.

## XXII.

What wert thou then? A child most  
infantine,  
Yet wandering far beyond that in-  
nocent age  
In all but its sweet looks and mien  
divine:  
Even then, methought, with the  
world's tyrant rage  
A patient warfare thy young heart  
did wage,  
When those soft eyes of scarcely con-  
scious thought  
Some tale or thine own fancies  
would engage  
To overflow with tears, or converse  
fraught  
With passion o'er their depths its fleet-  
ing light had wrought.

## XXIII.

She moved upon this earth a shape of  
brightness,  
A power that from its objects  
scarcely drew  
One impulse of her being — in her  
lightness

Most like some radiant cloud of  
morning dew  
Which wanders through the waste  
air's pathless blue  
To nourish some far desert; she did  
seem,  
Beside me, gathering beauty as she  
grew,  
Like the bright shade of some im-  
mortal dream  
Which walks, when tempest sleeps, the  
wave of life's dark stream.

## XXIV.

As mine own shadow was this child  
to me,  
A second self, far dearer and more  
fair,  
Which clothed in undissolving radiancy  
All those steep paths which languor  
and despair  
Of human things had made so dark  
and bare,  
But which I trod alone — nor, till  
bereft  
Of friends, and overcome by lonely  
care,  
Knew I what solace for that loss was  
left,  
Though by a bitter wound my trusting  
heart was cleft.

## XXV.

Once she was dear, now she was all I  
had  
To love in human life — this play-  
mate sweet,  
This child of twelve years old — so  
she was made  
My sole associate, and her willing  
feet  
Wandered with mine where earth  
and ocean meet,  
Beyond the aerial mountains whose  
vast cells  
The unreposing billows ever beat,  
Through forests wide and old, and  
lawny dells  
Where boughs of incense droop over  
the emerald wells.



## XXVI.

And warm and light I felt her clasping hand  
 When twined in mine: she followed where I went,  
 Through the lone paths of our immortal land.  
 It had no waste but some memorial lent  
 Which strung me to my toil — some monument  
 Vital with mind: then Cythna by my side,  
 Until the bright and beaming day were spent,  
 Would rest, with looks entreating to abide,  
 Too earnest and too sweet ever to be denied.

## XXVII.

And soon I could not have refused her — Thus,  
 Forever, day and night, we two were ne'er  
 Parted, but when brief sleep divided us:  
 And, when the pauses of the lulling air  
 Of noon beside the sea had made a lair  
 For her soothed senses, in my arms she slept,  
 And I kept watch over her slumbers there,  
 While, as the shifting visions o'er her swept,  
 Amid her innocent rest by turns she smiled and wept.

## XXVIII.

And in the murmur of her dreams was heard  
 Sometimes the name of Laon:— suddenly  
 She would arise, and, like the secret bird  
 Whom sunset wakens, fill the shore and sky  
 With her sweet accents — a wild melody!

Hymns which my soul had woven to  
 Freedom, strong  
 The source of passion, whence they rose, to be;  
 Triumphant strains which, like a spirit's tongue,  
 To the enchanted waves that child of glory sung —

## XXIX.

Her white arms lifted through the shadowy stream  
 Of her loose hair — O excellently great  
 Seemed to me then my purpose, the vast theme  
 Of those impassioned songs, when Cythna sate  
 Amid the calm which rapture doth create  
 After its tumult, her heart vibrating,  
 Her spirit o'er the ocean's floating state  
 From her deep eyes far wandering, on the wing  
 Of visions that were mine, beyond its utmost spring.

## XXX.

For, before Cythna loved it, had my song  
 Peopled with thoughts the boundless universe,  
 A mighty congregation, which were strong,  
 Where'er they trod the darkness, to disperse  
 The cloud of that unutterable curse  
 Which clings upon mankind:— all things became  
 Slaves to my holy and heroic verse,  
 Earth, sea and sky, the planets, life and fame,  
 And fate, or whate'er else binds the world's wondrous frame.

## XXXI.

And this beloved child thus felt the sway  
 Of my conceptions, gathering like a cloud

The very wind on which it rolls away:  
 Hers too were all my thoughts ere  
 yet, endowed  
 With music and with light, their  
 fountains flowed  
 In poesy; and her still and earnest  
 face,  
 Pallid with feelings which intensely  
 glowed  
 Within, was turned on mine with  
 speechless grace,  
 Watching the hopes which there her  
 heart had learned to trace.

## XXXII.

In me communion with this purest  
 being  
 Kindled intenser zeal, and made me  
 wise  
 In knowledge, which in hers mine own  
 mind seeing  
 Left in the human world few mys-  
 teries.  
 How without fear of evil or disguise  
 Was Cythna! — what a spirit strong  
 and mild,  
 Which death or pain or peril could  
 despise,  
 Yet melt in tenderness! what genius  
 wild  
 Yet mighty was enclosed within one  
 simple child!

## XXXIII.

New lore was this — old age, with its  
 gray hair,  
 And wrinkled legends of unworthy  
 things,  
 And icy sneers, is naught: it cannot  
 dare  
 To burst the chains which life forever  
 flings  
 On the entangled soul's aspiring  
 wings,  
 So is it cold and cruel, and is made  
 The careless slave of that dark power  
 which brings  
 Evil, like blight, on man, who, still  
 betrayed,  
 Laughs o'er the grave in which his living  
 hopes are laid.

## XXXIV.

Nor are the strong and the severe to  
 keep  
 The empire of the world: thus  
 Cythna taught  
 Even in the visions of her eloquent  
 sleep,  
 Unconscious of the power through  
 which she wrought  
 The woof of such intelligible thought,  
 As from the tranquil strength which  
 cradled lay  
 In her smile-peopled rest, my spirit  
 sought  
 Why the deceiver and the slave has  
 sway  
 O'er heralds so divine of truth's arising  
 day.

## XXXV.

Within that fairest form the female  
 mind,  
 Untainted by the poison-clouds which  
 rest  
 On the dark world, a sacred home did  
 find:  
 But else from the wide earth's ma-  
 ternal breast  
 Victorious Evil, which had dispos-  
 est  
 All native power, had those fair  
 children torn,  
 And made them slaves to soothe his  
 vile unrest,  
 And minister to lust its joys forlorn,  
 Till they had learned to breathe the  
 atmosphere of scorn.

## XXXVI.

This misery was but coldly felt till she  
 Became my only friend, who had  
 endued  
 My purpose with a wider sympathy;  
 Thus Cythna mourned with me the  
 servitude  
 In which the half of humankind  
 were mewed,  
 Victims of lust and hate, the slaves of  
 slaves,  
 She mourned that grace and power  
 were thrown as food

To the hyena lust, who among graves  
Over his loathèd meal, laughing in  
agony, raves.

## xxxvii.

And I, still gazing on that glorious  
child,  
Even as these thoughts flushed o'er  
her: — "Cythna sweet,  
Well with the world art thou unrec-  
onciled;  
Never will peace and human nature  
meet  
Till free and equal man and woman  
greet  
Domestic peace; and, ere this power  
can make  
In human hearts its calm and holy  
seat,  
This slavery must be broken" — as I  
spake,  
From Cythna's eyes a light of exultation  
brake.

## xxxviii.

She replied earnestly: — "It shall be  
mine,  
This task, — mine, Laon! — thou  
hast much to gain;  
Nor wilt thou at poor Cythna's pride  
repine,  
If she should lead a happy female  
train  
To meet thee over the rejoicing  
plain,  
When myriads at thy call shall throng  
around  
The Golden City." — Then the  
child did strain  
My arm upon her tremulous heart, and  
wound  
Her own about my neck, till some reply  
she found.

## xxxix.

I smiled, and spake not. — "Where-  
fore dost thou smile  
At what I say? Laon, I am not  
weak,  
And, though my cheek might become  
pale the while,

With thee, if thou desirest, will I  
seek,  
Through their array of banded slaves,  
to wreak  
Ruin upon the tyrants. I had thought  
It was more hard to turn my un-  
practised cheek  
To scorn and shame, and this beloved  
spot  
And thee, O dearest friend, to leave and  
murmur not.

## xl.

"Whence came I what I am? Thou,  
Laon, knowest  
How a young child should thus un-  
daunted be;  
Methinks it is a power which thou  
bestowest,  
Through which I seek, by most  
resembling thee,  
So to become most good and great  
and free;  
Yet, far beyond this Ocean's utmost  
roar,  
In towers and huts are many like to  
me,  
Who, could they see thine eyes, or  
feel such lore  
As I have learnt from them, like me  
would fear no more.

## xli.

"Think'st thou that I shall speak un-  
skilfully,  
And none will heed me? I remem-  
ber now  
How once a slave in tortures doomed  
to die  
Was saved because in accents sweet  
and low  
He sung a song his judge loved long  
ago,  
As he was led to death. — All shall  
relent  
Who hear me — tears, as mine have  
flowed, shall flow,  
Hearts beat as mine now beats, with  
such intent  
As renovates the world; a will omni-  
potent!

## XLII.

“Yes, I will tread Pride’s golden  
palaces,  
Through Penury’s roofless huts and  
squalid cells  
Will I descend, where’er in abjectness  
Woman with some vile slave her  
tyrant dwells,  
There with the music of thine own  
sweet spells  
Will disenchant the captives, and will  
pour  
For the despairing, from the crystal  
wells  
Of thy deep spirit, reason’s mighty  
lore,  
And power shall then abound, and hope  
arise once more.

## XLIII.

“Can man be free if woman be a  
slave?  
Chain one who lives, and breathes  
this boundless air,  
To the corruption of a closed grave!  
Can they whose mates are beasts  
condemned to bear  
Scorn heavier far than toil or anguish  
dare  
To trample their oppressors? In their  
home,  
Among their babes, thou knowest a  
curse would wear  
The shape of woman—hoary Crime  
would come  
Behind, and Fraud rebuild Religion’s  
tottering dome.

## XLIV.

“I am a child:—I would not yet de-  
part.  
When I go forth alone, bearing the  
lamp  
Aloft which thou hast kindled in my  
heart,  
Millions of slaves from many a dun-  
geon damp  
Shall leap in joy, as the benumbing  
cramp  
Of ages leaves their limbs—no ill  
may harm

Thy Cythna ever — truth its radiant  
stamp  
Has fixt, as an invulnerable charm,  
Upon her children’s brow, dark False-  
hood to disarm.

## XLV.

“Wait yet awhile for the appointed  
day—  
Thou wilt depart, and I with tears  
shall stand  
Watching thy dim sail skirt the ocean  
gray;  
Amid the dwellers of this lonely land  
I shall remain alone — and thy com-  
mand  
Shall then dissolve the world’s unquiet  
trance,  
And, multitudinous as the desert  
sand  
Borne on the storm, its millions shall  
advance,  
Thronging round thee, the light of their  
deliverance.

## XLVI.

“Then, like the forests of some path-  
less mountain  
Which from remotest glens two  
warring winds  
Involve in fire which not the loosened  
fountain  
Of broadest floods might quench,  
shall all the kinds  
Of evil catch from our uniting minds  
The spark which must consume them;  
— Cythna then  
Will have cast off the impotence  
that binds  
Her childhood now, and through the  
paths of men  
Will pass, as the charmed bird that  
haunts the serpent’s den.

## XLVII.

“We part! — O Laon, I must dare,  
nor tremble,  
To meet those looks no more! —  
Oh heavy stroke!  
Sweet brother of my soul! can I dis-  
semble

The agony of this thought?" — As  
 thus she spoke,  
 The gathered sobs her quivering ac-  
 cents broke,  
 And in my arms she hid her beating  
 breast.  
 I remained still for tears — sudden  
 she woke  
 As one awakes from sleep, and wildly  
 prest  
 My bosom, her whole frame impetuously  
 possess.

## XLVIII.

"We part to meet again — but yon  
 blue waste,  
 Yon desert wide and deep, holds no  
 recess  
 Within whose happy silence, thus em-  
 braced,  
 We might survive all ills in one  
 caress:  
 Nor doth the grave — I fear 't is  
 passionless —  
 Nor yon cold vacant Heaven: — we  
 meet again  
 Within the minds of men, whose  
 lips shall bless  
 Our memory, and whose hopes its light  
 retain,  
 When these dis severed bones are trod-  
 den in the plain."

## XLIX.

I could not speak, though she had  
 ceased, for now  
 The fountains of her feeling, swift  
 and deep,  
 Seemed to suspend the tumult of their  
 flow;  
 So we arose, and by the starlight  
 steep  
 Went homeward — neither did we  
 speak nor weep,  
 But, pale, were calm with passion —  
 Thus subdued,  
 Like evening shades that o'er the  
 mountains creep,  
 We moved towards our home; where,  
 in this mood,  
 Each from the other sought refuge in  
 solitude.

## CANTO III.

## I.

WHAT thoughts had sway o'er Cythna's  
 lonely slumber  
 That night I know not; but my own  
 did seem  
 As if they might ten-thousand years  
 outnumber  
 Of waking life, the visions of a  
 dream  
 Which hid in one dim gulf the  
 troubled stream  
 Of mind; a boundless chaos wild and  
 vast,  
 Whose limits yet were never mem-  
 ory's theme:  
 And I lay struggling as its whirlwinds  
 past,  
 Sometimes for rapture sick, sometimes  
 for pain aghast.

## II.

Two hours, whose mighty circle did  
 embrace  
 More time than might make gray  
 the infant world,  
 Rolled thus, a weary and tumultuous  
 space:  
 When the third came, like mist on  
 breezes curled,  
 From my dim sleep a shadow was  
 unfurled:  
 Methought, upon the threshold of a  
 cave  
 I sate with Cythna; drooping bry-  
 ony, pearly  
 With dew from the wild streamlet's  
 shattered wave,  
 Hung, where we sate to taste the joys  
 which Nature gave.

## III.

We lived a day as we were wont to  
 live,  
 But Nature had a robe of glory on,  
 And the bright air o'er every shape  
 did weave  
 Intenser hues, so that the herbless  
 stone,

The leafless bough among the  
leaves alone,  
Had being clearer than its own could  
be, —  
And Cythna's pure and radiant self  
was shown,  
In this strange vision, so divine to me  
That, if I loved before, now love was  
agony.

## IV.

Morn fled, noon came, evening, then  
night, descended,  
And we prolonged calm talk beneath  
the sphere  
Of the calm moon — when suddenly  
was blended  
With our repose a nameless sense  
of fear;  
And from the cave behind I seemed  
to hear  
Sounds gathering upwards — accents  
incomplete  
And stifled shrieks, — and now,  
more near and near,  
A tumult and a rush of thronging feet  
The cavern's secret depths beneath the  
earth did beat.

## V.

The scene was changed, and away,  
away, away!  
Through the air and over the sea  
we sped,  
And Cythna in my sheltering bosom  
lay,  
And the winds bore me — through  
the darkness spread  
Around, the gaping earth then  
vomited  
Legions of foul and ghastly shapes,  
which hung  
Upon my flight; and ever as we  
fled,  
They plucked at Cythna — soon to me  
then clung  
A sense of actual things those monstrous  
dreams among.

## VI.

And I lay struggling in the impotence  
Of sleep, while outward life had  
burst its bound,

Though, still deluded, strove the tor-  
tured sense  
To its dire wanderings to adapt the  
sound  
Which in the light of morn was  
poured around  
Our dwelling — breathless, pale, and  
unaware,  
I rose, and all the cottage crowded  
found  
With armèd men, whose glittering  
swords were bare,  
And whose degraded limbs the tyrant's  
garb did wear.

## VII.

And, ere with rapid lips and gathered  
brow  
I could demand the cause, a feeble  
shriek —  
It was a feeble shriek, faint, far, and  
low —  
Arrested me — my mien grew calm  
and meek,  
And, grasping a small knife, I went  
to seek  
That voice among the crowd — 't was  
Cythna's cry!  
Beneath most calm resolve did agony  
wreak  
Its whirlwind rage: — so I past quietly,  
Till I beheld where bound that dearest  
child did lie.

## VIII.

I started to behold her, for delight  
And exultation, and a joyance free,  
Solemn, serene, and lofty, filled the  
light  
Of the calm smile with which she  
looked on me:  
So that I feared some brainless  
ecstasy,  
Wrought from that bitter woe, had  
wildered her —  
“Farewell! farewell!” she said, as  
I drew nigh.  
“At first my peace was marred by  
this strange stir,  
Now I am calm as truth — its chosen  
minister.

## IX.

“Look not so, Laon — say farewell in hope,  
 These bloody men are but the slaves who bear  
 Their mistress to her task — it was my scope  
 The slavery where they drag me now to share,  
 And among captives willing chains to wear  
 Awhile — the rest thou knowest — Return, dear friend!  
 Let our first triumph trample the despair  
 Which would ensnare us now, for, in the end,  
 In victory or in defeat our hopes and fears must blend.”

## X.

These words had fallen on my unheeding ear,  
 Whilst I had watched the motions of the crew  
 With seeming-careless glance; not many were  
 Around her, for their comrades just withdrew  
 To guard some other victim — so I drew  
 My knife, and with one impulse, suddenly,  
 All unaware three of their number slew,  
 And grasped a fourth by the throat, and with loud cry  
 My countrymen invoked to death or liberty!

## XI.

What followed then I know not — for a stroke  
 On my raised arm and naked head came down,  
 Filling my eyes with blood. — When I awoke,  
 I felt that they had bound me in my swoon,  
 And up a rock which overhangs the town,

By the steep path, were bearing me:  
 below  
 The plain was filled with slaughter,  
 — overthrown  
 The vineyards and the harvests, and the glow  
 Of blazing roofs shone far o'er the white ocean's flow.

## XII.

Upon that rock a mighty column stood  
 Whose capital seemed sculptured in the sky,  
 Which to the wanderers o'er the solitude  
 Of distant seas, from ages long gone by,  
 Had made a landmark; o'er its heights to fly  
 Scarcely the cloud, the vulture, or the blast,  
 Has power — and, when the shades of evening lie  
 On earth and ocean, its carved summits cast  
 The sunken daylight far through the aërial waste.

## XIII.

They bore me to a cavern in the hill  
 Beneath that column, and unbound me there:  
 And one did strip me stark; and one did fill  
 A vessel from the putrid pool; one bare  
 A lighted torch, and four with friendless care  
 Guided my steps the cavern-paths along.  
 Then up a steep and dark and narrow stair  
 We wound, until the torch's fiery tongue  
 Amid the gushing day beamless and pallid hung.

## XIV.

They raised me to the platform of the pile,

That column's dizzy height: the  
grate of brass,  
Through which they thrust me, open  
stood the while,  
As to its ponderous and suspended  
mass,  
With chains which eat into the flesh,  
alas!  
With brazen links, my naked limbs  
they bound:  
The grate, as they departed to re-  
pass,  
With horrid clangor fell, and the far  
sound  
Of their retiring steps in the dense gloom  
was drowned.

## xv.

The noon was calm and bright:—  
around that column  
The overhanging sky and circling  
sea  
Spread forth, in silentness profound  
and solemn,  
The darkness of brief frenzy cast on  
me,  
So that I knew not my own misery:  
The islands and the mountains in the  
day  
Like clouds reposed afar; and I  
could see  
The town among the woods below  
that lay,  
And the dark rocks which bound the  
bright and glassy bay.

## xvi.

It was so calm that scarce the feathery  
weed  
Sown by some eagle on the topmost  
stone  
Swayed in the air:—so bright that  
noon did breed  
No shadow in the sky beside mine  
own—  
Mine, and the shadow of my chain  
alone.  
Below, the smoke of roofs involved in  
flame  
Rested like night, all else was clearly  
shown

In that broad glare,—yet sound to  
me none came,  
But of the living blood that ran within  
my frame.

## xvii.

The peace of madness fled, and ah, too  
soon!  
A ship was lying on the sunny main,  
Its sails were flagging in the breathless  
noon—  
Its shadow lay beyond—That sight  
again  
Waked with its presence in my  
trancèd brain  
The stings of a known sorrow, keen  
and cold:  
I knew that ship bore Cythna o'er  
the plain  
Of waters, to her blighting slavery  
sold,  
And watched it with such thoughts as  
must remain untold.

## xviii.

I watcht, until the shades of evening  
wrapt  
Earth like an exhalation—then the  
bark  
Moved, for that calm was by the sun-  
set snapt.  
It moved a speck upon the ocean  
dark:  
Soon the wan stars came forth, and  
I could mark  
Its path no more! I sought to close  
mine eyes,  
But, like the balls, their lids were  
stiff and stark;  
I would have risen, but ere that I  
could rise  
My parchèd skin was split with piercing  
agonies.

## xix.

I gnawed my brazen chain, and sought  
to sever  
Its adamantine links, that I might  
die;  
O Liberty! forgive the base endeavor,  
Forgive me if, reserved for victory,



The Champion of thy faith e'er  
sought to fly!  
That starry night with its clear silence  
sent  
Tameless resolve which laughed at  
misery  
Into my soul — linkèd remembrance  
lent  
To that such power, to me such a severe  
content.

## XX.

To breathe, to be, to hope, or to de-  
spair  
And die, I questioned not; nor,  
though the sun,  
Its shafts of agony kindling through  
the air,  
Moved over me, nor though, in even-  
ing dun,  
Or when the stars their visible  
courses run,  
Or morning, the wide universe was  
spread  
In dreary calmness round me, did I  
shun  
Its presence, nor seek refuge with the  
dead  
From one faint hope whose flower a  
dropping poison shed.

## XXI.

Two days thus past — I neither raved  
nor died —  
Thirst raged within me, like a scor-  
pion's nest  
Built in mine entrails; I had spurned  
aside  
The water-vessel while despair pos-  
sessed  
My thoughts, and now no drop re-  
mained! The uprest  
Of the third sun brought hunger — but  
the crust  
Which had been left was to my  
craving breast  
Fuel, not food. I chewed the bitter  
dust,  
And bit my bloodless arm, and licked  
the brazen rust.

## XXII.

My brain began to fail when the fourth  
morn  
Burst o'er the golden isles — a fear-  
ful sleep,  
Which through the caverns dreary  
and forlorn  
Of the riven soul sent its foul  
dreams to sweep  
With whirlwind swiftness — a fall  
far and deep —  
A gulf, a void, a sense of senseless-  
ness —  
These things dwelt in me, even as  
shadows keep  
Their watch in some dim charnel's  
loneliness, —  
A shoreless sea, a sky sunless and  
planetless!

## XXIII.

The forms which peopled this terrific  
trance  
I well remember — like a choir of  
devils,  
Around me they involved a giddy  
dance;  
Legions seemed gathering from the  
misty levels  
Of ocean to supply those ceaseless  
revels,  
Foul ceaseless shadows: — thought  
could not divide  
The actual world from these en-  
tangling evils,  
Which so bemocked themselves that  
I descried  
All shapes like mine own self hideously  
multiplied.

## XXIV.

The sense of day and night, of false  
and true,  
Was dead within me. Yet two  
visions burst  
That darkness — one, as since that  
hour I knew,  
Was not a phantom of the realms  
accurst  
Where then my spirit dwelt — but,  
of the first,

I know not yet was it a dream or no.  
 But both, though not distincter,  
 were immersed  
 In hues which, when through memory's  
 waste they flow,  
 Make their divided streams more bright  
 and rapid now.

## XXV.

Methought that grate was lifted, and  
 the seven  
 Who brought me thither four stiff  
 corpses bare,  
 And from the frieze to the four winds  
 of Heaven  
 Hung them on high by the en-  
 tangled hair;  
 Swarthy were three — the fourth  
 was very fair:  
 As they retired, the golden moon up-  
 sprung,  
 And eagerly, out in the giddy air  
 Leaning that I might eat, I stretched  
 and clung  
 Over the shapeless depth in which those  
 corpses hung.

## XXVI.

A woman's shape, now lank and cold  
 and blue,  
 The dwelling of the many-colored  
 worm,  
 Hung there; the white and hollow  
 cheek I drew  
 To my dry lips — What radiance  
 did inform  
 Those horny eyes? whose was that  
 withered form?  
 Alas, alas! it seemed that Cythna's  
 ghost  
 Laught in those looks, and that  
 the flesh was warm  
 Within my teeth! — A whirlwind keen  
 as frost  
 Then in its sinking gulfs my sickening  
 spirit tost.

## XXVII.

Then seemed it that a tameless hurri-  
 cane

Arose, and bore me in its dark  
 career  
 Beyond the sun, beyond the stars that  
 wane  
 On the verge of formless space — it  
 languished there,  
 And, dying, left a silence lone and  
 drear,  
 More horrible than famine:—in the  
 deep  
 The shape of an old man did then  
 appear,  
 Stately and beautiful; that dreadful  
 sleep  
 His heavenly smiles dispersed, and I  
 could wake and weep.

## XXVIII.

And, when the blinding tears had  
 fallen, I saw  
 That column and those corpses and  
 the moon,  
 And felt the poisonous tooth of hunger  
 gnaw  
 My vitals, I rejoiced, as if the boon  
 Of senseless death would be ac-  
 corded soon;—  
 When from that stony gloom a voice  
 arose,  
 Solemn and sweet as when low  
 winds attune  
 The midnight pines; the grate did  
 then unclose,  
 And on that reverend form the moon-  
 light did repose.

## XXIX.

He struck my chains, and gently spake  
 and smiled;  
 As they were loosened by that  
 Hermit old,  
 Mine eyes were of their madness half  
 beguiled,  
 To answer those kind looks. — He  
 did enfold  
 His giant arms around me, to up-  
 hold  
 My wretched frame, my scorched  
 limbs he wound  
 In linen moist and balmy, and as  
 cold

As dew to drooping leaves: the chain,  
with sound  
Like earthquake, through the chasm of  
that steep stair did bound,

## XXX.

As, lifting me, it fell! — What next I  
heard  
Were billows leaping on the harbor-  
bar  
And the shrill sea-wind, whose breath  
idly stirred  
My hair;—I looked abroad, and  
saw a star  
Shining beside a sail, and distant  
far  
That mountain and its column, the  
known mark  
Of those who in the wide deep  
wandering are,  
So that I feared some Spirit fell and  
dark  
In trance had lain me thus within a  
fiendish bark.

## XXXI.

For now indeed over the salt sea-billow  
I sailed: yet dared not look upon  
the shape  
Of him who ruled the helm, although  
the pillow  
For my light head was hollowed in  
his lap,  
And my bare limbs his mantle did  
enwrap,  
Fearing it was a fiend: at last, he bent  
O'er me his aged face, as if to snap  
Those dreadful thoughts the gentle  
grandsire bent,  
And to my inmost soul his soothing  
looks he sent.

## XXXII.

A soft and healing potion to my lips  
At intervals he raised — now looked  
on high,  
To mark if yet the starry giant dips  
His zone in the dim sea — now  
cheerfully,

Though he said little, did he speak  
to me.

“It is a friend beside thee — take good  
cheer,  
Poor victim, thou art now at lib-  
erty!”

I joyed as those, a human tone to  
hear,  
Who in cells deep and lone have lan-  
guisht many a year.

## XXXIII.

A dim and feeble joy, whose glimpses  
oft  
Were quencht in a relapse of wilder-  
ing dreams,  
Yet still methought we sailed, until  
aloft  
The stars of night grew pallid, and  
the beams  
Of morn descended on the ocean-  
streams,  
And still that aged man, so grand and  
mild,  
Tended me, even as some sick  
mother seems  
To hang in hope over a dying child,  
Till in the azure East darkness again  
was piled.

## XXXIV.

And then the night-wind, steaming from  
the shore,  
Sent odors dying sweet across the  
sea,  
And the swift boat the little waves  
which bore  
Were cut by its keen keel, though  
slantingly;  
Soon I could hear the leaves sigh,  
and could see  
The myrtle-blossoms starring the dim  
grove,  
As past the pebbly beach the boat  
did flee  
On sidelong wing into a silent cove,  
Where ebon pines a shade under the  
starlight wove.

## CANTO IV.

## I.

The old man took the oars, and soon  
 the bark  
 Smote on the beach beside a tower  
 of stone;  
 It was a crumbling heap whose portal  
 dark  
 With blooming ivy-trails was over-  
 grown;  
 Upon whose floor the spangling  
 sands were strown,  
 And rarest sea-shells, which the eter-  
 nal flood,  
 Slave to the mother of the months,  
 had thrown  
 Within the walls of that gray tower,  
 which stood  
 A changeling of man's art nurst amid  
 Nature's brood.

## II.

When the old man his boat had  
 anchorèd,  
 He wound me in his arms with  
 tender care,  
 And very few but kindly words he  
 said,  
 And bore me through the tower  
 adown a stair,  
 Whose smooth descent some cease-  
 less step to wear  
 For many a year had fallen. — We  
 came at last  
 To a small chamber which with  
 mosses rare  
 Was tapestried, where me his soft  
 hands placed  
 Upon a couch of grass and oak-leaves  
 interlaced.

## III.

The moon was darting through the  
 lattices  
 Its yellow light, warm as the beams  
 of day —  
 So warm that, to admit the dewy  
 breeze,  
 The old man opened them; the  
 moonlight lay

Upon a lake whose waters wove  
 their play  
 Even to the threshold of that lonely  
 home:  
 Within was seen in the dim waver-  
 ing ray  
 The antique sculptured roof, and many  
 a tome  
 Whose lore had made that sage all that  
 he had become.

## IV.

The rock-built barrier of the sea was  
 past, —  
 And I was on the margin of a lake,  
 A lonely lake, amid the forests vast  
 And snowy mountains: — did my  
 spirit wake  
 From sleep as many-colored as the  
 snake  
 That girds eternity? in life and truth  
 Might not my heart its cravings ever  
 slake?  
 Was Cythna then a dream, and all my  
 youth,  
 And all its hopes and fears, and all its  
 joy and ruth?

## V.

Thus madness came again — a milder  
 madness  
 Which darkened naught but time's  
 unquiet flow  
 With supernatural shades of clinging  
 sadness;  
 That gentle Hermit, in my helpless  
 woe,  
 By my sick couch was busy to and  
 fro,  
 Like a strong spirit ministrant of good:  
 When I was healed, he led me forth  
 to show  
 The wonders of his sylvan solitude,  
 And we together sate by that isle-fretted  
 flood.

## VI.

He knew his soothing words to weave  
 with skill  
 From all my madness told: like  
 mine own heart,

Of Cythna would he question me, until  
 That thrilling name had ceased to  
 make me start,  
 From his familiar lips—it was not  
 art,  
 Of wisdom and of justice when he  
 spoke—  
 When mid soft looks of pity there  
 would dart  
 A glance as keen as is the lightning's  
 stroke  
 When it doth rive the knots of some  
 ancestral oak.

## VII.

Thus slowly from my brain the dark-  
 ness rolled;  
 My thoughts their due array did  
 reassume  
 Through the enchantments of that  
 Hermit old;  
 Then I bethought me of the glorious  
 doom  
 Of those who sternly struggle to  
 relume  
 The lamp of Hope o'er man's bewil-  
 dered lot;  
 And, sitting by the waters in the  
 gloom  
 Of eve, to that friend's heart I told  
 my thought—  
 That heart which had grown old, but  
 had corrupted not.

## VIII.

That hoary man had spent his live-  
 long age  
 In converse with the dead who  
 leave the stamp  
 Of ever-burning thoughts on many a  
 page,  
 When they are gone into the sense-  
 less damp  
 Of graves: his spirit thus became a  
 lamp  
 Of splendor, like to those on which it  
 fed:  
 Through peopled haunts, the city  
 and the camp,  
 Deep thirst for knowledge had his  
 footsteps led,

And all the ways of men among mankind  
 he read.

## IX.

But custom maketh blind and obdurate  
 The loftiest hearts:— he had beheld  
 the woe  
 In which mankind was bound, but  
 deemed that fate  
 Which made them abject would pre-  
 serve them so;  
 And in such faith, some steadfast  
 joy to know,  
 He sought this cell: but, when fame  
 went abroad  
 That one in Argolis did undergo  
 Torture for liberty, and that the crowd  
 High truths from gifted lips had heard  
 and understood;

## X.

And that the multitude was gathering  
 wide,  
 His spirit leaped within his aged  
 frame,  
 In lonely peace he could no more  
 abide,  
 But to the land on which the vic-  
 tor's flame  
 Had fed, my native land, the Her-  
 mit came:  
 Each heart was there a shield, and  
 every tongue  
 Was as a sword, of truth— young  
 Laon's name  
 Rallied their secret hopes, though  
 tyrants sung  
 Hymns of triumphant joy our scattered  
 tribes among.

## XI.

He came to the lone column on the  
 rock,  
 And with his sweet and mighty  
 eloquence  
 The hearts of those who watched it  
 did unlock,  
 And made them melt in tears of  
 penitence.  
 They gave him entrance free to  
 bear me thence.

“ Since this,” the old man said,  
 “ seven years are spent  
 While slowly truth on thy benighted  
 sense  
 Has crept ; the hope which wildered  
 it has lent  
 Meanwhile to me the power of a sub-  
 lime intent.

## XII.

“ Yes, from the records of my youth-  
 ful state,  
 And from the lore of bards and  
 sages old,  
 From whatso'er my wakened thoughts  
 create  
 Out of the hopes of thine aspirings  
 bold,  
 Have I collected language to un-  
 fold  
 Truth to my countrymen; from shore  
 to shore  
 Doctrines of human power my  
 words have told,  
 They have been heard, and men as-  
 pire to more  
 Than they have ever gained or ever lost  
 of yore.

## XIII.

“ In secret chambers parents read, and  
 weep,  
 My writings to their babes, no longer  
 blind;  
 And young men gather when their  
 tyrants sleep,  
 And vows of faith each to the other  
 bind;  
 And marriageable maidens, who  
 have pined  
 With love till life seemed melting  
 through their look,  
 A warmer zeal, a nobler hope, now  
 find;  
 And every bosom thus is rapt and  
 shook,  
 Like autumn's myriad leaves in one  
 swoln mountain-brook.

## XIV.

“ The tyrants of the Golden City  
 tremble

At voices which are heard about the  
 streets,  
 The ministers of fraud can scarce dis-  
 semble  
 The lies of their own heart, — but,  
 when one meets  
 Another at the shrine, he inly weets,  
 Though he says nothing, that the truth  
 is known;  
 Murderers are pale upon the judg-  
 ment-seats,  
 And gold grows vile even to the  
 wealthy crone,  
 And laughter fills the Fane, and curses  
 shake the Throne.

## XV.

“ Kind thoughts, and mighty hopes,  
 and gentle deeds  
 Abound, for fearless love, and the  
 pure law  
 Of mild equality and peace, succeeds  
 To faiths which long have held the  
 world in awe,  
 Bloody and false and cold. — As  
 whirlpools draw  
 All wrecks of ocean to their chasm,  
 the sway  
 Of thy strong genius, Laon, which  
 foresaw  
 This hope, compels all spirits to obey  
 Which round thy secret strength now  
 throng in wide array.

## XVI.

“ For I have been thy passive instru-  
 ment ” —  
 (As thus the old man spake, his  
 countenance  
 Gleamed on me like a spirit's) —  
 “ Thou hast lent  
 To me, to all, the power to advance  
 Towards this unforeseen deliverance  
 From our ancestral chains — ay, thou  
 didst rear  
 That lamp of hope on high which  
 time nor chance  
 Nor change may not extinguish, and  
 my share  
 Of good was o'er the world its gathered  
 beams to bear.

## XVII.

“But I, alas! am both unknown and old,  
 And, though the woof of wisdom I know well  
 To dye in hues of language, I am cold  
 In seeming, and the hopes which inly dwell  
 My manners note that I did long repel;  
 But Laon’s name to the tumultuous throng  
 Were like the star whose beams the waves compel,  
 And tempests, and his soul-subduing tongue  
 Were as a lance to quell the mailèd crest of wrong.

## XVIII.

“Perchance blood need not flow, if thou at length  
 Wouldst rise, perchance the very slaves would spare  
 Their brethren and themselves; great is the strength  
 Of words — for lately did a maiden fair,  
 Who from her childhood has been taught to bear  
 The tyrant’s heaviest yoke, arise, and make  
 Her sex the law of truth and freedom hear,  
 And with these quiet words — ‘For thine own sake,  
 I prithee spare me’ — did with ruth so take

## XIX.

“All hearts that even the torturer, who had bound  
 Her meek calm frame, ere it was yet impaled,  
 Loosened her, weeping then; nor could be found  
 One human hand to harm her. — Unassailed  
 Therefore she walks through the great City, veiled

In virtue’s adamantine cloquence,  
 ’Gainst scorn and death and pain thus trebly mailed,  
 And blending, in the smiles of that defence,  
 The serpent and the dove, wisdom and innocence.

## XX.

“The wild-eyed women throng around her path:  
 From their luxurious dungeons, from the dust  
 Of meaner thralls, from the oppressor’s wrath,  
 Or the caresses of his sated lust,  
 They congregate: in her they put their trust;  
 The tyrants send their armèd slaves to quell  
 Her power; they, even like a thunder-gust  
 Caught by some forest, bend beneath the spell  
 Of that young maiden’s speech, and to their chiefs rebel.

## XXI.

“Thus she doth equal laws and justice teach  
 To woman, outraged and polluted long;  
 Gathering the sweetest fruit in human reach  
 For those fair hands now free, while armèd wrong  
 Trembles before her look, though it be strong;  
 Thousands thus dwell beside her, virgins bright,  
 And matrons with their babes, a stately throng!  
 Lovers renew the vows which they did plight  
 In early faith, and hearts long parted now unite;

## XXII.

“And homeless orphans find a home near her,

And those poor victims of the  
proud, no less,  
Fair wrecks, on whom the smiling  
world, with stir,  
Thrusts the redemption of its  
wickedness: —  
In squalid huts and in its palaces  
Sits Lust alone, while o'er the land  
is borne  
Her voice, whose awful sweetness  
doth repress  
All evil, and her foes relenting turn,  
And cast the vote of love in hope's  
abandoned urn.

## XXIII.

“So, in the populous City, a young  
maiden  
Has baffled Havoc of the prey  
which he  
Marks as his own whene'er, with  
chains o'erladen,  
Men make them arms to hurl down  
tyranny, —  
False arbiter between the bound  
and free;  
And o'er the land, in hamlets and in  
towns,  
The multitudes collect tumultuously,  
And throng in arms; but tyranny dis-  
owns  
Their claim, and gathers strength around  
its trembling thrones.

## XXIV.

“Blood soon, although unwillingly,  
to shed  
The free cannot forbear — The  
Queen of Slaves,  
The hoodwinked Angel of the blind  
and dead,  
Custom, with iron mace points to  
the graves  
Where her own standard desolately  
waves  
Over the dust of Prophets and of Kings.  
Many yet stand in her array — ‘she  
paves  
Her path with human hearts,’ and  
o'er it flings  
The wildering gloom of her immeasur-  
able wings.

## XXV.

“There is a plain beneath the City's  
wall,  
Bounded by misty mountains, wide  
and vast,  
Millions there lift at Freedom's thrill-  
ing call  
Ten thousand standards wide, they  
load the blast  
Which bears one sound of many  
voices past,  
And startles on his throne their  
sceptred foe: —  
He sits amid his idle pomp aghast,  
And that his power hath past away  
doth know —  
Why pause the victor swords to seal his  
overthrow?

## XXVI.

“The tyrant's guards resistance yet  
maintain:  
Fearless and fierce and hard as  
beasts of blood,  
They stand a speck amid the peopled  
plain;  
Carnage and ruin have been made  
their food  
From infancy — ill has become their  
good,  
And for its hateful sake their will has  
wove  
The chains which eat their hearts —  
the multitude,  
Surrounding them, with words of  
human love  
Seek from their own decay their stub-  
born minds to move.

## XXVII.

“Over the land is felt a sudden pause,  
As night and day, those ruthless  
bands around,  
The watch of love is kept — a trance  
which awes  
The thoughts of men with hope —  
as, when the sound  
Of whirlwind whose fierce blasts  
the waves and clouds confound  
Dies suddenly, the mariner in fear



Feels silence sink upon his heart —  
 thus bound,  
 The conquerors pause, and oh may  
 freemen ne'er  
 Clasp the relentless knees of Dread the  
 murderer!

## XXVIII.

“If blood be shed, 't is but a change  
 and choice  
 Of bonds — from slavery to coward-  
 ice  
 A wretched fall! — Uplift thy charmèd  
 voice!  
 Pour on those evil men the love  
 that lies  
 Hovering within those spirit-sooth-  
 ing eyes!  
 Arise, my friend, farewell!” — As thus  
 he spake,  
 From the green earth lightly I did  
 arise,  
 As one out of dim dreams that doth  
 awake,  
 And looked upon the depth of that re-  
 posing lake.

## XXIX.

I saw my countenance reflected  
 there; —  
 And then my youth fell on me like  
 a wind  
 Descending on still waters — My thin  
 hair  
 Was prematurely gray, my face was  
 lined  
 With channels, such as suffering  
 leaves behind,  
 Not age; my brow was pale, but in  
 my cheek  
 And lips a flush of gnawing fire did  
 find  
 Their food and dwelling; though mine  
 eyes might speak  
 A subtle mind and strong within a frame  
 thus weak.

## XXX.

And though their lustre now was spent  
 and faded,

Yet in my hollow looks and withered  
 mien  
 The likeness of a shape for which was  
 braided  
 The brightest woof of genius still  
 was seen —  
 One who, methought, had gone from  
 the world's scene,  
 And left it vacant — 't was her lover's  
 face —  
 It might resemble her — it once had  
 been  
 The mirror of her thoughts, and still  
 the grace  
 Which her mind's shadow cast left there  
 a lingering trace.

## XXXI.

What then was I? She slumbered with  
 the dead.  
 Glory and joy and peace had come  
 and gone.  
 Doth the cloud perish when the beams  
 are fled  
 Which steeped its skirts in gold? or,  
 dark and lone,  
 Doth it not through the paths of  
 night, unknown,  
 On outspread wings of its own wind  
 upborne,  
 Pour rain upon the earth? The stars  
 are shown  
 When the cold moon sharpens her  
 silver horn  
 Under the sea, and make the wide night  
 not forlorn.

## XXXII.

Strengthened in heart, yet sad, that  
 aged man  
 I left with interchange of looks and  
 tears  
 And lingering speech, and to the  
 Camp began  
 My way. O'er many a mountain-  
 chain which rears  
 Its hundred crests aloft, my spirit  
 bears  
 My frame; o'er many a dale and  
 many a moor,  
 And gayly now meseems serene earth  
 wears

The bloomy spring's star-bright investiture,  
A vision which aught sad from sadness  
might allure.

## XXXIII.

My powers revived within me, and I  
went,  
As one whom winds waft o'er the  
bending grass,  
Through many a vale of that broad  
continent.  
At night when I reposed, fair dreams  
did pass  
Before my pillow; my own Cythna  
was,  
Not like a child of death, among them  
ever;  
When I arose from rest, a woful  
mass  
That gentlest sleep seemed from my  
life to sever,  
As if the light of youth were not with-  
drawn forever.

## XXXIV.

Aye as I went, that maiden who had  
reared  
The torch of Truth afar, of whose  
high deeds  
The Hermit in his pilgrimage had  
heard,  
Haunted my thoughts. Ah, Hope  
its sickness feeds  
With whatsoe'er it finds, or flowers,  
or weeds! —  
Could she be Cythna? Was that corpse  
a shade  
Such as self-torturing thought from  
madness breeds?  
Why was this hope not torture? Yet  
it made  
A light around my steps which would  
not ever fade.

## CANTO V.

## I.

OVER the utmost hill at length I sped,  
A snowy steep: — the moon was  
hanging low

Over the Asian mountains, and, out-  
spread  
The plain, the City, and the Camp,  
below,  
Skirted the midnight ocean's glim-  
mering flow;  
The City's moon-lit spires and myriad  
lamps  
Like stars in a sublunar sky did glow,  
And fires blazed far amid the scattered  
camps,  
Like springs of flame which burst where'er  
swift Earthquake stamps.

## II.

All slept but those in watchful arms  
who stood,  
And those who sate tending the  
beacon's light,  
And the few sounds from that vast  
multitude  
Made silence more profound. — Oh  
what a might  
Of human thought was cradled in  
that night!  
How many hearts impenetrably veiled  
Beat underneath its shade, what  
secret fight  
Evil and good, in woven passions  
mailed,  
Waged through that silent throng, — a  
war that never failed!

## III.

And now the Power of Good held  
victory,  
So, through the labyrinth of many a  
tent,  
Among the silent millions who did lie  
In innocent sleep, exultingly I went;  
The moon had left Heaven desert  
now, but, lent  
From eastern morn, the first faint lustre  
showed  
An armed youth; — over his spear he  
bent  
His downward face. — "A friend!"  
I cried aloud,  
And quickly common hopes made free-  
men understood.

## IV.

I sate beside him while the morning  
 beam  
 Crept slowly over Heaven, and  
 talked with him  
 Of those immortal hopes, a glorious  
 theme!  
 Which led us forth, until the stars  
 grew dim:  
 And all the while methought his  
 voice did swim  
 As if it drownèd in remembrance were  
 Of thoughts which make the moist  
 eyes overbrim:  
 At last, when daylight 'gan to fill the  
 air,  
 He looked on me, and cried in wonder,  
 "Thou art here!"

## V.

Then, suddenly, I knew it was the  
 youth  
 In whom its earliest hopes my spirit  
 found;  
 But envious tongues had stained his  
 spotless truth,  
 And thoughtless pride his love in  
 silence bound,  
 And shame and sorrow mine in  
 toils had wound,  
 Whilst he was innocent, and I deluded;  
 The truth now came upon me; on  
 the ground  
 Tears of repenting joy, which fast  
 intruded,  
 Fell fast, and o'er its peace our mingling  
 spirits brooded.

## VI.

Thus while with rapid lips and earnest  
 eyes  
 We talked, a sound of sweeping  
 conflict, spread  
 As from the earth, did suddenly arise;  
 From every tent, roused by that  
 clamor dread,  
 Our bands outsprung, and seized  
 their arms — We sped  
 Towards the sound: our tribes were  
 gathering far.

Those sanguine slaves, amid ten  
 thousand dead  
 Stabbed in their sleep, trampled in  
 treacherous war  
 The gentle hearts whose power their  
 lives had sought to spare.

## VII.

Like rabid snakes that sting some  
 gentle child  
 Who brings them food when winter  
 false and fair  
 Allures them forth with its cold smiles,  
 so wild  
 They rage among the camp; — they  
 overbear  
 The patriot host — confusion, then  
 despair  
 Descends like night — when "Laon!"  
 one did cry:  
 Like a bright ghost from Heaven,  
 that shout did scare  
 The slaves, and, widening through the  
 vaulted sky,  
 Seemed sent from Earth to Heaven in  
 sign of victory.

## VIII.

In sudden panic those false murderers  
 fled,  
 Like insect tribes before the northern  
 gale:  
 But, swifter still, our hosts encom-  
 passèd  
 Their shattered ranks, and in a  
 craggy vale,  
 Where even their fierce despair  
 might naught avail,  
 Hemmed them around! — And then  
 revenge and fear  
 Made the high virtue of the patriots  
 fail:  
 One pointed on his foe the mortal  
 spear —  
 I rushed before its point, and cried  
 "Forbear, forbear!"

## IX.

The spear transfixed my arm that was  
 uplifted  
 In swift expostulation, and the  
 blood

Gushed round its point: I smiled,  
 and — “O thou gifted  
 With eloquence which shall not be  
 withstood,  
 Flow thus!” I cried in joy, “thou  
 vital flood,  
 Until my heart be dry, ere thus the  
 cause  
 For which thou wert aught worthy  
 be subdued! —  
 Ah! ye are pale, — ye weep, — your  
 passions pause, —  
 ’Tis well! ye feel the truth of love’s  
 benignant slas.

## x.

“Soldiers, our brethren and our friends  
 are slain:  
 Ye murdered them, I think, as they  
 did sleep!  
 Alas! what have ye done? The slight-  
 est pain  
 Which ye might suffer, there were  
 eyes to weep,  
 But ye have quenched them — there  
 were smiles to steep  
 Your hearts in balm, but they are lost  
 in woe;  
 And those whom love did set his  
 watch to keep  
 Around your tents, truth’s freedom to  
 bestow,  
 Ye stabbed as they did sleep — but  
 they forgive ye now.

## xi.

“Oh wherefore should ill ever flow  
 from ill,  
 And pain still keener pain forever  
 breed?  
 We all are brethren — even the slaves  
 who kill  
 For hire are men; and to avenge  
 misdeed  
 On the misdoer doth but Misery  
 feed  
 With her own broken heart! O Earth,  
 O Heaven!  
 And thou, dread Nature, which to  
 every deed,  
 And all that lives or is, to be hath  
 given,

Even as to thee have these done ill,  
 and are forgiven!

## xii.

“Join then your hands and hearts,  
 and let the past  
 Be as a grave, which gives not up  
 its dead,  
 To evil thoughts.” — A film then over-  
 cast  
 My sense with dimness, for the  
 wound, which bled  
 Freshly, swift shadows o’er mine  
 eyes had shed.  
 When I awoke, I lay mid friends and  
 foes,  
 And earnest countenances on me  
 shed  
 The light of questioning looks, whilst  
 one did close  
 My wound with balmiest herbs, and  
 soothed me to repose.

## xiii.

And one, whose spear had pierced me,  
 leaned beside,  
 With quivering lips and humid  
 eyes;—and all  
 Seemed like some brothers on a  
 journey wide  
 Gone forth, whom now strange  
 meeting did befall  
 In a strange land round one whom  
 they might call  
 Their friend, their chief, their father,  
 for assay  
 Of peril, which had saved them  
 from the thrall  
 Of death, now suffering. Thus the  
 vast array  
 Of those fraternal bands were recon-  
 ciled that day.

## xiv.

Lifting the thunder of their acclamation  
 Towards the City, then the multi-  
 tude,  
 And I among them, went in joy — a  
 nation  
 Made free by love, a mighty brother-  
 hood

Linkt by a jealous interchange of  
 good;  
 A glorious pageant, more magnificent  
 Than kingly slaves arrayed in gold  
 and blood,  
 When they return from carnage, and  
 are sent  
 In triumph bright beneath the populous  
 battlement.

## XV.

Afar, the City-walls were thronged on  
 high,  
 And myriads on each giddy turret  
 clung,  
 And to each spire far lessening in the  
 sky  
 Bright pennons on the idle winds  
 were hung;  
 As we approached, a shout of joy-  
 ance sprung  
 At once from all the crowd, as if the  
 vast  
 And peopled Earth its boundless  
 skies among  
 The sudden clamor of delight had cast,  
 When from before its face some general  
 wreck had past.

## XVI.

Our armies through the City's hundred  
 gates  
 Were poured, like brooks which to  
 the rocky lair  
 Of some deep lake, whose silence them  
 awaits,  
 Throng from the mountains when  
 the storms are there:  
 And, as we past through the calm  
 sunny air,  
 A thousand flower-inwoven crowns  
 were shed,  
 The token-flowers of truth and free-  
 dom fair,  
 And fairest hands bound them on many  
 a head,  
 Those angels of love's heaven that over  
 all was spread.

## XVII.

I trod as one tranced in some raptur-  
 ous vision:

Those bloody bands so lately recor-  
 ciled  
 Were, ever as they went, by the con-  
 trition  
 Of anger turned to love, from ill  
 beguiled,  
 And every one on them more gently  
 smiled  
 Because they had done evil: — the  
 sweet awe  
 Of such mild looks made their own  
 hearts grow mild,  
 And did with soft attraction ever draw  
 Their spirits to the love of freedom's  
 equal law.

## XVIII.

And they and all in one loud sym-  
 phony  
 My name with Liberty commingling  
 lifted,  
 "The friend and the preserver of the  
 free!  
 The parent of this joy!" and fair  
 eyes, gifted  
 With feelings caught from one who  
 had uplifted  
 The light of a great spirit, round me  
 shone;  
 And all the shapes of this grand  
 scenery shifted  
 Like restless clouds before the steadfast  
 sun, —  
 Where was that Maid? I asked, but it  
 was known of none.

## XIX.

Laone was the name her love had  
 chosen,  
 For she was nameless, and her birth  
 none knew:  
 Where was Laone now? — The words  
 were frozen  
 Within my lips with fear; but to  
 subdue  
 Such dreadful hope to my great task  
 was due,  
 And when at length one brought reply  
 that she  
 To-morrow would appear, I then  
 withdrew

To judge what need for that great  
 through might be,  
 For now the stars came thick over the  
 twilight sea.

## XX.

Yet need was none for rest or food to  
 care,  
 Even though that multitude was  
 passing great,  
 Since each one for the other did pre-  
 pare  
 All kindly succor. — Therefore to the  
 gate  
 Of the Imperial House, now deso-  
 late,  
 I past, and there was found aghast,  
 alone,  
 The fallen Tyrant. — Silently he sat  
 Upon the footstool of his golden throne,  
 Which, starred with sunny gems, in its  
 own lustre shone.

## XXI.

Alone, but for one child who led before  
 him  
 A graceful dance: the only living  
 thing  
 Of all the crowd which thither to  
 adore him  
 Flocked yesterday, who solace  
 sought to bring  
 In his abandonment! — She knew  
 the King  
 Had praised her dance of yore; and  
 now she wove  
 Its circles, aye weeping and mur-  
 muring,  
 Mid her sad task of unregarded love,  
 That to no smiles it might his speechless  
 sadness move.

## XXII.

She fled to him, and wildly claspt his  
 feet,  
 When human steps were heard: —  
 he moved nor spoke,  
 Nor changed his hue, nor raised his  
 looks to meet

The gaze of strangers — Our loud  
 entrance woke

The echoes of the hall, which cir-  
 cling broke

The calm of its recesses; — like a tomb,  
 Its sculptured walls vacantly to the  
 stroke

Of footfalls answered, and the twi-  
 light's gloom

Lay like a charnel's mist within the  
 radiant dome.

## XXIII.

The little child stood up when we  
 came nigh;

Her lips and cheeks seemed very  
 pale and wan,

But on her forehead and within her  
 eye

Lay beauty which makes hearts that  
 feed thereon

Sick with excess of sweetness; on  
 the throne

She leaned; — the King, with gath-  
 ered brow and lips

Wreathed by long scorn, did inly  
 sneer and frown,

With hue like that when some great  
 painter dips

His pencil in the gloom of earthquake  
 and eclipse.

## XXIV.

She stood beside him like a rainbow  
 braided

Within some storm when scarce its  
 shadows vast

From the blue paths of the swift sun  
 have faded;

A sweet and solemn smile, like  
 Cythna's, cast

One moment's light, which made  
 my heart beat fast,

O'er that child's parted lips — a gleam  
 of bliss,

A shade of vanisht days, — as the  
 tears past

Which wrapt it, even as with a father's  
 kiss

I prest those softest eyes in trembling  
 tenderness.

## XXV.

The sceptred wretch then from that solitude

I drew, and, of his change compassionate,

With words of sadness soothed his rugged mood.

But he, while pride and fear held deep debate,

With sullen guile of ill-dissembled hate

Glared on me as a toothless snake might glare:

Pity, not scorn, I felt though desolate

The desolater now, and unaware

The curses which he mockt had caught him by the hair.

## XXVI.

I led him forth from that which now might seem

A gorgeous grave: through portals sculptured deep

With imagery beautiful as dream

We went, and left the shades which tend on sleep

Over its unregarded gold to keep

Their silent watch. — The child trod faintly,

And, as she went, the tears which she did weep

Glanced in the starlight; wildered seemèd she,

And, when I spake, for sobs she could not answer me.

## XXVII.

At last the Tyrant cried, "She hangers, slave,

Stab her, or give her bread!" — It was a tone

Such as sick fancies in a new-made grave

Might hear. I trembled, for the truth was known:

He with this child had thus been left alone,

And neither had gone forth for food, — but he,

In mingled pride and awe, cowered near his throne,

And she, a nursling of captivity, Knew naught beyond those walls, nor what such change might be.

## XXVIII.

And he was troubled at a charm withdrawn

Thus suddenly; that sceptres ruled no more —

That even from gold the dreadful strength was gone

Which once made all things subject to its power —

Such wonder seized him as if hour by hour

The past had come again; and the swift fall

Of one so great and terrible of yore To desolateness in the hearts of all

Like wonder stirred who saw such awful change befall.

## XXIX.

A mighty crowd, such as the wide land pours

Once in a thousand years, now gathered round

The fallen Tyrant; — like the rush of showers

Of hail in spring, pattering along the ground,

Their many footsteps fell — else came no sound

From the wide multitude; that lonely man

Then knew the burden of his change, and found,

Concealing in the dust his visage wan, Refuge from the keen looks which through his bosom ran.

## XXX.

And he was faint withal: I sate beside him

Upon the earth, and took that child so fair

From his weak arms, that ill might none betide him

Or her;—when food was brought  
to them, her share  
To his averted lips the child did  
bear,  
But, when she saw he had enough,  
she ate,  
And wept the while;—the lonely  
man's despair  
Hunger then overcame, and, of his  
state  
Forgetful, on the dust as in a trance he  
sate.

## XXXI.

Slowly the silence of the multitudes  
Past, as when far is heard in some  
lone dell  
The gathering of a wind among the  
woods —  
“And he is fallen!” they cry;  
“he who did dwell  
Like famine or the plague, or aught  
more fell,  
Among our homes, is fallen! the  
murderer  
Who slaked his thirsting soul, as  
from a well  
Of blood and tears, with ruin! he is  
here!  
Sunk in a gulf of scorn from which none  
may him rear!”

## XXXII.

Then was heard — “He who judged,  
let him be brought  
To judgment! Blood for blood  
cries from the soil  
On which his crimes have deep pollu-  
tion wrought!  
Shall Othman only unavenged de-  
spoil?  
Shall they who by the stress of  
grinding toil  
Wrest from the unwilling earth his  
luxuries  
Perish for crime, while his foul  
blood may boil  
Or creep within his veins at will? —  
Arise,  
And to high Justice make her chosen  
sacrifice.”

## XXXIII.

“What do ye seek? what fear ye,”  
then I cried,  
Suddenly starting forth, “that ye  
should shed  
The blood of Othman?—if your  
hearts are tried  
In the true love of freedom, cease  
to dread  
This one poor lonely man — be-  
neath Heaven spread  
In purest light above us all, through  
Earth,  
Maternal Earth, who doth her sweet  
smiles shed  
For all,—let him go free; until the  
worth  
Of human nature win from these a  
second birth.

## XXXIV.

“What call ye *justice*? Is there one  
who ne'er  
In secret thought has wisht another's  
ill?—  
Are ye all pure? Let those stand  
forth who hear  
And tremble not. Shall they insult  
and kill,  
If such they be? their mild eyes  
can they fill  
With the false anger of the hypocrite?  
Alas, such were not pure,—the  
chastened will  
Of virtue sees that justice is the light  
Of love, and not revenge and terror  
and despite.”

## XXXV.

The murmur of the people, slowly  
dying,  
Paused as I spake, then those who  
near me were  
Cast gentle looks where the lone man  
was lying  
Shrouding his head, which now that  
infant fair  
Claspt on her lap in silence;—  
through the air  
Sobs were then heard, and many  
kist my feet



In pity's madness, and to the despair  
 Of him whom late they curst a solace sweet  
 His very victims brought — soft looks  
 and speeches meet.

## XXXVI.

Then to a home for his repose assigned,  
 Accompanied by the still throng,  
 he went  
 In silence, where, to soothe his rank-  
 ling mind,  
 Some likeness of his ancient state  
 was lent;  
 And, if his heart could have been  
 innocent  
 As those who pardoned him, he might  
 have ended  
 His days in peace; but his straight  
 lips were bent,  
 Men said, into a smile which guile  
 portended,  
 A sight with which that child like hope  
 with fear was blended.

## XXXVII.

'T was midnight now, the eve of that  
 great day  
 Whereon the many nations at whose  
 call  
 The chains of earth like mist melted  
 away  
 Decreed to hold a sacred Festival,  
 A rite to attest the equality of all  
 Who live. So to their homes, to  
 dream or wake,  
 All went. The sleepless silence did  
 recall  
 Laone to my thoughts, with hopes  
 that make  
 The flood recede from which their thirst  
 they seek to slake.

## XXXVIII.

The dawn flowed forth, and from its  
 purple fountains  
 I drank those hopes which make  
 the spirit quail,

As to the plain between the misty  
 mountains  
 And the great City, with a counte-  
 nance pale,  
 I went: — it was a sight which  
 might avail  
 To make men weep exulting tears,  
 for whom  
 Now first from human power the  
 reverent veil  
 Was torn, to see Earth from her  
 general womb  
 Pour forth her swarming sons to a  
 fraternal doom;

## XXXIX.

To see far glancing in the misty morn-  
 ing  
 The signs of that innumerable host,  
 To hear one sound of many made, the  
 warning  
 Of Earth to Heaven from its free  
 children tost;  
 While the eternal hills, and the sea  
 lost  
 In wavering light, and, starring the  
 blue sky,  
 The City's myriad spires of gold,  
 almost  
 With human joy made mute society —  
 Its witnesses with men who must here-  
 after be;

## XL.

To see, like some vast island from the  
 ocean,  
 The Altar of the Federation rear  
 Its pile i' the midst, — a work which  
 the devotion  
 Of millions in one night created  
 there,  
 Sudden as when the moonrise makes  
 appear  
 Strange clouds in the east; a marble  
 pyramid  
 Distinct with steps: that mighty  
 shape did wear  
 The light of genius; its still shadow  
 hid  
 Far ships: to know its height the morn-  
 ing mists forbid!

## XLI.

To hear the restless multitudes forever  
 Around the base of that great Altar  
 flow,  
 As on some mountain-islet burst and  
 shiver  
 Atlantic waves; and solemnly and  
 slow,  
 As the wind bore that tumult to and  
 fro,  
 To feel the dreamlike music, which  
 did swim  
 Like beams through floating clouds  
 on waves below,  
 Falling in pauses from that Altar dim,  
 As silver-sounding tongues breathed an  
 aërial hymn.

## XLII.

To hear, to see, to live, was on that  
 morn  
 Lethean joy! so that all those  
 assembled  
 Cast off their memories of the past  
 outworn;  
 Two only bosoms with their own  
 life trembled,  
 And mine was one — and we had  
 both dissembled;  
 So with a beating heart I went, and  
 one  
 Who, having much, covets yet more,  
 resembled, —  
 A lost and dear possession, which not  
 won,  
 He walks in lonely gloom beneath the  
 noonday sun.

## XLIII.

To the great Pyramid I came: its  
 stair  
 With female choirs was thronged,  
 the loveliest  
 Among the free, grouped with its  
 sculptures rare;  
 As I approached, the morning's  
 golden mist,  
 Which now the wonder-stricken  
 breezes kist

With their cold lips, fled, and the  
 summit shone  
 Like Athos seen from Samothracia,  
 drest  
 In earliest light, by vintagers, and one  
 Sate there, a female Shape upon an  
 ivory throne:

## XLIV.

A Form most like the imagined habi-  
 tant  
 Of silver exhalations sprung from  
 dawn,  
 By winds which feed on sunrise woven,  
 to enchant  
 The faiths of men: all mortal eyes  
 were drawn —  
 As famished mariners, through  
 strange seas gone,  
 Gaze on a burning watch-tower — by  
 the light  
 Of those divinest lineaments. Alone  
 With thoughts which none could share,  
 from that fair sight  
 I turned in sickness, for a veil shrouded  
 her countenance bright.

## XLV.

And neither did I hear the acclama-  
 tions  
 Which, from brief silence bursting,  
 filled the air  
 With her strange name and mine,  
 from all the nations  
 Which we, they said, in strength  
 had gathered there  
 From the sleep of bondage; nor the  
 vision fair  
 Of that bright pageantry beheld, —  
 but blind  
 And silent as a breathing corpse did  
 fare,  
 Leaning upon my friend, till, like a  
 wind  
 To fevered cheeks, a voice flowed o'er  
 my troubled mind.

## XLVI.

Like music of some minstrel heavenly-  
 gifted  
 To one whom fiends enthrall, this  
 voice to me;

Scarce did I wish her veil to be up-  
 lifted,  
 I was so calm and joyous. — I could  
 see  
 The platform where we stood, the  
 statues three  
 Which kept their marble watch on  
 that high shrine,  
 The multitudes, the mountains, and  
 the sea;  
 As, when eclipse hath past, things  
 sudden shine  
 To men's astonished eyes most clear and  
 crystalline.

## XLVII.

At first Laone spoke most tremulously:  
 But soon her voice the calmness  
 which it shed  
 Gathered, and — "Thou art whom I  
 sought to see,  
 And thou art our first votary here,"  
 she said.  
 "I had a dear friend once, but he is  
 dead! —  
 And of all those on the wide earth  
 who breathe,  
 Thou dost resemble him alone. — I  
 spread  
 This veil between us two, that thou  
 beneath  
 Shouldst image one who may have been  
 long lost in death.

## XLVIII.

"For this wilt thou not henceforth  
 pardon me?  
 Yes, but those joys which silence  
 well requite  
 Forbid reply; why men have chosen  
 me  
 To be the Priestess of this holiest  
 rite  
 I scarcely know, but that the floods  
 of light  
 Which flow over the world have borne  
 me hither  
 To meet thee, long most dear; and  
 now unite  
 Thine hand with mine, and may all  
 comfort wither

From both the hearts whose pulse in joy  
 now beat together.

## XLIX.

"If our own will as others' law we  
 bind,  
 If the foul worship trampled here  
 we fear,  
 If as ourselves we cease to love our  
 kind!" —  
 She paused, and pointed upwards —  
 sculptured there  
 Three shapes around her ivory  
 throne appear:  
 One was a Giant, like a child asleep  
 On a loose rock, whose grasp  
 crushed, as it were  
 In dream, sceptres and crowns; and  
 one did keep  
 Its watchful eyes in doubt whether to  
 smile or weep;

## L.

A Woman sitting on the sculptured  
 disk  
 Of the broad earth, and feeding  
 from one breast  
 A human babe and a young basilisk;  
 Her looks were sweet as Heaven's  
 when loveliest  
 In autumn eves. The third Image  
 was drest  
 In white wings swift as clouds in  
 winter skies;  
 Beneath his feet, 'mongst ghastliest  
 forms, repress  
 Lay Faith, an obscene worm, who  
 sought to rise,  
 While calmly on the Sun he turned his  
 diamond eyes.

## LI.

Beside that Image then I sate, while  
 she  
 Stood mid the throngs which ever  
 ebbed and flowed,  
 Like light amid the shadows of the  
 sea  
 Cast from one cloudless star, and on  
 the crowd

That touch which none who feels  
forgets bestowed;  
And whilst the sun returned the steady  
fast gaze  
Of the great Image, as o'er Heaven  
it glode,  
That rite had place; it ceased when  
sunset's blaze  
Burned o'er the isles. All stood in joy  
and deep amaze,  
When in the silence of all spirits there  
Laone's voice was felt, and through  
the air  
Her thrilling gestures spoke, most elo-  
quently fair.

## 1.

“Calm art thou as yon sunset! swift  
and strong  
As new-fledged eagles, beautiful and  
young,  
That float among the blinding beams  
of morning:  
And underneath thy feet writhe  
Faith and Folly,  
Custom and Hell and mortal Melan-  
choly. —  
Hark! the Earth starts to hear the  
mighty warning  
Of thy voice sublime and holy;  
Its free spirits here assembled,  
See thee, feel thee, know thee  
now, —  
To thy voice their hearts have  
trembled,  
Like ten thousand clouds which  
flow  
With one wide wind as it flies!  
Wisdom! thy irresistible children rise  
To hail thee; and the elements they  
chain,  
And their own will, to swell the glory of  
thy train.

## 2.

“O Spirit vast and deep as Night and  
Heaven!  
Mother and soul of all to which is  
given  
The light of life, the loveliness of being,  
Lo! thou dost reascend the human  
heart,

Thy throne of power, almighty as  
thou wert  
In dreams of Poets old grown pale by  
seeing  
The shade of thee: — now mil-  
lions start  
To feel thy lightnings through  
them burning:  
Nature, or God, or Love, or  
Pleasure,  
Or Sympathy, the sad tears turn-  
ing  
To mutual smiles, a drainless  
treasure,  
Descends amidst us; — Scorn and  
Hate,  
Revenge and Selfishness, are deso-  
late —  
A hundred nations swear that there  
shall be  
Pity and Peace and Love among the  
good and free!

## 3.

“Eldest of things, divine Equality!  
Wisdom and Love are but the slaves  
of thee,  
The Angels of thy sway, who pour  
around thee  
Treasures from all the cells of human  
thought  
And from the stars and from the  
ocean brought,  
And the last living heart whose beat-  
ings bound thee:  
The powerful and the wise had  
sought  
Thy coming; thou, in light de-  
scending  
O'er the wide land which is  
thine own,  
Like the Spring whose breath is  
blending  
All blasts of fragrance into one,  
Comest upon the paths of men!  
Earth bares her general bosom to thy  
ken,  
And all her children here in glory  
meet  
To feed upon thy smiles, and clasp thy  
sacred feet.

## 4.

“My brethren, we are free! The  
 plains and mountains,  
 The gray sea-shore, the forests, and  
 the fountains,  
 Are haunts of happiest dwellers; man  
 and woman,  
 Their common bondage burst, may  
 freely borrow  
 From lawless love a solace for their  
 sorrow —

For oft we still must weep, since we  
 are human.

A stormy night's serenest mor-  
 row —

Whose showers are Pity's gentle  
 tears,

Whose clouds are smiles of those  
 that die

Like infants without hopes or  
 fears,

And whose beams are joys that  
 lie

In blended hearts — now holds  
 dominion:

The dawn of mind, which, upwards on  
 a pinion

Borne swift as sun-rise, far illumines  
 space,

And clasps this barren world in its own  
 bright embrace!

## 5.

“My brethren, we are free! The  
 fruits are glowing  
 Beneath the stars, and the night-winds  
 are flowing

O'er the ripe corn, the birds and beasts  
 are dreaming —

Never again may blood of bird or  
 beast

Stain with its venomous stream a  
 human feast,

To the pure skies in accusation steam-  
 ing;

Avenging poisons shall have  
 ceased

To feed disease and fear and mad-  
 ness;

The dwellers of the earth and  
 air

Shall throng around our steps in  
 gladness,  
 Seeking their food or refuge  
 there.

Our toil from thought all glorious  
 forms shall cull,

To make this Earth, our home, more  
 beautiful;

And Science, and her sister Poesy,  
 Shall clothe in light the fields and cities  
 of the free!

## 6.

“Victory, victory to the prostrate  
 nations!

Bear witness, Night, and ye mute Con-  
 stellations

Who gaze on us from your crystalline  
 cars!

Thoughts have gone forth whose  
 powers can sleep no more!

Victory! Victory! Earth's remotest  
 shore,

Regions which groan beneath the ant-  
 arctic stars,

The green lands cradled in the  
 roar

Of western waves, and wilder-  
 nesses

Peopled and vast which skirt the  
 oceans

Where Morning dyes her golden  
 tresses,

Shall soon partake our high  
 emotions:

Kings shall turn pale! Almighty  
 Fear,

The Fiend-God, when our charmed  
 name he hear,

Shall fade like shadow from his thou-  
 sand fanes,

While Truth, with Joy enthroned, o'er  
 his lost empire reigns!”

## LII.

Ere she had ceased, the mists of night,  
 entwining

Their dim woof, floated o'er the  
 infinite throng;

She, like a spirit through the darkness  
 shining,

In tones whose sweetness silence did  
 prolong  
 As if to lingering winds they did be-  
 long,  
 Poured forth her inmost soul: a pas-  
 sionate speech  
 With wild and thrilling pauses woven  
 among,  
 Which whoso heard was mute, for it  
 could teach  
 To rapture like her own all listening  
 hearts to reach.

## LIII.

Her voice was as a mountain-stream  
 which sweeps  
 The withered leaves of autumn to  
 the lake,  
 And in some deep and narrow bay  
 then sleeps  
 In the shadow of the shores; as  
 dead leaves wake,  
 Under the wave, in flowers and herbs  
 which make  
 Those green depths beautiful when  
 skies are blue,  
 The multitude so moveless did par-  
 take  
 Such living change, and kindling mur-  
 murs flew  
 As o'er that speechless calm delight and  
 wonder grew.

## LIV.

Over the plain the throngs were scat-  
 tered then  
 In groups around the fires, which  
 from the sea  
 Even to the gorge of the first moun-  
 tain-glen  
 Blazed wide and far: the banquet of  
 the free  
 Was spread beneath many a dark  
 cypress-tree,  
 Beneath whose spires which swayed  
 in the red flame  
 Reclining as they ate, of Liberty  
 And Hope and Justice and Laone's  
 name  
 Earth's children did a woof of happy  
 converse frame.

## LV.

Their feast was such as Earth the  
 general mother  
 Pours from her fairest bosom, when  
 she smiles  
 In the embrace of Autumn; to each  
 other  
 As when some parent fondly rec-  
 onciles  
 Her warring children, she their  
 wrath beguiles  
 With her own sustenance; they relent-  
 ing weep: —  
 Such was this Festival, which, from  
 their isles  
 And continents and winds and ocean's  
 deep,  
 All shapes might throng to share that  
 fly or walk or creep, —

## LVI.

Might share in peace and innocence:  
 for gore  
 Or poison none this festal did pol-  
 lute,  
 But, piled on high, an overflowing  
 store  
 Of pomegranates and citrons, fairest  
 fruit,  
 Melons and dates and figs, and many  
 a root  
 Sweet and sustaining, and bright  
 grapes ere yet  
 Accursed fire their mild juice could  
 transmute  
 Into a mortal bane, and brown corn set  
 In baskets; with pure streams their  
 thirsting lips they wet.

## LVII.

Laone had descended from the shrine,  
 And every deepest look and holiest  
 mind  
 Fed on her form, though now those  
 tones divine  
 Were silent, as she past; she did  
 unwind  
 Her veil, as with the crowds of her  
 own kind  
 She mixt; some impulse made my  
 heart refrain

From seeking her that night, so I  
reclined  
Amidst a group, where on the utmost  
plain  
A festal watchfire burned beside the  
dusky main.

## LVIII.

And joyous was our feast; pathetic  
talk,  
And wit, and harmony of choral  
strains,  
While far Orion o'er the waves did  
walk  
That flow among the isles, held us  
in chains  
Of sweet captivity which none dis-  
dains  
Who feels: but, when his zone grew  
dim in mist  
Which clothes the Ocean's bosom,  
o'er the plains  
The multitudes went homeward to  
their rest,  
Which that delightful day with its own  
shadow blest.

## CANTO VI.

## I.

BESIDE the dimness of the glimmering  
sea,  
Weaving swift language from im-  
passioned themes,  
With that dear friend I lingered who  
to me  
So late had been restored, beneath  
the gleams  
Of the silver stars; and ever in soft  
dreams  
Of future love and peace sweet con-  
verse lapt  
Our willing fancies, till the pallid  
beams  
Of the last watch-fire fell, and dark-  
ness wrapt  
The waves, and each bright chain of  
floating fire was snapt;

## II.

And till we came even to the City's  
wall  
And the great gate. Then, none  
knew whence or why,  
Disquiet on the multitudes did fall:  
And first, one pale and breathless  
passed us by,  
And stared and spoke not; then  
with piercing cry  
A troop of wild-eyed women, by the  
shrieks  
Of their own terror driven, — tumul-  
tuously  
Hither and thither hurrying with pale  
cheeks,  
Each one from fear unknown a sudden  
refuge seeks —

## III.

Then, rallying cries of treason and of  
danger  
Resounded: and — “They come!  
to arms! to arms!  
The Tyrant is amongst us, and the  
stranger  
Comes to enslave us in his name!  
to arms!”  
In vain: for Panic, the pale fiend  
who charms  
Strength to forswear her right, those  
millions swept  
Like waves before the tempest —  
these alarms  
Came to me, as to know their cause  
I leapt  
On the gate's turret, and in rage and  
grief and scorn I wept!

## IV.

For to the north I saw the town on  
fire,  
And its red light made morning  
pallid now,  
Which burst over wide Asia; — louder,  
higher,  
The yells of victory and the screams  
of woe  
I heard approach, and saw the  
throng below

Stream through the gates like foam-  
wrought waterfalls  
Fed from a thousand storms—the  
fearful glow  
Of bombs flares overhead—at in-  
tervals  
The red artillery's bolt mangling among  
them falls.

## v.

And now the horsemen come—and  
all was done  
Swifter than I have spoken—I  
beheld  
Their red swords flash in the unrisen  
sun.  
I rusht among the rout. to have  
repelled  
That miserable flight,—one mo-  
ment quelled  
By voice and looks and eloquent de-  
spair,  
As if reproach from their own  
hearts withheld  
Their steps, they stood; but soon  
came pouring there  
New multitudes, and did those rallied  
bands o'erbear.

## vi.

I strove, as, drifted on some cataract  
By irresistible streams, some wretch  
might strive  
Who hears its fatal roar: the files  
compact  
Whelmed me, and from the gate  
availed to drive  
With quickening impulse, as each  
bolt did rive  
Their ranks with bloodier chasm: into  
the plain  
Disgorged at length the dead and  
the alive,  
In one dread mass, were parted, and  
the stain  
Of blood from mortal steel fell o'er the  
fields like rain.

## vii.

For now the despot's bloodhounds,  
with their prey

Unarmed and unaware, were gor-  
ging deep  
Their gluttony of death; the loose  
array  
Of horsemen o'er the wide fields  
murdering sweep,  
And with loud laughter for their  
tyrant reap  
A harvest sown with other hopes, the  
while,  
Far overhead, ships from Propontis  
keep  
A killing rain of fire:—when the  
waves smile,  
As sudden earthquakes light many a vol-  
cano-isle.

## viii.

Thus sudden, unexpected feast was  
spread  
For the carrion-fowls of Heaven.—  
I saw the sight—  
I moved—I lived—as o'er the heaps  
of dead,  
Whose stony eyes glared in the  
morning light,  
I trod;—to me there came no  
thought of flight,  
But with loud cries of scorn, which  
whoso heard  
That dreaded death felt in his veins  
the might  
Of virtuous shame return, the crowd I  
stirred,  
And desperation's hope in many hearts  
recurred.

## ix.

A band of brothers gathering round  
me made,  
Although unarmed, a steadfast front,  
and, still  
Retreating, with stern looks beneath  
the shade  
Of gathering eyebrows, did the vic-  
tors fill  
With doubt even in success; delib-  
erate will  
Inspired our growing troops; not over-  
thrown,  
It gained the shelter of a grassy hill,



And ever still our comrades were  
hewn down,  
And their defenceless limbs beneath our  
footsteps strown.

## X.

Immovably we stood — in joy I found  
Beside me then, firm as a giant pine  
Among the mountain-vapors driven  
around,  
The old man whom I loved — his  
eyes divine  
With a mild look of courage an-  
swered mine;  
And my young friend was near, and  
ardently  
His hand grasped mine a moment; —  
now the line  
Of war extended to our rallying cry  
As myriads flockt in love and brother-  
hood to die.

## XI.

For ever while the sun was climbing  
Heaven  
The horseman hewed our unarmed  
myriads down  
Safely, though, when by thirst of  
carnage driven  
Too near, those slaves were swiftly  
overthrown  
By hundreds leaping on them: —  
flesh and bone  
Soon made our ghastly ramparts; then  
the shaft  
Of the artillery from the sea was  
thrown  
More fast and fiery, and the con-  
querors laught  
In pride to hear the wind our screams  
of torment waft.

## XII.

For on one side alone the hill gave  
shelter,  
So vast that phalanx of unconquered  
men,  
And there the living in the blood did  
welter  
Of the dead and dying, which in  
that green glen,

Like stifled torrents, made a plashy  
fen  
Under the feet — thus was the butchery  
waged  
While the sun clomb Heaven's east-  
ern steep: but, when  
It 'gan to sink, a fiercer combat raged,  
For in more doubtful strife the armies  
were engaged.

## XIII.

Within a cave upon a hill were found  
A bundle of rude pikes, the instru-  
ment  
Of those who war but on their native  
ground  
For natural rights: a shout of joy-  
ance, sent  
Even from our hearts, the wide air  
pierced and rent,  
As those few arms the bravest and the  
best  
Seized, and each sixth, thus armed,  
did now present  
A line which covered and sustained the  
rest,  
A confident phalanx which the foe on  
every side invest.

## XIV.

That onset turned the foes to flight  
almost;  
But soon they saw their present  
strength, and knew  
That coming night would to our reso-  
lute host  
Bring victory; so, dismounting, close  
they drew  
Their glittering files, and then the  
combat grew  
Unequal but most horrible; — and ever  
Our myriads, whom the swift bolt  
overthrew,  
Or the red sword, failed like a moun-  
tain-river  
Which rushes forth in foam to sink in  
sands forever.

## XV.

Sorrow and shame to see with their  
own kind

Our human brethren mix, like beasts  
 of blood,  
 To mutual ruin, armed by one behind  
 Who sits and scoffs! — That friend  
 so mild and good,  
 Who like its shadow near my youth  
 had stood,  
 Was stabbed! — my old preserver's  
 hoary hair,  
 With the flesh clinging to its roots,  
 was strewed  
 Under my feet! I lost all sense or  
 care,  
 And like the rest I grew desperate and  
 unaware.

## xvi.

The battle became ghastlier; — in the  
 midst  
 I paused, and saw how ugly and how  
 fell,  
 O Hate! thou art, even when thy life  
 thou shedd'st  
 For Love. The ground in many a  
 little dell  
 Was broken, up and down whose  
 steps befell  
 Alternate victory and defeat; and  
 there  
 The combatants with rage most  
 horrible  
 Strove, and their eyes started with  
 cracking stare,  
 And impotent their tongues they lolled  
 into the air, —

## xvii.

Flaccid and foamy, like a mad dog's  
 hanging.  
 Want, and Moon-madness, and the  
 pest's swift Bane,  
 When its shafts smite, while yet its  
 bow is twanging,  
 Have each their mark and sign,  
 some ghastly stain;  
 And this was thine, O War! of hate  
 and pain  
 Thou loathèd slave. I saw all shapes  
 of death,  
 And ministered to many, o'er the  
 plain

While carnage in the sunbeam's warmth  
 did seethe,  
 Till Twilight o'er the east wove her  
 serenest wreath.

## xviii.

The few who yet survived, resolute  
 and firm,  
 Around me fought. At the decline  
 of day,  
 Winding above the mountain's snowy  
 term,  
 New banners shone: they quivered  
 in the ray  
 Of the sun's unseen orb — ere night  
 the array  
 Of fresh troops hemmed us in — of  
 those brave bands  
 I soon survived alone — and now I  
 lay  
 Vanquish and faint, the grasp of  
 bloody hands  
 I felt, and saw on high the glare of fall-  
 ing brands,

## xix.

When on my foes a sudden terror  
 came,  
 And they fled, scattering. — Lo!  
 with reinless speed  
 A black Tartarian horse of giant frame  
 Comes trampling o'er the dead; the  
 living bleed  
 Beneath the hoofs of that tremen-  
 dous steed,  
 On which, like to an Angel, robed in  
 white,  
 Sate one waving a sword; — the  
 hosts recede  
 And fly, as through their ranks with  
 awful might  
 Sweeps in the shadow of eve that Phan-  
 tom swift and bright.

## xx.

And its path made a solitude. — I rose  
 And markt its coming; it relaxt its  
 course  
 As it approacht me, and the wind that  
 flows

Through night bore accents to mine  
 ear whose force  
 Might create smiles in death — the  
 Tartar horse  
 Paused, and I saw the Shape its might  
 which swayed,  
 And heard her musical pants, like  
 the sweet source  
 Of waters in the desert, as she said,  
 "Mount with me, Laon, now!" — I  
 rapidly obeyed.

## XXI.

Then "Away! away!" she cried,  
 and stretcht her sword  
 As 't were a scourge over the  
 courser's head,  
 And lightly shook the reins. — We  
 spake no word,  
 But like the vapor of the tempest  
 fled  
 Over the plain; her dark hair was  
 disspread  
 Like the pine's locks upon the linger-  
 ing blast;  
 Over mine eyes its shadowy strings  
 it spread  
 Fitfully, and the hills and streams fled  
 fast,  
 As o'er their glimmering forms the  
 steed's broad shadow past.

## XXII.

And his hoofs ground the rocks to fire  
 and dust,  
 His strong sides made the torrents  
 rise in spray,  
 And turbulence, as of a whirlwind's  
 gust,  
 Surrounded us;—and still away!  
 away!  
 Through the desert night we sped,  
 while she alway  
 Gazed on a mountain which we neared,  
 whose crest,  
 Crowned with a marble ruin, in the  
 ray  
 Of the obscure stars gleamed; — its  
 rugged breast  
 The steed strained up, and then his  
 impulse did arrest.

## XXIII.

A rocky hill which overhung the  
 ocean: —  
 From that lone ruin, when the steed  
 that panted  
 Paused, might be heard the murmur  
 of the motion  
 Of waters, as in spots forever  
 haunted  
 By the choicest winds of Heaven,  
 which are enchanted  
 To music by the wand of Solitude,  
 That wizard wild, and the far tents  
 implanted  
 Upon the plain be seen by those who  
 stood  
 Thence marking the dark shore of  
 ocean's curvèd flood.

## XXIV.

One moment these were heard and  
 seen — another  
 Past; and the two who stood be-  
 neath that night  
 Each only heard or saw or felt the  
 other;  
 As from the lofty steed she did  
 alight,  
 Cythna (for, from the eyes whose  
 deepest light  
 Of love and sadness made my lips feel  
 pale  
 With influence strange of mourn-  
 fullest delight,  
 My own sweet Cythna looked) with  
 joy did quail,  
 And felt her strength in tears of human  
 weakness fail.

## XXV.

And for a space in my embrace she  
 rested,  
 Her head on my unquiet heart repos-  
 ing,  
 While my faint arms her languid frame  
 invested:  
 At length she looked on me, and,  
 half unclosing  
 Her tremulous lips, said: "Friend,  
 thy bands were losing

The battle, as I stood before the King  
 In bonds. I burst them then, and,  
 swiftly choosing  
 The time, did seize a Tartar's sword,  
 and spring  
 Upon his horse, and, swift as on the  
 whirlwind's wing,

## XXVI.

“Have thou and I been borne beyond  
 pursuer,  
 And we are here.” — Then, turning  
 to the steed,  
 She pressed the white moon on his  
 front with pure  
 And rose-like lips, and many a fra-  
 grant weed  
 From the green ruin plucked that  
 he might feed; —  
 But I to a stone seat that Maiden  
 led,  
 And kissing her fair eyes, said,  
 “Thou hast need  
 Of rest,” and I heapt up the courser's  
 bed  
 In a green mossy nook, with mountain-  
 flowers dispread.

## XXVII.

Within that ruin, where a shattered  
 portal  
 Looks to the eastern stars, aban-  
 doned now  
 By man, to be the home of things  
 immortal,  
 Memories like awful ghosts which  
 come and go,  
 And must inherit all he builds  
 below,  
 When he is gone, a hall stood; o'er  
 whose roof  
 Fair clinging weeds with ivy pale  
 did grow,  
 Claspings its gray rents with a verdur-  
 ous woof,  
 A hanging dome of leaves, a canopy  
 moon-proof.

## XXVIII.

The autumnal winds, as if spell-  
 bound, had made

A natural couch of leaves in that  
 recess,  
 Which seasons none disturbed, but,  
 in the shade  
 Of flowering parasites, did Spring  
 love to dress  
 With their sweet blooms the wintry  
 loneliness  
 Of those dead leaves, shedding their  
 stars whene'er  
 The wandering wind her nurslings  
 might caress;  
 Whose intertwining fingers ever there  
 Made music wild and soft that filled the  
 listening air.

## XXIX.

We know not where we go, or what  
 sweet dream  
 May pilot us through caverns  
 strange and fair  
 Of far and pathless passion, while the  
 stream  
 Of life our bark doth on its whirl-  
 pools bear,  
 Spreading swift wings as sails to  
 the dim air:  
 Nor should we seek to know, so the  
 devotion  
 Of love and gentle thoughts be  
 heard still there  
 Louder and louder from the utmost  
 ocean  
 Of universal life, attuning its commotion.

## XXX.

To the pure all things are pure! Ob-  
 livion wrapt  
 Our spirits, and the fearful over-  
 throw  
 Of public hope was from our being  
 snapt,  
 Though linkèd years had bound it  
 there; for now  
 A power, a thirst, a knowledge,  
 which below  
 All thoughts, like light beyond the  
 atmosphere,  
 Clothing its clouds with grace, doth  
 ever flow,  
 Came on us, as we sate in silence  
 there,

Beneath the golden stars of the clear  
azure air:—

## xxxI.

In silence which doth follow talk that  
causes  
The baffled heart to speak with  
sighs and tears,  
When wildering passion swalloweth  
up the pauses  
Of inexpressive speech:—the  
youthful years  
Which we together past, their  
hopes and fears,  
The blood itself which ran within our  
frames,  
That likeness of the features which  
endears  
The thoughts express by them, our  
very names,  
And all the winged hours which speech-  
less memory claims,

## xxxII.

Had found a voice:—and, ere that  
voice did pass,  
The night grew damp and dim,  
and, through a rent  
Of the ruin where we sate, from the  
morass,  
A wandering Meteor by some wild  
wind sent,  
Hung high in the green dome, to  
which it lent  
A faint and pallid lustre; while the  
song  
Of blasts, in which its blue hair  
quivering bent,  
Strewed strangest sounds the moving  
leaves among;  
A wondrous light, the sound as of a  
spirit's tongue.

## xxxIII.

The Meteor showed the leaves on  
which we sate,  
And Cythna's glowing arms, and  
the thick ties  
Of her soft hair which bent with  
gathered weight

My neck near hers, her dark and  
deepening eyes,  
Which, as twin phantoms of one  
star that lies  
O'er a dim well move though the star  
reposes,  
Swam in our mute and liquid  
ecstasies,  
Her marble brow, and eager lips,  
like roses,  
With their own fragrance pale, which  
Spring but half uncloses.

## xxxIV.

The Meteor to its far morass returned;  
The beating of our veins one in-  
terval  
Made still; and then I felt the blood  
that burned  
Within her frame mingle with mine,  
and fall  
Around my heart like fire; and  
over all  
A mist was spread, the sickness of a  
deep  
And speechless swoon of joy, as  
might befall  
Two disunited spirits when they leap  
In union from this earth's obscure and  
fading sleep.

## xxxV.

Was it one moment that confounded  
thus  
All thought, all sense, all feeling,  
into one  
Unutterable power, which shielded us  
Even from our own cold looks,  
when we had gone  
Into a wide and wild oblivion  
Of tumult and of tenderness? or now  
Had ages, such as make the moon  
and sun,  
The seasons and mankind, their  
changes know,  
Left fear and time unfelt by us alone  
below?

## xxxVI.

I know not. What are kisses whose  
fire clasps

The failing heart in languishment,  
 or limb  
 Twined within limb? or the quick  
 dying gasps  
 Of the life meeting, when the faint  
 eyes swim  
 Through tears of a wide mist  
 boundless and dim,  
 In one caress? What is the strong  
 control  
 Which leads the heart that dizzy  
 steep to climb  
 Where far over the world those vapors  
 roll  
 Which blend two restless frames in one  
 reposing soul?

## XXXVII.

It is the shadow which doth float  
 unseen,  
 But not unfelt, o'er blind mortality,  
 Whose divine darkness fled not from  
 that green  
 And lone recess, where lapt in  
 peace did lie  
 Our linkèd frames, till from the  
 changing sky  
 That night and still another day had  
 fled;  
 And then I saw and felt. The  
 moon was high,  
 And clouds, as of a coming storm,  
 were spread  
 Under its orb, — loud winds were gath-  
 ering overhead.

## XXXVIII.

Cythna's sweet lips seemed lurid in  
 the moon,  
 Her fairest limbs with the night  
 wind were chill,  
 And her dark tresses were all loosely  
 strewn  
 O'er her pale bosom: — all within  
 was still,  
 And the sweet peace of joy did  
 almost fill  
 The depth of her unfathomable look; —  
 And we sate calmly, though that  
 rocky hill  
 The waves contending in its caverns  
 strook,

For they foreknew the storm, and the  
 gray ruin shook.

## XXXIX.

There we unheeding sate, in the com-  
 munion  
 Of interchangèd vows which, with  
 a rite  
 Of faith most sweet and sacred,  
 stamp'd our union. —  
 Few were the living hearts which  
 could unite  
 Like ours, or celebrate a bridal-  
 night  
 With such close sympathies; for they  
 had sprung  
 From linkèd youth, and from the  
 gentle might  
 Of earliest love, delayed and cherisht  
 long,  
 Which common hopes and fears made,  
 like a tempest, strong.

## XL.

And such is Nature's law divine that  
 those  
 Who grow together cannot choose  
 but love,  
 If faith or custom do not interpose,  
 Or common slavery mar what else  
 might move  
 All gentlest thoughts; as, in the  
 sacred grove  
 Which shades the springs of Ethiopian  
 Nile,  
 That living tree which, if the arrowy  
 dove  
 Strike with her shadow, shrinks in fear  
 awhile,  
 But its own kindred leaves clasps while  
 the sunbeams smile,

## XLI.

And clings to them when darkness  
 may dissever  
 The close caresses of all duller  
 plants  
 Which bloom on the wide earth; —  
 thus we forever  
 Were linkt, for love had nurst us  
 in the haunts

Where knowledge from its secret  
 source enchants  
 Young hearts with the fresh music of  
 its springing,  
 Ere yet its gathered flood feeds  
 human wants,  
 As the great Nile feeds Egypt; ever  
 flinging  
 Light on the woven boughs which o'er  
 its waves are swinging.

## XLII.

The tones of Cythna's voice like  
 echoes were  
 Of those far murmuring streams;  
 they rose and fell,  
 Mixt with mine own in the tem-  
 pestuous air, —  
 And so we sate, until our talk befel  
 Of the late ruin, swift and horrible,  
 And how those seeds of hope might  
 yet be sown  
 Whose fruit is evil's mortal poison.  
 Well  
 For us this ruin made a watch-tower  
 lone,  
 But Cythna's eyes looked faint, and now  
 two days were gone

## XLIII.

Since she had food:—therefore I did  
 awaken  
 The Tartar steed, who, from his  
 ebon mane  
 Soon as the clinging slumbers he had  
 shaken,  
 Bent his thin head to seek the brazen  
 rein,  
 Following me obediently; with pain  
 Of heart so deep and dread that one  
 caress,  
 When lips and heart refuse to part  
 again  
 Till they have told their fill, could  
 scarce express  
 The anguish of her mute and fearful  
 tenderness,

## XLIV.

Cythna beheld me part, as I bestrode  
 That willing steed — the tempest  
 and the night,

Which gave my path its safety as I  
 rode  
 Down the ravine of rocks, did soon  
 unite  
 The darkness and the tumult of their  
 might  
 Borne on all winds. — Far, through  
 the streaming rain  
 Floating, at intervals the garments  
 white  
 Of Cythna gleamed, and her voice  
 once again  
 Came to me on the gust, and soon I  
 reached the plain.

## XLV.

I dreaded not the tempest, nor did he  
 Who bore me, but his eyeballs wide  
 and red  
 Turned on the lightning's cleft exult-  
 ingly:  
 And, when the earth beneath his  
 tameless tread  
 Shook with the sullen thunder, he  
 would spread  
 His nostrils to the blast, and joyously  
 Mock the fierce peal with neighings;  
 — thus we sped  
 O'er the lit plain, and soon I could  
 descry  
 Where Death and Fire had gorged the  
 spoil of victory.

## XLVI.

There was a desolate village in a  
 wood,  
 Whose bloom-inwoven leaves now  
 scattering fed  
 The hungry storm; it was a place of  
 blood,  
 A heap of hearthless walls;—the  
 flames were dead  
 Within those dwellings now, — the  
 life had fled  
 From all those corpses now, — but the  
 wide sky,  
 Flooded with lightning, was ribbed  
 overhead  
 By the black rafters, and around did lie  
 Women, and babes, and men slaughtered  
 confusedly.

## XLVII

Beside the fountain in the market-place  
 Dismounting, I beheld those corpses  
 stare  
 With horny eyes upon each other's  
 face,  
 And on the earth, and on the  
 vacant air,  
 And upon me, close to the waters  
 where  
 I stoopt to slake my thirst; — I  
 shrank to taste,  
 For the salt bitterness of blood was  
 there;  
 But tied the steed beside, and sought  
 in haste  
 If any yet survived amid that ghastly  
 waste.

## XLVIII.

No living thing was there beside one  
 woman  
 Whom I found wandering in the  
 streets, and she  
 Was withered from a likeness of aught  
 human  
 Into a fiend, by some strange misery:  
 Soon as she heard my steps, she  
 leapt on me,  
 And glued her burning lips to mine,  
 and laught  
 With a loud, long, and frantic laugh  
 of glee,  
 And cried, "Now, Mortal, thou hast  
 deeply quafft  
 The Plague's blue kisses — soon millions  
 shall pledge the draught !

## XLIX.

"My name is Pestilence — this bosom  
 dry  
 Once fed two babes — a sister and  
 a brother —  
 When I came home, one in the blood  
 did lie  
 Of three death wounds — the flames  
 had ate the other !  
 Since then I have no longer been a  
 mother,  
 But I am Pestilence; — hither and  
 thither

I flit about, that I may slay and  
 smother; —  
 All lips which I have kist must  
 surely wither,  
 But Death's — if thou art he, we'll go  
 to work together !

## L

"What seek'st thou here? The  
 moonlight comes in flashes, —  
 The dew is rising dankly from the  
 dell —  
 'T will moisten her! and thou shalt  
 see the gashes  
 In my sweet boy, now full of  
 worms — but tell  
 First what thou seek'st." — "I  
 seek for food." — "'T is well,  
 Thou shalt have food; Famine, my  
 paramour,  
 Waits for us at the feast — cruel  
 and fell  
 Is Famine, but he drives not from his  
 door  
 Those whom these lips have kist,  
 alone. No more, no more!"

## LI.

As thus she spake, she graspt me  
 with the strength  
 Of madness, and by many a ruined  
 hearth  
 She led, and over many a corpse: —  
 at length  
 We came to a lone hut, where, on  
 the earth  
 Which made its floor, she in her  
 ghastly mirth,  
 Gathering from all those homes now  
 desolate,  
 Had piled three heaps of loaves,  
 making a dearth  
 Among the dead — round which she  
 set in state  
 A ring of cold stiff babes; silent and  
 stark they sate.

## LII.

She leapt upon a pile, and lifted  
 high  
 Her mad looks to the lightning, and  
 cried: "Eat !



Share the great feast — to-morrow we  
must die ! ”

And then she spurned the loaves,  
with her pale feet,

Towards her bloodless guests;—  
that sight to meet,

Mine eyes and my heart ached, and,  
but that she

Who loved me did with absent  
looks defeat

Despair, I might have raved in sym-  
pathy :

But now I took the food that woman  
offered me ;

## LIII.

And, vainly having with her madness  
striven

If I might win her to return with  
me,

Departed. In the eastern beams of  
Heaven

The lightning now grew pallid—  
rapidly

As by the shore of the tempestuous  
sea

The dark steed bore me, and the  
mountain gray

Soon echoed to his hoofs, and I  
could see

Cythna among the rocks, where she  
always

Had sate with anxious eyes fixed on the  
lingering day.

## LIV.

And joy was ours to meet: she was  
most pale,

Famisht, and wet, and weary; so  
I cast

My arms around her, lest her steps  
should fail

As to our home we went, and thus  
embraced,

Her full heart seemed a deeper joy  
to taste

Than e'er the prosperous know; the  
steed behind

Trod peacefully along the mountain  
waste :

We reach our home ere morning  
could unbind

Night's latest veil, and on our bridal-  
couch reclined.

## LV.

Her chilled heart having cherisht in  
my bosom,

And sweetest kisses past, we two  
did share

Our peaceful meal: — as an autumnal  
blossom

Which spreads its shrunk leaves in  
the sunny air

After cold showers, like rainbows  
woven there,

Thus in her lips and cheeks the vital  
spirit

Mantled, and in her eyes an atmos-  
phere

Of health and hope; and sorrow  
languished near it,

And fear, and all that dark despondence  
doth inherit.

## CANTO VII.

## I.

So we sate joyous as the morning ray  
Which fed upon the wrecks of  
night and storm

Now lingering on the winds; light  
airs did play

Among the dewy weeds, the sun  
was warm,

And we sate linkt in the inwoven  
charm

Of converse and caresses sweet and  
deep,

Speechless caresses, talk that might  
disarm

Time, though he wield the darts of  
death and sleep,

And those thrice mortal barbs in his  
own poison steep.

## II.

I told her of my sufferings and my  
madness,

And how, awakened from that  
dreamy mood

By Liberty's uprising, the strength of  
 gladness  
 Came to my spirit in my solitude;  
 And all that now I was; while tears  
 pursued  
 Each other down her fair and listen-  
 ing cheek  
 Fast as the thoughts which fed  
 them, like a flood  
 From sunbright dales; and, when I  
 ceased to speak,  
 Her accents soft and sweet the pausing  
 air did wake.

## III.

She told me a strange tale of strange  
 endurance,  
 Like broken memories of many a  
 heart  
 Woven into one; to which no firm  
 assurance,  
 So wild were they, could her own  
 faith impart.  
 She said that not a tear did dare to  
 start  
 From the swoln brain, and that her  
 thoughts were firm,  
 When from all mortal hope she did  
 depart,  
 Borne by those slaves across the  
 ocean's term,  
 And that she reached the port without  
 one fear infirm.

## IV.

One was she among many there, the  
 thralls  
 Of the cold Tyrant's cruel lust: and  
 they  
 Laught mournfully in those polluted  
 halls;  
 But she was calm and sad, musing  
 away  
 On loftiest enterprise, till on a day  
 The Tyrant heard her singing to her  
 lute  
 A wild and sad and spirit-thrilling  
 lay,  
 Like winds that die in wastes — one  
 moment mute  
 The evil thoughts it made which did his  
 breast pollute.

## v.

Even when he saw her wondrous love-  
 liness,  
 One moment to great Nature's  
 sacred power  
 He bent, and was no longer passion-  
 less;  
 But, when he bade her to his secret  
 bower  
 Be borne, a loveless victim, and she  
 tore  
 Her locks in agony, and her words of  
 flame  
 And mightier looks availed not;  
 then he bore  
 Again his load of slavery, and became  
 A king, a heartless beast, a pageant and  
 a name.

## VI.

She told me what a loathsome agony  
 Is that when selfishness mocks love's  
 delight,  
 Foul as in dream's most fearful imagery  
 To dally with the mowing dead —  
 that night  
 All torture, fear, or horror, made  
 seem light  
 Which the soul dreams or knows,  
 and, when the day  
 Shone on her awful frenzy, from the  
 sight,  
 Where like a Spirit in fleshly chains  
 she lay  
 Struggling, aghast and pale the Tyrant  
 fled away.

## VII.

Her madness was a beam of light, a  
 power  
 Which dawned through the rent  
 soul; and words it gave,  
 Gestures, and looks, such as in whirl-  
 winds bore  
 (Which might not be withstood,  
 whence none could save)  
 All who approacht their sphere,  
 like some calm wave  
 Vext into whirlpools by the chasms  
 beneath;  
 And sympathy made each attendant  
 • slave

Fearless and free, and they began to breathe  
 Deep curses, like the voice of flames far underneath.

## VIII.

The King felt pale upon his noon-day throne :

At night two slaves he to her chamber sent ;

One was a green and wrinkled eunuch, grown

From human shape into an instrument

Of all things ill — distorted, bowed, and bent ;

The other was a wretch from infancy

Made dumb by poison, who naught knew or meant

But to obey ; from the fire-isles came he,

A diver lean and strong, of Oman's coral sea.

## IX.

They bore her to a bark, and the swift stroke

Of silent rowers clove the blue moonlight seas,

Until upon their path the morning broke ;

They anchored then where, be there calm or breeze,

The gloomiest of the drear Symplegades

Shakes with the sleepless surge ; — the Ethiop there

Wound his long arms around her, and with knees

Like iron clasped her feet, and plunged with her

Among the closing waves out of the boundless air.

## X.

“ Swift as an eagle stooping from the plain

Of morning light into some shadowy wood,

He plunged through the green silence of the main,

Through many a cavern which the eternal flood

Had scooped as dark lairs for its monster brood ;

And among mighty shapes which fled in wonder,

And among mightier shadows which pursued

His heels, he wound ; until the dark rocks under

He touched a golden chain — a sound arose like thunder.

## XI.

“ A stunning clang of massive bolts redoubling

Beneath the deep — a burst of waters driven

As from the roots of the sea, raging and bubbling :

And in that roof of crags a space was riven

Through which there shone the emerald beams of heaven,

Shot through the lines of many waves inwoven

Like sunlight through acacia woods at even,

Through which his way the diver having cloven

Past like a spark sent up out of a burning oven.

## XII.

“ And then,” she said, “ he laid me in a cave

Above the waters, by that chasm of sea,

A fountain round and vast, in which the wave,

Imprisoned, boiled and leapt perpetually,

Down which, one moment resting, he did flee,

Winning the adverse depth ; that spacious cell

Like an hupathric temple wide and high,

Whose aëry dome is inaccessible,

Was pierced with one round cleft through which the sunbeams fell

## XIII.

“Below, the fountain’s brink was  
richly paven  
With the deep’s wealth, coral and  
pearl, and sand  
Like spangling gold, and purple shells  
engraven  
With mystic legends by no mortal  
hand,  
Left there when, thronging to the  
moon’s command,  
The gathering waves rent the Hes-  
perian gate  
Of mountains, and on such bright  
floor did stand  
Columns, and shapes like statues, and  
the state  
Of kingless thrones, which Earth did in  
her heart create.

## XIV.

“The fiend of madness which had  
made its prey  
Of my poor heart was lulled to  
sleep awhile:  
There was an interval of many a day,  
And a sea-eagle brought me food  
the while,  
Whose nest was built in that un-  
trodden isle,  
And who to be the jailer had been  
taught  
Of that strange dungeon; as a friend  
whose smile  
Like light and rest at morn and even  
is sought  
That wild bird was to me, till madness  
misery brought.

## XV.

“The misery of a madness slow and  
creeping,  
Which made the earth seem fire,  
the sea seem air,  
And the white clouds of noon, which  
oft were sleeping  
In the blue heaven so beautiful and  
fair,  
Like hosts of ghastly shadows hov-  
ering there;

And the sea-eagle looked a fiend who  
bore  
Thy mangled limbs for food!—  
Thus all things were  
Transformed into the agony which I  
wore  
Even as a poisoned robe around my  
bosom’s core.

## XVI.

“Again I knew the day and night fast  
fleeing,  
The eagle and the fountain and the  
air;  
Another frenzy came — there seemed  
a being  
Within me — a strange load my  
heart did bear,  
As if some living thing had made its  
lair  
Even in the fountains of my life:— a  
long  
And wondrous vision, wrought from  
my despair,  
Then grew, like sweet reality among  
Dim visionary woes, an unreposing  
throng.

## XVII.

“Methought I was about to be a  
mother —  
Month after month went by, and  
still I dreamt  
That we should soon be all to one  
another,  
I and my child; and still new pulses  
seemed  
To beat beside my heart, and still  
I deemed  
There was a babe within — and, when  
the rain  
Of winter through the rifted cavern  
streamed,  
Methought, after a lapse of lingering  
pain,  
I saw that lovely shape which near my  
heart had lain.

## XVIII.

“It was a babe, beautiful from its  
birth, —

It was like thee, dear love, its eyes  
 were thine,  
 Its brow, its lips, and so upon the  
 earth  
 It laid its fingers as now rest on  
 mine  
 Thine own, beloved!—'t was a  
 dream divine;  
 Even to remember how it fled, how  
 swift,  
 How utterly, might make the heart  
 repine, —  
 Though 't was a dream." — Then  
 Cythna did uplift  
 Her looks on mine, as if some doubt  
 she sought to shift :

## XIX.

A doubt which would not flee, a ten-  
 derness  
 Of questioning grief, a source of  
 thronging tears :  
 Which having past, as one whom sobs  
 oppress  
 She spoke : " Yes, in the wilderness  
 of years  
 Her memory aye like a green home  
 appears ;  
 She suckt her fill even at this breast,  
 sweet love,  
 For many months. I had no mortal  
 fears ;  
 Methought I felt her lips and breath  
 approve  
 It was a human thing which to my bosom  
 clove.

## XX.

" I watcht the dawn of her first  
 smiles, and soon,  
 When zenith-stars were trembling  
 on the wave,  
 Or when the beams of the invisible  
 moon  
 Or sun from many a prism within  
 the cave  
 Their gem-born shadows to the  
 water gave,  
 Her looks would hunt them, and with  
 outspread hand,  
 From the swift lights which might  
 that fountain pave,

She would mark one, and laugh when,  
 that command  
 Slighting, it lingered there, and could  
 not understand.

## XXI.

" Methought her looks began to talk  
 with me :  
 And no articulate sounds but some-  
 thing sweet  
 Her lips would frame, — so sweet it  
 could not be  
 That it was meaningless ; her touch  
 would meet  
 Mine, and our pulses calmly flow  
 and beat  
 In response while we slept ; and, on  
 a day  
 When I was happiest in that strange  
 retreat,  
 With heaps of golden shells we two  
 did play, —  
 Both infants weaving wings for time's  
 perpetual way.

## XXII.

" Ere night, methought, her waning  
 eyes were grown  
 Weary with joy, and, tired with our  
 delight,  
 We on the earth like sister twins lay  
 down  
 On one fair mother's bosom : —  
 from that night  
 She fled ; — like those illusions clear  
 and bright  
 Which dwell in lakes when the red  
 moon on high  
 Pause ere it wakens tempest ; — and  
 her flight,  
 Though 't was the death of brainless  
 fantasy,  
 Yet smote my lonesome heart more than  
 all misery.

## XXIII.

" It seemed that, in the dreary night,  
 the diver  
 Who brought me thither came again,  
 and bore

My child away. I saw the waters  
quiver  
When he so swiftly sunk, as once  
before:  
Then morning came — it shone even  
as of yore,  
But I was changed — the very life was  
gone  
Out of my heart — I wasted more  
and more  
Day after day, and, sitting there  
alone,  
Vext the inconstant waves with my per-  
petual moan.

## XXIV.

“I was no longer mad, and yet me-  
thought  
My breasts were swoln and changed:  
— in every vein  
The blood stood still one moment,  
while that thought  
Was passing — with a gush of sick-  
ening pain  
It ebbed even to its withered springs  
again:  
When my wan eyes in stern resolve I  
turned  
From that most strange delusion,  
which would fain  
Have waked the dream for which my  
spirit yearned  
With more than human love, — then  
left it unreturned.

## XXV.

“So, now my reason was restored to  
me,  
I struggled with that dream, which,  
like a beast  
Most fierce and beauteous, in my  
memory  
Had made its lair, and on my heart  
did feast;  
But all that cave and all its shapes,  
possest  
By thoughts which could not fade, re-  
newed each one  
Some smile, some look, some ges-  
ture, which had blest  
Me heretofore; I, sitting there alone,

Vext the inconstant waves with my per-  
petual moan.

## XXVI.

“Time past, I know not whether  
months or years;  
For day nor night nor change of  
seasons made  
Its note, but thoughts and unavailing  
tears;  
And I became at last even as a  
shade,  
A smoke, a cloud on which the  
winds have preyed  
Till it be thin as air; until, one even,  
A Nautilus upon the fountain played,  
Spreading his azure sail where breath  
of Heaven  
Descended not, among the waves and  
whirlpools driven.

## XXVII.

“And, when the Eagle came, that  
lovely thing,  
Oaring with rosy feet its silver boat,  
Fled near me as for shelter; on slow  
wing  
The Eagle hovering o'er his prey  
did float;  
But, when he saw that I with fear  
did note  
His purpose, proffering my own food  
to him,  
The eager plumes subsided on his  
throat —  
He came where that bright child of  
sea did swim,  
And o'er it cast in peace his shadow  
broad and dim.

## XXVIII.

“This wakened me, it gave me human  
strength;  
And hope, I know not whence or  
wherefore, rose,  
But I resumed my ancient powers at  
length;  
My spirit felt again like one of  
those,  
Like thine, whose fate it is to make  
the woes

Of humankind their prey — what was  
this cave?

Its deep foundation no firm purpose  
knows,

Immutable, resistless, strong to save,  
Like mind while yet it mocks the all-  
devouring grave.

## XXIX.

“And where was Laon? might my  
heart be dead

While that far dearer heart could  
move and be?

Or whilst over the earth the pall was  
spread

Which I had sworn to rend? I  
might be free,

Could I but win that friendly bird  
to me

To bring me ropes; and long in vain  
I sought,

By intercourse of mutual imagery  
Of objects, if such aid he could be  
taught;

But fruit and flowers and boughs, yet  
never ropes, he brought.

## XXX.

“We live in our own world, and mine  
was made

From glorious fantasies of hope de-  
parted:

Ay, we are darkened with their float-  
ing shade,

Or cast a lustre on them — time  
impacted

Such power to me I became fear-  
less-hearted,

My eye and voice grew firm, calm was  
my mind,

And piercing, like the morn now it  
has darted

Its lustre on all hidden things behind  
Yon dim and fading clouds which load  
the weary wind.

## XXXI.

“My mind became the book through  
which I grew

Wise in all human wisdom, and its  
cave

Which like a mine I rifled through  
and through,

To me the keeping of its secrets  
gave, —

One mind, the type of all, the move-  
less wave

Whose calm reflects all moving things  
that are,

Necessity and love and life, the grave  
And sympathy, fountains of hope and  
fear,

Justice and truth and time and the  
world's natural sphere.

## XXXII.

“And on the sand would I make  
signs to range

These woofs, as they were woven, of  
my thought;

Clear elemental shapes, whose smallest  
change

A subtler language within language  
wrought:

The key of truths which once were  
dimly taught

In old Crotona; — and sweet melodies  
Of love in that lorn solitude I  
caught

From mine own voice in dream, when  
thy dear eyes

Shone through my sleep, and did that  
utterance harmonize.

## XXXIII.

“Thy songs were winds whereon I fled  
at will,

As in a wingèd chariot, o'er the plain  
Of crystal youth; and thou wert there  
to fill

My heart with joy, and there we  
sate again

On the gray margin of the glimmer-  
ing main,

Happy as then, but wiser far, for we  
Smiled on the flowery grave in which  
were lain

Fear, Faith, and Slavery; and man-  
kind was free,

Equal, and pure, and wise, in wisdom's  
prophecy.

## XXXIV.

"For to my will my fancies were as  
 slaves  
 To do their sweet and subtile minis-  
 tries;  
 And oft from that bright fountain's  
 shadowy waves  
 They would make human throngs  
 gather and rise  
 To combat with my overflowing eyes  
 And voice made deep with passion—  
 thus I grew  
 Familiar with the shock and the  
 surprisè  
 And war of earthly minds, from which  
 I drew  
 The power which has been mine to frame  
 their thoughts anew.

## XXXV.

"And thus my prison was the popu-  
 lous earth—  
 Where I saw—even as misery dreams  
 of morn  
 Before the east has given its glory  
 birth—  
 Religion's pomp made desolate by  
 the scorn  
 Of Wisdom's faintest smile, and  
 thrones uptorn,  
 And dwellings of mild people inter-  
 spersed  
 With undivided fields of ripening  
 corn,  
 And love made free,—a hope which  
 we have nurst  
 Even with our blood and tears,—until  
 its glory burst.

## XXXVI.

"All is not lost! There is some rec-  
 ompense  
 For hope whose fountain can be  
 thus profound,  
 Even throndè Evil's splendid impo-  
 tence  
 Girt by its hell of power, the secret  
 sound  
 Of hymns to truth and freedom—  
 the dread bound

Of life and death past fearlessly and  
 well,  
 Dungeons wherein the high resolve is  
 found,  
 Racks which degraded woman's great-  
 ness tell,  
 And what may else be good and irresist-  
 ible.

## XXXVII.

"Such are the thoughts which, like  
 the fires that flare  
 In storm-encompast isles, we cherish  
 yet  
 In this dark ruin—such were mine  
 even there;  
 As in its sleep some odorous violet,  
 While yet its leaves with nightly  
 dews are wet,  
 Breathes in prophetic dreams of day's  
 uprise,  
 Or as, ere Scythian frost in fear has  
 met  
 Spring's messengers descending from  
 the skies,  
 The buds foreknow their life—this hope  
 must ever rise.

## XXXVIII.

"So years had past, when sudden  
 earthquake rent  
 The depth of ocean, and the cavern  
 crackt,  
 With sound as if the world's wide  
 continent  
 Had fallen in universal ruin wrackt:  
 And through the cleft streamed in  
 one cataract  
 The stifling waters.—When I woke,  
 the flood,  
 Whose banded waves that crystal  
 cave had sackt,  
 Was ebbing round me, and my bright  
 abode  
 Before me yawned—a chasm desert and  
 bare and broad.

## XXXIX.

"Above me was the sky, beneath the  
 sea:  
 I stood upon a point of shattered  
 stone,



And heard loose rocks rushing tumultuously

With splash and shock into the deep—anon

All ceast, and there was silence wide and lone.

I felt that I was free! The ocean-spray

Quivered beneath my feet, the broad Heaven shone

Around, and in my hair the winds did play,

Lingering, as they pursued their unimpeded way.

## XL.

“My spirit moved upon the sea like wind,

Which round some thymy cape will lag and hover,

Though it can wake the still cloud, and unbind

The strength of tempest: day was almost over,

When through the fading light I could discover

A ship approaching—its white sails were fed

With the north wind—its moving shade did cover

The twilight deep;—the mariners in dread

Cast anchor when they saw new rocks around them spread.

## XLI.

“And, when they saw one sitting on a crag,

They sent a boat to me;—the sailors rowed

In awe through many a new and fearful jag

Of overhanging rock, through which there flowed

The foam of streams that cannot make abode.

They came and questioned me, but, when they heard

My voice, they became silent, and they stood

And moved as men in whom new love had stirred

Deep thoughts: so to the ship we past without a word.

## CANTO VIII.

## I.

“I SATÉ beside the steersman then, and, gazing

Upon the west, cried, ‘Spread the sails! Behold!

The sinking moon is like a watch-tower blazing

Over the mountains yet; the City of Gold

Yon cape alone does from the sight withhold;

The stream is fleet—the north breathes steadily

Beneath the stars, they tremble with the cold!

Ye cannot rest upon the dreary sea!—Haste, haste to the warm home of happier destiny!’

## II.

“The mariners obeyed—the Captain stood

Aloof, and, whispering to the pilot, said:

‘Alas, alas! I fear we are pursued

By wicked ghosts: a Phantom of the Dead,

The night before we sailed, came to my bed

In dream, like that!’ The pilot then replied:

‘It cannot be—she is a human Maid—

Her low voice makes you weep—she is some bride

Or daughter of high birth—she can be naught beside.’

## III.

“We past the islets, borne by wind and stream,

And, as we sailed, the mariners came near

And thronged around to listen;—in the gleam

Of the pale moon I stood, as one  
whom fear  
May not attain, and my calm voice  
did rear;  
'Ye all are human—yon broad moon  
gives light  
To millions who the selfsame like-  
ness wear,  
Even while I speak—beneath this  
very night  
Their thoughts flow on like ours, in sad-  
ness or delight.

## IV.

“‘What dream ye? Your own hands  
have built an home,  
Even for yourselves on a beloved  
shore:  
For some, fond eyes are pining till  
they come,  
How they will greet him when his  
toils are o'er,  
And laughing babes rush from the  
well-known door!  
Is this your care? ye toil for your own  
good—  
Ye feel and think—has some im-  
mortal power  
Such purposes? or, in a human mood,  
Dream ye some Power thus builds for  
man in solitude?

## V.

“‘What is that Power? Ye mock  
yourselves, and give  
A human heart to what ye cannot  
know:  
As if the cause of life could think and  
live!  
'T were as if man's own works  
should feel, and show  
The hopes and fears and thoughts  
from which they flow,  
And he be like to them! Lo! Plague  
is free  
To waste, Blight, Poison, Earth-  
quake, Hail, and Snow,  
Disease and Want, and worse Neces-  
sity  
Of hate and ill, and Pride, and Fear,  
and Tyranny!

## VI.

“‘What is that Power? Some moon-  
struck sophist stood  
Watching the shade from his own  
soul upthrown  
Fill Heaven and darken Earth, and in  
such mood  
The Form he saw and worshipt was  
his own,  
His likeness in the world's vast  
mirror shown;  
And 't were an innocent dream, but  
that a faith  
Nurst by fear's dew of poison  
grows thereon,  
And that men say that Power has  
'chosen Death  
On all who scorn its laws to wreak im-  
mortal wrath.

## VII.

“‘Men say that they themselves have  
heard and seen,  
Or known from others who have  
known such things,  
A Shade, a Form, which Earth and  
Heaven between,  
Wiends an invisible rod—that Priests  
and Kings,  
Custom, domestic sway, ay all that  
brings  
Man's freeborn soul beneath the op-  
pressor's heel,  
Are his strong ministers, and that  
the stings  
Of Death will make the wise his ven-  
geance feel,  
Though truth and virtue arm their hearts  
with tenfold steel.

## VIII.

“‘And it is said this Power will  
punish wrong;  
Yes, add despair to crime, and pain  
to pain!  
And deepest hell and deathless snakes  
among  
Will bind the wretch on whom is  
fixt a stain  
Which like a plague, a burden, and  
a bane,

Clung to him while he lived;— for love  
and hate,

Virtue and vice, they say, are differ-  
ence vain—

The will of strength is right— this  
human state

Tyrants, that they may rule, with lies  
thus desolate.

## IX.

“ Alas, what strength? Opinion is  
more frail

Than yon dim cloud now fading on  
the moon

Even while we gaze, though it awhile  
avail

To hide the orb of truth— and every  
throne

Of Earth or Heaven, though shadow,  
rests thereon,

One shape of many names:— for this  
ye plough

The barren waves of ocean, hence  
each one

Is slave or tyrant; all betray and bow,  
Command or kill or fear, or wreak or

suffer woe.

## X.

“ Its names are each a sign which  
maketh holy

All power— ay, the ghost, the  
dream, the shade,

Of power— lust, falsehood, hate, and  
pride, and folly;

The pattern whence all fraud and  
wrong is made,

A law to which mankind has been  
betrayed;

And human love is as the name well  
known

Of a dear mother whom the mur-  
derer laid

In bloody grave, and, into darkness  
thrown,

Gathered her wildered babes around  
him as his own.

## XI.

“ Oh! Love, who to the heart of  
wandering man

Art as the calm to ocean's weary  
waves!

Justice, or truth, or joy! those only  
can

From slavery and religion's laby-  
rinth caves

Guide us, as one clear star the sea-  
man saves.

To give to all an equal share of good,  
To track the steps of Freedom,

though through graves

She pass, to suffer all in patient mood,  
To weep for crime, though stained with

thy friend's dearest blood,—

## XII.

“ To feel the peace of self-content-  
ment's lot,

To own all sympathies, and outrage  
none,

And in the inmost bowers of sense and  
thought,

Until life's sunny day is quite gone  
down,

To sit and smile with Joy, or, not  
alone,

To kiss salt tears from the worn cheek  
of Woe;

To live as if to love and live were  
one;—

This is not faith or law, nor those  
who bow

To thrones on Heaven or Earth such  
destiny may know.

## XIII.

“ But children near their parents  
tremble now,

Because they must obey— one rules  
another,

And, as one Power rules both high  
and low,

So man is made the captive of his  
brother,

And Hate is throned on high with  
Fear his mother,

Above the Highest— and those foun-  
tain-cells

Whence love yet flowed when faith  
had choked all other

Are darkened— Woman as the bond-  
slave dwells

Of man, a slave; and life is poisoned  
in its wells.

## XIV.

“ ‘ Man seeks for gold in mines, that  
he may weave  
A lasting chain for his own slav-  
ery; —  
In fear and restless care that he may  
live,  
He toils for others, who must ever  
be  
The joyless thralls of like captivity;  
He murders, for his chiefs delight in  
ruin;  
He builds the altar, that its idol’s  
fee  
May be his very blood; he is pursu-  
ing —  
Oh, blind and willing wretch! — his own  
obscure undoing.

## XV.

“ ‘ Woman! — she is his slave, she  
has become  
A thing I weep to speak — the child  
of scorn,  
The outcast of a desolated home;  
Falsehood and fear and toil like  
waves have worn  
Channels upon her cheek, which  
smiles adorn  
As calm decks the false ocean: — well  
ye know  
What Woman is, for none of Woman  
born  
Can choose but drain the bitter dregs  
of woe,  
Which ever from the oppressed to the  
oppressors flow.

## XVI.

“ ‘ This need not be; ye might arise,  
and will  
That gold should lose its power, and  
thrones their glory;  
That love, which none may bind, be  
free to fill  
The world, like light; and evil  
faith, grown hoary

With crime, be quencht and die.

— Yon promontory

Even now eclipses the descending  
moon! —

Dungeons and palaces are transi-  
tory —

High temples fade like vapor — Man  
alone

Remains, whose will has power when  
all beside is gone.

## XVII.

“ ‘ Let all be free and equal! — From  
your hearts  
I feel an echo; through my inmost  
frame,  
Like sweetest sound, seeking its mate, it  
darts. —  
Whence come ye, friends? Alas, I  
cannot name  
All that I read of sorrow, toil, and  
shame,  
On your worn faces; as in legends old  
Which make immortal the disas-  
trous fame  
Of conquerors and impostors false and  
bold,  
The discord of your hearts I in your  
looks behold.

## XVIII.

“ ‘ Whence come ye, friends? from  
pouring human blood  
Forth on the earth? Or bring ye  
steel and gold,  
That kings may dupe and slay the mul-  
titude?  
Or from the famished poor, pale,  
weak, and cold,  
Bear ye the earnings of their toil?  
unfold!  
Speak! Are your hands in slaughter’s  
sanguine hue  
Stained freshly? have your hearts  
in guile grown old?  
Know yourselves thus! ye shall be  
pure as dew,  
And I will be a friend and sister unto  
you.

## XIX.

“ ‘ Disguise it not — we have one hu-  
man heart —

All mortal thoughts confess a common home;  
Blush not for what may to thyself impart  
Stains of inevitable crime: the doom  
Is this which has, or may, or must, become  
Thine, and all humankind's. Ye are the spoil  
Which Time thus marks for the devouring tomb,  
Thou and thy thoughts, and they, and all the toil  
Wherewith ye twine the rings of life's perpetual coil.

## XX.

“ ‘Disguise it not — ye blush for what ye hate,  
And Enmity is sister unto Shame;  
Look on your mind — it is the book of fate —  
Ah! it is dark with many a blazoned name  
Of misery — all are mirrors of the same;  
But the dark fiend who with his iron pen,  
Dipt in scorn's fiery poison makes his fame  
Enduring there, would o'er the heads of men  
Pass harmless, if they scorned to make their hearts his den.

## XXI.

“ ‘Yes, it is Hate — that shapeless fiendly thing  
Of many names, all evil, some divine —  
Whom self-contempt arms with a mortal sting;  
Which, when the heart its snaky folds entwine  
Is wasted quite, and when it doth repine  
To gorge such bitter prey, on all beside  
It turns with ninefold rage, as, with its twine  
When amphibæna some fair bird has tied,

Soon o'er the putrid mass he threatens on every side.

## XXII.

“ ‘Reproach not thine own soul, but know thyself,  
Nor hate another's crime, nor loathe thine own.  
It is the dark idolatry of self  
Which, when our thoughts and actions once are gone,  
Demands that man should weep and bleed and groan;  
Oh vacant expiation! Be at rest. —  
The past is Death's, the future is thine own;  
And love and joy can make the foulest breast  
A paradise of flowers where peace might build her nest.

## XXIII.

“ ‘Speak thou! whence come ye?' —  
A Youth made reply:  
‘Wearily, wearily o'er the boundless deep  
We sail; — thou readest well the misery  
Told in these faded eyes, but much doth sleep  
Within, which there the poor heart loves to keep,  
Or dare not write on the dishonored brow;  
Even from our childhood have we learned to steep  
The bread of slavery in the tears of woe,  
And never dreamed of hope or refuge until now.

## XXIV.

“ ‘Yes — I must speak — my secret should have perisht  
Even with the heart it wasted, as a brand  
Fades in the dying flame whose life it cherisht,  
But that no human bosom can withstand

Thee, wondrous Lady, and the mild  
 command  
 Of thy keener eyes:—yes, we are  
 wretched slaves,  
 Who from their wonted loves and  
 native land  
 Are reft, and bear o'er the dividing  
 waves  
 The unregarded prey of calm and happy  
 graves.

## XXV.

“ ‘We drag afar from pastoral vales  
 the fairest  
 Among the daughters of those  
 mountains lone,  
 We drag them there where all things  
 best and rarest  
 Are stained and trampled:— years  
 have come and gone  
 Since, like the ship which bears me,  
 I have known  
 No thought;— but now the eyes of  
 one dear Maid  
 On mine with light of mutual love  
 have shone:  
 She is my life, — I am but as the shade  
 Of her — a smoke sent up from ashes,  
 soon to fade.

## XXVI.

“ ‘For she must perish in the Tyrant’s  
 hall —  
 Alas, alas!’ — He ceased, and by  
 the sail  
 Sate cowering — but his sobs were  
 heard by all,  
 And still before the ocean and the  
 gale  
 The ship fled fast till the stars ’gan  
 to fail:  
 And, round me gathered with mute  
 countenance,  
 The seamen gazed, the pilot worn  
 and pale  
 With toil, the captain with gray locks,  
 whose glance  
 Met mine in restless awe — they stood  
 as in a trance.

## XXVII.

“ ‘Recede not! pause not now!  
 Thou art grown old,  
 But Hope will make thee young,  
 for Hope and Youth  
 Are children of one mother, even  
 Love — behold!  
 The eternal stars gaze on us! — is  
 the truth  
 Within your soul? care for your own,  
 or ruth  
 For others’ sufferings? do ye thirst to  
 bear  
 A heart which not the serpent  
 Custom’s tooth  
 May violate? — Be free! and even here  
 Swear to be firm till death!’ They cried  
 ‘We swear! We swear!’

## XXVIII.

“ ‘The very darkness shook, as with  
 a blast  
 Of subterranean thunder, at the cry;  
 The hollow shore its thousand echoes  
 cast  
 Into the night, as if the sea and sky  
 And earth rejoiced with new-born  
 liberty,  
 For in that name they swore! Bolts  
 were undrawn,  
 And on the deck, with unaccus-  
 tomed eye,  
 The captives gazing stood, and every  
 one  
 Shrank as the inconstant torch upon her  
 countenance shone.

## XXIX.

“ ‘They were earth’s purest children,  
 young and fair,  
 With eyes the shrines of un-  
 awakened thought,  
 And brows as bright as Spring or  
 morning, ere  
 Dark time had there its evil legend  
 wrought  
 In characters of cloud which wither  
 not. —  
 The change was like a dream to them;  
 but soon

They knew the glory of their altered  
lot,  
In the bright wisdom of youth's breath-  
less noon,  
Sweet talk and smiles and sighs all  
bosoms did attune.

xxx.

“But one was mute; her cheeks and  
lips most fair,  
Changing their hue like lilies newly  
blown  
Beneath a bright acacia's shadowy hair  
Waved by the wind amid the sunny  
noon,  
Showed that her soul was quiver-  
ing; and full soon  
That Youth arose, and breathlessly  
did look  
On her and me, as for some speech-  
less boon:  
I smiled, and both their hands in mine  
I took,  
And felt a soft delight from what their  
spirits shook.

## CANTO IX.

I.

“THAT night we anchored in a woody  
bay,  
And sleep no more around us dared  
to hover  
Than, when all doubt and fear has  
passed away,  
It shades the couch of some unrest-  
ing lover  
Whose heart is now at rest: thus  
night passed over  
In mutual joy: — around, a forest grew  
Of poplars and dark oaks, whose  
shade did cover  
The waning stars pranked in the  
waters blue,  
And trembled in the wind which from  
the morning flew.

II.

“The joyous mariners and each free  
maiden

Now brought from the deep forest  
many a bough,  
With woodland spoil most innocently  
laden;  
Soon wreaths of budding foliage  
seemed to flow  
Over the mast and sails, the stern  
and prow  
Were canopied with blooming boughs,  
— the while  
On the slant sun's path o'er the  
waves we go  
Rejoicing, like the dwellers of an isle  
Doomed to pursue those waves that  
cannot cease to smile.

III.

“The many ships spotting the dark-  
blue deep  
With snowy sails fled fast as ours  
came nigh,  
In fear and wonder; and on every  
steep  
Thousands did gaze; they heard the  
startling cry,  
Like Earth's own voice lifted un-  
conquerably  
To all her children, the unbounded  
mirth,  
The glorious joy of thy name —  
Liberty!  
They heard! — As o'er the mountains  
of the earth  
From peak to peak leap on the beams  
of morning's birth:

IV.

“So from that cry over the boundless  
hills  
Sudden was caught one universal  
sound,  
Like a volcano's voice whose thunder  
fills  
Remotest skies, — such glorious  
madness found  
A path through human hearts with  
stream which drowned  
Its struggling fears and cares, dark  
Custom's brood;  
They knew not whence it came,  
but felt around

A wide contagion poured — they called  
aloud  
On Liberty — that name lived on the  
sunny flood.

## v.

“We reached the port. — Alas! from  
many spirits  
The wisdom which had waked that  
cry was fled,  
Like the brief glory which dark  
Heaven inherits  
From the false dawn, which fades  
ere it is spread,  
Upon the night’s devouring dark-  
ness shed:  
Yet soon bright day will burst — even  
like a chasm  
Of fire, to burn the shrouds out-  
worn and dead  
Which wrap the world; a wide en-  
thusiasm,  
To cleanse the fevered world as with  
an earthquake’s spasm!

## VI.

“I walkt through the great City  
then, but free  
From shame or fear; those toil-  
worn mariners  
And happy maidens did encompass  
me;  
And, like a subterranean wind that  
stirs  
Some forest among caves, the hopes  
and fears  
From every human soul a murmur  
strange  
Made as I past: and many wept,  
with tears  
Of joy and awe, and wingèd thoughts  
did range,  
And half-extinguisht words which pro-  
phesied of change.

## VII.

“For with strong speech I tore the  
veil that hid  
Nature, and Truth, and Liberty, and  
Love, —

As one who from some mountain’s  
pyramid  
Points to the unrisen sun! — the  
shades approve  
His truth, and flee from every  
stream and grove.  
Thus, gentle thoughts did many a  
bosom fill, —  
Wisdom the mail of tried affections  
wove  
For many a heart, and tameless scorn  
of ill  
Thrice steeped in molten steel the un-  
conquerable will.

## VIII.

“Some said I was a maniac wild and  
lost;  
Some, that I scarce had risen from  
the grave,  
The Prophet’s virgin bride, a heavenly  
ghost: —  
Some said I was a fiend from my  
weird cave,  
Who had stolen human shape, and  
o’er the wave,  
The forest, and the mountain, came;  
— some said  
I was the child of God, sent down  
to save  
Women from bonds and death, and  
on my head  
The burden of their sins would fright-  
fully be laid.

## IX.

“But soon my human words found  
sympathy  
In human hearts: the purest and  
the best,  
As friend with friend, made common  
cause with me,  
And they were few, but resolute;  
— the rest,  
Ere yet success the enterprise had  
blest,  
Leagued with me in their hearts: —  
their meals, their slumber,  
Their hourly occupations, were pos-  
sessed  
By hopes which I had armed to over-  
number



Those hosts of meaner cares which life's  
strong wings encumber.

## X.

“ But chiefly women, whom my voice  
did waken  
From their cold, careless, willing  
slavery,  
Sought me: one truth their dreary  
prison has shaken,  
They lookt around, and lo! they  
became free!  
Their many tyrants, sitting deso-  
lately  
In slave-deserted halls, could none  
restrain;  
For wrath's red fire had withered in  
the eye  
Whose lightning once was death, —  
nor fear nor gain  
Could tempt one captive now to lock  
another's chain.

## XI.

“ Those who were sent to bind me  
wept, and felt  
Their minds outsoar the bonds which  
claspt them round,  
Even as a waxen shape may waste and  
melt  
In the white furnace; and a visioned  
swound,  
A pause of hope and awe, the City  
bound,  
Which, like the silence of a tempest's  
birth,  
When in its awful shadow it has  
wound  
The sun, the wind, the ocean, and the  
earth,  
Hung terrible, ere yet the lightnings  
have leapt forth.

## XII.

“ Like clouds inwoven in the silent  
sky  
By winds from distant regions meet-  
ing there,  
In the high name of truth and liberty  
Around the City millions gathered  
were

By hopes which sprang from many  
a hidden lair,  
Words which the lore of truth in hues  
of flame  
Arrayed, thine own wild songs which  
in the air  
Like homeless odors floated, and the  
name  
Of thee, and many a tongue which thou  
hadst dipt in flame.

## XIII.

“ The Tyrant knew his power was  
gone, but Fear,  
The nurse of Vengeance, bade him  
wait the event —  
That perfidy and custom, gold and  
prayer,  
And whatsoe'er, when force is impo-  
tent,  
To Fraud the sceptre of the world  
has lent,  
Might, as he judged, confirm his fail-  
ing sway.  
Therefore throughout the streets the  
priests he sent  
To curse the rebels. To their gods  
did they  
For Earthquake, Plague, and Want,  
kneel in the public way.

## XIV.

“ And grave and hoary men were  
bribed to tell,  
From seats where law is made the  
slave of wrong,  
How glorious Athens in her splendor  
fell  
Because her sons were free, — and  
that, among  
Mankind, the many to the few be-  
long,  
By Heaven, and Nature, and Neces-  
sity.  
They said that age was truth, and  
that the young  
Marred with wild hopes the peace of  
slavery,  
With which old times and men had  
quelled the vain and free.

## XV.

“ And with the falsehood of their  
poisonous lips  
They breathed on the enduring mem-  
ory  
Of sages and of bards a brief eclipse;  
There was one teacher, who neces-  
sity  
Had armed with strength and wrong  
against mankind,  
His slave and his avenger aye to be;  
That we were weak and sinful, frail  
and blind,  
And that the will of one was peace,  
and we  
Should seek for naught on earth but  
toil and misery.

## XVI.

“ ‘ For thus we might avoid the hell  
hereafter.’  
So spake the hypocrites, who curst  
and lied;  
Alas! their sway was past, and tears  
and laughter  
Clung to their hoary hair, withering  
the pride  
Which in their hollow hearts dared  
still abide;  
And yet obscener slaves with smoother  
brow,  
And sneers on their strait lips, thin,  
blue, and wide,  
Said that the rule of men was over now,  
And hence the subject world to woman’s  
will must bow.

## XVII.

“ And gold was scattered through the  
streets, and wine  
Flowed at a hundred feasts within  
the wall.  
In vain! the steady towers in Heaven  
did shine  
As they were wont, nor at the  
priestly call  
Left Plague her banquet in the  
Ethiop’s hall,  
Nor Famine from the rich man’s portal  
came,

Where at her ease she ever preys on  
all  
Who throng to kneel for food: nor  
fear nor shame  
Nor faith, nor discord, dimmed hope’s  
newly kindled flame.

## XVIII.

“ For gold was as a god whose faith  
began  
To fade, so that its worshippers were  
few;  
And Faith itself, which in the heart of  
man  
Gives shape, voice, name, to spec-  
tral Terror, knew  
Its downfall, as the altars lonelier  
grew,  
Till the priests stood alone within the  
fane;  
The shafts of Falsehood unpolluting  
flew,  
And the cold sneers of Calumny were  
vain  
The union of the free with Discord’s  
brand to stain.

## XIX.

“ The rest thou knowest. — Lo! we  
two are here —  
We have survived a ruin wide and  
deep —  
Strange thoughts are mine. — I cannot  
grieve or fear;  
Sitting with thee upon this lonely  
steep,  
I smile, though human love should  
make me weep.  
We have survived a joy that knows no  
sorrow,  
And I do feel a mighty calmness  
creep  
Over my heart, which can no longer  
borrow  
Its hues from chance or change, dark  
children of to-morrow.

## XX.

“ We know not what will come —  
yet, Laon, dearest,

Cythna shall be the prophetess of  
 Love;  
 Her lips shall rob thee of the grace  
 thou wearest,  
 To hide thy heart, and clothe the  
 shapes which rove  
 Within the homeless Future's win-  
 try grove;  
 For I now, sitting thus beside thee,  
 seem  
 Even with thy breath and blood to  
 live and move,  
 And violence and wrong are as a dream  
 Which rolls from steadfast truth, an un-  
 returning stream.

## XXI.

“The blasts of Autumn drive the  
 wingèd seeds  
 Over the earth, — next come the  
 snows, and rain,  
 And frosts, and storms, which dreary  
 Winter leads  
 Out of his Scythian cave, a savage  
 train;  
 Behold! Spring sweeps over the  
 world again,  
 Shedding soft dews from her ethereal  
 wings;  
 Flowers on the mountains, fruits  
 over the plain,  
 And music on the waves and woods,  
 she flings,  
 And love on all that lives, and calm on  
 lifeless things.

## XXII.

“O Spring, of hope and love and  
 youth and gladness  
 Wind-wingèd emblem! brightest,  
 best, and fairest!  
 Whence comest thou when with dark  
 Winter's sadness  
 The tears that fade in sunny smiles  
 thou sharest?  
 Sister of joy! thou art the child  
 who wearest  
 Thy mother's dying smile, tender and  
 sweet;  
 Thy mother Autumn, for whose  
 grave thou bearest

Fresh flowers, and beams like flowers,  
 with gentle feet  
 Disturbing not the leaves which are her  
 winding-sheet.

## XXIII.

“Virtue and Hope and Love, like  
 light and Heaven,  
 Surround the world. We are their  
 chosen slaves.  
 Has not the whirlwind of our spirit  
 driven  
 Truth's deathless germs to Thought's  
 remotest caves?  
 Lo, Winter comes! — the grief of  
 many graves,  
 The frost of death, the tempest of the  
 sword,  
 The flood of tyranny, whose san-  
 guine waves  
 Stagnate like ice at Faith the enchan-  
 ter's word,  
 And bind all human hearts in its repose  
 abhorred!

## XXIV.

“The seeds are sleeping in the soil.  
 Meanwhile  
 The Tyrant peoples dungeons with  
 his prey,  
 Pale victims on the guarded scaffold  
 smile  
 Because they cannot speak; and,  
 day by day,  
 The moon of wasting Science wanes  
 away  
 Among her stars, and in that darkness  
 vast  
 The sons of earth to their foul idols  
 pray,  
 And gray priests triumph, and like  
 blight or blast  
 A shade of selfish care o'er human looks  
 is cast.

## XXV.

“This is the winter of the world; —  
 and here  
 We die, even as the winds of  
 Autumn fade,  
 Expiring in the frore and foggy air. —

Behold! Spring comes, though we  
 must pass who made  
 The promise of its birth, even as  
 the shade  
 Which from our death, as from a  
 mountain, flings  
 The future, a broad sunrise; thus  
 arrayed  
 As with the plumes of overshadowing  
 wings,  
 From its dark gulf of chains Earth like  
 an eagle springs.

## XXVI.

“O dearest love! we shall be dead  
 and cold  
 Before this morn may on the world  
 arise:  
 Wouldst thou the glory of its dawn  
 behold?  
 Alas! gaze not on me, but turn  
 thine eyes  
 On thine own heart — it is a para-  
 dise  
 Which everlasting Spring has made  
 its own,  
 And, while drear winter fills the  
 naked skies,  
 Sweet streams of sunny thought, and  
 flowers fresh-blown,  
 Are there, and weave their sounds and  
 odors into one.

## XXVII.

“In their own hearts the earnest of  
 the hope  
 Which made them great the good  
 will ever find;  
 And, though some envious shades may  
 interlope  
 Between the effect and it, One comes  
 behind  
 Who aye the future to the past will  
 bind —  
 Necessity, whose sightless strength for  
 ever  
 Evil with evil, good with good,  
 must wind  
 In bands of union which no power  
 may sever:  
 They must bring forth their kind, and  
 be divided never!

## XXVIII.

“The good and mighty of departed  
 ages,  
 Are in their graves, the innocent  
 and free,  
 Heroes, and Poets, and prevailing  
 Sages,  
 Who leave the vesture of their  
 majesty  
 To adorn and clothe this naked  
 world; — and we  
 Are like to them — such perish, but  
 they leave  
 All hope, or love, or truth, or liberty  
 Whose forms their mighty spirits could  
 conceive,  
 To be a rule and law to ages that sur-  
 vive.

## XXIX.

“So be the turf heapt over our re-  
 mains  
 Even in our happy youth, and that  
 strange lot,  
 Whate'er it be, when in these ming-  
 ling veins  
 The blood is still, be ours; let sense  
 and thought  
 Pass from our being, or be num-  
 bered not  
 Among the things that are; let those  
 who come  
 Behind, for whom our steadfast will  
 has bought  
 A calm inheritance, a glorious doom,  
 Insult with careless tread our undivided  
 tomb.

## XXX.

“Our many thoughts and deeds, our  
 life and love,  
 Our happiness, and all that we have  
 been,  
 Immortally must live and burn and  
 move  
 When we shall be no more; — the  
 world has seen  
 A type of peace; and — as some  
 most serene  
 And lovely spot to a poor maniac's  
 eye,

After long years, some sweet and  
moving scene  
Of youthful hope, returning suddenly,  
Quells his long madness—thus man  
shall remember thee.

## XXXI.

“And Calumny meanwhile shall feed  
on us  
As worms devour the dead, and  
near the throne  
And at the altar most accepted thus  
Shall sneers and curses be;— what  
we have done  
None shall dare vouch, though it be  
truly known;  
That record shall remain when they  
must pass  
Who built their pride on its oblivion,  
And fame, in human hope which sculp-  
tured was,  
Survive the perished scrolls of unendur-  
ing brass.

## XXXII.

“The while we two, belovèd, must  
depart,  
And Sense and Reason, those en-  
chanters fair  
Whose wand of power is hope, would  
bid the heart  
That gazed beyond the wormy grave  
despair:  
These eyes, these lips, this blood,  
seem darkly there  
To fade in hideous ruin; no calm  
sleep,  
Peopling with golden dreams the  
stagnant air,  
Seems our obscure and rotting eyes to  
steep  
In joy; — but senseless death — a ruin  
dark and deep!

## XXXIII.

“These are blind fancies—reason  
cannot know  
What sense can neither feel nor  
thought conceive;  
There is delusion in the world, and  
woe,

And fear, and pain — we know not  
whence we live,  
Or why, or how, or what mute  
Power may give  
Their being to each plant and star and  
beast,  
Or even these thoughts. — Come  
near me! I do weave  
A chain I cannot break — I am  
possest  
With thoughts too swift and strong for  
one lone human breast.

## XXXIV.

“Yes, yes — thy kiss is sweet, thy lips  
are warm —  
Oh, willingly, belovèd, would these  
eyes,  
Might they no more drink being from  
thy form,  
Even as to sleep whence we again  
arise,  
Close their faint orbs in death: I  
fear nor prize  
Aught that can now betide, unshared  
by thee —  
Yes, Love, when Wisdom fails,  
makes Cythna wise;  
Darkness and death, if death be true,  
must be  
Dearer than life and hope if unenjoyed  
with thee.

## XXXV.

“Alas, our thoughts flow on with  
stream whose waters  
Return not to their fountain: Earth  
and Heaven,  
The Ocean and the Sun, the Clouds  
their daughters,  
Winter and Spring, and Morn and  
Noon and Even,  
All that we are or know, is darkly  
driven  
Towards one gulf. — Lo! what a  
change is come  
Since I first spake — but time shall  
be forgiven  
Though it change all but thee!”  
She ceased — night’s gloom  
Meanwhile had fallen on earth from  
the sky’s sunless dome.

## XXXVI.

Though she had ceased, her countenance, uplifted  
 To Heaven, still spake, with solemn glory bright;  
 Her dark deep eyes, her lips whose motions gifted  
 The air they breathed with love, her locks undight.  
 "Fair star of life and love," I cried,  
 "my soul's delight,  
 Why lookest thou on the crystalline skies?  
 Oh, that my spirit were yon Heaven of night  
 Which gazes on thee with its thousand eyes!"  
 She turned to me and smiled — that smile was Paradise!

## CANTO X.

## I.

Was there a human spirit in the steed,  
 That thus with his proud voice, ere night was gone,  
 He broke our linkèd rest? or do indeed  
 All living things a common nature own,  
 And thought erect an universal throne,  
 Where many shapes one tribute ever bear?  
 And Earth, their mutual mother, does she groan  
 To see her sons contend? and makes she bare  
 Her breast, that all in peace its drainless stores may share?

## II.

I have heard friendly sounds from many a tongue  
 Which was not human — the lone nightingale  
 Has answered me with her most soothing song

Out of her ivy bower, when I sate pale  
 With grief, and sighed beneath; from many a dale  
 The antelopes who flockt for food have spoken  
 With happy sounds and motions that avail  
 Like man's own speech: and such was now the token  
 Of waning night, whose calm by that proud neigh was broken.

## III.

Each night, that mighty steed bore me abroad,  
 And I returned with food to our retreat,  
 And dark intelligence; the blood which flowed  
 Over the fields had stained the courser's feet;  
 Soon the dust drinks that bitter dew, — then meet  
 The vulture and the wild dog and the snake,  
 The wolf and the hyena gray, and eat  
 The dead in horrid truce: their throngs did make,  
 Behind the steed, a chasm like waves in a ship's wake.

## IV.

For from the utmost realms of earth came pouring  
 The banded slaves whom every despot sent  
 At that throned traitor's summons; like the roaring  
 Of fire, whose floods the wild deer circumvent  
 In the scorcht pastures of the south, so bent  
 The armies of the leaguèd kings around  
 Their files of steel and flame; — the continent  
 Trembled, as with a zone of ruin bound,  
 Beneath their feet, the sea shook with their navies' sound.

## v.

From every nation of the earth they came,  
 The multitude of moving heartless things  
 Whom slaves call men: obediently they came,  
 Like sheep whom from the fold the shepherd brings  
 To the stall, red with blood; their many kings  
 Led them thus erring from their native land, —  
 Tartar and Frank, and millions whom the wings  
 Of Indian breezes lull, and many a band  
 The Arctic Anarch sent, and Idumea's sand,

## vi.

Fertile in prodigies and lies. — So there  
 Strange natures made a brotherhood of ill.  
 The desert savage ceased to grasp in fear  
 His Asian shield and bow when, at the will  
 Of Europe's subtler son, the bolt would kill  
 Some shepherd sitting on a rock secure;  
 But smiles of wondering joy his face would fill,  
 And savage sympathy: those slaves impure  
 Each one the other thus from ill to ill did lure.

## vii.

For traitorously did that foul Tyrant robe  
 His countenance in lies, — even at the hour  
 When he was snatcht from death, then o'er the globe,  
 With secret signs from many a mountain-tower,  
 With smoke by day and fire by night the power

Of kings and priests, those dark conspirators,  
 He called: — they knew his cause their own, and swore  
 Like wolves and serpents to their mutual wars  
 Strange truce, with many a rite which Earth and Heaven abhors.

## viii.

Myriads had come — millions were on their way;  
 The Tyrant past, surrounded by the steel  
 Of hired assassins, through the public way,  
 Chokt with his country's dead; — his footsteps reel  
 On the fresh blood — he smiles.  
 "Ay, now I feel  
 I am a king in truth!" he said, and took  
 His royal seat, and bade the torturing wheel  
 Be brought, and fire, and pincers, and the hook,  
 And scorpions, that his soul on its revenge might look.

## ix.

"But first go slay the rebels — why return  
 The victor bands?" he said. "Millions yet live,  
 Of whom the weakest with one word might turn  
 The scales of victory yet; let none survive  
 But those within the walls — each fifth shall give  
 The expiation for his brethren, here. —  
 Go forth, and waste and kill." —  
 "O king, forgive  
 My speech," a soldier answered; "but we fear  
 The spirits of the night, and morn is drawing near;

## x.

"For we were slaying still without remorse,

And now that dreadful chief beneath  
 my hand  
 Defenceless lay, when on a hell-black  
 horse  
 An Angel bright as day, waving a  
 brand  
 Which flasht among the stars,  
 past." — "Dost thou stand  
 Parleying with me, thou wretch?"  
 the king replied.  
 "Slaves, bind him to the wheel;  
 and of this band  
 Whoso will drag that woman to his side  
 That scared him thus may burn his dear-  
 est foe beside;

## XI.

"And gold and glory shall be his. —  
 Go forth!"  
 They rusht into the plain. — Loud  
 was the roar  
 Of their career: the horsemen shook  
 the earth;  
 The wheeled artillery's speed the  
 pavement tore;  
 The infantry, file after file, did pour  
 Their clouds on the utmost hills. Five  
 days they slew  
 Among the wasted fields; the sixth  
 saw gore  
 Stream through the city; on the sev-  
 enth the dew  
 Of slaughter became stiff, and there  
 was peace anew:

## XII.

Peace in the desert fields and villages,  
 Between the gluttoned beasts and  
 mangled dead!  
 Peace in the silent streets! save when  
 the cries  
 Of victims, to their fiery judgment  
 led,  
 Made pale their voiceless lips who  
 seemed to dread,  
 Even in their dearest kindred, lest  
 some tongue  
 Be faithless to the fear yet unbe-  
 trayed:  
 Peace in the Tyrant's palace, where  
 the throng

Waste the triumphal hours in festival  
 and song!

## XIII.

Day after day the burning sun rolled  
 on  
 Over the death-polluted land — it  
 came  
 Out of the east like fire, and fiercely  
 shone  
 A lamp of autumn, ripening with its  
 flame  
 The few lone ears of corn; — the  
 sky became  
 Stagnate with heat, so that each cloud  
 and blast  
 Languisht and died, — the thirsting  
 air did claim  
 All moisture, and a rotting vapor past  
 From the unburied dead, invisible and  
 fast.

## XIV.

First Want, then Plague, came on the  
 beasts; their food  
 Failed, and they drew the breath  
 of its decay.  
 Millions on millions, whom the scent  
 of blood  
 Had lured, or who from regions far  
 away  
 Had tracked the hosts in festival  
 array,  
 From their dark deserts, gaunt and  
 wasting now,  
 Stalkt like fell shades among their  
 perisht prey;  
 In their green eyes a strange disease  
 did glow,  
 They sank in hideous spasm, or pains  
 severe and slow.

## XV.

The fish were poisoned in the streams;  
 the birds  
 In the green woods perisht; the  
 insect race  
 Was withered up; the scattered flocks  
 and herds  
 Who had survived the wild beasts'  
 hungry chase



Died moaning, each upon the  
 other's face  
 In helpless agony gazing; round the  
 City  
 All night the lean hyenas their sad  
 case  
 Like starving infants wailed — a woe-  
 ful ditty!  
 And many a mother wept, pierced with  
 unnatural pity.

## XVI.

Amid the aërial minarets on high  
 The Ethiopian vultures fluttering  
 fell  
 From their long line of brethren in  
 the sky,  
 Startling the concourse of mankind.  
 — Too well  
 These signs the coming mischief did  
 foretell: —  
 Strange panic first, a deep and sicken-  
 ing dread,  
 Within each heart, like ice, did sink  
 and dwell,  
 A voiceless thought of evil, which did  
 spread  
 With the quick glance of eyes, like  
 withering lightnings shed.

## XVII.

Day after day, when the year wanes,  
 the frosts  
 Strip its green crown of leaves, till  
 all is bare;  
 So on those strange and congregated  
 hosts  
 Came Famine, a swift shadow, and  
 the air  
 Groaned with the burden of a new  
 despair;  
 Famine, than whom Misrule no dead-  
 lier daughter  
 Feeds from her thousand breasts,  
 though sleeping there  
 With lidless eyes lie Faith and Plague  
 and Slaughter,  
 A ghastly brood conceived of Lethe's  
 sullen water.

## XVIII.

There was no food; the corn was  
 trampled down,  
 The flocks and herds had perisht;  
 on the shore  
 The dead and putrid fish were ever  
 thrown:  
 The deeps were foodless, and the  
 winds no more  
 Creaked with the weight of birds,  
 but, as before  
 Those wingèd things sprang forth,  
 were void of shade;  
 The vines and orchards, Autumn's  
 golden store,  
 Were burned; so that the meanest  
 food was weighed  
 With gold, and Avarice died before the  
 god it made.

## XIX.

There was no corn — in the wide  
 market-place  
 All loathliest things, even human  
 flesh, was sold;  
 They weighed it in small scales — and  
 many a face  
 Was fixt in eager horror then; his  
 gold  
 The miser brought; the tender maid,  
 grown bold  
 Through hunger, bared her scornèd  
 charms in vain;  
 The mother brought her eldest-born,  
 controlled  
 By instinct blind as love, but turned  
 again,  
 And bade her infant suck, and died in  
 silent pain.

## XX.

Then fell blue Plague upon the race  
 of man.  
 “ Oh, for the sheathèd steel, so late  
 which gave  
 Oblivion to the dead when the streets  
 ran  
 With brothers' blood! Oh, that the  
 earthquake's grave  
 Would gape, or ocean lift its stifling  
 wave! ”

Vain cries — throughout the streets,  
 thousands, pursued  
 Each by his fiery torture, howl and  
 rave,  
 Or sit in frenzy's unimagined mood  
 Upon fresh heaps of dead — a ghastly  
 multitude.

## XXI.

It was not hunger now, but thirst.  
 Each well  
 Was choked with rotting corpses,  
 and became  
 A caldron of green mist made visible  
 At sunrise. Thither still the myr-  
 iads came,  
 Seeking to quench the agony of the  
 flame  
 Which raged like poison through their  
 bursting veins;  
 Naked they were from torture, with-  
 out shame,  
 Spotted with nameless scars and lurid  
 blains,  
 Childhood, and youth, and age, writhing  
 in savage pains.

## XXII.

It was not thirst but madness! Many  
 saw  
 Their own lean image everywhere;  
 it went  
 A ghastlier self beside them, till the  
 awe  
 Of that dread sight to self-destruc-  
 tion sent  
 Those shrieking victims; some, ere  
 life was spent,  
 Sought, with a horrid sympathy, to  
 shed  
 Contagion on the sound; and others  
 rent  
 Their matted hair, and cried aloud,  
 "We tread  
 On fire! the avenging Power his hell  
 on earth has spread!"

## XXIII.

Sometimes the living by the dead  
 were hid.

Near the great fountain in the public  
 square,  
 Where corpses made a crumbling  
 pyramid  
 Under the sun, was heard one  
 stifled prayer  
 For life, in the hot silence of the  
 air;  
 And strange 't was mid that hideous  
 heap to see  
 Some shrouded in their long and  
 golden hair,  
 As if not dead, but slumbering  
 quietly,  
 Like forms which sculptors carve, then  
 love to agony.

## XXIV.

Famine had spared the palace of the  
 King: —  
 He rioted in festival the while,  
 He and his guards and priests; but  
 Plague did fling  
 One shadow upon all. Famine can  
 smile  
 On him who brings it food, and  
 pass, with guile  
 Of thankful falsehood, like a courtier  
 gray,  
 The house-dog of the throne; but  
 many a mile  
 Comes Plague, a wingèd wolf, who  
 loathes alway  
 The garbage and the scum that strangers  
 make her prey.

## XXV.

So, near the throne, amid the gorgeous  
 feast,  
 Sheathed in resplendent arms, or  
 loosely dight  
 To luxury, ere the mockery yet had  
 ceast  
 That lingered on his lips, the  
 warrior's might  
 Was loosened, and a new and  
 ghastlier night  
 In dreams of frenzy lapt his eyes; he  
 fell  
 Headlong, or with stiff eyeballs sate  
 upright

Among the guests, or raving mad did tell  
Strange truths, a dying seer of dark  
oppression's hell.

## XXVI.

The Princes and the Priests were pale  
with terror;  
That monstrous faith wherewith they  
ruled mankind  
Fell, like a shaft loosed by the bow-  
man's error,  
On their own hearts: they sought,  
and they could find  
No refuge — 't was the blind who  
led the blind.  
So through the desolate streets to the  
high fane  
The many-tongued and endless  
armies wind  
In sad procession: each among the  
train  
To his own Idol lifts his supplications  
vain.

## XXVII.

"O God!" they cried, "we know  
our secret pride  
Has scorned thee, and thy worship,  
and thy name;  
Secure in human power, we have  
defied  
Thy fearful night; we bend in fear  
and shame  
Before thy presence; with the dust  
we claim  
Kindred; be merciful, O King of  
Heaven!  
Most justly have we suffered for thy  
fame  
Made dim, but be at length our sins  
forgiven,  
Ere to despair and death thy worship-  
pers be driven.

## XXVIII.

"O King of glory! thou alone hast  
power!  
Who can resist thy will? who can  
restrain

Thy wrath when on the guilty thou  
dost shower  
The shafts of thy revenge, a blister-  
ing rain?  
Greatest and best, be merciful again!  
Have we not stabbed thine enemies?  
and made  
The Earth an altar, and the Heavens  
a fane,  
Where thou wert worshipt with their  
blood, and laid  
Those hearts in dust which would thy  
searchless works have weighed?

## XXIX.

"Well didst thou loosen on this im-  
pious City  
Thine angels of revenge: recall  
them now;  
Thy worshippers, abased, here kneel  
for pity,  
And bind their souls by an immor-  
tal vow:  
We swear by thee! and to our oath  
do thou  
Give sanction from thine hell of fiends  
and flame,  
That we will kill with fire and tor-  
ments slow  
The last of those who mockt thy holy  
name,  
And scorned the sacred laws thy  
prophets did proclaim."

## XXX.

Thus they with trembling limbs and  
pallid lips  
Worshipt their own hearts' image,  
dim and vast,  
Scared by the shade wherewith they  
would eclipse  
The light of other minds; — troubled  
they past  
From the great Temple; — fiercely  
still and fast  
The arrows of the plague among them  
fell,  
And they on one another gazed  
aghast,  
And through the hosts contention  
wild befel,

As each of his own god the wondrous  
works did tell.

## xxxI.

And Oromaze, Joshua, and Mahomet,  
Moses and Buddh, Zerdusht and  
Brahm and Foh,  
A tumult of strange names, which  
never met  
Before as watchwords of a single  
woe,  
Arose; each raging votary 'gan to  
throw  
Aloft his armèd hands, and each did  
howl  
"Our God alone is God!" — And  
slaughter now  
Would have gone forth, when from  
beneath a cowl  
A voice came forth which pierced like  
ice through every soul.

## xxxII.

'T was an Iberian priest from whom it  
came,  
A zealous man who led the legioned  
West,  
With words which faith and pride had  
steeped in flame,  
To quell the unbelievers; a dire  
guest  
Even to his friends was he, for in  
his breast  
Did hate and guile lie watchful, inter-  
twined,  
Twin serpents in one deep and  
winding nest;  
He loathed all faith beside his own,  
and pined  
To wreak his fear of Heaven in ven-  
geance on mankind.

## xxxIII.

But more he loathed and hated the  
clear light  
Of wisdom and free thought, and  
more did fear  
Lest, kindled once, its beams might  
pierce the night,  
Even where his Idol stood; for far  
and near

Did many a heart in Europe leap to  
hear  
That faith and tyranny were trampled  
down;  
Many a pale victim doomed for truth  
to share  
The murderer's cell, or see with help-  
less groan  
The priests his children drag for slaves  
to serve their own.

## xxxIV.

He dared not kill the infidels with fire  
Or steel, in Europe; the slow ago-  
nies  
Of legal torture mockt his keen de-  
sire:  
So he made truce with those who  
did despise  
The expiation and the sacrifice,  
That, though detested, Islam's kindred  
creed  
Might crush for him those deadlier  
enemies;  
For fear of God did in his bosom  
breed  
A jealous hate of man, an unreposing  
need.

## xxxv.

"Peace, peace!" he cried. "When  
we are dead, the day  
Of judgment comes, and all shall  
surely know  
Whose God is God, each fearfully  
shall pay  
The errors of his faith in endless  
woe!  
But there is sent a mortal vengeance  
now  
On earth, because an impious race  
had spurned  
Him whom we all adore, — a subtle  
foe,  
By whom for ye this dread reward was  
earned,  
And kingly thrones, which rest on faith,  
nigh overturned.

## xxxVI.

"Think ye, because ye weep and kneel  
and pray,

That God will lull the pestilence?  
It rose

Even from beneath his throne, where,  
many a day,

His mercy soothed it to a dark re-  
pose:

It walks upon the earth to judge his  
foes;

And what are thou and I, that he should  
deign

To curb his ghastly minister, or close  
The gates of death ere they receive the  
twin

Who shook with mortal spells his unde-  
fended reign?

xxxvii.

“Ay, there is famine in the gulf of  
hell,

Its giant worms of fire for ever  
yawn, —

Their lurid eyes are on us! Those  
who fell

By the swift shafts of pestilence ere  
dawn

Are in their jaws! They hunger for  
the spawn

Of Satan, their own brethren who  
were sent

To make our souls their spoil. See!  
see! they fawn

Like dogs, and they will sleep, with  
luxury spent,

When those detested hearts their iron  
fangs have rent!

xxxviii.

“Our God may then lull Pestilence to  
sleep:

Pile high the pyre of expiation now,  
A forest’s spoil of boughs, and on the  
heap

Pour venomous gums, which sullenly  
and slow,

When touched by flame, shall burn  
and melt and flow,

A stream of clinging fire, — and fix  
on high

A net of iron, and spread forth be-  
low

A couch of snakes and scorpions, and  
the fry

Of centipedes and worms, earth’s hell-  
ish progeny.

xxxix.

“Let Laon and Laone on that pyre,  
Linkt tight with burning brass,  
perish! — then pray

That, with this sacrifice, the withering  
ire

Of Heaven may be appeased.” He  
ceased, and they

A space stood silent, as far, far away  
The echoes of his voice among them  
died ;

And he knelt down upon the dust,  
always

Muttering the curses of his speechless  
pride,

Whilst shame and fear and awe the  
armies did divide.

xl.

His voice was like a blast that burst  
the portal

Of fabled hell; and, as he spake,  
each one

Saw gape beneath the chasms of fire  
immortal,

And Heaven above seemed cloven,  
where, on a throne

Girt round with storms and shadows,  
sate alone

Their King and Judge. — Fear killed in  
every breast

All natural pity then, a fear un-  
known

Before, and, with an inward fire pos-  
sessed,

They raged like homeless beasts whom  
burning woods invest.

xli.

’T was morn. — At noon the public  
crier went forth,

Proclaiming through the living and  
the dead,

“The Monarch saith that his great  
empire’s worth

Is set on Laon and Laone’s head:  
He who but one yet living here can  
lead,

Or who the life from both their hearts  
 can wring,  
 Shall be the kingdom's heir — a glo-  
 rious meed!  
 But he who both alive can hither  
 bring  
 The Princess shall espouse, and reign  
 an equal King.”

## XLII.

Ere night the pyre was piled, the net  
 of iron  
 Was spread above, the fearful couch  
 below;  
 It overtopped the towers that did en-  
 viron  
 That spacious square, for Fear is  
 never slow  
 To build the thrones of Hate, her  
 mate and foe,  
 So she scourged forth the maniac mul-  
 titude  
 To rear this pyramid — tottering and  
 slow,  
 Plague-stricken, foodless, like lean  
 herds pursued  
 By gadflies, they have piled the heath  
 and gums and wood.

## XLIII.

Night came, a starless and a moonless  
 gloom.  
 Until the dawn, those hosts of many  
 a nation  
 Stood round that pile, as near one  
 lover's tomb  
 Two gentle sisters mourn their deso-  
 lation:  
 And in the silence of that expecta-  
 tion  
 Was heard on high the reptiles' hiss  
 and crawl —  
 It was so deep — save when the  
 devastation  
 Of the swift pest, with fearful interval,  
 Marking its path with shrieks, among  
 the crowd would fall.

## XLIV.

Morn came, — among those sleepless  
 multitudes,

Madness, and Fear, and Plague, and  
 Famine, still  
 Heapt corpse on corpse, as in au-  
 tumnal woods  
 The frosts of many a wind with  
 dead leaves fill  
 Earth's cold and sullen brooks; in  
 silence, still  
 The pale survivors stood; ere noon,  
 the fear  
 Of Hell became a panic, which did  
 kill  
 Like hunger or disease, with whispers  
 drear,  
 As “Hush! hark! Come they yet? Just  
 Heaven! thine hour is near!”

## XLV.

And priests rushed through their  
 ranks, some counterfeiting  
 The rage they did inspire, some  
 mad indeed  
 With their own lies; they said their  
 god was waiting  
 To see his enemies writhe and burn  
 and bleed, —  
 And that, till then, the snakes of  
 hell had need  
 Of human souls: — three hundred  
 furnaces  
 Soon blazed through the wide City,  
 where, with speed,  
 Men brought their infidel kindred to  
 appease  
 God's wrath, and, while they burned,  
 knelt round on quivering knees.

## XLVI.

The noontide sun was darkened with  
 that smoke,  
 The winds of eve disperst those  
 ashes gray.  
 The madness which these rites had  
 lulled awoke  
 Again at sunset. — Who shall dare  
 to say  
 The deeds which night and fear  
 brought forth, or weigh  
 In balance just the good and evil  
 there?  
 He might man's deep and search-  
 less heart display,

And cast a light on those dim labyrinth where  
 Hope near imagined chasms is struggling with despair.

## XLVII.

'T is said, a mother dragged three children then  
 To those fierce flames which roast the eyes in the head,  
 And laught and died; and that unholy men,  
 Feasting like fiends upon the infidel dead,  
 Looked from their meal, and saw an Angel tread  
 The visible floor of heaven, and it was she!  
 And on that night one without doubt or dread  
 Came to the fire and said, "Stop, I am he!  
 Kill me!" — They burned them both with hellish mockery.

## XLVIII.

And one by one, that night, young maidens came,  
 Beauteous and calm, like shapes of living stone  
 Clothed in the light of dreams, and by the flame,  
 Which shrank as overgorged, they laid them down,  
 And sung a low sweet song, of which alone  
 One word was heard, and that was Liberty;  
 And that some kist their marble feet, with moan  
 Like love, and died; and then that they did die  
 With happy smiles, which sunk in white tranquillity.

## CANTO XI.

## I.

SHE saw me not — she heard me not — alone  
 Upon the mountain's dizzy brink she stood;

She spake not, breathed not, moved not — there was thrown  
 Over her look the shadow of a mood  
 Which only clothes the heart in solitude,  
 A thought of voiceless depth; — she stood alone;  
 Above, the heavens were spread; — below, the flood  
 Was murmuring in its caves; — the wind had blown  
 Her hair apart, through which her eyes and forehead shone.

## II.

A cloud was hanging o'er the western mountains;  
 Before its blue and moveless depth were flying  
 Gray mists poured forth from the un-resting fountains  
 Of darkness in the north: — the day was dying: —  
 Sudden, the sun shone forth, its beams were lying  
 Like boiling gold on ocean, strange to see,  
 And on the shattered vapors which, defying  
 The power of light in vain, tost restlessly  
 In the red Heaven, like wrecks in a tempestuous sea.

## III.

It was a stream of living beams, whose bank  
 On either side by the cloud's cleft was made;  
 And, where its chasms that flood of glory drank,  
 Its waves gusht forth like fire, and, as if swayed  
 By some mute tempest rolled on *her*: the shade  
 Of *her* bright image floated on the river  
 Of liquid light, which then did end and fade —  
 Her radiant shape upon its verge did shiver;

Aloft, her flowing hair like strings of  
flame did quiver.

## IV.

I stood beside her, but she saw me  
not —  
She lookt upon the sea, and skies,  
and earth;  
Rapture and love and admiration  
wrought  
A passion deeper far than tears or  
mirth,  
Or speech or gesture, or whate'er  
has birth  
From common joy; which with the  
speechless feeling  
That led her there united, and shot  
forth  
From her far eyes a light of deep re-  
vealing,  
All but her dearest self from my regard  
concealing.

## V.

Her lips were parted, and the measured  
breath  
Was now heard there; — her dark  
and intricate eyes,  
Orb within orb, deeper than sleep or  
death,  
Absorbed the glories of the burning  
skies,  
Which, mingling with her heart's  
deep ecstasies,  
Burst from her looks and gestures; —  
and a light  
Of liquid tenderness, like love, did  
rise  
From her whole frame, — an atmos-  
phere which quite  
Arrayed her in its beams, tremulous and  
soft and bright.

## VI.

She would have claspt me to her glow-  
ing frame;  
Those warm and odorous lips might  
soon have shed  
On mine the fragrance and the invis-  
ible flame

Which now the cold winds stole; —  
she would have laid  
Upon my languid heart her dearest  
head;  
I might have heard her voice, tender  
and sweet;  
Her eyes, mingling with mine, might  
soon have fed  
My soul with their own joy. — One  
moment yet  
I gazed — we parted then, never again  
to meet!

## VII.

Never but once to meet on Earth  
again!  
She heard me as I fled — her eager  
tone  
Sunk on my heart, and almost wove  
a chain  
Around my will to link it with her  
own,  
So that my stern resolve was almost  
gone.  
“I cannot reach thee! whither dost  
thou fly?  
My steps are faint. — Come back,  
thou dearest one —  
Return, ah me! return!” The wind  
past by  
On which those accents died, faint, far,  
and lingeringly.

## VIII.

Woe! Woe! that moonless midnight!  
— Want and Pest  
Were horrible, but one more fell  
doth rear,  
As in a hydra's swarming lair, its crest  
Eminent among those victims —  
even the Fear  
Of Hell: each girt by the hot  
atmosphere  
Of his blind agony, like a scorpion  
stung  
By his own rage upon his burning  
bier  
Of circling coals of fire; but still  
there clung  
One hope, like a keen sword on starting  
threads uphung: —



## IX.

Not death — death was no more refuge  
or rest;

Not life — it was despair to be! —  
not sleep,

For fiends and chasms of fire had dis-  
possest

All natural dreams; to wake was  
not to weep,

But to gaze, mad and pallid, at the  
leap

To which the Future, like a snaky  
scourge,

Or like some tyrant's eye which eye  
doth keep

Its withering beam upon its slaves,  
did urge

Their steps: — they heard the roar of  
Hell's sulphureous surge.

## X.

Each of that multitude, alone, and  
lost

To sense of outward things, one  
hope yet knew;

As on a foam-girt crag some seaman  
tost

Stares at the rising tide, or like the  
crew

Whilst now the ship is splitting  
through and through;

Each, if the tramp of a far steed was  
heard,

Started from sick despair, or if there  
flew

One murmur on the wind, or if some  
word,

Which none can gather yet, the distant  
crowd has stirred.

## XI.

Why became cheeks, wan with the  
kiss of death,

Paler from hope? they had sustained  
despair.

Why watcht those myriads with sus-  
pended breath,

Sleepless a second night? They  
are not here,

The victims, and hour by hour, a  
vision drear,

Warm corpses fall upon the clay-cold  
dead;

And even in death their lips are  
writhed with fear. —

The crowd is mute and moveless —  
overhead

Silent Arcturus shines — “Ha! hear'st  
thou not the tread

## XII.

“Of rushing feet? laughter? the shout,  
the scream

Of triumph not to be contained?  
See! hark!

They come, they come! give way!”  
Alas, ye deem

Falsely — 't is but a crowd of mani-  
acs stark,

Driven, like a troop of spectres,  
through the dark

From the chokt well, whence a bright  
death-fire sprung,

A lurid earth-star which dropt many  
a spark

From its blue train, and, spreading  
widely, clung

To their wild hair, like mist the top-  
most pines among.

## XIII.

And many, from the crowd collected  
there,

Joined that strange dance in fearful  
sympathies;

There was the silence of a long despair  
When the last echo of those terrible

cries  
Came from a distant street, like  
agonies

Stifled afar. — Before the Tyrant's  
throne

All night his aged senate sate, their  
eyes

In stony expectation fixt; when one  
Sudden before them stood, a Stranger

and alone.

## XIV.

Dark priests and haughty warriors  
gazed on him

With baffled wonder, for a hermit's  
 vest  
 Concealed his face; but, when he  
 spake, his tone,  
 Ere yet the matter did their thoughts  
 arrest, —  
 Earnest, benignant, calm, as from a  
 breast  
 Void of all hate or terror — made them  
 start;  
 For, as with gentle accents he ad-  
 drest  
 His speech to them, on each unwilling  
 heart  
 Unusual awe did fall — a spirit-quelling  
 dart.

## xv.

“Ye Princes of the Earth, ye sit  
 aghast  
 Amid the ruin which yourselves have  
 made,  
 Yes, Desolation heard your trumpet's  
 blast,  
 And sprang from sleep! — dark Ter-  
 ror has obeyed  
 Your bidding. Oh that I, whom ye  
 have made  
 Your foe, could set my dearest enemy  
 free  
 From pain and fear! But evil casts  
 a shade  
 Which cannot pass so soon, and Hate  
 must be  
 The nurse and parent still of an ill pro-  
 geny.

## xvi.

“Ye turn to Heaven for aid in your  
 distress;  
 Alas! that ye, the mighty and the  
 wise,  
 Who, if ye dared, might not aspire  
 to less  
 Than ye conceive of power, should  
 fear the lies  
 Which thou, and thou, didst frame  
 for mysteries  
 To blind your slaves: — consider your  
 own thought,  
 An empty and a cruel sacrifice  
 Ye now prepare for a vain idol wrought

Out of the fears and hate which vain  
 desires have brought.

## xvii.

“Ye seek for happiness — alas the  
 day!  
 Ye find it not in luxury nor in gold,  
 Nor in the fame, nor in the envied  
 sway,  
 For which, O willing slaves to Cust-  
 tom old,  
 Severe taskmistress, ye your hearts  
 have sold.  
 Ye seek for peace, and, when ye die,  
 to dream  
 No evil dreams: all mortal things  
 are cold  
 And senseless then; if aught survive,  
 I deem  
 It must be love and joy, for they im-  
 mortal seem.

## xviii.

“Fear not the future, weep not for the  
 past.  
 Oh could I win your ears to dare  
 be now  
 Glorious and great and calm! that ye  
 would cast  
 Into the dust those symbols of your  
 woe,  
 Purple, and gold, and steel! that ye  
 would go  
 Proclaiming to the nations whence ye  
 came  
 That Want, and Plague, and Fear,  
 from slavery flow;  
 And that mankind is free, and that the  
 shame  
 Of royalty and faith is lost in freedom's  
 fame!

## xix.

“If thus, 't is well: if not, I come to  
 say  
 That Laon — ” while the Stranger  
 spoke, among  
 The council sudden tumult and affray  
 Arose, for many of those warriors  
 young

Had on his eloquent accents fed and hung  
 Like bees on mountain-flowers: they  
 knew the truth,  
 And from their thrones in vindica-  
 tion sprung;  
 The men of faith and law then with-  
 out ruth  
 Drew forth their secret steel, and stabbed  
 each ardent youth.

## xx.

They stabbed them in the back, and  
 sneered — a slave  
 Who stood behind the throne those  
 corpses drew  
 Each to its bloody, dark, and secret  
 grave;  
 And one more daring raised his steel  
 anew  
 To pierce the Stranger. “What  
 hast thou to do  
 With me, poor wretch?” Calm, sol-  
 emn, and severe,  
 That voice unstrung his sinews, and  
 he threw  
 His dagger on the ground, and, pale  
 with fear,  
 Sate silently—his voice then did the  
 Stranger rear.

## xxi.

“It doth avail not that I weep for  
 ye —  
 Ye cannot change, since ye are old  
 and gray,  
 And ye have chosen your lot — your  
 fame must be  
 A book of blood, whence in a milder  
 day  
 Men shall learn truth, when ye are  
 wrapt in clay:  
 Now ye shall triumph. I am Laon’s  
 friend,  
 And him to your revenge will I be-  
 tray,  
 So ye concede one easy boon. Attend!  
 For now I speak of things which ye can  
 apprehend.

## xxii.

“There is a People mighty in its youth,  
 A land beyond the Oceans of the  
 West,  
 Where, though with rudest rites, Free-  
 dom and Truth  
 Are worshipt. From a glorious  
 Mother’s breast  
 Who, since high Athens fell, among  
 the rest  
 Sate like the Queen of Nations, but  
 in woe,  
 By inbred monsters outraged and  
 opprest,  
 Turns to her chainless child for succor  
 now,  
 It draws the milk of Power in Wisdom’s  
 fullest flow.

## xxiii.

“That land is like an eagle whose  
 young gaze  
 Feeds on the noontide beam, whose  
 golden plume  
 Floats moveless on the storm, and in  
 the blaze  
 Of sunrise gleams when Earth is  
 wrapt in gloom;  
 An epitaph of glory for the tomb  
 Of murdered Europe may thy fame be  
 made,  
 Great People! As the sands shalt  
 thou become;  
 Thy growth is swift as morn when  
 night must fade;  
 The multitudinous Earth shall sleep be-  
 neath thy shade.

## xxiv.

“Yes, in the desert, then, is built a  
 home  
 For Freedom! Genius is made strong  
 to rear  
 The monuments of man beneath the  
 dome  
 Of a new Heaven; myriads assem-  
 ble there  
 Whom the proud lords of man, in  
 rage or fear,

Drive from their wasted homes: the  
 boon I pray  
 Is this — that Cythna shall be con-  
 voyed there, —  
 Nay, start not at the name — America!  
 And then to you this night Laon will I  
 betray.

## xxv.

“With me do what you will. I am  
 your foe!”  
 The light of such a joy as makes the  
 stare  
 Of hungry snakes like living emeralds  
 glow  
 Shone in a hundred human eyes. —  
 “Where, where  
 Is Laon? Haste! fly! drag him  
 swiftly here!  
 We grant thy boon.” — “I put no  
 trust in ye;  
 Swear by the Power ye dread.” —  
 “We swear, we swear!”  
 The Stranger threw his vest back sud-  
 denly,  
 And smiled in gentle pride, and said,  
 “Lo! I am he!”

## CANTO XII.

## I.

THE transport of a fierce and mon-  
 strous gladness  
 Spread through the multitudinous  
 streets, fast flying  
 Upon the winds of fear; from his dull  
 madness  
 The starveling waked, and died in  
 joy; the dying,  
 Among the corpses in stark agony  
 lying,  
 Just heard the happy tidings, and in  
 hope  
 Closed their faint eyes; from house  
 to house replying  
 With loud acclaim, the living shook  
 Heaven's cope,  
 And filled the startled Earth with  
 echoes: morn did ope

## II.

Its pale eyes then; and lo! the long  
 array  
 Of guards in golden arms, and  
 priests beside,  
 Singing their bloody hymns, whose  
 garbs betray  
 The blackness of the faith it seems  
 to hide;  
 And see the Tyrant's gem-wrought  
 chariot glide  
 Among the gloomy cowls and glitter-  
 ing spears —  
 A Shape of light is sitting by his side,  
 A child most beautiful. I' the midst  
 appears  
 Laon — exempt alone from mortal hopes  
 and fears.

## III.

His head and feet are bare, his hands  
 are bound  
 Behind with heavy chains, yet none  
 do wreak  
 Their scoffs on him, though myriads  
 throng around;  
 There are no sneers upon his lip  
 which speak  
 That scorn or hate has made him  
 bold; his cheek  
 Resolve has not turned pale — his eyes  
 are mild  
 And calm, and, like the morn about  
 to break,  
 Smile on mankind — his heart seems  
 reconciled  
 To all things and itself, like a reposing  
 child.

## IV.

Tumult was in the soul of all beside,  
 Ill joy, or doubt, or fear; but those  
 who saw  
 Their tranquil victim pass felt wonder  
 glide  
 Into their brain, and became calm  
 with awe. —  
 See, the slow pageant near the pile  
 doth draw.  
 A thousand torches in the spacious  
 square,

Borne by the ready slaves of ruthless law,

Await the signal round: the morning fair

Is changed to a dim night by that unnatural glare.

## v.

And see, beneath a sun-bright canopy,  
Upon a platform level with the pile,  
The anxious Tyrant sit, enthroned on high,

Girt by the chieftains of the host:  
all smile

In expectation, but one child: the while

I, Laon, led by mutes, ascend my bier  
Of fire, and look around: each distant isle

Is dark in the bright dawn; towers far and near

Pierce like reposing flames the tremulous atmosphere.

## vi.

There was such silence through the host as when

An earthquake, trampling on some populous town,

Has crushed ten thousand with one tread, and men

Expect the second; all were mute but one,

That fairest child, who, bold with love, alone

Stood up before the King, without avail

Pleading for Laon's life — her stifled groan

Was heard — she trembled like one aspen pale

Among the gloomy pines of a Norwegian vale.

## vii.

What were his thoughts, linkt in the morning sun

Among those reptiles, stingless with delay,

Even like a tyrant's wrath? — The signal-gun

Roared — hark, again! In that dread pause he lay

As in a quiet dream — the slaves obey —

A thousand torches drop, — and hark! the last

Bursts on that awful silence; far away,

Millions, with hearts that beat both loud and fast,

Watch for the springing flame expectant and agast.

## viii.

They fly — the torches fall — a cry of fear

Has startled the triumphant! — they recede!

For, ere the cannon's roar has died, they hear

The tramp of hoofs like earthquake, and a steed,

Dark and gigantic, with the tempest's speed

Bursts through their ranks: a woman sits thereon,

Fairer, it seems, than aught that earth can breed,

Calm, radiant, like the phantom of the dawn,

A spirit from the caves of daylight wandering gone.

## ix.

All thought it was God's Angel come to sweep

The lingering guilty to their fiery grave;

The Tyrant from his throne in dread did leap, —

Her innocence his child from fear did save;

Scared by the faith they feigned, each priestly slave

Knelt for his mercy whom they served with blood,

And, like the reflux of a mighty wave

Suckt into the loud sea, the multitude

With crushing panic fled in terror's altered mood.

## x.

They pause, they blush, they gaze; —  
 a gathering shout  
 Bursts, like one sound from the ten  
 thousand streams  
 Of a tempestuous sea: — that sudden  
 rout  
 One checked who never in his  
 mildest dreams  
 Felt awe from grace or loveliness,  
 the seams  
 Of his rent heart so hard and cold a  
 creed  
 Had seared with blistering ice: —  
 but he misdeems  
 That he is wise whose wounds do  
 only bleed  
 Inly for self; thus thought the Iberian  
 Priest indeed,

## xi.

And others too thought he was wise  
 to see  
 In pain and fear and hate some-  
 thing divine;  
 In love and beauty, no divinity.  
 Now with a bitter smile, whose light  
 did shine  
 Like a fiend's hope upon his lips  
 and eyne,  
 He said, and the persuasion of that  
 sneer  
 Rallied his trembling comrades —  
 “Is it mine  
 To stand alone, when kings and  
 soldiers fear  
 A woman? Heaven has sent its other  
 victim here.”

## xii.

“Were it not impious,” said the  
 King, “to break  
 Our holy oath?” — “Impious to  
 keep it, say!”  
 Shrieked the exulting Priest. “Slaves,  
 to the stake  
 Bind her, and on my head the bur-  
 den lay  
 Of her just torments: — at the  
 Judgment-day

Will I stand up before the golden  
 throne  
 Of heaven, and cry, ‘To thee did  
 I betray  
 An Infidel! but for me she would  
 have known  
 Another moment’s joy! — the glory be  
 thine own!’”

## xiii.

They trembled, but replied not, nor  
 obeyed,  
 Pausing in breathless silence.  
 Cythna sprung  
 From her gigantic steed, who, like a  
 shade  
 Chased by the winds, those vacant  
 streets among  
 Fled tameless, as the brazen rein  
 she flung  
 Upon his neck, and kist his moonèd  
 brow.  
 A piteous sight, that one so fair and  
 young  
 The clasp of such a fearful death  
 should woo  
 With smiles of tender joy, as beamed  
 from Cythna now.

## xiv.

The warm tears burst in spite of faith  
 and fear  
 From many a tremulous eye, but,  
 like soft dews  
 Which feed Spring’s earliest buds,  
 hung gathered there,  
 Frozen by doubt, — alas! they could  
 not choose  
 But weep; for, when her faint  
 limbs did refuse  
 To climb the pyre, upon the mutes  
 she smiled;  
 And with her eloquent gestures,  
 and the hues  
 Of her quick lips, even as a weary  
 child  
 Wins sleep from some fond nurse with  
 its caresses mild,

## xv.

She won them, though unwilling, her  
 to bind

Near me, among the snakes. When  
 there had fled  
 One soft reproach that was most  
 thrilling kind,  
 She smiled on me, and nothing then  
 we said,  
 But each upon the other's counte-  
 nance fed  
 Looks of insatiate love; the mighty  
 veil  
 Which doth divide the living and  
 the dead  
 Was almost rent, the world grew dim  
 and pale, —  
 All light in Heaven or Earth beside our  
 love did fail.

## XVI.

Yet — yet — one brief relapse, like  
 the last beam  
 Of dying flames, the stainless air  
 around  
 Hung silent and serene — a blood-red  
 gleam  
 Burst upwards, hurling fiercely from  
 the ground  
 The globed smoke; I heard the  
 mighty sound  
 Of its uprise, like a tempestuous  
 ocean;  
 And through its chasms I saw as  
 in a swound  
 The Tyrant's child fall without life or  
 motion  
 Before his throne, subdued by some  
 unseen emotion. —

## XVII.

And is this death? — The pyre has  
 disappeared,  
 The Pestilence, the Tyrant, and the  
 throng;  
 The flames grow silent — slowly there  
 is heard  
 The music of a breath-suspending  
 song,  
 Which, like the kiss of love when  
 life is young,  
 Steeps the faint eyes in darkness sweet  
 and deep;  
 With ever-changing notes it floats  
 along,

Till on my passive soul there seemed  
 to creep  
 A melody, like waves on wrinkled sands  
 that leap.

## XVIII.

The warm touch of a soft and tremu-  
 lous hand  
 Wakened me then; lo! Cythna sate  
 reclined  
 Beside me, on the waved and golden  
 sand  
 Of a clear pool, upon a bank o'er-  
 twined  
 With strange and star-bright flowers  
 which to the wind  
 Breathed divine odor; high above  
 was spread  
 The emerald heaven of trees of un-  
 known kind,  
 Whose moonlike blooms and bright  
 fruit overhead  
 A shadow which was light upon the  
 waters shed.

## XIX.

And round about sloped many a lawny  
 mountain,  
 With incense-bearing forests, and vast  
 caves  
 Of marble radiance, to that mighty  
 fountain;  
 And, where the flood its own bright  
 margin laves,  
 Their echoes talk with its eternal  
 waves,  
 Which from the depths whose jagged  
 caverns breed  
 Their unreposing strife it lifts and  
 heaves, —  
 Till through a chasm of hills they roll,  
 and feed  
 A river deep, which flies with smooth  
 but arrowy speed.

## XX.

As we sate gazing in a trance of  
 wonder,  
 A boat approacht, borne by the  
 musical air

Along the waves which sung and sparkled under  
 Its rapid keel — a wingèd shape  
 sate there,  
 A child with silver-shining wings,  
 so fair  
 That, as her bark did through the  
 waters glide,  
 The shadow of the lingering waves  
 did wear  
 Light, as from starry beams; from  
 side to side  
 While veering to the wind her plumes  
 the bark did guide.

## XXI.

The boat was one curved shell of  
 hollow pearl,  
 Almost translucent with the light  
 divine  
 Of her within; the prow and stern did  
 curl,  
 Hornèd on high, like the young  
 moon supine,  
 When o'er dim twilight mountains  
 dark with pine  
 It floats upon the sunset's sea of  
 beams,  
 Whose golden waves in many a  
 purple line  
 Fade fast, till, borne on sunlight's  
 ebbing streams,  
 Dilating, on earth's verge the sunken  
 meteor gleams.

## XXII.

Its keel has struck the sands beside  
 our feet. —  
 Then Cythna turned to me, and  
 from her eyes,  
 Which swam with unshed tears, a look  
 more sweet  
 Than happy love, a wild and glad  
 surprise,  
 Glanced as she spake: "Ay, this  
 is Paradise,  
 And not a dream, and we are all  
 united!  
 Lo! that is mine own child, who in  
 the guise  
 Of madness came, like day to one  
 benighted

In lonesome woods; my heart is now  
 too well requited!"

## XXIII.

And then she wept aloud, and in her  
 arms  
 Clasped that bright Shape, less mar-  
 vellously fair  
 Than her own human hues and living  
 charms;  
 Which, as she leaned in passion's  
 silence there,  
 Breathed warmth on the cold bosom  
 of the air,  
 Which seemed to blush and tremble  
 with delight;  
 The glossy darkness of her stream-  
 ing hair  
 Fell o'er that snowy child, and  
 wrapt from sight  
 The fond and long embrace which did  
 their hearts unite.

## XXIV.

Then the bright child, the plumèd  
 Seraph, came,  
 And fixt its blue and beaming eyes  
 on mine,  
 And said: "I was disturbed by tremu-  
 lous shame  
 When first we met, yet knew that I  
 was thine,  
 From the same hour in which thy  
 lips divine  
 Kindled a clinging dream within my  
 brain,  
 Which ever waked when I might  
 sleep, to twine  
 Thine image with *her* memory dear —  
 again  
 We meet; exempted now from mortal  
 fear or pain.

## XXV.

"When the consuming flames had  
 wrapt ye round,  
 The hope which I had cherisht  
 went away;  
 I fell in agony on the senseless ground,  
 And hid mine eyes in dust, and far  
 astray



My mind was gone, when, bright  
 like dawning day,  
 The Spectre of the Plague before me  
 flew,  
 And breathed upon my lips, and  
 seemed to say,  
 'They wait for thee, beloved!' — then  
 I knew  
 The death-mark on my breast, and be-  
 came calm anew.

## XXVI.

"It was the calm of love — for I was  
 dying.  
 I saw the black and half-extin-  
 guished pyre  
 In its own gray and shrunken ashes  
 lying;  
 The pitchy smoke of the departed  
 fire  
 Still hung in many a hollow dome  
 and spire  
 Above the towers, like night; beneath  
 whose shade,  
 Awed by the ending of their own  
 desire,  
 The armies stood; a vacancy was  
 made  
 In expectation's depth, and so they  
 stood dismayed.

## XXVII.

"The frightful silence of that altered  
 mood  
 The tortures of the dying clove alone,  
 Till one uprose among the multitude,  
 And said: 'The flood of time is  
 rolling on;  
 We stand upon its brink, whilst *they*  
 are gone  
 To glide in peace down death's mys-  
 terious stream.  
 Have ye done well? They moulder,  
 flesh and bone,  
 Who might have made this life's en-  
 venomed dream  
 A sweeter draught than ye will ever  
 taste, I deem.

## XXVIII.

"These perish as the good and great  
 of yore

Have perisht, and their murderers  
 will repent.  
 Yes, vain and barren tears shall flow  
 before  
 Yon smoke has faded from the firma-  
 ment, —  
 Even for this cause, that ye, who  
 must lament  
 The death of those that made this  
 world so fair,  
 Cannot recal them now; but there  
 is lent  
 To man the wisdom of a high despair  
 When such can die, and he live on and  
 linger here.

## XXIX.

"Ay, ye may fear — not now the  
 Pestilence,  
 From fabled hell as by a charm  
 withdrawn, —  
 All power and faith must pass, since  
 calmly hence  
 In pain and fire have unbelievers  
 gone;  
 And ye must sadly turn away, and  
 moan  
 In secret, to his home each one return-  
 ing,  
 And to long ages shall this hour be  
 known;  
 And slowly shall its memory, ever  
 burning,  
 Fill this dark night of things with an  
 eternal morning.

## XXX.

"For me the world is grown too  
 void and cold,  
 Since hope pursues immortal destiny  
 With steps thus slow — therefore shall  
 ye behold  
 How those who love, yet fear not,  
 dare to die;  
 Tell to your children this!' Then  
 suddenly  
 He sheathed a dagger in his heart, and  
 fell;  
 My brain grew dark in death, and  
 yet to me  
 There came a murmur from the crowd  
 to tell

Of deep and mighty change which suddenly befel.

XXXI.

“Then suddenly I stood, a wingèd Thought,  
Before the immortal Senate, and the seat

Of that star-shining Spirit, whence is wrought

The strength of its dominion, good and great,

The better Genius of this world’s estate.

His realm around one mighty Fane is spread,

Elysian islands bright and fortunate,  
Calm dwellings of the free and happy dead,

Where I am sent to lead.” These wingèd words she said,

XXXII.

And with the silence of her eloquent smile

Bade us embark in her divine canoe.

Then at the helm we took our seat, the while

Above her head those plumes of dazzling hue

Into the wind’s invisible stream she threw,

Sitting beside the prow: like gossamer

On the swift breath of morn, the vessel flew

O’er the bright whirlpools of that fountain fair,

Whose shores receded fast whilst we seemed lingering there.

XXXIII.

Till down that mighty stream, dark, calm, and fleet,

Between a chasm of cedarn mountains riven,

Chased by the thronging winds whose viewless feet,

As swift as twinkling beams, had under Heaven

From woods and waves wild sounds and odors driven,

The boat fled visibly — three nights and days,

Borne like a cloud through morn, and noon, and even,

We sailed along the winding watery ways

Of the vast stream, a long and labyrinthine maze.

XXXIV.

A scene of joy and wonder to behold  
That river’s shapes and shadows changing ever,

When the broad sunrise filled with deepening gold

Its whirlpools where all hues did spread and quiver,

And where melodious falls did burst and shiver

Among rocks clad with flowers, the foam and spray

Sparkled like stars upon the sunny river;

Or, when the moonlight poured a holier day,

One vast and glittering lake around green islands lay.

XXXV.

Morn, noon, and even, that boat of pearl outran

The streams which bore it, like the arrowy cloud

Of tempest, or the speedier thought of man

Which flieth forth and cannot make abode;

Sometimes through forests, deep like night, we glode,

Between the walls of mighty mountains crowned

With Cyclopean piles, whose turrets proud,

The homes of the departed; dimly frowned

O’er the bright waves which girt their dark foundations round.

XXXVI.

Sometimes between the wide and flowering meadows

Mile after mile we sailed, and 't was  
 delight  
 To see far off the sunbeams chase the  
 shadows  
 Over the grass: sometimes beneath  
 the night  
 Of wide and vaulted caves whose  
 roofs were bright  
 With starry gems we fled, whilst from  
 their deep  
 And dark-green chasms shades  
 beautiful and white  
 Amid sweet sounds across our path  
 would sweep,  
 Like swift and lovely dreams that walk  
 the waves of sleep.

## XXXVII.

And ever as we sailed our minds were  
 full  
 Of love and wisdom, which would  
 overflow  
 In converse wild and sweet and won-  
 derful,  
 And in quick smiles whose light  
 would come and go  
 Like music o'er wide waves, and in  
 the flow  
 Of sudden tears, and in the mute  
 caress —  
 For a deep shade was cleft, and we  
 did know  
 That virtue, though obscured on Earth,  
 not less  
 Survives all mortal change in lasting  
 loveliness.

## XXXVIII.

Three days and nights we sailed, as  
 thought and feeling  
 Number delightful hours — for  
 through the sky  
 The spherèd lamps of day and night,  
 revealing  
 New changes and new glories, rolled  
 on high,  
 Sun, moon, and moonlike lamps,  
 the progeny  
 Of a diviner Heaven, serene and fair:  
 On the fourth day, wild as a wind-  
 wrought sea

The stream became, and fast and faster  
 bare  
 The spirit-wingèd boat, steadily speed-  
 ing there.

## XXXIX.

Steady and swift, where the waves  
 rolled like mountains  
 Within the vast ravine whose rifts  
 did pour  
 Tumultuous floods from their ten-thou-  
 sand fountains,  
 The thunder of whose earth-uplift-  
 ing roar  
 Made the air sweep in whirlwinds  
 from the shore,  
 Calm as a shade, the boat of that fair  
 child  
 Securely fled that rapid stress before,  
 Amid the topmost spray and sunbows  
 wild  
 Wreathed in the silver mist: in joy and  
 pride we smiled.

## XL.

The torrent of that wide and raging  
 river  
 Is past, and our aërial speed sus-  
 pended.  
 We look behind; a golden mist did  
 quiver  
 Where its wild surges with the lake  
 were blended:  
 Our bark hung there, as on a line  
 suspended  
 Between two heavens, that windless  
 waveless lake  
 Which four great cataracts from four  
 vales, attended  
 By mists, aye feed: from rocks and  
 clouds they break,  
 And of that azure sea a silent refuge  
 make.

## XLI.

Motionless resting on the lake awhile,  
 I saw its marge of snow-bright  
 mountains rear  
 Their peaks aloft, I saw each radiant  
 isle,

And in the midst, afar, even like a  
 sphere  
 Hung in one hollow sky, did there  
 appear  
 The Temple of the Spirit; on the  
 sound  
 Which issued thence drawn nearer  
 and more near,  
 Like the swift moon this glorious earth  
 around,  
 The charmed boat approached, and  
 there its haven found.

NOTE ON THE REVOLT OF ISLAM,  
 BY MRS. SHELLEY.

SHELLEY possessed two remarkable qualities of intellect, — a brilliant imagination, and a logical exactness of reason. His inclinations led him (he fancied) almost alike to poetry and metaphysical discussions. I say "he fancied," because I believe the former to have been paramount, and that it would have gained the mastery even had he struggled against it. However, he said that he deliberated at one time whether he should dedicate himself to poetry or metaphysics; and, resolving on the former, he educated himself for it, discarding in a great measure his philosophical pursuits, and engaging himself in the study of the poets of Greece, Italy, and England. To these may be added a constant perusal of portions of the Old Testament — the Psalms, the Book of Job, the Prophet Isaiah, and others, the sublime poetry of which filled him with delight.

As a poet, his intellect and compositions were powerfully influenced by exterior circumstances, and especially by his place of abode. He was very fond of travelling, and ill-health increased this restlessness. The sufferings occasioned by a cold English winter made him pine, especially when our colder spring arrived, for a more genial climate. In 1816 he again visited Switzerland, and rented a house on the banks of the Lake of Geneva; and many a day, in cloud or sunshine, was passed alone in his boat — sailing as the wind listed, or weltering on

the calm waters. The majestic aspect of Nature ministered such thoughts as he afterwards enwove in verse. His lines on the Bridge of the Arve, and his "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty," were written at this time. Perhaps during this summer his genius was checked by association with another poet whose nature was utterly dissimilar to his own, yet who, in the poem he wrote at that time, gave tokens that he shared for a period the more abstract and etherealized inspiration of Shelley. The saddest events awaited his return to England; but such was his fear to wound the feelings of others that he never expressed the anguish he felt, and seldom gave vent to the indignation roused by the persecutions he underwent; while the course of deep unexpressed passion, and the sense of injury, engendered the desire to embody themselves in forms defecated of all the weakness and evil which cling to real life.

He chose therefore for his hero a youth nourished in dreams of liberty, some of whose actions are in direct opposition to the opinions of the world; but who is animated throughout by an ardent love of virtue, and a resolution to confer the boons of political and intellectual freedom on his fellow-creatures. He created for this youth a woman such as he delighted to imagine — full of enthusiasm for the same objects; and they both, with will unvanquished, and the deepest sense of the justice of their cause, met adversity and death. There exists in this poem a memorial of a friend of his youth. The character of the old man who liberates Laon from his tower-prison, and tends on him in sickness, is founded on that of Doctor Lind, who, when Shelley was at Eton, had often stood by to befriend and support him, and whose name he never mentioned without love and veneration.

During the year 1817 we were established at Marlow in Buckinghamshire. Shelley's choice of abode was fixed chiefly by this town being at no great distance from London, and its neighborhood to the Thames. The poem was written in his boat, as it floated under the beech-groves of Bisham, or during wanderings in the

neighboring country, which is distinguished for peculiar beauty. The chalk hills break into cliffs that overhang the Thames, or form valleys clothed with beech; the wilder portion of the country is rendered beautiful by exuberant vegetation; and the cultivated part is peculiarly fertile. With all this wealth of Nature, which, either in the form of gentlemen's parks or soil dedicated to agriculture, flourishes around, Marlow was inhabited (I hope it is altered now) by a very poor population. The women are lacemakers, and lose their health by sedentary labor, for which they were very ill paid. The Poor-laws ground to the dust not only the paupers, but those who had risen just above that state, and were obliged to pay poor-rates. The changes produced by peace following a long war, and a bad harvest, brought with them the most heart-rending evils to the poor. Shelley afforded what alleviation he could. In the winter, while bringing out his poem, he had a severe attack of ophthalmia, caught while visiting the poor cottages. I mention these things — for this minute and active sympathy with his fellow-creatures gives a thousand-fold interest to his speculations, and stamps with reality his pleadings for the human race.

The poem, bold in its opinions and uncompromising in their expression, met with many censurers, not only among those who allow of no virtue but such as supports the cause they espouse, but even among those whose opinions were similar to his own. I extract a portion of a letter written in answer to one of these friends. It best details the impulses of Shelley's mind, and his motives: it was written with entire unreserve; and is therefore a precious monument of his own opinion of his powers, of the purity of his designs, and the ardor with which he clung, in adversity and through the valley of the shadow of death, to views from which he believed the permanent happiness of mankind must eventually spring.

“MARLOW, Dec. 11, 1817.

“I have read and considered all that you say about my general powers, and

the particular instance of the poem in which I have attempted to develop them. Nothing can be more satisfactory to me than the interest which your admonitions express. But I think you are mistaken in some points with regard to the peculiar nature of my powers, whatever be their amount. I listened with deference and self-suspicion to your censures of ‘The Revolt of Islam;’ but the productions of mine which you commend hold a very low place in my own esteem; and this reassures me, in some degree at least. The poem was produced by a series of thoughts which filled my mind with unbounded and sustained enthusiasm. I felt the precariousness of my life, and I engaged in this task, resolved to leave some record of myself. Much of what the volume contains was written with the same feeling — as real, though not so prophetic — as the communications of a dying man. I never presumed indeed to consider it anything approaching to faultless; but, when I consider contemporary productions of the same apparent pretensions, I own I was filled with confidence. I felt that it was in many respects a genuine picture of my own mind. I felt that the sentiments were true, not assumed. And in this have I long believed that my power consists; in sympathy, and that part of the imagination which relates to sentiment and contemplation. I am formed, if for anything not in common with the herd of mankind, to apprehend minute and remote distinctions of feeling, whether relative to external nature or the living beings which surround us, and to communicate the conceptions which result from considering either the moral or the material universe as a whole. Of course, I believe these faculties, which perhaps comprehend all that is sublime in man, to exist very imperfectly in my own mind. But, when you advert to my Chancery-paper, a cold, forced, unimpassioned, insignificant piece of cramped and cautious argument, and to the little scrap about ‘Mandeville,’ which expressed my feelings indeed, but cost scarcely two minutes’ thought to express, as specimens of

my powers more favorable than that which grew as it were from 'the agony and bloody sweat' of intellectual travail; surely I must feel that, in some manner, either I am mistaken in believing that I have any talent at all, or you in the selection of the specimens of it. Yet, after all, I cannot but be conscious, in much of what I write, of an absence of that tranquillity which is the attribute and accompaniment of power. This feeling alone would make your most kind and wise admonitions, on the subject of the economy of intellectual force, valuable to me. And, if I live, or if I see any trust in coming years, doubt not but that I shall do something, whatever it may be, which a serious and earnest estimate of my powers will suggest to me, and which will be in every respect accommodated to their utmost limits."

## PRINCE ATHANASE.<sup>1</sup>

### A FRAGMENT.

#### PART I.

**THERE** was a youth, who, as with toil  
and travel,  
Had grown quite weak and gray before  
his time;  
Nor any could the restless griefs unravel  
Which burned within him, withering up  
his prime

<sup>1</sup> The idea Shelley had formed of Prince Athanase was a good deal modelled on *Alastor*. In the first sketch of the poem, he named it *Pandemos and Urania*. Athanase seeks through the world the One whom he may love. He meets, in the ship in which he is embarked, a lady who appears to him to embody his ideal of love and beauty. But she proves to be Pandemos, or the earthly and unworthy Venus; who, after disappointing his cherished dreams and hopes, deserts him. Athanase, crushed by sorrow, pines and dies. "On his deathbed, the lady who can really reply to his soul comes and kisses his lips." (*The Deathbed of Athanase*.) The poet describes her [in the words of the final fragment, p. 231]. This slender note is all we have to aid our imagination in shaping out the form of the poem, such as its author imagined. [Mrs. Shelley's Note.]

And goading him, like fiends, from land  
to land.

Not his the load of any secret crime,

For naught of ill his heart could under-  
stand,

But pity and wild sorrow for the same;—  
Not his the thirst for glory or command

Baffled with blast of hope-consuming  
shame;

Nor evil joys which fire the vulgar breast  
And quench in speedy smoke its feeble  
flame,

Had left within his soul their dark un-  
rest:

Nor what religion fables of the grave  
Feared he,—Philosophy's accepted guest.

For none than he a purer heart could  
have,

Or that loved good more for itself alone;  
Of naught in heaven or earth was he the  
slave.

What sorrow strange, and shadowy, and  
unknown,

Sent him, a hopeless wanderer, through  
mankind?—

If with a human sadness he did groan,

He had a gentle yet aspiring mind;  
Just, innocent, with varied learning fed,  
And such a glorious consolation find

In others' joy, when all their own is  
dead:

He loved, and labored for his kind in  
grief,

And yet, unlike all others, it is said,

That from such toil he never found relief.  
Although a child of fortune and of power,  
Of an ancestral name the orphan chief,

His soul had wedded Wisdom, and her  
dower

Is love and justice, clothed in which he  
sate

Apart from men, as in a lonely tower,

Pitying the tumult of their dark estate —  
 Yet even in youth did he not e'er abuse  
 The strength of wealth or thought, to  
 consecrate

Those false opinions which the harsh  
 rich use

To blind the world they furnish for their  
 pride;

Nor did he hold from any man his dues,

But like a steward in honest dealings tried  
 With those who toiled and wept, the  
 poor and wise,

His riches and his cares he did divide.

Fearless he was, and scorning all dis-  
 guise,

What he dared do or think, though men  
 might start,

He spoke with mild yet unaverted eyes;

Liberal he was of soul, and frank of  
 heart,

And to his many friends — all loved him  
 well —

Whate'er he knew or felt he would im-  
 part,

If words he found those inmost thoughts  
 to tell;

If not, he smiled or wept; and his weak  
 foes

He neither spurned nor hated, though  
 with fell

And mortal hate their thousand voices  
 rose,

They past like aimless arrows from his  
 ear —

Nor did his heart or mind its portal close

To those, or them, or any whom life's  
 sphere

May comprehend within its wide array.

What sadness made that vernal spirit  
 sere?

He knew not. Though his life, day  
 after day,

Was failing like an un replenisht stream,  
 Though his eyes a cloud and burden

lay,

Through which his soul, like Vesper's  
 serene beam

Piercing the chasms of ever rising clouds,  
 Shone, softly burning; though his lips  
 did seem

Like reeds which quiver in impetuous  
 floods;

And through his sleep, and o'er each  
 waking hour,

Thoughts after thoughts, unresting mul-  
 titudes,

Were driven within him, by some secret  
 power,

Which bade them blaze, and live, and  
 roll afar,

Like lights and sounds, from haunted  
 tower to tower

O'er castled mountains borne, when  
 tempest's war

Is levied by the night-contending winds  
 And the pale dalesmen watch with eager

ear; —

Though such were in his spirit, as the  
 fiends

Which wake and feed on everliving woe,—  
 What was this grief, which ne'er in other  
 minds

A mirror found,— he knew not — none  
 could know;

But on whome'er might question him he  
 turned

The light of his frank eyes, as if to show,

He knew not of the grief within that  
 burned,

But asked forbearance with a mournful  
 look;

Or spoke in words from which none ever  
 learned

The cause of his disquietude; or shook  
 With spasms of silent passion; or turned

pale:

So that his friends soon rarely undertook

To stir his secret pain without avail; —  
 For all who knew and loved him then

perceived

That there was drawn an adamantine  
veil

Between his heart and mind, — both un-  
relieved

Wrought in his brain and bosom separate  
strife.

Some said that he was mad, others  
believed

That memories of an antenatal life  
Made this, where now he dwelt, a penal  
hell;

And others said that such mysterious grief

From God's displeasure, like a darkness,  
fell

On souls like his which owned no higher  
law

Than love; love calm, steadfast, invin-  
cible

By mortal fear or supernatural awe;  
And others, — "'T is the shadow of a  
dream

Which the veiled eye of memory never  
saw

"But through the soul's abyss, like  
some dark stream

Through shattered mines and caverns  
underground

Rolls, shaking its foundations; and no  
beam

"Of joy may rise, but it is quencht  
and drowned

In the dim whirlpools of this dream  
obscure.

Soon its exhausted waters will have found

"A lair of rest beneath thy spirit pure,  
O Athanase! — in one so good and great,  
Evil or tumult cannot long endure."

So spake they: idly of another's state  
Babbling vain words and fond philoso-  
phy;

This was their consolation; such debate

Men held with one another; nor did he  
Like one who labors with a human woe  
Decline this talk: as if its theme might be

Another, not himself, he to and fro  
Questioned and canvast it with subtlest  
wit,

And none but those who loved him best  
could know

That which he knew not, how it galled  
and bit

His weary mind, this converse vain and  
cold;

For like an eyeless nightmare grief did sit

Upon his being; a snake which fold by  
fold

Prest out the life of life, a clinging  
fiend

Which clencht him if he stirred with  
deadlier hold; —

And so his grief remained — let it remain  
— untold.<sup>1</sup>

## PART II.

### FRAGMENT I.

PRINCE ATHANASE had one belovèd  
friend,

An old, old man, with hair of silver  
white,

And lips where heavenly smiles would  
hang and blend

With his wise words; and eyes whose  
arrowy light

Shone like the reflex of a thousand  
minds.

He was the last whom superstition's  
blight

Had spared in Greece — the blight that  
cramps and blinds, —

And in his olive bower at CEnoe  
Had sate from earliest youth. Like one  
who finds

<sup>1</sup> The Author was pursuing a fuller develop-  
ment of the ideal character of Athanase, when it  
struck him that in an attempt at extreme refine-  
ment and analysis, his conceptions might be  
betrayed into the assuming a morbid character.  
The reader will judge whether he is a loser or  
gainer by the difference. [Shelley's Note.]



A fertile island in a barren sea,  
 One mariner who has survived his mates  
 Many a drear month in a great ship —  
 so he

With soul-sustaining songs, and sweet  
 debates  
 Of ancient lore, there fed his lonely  
 being: —

“The mind becomes that which it con-  
 templates,” —

And thus Zonoras, by forever seeing  
 Their bright creations, grew like wisest  
 men;  
 And when he heard the crash of nations  
 fleeing

A bloodier power than ruled thy ruins  
 then,  
 O sacred Hellas! many weary years  
 He wandered, till the path of Laian's glen

Was grass-grown — and the unremem-  
 bered tears  
 Were dry in Laian for their honored  
 chief,  
 Who fell in Byzant, pierced by Moslem  
 spears: —

And as the lady lookt with faithful  
 grief  
 From her high lattice o'er the rugged  
 path,  
 Where she once saw that horseman toil,  
 with brief

And blighting hope, who with the news  
 of death  
 Struck body and soul as with a mortal  
 blight,  
 She saw beneath the chestnuts, far be-  
 neath,

An old man toiling up, a weary wight;  
 And soon within her hospitable hall  
 She saw his white hairs glittering in the  
 light

Of the wood fire, and round his shoul-  
 ders fall;  
 And his wan visage and his withered mien  
 Yet calm and gentle and majestic.

And Athanase, her child, who must have  
 been  
 Then three years old, sate opposite and  
 gazed  
 In patient silence.

## FRAGMENT II.

SUCH was Zonoras; and as daylight finds  
 One amaranth glittering on the path of  
 frost,  
 When autumn nights have nipt all  
 weaker kinds,

Thus through his age, dark, cold, and  
 tempest-tost,  
 Shone truth upon Zonoras; and he filled  
 From fountains pure, nigh overgrown  
 and lost,

The spirit of Prince Athanase, a child,  
 With soul-sustaining songs of ancient lore  
 And philosophic wisdom, clear and mild.

And sweet and subtle talk they evermore,  
 The pupil and the master, shared; until,  
 Sharing that undiminishable store,

The youth, as shadows on a grassy hill  
 Outrun the winds that chase them, soon  
 outran  
 His teacher, and did teach with native  
 skill

Strange truths and new to that experi-  
 enced man;  
 Still they were friends, as few have ever  
 been  
 Who mark the extremes of life's dis-  
 cordant span.

So in the caverns of the forest green,  
 Or by the rocks of echoing ocean hoar,  
 Zonoras and Prince Athanase were seen

By summer woodmen; and when win-  
 ter's roar  
 Sounded o'er earth and sea its blast of  
 war,  
 The Balearic fisher, driven from shore,

Hanging upon the peakèd wave afar,  
Then saw their lamp from Laian's turret  
gleam,  
Piercing the stormy darkness like a star,

Which pours beyond the sea one stead-  
fast beam,

Whilst all the constellations of the sky  
Seemed reeling through the storm. They  
did but seem —

For, lo! the wintry clouds are all gone by,  
And bright Arcturus through yon pines  
is glowing,  
And far o'er southern waves, immovably

Belted Orion hangs — warm light is  
flowing  
From the young moon into the sunset's  
chasm. —

“O, summer eve! with power divine,  
bestowing

“On thine own bird the sweet enthu-  
siasm  
Which overflows in notes of liquid glad-  
ness,

Filling the sky like light! How many  
a spasm

“Of fevered brains, opprest with grief  
and madness,  
Were lulled by thee, delightful nightin-  
gale!

And these soft waves, murmuring a gen-  
tle sadness,

“And the far sighings of yon piny dale  
Made vocal by some wind, we feel not  
here, —

I bear alone what nothing may avail

“To lighten — a strange load!” — No  
human ear

Heard this lament; but o'er the visage  
wan

Of Athanase, a ruffling atmosphere

Of dark emotion, a swift shadow ran,  
Like wind upon some forest-bosomed  
lake,

Glassy and dark. — And that divine old  
man

Beheld his mystic friend's whole being  
shake,  
Even where its inmost depths were  
gloomiest —  
And with a calm and measured voice he  
spake,

And with a soft and equal pressure,  
prest

That cold lean hand: — “Dost thou re-  
member yet

When the curved moon then lingering in  
the west

“Paused in yon waves her mighty horns  
to wet,

How in those beams we walkt, half  
resting on the sea?

'Tis just one year — sure thou dost not  
forget —

“Then Plato's words of light in thee  
and me

Lingered like moonlight in the moonless  
east,

For we had just then read — thy memory

“Is faithful now — the story of the feast;  
And Agathon and Diotima seemed  
From death and dark forgetfulness re-  
least.

#### FRAGMENT III.

'T WAS at the season when the Earth up-  
springs

From slumber, as a spherèd angel's child,  
Shadowing its eyes with green and gold-  
en wings,

Stands up before its mother bright and  
mild,

Of whose soft voice the air expectant  
seems —

So stood before the sun, which shone  
and smiled

To see it rise thus joyous from its dreams,  
The fresh and radiant Earth. The hoary  
grove

Waxt green — and flowers burst forth  
like starry beams; —

The grass in the warm sun did start and  
move,  
And sea-buds burst beneath the waves  
serene:—  
How many a one, though none be near  
to love,

Loves then the shade of his own soul,  
half seen  
In any mirror— or the spring's young  
minions,  
The wingèd leaves amid the copses  
green;—

How many a spirit then puts on the  
pinions  
Of fancy, and outstrips the lagging blast,  
And his own steps—and over wide  
dominions

Sweeps in his dream-drawn chariot, far  
and fast,  
More fleet than storms—the wide world  
shrinks below,  
When winter and despondency are  
past.

'T was at this season that Prince Athanase  
Past the white Alps—those eagle-baf-  
fling mountains  
Slept in their shrouds of snow;— beside  
the ways

The waterfalls were voiceless—for their  
fountains  
Were changed to mines of sunless crystal  
now,  
Or by the curdling winds—like brazen  
wings

Which clanged along the mountain's  
marble brow—  
Warpt into adamantine fretwork, hung  
And filled with frozen light the chasm  
below.

## FRAGMENT IV.

**THOU** art the wine whose drunkenness  
is all  
We can desire, O Love! and happy souls,

Ere from thy vine the leaves of autumn  
fall,

Catch thee, and feed from their o'er-  
flowing bowls  
Thousands who thirst for thy ambrosial  
dew;—  
Thou art the radiance which where  
ocean rolls

Investest it; and when the heavens are  
blue  
Thou fillest them; and when the earth  
is fair  
The shadow of thy moving wings imbue

Its deserts and its mountains, till they  
wear  
Beauty like some bright robe;— thou  
ever soarest  
Among the towers of men, and as soft air

In spring, which moves the unawakened  
forest,  
Clothing with leaves its branches bare  
and bleak,  
Thou floatest among men; and aye im-  
plorest

That which from thee they should im-  
plore:— the weak  
Alone kneel to thee, offering up the  
hearts  
The strong have broken— yet where  
shall any seek

A garment whom thou clothest not?

## ANOTHER FRAGMENT.

**HER** hair was brown, her spherèd eyes  
were brown,  
And in their dark and liquid moisture  
swam,  
Like the dim orb of the eclipsèd moon;

Yet when the spirit flasht beneath,  
there came  
The light from them, as when tears of  
delight  
Double the western planet's serene flame

## ROSALIND AND HELEN.

## A MODERN ECLOGUE.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE story of "Rosalind and Helen" is, undoubtedly, not an attempt in the highest style of poetry. It is in no degree calculated to excite profound meditation; and if, by interesting the affections and amusing the imagination, it awakens a certain ideal melancholy favorable to the reception of more important impressions, it will produce in the reader all that the writer experienced in the composition. I resigned myself, as I wrote, to the impulse of the feelings which moulded the conception of the story; and this impulse determined the pauses of a measure, which only pretends to be regular inasmuch as it corresponds with, and expresses, the irregularity of the imaginations which inspired it.

I do not know which of the few scattered poems I left in England will be selected by my bookseller to add to this collection. One,<sup>1</sup> which I sent from Italy, was written after a day's excursion among those lovely mountains which surround what was once the retreat, and where is now the sepulchre, of Petrarch. If any one is inclined to condemn the insertion of the introductory lines, which image forth the sudden relief of a state of deep despondency by the radiant visions disclosed by the sudden burst of an Italian sunrise in autumn on the highest peak of those delightful mountains, I can only offer as my excuse, that they were not erased at the request of a dear friend, with whom added years of intercourse only add to my apprehension of its value, and who would have had more right than any one to complain that she has not been able to extinguish in me the very power of delineating sadness.

NAPLES, Dec. 20, 1818.

<sup>1</sup> "Lines written among the Euganean Hills."  
— Ed.

ROSALIND, HELEN AND HER CHILD.

SCENE. *The Shore of the Lake of Como.*

HELEN.

COME hither, my sweet Rosalind.  
'T is long since thou and I have met;  
And yet methinks it were unkind  
Those moments to forget.  
Come sit by me. I see thee stand  
By this lone lake, in this far land,  
Thy loose hair in the light wind flying,  
Thy sweet voice to each tone of even  
United, and thine eyes replying  
To the hues of yon fair heaven.  
Come, gentle friend: wilt sit by me?  
And be as thou wert wont to be  
Ere we were disunited?  
None doth behold us now: the power  
That led us forth at this lone hour  
Will be but ill requited  
If thou depart in scorn: oh! come,  
And talk of our abandoned home.  
Remember, this is Italy,  
And we are exiles. Talk with me  
Of that our land, whose wilds and floods,  
Barren and dark although they be,  
Were dearer than these chestnut woods:  
Those heathy paths, that inland stream,  
And the blue mountains, shapes which  
    seem  
Like wrecks of childhood's sunny dream:  
Which that we have abandoned now,  
Weighs on the heart like that remorse  
Which altered friendship leaves. I seek  
No more our youthful intercourse.  
That cannot be! Rosalind, speak,  
Speak to me. Leave me not. — When  
    morn did come,  
When evening fell upon our common  
    home,  
When for one hour we parted, — do not  
    frown:  
I would not chide thee, though thy  
    faith is broken:  
But turn to me. Oh! by this cherished  
    token,  
Of woven hair, which thou wilt not  
    disown,  
Turn, as 't were but the memory of me,  
And not my scorn'd self who prayed to  
    thee.

ROSALIND.

Is it a dream, or do I see  
 And hear frail Helen? I would flee  
 Thy tainting touch; but former years  
 Arise, and bring forbidden tears;  
 And my o'erburdened memory  
 Seeks yet its lost repose in thee.  
 I share thy crime. I cannot choose  
 But weep for thee: mine own strange  
 grief

But seldom stoops to such relief:  
 Nor ever did I love thee less,  
 Though mourning o'er thy wickedness  
 Even with a sister's woe. I knew  
 What to the evil world is due,  
 And therefore sternly did refuse  
 To link me with the infamy  
 Of one so lost as Helen. Now  
 Bewildered by my dire despair,  
 Wondering I blush, and weep that thou  
 Shouldst't love me still, — thou only! —

There,

Let us sit on that gray stone,  
 Till our mournful talk be done.

HELEN.

Alas! not there; I cannot bear  
 The murmur of this lake to hear.  
 A sound from there, Rosalind dear,  
 Which never yet I heard elsewhere  
 But in our native land, recurs,  
 Even here where now we meet. It stirs  
 Too much of suffocating sorrow!  
 In the dell of yon dark chestnut wood  
 Is a stone seat, a solitude  
 Less like our own. The ghost of peace  
 Will not desert this spot. To-morrow,  
 If thy kind feelings should not cease,  
 We may sit here.

ROSALIND.

Thou lead, my sweet,  
 And I will follow.

HENRY.

'Tis Fenici's seat  
 Where you are going? This is not the  
 way,  
 Mamma; it leads behind those trees  
 that grow  
 Close to the little river.

HELEN.

Yes: I know:  
 I was bewildered. Kiss me, and be gay,  
 Dear boy: why do you sob?

HENRY.

I do not know:  
 But it might break any one's heart to  
 see  
 You and the lady cry so bitterly.

HELEN.

It is a gentle child, my friend. Go  
 home,  
 Henry, and play with Lilla till I come.  
 We only cried with joy to see each other;  
 We are quite merry now: Good-night.

The boy

Lifted a sudden look upon his mother,  
 And in the gleam of forced and hollow  
 joy  
 Which lightened o'er her face, laught  
 with the glee  
 Of light and unsuspecting infancy,  
 And whispered in her ear, "Bring home  
 with you  
 That sweet strange lady friend." Then  
 off he flew,  
 But stopt, and beckoned with a mean-  
 ing smile,  
 Where the road turned. Pale Rosalind  
 the while,  
 Hiding her face, stood weeping silently.

In silence then they took the way  
 Beneath the forest's solitude.  
 It was a vast and antique wood,  
 Thro' which they took their way;  
 And the gray shades of evening  
 O'er that green wilderness did fling  
 Still deeper solitude.  
 Pursuing still the path that wound  
 The vast and knotted trees around  
 Thro' which slow shades were wandering,  
 To a deep lawny dell they came,  
 To a stone seat beside a spring,  
 O'er which the columned wood did frame  
 A roofless temple, like the fane  
 Where, ere new creeds could faith obtain,  
 Man's early race once knelt beneath

The overhanging deity,  
O'er this fair fountain hung the sky,  
Now spangled with rare stars. The  
snake,

The pale snake, that with eager breath  
Creeps here his noontide thirst to slake,  
Is beaming with many a mingled hue,  
Shed from yon dome's eternal blue,  
When he floats on that dark and lucid  
flood

In the light of his own loveliness;  
And the birds that in the fountain dip  
Their plumes, with fearless fellowship  
Above and round him wheel and hover.  
The fitful wind is heard to stir  
One solitary leaf on high;  
The chirping of the grasshopper  
Fills every pause. There is emotion  
In all that dwells at noontide here:  
Then, thro' the intricate wild wood,  
A maze of life and light and motion  
Is woven. But there is stillness now:  
Gloom, and the trance of Nature now:  
The snake is in his cave asleep;  
The birds are on the branches dreaming:  
Only the shadows creep:  
Only the glow-worm is gleaming;  
Only the owls and the nightingales  
Wake in this dell when daylight fails,  
And gray shades gather in the woods:  
And the owls have all fled far away  
In a merrier glen to hoot and play,  
For the moon is veiled and sleeping now.  
The accustomed nightingale still broods  
On her accustomed bough,  
But she is mute; for her false mate  
Has fled and left her desolate.

This silent spot tradition old  
Had peopled with the spectral dead,  
For the roots of the speaker's hair felt  
cold

And stiff, as with tremulous lips he told  
That a hellish shape at midnight led  
The ghost of a youth with hoary hair,  
And sate on the seat beside him there,  
Till a naked child came wandering by,  
When the fiend would change to a lady  
fair!

A fearful tale! The truth was worse:  
For here a sister and a brother  
Had solemnized a monstrous curse,  
Meeting in this fair solitude:

For beneath yon very sky,  
Had they resigned to one another  
Body and soul. The multitude,  
Tracking them to the secret wood,  
Tore limb from limb their innocent child,  
And stabbed and trampled on its mother;  
But the youth, for God's most holy grace,  
A priest saved to burn in the market-  
place.

Duly at evening Helen came  
To this lone silent spot,  
From the wrecks of a tale of wilder  
sorrow

So much of sympathy to borrow  
As soothed her own dark lot.  
Duly each evening from her home,  
With her fair child would Helen come  
To sit upon that antique seat,  
While the hues of day were pale;  
And the bright boy beside her feet  
Now lay, lifting at intervals  
His broad blue eyes on her;  
Now, where some sudden impulse calls  
Following. He was a gentle boy  
And in all gentle sports took joy;  
Oft in a dry leaf for a boat,  
With a small feather for a sail,  
His fancy on that spring would float,  
If some invisible breeze might stir  
Its marble calm: and Helen smiled  
Thro' tears of awe on the gay child,  
To think that a boy as fair as he,  
In years which never more may be,  
By that same fount, in that same wood,  
The like sweet fancies had pursued;  
And that a mother, lost like her,  
Had mournfully sate watching him.  
Then all the scene was wont to swim  
Through the mist of a burning tear.

For many months had Helen known  
This scene; and now she thither turned  
Her footsteps, not alone.  
The friend whose falsehood she had  
mourned,

Sate with her on that seat of stone.  
Silent they sate; for evening,  
And the power its glimpses bring  
Had, with one awful shadow, quelled  
The passion of their grief. They sate  
With linkèd hands, for unrepelled  
Had Helen taken Rosalind's.

Like the autumn wind, when it unbinds  
 The tangled locks of the nightshade's  
 hair,  
 Which is twined in the sultry summer  
 air  
 Round the walls of an outworn sepulchre,  
 Did the voice of Helen, sad and sweet,  
 And the sound of her heart that ever  
 beat,  
 As with sighs and words she breathed  
 on her,  
 Unbind the knots of her friend's despair,  
 Till her thoughts were free to float and  
 flow;  
 And from her laboring bosom now,  
 Like the bursting of a prisoned flame,  
 The voice of a long-pent sorrow came.

ROSALIND.

I saw the dark earth fall upon  
 The coffin; and I saw the stone  
 Laid over him whom this cold breast  
 Had pillowed to his nightly rest!  
 Thou knowest not, thou canst not know  
 My agony. Oh! I could not weep:  
 The sources whence such blessings flow  
 Were not to be approacht by me!  
 But I could smile, and I could sleep,  
 Though with a self-accusing heart.  
 In morning's light, in evening's gloom,  
 I watcht, — and would not thence de-  
 part —

My husband's unlamented tomb.  
 My children knew their sire was gone,  
 But when I told them, — "he is dead," —  
 They laught aloud in frantic glee,  
 They clapt their hands and leapt  
 about,  
 Answering each other's ecstasy  
 With many a prank and merry shout.  
 But I sat silent and alone,  
 Wrapt in the mock of mourning weed.

They laught, for he was dead: but I  
 Sate with a hard and tearless eye,  
 And with a heart which would deny  
 The secret joy it could not quell,  
 Low muttering o'er his loathèd name;  
 Till from that self-contention came  
 Remorse where sin was none; a hell  
 Which in pure spirits should not dwell.

I'll tell thee truth. He was a man  
 Hard, selfish, loving only gold,  
 Yet full of guile: his pale eyes ran  
 With tears, which each some falsehood  
 told,

And oft his smooth and bridled tongue  
 Would give the lie to his flushing cheek:  
 He was a coward to the strong:  
 He was a tyrant to the weak,  
 On whom his vengeance he would wreak:  
 For scorn, whose arrows search the heart,  
 From many a stranger's eye would dart,  
 And on his memory cling, and follow  
 His soul to its home so cold and hollow.  
 He was a tyrant to the weak,  
 And we were such, alas the day!  
 Oft, when my little ones at play,  
 Were in youth's natural lightness gay,  
 Or if they listened to some tale  
 Of travellers, or of fairy land, —  
 When the light from the wood-fire's  
 dying brand

Flasht on their faces, — if they heard  
 Or thought they heard upon the stair  
 His footstep, the suspended word  
 Died on my lips: we all grew pale:  
 The babe at my bosom was husht with  
 fear  
 If it thought it heard its father near;  
 And my two wild boys would near my  
 knee  
 Cling, cowed and cowering fearfully.

I'll tell thee truth: I loved another.  
 His name in my ear was ever ringing,  
 His form to my brain was ever clinging:  
 Yet if some stranger breathed that name,  
 My lips turned white, and my heart beat  
 fast:

My nights were once haunted by dreams  
 of flame,  
 My days were dim in the shadow cast  
 By the memory of the same!  
 Day and night, day and night,  
 He was my breath and life and light,  
 For three short years, which soon were  
 past.

On the fourth, my gentle mother  
 Led me to the shrine, to be  
 His sworn bride eternally.  
 And now we stood on the altar stair,  
 When my father came from a distant  
 land,

And with a loud and fearful cry  
Rusht between us suddenly.

I saw the stream of his thin gray hair,  
I saw his lean and lifted hand,  
And heard his words, — and live! Oh  
God!

Wherefore do I live? — “Hold, hold!”  
He cried, — “I tell thee ’t is her brother!  
Thy mother, boy, beneath the sod  
Of yon churchyard rests in her shroud  
so cold:

I am now weak, and pale, and old:  
We were once dear to one another,  
I and that corpse! Thou art our child!”  
Then with a laugh both long and wild  
The youth upon the pavement fell:  
They found him dead! All looked on  
me,

The spasms of my despair to see:  
But I was calm. I went away:  
I was clammy-cold like clay!  
I did not weep: I did not speak:  
But day by day, week after week,  
I walkt about like a corpse alive!  
Alas! sweet friend, you must believe  
This heart is stone: it did not break.

My father lived a little while,  
But all might see that he was dying,  
He smiled with such a woeful smile!  
When he was in the churchyard lying  
Among the worms, we grew quite poor,  
So that no one would give us bread:  
My mother lookt at me, and said  
Faint words of cheer, which only meant  
That she could die and be content;  
So I went forth from the same church  
door

To another husband’s bed.  
And this was he who died at last,  
When weeks and months and years had  
past,

Through which I firmly did fulfil  
My duties, a devoted wife,  
With the stern-step of vanquisht will,  
Walking beneath the night of life,  
Whose hours extinguisht, like slow  
rain

Falling for ever, pain by pain,  
The very hope of death’s dear rest;  
Which, since the heart within my breast  
Of natural life was dispossesht,  
Its strange sustainer there had been.

When flowers were dead, and grass was  
green

Upon my mother’s grave, — that mother  
Whom to outlive, and cheer, and make  
My wan eyes glitter for her sake,  
Was my vowed task, the single care  
Which once gave life to my despair, —  
When she was a thing that did not stir  
And the crawling worms were cradling  
her

To a sleep more deep and so more sweet  
Than a baby’s rockt on its nurse’s knee,  
I lived: a living pulse then beat  
Beneath my heart that awakened me.  
What was this pulse so warm and free?  
Alas! I knew it could not be  
My own dull blood: ’t was like a thought  
Of liquid love, that spread and wrought  
Under my bosom and in my brain,  
And crept with the blood through every  
vein;

And hour by hour, day after day,  
The wonder could not charm away,  
But laid in sleep, my wakeful pain,  
Until I knew it was a child,  
And then I wept. For long, long years  
These frozen eyes had shed no tears:  
But now — ’t was the season fair and mild  
When April has wept itself to May:  
I sate through the sweet sunny day  
By my window bowered round with  
leaves,

And down my cheeks the quick tears ran  
Like twinkling rain-drops from the eaves,  
When warm spring showers are passing  
o’er:

O Helen, none can ever tell  
The joy it was to weep once more!

† I wept to think how hard it were  
To kill my babe, and take from it  
The sense of light, and the warm air,  
And my own fond and tender care,  
And love and smiles; ere I knew yet  
That these for it might, as for me,  
Be the masks of a grinning mockery.  
And haply, I would dream, ’t were sweet  
To feed it from my faded breast,  
Or mark my own heart’s restless beat  
Rock it to its untroubled rest,  
And watch the growing soul beneath  
Dawn in faint smiles; and hear its  
breath,



Half interrupted by calm sighs,  
 And search the depth of its fair eyes  
 For long departed memories!  
 And so I lived till that sweet load  
 Was lightened. Darkly forward flowed  
 The stream of years, and on it bore  
 Two shapes of gladness to my sight;  
 Two other babes, delightful more  
 In my lost soul's abandoned night,  
 Than their own country ships may be  
 Sailing towards wrecked mariners,  
 Who cling to the rock of a wintry sea.  
 For each, as it came, brought soothing  
 tears,  
 And a loosening warmth, as each one  
 lay  
 Sucking the sullen milk away.  
 About my frozen heart, did play,  
 And weaned it, oh how painfully! —  
 As they themselves were weaned each  
 one  
 From that sweet food, — even from the  
 thirst

Of death, and nothingness, and rest,  
 Strange inmate of a living breast!  
 Which all that I had undergone  
 Of grief and shame, since she, who first  
 The gates of that dark refuge closed,  
 Came to my sight, and almost burst  
 The seal of that Lethæan spring;  
 But these fair shadows interposed:  
 For all delights are shadows now!  
 And from my brain to my dull brow  
 The heavy tears gather and flow:  
 I cannot speak: Oh let me weep!

The tears which fell from her wan eyes  
 Glimmered among the moonlight dew:  
 Her deep hard sobs and heavy sighs  
 Their echoes in the darkness threw.  
 When she grew calm, she thus did keep  
 The tenor of her tale:

He died:

I know not how: he was not old,  
 If age be numbered by its years;  
 But he was bowed and bent with fears,  
 Pale with a quenchless thirst of gold,  
 Which, like fierce fever left him weak;  
 And his strait lip and bloated cheek  
 Were warpt in spasms by hollow  
 sneers;  
 And selfish cares with barren plough,  
 Not age, had lined his narrow brow,

And foul and cruel thoughts, which  
 feed  
 Upon the withering life within,  
 Like vipers on some poisonous weed.  
 Whether his ill were death or sin  
 None knew, until he died indeed,  
 And then men owned they were the  
 same.

Seven days within my chamber lay  
 That corse, and my babes made holiday:  
 At last, I told them what is death:  
 The eldest, with a kind of shame,  
 Came to my knees with silent breath,  
 And sate awe-stricken at my feet;  
 And soon the others left their play,  
 And sate there too. It is unmeet  
 To shed on the brief flower of youth  
 The withering knowledge of the grave;  
 From me remorse then wrung that truth.  
 I could not bear the joy which gave  
 Too just a response to mine own.  
 In vain. I dared not feign a groan;  
 And in their artless looks I saw,  
 Between the mists of fear and awe,  
 That my own thought was theirs; and  
 they

Expressed it not in words, but said,  
 Each in its heart, how every day  
 Will pass in happy work and play,  
 Now he is dead and gone away.

After the funeral all our kin  
 Assembled, and the will was read.  
 My friend, I tell thee, even the dead  
 Have strength, their putrid shrouds  
 within,

To blast and torture. Those who live  
 Still fear the living, but a corse  
 Is merciless, and Power doth give  
 To such pale tyrants half the spoil  
 He rends from those who groan and toil,  
 Because they blush not with remorse  
 Among their crawling worms. Behold,  
 I have no child! my tale grows old  
 With grief, and staggers: let it reach  
 The limits of my feeble speech,  
 And languidly at length recline  
 On the brink of its own grave and mine

Thou knowest what a thing is Poverty  
 Among the fallen on evil days:  
 'Tis Crime, and Fear, and Infamy,  
 And houseless Want in frozen ways

Wandering ungarmented, and Pain,  
And, worse than all, that inward stain,  
Foul Self-contentment, which drowns in  
sneers

Youth's starlight smile, and makes its  
tears

First like hot gall, then dry forever!  
And well thou knowest a mother never  
Could doom her children to this ill,  
And well he knew the same. The will  
Imported, that if e'er again

I sought my children to behold,  
Or in my birthplace did remain  
Beyond three days, whose hours were told,

They should inherit naught: and he,  
To whom next came their patrimony,  
A sallow lawyer, cruel and cold,  
Aye watched me, as the will was read,  
With eyes askance, which sought to see  
The secrets of my agony;

And with close lips and anxious brow  
Stood canvassing still to and fro  
The chance of my resolve, and all  
The dead man's caution just did call;  
For in that killing lie 'twas said —

“She is adulterous, and doth hold  
In secret that the Christian creed  
Is false, and therefore is much need  
That I should have a care to save  
My children from eternal fire.”

Friend, he was sheltered by the grave,  
And therefore dared to be a liar!

In truth, the Indian on the pyre  
Of her dead husband, half consumed,  
As well might there be false, as I  
To those abhorred embraces doomed,  
Far worse than fire's brief agony.

As to the Christian creed, if true  
Or false, I never questioned it:  
I took it as the vulgar do:

Nor my vext soul had leisure yet  
To doubt the things men say, or deem  
That they are other than they seem.

All present who those crimes did hear,  
In feigned or actual scorn and fear,  
Men, women, children, slunk away,  
Whispering with self-contented pride,  
Which half suspects its own base lie.

I spoke to none, nor did abide,  
But silently I went my way,  
Nor noticed I where joyously  
Sate my two younger babes at play,

In the court-yard through which I past;  
But went with footsteps firm and fast  
Till I came to the brink of the ocean  
green,

And there, a woman with gray hairs,  
Who had my mother's servant been,  
Kneeling, with many tears and prayers,  
Made me accept a purse of gold,  
Half of the earnings she had kept  
To refuge her when weak and old.

With woe, which never sleeps or slept,  
I wander now. 'Tis a vain thought —  
But on yon alp, whose snowy head  
Mid the azure air is islanded,

(We see it o'er the flood of cloud,  
Which sunrise from its eastern caves  
Drives, wrinkling into golden waves,  
Hung with its precipices proud,  
From that gray stone where first we met)  
There — now who knows the dead feel  
naught? —

Should be my grave; for he who yet  
Is my soul's soul, once said: “'T were  
sweet

Mid stars and lightnings to abide,  
And winds and lulling snows, that beat  
With their soft flakes the mountain wide,  
When weary meteor lamps repose,  
And languid storms their pinions close:  
And all things strong and bright and  
pure,

And ever during, aye endure:  
Who knows, if one were buried there,  
But these things might our spirits make,  
Amid the all-surrounding air,  
Their own eternity partake?”

Then 'twas a wild and playful saying  
At which I laught, or seemed to laugh:  
They were his words: now heed my  
praying,

And let them be my epitaph.  
Thy memory for a term may be  
My monument. Wilt remember me?  
I know thou wilt, and canst forgive  
Whilst in this erring world to live  
My soul disdained not, that I thought  
Its lying forms were worthy aught  
And much less thee.

HELEN.

O speak not so,  
But come to me and pour thy woe

Into this heart, full though it be,  
 Aye overflowing with its own:  
 I thought that grief had severed me  
 From all beside who weep and groan;  
 Its likeness upon earth to be,  
 Its express image; but thou art  
 More wretched. Sweet! we will not  
 part  
 Henceforth, if death be not division;  
 If so, the dead feel no contrition.  
 But wilt thou hear, since last we parted  
 All that has left me broken-hearted?

ROSALIND.

Yes, speak. The faintest stars are  
 scarcely shorn  
 Of their thin beams by that delusive morn  
 Which sinks again in darkness, like the  
 light  
 Of early love, soon lost in total night.

HELEN.

Alas! Italian winds are mild,  
 But my bosom is cold — wintry cold —  
 When the warm air weaves, among the  
 fresh leaves,  
 Soft music, my poor brain is wild,  
 And I am weak like a nursling child,  
 Though my soul with grief is gray and  
 old.

ROSALIND.

Weep not at thine own words, though  
 they must make  
 Me weep. What is thy tale?

HELEN.

I fear 't will shake  
 Thy gentle heart with tears. Thou well  
 Rememberest when we met no more,  
 And, though I dwelt with Lionel,  
 That friendless caution pierced me sore  
 With grief; a wound my spirit bore  
 Indignantly; but when he died  
 With him lay dead both hope and pride.

Alas! all hope is buried now.  
 But then men dreamed the aged earth  
 Was laboring in that mighty birth,  
 Which many a poet and a sage  
 Has aye foreseen — the happy age

When truth and love shall dwell below  
 Among the works and ways of men;  
 Which on this world not power but will  
 Even now is wanting to fulfil.

Among mankind what thence befel  
 Of strife, how vain, is known too well;  
 When liberty's dear pæan fell  
 Mid murderous howls. To Lionel,  
 Though of great wealth and lineage high,  
 Yet thro' those dungeon walls there  
 came

Thy thrilling light, O Liberty!  
 And as the meteor's midnight flame  
 Startles the dreamer, sun-like truth  
 Flasht on his visionary youth,  
 And filled him, not with love, but faith,  
 And hope, and courage mute in death;  
 For love and life in him were twins,  
 Born at one birth: in every other  
 First life, then love, its course begins,  
 Though they be children of one mother;  
 And so thro' this dark world they  
 fleet

Divided, till in death they meet:  
 But he loved all things ever. Then  
 He past amid the strife of men,  
 And stood at the throne of armed power  
 Pleading for a world of woe:  
 Secure as one on a rock-built tower  
 O'er the wrecks which the surge trails  
 to and fro,

Mid the passions wild of human kind  
 He stood, like a spirit calming them;  
 For, it was said, his words could bind  
 Like music the lulled crowd, and stem  
 That torrent of unquiet dream,  
 Which mortals truth and reason deem,  
 But is revenge, and fear, and pride.  
 Joyous he was; and hope and peace  
 On all who heard him did abide,  
 Raining like dew from his sweet talk,  
 As where the evening star may walk  
 Along the brink of the gloomy sea,  
 Liquid mists of splendor quiver.  
 His very gestures toucht to tears  
 The unpersuaded tyrant, never  
 So moved before: his presence stung  
 The torturers with their victim's pain,  
 And none knew how; and thro' their  
 ears,  
 The subtle witchcraft of his tongue  
 Unlockt the hearts of those who keep

Gold, the world's bond of slavery.  
Men wondered, and some sneered to see  
One sow what he could never reap:  
For he is rich, they said, and young,  
And might drink from the depths of  
luxury.

If he seeks fame, fame never crowned  
The champion of a trampled creed:  
If he seeks power, power is enthroned  
Mid ancient rights and wrongs, to feed  
Which hungry wolves with praise and  
spoil,

Those who would sit near power must  
toil;

And such, there sitting, all may see.  
What seeks he? All that others seek  
He casts away, like a vile weed  
Which the sea casts unreturningly.

That poor and hungry men should break  
The laws which wreak them toil and  
scorn,

We understand; but Lionel  
We know is rich and nobly born.  
So wondered they: yet all men loved  
Young Lionel, though few approved;  
All but the priests, whose hatred fell  
Like the unseen blight of a smiling day,  
The withering honey dew, which clings  
Under the bright green buds of May,  
Whilst they unfold their emerald wings:  
For he made verses wild and queer  
On the strange creeds priests hold so  
dear,

Because they bring them land and gold.  
Of devils and saints and all such gear,  
He made tales which whoso heard or read  
Would laugh till he were almost dead.  
So this grew a proverb: "Do n't get old  
Till Lionel's 'Banquet in Hell' you  
hear,

And then you will laugh yourself young  
again."

So the priests hated him, and he  
Repaid their hate with cheerful glee.

Ah, smiles and joyance quickly died,  
For public hope grew pale and dim  
In an altered time and tide,  
And in its wasting withered him,  
As a summer flower that blows too soon  
Droops in the smile of the waning moon,  
When it scatters through an April night  
The frozen dews of wrinkling blight.

None now hoped more. Gray Power  
was seated

Safely on her ancestral throne;  
And Faith, the Python, undefeated,  
Even to its blood-stained steps dragged  
on

Her foul and wounded train, and men  
Were trampled and deceived again,  
And words and shows again could bind  
The wailing tribes of human kind  
In scorn and famine. Fire and blood  
Raged round the raging multitude,  
To fields remote by tyrants sent  
To be the scorn'd instrument  
With which they drag from mines of  
gore

The chains their slaves yet ever wore:  
And in the streets men met each other,  
And by old altars and in halls,  
And smiled again at festivals.

But each man found in his heart's  
brother  
Cold cheer; for all, though half de-  
ceived,

The outworn creeds again believed,  
And the same round anew began,  
Which the weary world yet ever ran.

Many then wept, not tears, but gall  
Within their hearts, like drops which fall  
Wasting the fountain-stone away.  
And in that dark and evil day  
Did all desires and thoughts, that claim  
Men's care — ambition, friendship, fame,  
Love, hope, though hope was now de-  
spair —

Indue the colors of this change,  
As from the all-surrounding air  
The earth takes hues obscure and strange,  
When storm and earthquake linger there.

And so, my friend, it then befel  
To many, most to Lionel,  
Whose hope was like the life of youth  
Within him, and when dead, became  
A spirit of unresting flame,  
Which goaded him in his distress  
Over the world's vast wilderness.  
Three years he left his native land,  
And on the fourth, when he returned,  
None knew him: he was stricken deep  
With some disease of mind, and turned  
Into aught unlike Lionel.

On him, on whom, did he pause in  
 sleep,  
 Serenest smiles were wont to keep,  
 And, did he wake, a wingèd band  
 Of bright persuasions, which had fed  
 On his sweet lips and liquid eyes,  
 Kept their swift pinions half outspread,  
 To do on men his least command;  
 On him, whom once 't was paradise  
 Even to behold, now misery lay:  
 In his own heart 't was merciless,  
 To all things else none may express  
 Its innocence and tenderness.

'T was said that he had refuge sought  
 In love from his unquiet thought  
 In distant lands, and been deceived  
 By some strange show; for there were  
 found,  
 Blotted with tears as those relieved  
 By their own words are wont to do,  
 These mournful verses on the ground,  
 By all who read them blotted too.

"How am I changed! my hopes were  
 once like fire:  
 I loved, and I believed that life was  
 love.  
 How am I lost! on wings of swift desire  
 Among Heaven's winds my spirit once  
 did move.  
 I slept, and silver dreams did aye inspire  
 My liquid sleep: I woke, and did ap-  
 prove  
 All nature to my heart, and thought to  
 make  
 A paradise of earth for one sweet sake.

"I love, but I believe in love no more.  
 I feel desire, but hope not. O, from  
 sleep  
 Most vainly must my weary brain im-  
 plore  
 Its long lost flattery now: I wake to  
 weep,  
 And sit through the long day gnawing  
 the core  
 Of my bitter heart, and, like a miser,  
 keep,  
 Since none in what I feel take pain or  
 pleasure, —  
 To my own soul its self-consuming treas-  
 ure."

He dwelt beside me near the sea:  
 And oft in evening did we meet,  
 When the waves, beneath the starlight,  
 flee  
 O'er the yellow sands with silver feet,  
 And talkt: our talk was sad and sweet,  
 Till slowly from his mien there past  
 The desolation which it spoke;  
 And smiles, — as when the lightning's  
 blast  
 Has parcht some heaven-delighting  
 oak,  
 The next spring shows leaves pale and  
 rare,  
 But like flowers delicate and fair,  
 On its rent boughs, — again arrayed  
 His countenance in tender light:  
 His words grew subtle fire, which made  
 The air his hearers breathed delight:  
 His motions, like the winds, were free,  
 Which bend the bright grass gracefully,  
 Then fade away in circlets faint:  
 And wingèd hope, on which upborne  
 His soul seemed hovering in his eyes,  
 Like some bright spirit newly born  
 Floating amid the sunny skies,  
 Sprang forth from his rent heart anew.  
 Yet o'er his talk, and looks, and mien,  
 Tempering their loveliness too keen,  
 Past woe its shadow backward threw,  
 Till like an exhalation, spread  
 From flowers half drunk with evening  
 dew,  
 They did become infectious: sweet  
 And subtle mists of sense and thought:  
 Which wrapt us soon, when we might  
 meet,  
 Almost from our own looks and aught  
 The wide world holds. And so, his  
 mind  
 Was healed, while mine grew sick with  
 fear:  
 For ever now his health declined,  
 Like some frail bark which cannot bear  
 The impulse of an altered wind,  
 Though prosperous: and my heart grew  
 full  
 Mid its new joy of a new care:  
 For his cheek became, not pale, but fair,  
 As rose-o'ershadowed lilies are;  
 And soon his deep and sunny hair,  
 In this alone less beautiful,  
 Like grass in tombs grew wild and rare.

The blood in his translucent veins  
 Beat, not like animal life, but love  
 Seemed now its sullen springs to move,  
 When life had failed, and all its pains:  
 And sudden sleep would seize him oft  
 Like death, so calm, but that a tear,  
 His pointed eye-lashes between,  
 Would gather in the light serene  
 Of smiles, whose lustre bright and soft  
 Beneath lay undulating there.  
 His breath was like inconstant flame,  
 As eagerly it went and came;  
 And I hung o'er him in his sleep,  
 Till, like an image in the lake  
 Which rains disturb, my tears would  
 break

The shadow of that slumber deep:  
 Then he would bid me not to weep,  
 And say with flattery false, yet sweet,  
 That death and he could never meet,  
 If I would never part with him.  
 And so we loved, and did unite  
 All that in us was yet divided:  
 For when he said, that many a rite,  
 By men to bind but once provided,  
 Could not be shared by him and me,  
 Or they would kill him in their glee,  
 I shuddered, and then laughing said—  
 "We will have rites our faith to bind,  
 But our church shall be the starry  
 night,  
 Our altar the grassy earth outspread,  
 And our priest the muttering wind."

'Twas sunset as I spoke: one star  
 Had scarce burst forth, when from afar  
 The ministers of misrule sent,  
 Seized upon Lionel, and bore  
 His chained limbs to a dreary tower,  
 In the midst of a city vast and wide.  
 For he, they said, from his mind had  
 bent

Against their gods keen blasphemy,  
 For which, though his soul must roasted  
 be

In hell's red lakes immortally,  
 Yet even on earth must he abide  
 The vengeance of their slaves: a trial,  
 I think, men call it. What avail  
 Are prayers and tears, which chase denial  
 From the fierce savage, nurst in hate?  
 What the knit soul that pleading and  
 pale

Makes wan the quivering cheek, which  
 late

It painted with its own delight?  
 We were divided. As I could,  
 I stilled the tingling of my blood,  
 And followed him in their despite,  
 As a widow follows, pale and wild,  
 The murderers and corpse of her only  
 child;

And when we came to the prison door  
 And I prayed to share his dungeon floor  
 With prayers which rarely have been  
 spurned,

And when men drove me forth and I  
 Stared with blank frenzy on the sky,  
 A farewell look of love he turned,  
 Half calming me; then gazed awhile,  
 As if thro' that black and massy pile,  
 And thro' the crowd around him there,  
 And thro' the dense and murky air,  
 And the thronged streets, he did espay  
 What poets know and prophesy;  
 And said, with voice that made them  
 shiver

And clung like music in my brain,  
 And which the mute walls spoke again  
 Prolonging it with deepened strain:  
 "Fear not the tyrants shall rule for-  
 ever,

Or the priests of the bloody faith;  
 They stand on the brink of that mighty  
 river,

Whose waves they have tainted with  
 death:

It is fed from the depths of a thousand  
 dells,

Around them it foams, and rages, and  
 swells,

And their swords and their sceptres I  
 floating see,

Like wrecks in the surge of eternity."

I dwelt beside the prison gate,  
 And the strange crowd that out and in  
 Past, some, no doubt, with mine own  
 fate,

Might have fretted me with its ceaseless  
 din,

But the fever of care was louder within  
 Soon, but too late, in penitence  
 Or fear, his foes releas't him thence:

I saw his thin and languid form,  
 As leaning on the jailer's arm,

Whose hardened eyes grew moist the while,

To meet his mute and faded smile,  
And hear his words of kind farewell,  
He tottered forth from his damp cell.  
Many had never wept before,  
From whom fast tears then gush and fell:

Many will relent no more,  
Who sobbed like infants then: aye, all  
Who thronged the prison's stony hall,  
The rulers or the slaves of law,  
Felt with a new surprise and awe  
That they were human, till strong shame  
Made them again become the same.  
The prison blood-hounds, huge and grim,  
From human looks the infection caught,  
And fondly croucht and fawned on him;

And men have heard the prisoners say,  
Who in their rotting dungeons lay,  
That from that hour, throughout one day,

The fierce despair and hate which kept  
Their trampled bosoms almost slept,  
When, like twin vultures, they hung feeding

On each heart's wound, wide torn and bleeding,  
Because their jailer's rule, they thought,  
Grew merciful, like a parent's sway.

I know not how, but we were free:  
And Lionel sate alone with me,  
As the carriage drove thro' the streets  
apace;

And we lookt upon each other's face;  
And the blood in our fingers intertwined  
Ran like the thoughts of a single mind,  
As the swift emotions went and came  
Thro' the veins of each united frame.  
So thro' the long, long streets we past  
Of the million-peopled City vast;  
Which is that desert, where each one  
Seeks his mate yet is alone,  
Beloved and sought and mourned of none;

Until the clear blue sky was seen,  
And the grassy meadows bright and green,

And then I sunk in his embrace,  
Enclosing there a mighty space  
Of love: and so we travelled on

By woods, and fields of yellow flowers,  
And towns, and villages, and towers,  
Day after day of happy hours.  
It was the azure time of June,  
When the skies are deep in the stainless noon,

And the warm and fitful breezes shake  
The fresh green leaves of the hedge-row brier,

And there were odors then to make  
The very breath we did respire  
A liquid element, whereon  
Our spirits, like delighted things  
That walk the air on subtle wings,  
Floated and mingled far away,  
Mid the warm winds of the sunny day.  
And when the evening star came forth  
Above the curve of the new bent moon,  
And light and sound ebbed from the earth,

Like the tide of the full and weary sea  
To the depths of its tranquillity,  
Our natures to its own repose  
Did the earth's breathless sleep attune:  
Like flowers, which on each other close  
Their languid leaves when daylight's gone,

We lay, till new emotions came,  
Which seemed to make each mortal frame

One soul of interwoven flame,  
A life in life, a second birth  
In worlds diviner far than earth,  
Which, like two strains of harmony  
That mingle in the silent sky  
Then slowly disunite, past by  
And left the tenderness of tears,  
A soft oblivion of all fears,  
A sweet sleep: so we travelled on  
Till we came to the home of Lionel,  
Among the mountains wild and lone,  
Beside the hoary western sea,  
Which near the verge of the echoing shore

The massy forest shadowed o'er.

The ancient steward, with hair all hoar,

As we alighted, wept to see  
His master changed so fearfully;  
And the old man's sobs did waken me  
From my dream of unremaing gladness;

The truth flasht o'er me like quick  
madness

When I lookt, and saw that there was  
death

On Lionel: yet day by day

He lived, till fear grew hope and faith,

And in my soul I dared to say,

Nothing so bright can pass away:

Death is dark, and foul, and dull,

But he is — O how beautiful!

Yet day by day he grew more weak,

And his sweet voice, when he might  
speak,

Which ne'er was loud, became more  
low;

And the light which flasht through his  
waxen cheek

Grew faint, as the rose-like hues which  
flow

From sunset o'er the Alpine snow:

And death seemed not like death in him,

For the spirit of life o'er every limb

Lingered, a mist of sense and thought.

When the summer wind faint odors  
brought

From mountain flowers, even as it past

His cheek would change, as the noon-  
day sea

Which the dying breeze sweeps fitfully.

If but a cloud the sky o'ercast,

You might see his color come and go,

And the softest strain of music made

Sweet smiles, yet sad, arise and fade

Amid the dew of his tender eyes;

And the breath, with intermitting flow,

Made his pale lips quiver and part.

You might hear the beatings of his  
heart,

Quick, but not strong; and with my  
tresses

When oft he playfully would bind

In the bowers of mossy lonelinesses

His neck, and win me so to mingle

In the sweet depth of woven caresses,

And our faint limbs were intertwined,

Alas! the unquiet life did tingle

From mine own heart through every  
vein,

Like a captive in dreams of liberty,

Who beats the walls of his stony cell.

But his, it seemed already free,

Like the shadow of fire surrounding me!

On my faint eyes and limbs did dwell

That spirit as it past, till soon,

As a frail cloud wandering o'er the moon,

Beneath its light invisible,

Is seen when it folds its gray wings  
again

To alight on midnight's dusky plain,

I lived and saw, and the gathering soul

Past from beneath that strong con-  
trol,

And I fell on a life which was sick with  
fear

Of all the woe that now I bear.

Amid a bloomless myrtle wood,

On a green and sea-girt promontory,

Not far from where we dwelt, there  
stood

In record of a sweet sad story,

An altar and a temple bright

Circled by steps, and o'er the gate

Was sculptured, "To Fidelity;"

And in the shrine an image sate,

All veiled: but there was seen the light

Of smiles, which faintly could express

A mingled pain and tenderness

Thro' that ethereal drapery,

The left hand held the head, the right—

Beyond the veil, beneath the skin,

You might see the nerves quivering  
within —

Was forcing the point of a barbèd dart

Into its side-convulsing heart.

An unskilled hand, yet one informed

With genius, had the marble warmed

With that pathetic life. This tale

It told: A dog had from the sea,

When the tide was raging fearfully,

Dragged Lionel's mother, weak and pale,

Then died beside her on the sand,

And she that temple thence had planned;

But it was Lionel's own hand

Had wrought the image. Each new moon

That lady did, in this lone fane,

The rites of a religion sweet,

Whose god was in her heart and brain:

The seasons' loveliest flowers were  
strewn

On the marble floor beneath her feet,

And she brought crowns of sea-buds  
white,

Whose odor is so sweet and faint,

And weeds, like branching chrysolite,

Woven in devices fine and quaint,



And tears from her brown eyes did stain  
 The altar: need but look upon  
 That dying statue, fair and wan,  
 If tears should cease, to weep again:  
 And rare Arabian odors came,  
 Thro' the myrtle copses steaming  
 thence  
 From the hissing frankincense,  
 Whose smoke, wool-white as ocean foam,  
 Hung in dense flocks beneath the dome,  
 That ivory dome, whose azure night  
 With golden stars, like heaven, was  
 bright  
 O'er the split cedar's pointed flame;  
 And the lady's harp would kindle there  
 The melody of an old air,  
 Softer than sleep; the villagers  
 Mixt their religion up with hers,  
 And as they listened round, shed tears.

One eve he led me to this fane:  
 Daylight on its last purple cloud  
 Was lingering gray, and soon her strain  
 The nightingale began; now loud,  
 Climbing in circles the windless sky,  
 Now dying music; suddenly  
 'T is scattered in a thousand notes,  
 And now to the hushed ear it floats  
 Like field-smells known in infancy,  
 Then failing, soothes the air again.  
 We sate within that temple lone,  
 Pavilioned round with Parian stone:  
 His mother's harp stood near, and oft  
 I had awakened music soft  
 Amid its wires: the nightingale  
 Was pausing in her heaven-taught tale:  
 "Now drain the cup," said Lionel,  
 "Which the poet-bird has crowned so well  
 With the wine of her bright and liquid  
 song!  
 Heardst thou not, sweet words among  
 That heaven-resounding minstrelsy?  
 Heardst thou not, that those who die  
 Awake in a world of ecstasy?  
 That love, when limbs are interwoven,  
 And sleep, when the night of life is  
 cloven,  
 And thought, to the world's dim bound-  
 aries clinging,  
 And music, when one beloved is singing,  
 Is death? Let us drain right joyously  
 The cup which the sweet bird fills for  
 me."

He paused, and to my lips he bent  
 His own: like spirit his words went  
 Through all my limbs with the speed of  
 fire;  
 And his keen eyes, glittering through  
 mine,  
 Filled me with the flame divine,  
 Which in their orbs was burning far,  
 Like the light of an unmeasured star,  
 In the sky of midnight dark and deep:  
 Yes, 't was his soul that did inspire  
 Sounds, which my skill could ne'er  
 awaken;-  
 And first, I felt my fingers sweep  
 The harp, and a long quivering cry  
 Burst from my lips in symphony:  
 The dusk and solid air was shaken,  
 As swift and swifter the notes came  
 From my touch, that wandered like  
 quick flame,  
 And from my bosom, laboring  
 With some unutterable thing:  
 The awful sound of my own voice  
 made  
 My faint lips tremble, in some mood  
 Of wordless thought Lionel stood  
 So pale, that even beside his cheek  
 The snowy column from its shade  
 Caught whiteness: yet his countenance  
 Raised upward, burned with radiance  
 Of spirit-piercing joy, whose light,  
 Like the moon struggling thro' the  
 night  
 Of whirlwind-rifted clouds, did break  
 With beams that might not be confined.  
 I paused, but soon his gestures kindled  
 New power, as by the moving wind  
 The waves are lifted, and my song  
 To low soft notes now changed and  
 dwindled,  
 And from the twinkling wires among,  
 My languid fingers drew and flung  
 Circles of life-dissolving sound,  
 Yet faint: in aëry rings they bound  
 My Lionel, who, as every strain  
 Grew fainter but more sweet, his mien  
 Sunk with the sound relaxedly;  
 And slowly now he turned to me,  
 As slowly faded from his face  
 That awful joy: with look serene  
 He was soon drawn to my embrace,  
 And my wild song then died away  
 In murmurs: words I dare not say,

We mixt, and on his lips mine fed  
 Till they methought felt still and cold:  
 "What is it with thee, love?" I said:  
 No word, no look, no motion! yes,  
 There was a change, but spare to guess,  
 Nor let that moment's hope be told.  
 I lookt, — and knew that he was dead,  
 And fell, as the eagle on the plain  
 Falls when life deserts her brain,  
 And the mortal lightning is veiled again.

O that I were now dead! but such  
 (Did they not, love, demand too much,  
 Those dying murmurs?) he forbade.  
 O that I once again were mad!  
 And yet, dear Rosalind, not so,  
 For I would live to share thy woe.  
 Sweet boy, did I forget thee too?  
 Alas, we know not what we do  
 When we speak words.

No memory more  
 Is in my mind of that seashore.  
 Madness came on me, and a troop  
 Of misty shapes did seem to sit  
 Beside me, on a vessel's poop,  
 And the clear north wind was driving it.  
 Then I heard strange tongues, and saw  
 strange flowers,  
 And the stars methought grew unlike ours,  
 And the azure sky and the stormless sea  
 Made me believe that I had died,  
 And waked in a world, which was 'to me  
 Drear hell, though heaven to all beside:  
 Then a dead sleep fell on my mind,  
 Whilst animal life many long years  
 Had rescue from a chasm of tears;  
 And when I woke, I wept to find  
 That the same lady, bright and wise,  
 With silver locks and quick brown eyes,  
 The mother of my Lionel,  
 Had tended me in my distress,  
 And died some months before. Nor less  
 Wonder, but far more peace and joy  
 Brought in that hour my lovely boy;  
 For through that trance my soul had well  
 The impress of thy being kept;  
 And if I waked, or if I slept,  
 No doubt, though memory faithless be,  
 Thy image ever dwelt on me;  
 And thus, O Lionel, like thee  
 Is our sweet child. 'T is sure most  
 strange  
 I knew not of so great a change,

As that which gave him birth, who now  
 Is all the solace of my woe.

That Lionel great wealth had left  
 By will to me, and that of all  
 The ready lies of law bereft  
 My child and me, might well befall.  
 But let me think not of the scorn,  
 Which from the meanest I have borne,  
 When, for my child's beloved sake,  
 I mixt with slaves, to vindicate  
 The very laws themselves do make:  
 Let me not say scorn is my fate,  
 Lest I be proud, suffering the same  
 With those who live in deathless fame.

She ceased. — "Lo, where red morning  
 thro' the wood  
 Is burning o'er the dew;" said Rosalind.  
 And with these words they rose, and  
 towards the flood  
 Of the blue lake, beneath the leaves now  
 wind  
 With equal steps and fingers intertwined:  
 Thence to a lonely dwelling, where the  
 shore  
 Is shadowed with steep rocks, and cy-  
 presses  
 Cleave with their dark green cones the  
 silent skies,  
 And with their shadows the clear depths  
 below,  
 And where a little terrace from its bowers,  
 Of blooming myrtle and faint lemon-  
 flowers,  
 Scatters its sense-dissolving fragrance  
 o'er  
 The liquid marble of the windless lake;  
 And where the aged forest's limbs look  
 hoar,  
 Under the leaves which their green gar-  
 ments make,  
 They come: 't is Helen's home, and clean  
 and white,  
 Like one which tyrants spare on our own  
 land  
 In some such solitude, its casements  
 bright  
 Shone through their vine-leaves in the  
 morning sun,  
 And even within 't was scarce like Italy.  
 And when she saw how all things there  
 were planned,

As in an English home, dim memory  
 Disturbed poor Rosalind: she stood as  
 one  
 Whose mind is where his body cannot be,  
 Till Helen led her where her child yet  
 slept,  
 And said, "Observe, that brow was  
 Lionel's,  
 Those lips were his, and so he ever kept  
 One arm in sleep, pillowing his head  
 with it.  
 You cannot see his eyes, they are two  
 wells  
 Of liquid love: let us not wake him yet."  
 But Rosalind could bear no more, and  
 wept  
 A shower of burning tears, which fell  
 upon  
 His face, and so his opening lashes shone  
 With tears unlike his own, as he did leap  
 In sudden wonder from his innocent  
 sleep.

So Rosalind and Helen lived together  
 Thenceforth, changed in all else, yet  
 friends again,  
 Such as they were, when o'er the moun-  
 tain heather  
 They wandered in their youth, through  
 sun and rain.  
 And after many years, for human things  
 Change even like the ocean and the  
 wind,  
 Her daughter was restored to Rosalind,  
 And in their circle thence some visitings  
 Of joy mid their new calm would inter-  
 vene:  
 A lovely child she was, of looks serene,  
 And motions which o'er things indiffer-  
 ent shed  
 The grace and gentleness from whence  
 they came.  
 And Helen's boy grew with her, and  
 they fed  
 From the same flowers of thought, until  
 each mind  
 Like springs which mingle in one flood  
 became,  
 And in their union soon their parents saw  
 The shadow of the peace denied to them.  
 And Rosalind, for when the living stem  
 Is cankered in its heart, the tree must  
 fall,

Died ere her time; and with deep grief  
 and awe  
 The pale survivors followed her remains  
 Beyond the region of dissolving rains,  
 Up the cold mountain she was wont to  
 call  
 Her tomb; and on Chiavenna's precipice  
 They raised a pyramid of lasting ice,  
 Whose polisht sides, ere day had yet  
 begun,  
 Caught the first glow of the unrisen sun,  
 The last, when it had sunk; and thro'  
 the night  
 The charioteers of Arctos wheelèd round  
 Its glittering point, as seen from Helen's  
 home,  
 Whose sad inhabitants each year would  
 come,  
 With willing steps climbing that rugged  
 height,  
 And hang long locks of hair, and gar-  
 lands bound  
 With amaranth flowers, which, in the  
 clime's despite,  
 Filled the frore air with unaccustomed  
 light:  
 Such flowers, as in the wintry memory  
 bloom  
 Of one friend left, adorned that frozen  
 tomb.

Helen, whose spirit was of softer mould,  
 Whose sufferings too were less, death  
 slower led  
 Into the peace of his dominion cold:  
 She died among her kindred, being old.  
 And know, that if love die not in the dead  
 As in the living, none of mortal kind  
 Are blest, as now Helen and Rosalind.

## NOTE BY MRS. SHELLEY.

*Rosalind and Helen* was begun at Mar-  
 low, and thrown aside—till I found it;  
 and, at my request, it was completed.  
 Shelley had no care for any of his poems  
 that did not emanate from the depths of  
 his mind and develop some high or ab-  
 struse truth. When he does touch on  
 human life and the human heart, no pic-  
 tures can be more faithful, more delicate,  
 more subtle, or more pathetic. He never

mentioned Love but he shed a grace borrowed from his own nature, that scarcely any other poet has bestowed on that passion. When he spoke of it as the law of life, which inasmuch as we rebel against we err and injure ourselves and others, he promulgated that which he considered an irrefragable truth. In his eyes it was the essence of our being, and all woe and pain arose from the war made against it by selfishness, or insensibility, or mistake. By reverting in his mind to this first principle, he discovered the source of many emotions, and could disclose the secret of all hearts; and his delineations of passion and emotion touch the finest chords of our nature.

*Rosalind and Helen* was finished during the summer of 1818, while we were at the baths of Lucca.

## JULIAN AND MADDALO.

### A CONVERSATION.

#### PREFACE.

The meadows with fresh streams, the bees with  
thyme,  
The goats with the green leaves of budding  
Spring,  
Are saturated not—nor Love with tears.  
VIRGIL'S *Gallus*.

COUNT MADDALO is a Venetian nobleman of ancient family and of great fortune, who, without mixing much in the society of his countrymen, resides chiefly at his magnificent palace in that city. He is a person of the most consummate genius, and capable, if he would direct his energies to such an end, of becoming the redeemer of his degraded country. But it is his weakness to be proud: he derives, from a comparison of his own extraordinary mind with the dwarfish intellects that surround him, an intense apprehension of the nothingness of human life. His passions and his powers are incomparably greater than those of other men; and, instead of the latter having been employed in curbing the former, they have mutually lent each other

strength. His ambition preys upon itself, for want of objects which it can consider worthy of exertion. I say that Maddalo is proud, because I can find no other word to express the concentrated and impatient feelings which consume him; but it is on his own hopes and affections only that he seems to trample, for in social life no human being can be more gentle, patient, and unassuming than Maddalo. He is cheerful, frank, and witty. His more serious conversation is a sort of intoxication; men are held by it as by a spell. He has travelled much; and there is an inexpressible charm in his relation of his adventures in different countries.

Julian is an Englishman of good family, passionately attached to those philosophical notions which assert the power of man over his own mind, and the immense improvements of which, by the extinction of certain moral superstitions, human society may be yet susceptible. Without concealing the evil in the world, he is forever speculating how good may be made superior. He is a complete infidel, and a scoffer at all things reputed holy; and Maddalo takes a wicked pleasure in drawing out his taunts against religion. What Maddalo thinks on these matters is not exactly known. Julian, in spite of his heterodox opinions, is conjectured by his friends to possess some good qualities. How far this is possible the pious reader will determine. Julian is rather serious.

Of the Maniac I can give no information. He seems, by his own account, to have been disappointed in love. He was evidently a very cultivated and amiable person when in his right senses. His story, told at length, might be like many other stories of the same kind: the unconnected exclamations of his agony will perhaps be found a sufficient comment for the text of every heart.

I RODE one evening with Count Maddalo  
Upon the bank of land which breaks the  
flow  
Of Adria towards Venice. A bare strand  
Of hillocks, heaped from ever-shifting  
sand.

Matted with thistles and amphibious  
 weeds,  
 Such as from earth's embrace the salt  
 ooze breeds,  
 Is this; an uninhabited sea-side,  
 Which the lone fisher, when his nets are  
 dried,  
 Abandons; and no other object breaks  
 The waste but one dwarf tree and some  
 few stakes  
 Broken and unrepaired, and the tide  
 makes  
 A narrow space of level sand thereon,  
 Where 't was our wont to ride while day  
 went down.  
 This ride was my delight. I love all  
 waste  
 And solitary places; where we taste  
 The pleasure of believing what we see  
 Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be:  
 And such was this wide ocean, and this  
 shore  
 More barren than its billows; and yet  
 more  
 Than all, with a remembered friend I  
 love  
 To ride as then I rode; — for the winds  
 drove  
 The living spray along the sunny air  
 Into our faces; the blue heavens were  
 bare,  
 Stript to their depths by the awakening  
 north;  
 And, from the waves, sound like delight  
 broke forth  
 Harmonizing with solitude, and sent  
 Into our hearts ærial merriment.  
 So, as we rode, we talkt; and the swift  
 thought,  
 Winging itself with laughter, lingered  
 not,  
 But flew from brain to brain; such glee  
 was ours,  
 Charged with light memories of remem-  
 bered hours,  
 None slow enough for sadness: till we  
 came  
 Homeward, which always makes the  
 spirit tame.  
 This day had been cheerful but cold,  
 and now  
 The sun was sinking, and the wind  
 also.

Our talk grew somewhat serious, as may  
 be  
 Talk interrupted with such raillery  
 As mocks itself, because it cannot scorn  
 The thoughts it would extinguish: —  
 't was forlorn,  
 Yet pleasing, such as once, so poets tell,  
 The devils held within the dales of Hell  
 Concerning God, freewill and destiny:  
 Of all that earth has been or yet may be,  
 All that vain men imagine or believe,  
 Or hope can paint or suffering may  
 achieve,  
 We desanted, and I (for ever still  
 Is it not wise to make the best of ill?)  
 Argued against despondency, but pride  
 Made my companion take the darker  
 side.  
 The sense that he was greater than his  
 kind  
 Had struck, methinks, his eagle spirit  
 blind  
 By gazing on its own exceeding light.  
 Meanwhile the sun paused ere it should  
 alight,  
 Over the horizon of the mountains. —  
 Oh,  
 How beautiful is sunset, when the glow  
 Of Heaven descends upon a land like  
 thee,  
 Thou Paradise of exiles, Italy!  
 Thy mountains, seas and vineyards and  
 the towers  
 Of cities they encircle! — it was ours  
 To stand on thee, beholding it; and  
 then,  
 Just where we had dismounted, the  
 Count's men  
 Were waiting for us with the gondola. —  
 As those who pause on some delightful  
 way  
 Tho' bent on pleasant pilgrimage, we  
 stood  
 Looking upon the evening, and the flood  
 Which lay between the city and the shore  
 Paved with the image of the sky. The  
 hoar  
 And æry Alps towards the North ap-  
 peared  
 Thro' mist, a heaven-sustaining bulwark  
 reared  
 Between the East and West; and half  
 the sky

Was rooft with clouds of rich em-  
 blazonry  
 Dark purple at the zenith, which still  
 grew  
 Down the steep West into a wondrous  
 hue  
 Brighter than burning gold, even to the  
 rent  
 Where the swift sun yet paused in his  
 descent  
 Among the many-folded hills: they were  
 Those famous Euganean hills, which  
 bear  
 As seen from Lido thro' the harbor piles  
 The likeness of a clump of peakèd isles —  
 And then, as if the Earth and Sea had  
 been  
 Dissolved into one lake of fire, were  
 seen  
 Those mountains towering as from waves  
 of flame  
 Around the vaporous sun, from which  
 there came  
 The inmost purple spirit of light, and  
 made  
 Their very peaks transparent. "Ere  
 it fade,"  
 Said my companion, "I will show you  
 soon  
 A better station." — So, o'er the lagune  
 We glided, and from that funereal bark  
 I leaned, and saw the city, and could  
 mark  
 How from their many isles in evening's  
 gleam  
 Its temples and its palaces did seem  
 Like fabrics of enchantment piled to  
 Heaven.  
 I was about to speak, when — "We are  
 even  
 Now at the point I meant," said  
 Maddalo,  
 And bade the gondolieri cease to row.  
 "Look, Julian, on the West, and listen  
 well  
 If you hear not a deep and heavy  
 bell."  
 I lookt, and saw between us and the  
 sun  
 A building on an island; such a one  
 As age to age might add, for uses vile,  
 A windowless, deformed and dreary  
 pile;

And on the top an open tower, where  
 hung  
 A bell, which in the radiance swayed  
 and swung;  
 We could just hear its hoarse and iron  
 tongue:  
 The broad sun sunk behind it, and it  
 tolled  
 In strong and black relief. — "What we  
 behold  
 Shall be the madhouse and its belfry  
 tower,"  
 Said Maddalo, "and ever at this hour  
 Those who may cross the water, hear  
 that bell  
 Which calls the maniacs each one from  
 his cell  
 To vespers." — "As much skill as need  
 to pray  
 In thanks or hope for their dark lot  
 have they  
 To their stern maker," I replied. "O  
 ho!  
 You talk as in years past," said Mad-  
 dalo.  
 "'Tis strange men change not. You  
 were ever still  
 Among Christ's flock a perilous infidel,  
 A wolf for the meek lambs—if you  
 can't swim  
 Beware of Providence." I lookt on him,  
 But the gay smile had faded in his eye,  
 "And such," — he cried, "is our mor-  
 tality,  
 And this must be the emblem and the sign  
 Of what should be eternal and divine! —  
 And like that black and dreary bell, the  
 soul  
 Hung in a heaven-illumined tower, must  
 toll  
 Our thoughts and our desires to meet  
 below  
 Round the rent heart and pray—as  
 madmen do  
 For what? they know not, till the night  
 of death  
 As sunset that strange vision, severeth  
 Our memory from itself, and us from all  
 We sought and yet were baffled." I  
 recal  
 The sense of what he said, altho' I mar  
 The force of his expressions. The broad  
 star

Of day meanwhile had sunk behind the  
 hill,  
 And the black bell became invisible,  
 And the red tower looked gray, and all  
 between  
 The churches, ships and palaces were  
 seen  
 Huddled in gloom; — into the purple  
 sea  
 The orange hues of heaven sunk silently.  
 We hardly spoke, and soon the gondola  
 Conveyed me to my lodgings by the  
 way.  
 The following morn was rainy, cold  
 and dim.  
 Ere Maddalo arose, I called on him,  
 And whilst I waited with his child I  
 played;  
 A lovelier toy sweet Nature never made,  
 A serious, subtle, wild, yet gentle being,  
 Graceful without design, and unforesee-  
 ing,  
 With eyes — oh speak not of her eyes!  
 — which seem  
 Twin mirrors of Italian Heaven, yet  
 gleam  
 With such deep meaning, as we never see  
 But in the human countenance. With  
 me  
 She was a special favorite: I had nursed  
 Her fine and feeble limbs when she  
 came first  
 To this bleak world; and she yet seemed  
 to know  
 On second sight her ancient playfellow,  
 Less changed than she was by six months  
 or so;  
 For after her first shyness was worn out  
 We sate there, rolling billiard balls about,  
 When the Count entered. Salutations  
 past;  
 “The word you spoke last night might  
 well have cast  
 A darkness on my spirit — if man be  
 The passive thing you say, I should not  
 see  
 Much harm in the religions and old saws  
 (Tho’ I may never own such leaden  
 laws)  
 Which break a teachless nature to the  
 yoke:  
 Mine is another faith” — thus much I  
 spoke

And noting he replied not, added:  
 “See  
 This lovely child, blithe, innocent and  
 free,  
 She spends a happy time with little care  
 While we to such sick thoughts subjected  
 are  
 As came on you last night. — It is our  
 will  
 Which thus enchains us to permitted  
 ill —  
 We might be otherwise — we might be  
 all  
 We dream of, happy, high, majestic.  
 Where is the love, beauty, and truth we  
 seek  
 But in our mind? and if we were not  
 weak  
 Should we be less in deed than in  
 desire?”  
 “Ay, if we were not weak — and we  
 aspire  
 How vainly to be strong!” said Mad-  
 dalo:  
 “You talk Utopia.” “It remains to  
 know,”  
 I then rejoined, “and those who try may  
 find  
 How strong the chains are which our  
 spirit bind;  
 Brittle perchance as straw . . . We are  
 assured  
 Much may be conquered, much may be  
 endured  
 Of what degrades and crushes us. We  
 know  
 That we have power over ourselves to  
 do  
 And suffer — what, we know not till we  
 try;  
 But something nobler than to live and  
 die —  
 So taught those kings of old philosophy.  
 Who reigned, before Religion made  
 men blind;  
 And those who suffer with their suffering  
 kind  
 Yet feel their faith, religion.” “My  
 dear friend,”  
 Said Maddalo, “my judgment will not  
 bend  
 To your opinion, tho’ I think you might  
 Make such a system refutation-tight

As far as words go. I knew one like you  
 Who to this city came some months ago,  
 With whom I argued in this sort, and he  
 Is now gone mad, — and so he answered  
 me, —  
 Poor fellow! But if you would like to  
 go  
 We'll visit him, and his wild talk will  
 show  
 How vain are such aspiring theories.”  
 “I hope to prove the induction other-  
 wise,  
 And that a want of that true theory,  
 still,  
 Which seeks a ‘soul of goodness’ in  
 things ill,  
 Or in himself or others, has thus bowed  
 His being — there are some by nature  
 proud,  
 Who patient in all else demand but  
 this —  
 To love and be beloved with gentle-  
 ness;  
 And being scorned, what wonder if they  
 die  
 Some living death? this is not destiny  
 But man’s own wilful ill.”

As thus I spoke

Servants announced the gondola, and we  
 Through the fast-falling rain and high-  
 wrought sea  
 Sailed to the island where the madhouse  
 stands.  
 We disembarkt. The clap of tortured  
 hands,  
 Fierce yells and howlings and lament-  
 ings keen,  
 And laughter where complaint had  
 merrier been,  
 Moans, shrieks, and curses, and blas-  
 pheming prayers  
 Accosted us. We climbed the oozy  
 stairs  
 Into an old courtyard. I heard on high,  
 Then, fragments of most touching melody,  
 But looking up saw not the singer there.  
 Through the black bars in the tempestu-  
 ous air  
 I saw, like weeds on a wreckt palace  
 growing,  
 Long tangled locks flung wildly forth,  
 and flowing,

Of those who on a sudden were beguiled  
 Into strange silence, and lookt forth  
 and smiled  
 Hearing sweet sounds. — Then I: “Me-  
 thinks there were  
 A cure of these with patience and kind  
 care,  
 If music can thus move . . . But what  
 is he  
 Whom we seek here?” “Of his sad  
 history  
 I know but this,” said Maddalo, “he  
 came  
 To Venice a dejected man, and fame  
 Said he was wealthy, or he had been  
 so;  
 Some thought the loss of fortune wrought  
 him woe;  
 But he was ever talking in such sort  
 As you do — far more sadly; he seemed  
 hurt,  
 Even as a man with his peculiar wrong,  
 To hear but of the oppression of the  
 strong,  
 Or those absurd deceits (I think with  
 you  
 In some respects, you know) which carry  
 through  
 The excellent impostors of this earth  
 When they outface detection: he had  
 worth,  
 Poor fellow! but a humorist in his  
 way” —  
 “Alas, what drove him mad?” “I  
 cannot say;  
 A lady came with him from France, and  
 when  
 She left him and returned, he wandered  
 then  
 About yon lonely isles of desert sand  
 Till he grew wild — he had no cash or  
 land  
 Remaining, — the police had brought  
 him here —  
 Some fancy took him and he would not  
 bear  
 Removal; so I fitted up for him  
 Those rooms beside the sea, to please  
 his whim,  
 And sent him busts and books and urns  
 for flowers  
 Which had adorned his life in happier  
 hours,



And instruments of music. — You may  
 guess  
 A stranger could do little more or less  
 For one so gentle and unfortunate:  
 And those are his sweet strains which  
 charm the weight  
 From madmen's chains, and make this  
 Hell appear  
 A heaven of sacred silence, husht to  
 hear." —  
 "Nay, this was kind of you — he had  
 no claim,  
 As the world says." — "None — but the  
 very same  
 Which I on all mankind were I as he  
 Fallen to such deep reverse; — his  
 melody  
 Is interrupted — now we hear the din  
 Of madmen, shriek on shriek again  
 begin;  
 Let us now visit him; after this strain  
 He ever communes with himself again,  
 And sees nor hears not any." Having  
 said  
 These words we called the keeper, and  
 he led  
 To an apartment opening on the sea. —  
 There the poor wretch was sitting  
 mournfully  
 Near a piano, his pale fingers twined  
 One with the other, and the ooze and  
 wind  
 Rusht through an open casement, and  
 did sway  
 His hair, and starred it with the brackish  
 spray;  
 His head was leaning on a music book,  
 And he was muttering, and his lean  
 limbs shook;  
 His lips were prest against a folded  
 leaf  
 In hue too beautiful for health, and grief  
 Smiled in their motions as they lay  
 apart —  
 As one who wrought from his own fervid  
 heart  
 The eloquence of passion, soon he raised  
 His sad meek face and eyes lustrous and  
 glazed  
 And spoke — sometimes as one who  
 wrote and thought  
 His words might move some heart that  
 heeded not

If sent to distant lands: and then as one  
 Reproaching deeds never to be undone  
 With wondering self-compassion; then  
 his speech  
 Was lost in grief, and then his words  
 came each  
 Unmodulated, cold, expressionless, —  
 But that from one jarred accent you  
 might guess  
 It was despair made them so uniform:  
 And all the while the loud and gusty  
 storm  
 Hist thro' the window, and we stood  
 behind  
 Stealing his accents from the envious  
 wind  
 Unseen. I yet remember what he said  
 Distinctly: such impression his words  
 made.

"Month after month," he cried, "to  
 bear this load  
 And as a jade urged by the whip and  
 goad  
 To drag life on, which like a heavy chain  
 Lengthens behind with many a link of  
 pain! —  
 And not to speak my grief — O not to  
 dare  
 To give a human voice to my despair,  
 But live and move, and, wretched thing!  
 smile on  
 As if I never went aside to groan,  
 And wear this mask of falsehood even to  
 those  
 Who are most dear — not for my own  
 repose —  
 Alas! no scorn or pain or hate could be  
 So heavy as that falsehood is to me —  
 But that I cannot bear more altered faces  
 Than needs must be, more changed and  
 cold embraces,  
 More misery, disappointment, and mis-  
 trust  
 To own me for their father . . . Would  
 the dust  
 Were covered in upon my body now!  
 That the life ceast to toil within my  
 brow!  
 And then these thoughts would at the  
 least be fled;  
 Let us not fear such pain can vex the  
 dead.

"What Power delights to torture us?  
 I know  
 That to myself I do not wholly owe  
 What now I suffer, tho' in part I may.  
 Alas! none strewed sweet flowers upon  
 the way  
 Where, wandering heedlessly, I met pale  
 Pain,  
 My shadow, which will leave me not  
 again. —  
 If I have erred, there was no joy in error,  
 But pain and insult and unrest and terror;  
 I have not as some do, bought penitence  
 With pleasure, and a dark yet sweet  
 offence,  
 For then, if love and tenderness and truth  
 Had overlived hope's momentary youth,  
 My creed should have redeemed me from  
 repenting;  
 But loathed scorn and outrage unrelent-  
 ing,  
 Met love excited by far other seeming  
 Until the end was gained . . . as one  
 from dreaming  
 Of sweetest peace, I woke, and found  
 my state  
 Such as it is. —  
 "O Thou, my spirit's mate  
 Who, for thou art compassionate and  
 wise,  
 Wouldst pity me from thy most gentle  
 eyes  
 If this sad writing thou shouldst ever see—  
 My secret groans must be unheard by  
 thee,  
 Thou wouldst weep tears bitter as blood  
 to know  
 Thy lost friend's incommunicable woe.  
 "Ye few by whom my nature has been  
 weighed  
 In friendship, let me not that name de-  
 grade  
 By placing on your hearts the secret load  
 Which crushes mine to dust. There is  
 one road  
 To peace and that is truth, which follow  
 ye!  
 Love sometimes leads astray to misery.  
 Yet think not tho' subdued — and I may  
 well  
 Say that I am subdued — that the full  
 hell

Within me would infect the untainted  
 breast  
 Of sacred nature with its own unrest;  
 As some perverted beings think to find  
 In scorn or hate a medicine for the mind  
 Which scorn or hate hath wounded — O  
 how vain!  
 The dagger heals not but may rend  
 again . . .  
 Believe that I am ever still the same  
 In creed as in resolve, and what may  
 tame  
 My heart, must leave the understanding  
 free,  
 Or all would sink in this keen agony;  
 Nor dream that I will join the vulgar cry;  
 Or with my silence sanction tyranny;  
 Or seek a moment's shelter from my  
 pain  
 In any madness which the world calls  
 gain,  
 Ambition or revenge or thoughts as  
 stern  
 As those which make me what I am; or  
 turn  
 To avarice or misanthropy or lust . . .  
 Heap on me soon O grave, thy welcome  
 dust!  
 Till then the dungeon may demand its  
 prey,  
 And Poverty and Shame may meet and  
 say —  
 Halting beside me on the public way —  
 'That love-devoted youth is ours — let's  
 sit  
 Beside him — he may live some six  
 months yet.'  
 Or the red scaffold, as our country bends,  
 May ask some willing victim, or ye friends  
 May fall under some sorrow which this  
 heart  
 Or hand may share or vanquish or avert;  
 I am prepared — in truth with no proud  
 joy —  
 To do or suffer aught, as when a boy  
 I did devote to justice and to love  
 My nature, worthless now! . . .  
 "I must remove  
 A veil from my pent mind. 'Tis torn  
 aside!  
 O, pallid as Death's dedicated bride,  
 Thou mockery which art sitting by my  
 side,

Am I not wan like thee? at the grave's  
 call  
 I haste, invited to thy wedding-ball  
 To greet the ghastly paramour, for whom  
 Thou hast deserted me . . . and made  
 the tomb  
 Thy bridal bed . . . But I beside your  
 feet  
 Will lie and watch ye from my winding  
 sheet—  
 Thus . . . wide awake tho' dead . . .  
 yet stay, O stay!  
 Go not so soon—I know not what I  
 say—  
 Hear but my reasons . . . I am mad, I  
 fear,  
 My fancy is o'erwrought . . . thou art  
 not here . . .  
 Pale art thou, 'tis most true . . . but  
 thou art gone,  
 Thy work is finisht . . . I am left  
 alone!—  
 . . . . .  
 “Nay, was it I who wooed thee to  
 this breast  
 Which, like a serpent thou envenomest  
 As in repayment of the warmth it lent?  
 Didst thou not seek me for thine own  
 content?  
 Did not thy love awaken mine? I  
 thought  
 That thou wert she who said ‘You kiss  
 me not  
 Ever; I fear you do not love me now’—  
 In truth I loved even to my overthrow  
 Her, who would fain forget these words:  
 but they  
 Cling to her mind, and cannot pass away.  
 . . . . .  
 “You say that I am proud—that  
 when I speak  
 My lip is tortured with the wrongs which  
 break  
 The spirit it expresses . . . Never one  
 Humbled himself before, as I have done!  
 Even the instinctive worm on which we  
 tread  
 Turns, tho' it would not—then with  
 prostrate head  
 Sinks in the dust and writhes like me—  
 and dies?  
 No: wears a living death of agonies!

As the slow shadows of the pointed  
 grass  
 Mark the eternal periods, his pangs pass  
 Slow, ever-moving, — making moments  
 be  
 As mine seem — each an immortality!  
 . . . . .  
 “That you had never seen me — never  
 heard  
 My voice, and more than all had ne'er  
 endured  
 The deep pollution of my loathed em-  
 brace —  
 That your eyes ne'er had lied love in my  
 face—  
 That, like some maniac monk, I had  
 torn out  
 The nerves of manhood by their bleeding  
 root  
 With mine own quivering fingers, so  
 that ne'er  
 Our hearts had for a moment mingled  
 there  
 To disunite in horror — these were not  
 With thee, like some suppress and  
 hideous thought  
 Which flits athwart our musings, but can  
 find  
 No rest within a pure and gentle  
 mind . . .  
 Thou sealedst them with many a bare  
 broad word  
 And searedst my memory o'er them, —  
 for I heard  
 And can forget not . . . they were  
 ministered  
 One after one, those curses. Mix them  
 up  
 Like self-destroying poisons in one  
 cup,  
 And they will make one blessing which  
 thou ne'er  
 Didst imprecate for, on me, — death.  
 . . . . .  
 “It were  
 A cruel punishment for one most cruel  
 If such can love, to make that love the  
 fuel  
 Of the mind's hell; hate, scorn, remorse,  
 despair:  
 But *me* — whose heart a stranger's tear  
 might wear



Then, when thou speakest of me, never  
 say  
 'He could forgive not.' Here I cast away  
 All human passions, all revenge, all  
 pride;  
 I think, speak, act no ill; I do but hide  
 Under these words, like embers, every  
 spark  
 Of that which has consumed me — Quick  
 and dark  
 The grave is yawning . . . as its roof  
 shall cover  
 My limbs with dust and worms under  
 and over  
 So let Oblivion hide this grief . . . the  
 air  
 Closes upon my accents, as despair  
 Upon my heart — let death upon de-  
 spair!"

He ceast, and overcome leant back  
 awhile,  
 Then rising, with a melancholy smile  
 Went to a sofa, and lay down, and slept  
 A heavy sleep, and in his dreams he  
 wept  
 And muttered some familiar name, and  
 we  
 Wept without shame in his society.  
 I think I never was impress so much;  
 The man who were not, must have  
 lackt a touch  
 Of human nature . . . then we lingered  
 not,  
 Altho' our argument was quite forgot,  
 But calling the attendants, went to dine  
 At Maddalo's; yet neither cheer nor  
 wine  
 Could give us spirits, for we talkt of  
 him  
 And nothing else, till daylight made  
 stars dim;  
 And we agreed his was some dreadful  
 ill  
 Wrought on him boldly, yet unspeakable,  
 By a dear friend; some deadly change  
 in love  
 Of one vowed deeply which he dreamed  
 not of;  
 For whose sake he, it seemed, had fixt  
 a blot  
 Of falsehood on his mind which flourisht  
 not

But in the light of all-beholding truth,  
 And having stamp't this canker on his  
 youth  
 She had abandoned him — and how much  
 more  
 Might be his woe, we guessed not — he  
 had store  
 Of friends and fortune once, as we could  
 guess  
 From his nice habits and his gentleness;  
 These were now lost . . . it were a  
 grief indeed  
 If he had changed one unsustaining reed  
 For all that such a man might else adorn.  
 The colors of his mind seemed yet un-  
 worn;  
 For the wild language of his grief was  
 high,  
 Such as in measure were called poetry,  
 And I remember one remark which then  
 Maddalo made. He said: "Most  
 wretched men  
 Are cradled into poetry by wrong,  
 They learn in suffering what they teach  
 in song."

If I had been an unconnected man  
 I, from this moment, should have formed  
 some plan  
 Never to leave sweet Venice, — for to me  
 It was delight to ride by the lone sea;  
 And then, the town is silent — one may  
 write  
 Or read in gondolas by day or night,  
 Having the little brazen lamp alight,  
 Unseen, uninterrupted; books are there,  
 Pictures, and casts from all those statues  
 fair  
 Which were twin-born with poetry, and  
 all  
 We seek in towns, with little to recall  
 Regrets for the green country. I might  
 sit  
 In Maddalo's great palace, and his wit  
 And subtle talk would cheer the winter  
 night  
 And make me know myself, and the  
 firelight  
 Would flash upon our faces, till the day  
 Might dawn and make me wonder at my  
 stay:  
 But I had friends in London too: the chief  
 Attraction here, was that I sought relief

From the deep tenderness that maniac  
wrought  
Within me — 't was perhaps an idle  
thought —  
But I imagined that if day by day  
I watcht him, and but seldom went  
away,  
And studied all the beatings of his heart  
With zeal, as men study some stubborn  
art  
For their own good, and could by  
patience find  
An entrance to the caverns of his mind,  
I might reclaim him from this dark  
estate:  
In friendships I had been most for-  
tunate —  
Yet never saw I one whom I would call  
More willingly my friend; and this was  
all  
Accomplisht not; such dreams of base-  
less good  
Oft come and go in crowds or solitude  
And leave no trace — but what I now  
designed  
Made for long years impression on my  
mind.  
The following morning urged by my  
affairs  
I left bright Venice.

After many years

And many changes I returned; the name  
Of Venice, and its aspect, was the  
same;  
But Maddalo was travelling far away  
Among the mountains of Armenia.  
His dog was dead. His child had now  
become  
A woman; such as it has been my doom  
To meet with few, a wonder of this earth  
Where there is little of transcendent  
worth,  
Like one of Shakespeare's women.  
Kindly she,  
And with a manner beyond courtesy,  
Received her father's friend; and when  
I askt  
Of the lorn maniac, she her memory  
taskt  
And told, as she had heard, the mournful  
tale.  
"That the poor sufferer's health began  
to fail

Two years from my departure, but that  
then  
The lady who had left him, came again.  
Her mien had been imperious, but she  
now  
Lookt meek — perhaps remorse had  
brought her low.  
Her coming made him better, and they  
stayed  
Together at my father's — for I played  
As I remember with the lady's shawl —  
I might be six years old — but after all  
She left him." . . . "Why, her heart  
must have been tough:  
How did it end?" "And was not this  
enough?  
They met — they parted" — "Child, is  
there no more?"  
"Something within that interval which  
bore  
The stamp of *why* they parted, *how* they  
met:  
Yet if thine agèd eyes disdain to wet  
Those wrinkled cheeks with youth's  
remembered tears,  
Ask me no more, but let the silent years  
Be closed and cered over their memory  
As yon mute marble where their corpses  
lie."  
I urged and questioned still, she told  
me how  
All happened — but the cold world shall  
not know.

#### CANCELLED FRAGMENTS OF JULIAN AND MADDALO.

"What think you the dead are?"  
"Why, dust and clay,  
What should they be?" " 'Tis the  
last hour of day.  
Look on the west, how beautiful it is  
Vaulted with radiant vapors! The deep  
bliss  
Of that unutterable light has made  
The edges of that cloud fade  
Into a hue, like some harmonious thought,  
Wasting itself on that which it had  
wrought,  
Till it dies and  
between  
The light hues of the tender, pure,  
serene,

And infinite tranquillity of heaven.  
Ay, beautiful! but when not. . . .”

“Perhaps the only comfort which remains

Is the unheeded clanking of my chains,  
The which I make, and call it melody.”

#### NOTE BY MRS. SHELLEY.

From the Baths of Lucca, in 1818, Shelley visited Venice; and, circumstances rendering it eligible that we should remain a few weeks in the neighborhood of that city, he accepted the offer of Lord Byron, who lent him the use of a villa he rented near Este; and he sent for his family from Lucca to join him.

I Capuccini was a villa built on the site of a Capuchin convent, demolished when the French suppressed religious houses; it was situated on the very overhanging brow of a low hill at the foot of a range of higher ones. The house was cheerful and pleasant; a vine-trellised walk, a *pergola*, as it is called in Italian, led from the hall-door to a summer-house at the end of the garden, which Shelley made his study, and in which he began the *Prometheus*; and here also, as he mentions in a letter, he wrote *Julian and Maddalo*. A slight ravine, with a road in its depth, divided the garden from the hill, on which stood the ruins of the ancient castle of Este, whose dark massive wall gave forth an echo, and from whose ruined crevices owls and bats flitted forth at night, as the crescent moon sunk behind the black and heavy battlements. We looked from the garden over the wide plain of Lombardy, bounded to the west by the far Apennines, while to the east the horizon was lost in misty distance. After the picturesque but limited view of mountain, ravine, and chestnut-wood, at the Baths of Lucca, there was something infinitely gratifying to the eye in the wide range of prospect commanded by our new abode.

Our first misfortune, of the kind from

which we soon suffered even more severely, happened here. Our little girl, an infant in whose small features I fancied that I traced great resemblance to her father, showed symptoms of suffering from the heat of the climate. Teething increased her illness and danger. We were at Este, and when we became alarmed, hastened to Venice for the best advice. When we arrived at Fusina, we found that we had forgotten our passport, and the soldiers on duty attempted to prevent our crossing the laguna; but they could not resist Shelley's impetuosity at such a moment. We had scarcely arrived at Venice before life fled from the little sufferer, and we returned to Este to weep her loss.

After a few weeks spent in this retreat, which was interspersed by visits to Venice, we proceeded southward.

## PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

### A LYRICAL DRAMA.

IN FOUR ACTS.

AUDISNE HÆC AMPHIARAE, SUB TERRAM  
ABDITE?

#### PREFACE.

THE Greek tragic writers, in selecting as their subject any portion of their national history or mythology, employed in their treatment of it a certain arbitrary discretion. They by no means conceived themselves bound to adhere to the common interpretation or to imitate in story as in title their rivals and predecessors. Such a system would have amounted to a resignation of those claims to preference over their competitors which incited the composition. The Agamemnonian story was exhibited on the Athenian theatre with as many variations as dramas.

I have presumed to employ a similar license. The “Prometheus Unbound” of Æschylus supposed the reconciliation of Jupiter with his victim as the price of

the disclosure of the danger threatened to his empire by the consummation of his marriage with Thetis. Thetis, according to this view of the subject, was given in marriage to Peleus, and Prometheus, by the permission of Jupiter, delivered from his captivity by Hercules. Had I framed my story on this model, I should have done no more than have attempted to restore the lost drama of Æschylus; an ambition which, if my preference to this mode of treating the subject had incited me to cherish, the recollection of the high comparison such an attempt would challenge might well abate. But, in truth, I was averse from a catastrophe so feeble as that of reconciling the Champion with the Oppressor of mankind. The moral interest of the fable, which is so powerfully sustained by the sufferings and endurance of Prometheus, would be annihilated if we could conceive of him as unsaying his high language and quailing before his successful and perfidious adversary. The only imaginary being resembling in any degree Prometheus, is Satan; and Prometheus is, in my judgment, a more poetical character than Satan, because, in addition to courage, and majesty, and firm and patient opposition to omnipotent force, he is susceptible of being described as exempt from the taints of ambition, envy, revenge, and a desire for personal aggrandizement, which, in the Hero of Paradise Lost, interfere with the interest. The character of Satan engenders in the mind a pernicious casuistry which leads us to weigh his faults with his wrongs, and to excuse the former because the latter exceed all measure. In the minds of those who consider that magnificent fiction with a religious feeling it engenders something worse. But Prometheus is, as it were, the type of the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature, impelled by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends.

This Poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades, and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees, which are extended in ever wind-

ing labyrinths upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air. The bright blue sky of Rome, and the effect of the vigorous awakening spring in that divinest climate, and the new life with which it drenches the spirits even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama.

The imagery which I have employed will be found, in many instances, to have been drawn from the operations of the human mind, or from those external actions by which they are expressed. This is unusual in modern poetry, although Dante and Shakespeare are full of instances of the same kind: Dante indeed more than any other poet, and with greater success. But the Greek poets, as writers to whom no resource of awakening the sympathy of their contemporaries was unknown, were in the habitual use of this power; and it is the study of their works (since a higher merit would probably be denied me) to which I am willing that my readers should impute this singularity.

One word is due in candor to the degree in which the study of contemporary writings may have tinged my composition, for such has been a topic of censure with regard to poems far more popular, and indeed more deservedly popular, than mine. It is impossible that any one who inhabits the same age with such writers as those who stand in the foremost ranks of our own, can conscientiously assure himself that his language and tone of thought may not have been modified by the study of the productions of those extraordinary intellects. It is true, that, not the spirit of their genius, but the forms in which it has manifested itself, are due less to the peculiarities of their own minds than to the peculiarity of the moral and intellectual condition of the minds among which they have been produced. Thus a number of writers possess the form, whilst they want the spirit of those whom, it is alleged, they imitate; because the former is the endowment of the age in which they live, and the latter must be the uncommunicated lightning of their own mind.



The peculiar style of intense and comprehensive imagery which distinguishes the modern literature of England, has not been, as a general power, the product of the imitation of any particular writer. The mass of capabilities remains at every period materially the same; the circumstances which awaken it to action perpetually change. If England were divided into forty republics, each equal in population and extent to Athens, there is no reason to suppose but that, under institutions not more perfect than those of Athens, each would produce philosophers and poets equal to those who (if we except Shakespeare) have never been surpassed. We owe the great writers of the golden age of our literature to that fervid awakening of the public mind which shook to dust the oldest and most oppressive form of the Christian religion. We owe Milton to the progress and development of the same spirit: the sacred Milton was, let it ever be remembered, a republican, and a bold inquirer into morals and religion. The great writers of our own age are, we have reason to suppose, the companions and forerunners of some unimagined change in our social condition or the opinions which cement it. The cloud of mind is discharging its collected lightning, and the equilibrium between institutions and opinions is now restoring, or is about to be restored.

As to imitation, poetry is a mimetic art. It creates, but it creates by combination and representation. Poetical abstractions are beautiful and new, not because the portions of which they are composed had no previous existence in the mind of man or in nature, but because the whole produced by their combination has some intelligible and beautiful analogy with those sources of emotion and thought, and with the contemporary condition of them: one great poet is a masterpiece of nature which another not only ought to study but must study. He might as wisely and as easily determine that his mind should no longer be the mirror of all that is lovely in the visible universe, as exclude from his contemplation the beautiful which exists in

the writings of a great contemporary. The pretence of doing it would be a presumption in any but the greatest; the effect, even in him, would be strained, unnatural, and ineffectual. A poet is the combined product of such internal powers as modify the nature of others; and of such external influences as excite and sustain these powers; he is not one, but both. Every man's mind is, in this respect, modified by all the objects of nature and art; by every word and every suggestion which he ever admitted to act upon his consciousness; it is the mirror upon which all forms are reflected, and in which they compose one form. Poets, not otherwise than philosophers, painters, sculptors, and musicians, are, in one sense, the creators, and, in another, the creations, of their age. From this subjection the loftiest do not escape. There is a similarity between Homer and Hesiod, between Æschylus and Euripides, between Virgil and Horace, between Dante and Petrarch, between Shakespeare and Fletcher, between Dryden and Pope; each has a generic resemblance under which their specific distinctions are arranged. If this similarity be the result of imitation, I am willing to confess that I have imitated.

Let this opportunity be conceded to me of acknowledging that I have, what a Scotch philosopher characteristically terms, "a passion for reforming the world:" what passion incited him to write and publish his book, he omits to explain. For my part I had rather be damned with Plato and Lord Bacon, than go to Heaven with Paley and Malthus. But it is a mistake to suppose that I dedicate my poetical compositions solely to the direct enforcement of reform, or that I consider them in any degree as containing a reasoned system on the theory of human life. Didactic poetry is my abhorrence; nothing can be equally well expressed in prose that is not tedious and supererogatory in verse. My purpose has hitherto been simply to familiarize the highly refined imagination of the more select classes of poetical readers with beautiful idealisms of moral

excellence; aware that until the mind can love, and admire, and trust, and hope, and endure, reasoned principles of moral conduct are seeds cast upon the highway of life which the unconscious passenger tramples into dust, although they would bear the harvest of his happiness. Should I live to accomplish what I purpose, that is, produce a systematical history of what appear to me to be the genuine elements of human society, let not the advocates of injustice and superstition flatter themselves that I should take Æschylus rather than Plato as my model.

The having spoken of myself with unaffected freedom will need little apology with the candid; and let the uncandid consider that they injure me less than their own hearts and minds by misrepresentation. Whatever talents a person may possess to amuse and instruct others, be they ever so inconsiderable, he is yet bound to exert them: if his attempt be ineffectual, let the punishment of an unaccomplished purpose have been sufficient; let none trouble themselves to heap the dust of oblivion upon his efforts; the pile they raise will betray his grave which might otherwise have been unknown.

#### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PROMETHEUS.	MERCURY.	
DEMOGORGON.	HERCULES.	
JUPITER.	ASIA	} Oceanides.
THE EARTH.	PANTHEA	
OCEAN.	IONE	
APOLLO.		
THE PHANTASM OF JUPITER.		
THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.		
THE SPIRIT OF THE MOON.		
SPIRITS OF THE HOURS.		
SPIRITS. ECHOES. FAUNS. FURIES.		

#### ACT I.

SCENE. — A RAVINE OF ICY ROCKS IN THE INDIAN CAUCASUS.

PROMETHEUS is discovered bound to the Precipice. PANTHEA and IONE are seated at his feet. Time, night. During the Scene, morning slowly breaks.

*Prometheus.* Monarch of Gods and  
Dæmons, and all Spirits  
But One, who throng those bright and  
rolling worlds  
Which Thou and I alone of living things  
Behold with sleepless eyes! regard this  
Earth  
Made multitudinous with thy slaves,  
whom thou  
Requiest for knee-worship, prayer, and  
praise,  
And toil, and hecatombs of broken  
hearts,  
With fear and self-contempt and barren  
hope.  
Whilst me, who am thy foe, eyeless in  
hate,  
Hast thou made reign and triumph, to thy  
scorn,  
O'er mine own misery and thy vain re-  
venge.  
Three thousand years of sleep-unshel-  
tered hours,  
And moments aye divided by keen pangs  
Till they seemed years, torture and soli-  
tude,  
Scorn and despair, — these are mine  
empire:—  
More glorious far than that which thou  
surveyest  
From thine unenvied throne, O Mighty  
God!  
Almighty, had I deigned to share the  
shame  
Of thine ill tyranny, and hung not here  
Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling  
mountain,  
Black, wintry, dead; unmeasured; with-  
out herb,  
Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life.  
Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!  
No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I  
endure.  
I ask the Earth, have not the mountains  
felt?  
I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding Sun,  
Has it not seen? The Sea, in storm or  
calm,  
Heaven's ever-changing Shadow, spread  
below,  
Have its deaf waves not heard my agony?  
Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!

The crawling glaciers pierce me with the spears  
 Of their moon-freezing crystals; the bright chains  
 Eat with their burning cold into my bones.  
 Heaven's wingèd hound, polluting from thy lips  
 His beak in poison not his own, tears up  
 My heart; and shapeless sights come wandering by,  
 The ghastly people of the realm of dream,  
 Mocking me: and the Earthquake-fiends are charged  
 To wrench the rivets from my quivering wounds  
 When the rocks split and close again behind:  
 While from their loud abysses howling throng  
 The genii of the storm, urging the rage  
 Of whirlwind, and afflict me with keen hail.  
 And yet to me welcome is day and night,  
 Whether one breaks the hoar frost of the morn,  
 Or starry, dim, and slow, the other climbs  
 The leaden-colored east; for then they lead  
 The wingless, crawling hours, one among whom  
 — As some dark Priest hales the reluctant victim —  
 Shall drag thee, cruel King, to kiss the blood  
 From these pale feet, which then might trample thee  
 If they disdained not such a prostrate slave.  
 Disdain! Ah no! I pity thee. What ruin  
 Will hunt thee undefended thro' the wide Heaven!  
 How will thy soul, cloven to its depth with terror,  
 Gape like a hell within! I speak in grief,  
 Not exultation, for I hate no more,  
 As then ere misery made me wise. The curse  
 Once breathed on thee I would recal.

Ye Mountains,  
 Whose many-voicèd Echoes, thro' the mist  
 Of cataracts, flung the thunder of that spell!  
 Ye icy Springs, stagnant with wrinkling frost,  
 Which vibrated to hear me, and then crept  
 Shuddering thro' India! Thou serenest Air,  
 Thro' which the Sun walks burning without beams!  
 And ye swift Whirlwinds, who on poisèd wings  
 Hung mute and moveless o'er yon husht abyss,  
 As thunder, louder than your own, made rock  
 The orbèd world! If then my words had power,  
 Tho' I am changed so that aught evil wish  
 Is dead within; altho' no memory be  
 Of what is hate, let them not lose it now!  
 What was that curse? for ye all heard me speak.

*First Voice (from the Mountains).*

Thrice three hundred thousand years  
 O'er the Earthquake's couch we stood:

Oft, as men convulsed with fears,  
 We trembled in our multitude.

*Second Voice (from the Springs).*

Thunderbolts had parcht our water,  
 We had been stained with bitter blood,

And had run mute, mid shrieks of slaughter,

Thro' a city and a solitude.

*Third Voice (from the Air).*

I had clothed, since Earth uprose,  
 Its wastes in colors not their own,  
 And oft had my serene repose  
 Been cloven by many a rending groan.

*Fourth Voice (from the Whirlwinds).*

We had soared beneath these mountains

Unresting ages; nor had thunder,  
 Nor yon volcano's flaming fountains,  
 Nor any power above or under  
 Ever made us mute with wonder.

*First Voice.*

But never bowed our snowy crest  
As at the voice of thine unrest.

*Second Voice.*

Never such a sound before  
To the Indian waves we bore.  
A pilot asleep on the howling sea  
Leapt up from the deck in agony,  
And heard, and cried, "Ah, woe is me!"  
And died as mad as the wild waves be.

*Third Voice.*

By such dread words from Earth to  
Heaven  
My still realm was never riven:  
When its wound was closed, there  
stood  
Darkness o'er the day like blood.

*Fourth Voice.*

And we shrank back: for dreams of  
ruin  
To frozen caves our flight pursuing  
Made us keep silence — thus — and  
thus —  
Tho' silence is a hell to us.  
*The Earth.* The tongueless Caverns  
of the craggy hills  
Cried, "Misery!" then; the hollow  
Heaven replied,  
"Misery!" And the Ocean's purple  
waves,  
Climbing the land, howled to the lashing  
winds,  
And the pale nations heard it, "Misery!"  
*Prometheus.* I hear a sound of voices:  
not the voice  
Which I gave forth. Mother, thy sons  
and thou  
Scorn him, without whose all-enduring  
will  
Beneath the fierce omnipotence of Jove,  
Both they and thou had vanished, like  
thin mist  
Unrolled on the morning wind. Know  
ye not me,  
The Titan? He who made his agony  
The barrier to your else all-conquering  
foe?  
Oh, rock-embosomed lawns, and snow-  
fed streams,  
Now seen athwart frore vapors, deep  
below,  
Thro' whose o'ershadowing woods I  
wandered once

With Asia, drinking life from her loved  
eyes;  
Why scorns the spirit which informs ye,  
now  
To commune with me? me alone, who  
checkt,  
As one who checks a fiend-drawn  
charioteer,  
The falsehood and the force of him who  
reigns  
Supreme, and with the groans of pining  
slaves  
Fills your dim glens and liquid wilder-  
nesses:  
Why answer ye not, still? Brethren!  
*The Earth.* They dare not.  
*Prometheus.* Who dares? for I would  
hear that curse again.  
Ha, what an awful whisper rises up!  
'T is scarce like sound: it tingles thro'  
the frame  
As lightning tingles, hovering ere it  
strike.  
Speak, Spirit! from thine inorganic  
voice  
I only know that thou art moving  
near  
And love. How curst I him?  
*The Earth.* How canst thou hear  
Who knowest not the language of the  
dead?  
*Prometheus.* Thou art a living spirit:  
speak as they.  
*The Earth.* I dare not speak like  
life, lest Heaven's fell King  
Should hear, and link me to some wheel  
of pain  
More torturing than the one whereon I  
roll.  
Subtle thou art and good, and tho' the  
Gods  
Hear not this voice, yet thou art more  
than God  
Being wise and kind: earnestly hearken  
now.  
*Prometheus.* Obscurely thro' my brain,  
like shadows dim,  
Sweep awful thoughts, rapid and thick.  
I feel  
Faint, like one mingled in entwining  
love;  
Yet 't is not pleasure.  
*The Earth.* No, thou canst not hear:

Thou art immortal, and this tongue is known

Only to those who die.

*Prometheus.* And what art thou,

O melancholy Voice?

*The Earth.* I am the Earth,

Thy mother; she within whose stony veins,

To the last fibre of the loftiest tree

Whose thin leaves trembled in the frozen air,

Joy ran, as blood within a living frame,  
When thou didst from her bosom, like a cloud

Of glory, arise, a spirit of keen joy!  
And at thy voice her pining sons uplifted

Their prostrate brows from the polluting dust,

And our almighty Tyrant with fierce dread

Grew pale, until his thunder chained thee here.

Then, see those million worlds which burn and roll

Around us: their inhabitants beheld

My spherèd light wane in wide Heaven;  
the sea

Was lifted by strange tempest, and new fire

From earthquake-rifted mountains of bright snow

Shook its portentous hair beneath Heaven's frown;

Lightning and Inundation vext the plains;

Blue thistles bloomed in cities; foodless toads

Within voluptuous chambers panting crawled:

When Plague had fallen on man, and beast, and worm,

And Famine; and black blight on herb and tree;

And in the corn, and vines, and meadow-grass,

Teemed ineradicable poisonous weeds

Draining their growth, for my wan breast was dry

With grief; and the thin air, my breath, was stained

With the contagion of a mother's hate

Breathed on her child's destroyer; aye, I heard

Thy curse, the which, if thou rememberest not,

Yet my innumerable seas and streams,  
Mountains, and caves, and winds, and yon wide air,

And the inarticulate people of the dead,  
Preserve, a treasured spell. We meditate  
In secret joy and hope those dreadful words

But dare not speak them.

*Prometheus.* Venerable mother!

All else who live and suffer take from thee

Some comfort; flowers, and fruits, and happy sounds,

And love, though fleeting; these may not be mine.

But mine own words, I pray, deny me not.

*The Earth.* They shall be told. Ere Babylon was dust,

The Magus Zoroaster, my dead child,  
Met his own image walking in the garden.

That apparition, sole of men, he saw.

For know there are two worlds of life and death:

One that which thou beholdest; but the other

Is underneath the grave, where do inhabit

The shadows of all forms that think and live

Till death unite them and they part no more;

Dreams and the light imaginings of men,  
And all that faith creates or love desires,

Terrible, strange, sublime and beauteous shapes.

There thou art, and dost hang, a writhing shade,

Mid whirlwind-peopled mountains; all the gods

Are there, and all the powers of nameless worlds,

Vast, sceptred phantoms; heroes, men, and beasts;

And Demogorgon, a tremendous gloom;  
And he, the supreme Tyrant, on his throne

Of burning gold. Son, one of these shall utter

The curse which all remember. Call at will

Thine own ghost, or the ghost of Jupiter,  
Hades or Typhon, or what mightier  
Gods

From all-prolific Evil, since thy ruin  
Have sprung, and trampled on my prostrate  
sons.

Ask, and they must reply: so the revenge  
Of the Supreme may sweep thro' vacant  
shades,

As rainy wind thro' the abandoned gate  
Of a fallen palace.

*Prometheus.* Mother, let not aught  
Of that which may be evil, pass again  
My lips, or those of aught resembling  
me.

Phantasm of Jupiter, arise, appear!

*Ione.*

My wings are folded o'er mine ears:

My wings are crossèd o'er mine eyes:

Yet thro' their silver shade appears,

And thro' their lulling plumes arise,

A Shape, a throng of sounds;

May it be no ill to thee

O thou of many wounds!

Near whom, for our sweet sister's sake,  
Ever thus we watch and wake.

*Panthea.*

The sound is of whirlwind underground,  
Earthquake, and fire, and mountains  
cloven;

The shape is awful like the sound,  
Clothed in dark purple, star-in-  
woven.

A sceptre of pale gold

To stay steps proud, o'er the slow  
cloud

His veinèd hand doth hold.

Cruel he looks, but calm and strong,

Like one who does, not suffers wrong.

*Phantasm of Jupiter.* Why have the  
secret powers of this strange world  
Driven me, a frail and empty phantom,  
hither

On direst storms? What unaccustomed  
sounds

Are hovering on my lips, unlike the  
voice

With which our pallid race hold ghastly  
talk

In darkness? And, proud sufferer, who  
art thou?

*Prometheus.* Tremendous Image, as  
thou art must be

He whom thou shadowest forth. I am  
his foe,

The Titan. Speak the words which I  
would hear,

Although no thought inform thine empty  
voice.

*The Earth.* Listen! And tho' your  
echoes must be mute,

Gray mountains, and old woods, and  
haunted springs,

Prophetic caves, and isle-surrounding  
streams,

Rejoice to hear what yet ye cannot  
speak.

*Phantasm.* A spirit seizes me and  
speaks within:

It tears me as fire tears a thunder-  
cloud.

*Panthea.* See, how he lifts his mighty  
looks, the Heaven

Darkens above.

*Ione.* He speaks! O shelter me!

*Prometheus.* I see the curse on ges-  
tures proud and cold,

And looks of firm defiance, and calm  
hate,

And such despair as mocks itself with  
smiles,

Written as on a scroll: yet speak: Oh,  
speak!

*Phantasm.*

Fiend, I defy thee! with a calm, fixed  
mind,

All that thou canst inflict I bid thee  
do;

Foul Tyrant both of Gods and  
Human-kind,

One only being shalt thou not  
subdue.

Rain then thy plagues upon me  
here,

Ghastly disease, and frenzying fear;

And let alternate frost and fire

Eat into me, and be thine ire

Lightning, and cutting hail, and legioned  
forms

Of furies, driving by upon the wounding  
storms.

Ay, do thy worst! Thou art om-  
nipotent.

O'er all things but thyself I gave  
thee power,

And my own will. Be thy swift  
 mischiefs sent  
 To blast mankind, from yon  
 ethereal tower.  
 Let thy malignant spirit move  
 In darkness over those I love:  
 On me and mine I imprecate  
 The utmost torture of thy hate;  
 And thus devote to sleepless agony,  
 This undeclying head while thou must  
 reign on high.

But thou, who art the God and Lord:  
 O, thou,  
 Who fillest with thy soul this world  
 of woe,  
 To whom all things of Earth and  
 Heaven do bow  
 In fear and worship: all-prevail-  
 ing foe!  
 I curse thee! let a sufferer's curse  
 Clasp thee, his torturer, like remorse;  
 Till thine Infinity shall be  
 A robe of envenomed agony;  
 And thine Omnipotence a crown of  
 pain,  
 To cling like burning gold round thy  
 dissolving brain.

Heap on thy soul, by virtue of this  
 Curse,  
 Ill deeds, then be thou damned,  
 beholding good;  
 Both infinite as is the universe,  
 And thou, and thy self-torturing  
 solitude.  
 An awful image of calm power  
 Tho' now thou sittest, let the hour  
 Come, when thou must appear to be  
 That which thou art internally.  
 And after many a false and fruitless  
 crime  
 Scorn track thy lagging fall thro' bound-  
 less space and time.

*Prometheus.* Were these my words,  
 O, Parent?

*The Earth.* They were thine.

*Prometheus.* It doth repent me:  
 words are quick and vain;  
 Grief for awhile is blind, and so was  
 mine.

I wish no living thing to suffer pain.

*The Earth.*

Misery, Oh misery to me,  
 That Jove at length should vanquish  
 thee.  
 Wail, howl aloud, Land and Sea,  
 The Earth's rent heart shall answer  
 ye.  
 Howl, Spirits of the living and the dead,  
 Your refuge, your defence lies fallen and  
 vanquishèd.

*First Echo.*

Lies fallen and vanquishèd!

*Second Echo.*

Fallen and vanquishèd!

*Ione.*

Fear not: 't is but some passing spasm,  
 The Titan is unvanquisht still.  
 But see, where thro' the azure chasm  
 Of yon fork't and snowy hill  
 Trampling the slant winds on high  
 With golden-sandal'd feet, that  
 glow  
 Under plumes of purple dye,  
 Like rose-ensanguin'd ivory,  
 A Shape comes now,  
 Stretching on high from his right hand  
 A serpent-cinctured wand.  
*Panthea.* 'T is Jove's world-wander-  
 ing herald, Mercury.

*Ione.*

And who are those with hydra tresses  
 And iron wings that climb the wind,  
 Whom the frowning God represses  
 Like vapors steaming up behind,  
 Clanging loud, an endless crowd —

*Panthea.*

These are Jove's tempest-walking hounds,  
 Whom he gluts with groans and blood,  
 When charioted on sulphurous cloud  
 He bursts Heaven's bounds.

*Ione.*

Are they now led, from the thin dead  
 On new pangs to be fed?

*Panthea.*

The Titan looks as ever, firm, not proud.  
*First Fury.* Ha! I scent life!

*Second Fury.* Let me but look into  
 his eyes!

*Third Fury.* The hope of torturing  
 him smells like a heap  
 Of corpses, to a death-bird after battle.

*First Fury.* Darest thou delay, O  
 Herald! take cheer, Hounds

Of Hell: what if the Son of Maia soon  
Should make us food and sport — who  
can please long

The Omnipotent?

*Mercury.* Back to your towers of  
iron,  
And gnash, beside the streams of fire  
and wall,

Your foodless teeth. Geryon, arise!  
and Gorgon,

Chimæra, and thou Sphinx, subtlest of  
fiends

Who ministered to Thebes Heaven's  
poisoned wine,

Unnatural love, and more unnatural hate:  
These shall perform your task.

*First Fury.* Oh, mercy! mercy!  
We die with our desire: drive us not  
back!

*Mercury.* Crouch then in silence.  
Awful Sufferer

To thee unwilling, most unwillingly  
I come, by the great Father's will driven  
down,

To execute a doom of new revenge.

Alas! I pity thee, and hate myself

That I can do no more: aye from thy  
sight

Returning, for a season, Heaven seems  
Hell,

So thy worn form pursues me night and  
day,

Smiling reproach. Wise art thou, firm  
and good,

But vainly wouldst stand forth alone in  
strife

Against the Omnipotent; as yon clear  
lamps

That measure and divide the weary years  
From which there is no refuge, long  
have taught

And long must teach. Even now thy  
Torturer arms

With the strange might of unimagined  
pains

The powers who scheme slow agonies in  
Hell,

And my commission is to lead them  
here,

Or what more subtle, foul, or savage  
fiends

People the abyss, and leave them to their  
task.

Be it not so! there is a secret known  
To thee, and to none else of living  
things,

Which may transfer the sceptre of wide  
Heaven,

The fear of which perplexes the Supreme:  
Clothe it in words, and bid it clasp his  
throne

In intercession; bend thy soul in prayer,  
And like a suppliant in some gorgeous  
fane,

Let the will kneel within thy haughty  
heart:

For benefits and meek submission tame  
The fiercest and the mightiest.

*Prometheus.* Evil minds  
Change good to their own nature. I  
gave all

He has; and in return he chains me  
here

Years, ages, night and day: whether the  
Sun

Split my parched skin, or in the moony  
night

The crystal-wingèd snow cling round my  
hair:

Whilst my belovèd race is trampled down  
By his thought-executing ministers.

Such is the tyrant's recompense: 'tis  
just:

He who is evil can receive no good;  
And for a world bestowed, or a friend  
lost,

He can feel hate, fear, shame; not grat-  
itude:

He but requites me for his own mis-  
deed.

Kindness to such is keen reproach, which  
breaks

With bitter stings the light sleep of Re-  
venge.

Submission, thou dost know I cannot  
try:

For what submission but that fatal word,  
The death-seal of mankind's captivity,

Like the Sicilian's hair-suspended sword,  
Which trembles o'er his crown, would

he accept,  
Or could I yield? Which yet I will not

yield.  
Let others flatter Crime, where it sits  
throned

In brief Omnipotence: secure are they:



For Justice, when triumphant, will weep  
 down  
 Pity, not punishment, on her own  
 wrongs,  
 Too much avenged by those who err.  
 I wait,  
 Enduring thus, the retributive hour  
 Which since we spake is even nearer now.  
 But hark, the hell-hounds clamor: fear  
 delay:  
 Behold! Heaven lowers under thy  
 Father's frown.

*Mercury.* Oh, that we might be  
 spared: I to inflict  
 And thou to suffer! Once more answer  
 me:  
 Thou knowest not the period of Jove's  
 power?

*Prometheus.* I know but this, that it  
 must come.

*Mercury.* Alas!  
 Thou canst not count thy years to come  
 of pain?

*Prometheus.* They last while Jove  
 must reign: nor more, nor less  
 Do I desire or fear.

*Mercury.* Yet pause, and plunge  
 Into Eternity, where recorded time,  
 Even all that we imagine, age on age,  
 Seems but a point, and the reluctant mind  
 Flags wearily in its unending flight,  
 Till it sink, dizzy, blind, lost, shelterless;  
 Perchance it has not numbered the slow  
 years  
 Which thou must spend in torture, unre-  
 priev'd?

*Prometheus.* Perchance no thought  
 can count them, yet they pass.

*Mercury.* If thou might'st dwell  
 among the Gods the while  
 Lapt in voluptuous joy?

*Prometheus.* I would not quit  
 This bleak ravine, these unrepentant  
 pains.

*Mercury.* Alas! I wonder at, yet  
 pity thee.

*Prometheus.* Pity the self-despising  
 slaves of Heaven,  
 Not me, within whose mind sits peace  
 serene,  
 As light in the sun, throned: how vain  
 is talk!  
 Call up the fiends.

*Ione.* O, sister, look! White fire  
 Has cloven to the roots yon huge snow-  
 loaded cedar;  
 How fearfully God's thunder howls be-  
 hind!

*Mercury.* I must obey his words and  
 thine: alas!

Most heavily remorse hangs at my heart!  
*Panthea.* See where the child of  
 Heaven, with wingèd feet,  
 Runs down the slanted sunlight of the  
 dawn.

*Ione.* Dear sister, close thy plumes  
 over thine eyes

Lest thou behold and die: they come:  
 they come

Blackening the birth of day with count-  
 less wings,

And hollow underneath, like death.

*First Fury.* Prometheus!

*Second Fury.* Immortal Titan!

*Third Fury.* Champion of  
 Heaven's slaves!

*Prometheus.* He whom some dread-  
 ful voice invokes is here,

Prometheus, the chained Titan. Horri-  
 ble forms,

What and who are ye? Never yet there  
 came

Phantasms so foul thro' monster-teeming  
 Hell

From the all-miscreative brain of Jove;  
 Whilst I behold such execrable shapes,

Methinks I grow like what I contem-  
 plate,

And laugh and stare in loathsome sym-  
 pathy.

*First Fury.* We are the ministers of  
 pain, and fear,

And disappointment, and mistrust, and  
 hate,

And clinging crime; and as lean dogs  
 pursue

Thro' wood and lake some struck and  
 sobbing fawn,

We track all things that weep, and bleed,  
 and live,

When the great King betrays them to  
 our will.

*Prometheus.* Oh! many fearful natures  
 in one name,

I know ye; and these lakes and echoes  
 know

The darkness and the clangor of your wings.

But why more hideous than your loathèd selves

Gather ye up in legions from the deep?

*Second Fury.* We knew not that: Sisters, rejoice, rejoice!

*Prometheus.* Can aught exult in its deformity?

*Second Fury.* The beauty of delight makes lovers glad,

Gazing on one another: so are we.

As from the rose which the pale priestess kneels

To gather for her festal crown of flowers  
The aerial crimson falls, flushing her cheek,

So from our victim's destined agony  
The shade which is our form invests us round,

Else we are shapeless as our mother Night.

*Prometheus.* I laugh your power, and his who sent you here,  
To lowest scorn. Pour forth the cup of pain.

*First Fury.* Thou thinkest we will rend thee bone from bone,  
And nerve from nerve, working like fire within?

*Prometheus.* Pain is my element, as hate is thine;  
Ye rend me now: I care not.

*Second Fury.* Dost imagine  
We will but laugh into thy lidless eyes?

*Prometheus.* I weigh not what ye do,  
but what ye suffer,  
Being evil. Cruel was the power which called

You, or aught else so wretched, into light.

*Third Fury.* Thou think'st we will live thro' thee, one by one,  
Like animal life, and tho' we can obscure not

The soul which burns within, that we will dwell

Beside it, like a vain loud multitude

Vexing the self-content of wisest men:

That we will be dread thought beneath thy brain,

And foul desire round thine astonisht heart,

And blood within thy labyrinthine veins  
Crawling like agony.

*Prometheus.* Why, ye are thus now;  
Yet am I king over myself, and rule  
The torturing and conflicting throngs within,

As Jove rules you when Hell grows mutinous.

*Chorus of Furies.*

From the ends of the earth, from the ends of the earth,

Where the night has its grave and the morning its birth,

Come, come, come!

Oh, ye who shake hills with the scream of your mirth,

When cities sink howling in ruin; and ye

Who with wingless footsteps trample the sea,

And close upon Shipwreck and Famine's track,

Sit chattering with joy on the foodless wreck;

Come, come, come!

Leave the bed, low, cold, and red,  
Strewed beneath a nation dead;

Leave the hatred, as in ashes

Fire is left for future burning:

It will burst in bloodier flashes

When ye stir it, soon returning:

Leave the self-contempt implanted

In young spirits, sense-enchanted,

Misery's yet unkindled fuel:

Leave Hell's secrets half unchanted

To the maniac dreamer; cruel

More than ye can be with hate

Is he with fear.

Come, come, come!

We are steaming up from Hell's wide gate  
And we burden the blast of the atmosphere,

But vainly we toil till ye come here.

*Ione.* Sister, I hear the thunder of new wings.

*Panthea.* These solid mountains quiver with the sound

Even as the tremulous air: their shadows make

The space within my plumes more black than night.

*First Fury.*

Your call was as a winged car  
Driven on whirlwinds fast and far;  
It rapt us from red gulfs of war.

*Second Fury.*

From wide cities, famine-wasted;

*Third Fury.*

Groans half heard, and blood untasted;

*Fourth Fury.*

Kingly conclaves stern and cold,  
Where blood with gold is bought and  
sold;

*Fifth Fury.*

From the furnace, white and hot,  
In which —

*A Fury.*

Speak not: whisper not:  
I know all that ye would tell,  
But to speak might break the spell  
Which must bend the Invincible,  
The stern of thought;  
He yet defies the deepest power of Hell.  
*Fury.*

Tear the veil!

*Another Fury.*

It is torn.

*Chorus.*

The pale stars of the morn  
Shine on a misery, dire to be borne.  
Dost thou faint, mighty Titan? We  
laugh thee to scorn.  
Dost thou boast the clear knowledge  
thou waken'dst for man?  
Then was kindled within him a thirst  
which outran  
Those perishing waters; a thirst of fierce  
fever,  
Hope, love, doubt, desire, which con-  
sume him for ever.  
One came forth of gentle worth  
Smiling on the sanguine earth;  
His words outlived him, like swift  
poison  
Withering up truth, peace, and pity.  
Look! where round the wide horizon  
Many a million-peopled city  
Vomits smoke in the bright air.  
Mark that outcry of despair!  
'T is his mild and gentle ghost  
Wailing for the faith he kindled:  
Look again, the flames almost  
To a glow-worm's lamp have  
dwindled:

The survivors round the embers  
Gather in dread.

Joy, joy, joy!

Past ages crowd on thee, but each one  
remembers,  
And the future is dark, and the present  
is spread  
Like a pillow of thorns for thy slumber-  
less head.

*Semichorus I.*

Drops of bloody agony flow  
From his white and quivering brow.  
Grant a little respite now:  
See a disenchantèd nation  
Springs like day from desolation;  
To Truth its state is dedicate,  
And Freedom leads it forth, her mate;  
A legiõned ban of linkèd brothers  
Whom Love calls children —

*Semichorus II.*

'T is another's:

See how kindred murder kin:  
'T is the vintage-time for death and sin:  
Blood, like new wine, bubbles within:  
Till Despair smothers

The struggling world, which slaves and  
tyrants win.

[*All the FURIES vanish, except one.*

*Ione.* Hark, sister! what a low yet  
dreadful groan.

Quite unsuppress't is tearing up the heart  
Of the good Titan, as storms tear the  
deep,  
And beasts hear the sea moan in inland  
caves.

Darest thou observe how the fiends tor-  
ture him?

*Panthea.* Alas! I looked forth twice,  
but will no more.

*Ione.* What didst thou see?

*Panthea.* A woful sight: a youth  
With patient looks nailed to a crucifix.

*Ione.* What next?

*Panthea.* The heaven around, the  
earth below  
Was peopled with thick shapes of human  
death,  
All horrible, and wrought by human  
hands,  
And some appeared the work of human  
hearts,  
For men were slowly killed by frowns  
and smiles:

And other sights too foul to speak and live  
 Were wandering by. Let us not tempt worse fear  
 By looking forth: those groans are grief enough.  
*Fury.* Behold an emblem: those who do endure  
 Deep wrongs for man, and scorn, and chains, but heap  
 Thousand-fold torment on themselves and him.  
*Prometheus.* Remit the anguish of that lighted stare;  
 Close those wan lips; let that thorn-wounded brow  
 Stream not with blood; it mingles with thy tears!  
 Fix, fix those tortured orbs in peace and death,  
 So thy sick throes shake not that crucifix,  
 So those pale fingers play not with thy gore.  
 O, horrible! thy name I will not speak,  
 It hath become a curse. I see, I see  
 The wise, the mild, the lofty, and the just,  
 Whom thy slaves hate for being like to thee,  
 Some hunted by foul lies from their heart's home,  
 An early-chosen, late-lamented home;  
 As hooded ounces cling to the driven hind;  
 Some linkt to corpses in unwholesome cells:  
 Some — Hear I not the multitude laugh loud? —  
 Impaled in lingering fire: and mighty realms  
 Float by my feet, like sea-uprooted isles,  
 Whose sons are kneaded down in common blood  
 By the red light of their own burning homes.  
*Fury.* Blood thou canst see, and fire; and canst hear groans;  
 Worse things, unheard, unseen, remain behind.  
*Prometheus.* Worse?  
*Fury.* In each human heart terror survives  
 The ruin it has gorged: the loftiest fear

All that they would disdain to think were true:  
 Hypocrisy and custom make their minds  
 The fancies of many a worship, now outworn.  
 They dare not devise good for man's estate,  
 And yet they know not that they do not dare.  
 The good want power, but to weep barren tears.  
 The powerful goodness want: worse need for them.  
 The wise want love; and those who love want wisdom;  
 And all best things are thus confused to ill.  
 Many are strong and rich, and would be just,  
 But live among their suffering fellow-men  
 As if none felt: they know not what they do.  
*Prometheus.* Thy words are like a cloud of winged snakes;  
 And yet I pity those they torture not.  
*Fury.* Thou pitiest them? I speak no more! [*Vanishes.*]  
*Prometheus.* Ah woe!  
 Ah woe! Alas! pain, pain ever, for ever!  
 I close my tearless eyes, but see more clear  
 Thy works within my woe-illumèd mind,  
 Thou subtle tyrant! Peace is in the grave.  
 The grave hides all things beautiful and good:  
 I am a God and cannot find it there,  
 Nor would I seek it: for, tho' dread revenge,  
 This is defeat, fierce king, not victory.  
 The sights with which thou torturest gird my soul  
 With new endurance, till the hour arrives  
 When they shall be no types of things which are.  
*Panthea.* Alas! what sawest thou?  
*Prometheus.* There are two woes:  
 To speak, and to behold; thou spare me one.  
 Names are there, Nature's sacred watch-words, they

Were borne aloft in bright emblazonry;  
The nations thronged around, and cried  
aloud,

As with one voice, Truth, liberty, and  
love!

Suddenly fierce confusion fell from  
heaven

Among them: there was strife, deceit,  
and fear:

Tyrants rushed in, and did divide the  
spoil.

This was the shadow of the truth I saw.

*The Earth.* I felt thy torture, son,  
with such mixt joy

As pain and virtue give. To cheer thy  
state

I bid ascend those subtle and fair spirits,  
Whose homes are the dim caves of human  
thought,

And who inhabit, as birds wing the  
wind,

Its world-surrounding ether: they be-  
hold

Beyond that twilight realm, as in a glass,  
The future: may they speak comfort to  
thee!

*Panthea.* Look, sister, where a troop  
of spirits gather,

Like flocks of clouds in spring's delight-  
ful weather,

Thronging in the blue air!

*Ione.* And see! more come,  
Like fountain-vapors when the winds are  
dumb,

That climb up the ravine in scattered  
lines.

And, hark! is it the music of the pines?  
Is it the lake? Is it the waterfall?

*Panthea.* 'T is something sadder,  
sweeter far than all.

*Chorus of Spirits.*

From unremembered ages we  
Gentle guides and guardians be  
Of heaven-opprest mortality;  
And we breathe, and sicken not,  
The atmosphere of human thought:  
Be it dim, and dank, and gray,  
Like a storm-extinguisht day,  
Travelled o'er by dying gleams;

Be it bright as all between  
Cloudless skies and windless streams,  
Silent, liquid, and serene;  
As the birds within the wind,

As the fish within the wave,  
As the thoughts of man's own mind

Float thro' all above the grave;

We make there our liquid lair,

Voyaging cloudlike and unpent

Thro' the boundless element:

Thence we bear the prophecy

Which begins and ends in thee!

*Ione.* More yet come, one by one:  
the air around them

Looks radiant as the air around a star.

*First Spirit.*

On a battle-trumpet's blast

I fled hither, fast, fast, fast,

Mid the darkness upward cast.

From the dust of creeds outworn,

From the tyrant's banner torn,

Gathering round me, onward borne,

There was mingled many a cry —

Freedom! Hope! Death! Victory!

Till they faded thro' the sky;

And one sound, above, around,

One sound beneath, around, above,

Was moving; 't was the soul of love;

'T was the hope, the prophecy,

Which begins and ends in thee.

*Second Spirit.*

A rainbow's arch stood on the sea,

Which rockt beneath, immovably;

And the triumphant storm did flee,

Like a conqueror, swift and proud,

Between, with many a captive cloud,

A shapeless, dark and rapid crowd,

Each by lightning riven in half:

I heard the thunder hoarsely laugh:

Mighty fleets were strewn like chaff

And spread beneath a hell of death

O'er the white waters. I alit

On a great ship lightning-split,

And speeded hither on the sigh

Of one who gave an enemy

His plank, then plunged aside to die.

*Third Spirit.*

I sate beside a sage's bed,

And the lamp was burning red

Near the book where he had fed,

When a Dream with plumes of flame,

To his pillow hovering came,

And I knew it was the same

Which had kindled long ago

Pity, eloquence, and woe;

And the world awhile below

Wore the shade, its lustre made

It has borne me here as fleet  
As Desire's lightning feet:  
I must ride it back ere morrow,  
Or the sage will wake in sorrow.

*Fourth Spirit.*

On a poet's lips I slept  
Dreaming like a love-adept  
In the sound his breathing kept;  
Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,  
But feeds on the ærial kisses  
Of shapes that haunt thought's wilder-  
nesses.

He will watch from dawn to gloom  
The lake-reflected sun illumine  
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,  
Nor heed nor see, what things they be;  
But from these create he can  
Forms more real than living man,  
Nurslings of immortality!  
One of these awakened me,  
And I sped to succor thee.

*Ione.*

Behold'st thou not two shapes from the  
east and west  
Come, as two doves to one beloved  
nest,  
Twin nurslings of the all-sustaining air  
On swift still wings glide down the  
atmosphere?  
And, hark! their sweet, sad voices! 't is  
despair  
Mingled with love and then dissolved in  
sound.

*Panthea.* Canst thou speak, sister?  
all my words are drowned.

*Ione.* Their beauty gives me voice.  
See how they float

On their sustaining wings of skyey grain,  
Orange and azure deepening into gold:  
Their soft smiles light the air like a star's  
fire.

*Chorus of Spirits.*

Hast thou beheld the form of love?

*Fifth Spirit.*

As over wide dominions  
I sped, like some swift cloud that wings  
the wide air's wildernesses,  
That planet-crested shape swept by on  
lightning-braided pinions,  
Scattering the liquid joy of life from his  
ambrosial tresses:  
His footsteps paved the world with light;  
but as I past 't was fading,

And hollow Ruin yawned behind: great  
sages bound in madness,  
And headless patriots, and pale youths  
who perished, unupbraiding,  
Gleamed in the night. I wandered o'er,  
till thou, O King of sadness;  
Turned by thy smile the worst I saw to  
recollected gladness.

*Sixth Spirit.*

Ah, sister! Desolation is a delicate thing:  
It walks not on the earth, it floats not on  
the air,  
But treads with killing footstep, and fans  
with silent wing  
The tender hopes which in their hearts  
the best and gentlest bear;  
Who, soothed to false repose by the fan-  
ning plumes above  
And the music-stirring motion of its soft  
and busy feet,  
Dream visions of ærial joy, and call the  
monster, Love,  
And wake, and find the shadow Pain, as  
he whom now we greet.

*Chorus.*

Tho' Ruin now Love's shadow be,  
Following him, destroyingly,  
On Death's white and winged steed,  
Which the fleetest cannot flee,  
Trampling down both flower and weed  
Man and beast, and foul and fair,  
Like a tempest thro' the air;  
Thou shalt quell this horseman grim,  
Woundless tho' in heart or limb.

*Prometheus.* Spirits! how know ye  
this shall be?

*Chorus.*

In the atmosphere we breathe,  
As buds grow red when the snow-storms  
flee,

From spring gathering up beneath,  
Whose mild winds shake the elder brake,  
And the wandering herdsmen know  
That the white-thorn soon will blow:  
Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Peace,  
When they struggle to increase,  
Are to us as soft winds be  
To shepherd boys, the prophecy  
Which begins and ends in thee.

*Ione.* Where are the Spirits fled?

*Panthea.* Only a sense  
Remains of them, like the omnipo-  
tence

Of music, when the inspired voice and  
lute

Languish, ere yet the responses are mute,  
Which thro' the deep and labyrinthine  
soul,

Like echoes thro' long caverns, wind  
and roll.

*Prometheus.* How fair these air-born  
shapes! and yet I feel

Most vain all hope but love; and thou  
art far,

Asia! who, when my being overflowed,  
Wert like a golden chalice to bright wine  
Which else had sunk into the thirsty dust.  
All things are still: alas! how heavily  
This quiet morning weighs upon my  
heart;

Tho' I should dream I could even sleep  
with grief

If slumber were denied not. I would  
fain

Be what it is my destiny to be,  
The savior and the strength of suffering  
man,

Or sink into the original gulf of things:  
There is no agony, and no solace left;  
Earth can console, Heaven can torment  
no more.

*Panthea.* Hast thou forgotten one  
who watches thee

The cold dark night, and never sleeps  
but when

The shadow of thy spirit falls on her?

*Prometheus.* I said all hope was vain  
but love: thou lovest.

*Panthea.* Deeply in truth; but the  
eastern star looks white,

And Asia waits in that far Indian vale  
The scene of her sad exile; rugged  
once

And desolate and frozen, like this ravine;  
But now invested with fair flowers and  
herbs,

And haunted by sweet airs and sounds,  
which flow

Among the woods and waters, from the  
ether

Of her transforming presence, which  
would fade

If it were mingled not with thine. Fare-  
well!

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I. — MORNING. A LOVELY  
VALE IN THE INDIAN CAUCASUS.  
*ASIA alone.*

*Asia.* From all the blasts of heaven  
thou hast descended:

Yes, like a spirit, like a thought, which  
makes

Unwonted tears throng to the horny eyes,  
And beatings haunt the desolated heart,  
Which should have learned repose: thou  
hast descended

Cradled in tempests; thou dost wake, O  
Spring!

O child of many winds! As suddenly  
Thou comest as the memory of a dream,  
Which now is sad because it hath been  
sweet;

Like genius, or like joy which riseth up  
As from the earth, clothing with golden  
clouds

The desert of our life.  
This is the season, this the day, the hour;  
At sunrise thou shouldst come, sweet  
sister mine,

Too long desired, too long delaying,  
come!

How like death-worms the wingless mo-  
ments crawl!

The point of one white star is quivering  
still

Deep in the orange light of widening  
morn

Beyond the purple mountains: thro' a  
chasm

Of wind-divided mist the darker lake  
Reflects it: now it wanes: it gleams  
again

As the waves fade, and as the burning  
threads

Of woven cloud unravel in pale air:  
'T is lost! and thro' yon peaks of cloud-  
like snow

The roseate sunlight quivers: hear I not  
The Æolian music of her sea-green  
plumes

Winnowing the crimson dawn?

[PANTHEA enters.

I feel, I see

Those eyes which burn thro' smiles that  
fade in tears,

Like stars half quencht in mists of silver  
dew.

Belovèd and most beautiful, who wearest  
The shadow of that soul by which I live,  
How late thou art! the spherèd sun had  
climbed

The sea; my heart was sick with hope,  
before

The printless air felt thy belated plumes.  
*Panthea.* Pardon, great Sister! but  
my wings were faint

With the delight of a remembered dream,  
As are the noontide plumes of summer  
winds

Satiate with sweet flowers. I was wont  
to sleep

Peacefully, and awake refresht and calm  
Before the sacred Titan's fall, and thy  
Unhappy love, had made, thro' use and  
pity,

Both love and wo familiar to my heart  
As they had grown to thine: erewhile I  
slept

Under the glaucous caverns of old Ocean  
Within dim bowers of green and purple  
moss,

Our young Ione's soft and milky arms  
Locked then, as now, behind my dark,  
moist hair,

While my shut eyes and cheek were  
pressed within

The folded depth of her life-breathing  
bosom:

But not as now, since I am made the  
wind

Which fails beneath the music that I bear  
Of thy most wordless converse; since  
dissolved

Into the sense with which love talks, my  
rest

Was troubled and yet sweet; my waking  
hours

Too full of care and pain.

*Asia.* Lift up thine eyes,  
And let me read thy dream.

*Panthea.* As I have said  
With our sea-sister at his feet I slept.  
The mountain mists, condensing at our  
voice

Under the moon, had spread their snowy  
flakes,

From the keen ice shielding our linkèd  
sleep.

Then two dreams came. One, I remem-  
ber not.

But in the other his pale wound-worn  
limbs

Fell from Prometheus, and the azure  
night

Grew radiant with the glory of that form  
Which lives unchanged within, and his  
voice fell

Like music which makes giddy the dim  
brain,

Faint with intoxication of keen joy:  
"Sister of her whose footsteps pave the  
world

With loveliness — more fair than aught  
but her,

Whose shadow thou art — lift thine eyes  
on me."

I lifted them: the overpowering light  
Of that immortal shape was shadowed  
o'er

By love; which, from his soft and flow-  
ing limbs,

And passion-parted lips, and keen, faint  
eyes,

Steamed forth like vaporous fire; an  
atmosphere

Which wrapt me in its all-dissolving  
power,

As the warm ether of the morning sun  
Wraps ere it drinks some cloud of wan-  
dering dew.

I saw not, heard not, moved not, only  
felt

His presence flow and mingle thro' my  
blood

Till it became his life, and his grew mine,  
And I was thus absorbed, until it past,  
And like the vapors when the sun sinks  
down,

Gathering again in drops upon the pines,  
And tremulous as they, in the deep  
night

My being was condens't; and as the  
rays

Of thought were slowly gathered, I could  
hear

His voice, whose accents lingered ere  
they died

Like footsteps of weak melody: thy  
name

Among the many sounds alone I heard  
Of what might be articulate; tho' still



I listened thro' the night when sound  
was none.

Ione wakened then, and said to me:  
"Canst thou divine what troubles me to-  
night?"

I always knew what I desired before,  
Nor ever found delight to wish in vain.  
But now I cannot tell thee what I seek;  
I know not; something sweet, since it  
is sweet

Even to desire; it is thy sport, false  
sister;

Thou hast discovered some enchantment  
old,

Whose spells have stolen my spirit as I  
slept

And mingled it with thine: for when just  
now

We kist, I felt within thy parted lips  
The sweet air that sustained me, and the  
warmth

Of the life-blood, for loss of which I  
faint,

Quivered between our intertwining  
arms."

I answered not, for the Eastern star  
grew pale,

But fled to thee.

*Asia.* Thou speakest, but thy words  
Are as the air: I feel them not: O  
lift

Thine eyes, that I may read his written  
soul!

*Panthea.* I lift them tho' they droop  
beneath the load

Of that they would express: what canst  
thou see

But thine own fairest shadow imaged  
there?

*Asia.* Thine eyes are like the deep,  
blue, boundless heaven

Contracted to two circles underneath  
Their long, fine lashes; dark, far, meas-  
ureless,

Orb within orb, and line thro' line in-  
woven.

*Panthea.* Why lookest thou as if a  
spirit past?

*Asia.* There is a change: beyond  
their inmost depth

I see a shade, a shape: 't is He, arrayed  
In the soft light of his own smiles, which

spread

Like radiance from the cloud-surrounded  
moon.

Prometheus, it is thine! depart not yet!  
Say not those smiles that we shall meet  
again

Within that bright pavilion which their  
beams

Shall build on the waste world? The  
dream is told.

What shape is that between us? Its  
rude hair

Roughens the wind that lifts it, its regard  
Is wild and quick, yet 't is a thing of air

For thro' its gray robe gleams the golden  
dew

Whose stars the noon has quencht not.  
*Dream.* Follow! Follow!

*Panthea.* It is mine other dream.  
*Asia.* It disappears.

*Panthea.* It passes now into my  
mind. Methought

As we sate here, the flower-infolding  
buds

Burst on yon lightning-blasted almond-  
tree,

When swift from the white Scythian wil-  
derness

A wind swept forth wrinkling the Earth  
with frost:

I lookt, and all the blossoms were  
blown down;

But on each leaf was stamp't, as the  
blue bells

Of Hyacinth tell Apollo's written grief,  
O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW!

*Asia.* As you speak, your words  
Fill, pause by pause, my own forgotten  
sleep

With shapes. Methought among the  
lawns together

We wandered, underneath the young  
gray dawn,

And multitudes of dense white fleecy  
clouds

Were wandering in thick flocks along  
the mountains

Shepherd'd by the slow, unwilling wind;  
And the white dew on the new bladed  
grass,

Just piercing the dark earth, hung silently:  
And there was more which I remember  
not:

But on the shadows of the morning clouds,

Athwart the purple mountain slope, was  
written

FOLLOW, O, FOLLOW! as they vanish  
by,

And on each herb, from which Heaven's  
dew had fallen,

The like was stamp'd, as with a wither-  
ing fire,

A wind arose among the pines; it shook  
The clinging music from their boughs,  
and then

Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the fare-  
well of ghosts,

Were heard: O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW, FOL-  
LOW ME!

And then I said: "Panthea, look on  
me."

But in the depth of those belovèd eyes  
Still I saw, FOLLOW, FOLLOW!

*Echo.* Follow, follow!

*Panthea.* The crags, this clear spring  
morning, mock our voices

As they were spirit-tongued.

*Asia.* It is some being

Around the crags. What fine clear  
sounds! O, list!

*Echoes (unseen).*

Echoes we: listen!

We cannot stay:

As dew-stars glisten

Then fade away—

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* Hark! Spirits speak. The  
liquid responses

Of their aërial tongues yet sound.

*Panthea.* I hear.

*Echoes.*

O, follow, follow,

As our voice recedeth

Thro' the caverns hollow,

Where the forest spreadeth;

(*More distant.*)

O, follow, follow!

Thro' the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,  
Where the wild bee never flew,

Thro' the noontide darkness deep,  
By the odor-breathing sleep

Of faint night-flowers, and the waves

At the fountain-lighted caves,

While our music, wild and sweet,

Mocks thy gently falling feet,

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* Shall we pursue the sound? It  
grows more faint  
And distant.

*Panthea.* List! the strain floats  
nearer now.

*Echoes.*

In the world unknown

Sleeps a voice unspoken;

By thy step alone

Can its rest be broken;

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* How the notes sink upon the  
ebbing wind!

*Echoes.*

O, follow, follow!

Thro' the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,

By the woodland noontide dew;

By the forests, lakes, and fountains

Thro' the many-folded mountains;

To the rents, and gulfs, and chasms,

Where the Earth reposed from spasms,

On the day when He and thou

Parted, to commingle now;

Child of Ocean!

*Asia.* Come, sweet Panthea, link thy  
hand in mine,

And follow, ere the voices fade away.

## SCENE II.—A FOREST, INTERMIN- GLED WITH ROCKS AND CAVERNS.

*ASIA and PANTHEA pass into it. Two  
young Fauns are sitting on a Rock  
listening.*

*Semichorus I. of Spirits.*

The path thro' which that lovely twain

Have past, by cedar, pine, and yew,

And each dark tree that ever grew,

Is curtained out from Heaven's wide  
blue;

Nor sun, nor moon, nor wind, nor rain,

Can pierce its interwoven bowers,

Nor aught, save where some cloud of  
dew,

Drifted along the earth-creeping breeze,

Between the trunks of the hoar trees,

Hangs each a pearl in the pale  
flowers

Of the green laurel, blown anew;

And bends, and then fades silently,

One frail and fair anemone:

Or when some star of many a one  
That climbs and wanders thro' steep night,  
Has found the cleft thro' which alone  
Beams fall from high those depths upon  
Ere it is borne away, away,  
By the swift Heavens that cannot stay,  
It scatters drops of golden light,  
Like lines of rain that ne'er unite:  
And the gloom divine is all around.  
And underneath is the mossy ground.

*Semichorus II.*

There the voluptuous nightingales,  
Are awake thro' all the broad noon-  
day.

When one with bliss or sadness fails,  
And thro' the windless ivy-boughs,  
Sick with sweet love, droops dying  
away

On its mate's music-panting bosom;  
Another from the swinging blossom,  
Watching to catch the languid close  
Of the last strain, then lifts on high  
The wings of the weak melody,  
Till some new strain of feeling bear

The song, and all the woods are mute;  
When there is heard thro' the dim air  
The rush of wings, and rising there  
Like many a lake-surrounded flute,  
Sounds overflow the listener's brain  
So sweet, that joy is almost pain.

*Semichorus I.*

There those enchanted eddies play  
Of echoes, music-tongued, which draw,  
By Demogorgon's mighty law,  
With melting rapture, or sweet awe,  
All spirits on that secret way;  
As inland boats are driven to Ocean  
Down streams made strong with moun-  
tain-thaw:

And first there comes a gentle sound  
To those in talk or slumber bound,  
And wakes the destined. Soft emo-  
tion

Attracts, impels them: those who saw  
Say from the breathing earth behind  
There steams a plume-uplifting wind  
Which drives them on their path, while  
they

Believe their own swift wings and feet  
The sweet desires within obey:  
And so they float upon their way,  
Until, still sweet, but loud and strong,  
The storm of sound is driven along,

Suckt up and hurrying: as they fleet  
Behind, its gathering billows meet  
And to the fatal mountain bear  
Like clouds amid the yielding air.

*First Faun.* Canst thou imagine  
where those spirits live  
Which make such delicate music in the  
woods?

We haunt within the least frequented  
caves

And closest coverts, and we know these  
wilds,

Yet never meet them, tho' we hear them  
oft:

Where may they hide themselves?

*Second Faun.* 'T is hard to tell:  
I have heard those more skilled in spirits  
say,

The bubbles, which the enchantment of  
the sun

Sucks from the pale faint water-flowers  
that pave

The oozy bottom of clear lakes and  
pools,

Are the pavilions where such dwell and  
float

Under the green and golden atmosphere  
Which noontide kindles thro' the woven  
leaves;

And when these burst, and the thin fiery  
air,

The which they breathed within those  
lucent domes,

Ascends to flow like meteors thro' the  
night,

They ride on them, and rein their head-  
long speed,

And bow their burning crests, and glide  
in fire

Under the waters of the earth again.

*First Faun.* If such live thus, have  
others other lives,

Under pink blossoms or within the bells  
Of meadow flowers, or folded violets  
deep,

Or on their dying odors, when they die,  
Or in the sunlight of the spherèd dew?

*Second Faun.* Ay, many more which  
we may well divine.

But, should we stay to speak, noontide  
would come,

And thwart Silenus find his goats un-  
drawn,

And grudge to sing those wise and lovely  
 songs  
 Of fate, and chance, and God, and  
 Chaos old,  
 And Love, and the chained Titan's wo-  
 ful doom,  
 And how he shall be loost, and make  
 the earth  
 One brotherhood: delightful strains  
 which cheer  
 Our solitary twilights, and which charm  
 To silence the unenvying nightingales.

SCENE III. — A PINNACLE OF ROCK  
 AMONG MOUNTAINS. ASIA and  
 PANTHEA.

*Panthea.* Hither the sound has borne  
 us — to the realm  
 Of Demogorgon, and the mighty portal,  
 Like a volcano's meteor-breathing chasm,  
 Whence the oracular vapor is hurled up  
 Which lonely men drink wandering in  
 their youth,  
 And call truth, virtue, love, genius, or  
 joy,  
 That maddening wine of life, whose  
 dregs they drain  
 To deep intoxication; and uplift,  
 Like Mænads who cry loud, Evoe!  
 Evoe!  
 The voice which is contagion to the  
 world.

*Asia.* Fit throne for such a power!  
 Magnificent!  
 How glorious art thou, Earth! And if  
 thou be  
 The shadow of some spirit lovelier still,  
 Though evil stain its work, and it should  
 be  
 Like its creation, weak yet beautiful,  
 I could fall down and worship that and  
 thee.  
 Even now my heart adareth: Wonder-  
 ful!  
 Look, sister, ere the vapor dim thy  
 brain:  
 Beneath is a wide plain of billowy mist,  
 As a lake, paving in the morning sky,  
 With azure waves which burst in silver  
 light,  
 Some Indian vale. Behold it, rolling on  
 Under the curdling winds, and islanding

The peak whereon we stand, midway,  
 around,  
 Encinctured by the dark and blooming  
 forests,  
 Dim twilight-lawns, and stream-illumined  
 caves,  
 And wind-enchanted shapes of wander-  
 ing mist;  
 And far on high the keen sky-cleaving  
 mountains  
 From icy spires of sun-like radiance fling  
 The dawn, as lifted Ocean's dazzling  
 spray,  
 From some Atlantic islet scattered up,  
 Spangles the wind with lamp-like water-  
 drops.  
 The vale is girdled with their walls, a  
 howl  
 Of cataracts from their thaw-cloven  
 ravines,  
 Satiates the listening wind, continuous,  
 vast,  
 Awful as silence. Hark! the rushing  
 snow!  
 The sun-awakened avalanche! whose  
 mass,  
 Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered  
 there  
 Flake after flake, in heaven-defying  
 minds  
 As thought by thought is piled, till some  
 great truth  
 Is loosened, and the nations echo round,  
 Shaken to their roots, as do the moun-  
 tains now.

*Panthea.* Look how the gusty sea of  
 mist is breaking  
 In crimson foam, even at our feet! it  
 rises  
 As Ocean at the enchantment of the  
 moon  
 Round foodless men wreckt on some  
 oozy isle.

*Asia.* The fragments of the cloud  
 are scattered up;  
 The wind that lifts them disentwines  
 my hair;  
 Its billows now sweep o'er mine eyes;  
 my brain  
 Grows dizzy; I see thin shapes within  
 the mist.

*Panthea.* A countenance with beckon-  
 ing smiles: there burns

An azure fire within its golden locks!  
Another and another: hark! they  
speak!

*Song of Spirits.*

To the deep, to the deep,  
Down, down!  
Through the shade of sleep,  
Through the cloudy strife  
Of Death and of Life;  
Through the veil and the bar  
Of things which seem and are  
Even to the steps of the remotest throne,

Down, down!

While the sound whirls around,  
Down, down!  
As the fawn draws the hound,  
As the lightning the vapor,  
As a weak moth the taper;  
Death, despair; love, sorrow;  
Time both; to-day, to-morrow;  
As steel obeys the spirit of the stone,  
Down, down!

Through the gray, void abysm,  
Down, down!

Where the air is no prism,  
And the moon and stars are not,  
And the cavern-crag wears not  
The radiance of Heaven,  
Nor the gloom to Earth given,  
Where there is one pervading, one alone,  
Down, down!

In the depth of the deep  
Down, down!

Like veiled lightning asleep,  
Like the spark nursed in embers,  
The last look Love remembers,  
Like a diamond, which shines  
On the dark wealth of mines,  
A spell is treasured but for thee alone.  
Down, down!

We have bound thee, we guide thee;  
Down, down!

With the bright form beside thee;  
Resist not the weakness,  
Such strength is in meekness  
That the Eternal, the Immortal,  
Must unloose through life's portal  
The snake-like Doom coiled underneath  
his throne  
By that alone.

SCENE IV. — THE CAVE OF  
DEMORGORGON. ASIA and PANTHEA.

*Panthea.* What veiled form sits on  
that ebony throne?

*Asia.* The veil has fallen.

*Panthea.* I see a mighty darkness  
Filling the seat of power, and rays of  
gloom

Dart round, as light from the meridian  
sun,

Ungazed upon and shapeless; neither  
limb,

Nor form, nor outline; yet we feel it is  
A living Spirit.

*Demogorgon.* Ask what thou would'st  
know.

*Asia.* What canst thou tell?

*Demogorgon.* All things thou  
dar'st demand.

*Asia.* Who made the living world?

*Demogorgon.* God.

*Asia.* Who made all  
That it contains? thought, passion, rea-  
son, will,

Imagination?

*Demogorgon.* God: Almighty God.

*Asia.* Who made that sense which,  
when the winds of spring

In rarest visitation, or the voice  
Of one beloved heard in youth alone,  
Fills the faint eyes with falling tears  
which dim

The radiant looks of unbewailing flowers,  
And leaves this peopled earth a solitude  
When it returns no more?

*Demogorgon.* Merciful God.

*Asia.* And who made terror, madness,  
crime, remorse,

Which from the links of the great chain  
of things,

To every thought within the mind of man  
Sway and drag heavily, and each one reels  
Under the load towards the pit of death;  
Abandoned hope, and love that turns to  
hate;

And self-contempt, bitterer to drink than  
blood;

Pain, whose unheeded and familiar speech  
Is howling, and keen shrieks, day after  
day;

And Hell, or the sharp fear of Hell?

*Demogorgon.* He reigns.  
*Asia.* Utter his name: a world pining  
 in pain  
 Asks but his name: curses shall drag him  
 down.  
*Demogorgon.* He reigns.  
*Asia.* I feel, I know it: who?  
*Demogorgon.* He reigns.  
*Asia.* Who reigns? There was the  
 Heaven and Earth at first,  
 And Light and Love; then Saturn, from  
 whose throne  
 Time fell, an envious shadow: such the  
 state  
 Of the earth's primal spirits beneath his  
 sway,  
 As the calm joy of flowers and living  
 leaves  
 Before the wind or sun has withered  
 them  
 And semivital worms; but he refused  
 The birthright of their being, knowledge,  
 power,  
 The skill which wields the elements, the  
 thought  
 Which pierces this dim universe like  
 light,  
 Self-empire, and the majesty of love;  
 For thirst of which they fainted. Then  
 Prometheus  
 Gave wisdom, which is strength, to Jupi-  
 ter,  
 And with this law alone, "Let man be  
 free,"  
 Clothed him with the dominion of wide  
 Heaven.  
 To know nor faith, nor love, nor law;  
 to be  
 Omnipotent but friendless is to reign;  
 And Jove now reigned; for on the race  
 of man  
 First famine, and then toil, and then  
 disease,  
 Strife, wounds, and ghastly death unseen  
 before,  
 Fell; and the unseasonable seasons  
 drove  
 With alternating shafts of frost and fire,  
 Their shelterless, pale tribes to mountain  
 caves:  
 And in their desert hearts fierce wants he  
 sent,  
 And mad disquietudes, and shadows idle

Of unreal good, which levied mutual war,  
 So ruining the lair wherein they raged.  
 Prometheus saw, and waked the legioned  
 hopes  
 Which sleep within folded Elysian  
 flowers,  
 Nepenthe, Moly, Amaranth, fadeless  
 blooms,  
 That they might hide with thin and rain-  
 bow wings  
 The shape of Death; and Love he sent  
 to bind  
 The disunited tendrils of that vine  
 Which bears the wine of life, the human  
 heart;  
 And he tamed fire which, like some beast  
 of prey,  
 Most terrible, but lovely, played beneath  
 The frown of man; and tortured to his  
 will  
 Iron and gold, the slaves and signs of  
 power,  
 And gems and poisons, and all subtlest  
 forms  
 Hidden beneath the mountains and the  
 waves.  
 He gave man speech, and speech created  
 thought,  
 Which is the measure of the universe;  
 And Science struck the thrones of earth  
 and heaven,  
 Which shook, but fell not; and the har-  
 monious mind  
 Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song;  
 And music lifted up the listening spirit  
 Until it walkt, exempt from mortal care,  
 Godlike, o'er the clear billows of sweet  
 sound;  
 And human hands first mimickt and  
 then mockt,  
 With moulded limbs more lovely than its  
 own,  
 The human form, till marble grew divine;  
 And mothers, gazing, drank the love men  
 see  
 Reflected in their race, behold, and perish.  
 He told the hidden power of herbs and  
 springs,  
 And Disease drank and slept. Death  
 grew like sleep.  
 He taught the implicated orbits woven  
 Of the wide-wandering stars; and how  
 the sun

Changes his lair, and by what secret spell  
 The pale moon is transformed, when her  
     broad eye  
 Gazes, not on the interlunar sea:  
 He taught to rule, as life directs the  
     limbs,  
 The tempest-wingèd chariots of the  
     Ocean,  
 And the Celt knew the Indian. Cities  
     then  
 Were built, and through their snow-like  
     columns flowed  
 The warm winds, and the azure ether  
     shone,  
 And the blue sea and shadowy hills were  
     seen.  
 Such, the alleviations of his state,  
 Prometheus gave to man, for which he  
     hangs  
 Withering in destined pain: but who  
     rains down  
 Evil, the immedicable plague, which,  
     while  
 Man looks on his creation like a God  
 And sees that it is glorious, drives him on  
 The wreck of his own will, the scorn of  
     earth,  
 The outcast, the abandoned, the alone?  
 Not Jove: while yet his frown shook  
     heaven, ay when  
 His adversary from adamantine chains  
 Curst him, he trembled like a slave.  
     Declare  
 Who is his master? Is he too a slave?  
*Demogorgon.* All spirits are enslaved  
     which serve things evil:  
 Thou knowest if Jupiter be such or no.  
*Asia.* Whom called'st thou God?  
*Demogorgon.* I spoke but as ye  
     speak,  
 For Jove is the supreme of living things.  
*Asia.* Who is the master of the slave?  
*Demogorgon.* If the abysm  
 Could vomit forth its secrets. . . But a  
     voice  
 Is wanting, the deep truth is imageless;  
 For what would it avail to bid thee  
     gaze  
 On the revolving world? What to bid  
     speak  
 Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance, and  
     Change? To these  
 All things are subject but eternal Love.

*Asia.* So much I askt before, and  
     my heart gave  
 The response thou hast given; and of  
     such truths  
 Each to itself must be the oracle.  
 One more demand; and do thou answer  
     me  
 As mine own soul would answer, did it  
     know  
 That which I ask. Prometheus shall  
     arise  
 Henceforth the sun of this rejoicing  
     world:  
 When shall the destined hour arrive?  
*Demogorgon.* Behold!  
*Asia.* The rocks are cloven, and  
     through the purple night  
 I see cars drawn by rainbow-wingèd  
     steeds  
 Which trample the dim winds: in each  
     there stands  
 A wild-eyed charioteer urging their  
     flight.  
 Some look behind, as fiends pursued  
     them there,  
 And yet I see no shapes but the keen  
     stars:  
 Others, with burning eyes, lean forth,  
     and drink  
 With eager lips the wind of their own  
     speed,  
 As if the thing they loved fled on before,  
 And now, even now, they claspt it.  
     Their bright locks  
 Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they  
     all  
 Sweep onward.  
*Demogorgon.* These are the immortal  
     Hours,  
 Of whom thou didst demand. One waits  
     for thee.  
*Asia.* A spirit with a dreadful coun-  
     tenance  
 Checks its dark chariot by the craggy  
     gulf.  
 Unlike thy brethren, ghastly charioteer,  
 Who art thou? Whither wouldst thou  
     bear me? Speak!  
*Spirit.* I am the shadow of a destiny  
 More dread than is my aspect: ere yon  
     planet  
 Has set, the darkness which ascends  
     with me

Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's king-  
less throne.

*Asia.* What meanest thou?

*Panthea.* That terrible shadow  
floats

Up from its throne, as may the lurid  
smoke

Of earthquake-ruined cities o'er the sea.  
Lo! it ascends the car; the coursers fly  
Terror'd: watch its path among the stars  
Blackening the night!

*Asia.* Thus I am answered:  
strange!

*Panthea.* See, near the verge, another  
chariot stays;

An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,  
Which comes and goes within its sculp-  
tured rim

Of delicate strange tracery; the young  
spirit

That guides it has the dove-like eyes  
of hope;

How its soft smiles attract the soul! as  
light

Lures winged insects through the lamp-  
less air.

*Spirit.*

My coursers are fed with the lightning,  
They drink of the whirlwind's stream,

And when the red morning is brightning  
They bathe in the fresh sunbeam;

They have strength for their swiftness  
I deem,

Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

I desire: and their speed makes night  
kindle;

I fear: they outstrip the typhoon;

Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can dwindle

We encircle the earth and the moon:

We shall rest from long labors at noon:

Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

SCENE V. — THE CAR PAUSES WITHIN  
A CLOUD ON THE TOP OF A SNOWY  
MOUNTAIN. ASIA, PANTHEA, and the  
SPIRIT OF THE HOUR.

*Spirit.*

On the brink of the night and the morn-  
ing

My coursers are wont to respire;

But the Earth has just whispered a warn-  
ing

That their flight must be swifter than  
fire:

They shall drink the hot speed of  
desire!

*Asia.* Thou breathe'st on their nostrils,  
but my breath

Would give them swifter speed.

*Spirit.* Alas! it could not.

*Panthea.* Oh Spirit! pause, and tell  
whence is the light

Which fills the cloud? the sun is yet un-  
risen.

*Spirit.* The sun will rise not until  
noon. Apollo

Is held in heaven by wonder; and the  
light

Which fills this vapor, as the ærial hue  
Of fountain-gazing roses fills the water,  
Flows from thy mighty sister.

*Panthea.* Yes, I feel—

*Asia.* What is it with thee, sister?  
Thou art pale.

*Panthea.* How thou art changed! I  
dare not look on thee;

I feel but see thee not. I scarce endure  
The radiance of thy beauty. Some good  
change

Is working in the elements, which suffer  
Thy presence thus unveiled. The Nereids  
tell

That on the day when the clear hyaline  
Was cloven at thy uprising and thou didst  
stand

Within a veined shell, which floated on  
Over the calm floor of the crystal sea,  
Among the Ægean isles, and by the  
shores

Which bear thy name; love, like the  
atmosphere

Of the sun's fire filling the living world,  
Burst from thee, and illumined earth and  
heaven

And the deep ocean and the sunless  
caves

And all that dwells within them; till  
grief cast

Eclipse upon the soul from which it  
came:

Such art thou now; nor is it I alone,

Thy sister, thy companion, thine own  
chosen one,

But the whole world which seeks thy  
sympathy.



Hearst thou not sounds i' the air which  
speak the love  
Of all articulate beings? Feelest thou  
not

The inanimate winds enamoured of thee?  
List! (*Music.*)

*Asia.* Thy words are sweeter than  
aught else but his

Whose echoes they are: yet all love is  
sweet,

Given or returned. Common as light  
is love,

And its familiar voice wearies not ever.  
Like the wide heaven, the all-sustaining  
air,

It makes the reptile equal to the God:  
They who inspire it most are fortunate,

As I am now; but those who feel it most  
Are happier still, after long sufferings,

As I shall soon become.

*Panthea.* List! Spirits speak.  
*Voice in the Air, singing.*

Life of Life! thy lips enkindle  
With their love the breath between  
them;

And thy smiles before they dwindle  
Make the cold air fire; then screen  
them

In those looks, where whoso gazes  
Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of Light! thy limbs are burning  
Thro' the vest which seems to hide  
them;

As the radiant lines of morning  
Thro' the clouds ere they divide them;  
And this atmosphere divinest  
Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shinest.

Fair are others; none beholds thee,  
But thy voice sounds low and tender  
Like the fairest, for it folds thee  
From the sight, that liquid splendor,  
And all feel, yet see thee never,  
As I feel now, lost for ever!

Lamp of Earth! where'er thou movest  
Its dim shapes are clad with bright-  
ness,

And the souls of whom thou lovest  
Walk upon the winds with lightness,  
Till they fail, as I am failing,  
Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing!

*Asia.*

My soul is an enchanted boat,  
Which, like a sleeping swan, doth  
float

Upon the silver waves of thy sweet  
singing;

And thine doth like an angel sit  
Beside a helm conducting it,

Whilst all the winds with melody are  
ringing.

It seems to float ever, for ever,  
Upon that many-winding river,  
Between mountains, woods, abysses,  
A paradise of wildernesses!

Till, like one in slumber bound,  
Borne to the ocean, I float down, around,  
Into a sea profound, of ever-spreading  
sound:

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions  
In music's most serene dominions;  
Catching the winds that fan that happy  
heaven.

And we sail on, away, afar,  
Without a course, without a star,  
But, by the instinct of sweet music  
driven;

Till through Elysian garden islets  
By thee, most beautiful of pilots,  
Where never mortal pinnacle glided,  
The boat of my desire is guided:

Realms where the air we breathe is love,  
Which in the winds and on the waves  
doth move,

Harmonizing this earth with what we  
feel above.

We have past Age's icy caves,  
And Manhood's dark and tossing  
waves,

And Youth's smooth ocean, smiling to  
betray:

Beyond the glassy gulfs we flee  
Of shadow-peopled Infancy,  
Through Death and Birth, to a diviner  
day;

A paradise of vaulted bowers,  
Lit by downward-gazing flowers,  
And watery paths that wind between  
Wildernesses calm and green,

Peopled by shapes too bright to see,  
And rest, having beheld; somewhat like  
thee;

Which walk upon the sea, and chant  
melodiously!

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I. — HEAVEN. JUPITER *on his Throne*; THETIS *and the other Deities assembled*.

*Jupiter.* Ye congregated powers of  
heaven, who share  
The glory and the strength of him ye  
serve,  
Rejoice! henceforth I am omnipotent.  
All else had been subdued to me; alone  
The soul of man, like unextinguish  
fire,  
Yet burns towards heaven with fierce  
reproach, and doubt,  
And lamentation, and reluctant prayer,  
Hurling up insurrection, which might  
make  
Our antique empire insecure, though  
built  
On eldest faith, and hell's coeval, fear;  
And tho' my curses thro' the pendulous  
air,  
Like snow on herbless peaks, fall flake  
by flake,  
And cling to it; tho' under my wrath's  
night  
It climbs the crags of life, step after step,  
Which wound it, as ice wounds un-  
sandalled feet,  
It yet remains supreme o'er misery,  
Aspiring, unrepent, yet soon to fall:  
Even now have I begotten a strange  
wonder,  
That fatal child, the terror of the earth,  
Who waits but till the destined hour  
arrive,  
Bearing from Demogorgon's vacant  
throne  
The dreadful might of ever-living limbs  
Which clothed that awful spirit unbe-  
held,  
To redescend, and trample out the spark.  
Pour forth heaven's wine, Idæan Gany-  
mede,

And let it fill the dædal cups like fire,  
And from the flower-inwoven soil divine  
Ye all-triumphant harmonies arise,  
As dew from earth under the twilight  
stars:

Drink! be the nectar circling thro' your  
veins

The soul of joy, ye ever-living Gods,  
Till exultation burst in one wide voice  
Like music from Elysian winds.

And thou

Ascend beside me, veiled in the light  
Of the desire which makes thee one with  
me,

Thetis, bright image of eternity!  
When thou didst cry, "Insufferable  
might!

God! Spare me! I sustain not the  
quick flames,

The penetrating presence; all my being,  
Like him whom the Numidian seps did  
thaw

Into a dew with poison, is dissolved,  
Sinking thro' its foundations:" even  
then

Two mighty spirits, mingling, made a  
third

Mightier than either, which, unbodied  
now,

Between us floats, felt, although unbe-  
held,

Waiting the incarnation, which ascends,  
(Hear ye the thunder of the fiery wheels  
Gridding the winds?) from Demogorgon's  
throne.

Victory! victory! Feel'st thou not, O  
world,

The earthquake of his chariot thunder-  
ing up

Olympus?

[*The Car of the HOUR arrives.*

DEMOGORGON *descends, and moves  
towards the Throne of JUPITER.*

Awful shape, what art thou?

Speak!

*Demogorgon.* Eternity. Demand no  
direr name.

Descend, and follow me down the  
abyss.

I am thy child, as thou wert Saturn's  
child;

Mightier than thee: and we must dwell  
together

Henceforth in darkness. Lift thy lightnings not.

The tyranny of heaven none may retain,  
Or reassume, or hold, succeeding thee:

Yet if thou wilt, as 't is the destiny  
Of trodden worms to writhe till they are  
dead,

Put forth thy might.

*Jupiter.* Detested prodigy!  
Even thus beneath the deep Titanian  
prisons

I trample thee! thou lingerest?

Mercy! mercy!  
No pity, no release, no respite! Oh,  
That thou wouldst make mine enemy my  
judge,

Even where he hangs, seared by my long  
revenge,

On Caucasus! he would not doom me  
thus.

Gentle, and just, and dreadless, is he  
not

The monarch of the world? What then  
art thou?

No refuge! no appeal!

Sink with me then,  
We too will sink on the wide waves of  
ruin,

Even as a vulture and a snake outspent  
Drop, twisted in inextricable fight,

Into a shoreless sea. Let hell unlock  
Its mounded oceans of tempestuous fire,

And whelm on them into the bottomless  
void

This desolated world, and thee, and me,  
The conqueror and the conquered, and  
the wreck

Of that for which they combated.

Ai! Ai!  
The elements obey me not. I sink  
Dizzily down, ever, for ever, down.

And, like a cloud, mine enemy above  
Darkens my fall with victory! Ai, Ai!

SCENE II. — THE MOUTH OF A GREAT  
RIVER IN THE ISLAND ATLANTIS.  
*OCEAN is discovered reclining near the  
Shore; APOLLO stands beside him.*

*Ocean.* He fell, thou sayest, beneath  
his conqueror's frown?

*Apollo.* Aye, when the strife was  
ended which made dim

The orb I rule, and shook the solid stars,  
The terrors of his eye illumined heaven  
With sanguine light, through the thick  
ragged skirts

Of the victorious darkness, as he fell:  
Like the last glare of day's red agony,

Which, from a rent among the fiery  
clouds,

Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled  
deep.

*Ocean.* He sunk to the abyss? To  
the dark void?

*Apollo.* An eagle so caught in some  
bursting cloud

On Caucasus, his thunder-baffled wings  
Entangled in the whirlwind, and his eyes

Which gazed on the undazzling sun, now  
blinded

By the white lightning, while the pon-  
derous hail

Beats on his struggling form, which  
sinks at length

Prone, and the aërial ice clings over it.

*Ocean.* Henceforth the fields of  
Heaven-reflecting sea

Which are my realm, will heave, un-  
stained with blood,

Beneath the uplifting winds, like plains  
of corn

Swayed by the summer air; my streams  
will flow

Round many-peopled continents, and  
round

Fortunate isles; and from their glassy  
thrones

Blue Proteus and his humid nymphs  
shall mark

The shadow of fair ships, as mortals see  
The floating bark of the light-laden moon

With that white star, its sightless pilot's  
crest,

Borne down the rapid sunset's ebbing  
sea;

Tracking their path no more by blood  
and groans,

And desolation, and the mingled voice  
Of slavery and command; but by the  
light

Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating  
odors,

And music soft, and mild, free, gentle  
voices,

And sweetest music, such as spirits love.

*Apollo.* And I shall gaze not on the deeds which make

My mind obscure with sorrow, as eclipse Darkens the sphere I guide. But list, I hear

The small, clear, silver lute of the young Spirit

That sits i' the morning star.

*Ocean.* Thou must away; Thy steeds will pause at even, till when farewell:

The loud deep calls me home even now to feed it

With azure calm out of the emerald urns Which stand for ever full beside my throne.

Behold the Nereids under the green sea, Their wavering limbs borne on the wind-like stream,

Their white arms lifted o'er their streaming hair

With garlands pied and starry sea-flower crowns,

Hastening to grace their mighty sister's joy.

[*A sound of waves is heard.*]

It is the unpastured sea hungering for calm.

Peace, monster; I come now. Farewell.

*Apollo.*

Farewell.

SCENE III.—CAUCASUS. PROMETHEUS, HERCULES, IONE, the EARTH, SPIRITS, ASIA, and PANTHEA, borne in the Car with the SPIRIT OF THE HOUR.

HERCULES *unbinds* PROMETHEUS, *who descends.*

*Hercules.* Most glorious among spirits, thus doth strength

To wisdom, courage, and long-suffering love,

And thee, who art the form they animate,

Minister like a slave.

*Prometheus.* Thy gentle words Are sweeter even than freedom long desired

And long delayed.

Asia, thou light of life, Shadow of beauty unbeheld: and ye,

Fair sister nymphs, who made long years of pain

Sweet to remember, thro' your love and care:

Henceforth we will not part. There is a cave,

All overgrown with trailing odorous plants,

Which curtain out the day with leaves and flowers,

And paved with veined emerald; and a fountain

Leaps in the midst with an awakening sound.

From its curved roof the mountain's frozen tears

Like snow, or silver, or long diamond spires,

Hang downward, raining forth a doubtful light:

And there is heard the ever-moving air, Whispering without from tree to tree, and birds,

And bees; and all around are mossy seats,

And the rough walls are clothed with long soft grass;

A simple dwelling, which shall be our own;

Where we will sit and talk of time and change,

As the world ebbs and flows, ourselves unchanged.

What can hide man from mutability? And if ye sigh, then I will smile; and thou,

Ione, shalt chant fragments of sea-music,

Until I weep, when ye shall smile away

The tears she brought, which yet were sweet to shed.

We will entangle buds and flowers and beams

Which twinkle on the fountain's brim, and make

Strange combinations out of common things,

Like human babes in their brief innocence;

And we will search, with looks and words of love,

For hidden thoughts, each lovelier than the last,

Our unexhausted spirits ; and like lutes  
Touct by the skill of the enamoured  
wind,

Weave harmonies divine, yet ever new,  
From difference sweet where discord  
cannot be ;

And hither come, sped on the charmèd  
winds,

Which meet from all the points of  
heaven, as bees

From every flower aërial Enna feeds,  
At their known island-homes in Himera,  
The echoes of the human world, which  
tell

Of the low voice of love, almost un-  
heard,

And dove-eyed pity's murmured pain,  
and music,

Itself the echo of the heart, and all  
That tempers or improves man's life, now  
free ;

And lovely apparitions, dim at first,  
Then radiant, as the mind, arising  
bright

From the embrace of beauty, whence  
the forms

Of which these are the phantoms, cast  
on them

The gathered rays which are reality,  
Shall visit us, the progeny immortal  
Of Painting, Sculpture, and rapt Poesy,  
And arts, tho' unimagined, yet to be.

The wandering voices and the shadows  
these

Of all that man becomes, the mediators  
Of that best worship, love, by him and  
us

Given and returned ; swift shapes and  
sounds, which grow

More fair and soft as man grows wise  
and kind,

And, veil by veil, evil and error fall :  
Such virtue has the cave and place  
around.

[Turning to the Spirit of the Hour.

For thee, fair Spirit, one toil remains.  
Ione,

Give her that curvèd shell, which Pro-  
teus old

Made Asia's nuptial boon, breathing  
within it

A voice to be accomplisht, and which  
thou

Didst hide in grass under the hollow  
rock.

*Ione.* Thou most desired Hour, more  
loved and lovely

Than all thy sisters, this is the mystic  
shell ;

See the pale azure fading into silver  
Lining it with a soft yet glowing light :  
Looks it not like lulled music sleeping  
there ?

*Spirit.* It seems in truth the fairest  
shell of Ocean :

Its sounds must be at once both sweet  
and strange.

*Prometheus.* Go, borne over the  
cities of mankind

On whirlwind-footed coursers : once  
again

Outspeed the sun around the orbèd  
world ;

And as thy chariot cleaves the kindling  
air,

Thou breathe into the many-folded shell,  
Loosening its mighty music ; it shall be  
As thunder mingled with clear echoes :  
then

Return ; and thou shalt dwell beside our  
cave.

And thou, O, Mother Earth ! —

*The Earth.* I hear, I feel ;

Thy lips are on me, and thy touch runs  
down

Even to the adamantine central gloom  
Along these marble nerves ; 't is life, 't is  
joy,

And thro' my withered, old, and icy  
frame

The warmth of an immortal youth shoots  
down

Circling. Henceforth the many chil-  
dren fair

Folded in my sustaining arms ; all  
plants,

And creeping forms, and insects rainbow-  
winged,

And birds, and beasts, and fish, and  
human shapes,

Which drew disease and pain from my  
wan bosom,

Draining the poison of despair, shall  
take

And interchange sweet nutriment ; to me  
Shall they become like sister-antelopes

By one fair dam, snow-white, and swift  
as wind,  
Nurst among lilies near a brimming  
stream.

The dew-mists of my sunless sleep shall  
float

Under the stars like balm: night-folded  
flowers

Shall suck unwithering hues in their  
repose:

And men and beasts in happy dreams  
shall gather

Strength for the coming day, and all its  
joy:

And death shall be the last embrace of  
her

Who takes the life she gave, even as a  
mother

Folding her child, says, "Leave me not  
again."

*Asia.* O mother! wherefore speak  
the name of death?

Cease they to love, and move, and  
breathe, and speak,

Who die?  
*The Earth.* It would avail not to  
reply:

Thou art immortal, and this tongue is  
known

But to the uncommunicating dead.  
Death is the veil which those who live  
call life:

They sleep, and it is lifted: and mean-  
while

In mild variety the seasons mild  
With rainbow-skirted showers, and  
odorous winds,

And long blue meteors cleansing the  
dull night,

And the life-kindling shafts of the keen  
sun's

All-piercing bow, and the dew-mingled  
rain

Of the calm moonbeams, a soft influence  
mild,

Shall clothe the forests and the fields,  
ay, even

The crag-built deserts of the barren  
deep,

With ever-living leaves, and fruits, and  
flowers.

And thou! There is a cavern where my  
spirit

Was panted forth in anguish whilst thy  
pain

Made my heart mad, and those who did  
inhale it

Became mad too, and built a temple  
there,

And spoke, and were oracular, and  
lured

The erring nations round to mutual  
war,

And faithless faith, such as Jove kept  
with thee;

Which breath now rises, as amongst tall  
weeds

A violet's exhalation, and it fills  
With a serener light and crimson air

Intense, yet soft, the rocks and woods  
around;

It feeds the quick growth of the serpent  
vine,

And the dark linkèd ivy tangling wild,  
And budding, blown, or odor-faded  
blooms

Which star the winds with points of  
colored light,

As they rain thro' them, and bright  
golden globes

Of fruit, suspended in their own green  
heaven,

And thro' their veinèd leaves and amber  
stems

The flowers whose purple and translucent  
bowls

Stand ever mantling with aërial dew,  
The drink of spirits: and it circles  
round,

Like the soft waving wings of noonday  
dreams,

Inspiring calm and happy thoughts, like  
mine,

Now thou art thus restored. This cave is  
thine.

Arise! Appear!

[*A Spirit rises in the likeness  
of a winged child.*

This is my torch-bearer;

Who let his lamp out in old time with  
gazing

On eyes from which he kindled it anew  
With love, which is as fire, sweet  
daughter mine,

For such is that within thine own. Run,  
wayward,

And guide this company beyond the  
peak  
Of Bacchic Nysa, Mænad-haunted moun-  
tain,

And beyond Indus and its tribute rivers,  
Trampling the torrent streams and glassy  
lakes

With feet unwet, unwearied, undelaying,  
And up the green ravine, across the vale,  
Beside the windless and crystalline pool,  
Wherever lies, on unerasing waves,  
The image of a temple, built above,  
Distinct with column, arch, and archi-  
trave,

And palm-like capital, and over-wrought,  
And populous most with living imagery,  
Praxitelean shapes, whose marble smiles  
Fill the husht air with everlasting love.

It is deserted now, but once it bore  
Thy name, Prometheus; there the  
emulous youths

Bore to thy honor thro' the divine gloom  
The lamp which was thine emblem; even  
as those

Who bear the untransmitted torch of hope  
Into the grave, across the night of life,  
As thou hast borne it most triumphantly  
To this far goal of Time. Depart, fare-  
well.

Beside that temple is the destined cave.

SCENE IV. — A FOREST. IN THE  
BACKGROUND A CAVE. PROME-  
THEUS, ASIA, PANTHEA, IONE, and  
the SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.

*Ione.* Sister, it is not earthly: how  
it glides

Under the leaves! how on its head  
there burns

A light, like a green star, whose emerald  
beams

Are twined with its fair hair! how, as  
it moves,

The splendor drops in flakes upon the  
grass!

Knowest thou it?

*Panthea.* It is the delicate spirit  
That guides the earth thro' heaven.

From afar  
The populous constellations call that light  
The loveliest of the planets; and some-  
times

It floats along the spray of the salt sea,  
Or makes its chariot of a foggy cloud,  
Or walks thro' fields or cities while  
men sleep,

Or o'er the mountain tops, or down the  
rivers,

Or thro' the green waste wilderness, as  
now,

Wondering at all it sees. Before Jove  
reigned

It loved our sister Asia, and it came  
Each leisure hour to drink the liquid light  
Out of her eyes, for which it said it  
thirsted

As one bit by a dipsas, and with her  
It made its childish confidence, and told  
her

All it had known or seen, for it saw  
much,

Yet idly reasoned what it saw; and  
called her —

For whence it sprung it knew not, nor  
do I —

Mother, dear mother.

*The Spirit of the Earth (running to  
Asia).* Mother, dearest mother;  
May I then talk with thee as I was  
wont?

May I then hide my eyes in thy soft arms,  
After thy looks have made them tired of  
joy?

May I then play beside thee the long  
noons,

When work is none in the bright silent  
air?

*Asia.* I love thee, gentlest being,  
and henceforth

Can cherish thee unenvied: speak, I  
pray:

Thy simple talk once solaced, now de-  
lights.

*Spirit of the Earth.* Mother, I am  
grown wiser, tho' a child

Cannot be wise like thee, within this day;  
And happier too; happier and wiser both.

Thou knowest that toads, and snakes,  
and loathly worms,

And venomous and malicious beasts,  
and boughs

That bore ill berries in the woods, were  
ever

An hindrance to my walks o'er the  
green world:

And that, among the haunts of human kind,  
 Hard - featured men, or with proud, angry looks,  
 Or cold, staid gait, or false and hollow smiles,  
 Or the dull sneer of self-loved ignorance,  
 Or other such foul masks, with which ill thoughts  
 Hide that fair being whom we spirits call man;  
 And women too, ugliest of all things evil,  
 (Tho' fair, even in a world where thou art fair,  
 When good and kind, free and sincere like thee),  
 When false or frowning made me sick at heart  
 To pass them, tho' they slept, and I unseen.  
 Well, my path lately lay thro' a great city  
 Into the woody hills surrounding it:  
 A sentinel was sleeping at the gate:  
 When there was heard a sound, so loud it shook  
 The towers amid the moonlight, yet more sweet  
 Than any voice but thine, sweetest of all;  
 A long, long sound, as it would never end:  
 And all the inhabitants leapt suddenly  
 Out of their rest, and gathered in the streets,  
 Looking in wonder up to Heaven, while yet  
 The music pealed along. I hid myself  
 Within a fountain in the public square,  
 Where I lay like the reflex of the moon  
 Seen in a wave under green leaves; and soon  
 Those ugly human shapes and visages  
 Of which I spoke as having wrought me pain,  
 Past floating thro' the air, and fading still  
 Into the winds that scattered them; and those  
 From whom they past seemed mild and lovely forms  
 After some foul disguise had fallen, and all

Were somewhat changed, and after brief surprise  
 And greetings of delighted wonder, all  
 Went to their sleep again: and when the dawn  
 Came, would'st thou think that toads, and snakes, and efts,  
 Could e'er be beautiful? yet so they were,  
 And that with little change of shape or hue:  
 All things had put their evil nature off:  
 I cannot tell my joy, when o'er a lake  
 Upon a drooping bough with night-shade twined,  
 I saw two azure halcyons clinging downward  
 And thinning one bright bunch of amber berries,  
 With quick long beaks, and in the deep there lay  
 Those lovely forms imaged as in a sky;  
 So, with my thoughts full of these happy changes,  
 We meet again, the happiest change of all.

*Asia.* And never will we part, till thy chaste sister

Who guides the frozen and inconstant moon

Will look on thy more warm and equal light

Till her heart thaw like flakes of April snow

And love thee.

*Spirit of the Earth.* What; as Asia loves Prometheus?

*Asia.* Peace, wanton, thou art yet not old enough.

Think ye by gazing on each other's eyes

To multiply your lovely selves, and fill  
 With spherèd fires the interlunar air?

*Spirit of the Earth.* Nay, mother, while my sister trims her lamp

'T is hard I should go darkling.

*Asia.* Listen; look!

*The SPIRIT OF THE HOUR enters.*

*Prometheus.* We feel what thou hast heard and seen: yet speak.

*Spirit of the Hour.* Soon as the sound had ceast whose thunder filled



The abysses of the sky and the wide earth,  
 There was a change: the impalpable thin air  
 And the all-circling sunlight were transformed,  
 As if the sense of love dissolved in them  
 Had folded itself round the spherèd world.  
 My vision then grew clear, and I could see  
 Into the mysteries of the universe:  
 Dizzy as with delight I floated down,  
 Winnowing the lightsome air with languid plumes,  
 My coursers sought their birthplace in the sun,  
 Where they henceforth will live exempt from toil  
 Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire;  
 And where my moonlike car will stand within  
 A temple, gazed upon by Phidian forms  
 Of thee, and Asia, and the Earth, and me,  
 And you fair nymphs looking the love we feel, —  
 In memory of the tidings it has borne, —  
 Beneath a dome fretted with graven flowers,  
 Poised on twelve columns of resplendent stone,  
 And open to the bright and liquid sky.  
 Yoked to it by an amphibænic snake  
 The likeness of those wingèd steeds will mock  
 The flight from which they find repose.  
 Alas,  
 Whither has wandered now my partial tongue  
 When all remains untold which ye would hear?  
 As I have said I floated to the earth:  
 It was, as it is still, the pain of bliss  
 To move, to breathe, to be; I wandering went  
 Among the haunts and dwellings of mankind,  
 And first was disappointed not to see  
 Such mighty change as I had felt within  
 Express in outward things; but soon I lookt,

And behold, thrones were kingless, and men walkt  
 One with the other even as spirits do,  
 None fawned, none trampled; hate, disdain, or fear,  
 Self-love or self-contempt, on human brows,  
 No more inscribed, as o'er the gate of hell,  
 "All hope abandon ye who enter here;"  
 None frowned, none trembled, none with eager fear  
 Gazed on another's eye of cold command,  
 Until the subject of the tyrant's will  
 Became, worse fate, the abject of his own,  
 Which spurred him, like an outspent horse, to death.  
 None wrought his lips in truth-entangling lines  
 Which smiled the lie his tongue disdained to speak;  
 None, with firm sneer, trod out in his own heart  
 The sparks of love and hope till there remained  
 Those bitter ashes, a soul self-consumed,  
 And the wretch crept a vampire among men,  
 Infecting all with his own hideous ill;  
 None talkt that common, false, cold, hollow talk  
 Which makes the heart deny the *yes* it breathes,  
 Yet question that unmeant hypocrisy  
 With such a self-mistrust as has no name.  
 And women, too, frank, beautiful, and kind  
 As the free heaven which rains fresh light and dew  
 On the wide earth, past; gentle radiant forms,  
 From custom's evil taint exempt and pure;  
 Speaking the wisdom once they could not think,  
 Looking emotions once they feared to feel,  
 And changed to all which once they dared not be,  
 Yet being now, made earth like heaven;  
 nor pride,  
 Nor jealousy, nor envy, nor ill shame,

The bitterest of those drops of treasured  
gall,  
Spoiled the sweet taste of the nepenthe,  
love.

Thrones, altars, judgment-seats, and  
prisons; wherein,  
And beside which, by wretched men  
were borne

Sceptres, tiaras, swords, and chains, and  
tomes

Of reasoned wrong, glozed on by igno-  
rance,

Were like those monstrous and barbaric  
shapes,

The ghosts of a no more remembered  
fame,

Which, from their unworn obelisks, look  
forth

In triumph o'er the palaces and tombs  
Of those who were their conquerors:  
mouldering round

Those imaged to the pride of kings and  
priests,

A dark yet mighty faith, a power as  
wide

As is the world it wasted, and are  
now

But an astonishment; even so the tools  
And emblems of its last captivity,

Amid the dwellings of the peopled  
earth,

Stand, not o'erthrown, but unregarded  
now.

And those foul shapes, abhorred by God  
and man,

Which, under many a name and many a  
form

Strange, savage, ghastly, dark and ex-  
ecrable,

Were Jupiter, the tyrant of the world;  
And which the nations, panic-stricken,  
served

With blood, and hearts broken by long  
hope, and love

Dragged to his altars soiled and garland-  
less,

And slain among men's unreclaiming  
tears,

Flattering the thing they feared, which  
fear was hate,

Frown, mouldering fast, o'er their aban-  
doned shrines:

The painted veil, by those who were,  
called life,

Which mimickt, as with colors idly  
spread,

All men believed and hoped, is torn  
aside;

The loathsome mask has fallen, the man  
remains

Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but  
man

Equal, unclast, tribeless, and nation-  
less,

Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the  
king

Over himself; just, gentle, wise: but  
man

Passionless; no, yet free from guilt or  
pain,

Which were, for his will made or suffered  
them,

Nor yet exempt, tho' ruling them like  
slaves,

From chance, and death, and mutability,  
The clogs of that which else might over-  
soar

The loftiest star of unascended heaven,  
Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

#### ACT IV.

SCENE. — A PART OF THE FOREST NEAR  
THE CAVE OF PROMETHEUS. PAN-  
THEA and IONE are sleeping; they  
awaken gradually during the first  
Song.

*Voice of unseen Spirits.*

The pale stars are gone!  
For the sun, their swift shepherd,  
To their folds them compelling,  
In the depths of the dawn,

Hastes, in meteor-eclipsing array, and  
they flee

Beyond his blue dwelling,  
As fawns flee the leopard.

But where are ye?

*A Train of dark Forms and Shadows  
passes by confusedly, singing.*

Here, oh, here:  
We bear the bier

Of the Father of many a cancelled year!  
Spectres we  
Of the dead Hours be;  
We bear Time to his tomb in eternity.

Strew, oh, strew  
Hair, not yew!  
Wet the dusty pall with tears, not dew!  
Be the faded flowers  
Of Death's bare bowers  
Spread on the corpse of the King of  
Hours!

Haste, oh, haste!  
As shades are chased,  
Trembling, by day, from heaven's blue  
waste.

We melt away,  
Like dissolving spray,  
From the children of a diviner day,  
With the lullaby  
Of winds that die  
On the bosom of their own harmony!

What dark forms were they?

*Panthea.*

The past Hours weak and gray,  
With the spoil which their toil  
Raked together  
From the conquest but One could foil.

*Ione.*

Have they past?

*Panthea.*

They have past;

They outsped the blast,  
While 't is said, they are fled:

*Ione.*

Whither, oh, whither?

*Panthea.*

To the dark, to the past, to the dead.

*Voice of unseen Spirits.*

Bright clouds float in heaven,  
Dew-stars gleam on earth,  
Waves assemble on ocean,  
They are gathered and driven  
By the storm of delight, by the panic of  
glee!

They shake with emotion,  
They dance in their mirth.

But where are ye?

The pine boughs are singing  
Old songs with new gladness,

The billows and fountains  
Fresh music are flinging,  
Like the notes of a spirit from land and  
from sea;  
The storms mock the mountains  
With the thunder of gladness.  
But where are ye?

*Ione.* What charioteers are these?

*Panthea.* Where are their  
chariots?

*Semichorus of Hours.*

The voice of the Spirits of Air and of  
Earth

Have drawn back the figured curtain  
of sleep  
Which covered our being and darkened  
our birth  
In the deep.

*A Voice.*

In the deep?

*Semichorus II.*

Oh, below the deep.

*Semichorus I.*

An hundred ages we had been kept  
Cradled in visions of hate and care,  
And each one who waked as his brother  
slept,

Found the truth—

*Semichorus II.*

Worse than his visions were!

*Semichorus I.*

We have heard the lute of Hope in sleep;  
We have known the voice of Love in  
dreams,

We have felt the wand of Power, and  
leap—

*Semichorus II.*

As the billows leap in the morning  
beams!

*Chorus.*

Weave the dance on the floor of the  
breeze,

Pierce with song heaven's silent light,  
Enchant the day that too swiftly flees,  
To check its flight ere the cave of  
night.

Once the hungry Hours were hounds  
Which chased the day like a bleeding  
deer,  
And it limpt and stumbled with many  
wounds

Through the nightly dells of the desert  
year.

But now, oh weave the mystic measure  
Of music, and dance, and shapes of  
light,  
Let the Hours, and the spirits of might  
and pleasure,  
Like the clouds and sunbeams, unite.

*A Voice.*

Unite!

*Panthea.* See, where the Spirits of  
the human mind  
Wrapt in sweet sounds, as in bright veils,  
approach.

*Chorus of Spirits.*

We join the throng  
Of the dance and the song,  
By the whirlwind of gladness borne  
along;  
As the flying-fish leap  
From the Indian deep,  
And mix with the sea-birds, half asleep.

*Chorus of Hours.*

Whence come ye, so wild and so fleet,  
For sandals of lightning are on your feet,  
And your wings are soft and swift as  
thought,  
And your eyes are as love which is  
veiled not?

*Chorus of Spirits.*

We come from the mind  
Of human kind  
Which was late so dusk, and obscene,  
and blind,  
Now 't is an ocean  
Of clear emotion,  
A heaven of serene and mighty motion;

From that deep abyss  
Of wonder and bliss,  
Whose caverns are crystal palaces;  
From those skiey towers  
Where Thought's crowned powers  
Sit watching your dance, ye happy  
Hours!

From the dim recesses  
Of woven caresses,

Where lovers catch ye by your loose  
tresses;

From the azure isles,  
Where sweet Wisdom smiles,  
Delaying your ships with her siren wiles.

From the temples high  
Of Man's ear and eye,  
Roofed over Sculpture and Poesy;  
From the murmurings  
Of the unsealed springs  
Where Science bedews his dædal wings.

Years after years,  
Through blood, and tears,  
And a thick hell of hatreds, and hopes,  
and fears;  
We waded and flew,  
And the islets were few  
Where the bud-blighted flowers of hap-  
piness grew.

Our feet now, every palm,  
Are sandalled with calm,  
And the dew of our wings is a rain of  
balm;  
And, beyond our eyes,  
The human love lies  
Which makes all it gazes on Paradise.

*Chorus of Spirits and Hours.*

Then weave the web of the mystic  
measure;  
From the depths of the sky and the ends  
of the earth,  
Come, swift Spirits of might and of  
pleasure,  
Fill the dance and the music of mirth,  
As the waves of a thousand streams  
rush by  
To an ocean of splendor and harmony!

*Chorus of Spirits.*

Our spoil is won,  
Our task is done,  
We are free to dive, or soar, or run;  
Beyond and around,  
Or within the bound  
Which clips the world with darkness  
round.

We 'll pass the eyes  
Of the starry skies

Into the hoar deep to colonize:  
 Death, Chaos, and Night,  
 From the sound of our flight,  
 Shall flee, like mist from a tempest's  
 might.

And Earth, Air, and Light,  
 And the Spirit of Might,  
 Which drives round the stars in their  
 fiery flight;  
 And Love, Thought, and Breath,  
 The powers that quell Death,  
 Wherever we soar shall assemble beneath.

And our singing shall build  
 In the void's loose field  
 A world for the Spirit of Wisdom to wield;  
 We will take our plan  
 From the new world of man,  
 And our work shall be called the Pro-  
 methean.

*Chorus of Hours.*

Break the dance, and scatter the song;  
 Let some depart, and some remain.

*Semichorus I.*

We, beyond heaven, are driven along:

*Semichorus II.*

Us the enchantments of earth retain:

*Semichorus I.*

Ceaseless, and rapid, and fierce, and free,  
 With the Spirits which build a new earth  
 and sea,  
 And a heaven where yet heaven could  
 never be.

*Semichorus II.*

Solemn, and slow, and serene, and bright,  
 Leading the Day and outspeeding the  
 Night,  
 With the powers of a world of perfect  
 light.

*Semichorus I.*

We whirl, singing loud, round the gather-  
 ing sphere,  
 Till the trees, and the beasts, and the  
 clouds appear  
 From its chaos made calm by love, not fear.

*Semichorus II.*

We encircle the ocean and mountains of  
 earth,  
 And the happy forms of its death and birth  
 Change to the music of our sweet  
 mirth.

*Chorus of Hours and Spirits.*

Break the dance, and scatter the song,  
 Let some depart, and some remain.  
 Wherever we fly we lead along  
 In leashes, like starbeams, soft yet  
 strong,  
 The clouds that are heavy with love's  
 sweet rain.

*Panthea.* Ha! they are gone!

*Ione.* Yet feel you no delight  
 From the past sweetness?

*Panthea.* As the bare green hill  
 When some soft cloud vanishes into rain,  
 Laughs with a thousand drops of sunny  
 water

To the unpavilioned sky!

*Ione.* Even whilst we speak  
 New notes arise. What is that awful  
 sound?

*Panthea.* 'T is the deep music of the  
 rolling world  
 Kindling within the strings of the waved  
 air,

Æolian modulations.

*Ione.* Listen too,  
 How every pause is filled with under-  
 notes,

Clear, silver, icy, keen, awakening tones,  
 Which pierce the sense, and live within  
 the soul,

As the sharp stars pierce winter's crystal  
 air

And gaze upon themselves within the  
 sea.

*Panthea.* But see where thro' two  
 openings in the forest

Which hanging branches overcanopy,  
 And where two runnels of a rivulet,  
 Between the close moss violet-inwoven,  
 Have made their path of melody, like  
 sisters

Who part with sighs that they may meet  
 in smiles,

Turning their dear disunion to an isle  
 Of lovely grief, a wood of sweet sad  
 thoughts;

Two visions of strange radiance float  
upon  
The ocean-like enchantment of strong  
sound,  
Which flows intenser, keener, deeper yet  
Under the ground and thro' the wind-  
less air.  
*Ione.* I see a chariot like that thinnest  
boat,  
In which the mother of the months is  
borne  
By ebbing night into her western cave,  
When she upsprings from interlunar  
dreams,  
O'er which is curved an orblike canopy  
Of gentle darkness, and the hills and  
woods  
Distinctly seen through that dusk airy  
veil,  
Regard like shapes in an enchanter's  
glass;  
Its wheels are solid clouds, azure and  
gold,  
Such as the genii of the thunderstorm  
Pile on the floor of the illumined sea  
When the sun rushes under it; they roll  
And move and grow as with an inward  
wind;  
Within it sits a wingèd infant, white  
Its countenance, like the whiteness of  
bright snow,  
Its plumes are as feathers of sunny  
frost,  
Its limbs gleam white, through the wind-  
flowing folds  
Of its white robe, woof of ethereal pearl.  
Its hair is white, the brightness of white  
light  
Scattered in strings; yet its two eyes are  
heavens  
Of liquid darkness, which the Deity  
Within seems pouring, as a storm is  
poured  
From jagged clouds, out of their arrowy  
lashes,  
Tempering the cold and radiant air  
around,  
With fire that is not brightness; in its  
hand  
It sways a quivering moonbeam, from  
whose point  
A guiding power directs the chariot's  
prow

Over its wheelèd clouds, which as they  
roll  
Over the grass, and flowers, and waves,  
wake sounds,  
Sweet as a singing rain of silver dew.  
*Panthea.* And from the other open-  
ing in the wood  
Rushes, with loud and whirlwind har-  
mony,  
A sphere, which is as many thousand  
spheres,  
Solid as crystal, yet through all its mass  
Flow, as through empty space, music and  
light:  
Ten thousand orbs involving and in-  
volved,  
Purple and azure, white, and green, and  
golden,  
Sphere within sphere; and every space  
between  
Peopled with unimaginable shapes,  
Such as ghosts dream dwell in the lamp-  
less deep,  
Yet each inter-transparent, and they  
whirl  
Over each other with a thousand motions,  
Upon a thousand sightless axles spinning,  
And with the force of self-destroying  
swiftness,  
Intensely, slowly, solemnly roll on,  
Kindling with mingled sounds, and many  
tones,  
Intelligible words and music wild.  
With mighty whirl the multitudinous orb  
Grinds the bright brook into an azure  
mist  
Of elemental subtlety, like light;  
And the wild odor of the forest flowers,  
The music of the living grass and air,  
The emerald light of leaf-entangled beams  
Round its intense yet self-conflicting  
speed,  
Seem kneaded into one aërial mass  
Which drowns the sense. Within the  
orb itself,  
Pillowed upon its alabaster arms,  
Like to a child o'erwearied with sweet  
toil,  
On its own folded wings, and wavy  
hair,  
The Spirit of the Earth is laid asleep,  
And you can see its little lips are mov-  
ing,

Amid the changing light of their own smiles,

Like one who talks of what he loves in dream.

*Ione.* 'T is only mocking the orb's harmony.

*Panthea.* And from a star upon its forehead, shoot,

Like swords of azure fire, or golden spears

With tyrant-quelling myrtle overtined,  
Embleming heaven and earth united now,

Vast beams like spokes of some invisible wheel

Which whirl as the orb whirls, swifter than thought,

Filling the abyss with sun-like lightnings,  
And perpendicular now, and now transverse,

Pierce the dark soil, and as they pierce and pass,

Make bare the secrets of the earth's deep heart;

Infinite mine of adamant and gold,  
Valueless stones, and unimagined gems,  
And caverns on crystalline columns poised

With vegetable silver overspread;  
Wells of unfathomed fire, and water springs

Whence the great sea, even as a child is fed,

Whose vapors clothe earth's monarch mountain-tops

With kingly, ermine snow. The beams flash on

And make appear the melancholy ruins  
Of cancelled cycles; anchors, beaks of ships;

Planks turned to marble; quivers, helms, and spears,

And gorgon-headed targes, and the wheels

Of scythèd chariots, and the emblazonry  
Of trophies, standards, and armorial beasts,

Round which death laught, sepulchred emblems

Of dead destruction, ruin within ruin!  
The wrecks beside of many a city vast,  
Whose population which the earth grew over

Was mortal, but not human; see, they lie,

Their monstrous works, and uncouth skeletons,

Their statues, homes and fanes; prodigious shapes

Huddled in gray annihilation, split,  
Jammed in the hard, black deep; and over these,

The anatomies of unknown wingèd things,

And fishes which were isles of living scale,

And serpents, bony chains, twisted around

The iron crags, or within heaps of dust  
To which the tortuous strength of their last pangs

Had crushed the iron crags; and over these

The jagged alligator, and the might  
Of earth-convulsing behemoth, which once

Were monarch beasts, and on the slimy shores,

And weed-overgrown continents of earth,  
Increased and multiplied like summer worms

On an abandoned corpse, till the blue globe

Wrapt deluge round it like a cloke, and they

Yelled, gaspt, and were abolisht; or some God

Whose throne was in a comet, past, and cried,

Be not! And like my words they were no more.

*The Earth.*

The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness!

The boundless, overflowing, bursting gladness,

The vaporous exultation not to be confined!

Ha! ha! the animation of delight  
Which wraps me, like an atmosphere of light,

And bears me as a cloud is borne by its own wind.

*The Moon.*

Brother mine, calm wanderer,  
Happy globe of land and air,

Some Spirit is darted like a beam from thee,  
Which penetrates my frozen frame,  
And passes with the warmth of flame,  
With love, and odor, and deep melody  
Thro' me, thro' me!

*The Earth.*

Ha! ha! the caverns of my hollow mountains,  
My cloven fire-crags, sound-exulting fountains  
Laugh with a vast and inextinguishable laughter.  
The oceans, and the deserts, and the abysses,  
And the deep air's unmeasured wildernesses,  
Answer from all their clouds and billows,  
echoing after.

They cry aloud as I do. Sceptred curse,  
Who all our green and azure universe  
Threatenedst to muffle round with black destruction, sending  
A solid cloud to rain hot thunder-stones,  
And splinter and knead down my children's bones,  
All I bring forth, to one void mass battering and blending.

Until each crag-like tower, and storied column,  
Palace, and obelisk, and temple solemn,  
My imperial mountains crowned with cloud, and snow, and fire;  
My sea-like forests, every blade and blossom  
Which finds a grave or cradle in my bosom,  
Were stamp'd by thy strong hate into a lifeless mire.

How art thou sunk, withdrawn, covered, drunk up  
By thirsty nothing, as the brackish cup  
Drained by a desert-troop, a little drop for all;

And from beneath, around, within, above,  
Filling thy void annihilation, love  
Burst in like light on caves cloven by the thunder-ball.

*The Moon.*

The snow upon my lifeless mountains  
Is loosened into living fountains,  
My solid oceans flow, and sing, and shine:  
A spirit from my heart bursts forth,  
It clothes with unexpected birth  
My cold bare bosom: Oh! it must be thine  
On mine, on mine!

Gazing on thee I feel, I know  
Green stalks burst forth, and bright flowers grow,  
And living shapes upon my bosom move:  
Music is in the sea and air,  
Winged clouds soar here and there,  
Dark with the rain new buds are dreaming of:  
'T is love, all love!

*The Earth.*

It interpenetrates my granite mass,  
Through tangled roots and trodden clay doth pass,  
Into the utmost leaves and delicatest flowers;  
Upon the winds, among the clouds 't is spread,  
It wakes a life in the forgotten dead,  
They breathe a spirit up from their obscurest bowers.

And like a storm bursting its cloudy prison  
With thunder, and with whirlwind, has arisen  
Out of the lampless caves of unimagined being:  
With earthquake shock and swiftness making shiver  
Thought's stagnant chaos, unremoved for ever,  
Till hate, and fear, and pain, light-vanquish'd shadows, fleeing,



Leave Man, who was a many-sided  
mirror,  
Which could distort to many a shape  
of error,  
This true fair world of things, a sea re-  
flecting love;  
Which over all his kind as the sun's  
heaven  
Gliding o'er ocean, smooth, serene,  
and even  
Darting from starry depths radiance and  
life, doth move,

Leave Man, even as a leprous child  
is left,  
Who follows a sick beast to some  
warm cleft  
Of rocks, through which the might of  
healing springs is poured;  
Then when it wanders home with rosy  
smile,  
Unconscious, and its mother fears  
awhile  
It is a spirit, then, weeps on her child  
restored.

Man, oh, not men! a chain of linkèd  
thought,  
Of love and might to be divided not,  
Compelling the elements with adaman-  
tine stress;  
As the sun rules, even with a tyrant's  
gaze,  
The unquiet republic of the maze  
Of planets, struggling fierce towards  
heaven's free wilderness.

Man, one harmonious soul of many a  
soul,  
Whose nature is its own divine con-  
trol,  
Where all things flow to all, as rivers to  
the sea;  
Familiar acts are beautiful through love;  
Labor, and pain, and grief, in life's  
green grove  
Sport like tame beasts; none knew how  
gentle they could be!

His will, with all mean passions, bad  
delights,  
And selfish cares, its trembling  
satellites,

A spirit ill to guide, but mighty to obey,  
Is as a tempest-wingèd ship, whose  
helm  
Love rules, through waves which dare  
not overwhelm,  
Forcing life's wildest shores to own its  
sovereign sway.

All things confess his strength.  
Through the cold mass  
Of marble and of color his dreams  
pass;  
Bright threads whence mothers weave  
the robes their children wear;  
Language is a perpetual orphic song,  
Which rules with dædal harmony a  
throng  
Of thoughts and forms, which else sense-  
less and shapeless were.

The lightning is his slave; heaven's  
utmost deep  
Gives up her stars, and like a flock of  
sheep  
They pass before his eye, are numbered,  
and roll on!  
The tempest is his steed, he strides  
the air;  
And the abyss shouts from her depth  
laid bare,  
Heaven, hast thou secrets? Man un-  
veils me; I have none.

#### *The Moon.*

The shadow of white death has past  
From my path in heaven at last,  
A clinging shroud of solid frost and  
sleep;  
And through my newly-woven bowers,  
Wander happy paramours,  
Less mighty, but as mild as those who  
keep  
Thy vales more deep.

#### *The Earth.*

As the dissolving warmth of dawn  
may fold  
A half unfrozen dew-globe, green,  
and gold,  
And crystalline, till it becomes a wingèd  
mist,

And wanders up the vault of the blue  
 day,  
 Outlives the noon, and on the sun's  
 last ray  
 Hangs o'er the sea, a fleece of fire and  
 amethyst.

*The Moon.*

Thou art folded, thou art lying  
 In the light which is undying  
 Of thine own joy, and heaven's smile  
 divine;  
 All suns and constellations shower  
 On thee a light, a life, a power  
 Which doth array thy sphere; thou pour-  
 est thine  
 On mine, on mine!

*The Earth.*

I spin beneath my pyramid of night,  
 Which points into the heavens dream-  
 ing delight,  
 Murmuring victorious joy in my enchanted  
 sleep;  
 As a youth lulled in love-dreams  
 faintly sighing,  
 Under the shadow of his beauty lying,  
 Which round his rest a watch of light and  
 warmth doth keep.

*The Moon.*

As in the soft and sweet eclipse,  
 When soul meets soul on lovers' lips,  
 High hearts are calm, and brightest eyes  
 are dull;  
 So when thy shadow falls on me,  
 Then am I mute and still, by thee  
 Covered; of thy love, Orb most beau-  
 tiful,  
 Full, oh, too full!

Thou art speeding round the sun  
 Brightest world of many a one;  
 Green and azure sphere which shinest  
 With a light which is divinest  
 Among all the lamps of Heaven  
 To whom life and light is given;  
 I, thy crystal paramour  
 Borne beside thee by a power  
 Like the polar Paradise,  
 Magnet-like of lovers' eyes;  
 I, a most enamoured maiden  
 Whose weak brain is overladen

With the pleasure of her love,  
 Maniac-like around thee move  
 Gazing, an insatiate bride,  
 On thy form from every side  
 Like a Mænad, round the cup  
 Which Agave lifted up  
 In the weird Cadmean forest.  
 Brother, wheresoe'er thou soarest  
 I must hurry, whirl and follow  
 Thro' the heavens wide and hollow,  
 Sheltered by the warm embrace  
 Of thy soul from hungry space,  
 Drinking from thy sense and sight  
 Beauty, majesty, and might,  
 As a lover or chameleon  
 Grows like what it looks upon,  
 As a violet's gentle eye  
 Gazes on the azure sky  
 Until its hue grows like what it beholds,  
 As a gray and watery mist  
 Glows like solid amethyst  
 Athwart the western mountain it enfolds,  
 When the sunset sleeps  
 Upon its snow.

*The Earth.*

And the weak day weeps  
 That it should be so.  
 O gentle Moon, the voice of thy de-  
 light  
 Falls on me like thy clear and tender  
 light  
 Soothing the seaman, borne the summer  
 night,  
 Thro' isles for ever calm;  
 O gentle Moon, thy crystal accents  
 pierce  
 The caverns of my pride's deep universe,  
 Charming the tiger joy, whose tramp-  
 ling fierce  
 Made wounds which need thy balm.  
*Panthea.* I rise as from a bath of  
 sparkling water,  
 A bath of azure light, among dark rocks,  
 Out of the stream of sound.  
*Ione.* Ah me! sweet sister,  
 The stream of sound has ebbed away  
 from us,  
 And you pretend to rise out of its  
 wave,  
 Because your words fall like the clear,  
 soft dew  
 Shaken from a bathing wood-nymph's  
 limbs and hair.

*Panthea.* Peace! peace! A mighty  
Power, which is as darkness,  
Is rising out of Earth, and from the sky  
Is showered like night, and from within  
the air  
Bursts, like eclipse which had been gath-  
ered up  
Into the pores of sunlight: the bright  
visions,  
Wherein the singing spirits rode and  
shone,  
Gleam like pale meteors thro' a watery  
night.

*Ione.* There is a sense of words upon  
mine ear.

*Panthea.* An universal sound like  
words: Oh, list!

*Demogorgon.*

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy soul,  
Sphere of divinest shapes and harmo-  
nies,

Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost roll  
The love which paves thy path along  
the skies:

*The Earth.*

I hear: I am as a drop of dew that dies.

*Demogorgon.*

Thou, Moon, which gazest on the nightly  
Earth

With wonder, as it gazes upon thee;  
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the  
swift birth

Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, har-  
mony:

*The Moon.*

I hear: I am a leaf shaken by thee!

*Demogorgon.*

Ye kings of suns and stars, Dæmons and  
Gods,

Ethereal Dominations, who possess  
Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes  
Beyond Heaven's constellated wilder-  
ness:

*A Voice from above.*

Our great Republic hears, we are blest,  
and bless.

*Demogorgon.*

Ye happy dead, whom beams of bright-  
est verse

Are clouds to hide, not colors to por-  
tray,

Whether your nature is that universe  
Which once ye saw and suffered—

*A Voice from beneath.*

Or as they  
Whom we have left, we change and  
pass away.

*Demogorgon.*

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes  
From man's high mind even to the  
central stone

Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-fretted  
domes

To the dull weed some sea-worm bat-  
tens on:

*A confused Voice.*

We hear! thy words waken Oblivion.

*Demogorgon.*

Spirits, whose homes are flesh; ye beasts  
and birds,

Ye worms, and fish; ye living leaves  
and buds;

Lightning and wind; and ye untamable  
herds,

Meteors and mists, which throng air's  
solitudes:—

*A Voice.*

Thy voice to us is wind among still  
woods.

*Demogorgon.*

Man, who wert once a despot and a  
slave;

A dupe and a deceiver; a decay;

A traveller from the cradle to the grave  
Thro' the dim night of this immor-  
tal day:

*All.*

Speak: thy strong words may never  
pass away.

*Demogorgon.*

This is the day, which down the void  
abysm

At the Earth-born's spell yawns for  
Heaven's despotism,

And Conquest is dragged captive  
through the deep:

Love, from its awful throne of patient  
power

In the wise heart, from the last giddy  
hour

Of dead endurance, from the slippery,  
steep,

And narrow verge of crag-like agony,  
springs

And folds over the world its healing  
wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,

These are the seals of that most firm assurance

Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;

And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,  
Mother of many acts and hours, should free

The serpent that would clasp her with his length;

These are the spells by which to reassume  
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;

To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;

To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;

To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates

From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;

Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;

This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;

This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and  
Victory.

#### NOTE ON PROMETHEUS UNBOUND, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

ON the 12th of March 1818 Shelley quitted England, never to return. His principal motive was the hope that his health would be improved by a milder climate; he suffered very much during the winter previous to his emigration, and this decided his vacillating purpose. In December 1817 he had written from Marlow to a friend, saying:

"My health has been materially worse. My feelings at intervals are of a deadly and torpid kind or awakened to such a state of unnatural and keen excitement that, only to instance the organ of sight, I find the very blades of grass and the boughs of distant trees present themselves to me with microscopic distinctness. Towards

evening I sink into a state of lethargy and inanimation, and often remain for hours on the sofa between sleep and waking, a prey to the most painful irritability of thought. Such, with little intermission, is my condition. The hours devoted to study are selected with vigilant caution from among these periods of endurance. It is not for this that I think of travelling to Italy, even if I knew that Italy would relieve me. But I have experienced a decisive pulmonary attack; and although at present it has passed away without any considerable vestige of its existence, yet this symptom sufficiently shows the true nature of my disease to be consumptive. It is to my advantage that this malady is in its nature slow, and, if one is sufficiently alive to its advances, is susceptible of cure from a warm climate. In the event of its assuming any decided shape, *it would be my duty* to go to Italy without delay. It is not mere health, but life, that I should seek, and that not for my own sake — I feel I am capable of trampling on all such weakness; but for the sake of those to whom my life may be a source of happiness, utility, security, and honor, and to some of whom my death might be all that is the reverse."

In almost every respect his journey to Italy was advantageous. He left behind friends to whom he was attached; but cares of a thousand kinds, many springing from his lavish generosity, crowded round him in his native country, and, except the society of one or two friends, he had no compensation. The climate caused him to consume half his existence in helpless suffering. His dearest pleasure, the free enjoyment of the scenes of Nature, was marred by the same circumstance.

He went direct to Italy, avoiding even Paris, and did not make any pause till he arrived at Milan. The first aspect of Italy enchanted Shelley; it seemed a garden of delight placed beneath a clearer and brighter heaven than any he had lived under before. He wrote long descriptive letters during the first year of his residence in Italy, which, as compositions, are the most beautiful in the world, and show

how truly he appreciated and studied the wonders of Nature and Art in that divine land.

The poetical spirit within him speedily revived with all the power and with more than all the beauty of his first attempts. He meditated three subjects as the groundwork for lyrical dramas. One was the story of Tasso; of this a slight fragment of a song of Tasso remains. The other was one founded on the "Book of Job," which he never abandoned in idea, but of which no trace remains among his papers. The third was the "Prometheus Unbound." The Greek tragedians were now his most familiar companions in his wanderings, and the sublime majesty of Æschylus filled him with wonder and delight. The father of Greek tragedy does not possess the pathos of Sophocles, nor the variety and tenderness of Euripides; the interest on which he founds his dramas is often elevated above human vicissitudes into the mighty passions and throes of gods and demi-gods: such fascinated the abstract imagination of Shelley.

We spent a month at Milan, visiting the Lake of Como during that interval. Thence we passed in succession to Pisa, Leghorn, the Baths of Lucca, Venice, Este, Rome, Naples, and back again to Rome, whither we returned early in March 1819. During all this time Shelley meditated the subject of his drama, and wrote portions of it. Other poems were composed during this interval, and while at the Bagni di Lucca he translated Plato's *Symposium*. But, though he diversified his studies, his thoughts centred in the *Prometheus*. At last, when at Rome, during a bright and beautiful Spring, he gave up his whole time to the composition. The spot selected for his study was, as he mentions in his preface, the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla. These are little known to the ordinary visitor at Rome. He describes them in a letter, with that poetry and delicacy and truth of description which render his narrated impressions of scenery of unequalled beauty and interest.

At first he completed the drama in three acts. It was not till several months after,

when at Florence, that he conceived that a fourth act, a sort of hymn of rejoicing in the fulfilment of the prophecies with regard to Prometheus, ought to be added to complete the composition.

The prominent feature of Shelley's theory of the destiny of the human species was that evil is not inherent in the system of the creation, but an accident that might be expelled. This also forms a portion of Christianity: God made earth and man perfect, till he, by his fall,

"Brought death into the world and all our woe."

Shelley believed that mankind had only to will that there should be no evil, and there would be none. It is not my part in these Notes to notice the arguments that have been urged against this opinion, but to mention the fact that he entertained it, and was indeed attached to it with fervent enthusiasm. That man could be so perfectionized as to be able to expel evil from his own nature, and from the greater part of the creation, was the cardinal point of his system. And the subject he loved best to dwell on was the image of One warring with the Evil Principle, oppressed not only by it, but by all — even the good, who were deluded into considering evil a necessary portion of humanity; a victim full of fortitude and hope and the spirit of triumph, emanating from a reliance in the ultimate omnipotence of Good. Such he had depicted in his last poem, when he made Laon the enemy and the victim of tyrants. He now took a more idealized image of the same subject. He followed certain classical authorities in figuring Saturn as the good principle, Jupiter the usurping evil one, and Prometheus as the regenerator, who, unable to bring mankind back to primitive innocence, used knowledge as a weapon to defeat evil, by leading mankind, beyond the state wherein they are sinless through ignorance, to that in which they are virtuous through wisdom. Jupiter punished the temerity of the Titan by chaining him to a rock of Caucasus, and causing a vulture to devour his still-renewed heart. There was a prophecy afloat in heaven

portending the fall of Jove, the secret of averting which was known only to Prometheus; and the god offered freedom from torture on condition of its being communicated to him. According to the mythological story, this referred to the offspring of Thetis, who was destined to be greater than his father. Prometheus at last bought pardon for his crime of enriching mankind with his gifts, by revealing the prophecy. Hercules killed the vulture, and set him free; and Thetis was married to Peleus, the father of Achilles.

Shelley adapted the catastrophe of this story to his peculiar views. The son greater than his father, born of the nuptials of Jupiter and Thetis, was to dethrone Evil, and bring back a happier reign than that of Saturn. Prometheus defies the power of his enemy, and endures centuries of torture; till the hour arrives when Jove, blind to the real event, but darkly guessing that some great good to himself will flow, espouses Thetis. At the moment, the Primal Power of the world drives him from his usurped throne, and Strength, in the person of Hercules, liberates Humanity, typified in Prometheus, from the tortures generated by evil done or suffered. Asia, one of the Oceanides, is the wife of Prometheus—she was, according to other mythological interpretations, the same as Venus and Nature. When the benefactor of mankind is liberated, Nature resumes the beauty of her prime, and is united to her husband, the emblem of the human race, in perfect and happy union. In the fourth Act, the Poet gives further scope to his imagination, and idealizes the forms of creation—such as we know them, instead of such as they appeared to the Greeks. Maternal Earth, the mighty parent, is superseded by the Spirit of the Earth, the guide of our planet through the realms of sky; while his fair and weaker companion and attendant, the Spirit of the Moon, receives bliss from the annihilation of Evil in the superior sphere.

Shelley develops more particularly in the lyrics of this drama his abstruse and imaginative theories with regard to the

creation. It requires a mind as subtle and penetrating as his own to understand the mystic meanings scattered throughout the poem. They elude the ordinary reader by their abstraction and delicacy of distinction, but they are far from vague. It was his design to write prose metaphysical essays on the nature of Man, which would have served to explain much of what is obscure in his poetry; a few scattered fragments of observations and remarks alone remain. He considered these philosophical views of Mind and Nature to be instinct with the intensest spirit of poetry.

More popular poets clothe the ideal with familiar and sensible imagery. Shelley loved to idealize the real—to gift the mechanism of the material universe with a soul and a voice, and to bestow such also on the most delicate and abstract emotions and thoughts of the mind. Sophocles was his great master in this species of imagery.

I find in one of his manuscript books some remarks on a line in the “*Cædipus Tyrannus*,” which show at once the critical subtlety of Shelley’s mind, and explain his apprehension of those “minute and remote distinctions of feeling, whether relative to external nature or the living beings which surround us,” which he pronounces, in the letter quoted in the note to the “*Revolt of Islam*,” to comprehend all that is sublime in man.

“In the Greek Shakespeare, Sophocles, we find the image,

Πολλὰς δ' ὁδοὺς ἐλθόντα φροντίδος πλάνοις :

a line of almost unfathomable depth of poetry; yet how simple are the images in which it is arrayed!

‘Coming to many ways in the wanderings of careful thought.’

If the words ὁδοὺς and πλάνοις had not been used, the line might have been explained in a metaphorical instead of an absolute sense, as we say ‘ways and means,’ and ‘wanderings’ for error and confusion. But they meant literally paths or roads, such as we tread with our feet;

and wanderings, such as a man makes when he loses himself in a desert, or roams from city to city — as *Ædipus*, the speaker of this verse, was destined to wander, blind and asking charity. What a picture does this line suggest of the mind as a wilderness of intricate paths, wide as the universe, which is here made its symbol; a world within a world which he who seeks some knowledge with respect to what he ought to do searches throughout, as he would search the external universe for some valued thing which was hidden from him upon its surface.”

In reading Shelley's poetry, we often find similar verses, resembling, but not imitating, the Greek in this species of imagery; for, though he adopted the style, he gifted it with that originality of form and coloring which sprung from his own genius.

In the “*Prometheus Unbound*,” Shelley fulfils the promise quoted from a letter in the Note on the “*Revolt of Islam*.”<sup>1</sup> The tone of the composition is calmer and more majestic; the poetry, more perfect as a whole; and the imagination displayed, at once more pleasingly beautiful and more varied and daring. The description of the Hours, as they are seen in the cave of Demogorgon, is an instance of this — it fills the mind as the most charming picture — we long to see an artist at work to bring to our view the

“cars drawn by rainbow-winged steeds  
Which trample the dim winds; in each there  
stands  
A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.  
Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there,

<sup>1</sup> While correcting the proof-sheets of that poem, it struck me that the poet had indulged in an exaggerated view of the evils of restored despotism; which, however injurious and degrading, were less openly sanguinary than the triumph of anarchy, such as it appeared in France at the close of the last century. But at this time a book, “*Scenes of Spanish Life*,” translated by Lieutenant Crawford from the German of Dr. Huber, of Rostock, fell into my hands. The account of the triumph of the priests and the serviles, after the French invasion of Spain in 1823, bears a strong and frightful resemblance to some of the descriptions of the massacre of the patriots in the “*Revolt of Islam*.”

And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars :  
Others, with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink  
With eager lips the wind of their own speed,  
As if the thing they loved fled on before,  
And now, even now, they claspt it. Their bright  
locks  
Stream like a comet's flashing hair; they all  
Sweep onward.”

Through the whole poem there reigns a sort of calm and holy spirit of love; it soothes the tortured, and is hope to the expectant, till the prophecy is fulfilled, and Love, untainted by any evil, becomes the law of the world.

England had been rendered a painful residence to Shelley, as much by the sort of persecution with which in those days all men of liberal opinions were visited, and by the injustice he had lately endured in the Court of Chancery, as by the symptoms of disease which made him regard a visit to Italy as necessary to prolong his life. An exile, and strongly impressed with the feeling that the majority of his countrymen regarded him with sentiments of aversion such as his own heart could experience towards none, he sheltered himself from such disgusting and painful thoughts in the calm retreats of poetry, and built up a world of his own — with the more pleasure, since he hoped to induce some one or two to believe that the earth might become such, did mankind themselves consent. The charm of the Roman climate helped to clothe his thoughts in greater beauty than they had ever worn before. And, as he wandered among the ruins made one with Nature in their decay, or gazed on the Praxitelean shapes that throng the Vatican, the Capitol, and the palaces of Rome, his soul imbibed forms of loveliness which became a portion of itself. There are many passages in the “*Prometheus*,” which show the intense delight he received from such studies, and give back the impression with a beauty of poetical description peculiarly his own. He felt this, as a poet must feel when he satisfies himself by the result of his labors; and he wrote from Rome, “*My ‘Prometheus Unbound’ is just finished, and in a month or two I shall send it. It is a drama, with characters and mechan-*

ism of a kind yet unattempted; and I think the execution is better than any of my former attempts."

I may mention, for the information of the more critical reader, that the verbal alterations in this edition of "Prometheus" are made from a list of errata written by Shelley himself.

## THE CENCI:

### A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

#### DEDICATION.

TO

LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

MY DEAR FRIEND — I inscribe with your name, from a distant country, and after an absence whose months have seemed years, this the latest of my literary efforts.

Those writings which I have hitherto published, have been little else than visions which impersonate my own apprehensions of the beautiful and the just. I can also perceive in them the literary defects incidental to youth and impatience; they are dreams of what ought to be, or may be. The drama which I now present to you is a sad reality. I lay aside the presumptuous attitude of an instructor, and am content to paint, with such colors as my own heart furnishes, that which has been.

Had I known a person more highly endowed than yourself with all that it becomes a man to possess, I had solicited for this work the ornament of his name. One more gentle, honorable, innocent and brave; one of more exalted toleration for all who do and think evil, and yet himself more free from evil; one who knows better how to receive, and how to confer a benefit though he must ever confer far more than he can receive; one of simpler, and, in the highest sense of the word, of purer life and manners I never knew: and I had already been fortunate in friendships when your name was added to the list.

In that patient and irreconcilable enmity with domestic and political tyranny and imposture which the tenor of your life has illustrated, and which, had I health and talents, should illustrate mine, let us, comforting each other in our task, live and die.

All happiness attend you! Your affectionate friend,  
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

ROME, *May 29, 1819.*

## PREFACE.

A MANUSCRIPT was communicated to me during my travels in Italy, which was copied from the archives of the Cenci Palace at Rome, and contains a detailed account of the horrors which ended in the extinction of one of the noblest and richest families of that city during the Pontificate of Clement VIII., in the year 1599. The story is, that an old man having spent his life in debauchery and wickedness, conceived at length an implacable hatred towards his children; which showed itself towards one daughter under the form of an incestuous passion, aggravated by every circumstance of cruelty and violence. This daughter, after long and vain attempts to escape from what she considered a perpetual contamination both of body and mind, at length plotted with her mother-in-law and brother to murder their common tyrant. The young maiden, who was urged to this tremendous deed by an impulse which overpowered its horror, was evidently a most gentle and amiable being, a creature formed to adorn and be admired, and thus violently thwarted from her nature by the necessity of circumstance and opinion. The deed was quickly discovered, and, in spite of the most earnest prayers made to the Pope by the highest persons in Rome, the criminals were put to death. The old man had during his life repeatedly bought his pardon from the Pope for capital crimes of the most enormous and unspeakable kind, at the price of a hundred thousand crowns; the death therefore of his victims can scarcely be accounted for



by the love of justice. The Pope, among other motives for severity, probably felt that whoever killed the Count Cenci deprived his treasury of a certain and copious source of revenue.<sup>1</sup> Such a story, if told so as to present to the reader all the feelings of those who once acted it, their hopes and fears, their confidences and misgivings, their various interests, passions, and opinions, acting upon and with each other, yet all conspiring to one tremendous end, would be as a light to make apparent some of the most dark and secret caverns of the human heart.

On my arrival at Rome I found that the story of the Cenci was a subject not to be mentioned in Italian society without awakening a deep and breathless interest; and that the feelings of the company never failed to incline to a romantic pity for the wrongs, and a passionate exculpation of the horrible deed to which they urged her, who has been mingled two centuries with the common dust. All ranks of people knew the outlines of this history, and participated in the overwhelming interest which it seems to have the magic of exciting in the human heart. I had a copy of Guido's picture of Beatrice which is preserved in the Colonna Palace, and my servant instantly recognized it as the portrait of *La Cenci*.

This national and universal interest which the story produces and has produced for two centuries and among all ranks of people in a great City, where the imagination is kept for ever active and awake, first suggested to me the conception of its fitness for a dramatic purpose. In fact it is a tragedy which has already received, from its capacity of awakening and sustaining the sympathy of men, approbation and success. Nothing remained as I imagined, but to clothe it to the apprehensions of my countrymen in such language and action

as would bring it home to their hearts. The deepest and the sublimest tragic compositions, King Lear and the two plays in which the tale of *Cedipus* is told, were stories which already existed in tradition, as matters of popular belief and interest, before Shakespeare and Sophocles made them familiar to the sympathy of all succeeding generations of mankind.

This story of the Cenci is indeed eminently fearful and monstrous: anything like a dry exhibition of it on the stage would be insupportable. The person who would treat such a subject must increase the ideal, and diminish the actual horror of the events, so that the pleasure which arises from the poetry which exists in these tempestuous sufferings and crimes may mitigate the pain of the contemplation of the moral deformity from which they spring. There must also be nothing attempted to make the exhibition subservient to what is vulgarly termed a moral purpose. The highest moral purpose aimed at in the highest species of the drama, is the teaching the human heart, through its sympathies and antipathies, the knowledge of itself; in proportion to the possession of which knowledge, every human being is wise, just, sincere, tolerant and kind. If dogmas can do more, it is well: but a drama is no fit place for the enforcement of them. Undoubtedly, no person can be truly dishonored by the act of another; and the fit return to make to the most enormous injuries is kindness and forbearance, and a resolution to convert the injurer from his dark passions by peace and love. Revenge, retaliation, atonement, are pernicious mistakes. If Beatrice had thought in this manner she would have been wiser and better; but she would never have been a tragic character: the few whom such an exhibition would have interested, could never have been sufficiently interested for a dramatic purpose, from the want of finding sympathy in their interest among the mass who surround them. It is in the restless and anatomizing casuistry with which men seek the justification of Beatrice, yet feel that she has

<sup>1</sup> The Papal Government formerly took the most extraordinary precautions against the publicity of facts which offer so tragical a demonstration of its own wickedness and weakness; so that the communication of the MS. had become, until very lately, a matter of some difficulty.

done what needs justification; it is in the superstitious horror with which they contemplate alike her wrongs and their revenge, that the dramatic character of what she did and suffered, consists.

I have endeavored as nearly as possible to represent the characters as they probably were, and have sought to avoid the error of making them actuated by my own conceptions of right or wrong, false or true: thus under a thin veil converting names and actions of the sixteenth century into cold impersonations of my own mind. They are represented as Catholics, and as Catholics deeply tinged with religion. To a Protestant apprehension there will appear something unnatural in the earnest and perpetual sentiment of the relations between God and men which pervade the tragedy of the *Cenci*. It will especially be startled at the combination of an undoubting persuasion of the truth of the popular religion with a cool and determined perseverance in enormous guilt. But religion in Italy is not, as in Protestant countries, a cloak to be worn on particular days; or a passport which those who do not wish to be railed at carry with them to exhibit; or a gloomy passion for penetrating the impenetrable mysteries of our being, which terrifies its possessor at the darkness of the abyss to the brink of which it has conducted him. Religion coexists, as it were, in the mind of an Italian Catholic, with a faith in that of which all men have the most certain knowledge. It is interwoven with the whole fabric of life. It is adoration, faith, submission, penitence, blind admiration; not a rule for moral conduct. It has no necessary connection with any one virtue. The most atrocious villain may be rigidly devout, and without any shock to established faith, confess himself to be so. Religion pervades intensely the whole frame of society, and is according to the temper of the mind which it inhabits, a passion, a persuasion, an excuse, a refuge; never a check. *Cenci* himself built a chapel in the court of his Palace, and dedicated it to St. Thomas the Apostle, and established masses for the peace of his

soul. Thus in the first scene of the fourth act Lucretia's design in exposing herself to the consequences of an exhortation with *Cenci* after having administered the opiate, was to induce him by a feigned tale to confess himself before death; this being esteemed by Catholics as essential to salvation; and she only relinquishes her purpose when she perceives that her perseverance would expose Beatrice to new outrages.

I have avoided with great care in writing this play the introduction of what is commonly called mere poetry, and I imagine there will scarcely be found a detached simile or a single isolated description, unless Beatrice's description of the chasm appointed for her father's murder should be judged to be of that nature.<sup>1</sup>

In a dramatic composition the imagery and the passion should interpenetrate one another, the former being reserved simply for the full development and illustration of the latter. Imagination is as the immortal God which should assume flesh for the redemption of mortal passion. It is thus that the most remote and the most familiar imagery may alike be fit for dramatic purposes when employed in the illustration of strong feeling, which raises what is low, and levels to the apprehension that which is lofty, casting over all the shadow of its own greatness. In other respects, I have written more carelessly; that is, without an over-fastidious and learned choice of words. In this respect I entirely agree with those modern critics who assert that in order to move men to true sympathy we must use the familiar language of men, and that our great ancestors the ancient English poets are the writers, a study of whom might incite us to do that for our own age which they have done for theirs. But it must be the real language of men in general and not that of any particular class to whose society the writer happens to

<sup>1</sup> An idea in this speech was suggested by a most sublime passage in "*El Purgatorio de San Patricio*" of Calderon; the only plagiarism which I have intentionally committed in the whole piece.

belong. So much for what I have attempted; I need not be assured that success is a very different matter; particularly for one whose attention has but newly been awakened to the study of dramatic literature.

I endeavored whilst at Rome to observe such monuments of this story as might be accessible to a stranger. The portrait of Beatrice at the Colonna Palace is admirable as a work of art: it was taken by Guido during her confinement in prison. But it is most interesting as a just representation of one of the loveliest specimens of the workmanship of Nature. There is a fixed and pale composure upon the features: she seems sad and stricken down in spirit, yet the despair thus expressed is lightened by the patience of gentleness. Her head is bound with folds of white drapery from which the yellow strings of her golden hair escape, and fall about her neck. The moulding of her face is exquisitely delicate; the eyebrows are distinct and arched: the lips have that permanent meaning of imagination and sensibility which suffering has not repressed and which it seems as if death scarcely could extinguish. Her forehead is large and clear; her eyes which we are told were remarkable for their vivacity, are swollen with weeping and lustreless, but beautifully tender and serene. In the whole mien there is a simplicity and dignity which united with her exquisite loveliness and deep sorrow are inexpressibly pathetic. Beatrice Cenci appears to have been one of those rare persons in whom energy and gentleness dwell together without destroying one another: her nature was simple and profound. The crimes and miseries in which she was an actor and a sufferer are as the mask and the mantle in which circumstances clothed her for her impersonation on the scene of the world.

The Cenci Palace is of great extent; and though in part modernized, there yet remains a vast and gloomy pile of feudal architecture in the same state as during the dreadful scenes which are the subject of this tragedy. The Palace is situated in an obscure corner of Rome, near the

quarter of the Jews, and from the upper windows you see the immense ruins of Mount Palatine half hidden under their profuse overgrowth of trees. There is a court in one part of the Palace (perhaps that in which Cenci built the Chapel to St. Thomas), supported by granite columns and adorned with antique friezes of fine workmanship, and built up, according to the ancient Italian fashion, with balcony over balcony of open-work. One of the gates of the Palace formed of immense stones and leading through a passage, dark and lofty and opening into gloomy subterranean chambers, struck me particularly.

Of the Castle of Petrella, I could obtain no further information than that which is to be found in the manuscript.

## THE CENCI.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT FRANCESCO CENCI.  
 GIACOMO, } *his Sons.*  
 BERNARDO, }  
 CARDINAL CAMILLO.  
 ORSINO, *a Prelate.*  
 SAVELLA, *the Pope's Legate.*  
 OLIMPIO, } *Assassins.*  
 MARZIO, }  
 ANDREA, *Servant to Cenci.*

Nobles — Judges — Guards — Servants.

LUCRETIA, *Wife of Cenci, and Step-mother of his children.*

BEATRICE, *his Daughter.*

The SCENE lies principally in Rome, but changes during the fourth Act to Petrella, a Castle among the Apulian Apennines.

TIME. During the Pontificate of Clement VIII.

## ACT I.

### SCENE I. — AN APARTMENT IN THE CENCI PALACE.

*Enter* COUNT CENCI, *and* CARDINAL CAMILLO.

*Camillo.* THAT matter of the murder is hushed up

If you consent to yield his Holiness Your fief that lies beyond the Pincian gate. —

It needed all my interest in the conclave  
To bend him to this point: he said that  
you

Bought perilous impunity with your gold;  
That crimes like yours if once or twice  
compounded

Enriched the Church, and respited from  
hell

An erring soul which might repent and  
live: —

But that the glory and the interest  
Of the high throne he fills, little consist  
With making it a daily mart of guilt  
As manifold and hideous as the deeds  
Which you scarce hide from men's re-  
volted eyes.

*Cenci.* The third of my possessions  
— let it go!

Ay, I once heard the nephew of the  
Pope

Had sent his architect to view the ground,  
Meaning to build a villa on my vines  
The next time I compounded with his  
uncle:

I little thought he should outwit me so!  
Henceforth no witness — not the lamp —  
shall see

That which the vassal threatened to di-  
vulge

Whose throat is choked with dust for his  
reward.

The deed he saw could not have rated  
higher

Than his most worthless life: — it angers  
me!

Respited me from Hell: — so may the  
Devil

Respite their souls from Heaven. No  
doubt Pope Clement,

And his most charitable nephews, pray  
That the Apostle Peter and the saints  
Will grant for their sake that I long  
enjoy

Strength, wealth, and pride, and lust, and  
length of days

Wherein to act the deeds which are the  
stewards

Of their revenue. — But much yet remains  
To which they show no title.

*Camillo.* Oh, Count Cenci!

So much that thou mightst honorably live  
And reconcile thyself with thine own  
heart

And with thy God, and with the offended  
world.

How hideously look deeds of lust and  
blood

Thro' those snow white and venerable  
hairs! —

Your children should be sitting round you  
now,

But that you fear to read upon their looks  
The shame and misery you have written  
there.

Where is your wife? Where is your  
gentle daughter?

Methinks her sweet looks, which make  
all things else

Beauteous and glad, might kill the fiend  
within you.

Why is she barred from all society  
But her own strange and uncomplaining  
wrongs?

Talk with me, Count, — you know I  
mean you well.

I stood beside your dark and fiery youth  
Watching its bold and bad career, as  
men

Watch meteors, but it vanisht not —  
I markt

Your desperate and remorseless man-  
hood; now

Do I behold you in dishonored age  
Charged with a thousand unrepented  
crimes.

Yet I have ever hoped you would amend,  
And in that hope have saved your life  
three times.

*Cenci.* For which Aldobrandino owes  
you now

My fief beyond the Pincian. — Cardinal,  
One thing, I pray you, recollect hence-  
forth,

And so we shall converse with less re-  
straint.

A man you knew spoke of my wife and  
daughter —

He was accustomed to frequent my  
house;

So the next day *his* wife and daughter  
came

And asked if I had seen him; and I  
smiled:

I think they never saw him any more.

*Camillo.* Thou execrable man, be-  
ware! —

*Cenci.* Of thee?  
 Nay this is idle: — We should know each other.  
 As to my character for what men call crime  
 Seeing I please my senses as I list,  
 And vindicate that right with force or guile,  
 It is a public matter, and I care not  
 If I discuss it with you. I may speak  
 Alike to you and my own conscious heart —  
 For you give out that you have half re-  
 formed me,  
 Therefore strong vanity will keep you  
 silent  
 If fear should not; both will, I do not  
 doubt.  
 All men delight in sensual luxury,  
 All men enjoy revenge; and most exult  
 Over the tortures they can never feel —  
 Flattering their secret peace with others'  
 pain.  
 But I delight in nothing else. I love  
 The sight of agony, and the sense of  
 joy,  
 When this shall be another's, and that  
 mine.  
 And I have no remorse and little fear.  
 Which are, I think, the checks of other  
 men.  
 This mood has grown upon me, until  
 now  
 Any design my captious fancy makes  
 The picture of its wish, and it forms  
 none  
 But such as men like you would start to  
 know,  
 Is as my natural food and rest debarred  
 Until it be accomplisht.  
*Camillo.* Art thou not  
 Most miserable?  
*Cenci.* Why miserable? —  
 No. — I am what your theologians call  
 Hardened; — which they must be in  
 impudence,  
 So to revile a man's peculiar taste.  
 True, I was happier than I am, while  
 yet  
 Manhood remained to act the thing I  
 thought;  
 While lust was sweeter than revenge;  
 and now

Invention palls: — Ay, we must all grow  
 old —  
 And but that there yet remains a deed to  
 act  
 Whose horror might make sharp an  
 appetite  
 Duller than mine — I'd do — I know not  
 what.  
 When I was young I thought of nothing  
 else  
 But pleasure; and I fed on honey sweets:  
 Men, by St. Thomas! cannot live like  
 bees,  
 And I grew tired: — yet, till I killed a  
 foe,  
 And heard his groans, and heard his  
 children's groans,  
 Knew I not what delight was else on  
 earth,  
 Which now delights me little. I the  
 rather  
 Look on such pangs as terror ill con-  
 ceals,  
 The dry fixt eyeball; the pale quiver-  
 ing lip,  
 Which tell me that the spirit weeps  
 within  
 Tears bitterer than the bloody sweat of  
 Christ.  
 I rarely kill the body, which preserves,  
 Like a strong prison, the soul within my  
 power,  
 Wherein I feed it with the breath of fear  
 For hourly pain.  
*Camillo.* Hell's most aban-  
 doned fiend  
 Did never, in the drunkenness of guilt,  
 Speak to his heart as now you speak to  
 me;  
 I thank my God that I believe you not.  
*Enter ANDREA.*  
*Andrea.* My Lord, a gentleman from  
 Salamanca  
 Would speak with you.  
*Cenci.* Bid him attend me in the  
 grand saloon. [*Exit ANDREA.*]  
*Camillo.* Farewell; and I will pray  
 Almighty God that thy false, impious  
 words  
 Tempt not his spirit to abandon thee.  
 [*Exit CAMILLO.*]  
*Cenci.* The third of my possessions!  
 I must use

Close husbandry, or gold, the old man's sword,  
 Falls from my withered hand. But yesterday  
 There came an order from the Pope to make  
 Fourfold provision for my cursèd sons;  
 Whom I had sent from Rome to Salamanca,  
 Hoping some accident might cut them off;  
 And meaning if I could to starve them there.  
 I pray thee, God, send some quick death upon them!  
 Bernardo and my wife could not be worse  
 If dead and damned: — then, as to Beatrice —

(*Looking around him suspiciously.*)

I think they cannot hear me at that door;  
 What if they should? And yet I need not speak  
 Tho' the heart triumphs with itself in words.  
 O, thou most silent air, that shalt not hear  
 What now I think! Thou, pavement, which I tread  
 Towards her chamber, — let your echoes talk  
 Of my imperious step scorning surprise,  
 But not of my intent! — Andrea!

*Enter ANDREA.*

*Andrea.* My lord?  
*Cenci.* Bid Beatrice attend me in her chamber  
 This evening: — no, at midnight and alone. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II. — A GARDEN OF THE CENCI PALACE. *Enter BEATRICE and ORSINO, as in conversation.*

*Beatrice.* Pervert not truth, Orsino. You remember where we held That conversation; — nay, we see the spot  
 Even from this cypress; — two long years are past  
 Since, on an April midnight, underneath

The moonlight ruins of mount Palatine,  
 I did confess to you my secret mind.

*Orsino.* You said you loved me then.

*Beatrice.* You are a Priest, Speak to me not of love.

*Orsino.* I may obtain  
 The dispensation of the Pope to marry.

Because I am a Priest do you believe  
 Your image, as the hunter some struck  
 deer,

Follows me not whether I wake or sleep?

*Beatrice.* As I have said, speak to me not of love;

Had you a dispensation I have not;  
 Nor will I leave this home of misery  
 Whilst my poor Bernard, and that gentle lady

To whom I owe life, and these virtuous thoughts,

Must suffer what I still have strength to share.

Alas, Orsino! All the love that once  
 I felt for you, is turned to bitter pain.

Ours was a youthful contract, which you first

Broke, by assuming vows no Pope will loose.

And thus I love you still, but holily,

Even as a sister or a spirit might;

And so I swear a cold fidelity.

And it is well perhaps we shall not marry.

You have a sly, equivocating vein

That suits me not. — Ah, wretched that I am!

Where shall I turn? Even now you look on me

As you were not my friend, and as if you  
 Discovered that I thought so, with false smiles

Making my true suspicion seem your wrong.

Ah no! forgive me; sorrow makes me seem

Stern than else my nature might have been;

I have a weight of melancholy thoughts,  
 And they forbode, — but what can they forbode

Worse than I now endure?

*Orsino.* All will be well.

Is the petition yet prepared? You know

My zeal for all you wish, sweet Beatrice;  
Doubt not but I will use my utmost  
skill

So that the Pope attend to your complaint.

*Beatrice.* Your zeal for all I wish;  
— Ah me, you are cold!

Your utmost skill . . . speak but one  
word . . . (*aside*) Alas!

Weak and deserted creature that I am,  
Here I stand bickering with my only  
friend! [To ORSINO.

This night my father gives a sumptuous  
feast,

Orsino; he has heard some happy news  
From Salamanca, from my brothers there,  
And with this outward show of love he  
mocks

His inward hate. 'T is bold hypocrisy,  
For he would gladlier celebrate their  
deaths,

Which I have heard him pray for on his  
knees:

Great God! that such a father should be  
mine!

But there is mighty preparation made,  
And all our kin, the Cenci, will be there,  
And all the chief nobility of Rome.

And he has bidden me and my pale  
Mother

Attire ourselves in festival array.

Poor lady! She expects some happy  
change

In his dark spirit from this act; I none.  
At supper I will give you the petition:  
Till when — farewell.

*Orsino.* Farewell. (*Exit BEATRICE.*)

I know the Pope

Will ne'er absolve me from my priestly  
vow

But by absolving me from the revenue  
Of many a wealthy see; and, Beatrice,  
I think to win thee at an easier rate.

Nor shall he read her eloquent petition:  
He might bestow her on some poor  
relation

Of his sixth cousin, as he did her sister,  
And I should be debarred from all access.  
Then as to what she suffers from her  
father,

In all this there is much exaggeration:—  
Old men are testy and will have their  
way;

A man may stab his enemy, or his vassal,  
And live a free life as to wine or women,  
And with a peevish temper may return  
To a dull home, and rate his wife and  
children;

Daughters and wives call this foul  
tyranny.

I shall be well content if on my con-  
science

There rest no heavier sin than what they  
suffer

From the devices of my love — a net  
From which she shall escape not. Yet I  
fear

Her subtle mind, her awe-inspiring gaze,  
Whose beams anatomize me nerve by  
nerve

And lay me bare, and make me blush to  
see

My hidden thoughts. — Ah, no! A friend-  
less girl

Who clings to me, as to her only hope:—  
I were a fool, not less than if a panther  
Were panic-stricken by the antelope's  
eye,

If she escape me. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. — A MAGNIFICENT HALL  
IN THE CENCI PALACE. A BANQUET.

*Enter CENCI, LUCRETIA, BEATRICE,  
ORSINO, CAMILLO, NOBLES.*

*Cenci.* Welcome, my friends and  
kinsmen; welcome ye,  
Princes and Cardinals, pillars of the  
church,

Whose presence honors our festivity.  
I have too long lived like an anchorite,  
And in my absence from your merry  
meetings

An evil word is gone abroad of me;  
But I do hope that you, my noble friends,  
When you have shared the entertainment  
here,

And heard the pious cause for which 't is  
given,

And we have pledged a health or two  
together,

Will think me flesh and blood as well as  
you;

Sinful indeed, for Adam made all so,  
But tender-hearted, meek and pitiful.

*First Guest.* In truth, my Lord, you seem too light of heart,  
Too sprightly and companionable a man,  
To act the deeds that rumor pins on you.  
(*To his companion.*) I never saw such blithe and open cheer  
In any eye!

*Second Guest.* Some most desired event,  
In which we all demand a common joy,  
Has brought us hither; let us hear it, Count.

*Cenci.* It is indeed a most desired event.

If, when a parent from a parent's heart  
Lifts from this earth to the great Father  
of all

A prayer, both when he lays him down  
to sleep,

And when he rises up from dreaming it;  
One supplication, one desire, one hope,  
That he would grant a wish for his two sons,

Even all that he demands in their regard —

And suddenly beyond his dearest hope,  
It is accomplish'd, he should then rejoice,  
And call his friends and kinsmen to a feast,

And task their love to grace his merriment,

Then honor me thus far — for I am he.

*Beatrice (to LUCRETIA).* Great God!  
How horrible! Some dreadful ill  
Must have befallen my brothers.

*Lucretia.* Fear not, Child,  
He speaks too frankly.

*Beatrice.* Ah! my blood  
runs cold.

I fear that wicked laughter round his eye,  
Which wrinkles up the skin even to the hair.

*Cenci.* Here are the letters brought  
from Salamanca;

*Beatrice,* read them to your mother.  
God!

I thank thee! In one night didst thou  
perform,

By ways inscrutable, the thing I sought.  
My disobedient and rebellious sons

Are dead! — Why, dead! — What means  
this change of cheer?

You hear me not, I tell you they are  
dead;

And they will need no food or raiment  
more;

The tapers that did light them the dark  
way

Are their last cost. The Pope, I think,  
will not

Expect I should maintain them in their  
coffins.

Rejoice with me — my heart is wondrous  
glad.

[*LUCRETIA sinks, half-fainting;*  
*BEATRICE supports her.*

*Beatrice.* It is not true! — Dear lady,  
pray look up.

Had it been true, there is a God in  
Heaven,

He would not live to boast of such a  
boon.

Unnatural man, thou knowest that it is  
false.

*Cenci.* Ay, as the word of God; whom  
here I call

To witness that I speak the sober truth; —  
And whose most favoring Providence was  
shown

Even in the manner of their deaths.  
For Rocco

Was kneeling at the mass, with sixteen  
others,

When the church fell and crush'd him to  
a mummy,

The rest escaped unhurt. Cristofano  
Was stabbed in error by a jealous man,

Whilst she he loved was sleeping with  
his rival;

All in the self-same hour of the same  
night;

Which shows that Heaven has special  
care of me.

I beg those friends who love me, that  
they mark

The day a feast upon their calendars.

It was the twenty-seventh of December:  
Ay, read the letters if you doubt my oath.

[*The assembly appears confused;*  
*several of the guests rise.*

*First Guest.* Oh, horrible! I will  
depart —

*Second Guest.* And I. —

*Third Guest.* No, stay!

I do believe it is some jest; tho' faith!



'Tis mocking us somewhat too solemnly.  
I think his son has married the Infanta,  
Or found a mine of gold in El dorado;  
'Tis but to season some such news; stay,  
stay!

I see 't is only raillery by his smile.

*Cenci (filling a bowl of wine, and lifting it up).* Oh, thou bright wine whose purple splendor leaps  
And bubbles gayly in this golden bowl  
Under the lamp-light, as my spirits do,  
To hear the death of my accursèd sons!  
Could I believe thou wert their mingled blood,

Then would I taste thee like a sacrament,

And pledge with thee the mighty Devil  
in Hell,

Who, if a father's curses, as men say,  
Climb with swift wings after their children's souls,

And drag them from the very throne of  
Heaven,

Now triumphs in my triumph! — But thou art

Superfluous; I have drunken deep of  
joy,

And I will taste no other wine to-night.  
Here, Andrea! Bear the bowl around.

*A Guest (rising).* Thou wretch!  
Will none among this noble company  
Check the abandoned villain?

*Camillo.* For God's sake  
Let me dismiss the guests! You are  
insane,

Some ill will come of this.

*Second Guest.* Seize, silence him!

*First Guest.* I will!

*Third Guest.* And I?

*Cenci (addressing those who rise with a threatening gesture).* Who  
moves? Who speaks?

*(turning to the Company)*  
't is nothing,

Enjoy yourselves. — Beware! For my  
revenge

Is as the sealed commission of a king  
That kills, and none dare name the murderer.

[*The Banquet is broken up; several of the Guests are departing.*]

*Beatrice.* I do entreat you, go not,  
noble guests;

What, altho' tyranny and impious hate  
Stand sheltered by a father's hoary hair?  
What, if 'tis he who clothed us in these  
limbs

Who tortures them, and triumphs?  
What, if we,

The desolate and the dead, were his own  
flesh,

His children and his wife, whom he is  
bound

To love and shelter? Shall we therefore  
find

No refuge in this merciless wide world?  
O think what deep wrongs must have  
blotted out

First love, then reverence in a child's  
prone mind,

Till it thus vanquish shame and fear!  
O think!

I have borne much, and kissed the sacred  
hand

Which crusht us to the earth, and  
thought its stroke

Was perhaps some paternal chastisement!

Have excused much, doubted; and when  
no doubt

Remained, have sought by patience, love,  
and tears

To soften him, and when this could not  
be

I have knelt down through the long sleep-  
less nights

And lifted up to God, the father of all,  
Passionate prayers: and when these were  
not heard

I have still borne,— until I meet you  
here,

Princes and kinsmen, at this hideous  
feast

Given at my brothers' deaths. Two yet  
remain,

His wife remains and I, whom if ye save  
not,

Ye may soon share such merriment again  
As fathers make over their children's  
graves.

O Prince Colonna, thou art our near  
kinsman,

Cardinal, thou art the Pope's Chamber-  
lain,

Camillo, thou art chief justiciary,  
Take us away!

*Cenci* (he has been conversing with CAMILLO during the first part of BEATRICE'S speech; he hears the conclusion, and now advances).

I hope my good friends here  
Will think of their own daughters — or  
perhaps  
Of their own throats — before they lend  
an ear  
To this wild girl.

*Beatrice* (not noticing the words of *Cenci*). Dare no one look  
on me ?

None answer ? Can one tyrant overbear  
The sense of many best and wisest men ?  
Or is it that I sue not in some form  
Of scrupulous law, that ye deny my suit ?  
O God ! That I were buried with my  
brothers !

And that the flowers of this departed  
spring  
Were fading on my grave ! And that my  
father

Were celebrating now one feast for all !  
*Camillo*. A bitter wish for one so  
young and gentle ;

Can we do nothing ?

*Colonna*. Nothing that I see.  
Count *Cenci* were a dangerous enemy :  
Yet I would second any one.

*A Cardinal*. And I.

*Cenci*. Retire to your chamber, insolent girl !

*Beatrice*. Retire thou impious man !  
Ay hide thyself

Where never eye can look upon thee  
more !

Wouldst thou have honor and obedience  
Who art a torturer ? Father, never  
dream

Though thou mayst overbear this com-  
pany,

But ill must come of ill. — Frown not on  
me !

Haste, hide thyself, lest with avenging  
looks

My brothers' ghosts should hunt thee  
from thy seat !

Cover thy face from every living eye,  
And start if thou but hear a human step :  
Seek out some dark and silent corner,  
there,

Bow thy white head before offended God,

And we will kneel around, and fervently  
Pray that he pity both ourselves, and  
thee.

*Cenci*. My friends, I do lament this  
insane girl

Has spoil the mirth of our festivity.

Good-night, farewell ; I will not make  
you longer

Spectators of our dull domestic quarrels.

Another time. —

[*Exeunt all but CENCI and BEATRICE*.

My brain is swimming round ;  
Give me a bowl of wine !

[*To BEATRICE*.

Thou painted viper !

Beast that thou art ! Fair and yet terri-  
ble !

I know a charm shall make thee meek  
and tame,

Now get thee from my sight !

[*Exit BEATRICE*.

Here, Andrea,

Fill up this goblet with Greek wine. I  
said

I would not drink this evening ; but I  
must ;

For, strange to say, I feel my spirits fail  
With thinking what I have decreed to do.

[*Drinking the wine*.

Be thou the resolution of quick youth  
Within my veins, and manhood's purpose  
stern,

And age's firm, cold, subtle villany ;  
As if thou wert indeed my children's  
blood

Which I did thirst to drink ! The charm  
works well ;

It must be done ; it shall be done, I  
swear !

[*Exit*.

END OF FIRST ACT.

## ACT II.

SCENE I. — AN APARTMENT IN THE  
CENCI PALACE. *Enter* LUCRETIA and  
BERNARDO.

*Lucretia*. Weep not, my gentle boy ;  
he struck but me

Who have borne deeper wrongs. In  
truth, if he

Had killed me, he had done a kinder deed.

O, God Almighty, do thou look upon us,  
We have no other friend but only thee!  
Yet weep not; though I love you as my own,

I am not your true mother.

*Bernardo.* O more, more,  
Than ever mother was to any child,  
That have you been to me! Had he not been

My father, do you think that I should weep!

*Lucretia.* Alas! Poor boy, what else couldst thou have done?

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Beatrice (in a hurried voice).* Did he pass this way? Have you seen him, brother?

Ah! No, that is his step upon the stairs;  
'T is nearer now; his hand is on the door;  
Mother, if I to thee have ever been

A duteous child, now save me! Thou, great God,

Whose image upon earth a father is,  
Dost thou indeed abandon me? He comes;

The door is opening now; I see his face;

He frowns on others, but he smiles on me,

Even as he did after the feast last night.

*Enter a Servant.*

Almighty God, how merciful thou art!  
'T is but Orsino's servant. — Well, what news?

*Servant.* My master bids me say,  
the Holy Father

Has sent back your petition thus unopened. [*Giving a paper.*

And he demands at what hour 't were secure

To visit you again?

*Lucretia.* At the Ave Mary.

[*Exit Servant.*

So, daughter, our last hope has failed;  
Ah me!

How pale you look; you tremble, and you stand

Wrapt in some fixed and fearful meditation,

As if one thought were over strong for you:

Your eyes have a chill glare; O, dearest child!

Are you gone mad? If not, pray speak to me.

*Beatrice.* You see I am not mad: I speak to you.

*Lucretia.* You talkt of something that your father did

After that dreadful feast? Could it be worse

Than when he smiled, and cried, My sons are dead!

And every one lookt in his neighbor's face

To see if others were as white as he?  
At the first word he spoke I felt the blood

Rush to my heart, and fell into a trance;  
And when it past I sat all weak and wild;

Whilst you alone stood up, and with strong words

Checkt his unnatural pride; and I could see

The devil was rebuked that lives in him.  
Until this hour thus have you ever stood  
Between us and your father's moody wrath

Like a protecting presence: your firm mind

Has been our only refuge and defence:  
What can have thus subdued it? What can now

Have given you that cold melancholy look,

Succeeding to your unaccustomed fear?

*Beatrice.* What is it that you say?  
I was just thinking

'T were better not to struggle any more.  
Men, like my father, have been dark and bloody,

Yet never — Oh! Before worse comes of it

'T were wise to die: it ends in that at last.

*Lucretia.* O talk not so, dear child!  
Tell me at once

What did your father do or say to you?  
He stayed not after that accursèd feast  
One moment in your chamber. — Speak to me.

*Bernardo.* O sister, sister, prithee, speak to us!

*Beatrice* (*speaking very slowly with a forced calmness*). It was one word, Mother, one little word; One look, one smile. (*Wildly*.) Oh! He has trampled me Under his feet, and made the blood stream down My pallid cheeks. And he has given us all Ditch water, and the fever-stricken flesh Of buffaloes, and bade us eat or starve, And we have eaten. — He has made me look On my beloved Bernardo, when the rust Of heavy chains has gangrened his sweet limbs, And I have never yet despaired — but now! What could I say? [*Recovering herself*. Ah! No, 't is nothing new The sufferings we all share have made me wild: He only struck and curst me as he past; He said, he lookt, he did; — nothing at all Beyond his wont, yet it disordered me. Alas! I am forgetful of my duty, I should preserve my senses for your sake.

*Lucretia*. Nay, Beatrice; have courage my sweet girl, If any one despairs it should be I Who loved him once, and now must live with him Till God in pity call for him or me. For you may, like your sister, find some husband, And smile, years hence, with children round your knees; Whilst I, then dead, and all this hideous coil Shall be remembered only as a dream.

*Beatrice*. Talk not to me, dear lady, of a husband. Did you not nurse me when my mother died? Did you not shield me and that dearest boy? And had we any other friend but you In infancy, with gentle words and looks To win our father not to murder us?

And shall I now desert you? May the ghost Of my dead Mother plead against my soul If I abandon her who filled the place She left, with more, even, than a mother's love!

*Bernardo*. And I am of my sister's mind. Indeed I would not leave you in this wretchedness, Even though the Pope should make me free to live In some blithe place, like others of my age, With sports, and delicate food, and the fresh air. O never think that I will leave you, Mother!

*Lucretia*. My dear, dear children!

*Enter CENCI, suddenly.*

*Cenci*. What, Beatrice here! Come hither!

[*She shrinks back, and covers her face.*

Nay, hide not your face, 't is fair; Look up! Why, yesternight you dared to look With disobedient insolence upon me, Bending a stern and an inquiring brow On what I meant; whilst I then sought to hide That which I came to tell you — but in vain.

*Beatrice* (*wildly, staggering towards the door*). O that the earth would gape! Hide me, O God!

*Cenci*. Then it was I whose inarticulate words Fell from my lips, and who with tottering steps Fled from your presence, as you now from mine. Stay, I command you — from this day and hour Never again, I think, with fearless eye, And brow superior, and unaltered cheek, And that lip made for tenderness or scorn, Shalt thou strike dumb the meanest of mankind; Me least of all. Now get thee to thy chamber! Thou too, loathed image of thy cursèd mother,

[To BERNARDO.

Thy milky, meek face makes me sick  
with hate!

[*Exeunt* BEATRICE and BERNARDO.  
(*Aside.*) So much has past between us  
as must make

Me bold, her fearful. — 'T is an awful  
thing

To touch such mischief as I now con-  
ceive:

So men sit shivering on the dewy bank,  
And try the chill stream with their feet;  
once in . . .

How the delighted spirit pants for joy!

*Lucretia* (*advancing timidly towards  
him*). O husband! Pray forgive  
poor Beatrice.

She meant not any ill.

(*Cenci.* Nor you perhaps?)

Nor that young imp, whom you have  
taught by rote

Parricide with his alphabet? Nor  
Giacomo?

Nor those two most unnatural sons, who  
stirred

Enmity up against me with the Pope?

Whom in one night merciful God cut off:  
Innocent lambs! They thought not any  
ill.

You were not here conspiring? You  
said nothing

Of how I might be dungeoned as a  
madman;

Or be condemned to death for some  
offence,

And you would be the witnesses? — This  
failing,

How just it were to hire assassins, or  
Put sudden poison in my evening drink?

Or smother me when overcome by wine?  
Seeing we had no other judge but God,

And he had sentenced me, and there  
were none

But you to be the executioners

Of his decree enregistered in heaven?

Oh, no! You said not this?

*Lucretia.* So help me God,

I never thought the things you charge  
me with!

*Cenci.* If you dare speak that wicked  
lie again

I'll kill you. What! It was not by  
your counsel

That Beatrice disturbed the feast last  
night?

You did not hope to stir some enemies  
Against me, and escape, and laugh to  
scorn

What every nerve of you now trembles  
at?

You judged that men were bolder than  
they are;

Few dare to stand between their grave  
and me.

*Lucretia.* Look not so dreadfully!  
By my salvation

I knew not aught that Beatrice designed;  
Nor do I think she designed anything  
Until she heard you talk of her dead  
brothers.

*Cenci.* Blaspheming liar! You are  
damned for this!

But I will take you where you may per-  
suade

The stones you tread on to deliver you:  
For men shall there be none but those  
who dare

All things — not question that which I  
command.

On Wednesday next I shall set out: you  
know

That savage rock, the Castle of Petrella:  
'T is safely walled, and moated round  
about:

Its dungeons underground, and its thick  
towers

Never told tales; though they have  
heard and seen

What might make dumb things speak. —  
Why do you linger?

Make speediest preparation for the  
journey! [*Exit* LUCRETIA.

The all-beholding sun yet shines; I  
hear

A busy stir of men about the streets;  
I see the bright sky through the window  
panes:

It is a garish, broad, and peering day;  
Loud, light, suspicious, full of eyes and  
ears,

And every little corner, nook, and hole  
Is penetrated with the insolent light.

Come darkness! Yet, what is the day to  
me?

And wherefore should I wish for night,  
who do

A deed which shall confound both night  
and day?

'T is she shall grope through a bewildering  
mist

Of horror: if there be a sun in heaven  
She shall not dare to look upon its beams;  
Nor feel its warmth. Let her then wish  
for night;

The act I think shall soon extinguish all  
For me: I bear a darker deadlier gloom  
Than the earth's shade, or interlunar air,  
Or constellations quencht in murkiest  
cloud,

In which I walk secure and unbeheld  
Towards my purpose.— Would that it  
were done! [Exit.

SCENE II. — A CHAMBER IN THE  
VATICAN. *Enter CAMILLO and  
GIACOMO, in conversation.*

*Camillo.* There is an obsolete and  
doubtful law  
By which you might obtain a bare  
provision  
Of food and clothing—

*Giacomo.* Nothing more? Alas!  
Bare must be the provision which strict  
law

Awards, and agèd, sullen avarice pays.  
Why did my father not apprentice me  
To some mechanic trade? I should have  
then

Been trained in no highborn necessities  
Which I could meet not by my daily toil.  
The eldest son of a rich nobleman  
Is heir to all his incapacities;  
He has wide wants, and narrow powers.

If you,  
Cardinal Camillo, were reduced at once  
From thrice-driven beds of down, and  
delicate food,  
An hundred servants, and six palaces,  
To that which nature doth indeed re-  
quire?—

*Camillo.* Nay, there is reason in your  
plea; 't were hard.

*Giacomo.* 'T is hard for a firm man to  
bear: but I  
Have a dear wife, a lady of high birth,  
Whose dowry in ill hour I lent my father  
Without a bond or witness to the deed:

And children, who inherit her fine  
senses,

The fairest creatures in this breathing  
world;

And she and they reproach me not.  
Cardinal,

Do you not think the Pope would inter-  
pose

And stretch authority beyond the law?

*Camillo.* Though your peculiar case is  
hard, I know

The Pope will not divert the course of  
law.

After that impious feast the other night  
I spoke with him, and urged him then to  
check

Your father's cruel hand; he frowned  
and said,

“Children are disobedient, and they  
sting

Their fathers' hearts to madness and  
despair,

Requiting years of care with contumely.  
I pity the Count Cenci from my heart;

His outraged love perhaps awakened  
hate,

And thus he is exasperated to ill.

In the great war between the old and  
young

I, who have white hairs and a tottering  
body,

Will keep at least blameless neutrality.”

*Enter ORSINO.*

You, my good Lord Orsino, heard those  
words.

*Orsino.* What words?

*Giacomo.* Alas, repeat them  
not again!

There then is no redress for me, at least  
None but that which I may achieve my-  
self,

Since I am driven to the brink.— But,  
say,

My innocent sister and my only brother  
Are dying underneath my father's eye.  
The memorable torturers of this land,  
Galcaz, Visconti, Borgia, Ezzelin,  
Never inflicted on the meanest slave  
What these endure; shall they have no  
protection?

*Camillo.* Why, if they would peti-  
tion to the Pope

I see not how he could refuse it—yet

He holds it of most dangerous example  
In aught to weaken the paternal power,  
Being, as 't were, the shadow of his own.  
I pray you now excuse me. I have  
business

That will not bear delay.

*Giacomo.* [Exit CAMILLO.

But you, Orsino,  
Have the petition: wherefore not present  
it?

*Orsino.* I have presented it, and  
backed it with  
My earnest prayers, and urgent interest;  
It was returned unanswered. I doubt  
not

But that the strange and execrable deeds  
Alleged in it—in truth they might well  
baffle

Any belief—have turned the Pope's  
displeasure

Upon the accusers from the criminal:  
So I should guess from what Camillo  
said.

*Giacomo.* My friend, that palace-  
walking devil Gold  
Has whispered silence to his Holiness:  
And we are left, as scorpions ringed  
with fire.

What should we do but strike ourselves  
to death?

For he who is our murderous persecutor  
Is shielded by a father's holy name,  
Or I would—

(*Stops abruptly.*)  
*Orsino.* What? Fear not to speak  
your thought.

Words are but holy as the deeds they  
cover:

A priest who has forsworn the God he  
serves;

A judge who makes Truth weep at his  
decree;

A friend who should weave counsel,  
as I now,

But as the mantle of some selfish guile;  
A father who is all a tyrant seems,  
Were the profaner for his sacred name.

*Giacomo.* Ask me not what I think;  
the unwilling brain

Feigns often what it would not; and we  
trust

Imagination with such fantasies  
As the tongue dares not fashion into  
words,

Which have no words, their horror  
makes them dim

To the mind's eye.—My heart denies  
itself

To think what you demand.

*Orsino.* But a friend's bosom  
Is as the inmost cave of our own mind  
Where we sit shut from the wide gaze  
of day,

And from the all-communicating air.

You look what I suspected—

*Giacomo.* Spare me now!  
I am as one lost in a midnight wood,  
Who dares not ask some harmless pas-  
senger

The path across the wilderness, lest he,  
As my thoughts are, should be—a  
murderer.

I know you are my friend, and all I dare  
Speak to my soul that will I trust with  
thee.

But now my heart is heavy, and would  
take

Lone counsel from a night of sleepless  
care.

Pardon me, that I say farewell—fare-  
well!

I would that to my own suspected self  
I could address a word so full of peace.

*Orsino.* Farewell!—Be your thoughts  
better or more bold.

[Exit GIACOMO.

I had disposed the Cardinal Camillo  
To feed his hope with cold encourage-  
ment:

It fortunately serves my close designs  
That 't is a trick of this same family  
To analyze their own and other minds.  
Such self-anatomy shall teach the will  
Dangerous secrets: for it tempts our  
powers,

Knowing what must be thought, and  
may be done,

Into the depth of darkest purposes:  
So Cenci fell into the pit; even I,  
Since Beatrice unveiled me to myself,  
And made me shrink from what I can-  
not shun,

Show a poor figure to my own esteem,  
To which I grow half reconciled. I'll  
do

As little mischief as I can; that thought  
Shall fee the accuser conscience.

(*After a pause.*) Now what harm  
 If Cenci should be murdered?— Yet, if  
 murdered,  
 Wherefore by me? And what if I could  
 take  
 The profit, yet omit the sin and peril  
 In such an action? Of all earthly things  
 I fear a man whose blows outspeed his  
 words;  
 And such is Cenci: and while Cenci  
 lives  
 His daughter's dowry were a secret grave  
 If a priest wins her.— Oh, fair Beatrice!  
 Would that I loved thee not, or loving  
 thee  
 Could but despise danger and gold and  
 all  
 That frowns between my wish and its  
 effect,  
 Or smiles beyond it! There is no  
 escape . . .  
 Her bright form kneels beside me at  
 the altar,  
 And follows me to the resort of men,  
 And fills my slumber with tumultuous  
 dreams,  
 So when I wake my blood seems liquid  
 fire;  
 And if I strike my damp and dizzy head  
 My hot palm scorches it: her very  
 name,  
 But spoken by a stranger, makes my  
 heart  
 Sicken and pant; and thus unprofitably  
 I clasp the phantom of unfelt delights  
 Till weak imagination half possesses  
 The self-created shadow. Yet much  
 longer  
 Will I not nurse this life of feverous  
 hours:  
 From the unravelled hopes of Giacomo  
 I must work out my own dear purposes.  
 I see, as from a tower, the end of all:  
 Her father dead; her brother bound to  
 me  
 By a dark secret, surer than the grave;  
 Her mother scared and unexpostulating  
 From the dread manner of her wish  
 achieved:  
 And she!— Once more take courage my  
 faint heart;  
 What dares a friendless maiden match  
 with thee?

I have such foresight as assures success:  
 Some unbeheld divinity doth ever,  
 When dread events are near, stir up  
 men's minds  
 To black suggestions; and he prospers  
 best,  
 Not who becomes the instrument of ill,  
 But who can flatter the dark spirit,  
 that makes  
 Its empire and its prey of other hearts  
 Till it become his slave . . . as I will  
 do. [Exit.]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—AN APARTMENT IN THE  
 CENCI PALACE. LUCRETIA, *to her*  
*enter* BEATRICE.

*Beatrice* (*she enters staggering, and*  
*speaks wildly*). Reach me that  
 handkerchief!— My brain is hurt;  
 My eyes are full of blood; just wipe  
 them for me . . .  
 I see but indistinctly.

*Lucretia.* My sweet child,  
 You have no wound; 'tis only a cold  
 dew  
 That starts from your dear brow . . .  
 Alas! Alas!  
 What has befallen?

*Beatrice.* How comes this hair  
 undone?  
 Its wandering strings must be what blind  
 me so,  
 And yet I tied it fast. — O, horrible!  
 The pavement sinks under my feet!  
 The walls  
 Spin round! I see a woman weeping  
 there,  
 And standing calm and motionless,  
 whilst I  
 Slide giddily as the world reels. . . .  
 My God!  
 The beautiful blue heaven is fleckt with  
 blood!  
 The sunshine on the floor is black! The  
 air  
 Is changed to vapors such as the dead  
 breathe



In charnel pits! Pah! I am choked!  
 There creeps  
 A clinging, black, contaminating mist  
 About me . . . 't is substantial, heavy,  
 thick,  
 I cannot pluck it from me, for it glues  
 My fingers and my limbs to one another,  
 And eats into my sinews, and dissolves  
 My flesh to a pollution, poisoning  
 The subtle, pure, and inmost spirit of  
 life!  
 My God! I never knew what the mad  
 felt  
 Before; for I am mad beyond all doubt!  
 (*More wildly.*) No, I am dead! These  
 putrefying limbs  
 Shut round and sepulchre the panting  
 soul  
 Which would burst forth into the wander-  
 ing air! (*A pause.*)  
 What hideous thought was that I had  
 even now?  
 'T is gone; and yet its burden remains  
 here  
 O'er these dull eyes . . . upon this weary  
 heart!  
 O world! O life! O day! O misery!  
*Lucretia.* What ails thee, my poor  
 child? She answers not:  
 Her spirit apprehends the sense of pain,  
 But not its cause; suffering has dried away  
 The source from which it sprung . . .  
*Beatrice (frantically).* Like Parri-  
 cide . . .  
 Misery has killed its father: yet its father  
 Never like mine . . . O God! What  
 thing am I?  
*Lucretia.* My dearest child, what  
 has your father done?  
*Beatrice (doubtfully).* Who art thou,  
 questioner? I have no father.  
 (*Aside.*) She is the madhouse nurse  
 who tends on me,  
 It is a piteous office.  
 (*To LUCRETIA, in a slow, subdued voice.*)  
 Do you know  
 I thought I was that wretched Beatrice  
 Men speak of, whom her father some-  
 times hailes  
 From hall to hall by the entangled hair;  
 At others, pens up naked in damp cells  
 Where scaly reptiles crawl, and starves  
 her there,

Till she will eat strange flesh. This  
 woful story  
 So did I overact in my sick dreams,  
 That I imagined . . . no, it cannot be!  
 Horrible things have been in this wild  
 world,  
 Prodigious mixtures, and confusions  
 strange  
 Of good and ill; and worse have been  
 conceived  
 Than ever there was found a heart to do.  
 But never fancy imaged such a deed  
 As . . . (*Pauses, suddenly recollecting  
 herself.*)  
 Who art thou? Swear to me, ere I  
 die  
 With fearful expectation, that indeed  
 Thou art not what thou seemest . . .  
 Mother!  
*Lucretia.* Oh!  
 My sweet child, know you . . .  
*Beatrice.* Yet speak it not:  
 For then if this be truth, that other too  
 Must be a truth, a firm enduring truth,  
 Linkt with each lasting circumstance of  
 life,  
 Never to change, never to pass away.  
 Why so it is. This is the Cenci Palace;  
 Thou art Lucretia; I am Beatrice.  
 I have talkt some wild words, but will  
 no more.  
 Mother, come near me: from this point  
 of time,  
 I am . . . (*Her voice dies away faintly.*)  
*Lucretia.* Alas! What has befallen  
 thee, child?  
 What has thy father done?  
*Beatrice.* What have I done?  
 Am I not innocent? Is it my crime  
 That one with white hair and imperious  
 brow,  
 Who tortured me from my forgotten  
 years  
 As parents only dare, should call himself  
 My father, yet should be!—Oh, what  
 am I?  
 What name, what place, what memory  
 shall be mine?  
 What retrospects, outliving even despair?  
*Lucretia.* He is a violent tyrant,  
 surely, child:  
 We know that death alone can make us  
 free;

His death or ours. But what can he  
have done

Of deadlier outrage or worse injury?  
Thou art unlike thyself; thine eyes shoot  
forth

A wandering and strange spirit. Speak  
to me,

Unlock those pallid hands whose fingers  
twine

With one another.

*Beatrice.* 'T is the restless life  
Tortured within them. If I try to speak  
I shall go mad. Ay, something must be  
done;

What, yet I know not . . . something  
which shall make

The thing that I have suffered but a  
shadow

In the dread lightning which avenges it;  
Brief, rapid, irreversible, destroying  
The consequence of what it cannot cure.  
Some such thing is to be endured or  
done:

When I know what, I shall be still and  
calm,

And never any thing will move me more.  
But now!—O blood, which art my  
father's blood,

Circling thro' these contaminated veins,  
If thou, poured forth on the polluted  
earth,

Could wash away the crime, and punish-  
ment

By which I suffer . . . no, that cannot  
be!

Many might doubt there were a God  
above

Who sees and permits evil, and so die:  
That faith no agony shall obscure in me.

*Lucretia.* It must indeed have been  
some bitter wrong;

Yet what, I dare not guess. Oh, my  
lost child,

Hide not in proud impenetrable grief  
Thy sufferings from my fear.

*Beatrice.* I hide them not.  
What are the words which you would  
have me speak?

I, who can feign no image in my mind  
Of that which has transformed me: I,  
whose thought

Is like a ghost shrouded and folded up  
In its own formless horror: of all words

That minister to mortal intercourse,  
Which wouldst thou hear? For there is  
none to tell

My misery: if another ever knew  
Aught like to it, she died as I will die,  
And left it, as I must, without a name.

Death! Death! Our law and our reli-  
gion call thee

A punishment and a reward . . . Oh,  
which

Have I deserved?

*Lucretia.* The peace of innocence;  
Till in your season you be called to  
heaven.

Whate'er you may have suffered, you  
have done

No evil. Death must be the punish-  
ment

Of crime, or the reward of trampling  
down

The thorns which God has strewed upon  
the path

Which leads to immortality.

*Beatrice.* Ay, death . . .  
The punishment of crime. I pray thee,  
God,

Let me not be bewildered while I judge.  
If I must live day after day, and keep  
These limbs, the unworthy temple of thy  
spirit,

As a foul den from which what thou  
abhorrest

May mock thee, unavenged . . . it shall  
not be!

Self-murder . . . no, that might be no  
escape,

For thy decree yawns like a Hell between  
Our will and it:—Oh! In this mortal  
world

There is no vindication and no law  
Which can adjudge and execute the doom  
Of that thro' which I suffer.

*Enter ORSINO.*

(*She approaches him solemnly.*) Wel-  
come, Friend!

I have to tell you that, since last we met,  
I have endured a wrong so great and  
strange,

That neither life nor death can give me  
rest.

Ask me not what it is, for there are deeds  
Which have no form, sufferings which  
have no tongue.

*Orsino.* And what is he who has thus injured you?

*Beatrice.* The man they call my father: a dread name.

*Orsino.* It cannot be . . .

*Beatrice.* What it can be, or not, Forbear to think. It is, and it has been; Advise me how it shall not be again.

I thought to die; but a religious awe Restrains me, and the dread lest death itself

Might be no refuge from the consciousness

Of what is yet unexpiated. Oh, speak!

*Orsino.* Accuse him of the deed, and let the law

Avenge thee.

*Beatrice.* Oh, ice-hearted counsellor! If I could find a word that might make known

The crime of my destroyer; and that done,

My tongue should like a knife tear out the secret

Which cankers my heart's core; ay, lay all bare

So that my unpolluted fame should be With vilest gossips a stale mouthèd story;

A mock, a bye-word, an astonishment:— If th' were done, which never shall be done,

Think of the offender's gold, his dreaded hate,

And the strange horror of the accuser's tale,

Baffling belief, and overpowering speech; Scarce whispered, unimaginable, wrapt

In hideous hints . . . Oh, most assured redress!

*Orsino.* You will endure it then?

*Beatrice.* Endure?—*Orsino,*

It seems your counsel is small profit.

(*Turns from him, and speaks half to herself.*) Ay,

All must be suddenly resolved and done. What is this undistinguishable mist

Of thoughts which rise, like shadow after shadow,

Darkening each other?

*Orsino.* Should the offender live?

Triumph in his misdeed? and make, by use,

His crime, whate'er it is, dreadful no doubt,

Thine element; until thou mayest become

Utterly lost; subdued even to the hue Of that which thou permittest?

*Beatrice (to herself).* Mighty death! Thou double-visaged shadow? Only judge!

Rightfullest arbiter!

(*She retires absorbed in thought.*)

*Lucretia.* If the lightning Of God has e'er descended to avenge . . .

*Orsino.* Blaspheme not! His high Providence commits

Its glory on this earth, and their own wrongs

Into the hands of men; if they neglect To punish crime . . .

*Lucretia.* But if one, like this wretch, Should mock, with gold, opinion, law, and power?

If there be no appeal to that which makes

The guiltiest tremble? If because our wrongs,

For that they are unnatural, strange, and monstrous,

Exceed all measure of belief? O God! If, for the very reasons which should make

Redress most swift and sure, our injurer triumphs?

And we, the victims, bear worse punishment

Than that appointed for their torturer?

*Orsino.* Think not But that there is redress where there is

wrong,

So we be bold enough to seize it.

*Lucretia.* How?

If there were any way to make all sure, I know not . . . but I think it might be

good To . . .

*Orsino.* Why, his late outrage to *Beatrice;*

For it is such, as I but faintly guess, As makes remorse dishonor, and leaves her

Only one duty, how she may avenge: You, but one refuge from ills ill endured;

Me, but one counsel . . .

*Lucretia.* For we cannot hope  
That aid, or retribution, or resource  
Will arise thence, where every other one  
Might find them with less need.

(*BEATRICE advances.*)

*Orsino.* Then . . .

*Beatrice.* Peace, Orsino!  
And, honored Lady, while I speak, I  
pray

That you put off, as garments overworn,  
Forbearance and respect, remorse and  
fear,

And all the fit restraints of daily life,  
Which have been borne from childhood,  
but which now

Would be a mockery to my holier plea.  
As I have said, I have endured a wrong,  
Which, though it be expressionless, is  
such

As asks atonement; both for what is  
past,

And lest I be reserved, day after day,  
To load with crimes an overburdened  
soul,

And be . . . what ye can dream not. I  
have prayed

To God, and I have talkt with my own  
heart,

And have unravelled my entangled wil'  
And have at length determined what is  
right.

Art thou my friend, Orsino? False or  
true?

Pledge thy salvation ere I speak.

*Orsino.* I swear

To dedicate my cunning, and my strength,  
My silence, and whatever else is mine,  
To thy commands.

*Lucretia.* You think we should de-  
vise  
His death?

*Beatrice.* And execute what is de-  
vised,  
And suddenly. We must be brief and  
bold.

*Orsino.* And yet most cautious.

*Lucretia.* For the jealous laws  
Would punish us with death and infamy  
For that which it became themselves to  
do.

*Beatrice.* Be cautious as ye may, but  
prompt. Orsino,  
What are the means?

*Orsino.* I know two dull,  
fierce outlaws,  
Who think man's spirit as a worm's, and  
they

Would trample out, for any slight caprice,  
The meanest or the noblest life. This  
mood

Is marketable here in Rome. They sell  
What we now want.

*Lucretia.* To-morrow before dawn,  
Cenci will take us to that lonely rock,  
Petrella, in the Apulian Apennines.  
If he arrive there . . .

*Beatrice.* He must not arrive.

*Orsino.* Will it be dark before you  
reach the tower?

*Lucretia.* The sun will scarce be set.

*Beatrice.* But I remember  
Two miles on this side of the fort, the  
road

Crosses a deep ravine; 't is rough and  
narrow,

And winds with short turns down the  
precipice;

And in its depth there is a mighty rock,  
Which has, from unimaginable years,  
Sustained itself with terror and with  
toil

Over a gulf, and with the agony  
With which it clings seems slowly coming  
down;

Even as a wretched soul hour after hour,  
Clings to the mass of life; yet clinging;  
leans;

And leaning, makes more dark the dread  
abyss

In which it fears to fall: beneath this  
crag

Huge as despair, as if in weariness,  
The melancholy mountain yawns . . .  
below,

You hear but see not an impetuous tor-  
rent

Raging among the caverns, and a bridge  
Crosses the chasm; and high above there  
grow,

With intersecting trunks, from crag to  
crag,

Cedars, and yews, and pines; whose  
tangled hair

Is matted in one solid roof of shade  
By the dark ivy's twine. At noonday  
here

'Tis twilight, and at sunset blackest night.

*Orsino.* Before you reach that bridge make some excuse

For spurring on your mules, or loitering Until . . .

*Beatrice.* What sound is that?

*Lucretia.* Hark! No, it cannot be a servant's step;

It must be Cenci, unexpectedly Returned . . . Make some excuse for being here.

*Beatrice* (*To ORSINO, as she goes out.*)

That step we hear approach must never pass

The bridge of which we spoke.

[*Exeunt LUCRETIA and BEATRICE.*

*Orsino.* What shall I do?

Cenci must find me here, and I must bear

The imperious inquisition of his looks As to what brought me hither: let me mask

Mine own in some inane and vacant smile.

*Enter GIACOMO, in a hurried manner.* How! Have you ventured hither? Know you then

That Cenci is from home?

*Giacomo.* I sought him here; And now must wait till he returns.

*Orsino.* Great God! Weigh you the danger of this rashness?

*Giacomo.* Ay!

Does my destroyer know his danger? We

Are now no more, as once, parent and child,

But man to man; the oppressor to the opprest;

The slanderer to the slandered; foe to foe:

He has cast Nature off, which was his shield,

And Nature casts him off, who is her shame;

And I spurn both. Is it a father's throat

Which I will shake, and say, I ask not gold;

I ask not happy years; nor memories Of tranquil childhood; nor home-sheltered love;

Tho' all these hast thou torn from me, and more;

But only my fair fame; only one hoard Of peace, which I thought hidden from thy hate,

Under the penury heapt on me by thee, Or I will . . . God can understand and

pardon, Why should I speak with man?

*Orsino.* Be calm, dear friend.

*Giacomo.* Well, I will calmly tell you what he did.

This old Francesco Cenci, as you know, Borrowed the dowry of my wife from me, And then denied the loan; and left me so In poverty, the which I sought to mend By holding a poor office in the state.

It had been promist to me, and already I bought new clothing for my ragged

babes, And my wife smiled; and my heart knew repose.

When Cenci's intercession, as I found, Conferred this office on a wretch, whom thus

He paid for vilest service. I returned With this ill news, and we sate sad together

Solacing our despondency with tears Of such affection and unbroken faith As temper life's worst bitterness; when he,

As he is wont, came to upbraid and curse, Mocking our poverty, and telling us Such was God's scourge for disobedient sons.

And then, that I might strike him dumb with shame,

I spoke of my wife's dowry; but he coined

A brief yet specious tale, how I had wasted

The sum in secret riot; and he saw My wife was toucht, and he went smiling forth.

And when I knew the impression he had made,

And felt my wife insult with silent scorn My ardent truth, and look averse and cold,

I went forth too: but soon returned again; Yet not so soon but that my wife had taugt

My children her harsh thoughts, and  
they all cried,  
"Give us clothes, father! Give us better  
food!

What you in one night squander were  
enough  
For months!" I lookt, and saw that  
home was hell.

And to that hell will I return no more  
Until mine enemy has rendered up  
Atonement, or, as he gave life to me  
I will, reversing nature's law . . .

*Orsino.* Trust me,  
The compensation which thou seekest  
here  
Will be denied.

*Giacomo.* Then . . . Are you  
not my friend?  
Did you not hint at the alternative,  
Upon the brink of which you see I stand,  
The other day when we conversed to-  
gether?

My wrongs were then less. That word  
paricide,  
Altho' I am resolved, haunts me like  
fear.

*Orsino.* It must be fear itself, for the  
bare word  
Is hollow mockery. Mark, how wisest  
God

Draws to one point the threads of a just  
doom,  
So sanctifying it: what you devise  
Is, as it were, accomplisht.

*Giacomo.* Is he dead?  
*Orsino.* His grave is ready. Know  
that since we met

Cenci has done an outrage to his daughter.  
*Giacomo.* What outrage?

*Orsino.* That she speaks  
not, but you may

Conceive such half conjectures as I do,  
From her fixt paleness, and the lofty  
grief

Of her stern brow bent on the idle  
air,

And her severe unmodulated voice,  
Drowning both tenderness and dread;  
and last

From this; that whilst her step-mother  
and I,

Bewildered in our horror, talked to-  
gether

With obscure hints; both self-misunder-  
stood

And darkly guessing, stumbling, in our  
talk,

Over the truth, and yet to its revenge,  
She interrupted us, and with a look  
Which told before she spoke it, he must  
die: . . .

*Giacomo.* It is enough. My doubts  
are well appeased;

There is a higher reason for the act  
Than mine; there is a holier judge than  
me,

A more unblamed avenger. Beatrice,  
Who in the gentleness of thy sweet  
youth

Hast never trodden on a worm, or bruised  
A living flower, but thou hast pitied it  
With needless tears! Fair sister, thou  
in whom

Men wondered how such loveliness and  
wisdom

Did not destroy each other! Is there  
made

Ravage of thee? O heart, I ask no  
more

Justification! Shall I wait, Orsino,  
Till he return, and stab him at the door?

*Orsino.* Not so; some accident  
might interpose

To rescue him from what is now most sure;  
And you are unprovided where to fly,  
How to excuse or to conceal. Nay,  
listen:

All is contrived; success is so assured  
That . . .

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Beatrice.* 'T is my brother's voice!  
You know me not?

*Giacomo.* My sister, my lost sister!  
*Beatrice.* Lost indeed!

I see Orsino has talkt with you, and  
That you conjecture things too horrible  
To speak, yet far less than the truth.

Now, stay not,  
He might return: yet kiss me; I shall  
know

That then thou hast consented to his  
death.

Farewell, farewell! Let piety to God,  
Brotherly love, justice and clemency,  
And all things that make tender hardest  
hearts

Make thine hard, brother. Answer  
not . . . farewell.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II. — A MEAN APARTMENT IN  
GIACOMO'S HOUSE. GIACOMO *alone.*

*Giacomo.* 'T is midnight, and Orsino  
comes not yet.

[*Thunder, and the sound of a storm.*]

What! can the everlasting elements  
Feel with a worm like man? If so the  
shaft

Of mercy-wingèd lightning would not  
fall

On stones and trees. My wife and  
children sleep:

They are now living in unmeaning  
dreams:

But I must wake, still doubting if that  
deed

Be just which was most necessary. Oh,  
Thou un replenished lamp! whose narrow  
fire

Is shaken by the wind, and on whose  
edge

Devouring darkness hovers! Thou small  
flame,

Which, as a dying pulse rises and falls,  
Still flickerest up and down, how very  
soon,

Did I not feed thee, wouldst thou fail  
and be

As thou hadst never been! So wastes  
and sinks

Even now, perhaps, the life that kindled  
mine:

But that no power can fill with vital oil  
That broken lamp of flesh. Ha! 't is  
the blood

Which fed these veins that ebbs till all  
is cold:

It is the form that moulded mine that  
sinks

Into the white and yellow spasms of  
death:

It is the soul by which mine was arrayed  
In God's immortal likeness which now  
stands

Naked before Heaven's judgment seat!  
(*A bell strikes.*) One! Two!

The hours crawl on; and when my hairs  
are white,

My son will then perhaps be waiting  
thus,

Tortured between just hate and vain  
remorse;

Chiding the tardy messenger of news  
Like those which I expect. I almost  
wish

He be not dead, although my wrongs  
are great;

Yet . . . 't is Orsino's step . . .

*Enter ORSINO.*

Speak!

*Orsino.*

I am come

To say he has escaped.

*Giacomo.*

Escaped!

*Orsino.*

And safe

Within Petrella. He past by the spot  
Appointed for the deed an hour too soon.

*Giacomo.* Are we the fools of such  
contingencies?

And do we waste in blind misgivings thus  
The hours when we should act? Then  
wind and thunder,

Which seemed to howl his knell, is the  
loud laughter

With which Heaven mocks our weak-  
ness! I henceforth

Will ne'er repent of aught designed or  
done

But my repentance.

*Orsino.*

See, the lamp is out.

*Giacomo.* If no remorse is ours  
when the dim air

Has drank this innocent flame, why  
should we quail

When Cenci's life, that light by which  
ill spirits

See the worst deeds they prompt, shall  
sink for ever?

No, I am hardened.

*Orsino.* Why, what need of this?

Who feared the pale intrusion of remorse  
In a just deed? Altho' our first plan  
failed,

Doubt not but he will soon be laid to  
rest.

But light the lamp; let us not talk i'  
the dark.

*Giacomo (lighting the lamp).* And

yet once quencht I cannot thus  
relume

My father's life: do you not think his  
ghost

Might plead that argument with God?

*Orsino.* Once gone  
You cannot now recall your sister's  
peace;

Your own extinguisht years of youth  
and hope;

Nor your wife's bitter words; nor all  
the taunts

Which, from the prosperous, weak mis-  
fortune takes;

Nor your dead mother; nor . . .

*Giacomo.* O, speak no more!  
I am resolved, although this very hand  
Must quench the life that animated it.

*Orsino.* There is no need of that.

Listen: you know  
Olimpio, the castellan of Petrella  
In old Colonna's time; him whom your  
father

Degraded from his post? And Marzio,  
That desperate wretch, whom he deprived  
last year

Of a reward of blood, well earned and  
due?

*Giacomo.* I knew Olimpio; and they  
say he hated

Old Cenci so, that in his silent rage  
His lips grew white only to see him pass.  
Of Marzio I know nothing.

*Orsino.* Marzio's hate  
Matches Olimpio's. I have sent these  
men,

But in your name, and as at your request,  
To talk with Beatrice and Lucretia.

*Giacomo.* Only to talk?

*Orsino.* The moments  
which even now

Pass onward to to-morrow's midnight  
hour

May memorize their flight with death:  
ere then

They must have talkt, and may perhaps  
have done,

And made an end . . .

*Giacomo.* Listen! What  
sound is that?

*Orsino.* The house-dog moans, and  
the beams crack: nought else.

*Giacomo.* It is my wife complaining  
in her sleep:

I doubt not she is saying bitter things  
Of me; and all my children round her  
dreaming

That I deny them sustenance.

*Orsino.* Whilst he  
Who truly took it from them, and who  
fills

Their hungry rest with bitterness, now  
sleeps

Lapt in bad pleasures, and triumph-  
antly

Mocks thee in visions of successful hate  
Too like the truth of day.

*Giacomo.* If e'er he wakes  
Again, I will not trust to hireling  
hands . . .

*Orsino.* Why, that were well. I must  
be gone; good-night:

When next we meet — may all be done!

*Giacomo.* And all  
Forgotten: Oh, that I had never been!

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

#### ACT IV.

SCENE I. — AN APARTMENT IN THE  
CASTLE OF PETRELLA. *Enter CENCI.*

*Cenci.* She comes not; yet I left her  
even now

Vanquisht and faint. She knows the  
penalty

Of her delay: yet what if threats are  
vain?

Am I not now within Petrella's moat?

Or fear I still the eyes and ears of Rome?

Might I not drag her by the golden hair?

Stamp on her? Keep her sleepless till  
her brain

Be overworn? Tame her with chains  
and famine?

Less would suffice. Yet so to leave un-  
done

What I most seek! No, 't is her stubborn  
will

Which by its own consent shall stoop as  
low

As that which drags it down.

*Enter LUCRETIA.*

Thou loathèd wretch!

Hide thee from my abhorrence; fly, be-  
gone!

Yet stay! Bid Beatrice come hither.



*Lucretia.* Oh,  
 Husband! I pray for thine own wretched  
 sake  
 Heed what thou dost. A man who walks  
 like thee  
 Thro' crimes, and thro' the danger of his  
 crimes,  
 Each hour may stumble o'er a sudden  
 grave.  
 And thou art old; thy hairs are hoary  
 gray;  
 As thou wouldst save thyself from death  
 and hell,  
 Pity thy daughter; give her to some  
 friend  
 In marriage: so that she may tempt thee  
 not  
 To hatred, or worse thoughts, if worse  
 there be.

*Cenci.* What! like her sister who has  
 found a home  
 To mock my hate from with prosperity?  
 Strange ruin shall destroy both her and  
 thee  
 And all that yet remain. My death may  
 be  
 Rapid, her destiny outspeeds it. Go,  
 Bid her come hither, and before my mood  
 Be changed, lest I should drag her by  
 the hair.

*Lucretia.* She sent me to thee, hus-  
 band. At thy presence  
 She fell, as thou dost know, into a trance;  
 And in that trance she heard a voice which  
 said,  
 "Cenci must die! Let him confess him-  
 self!  
 Even now the accusing Angel waits to  
 hear  
 If God, to punish his enormous crimes,  
 Harden his dying heart!"

*Cenci.* Why — such  
 things are . . .  
 No doubt divine revealings may be made.  
 'Tis plain I have been favored from  
 above,  
 For when I curst my sons they died. —  
 Ay . . . so . . .  
 As to the right or wrong that 's talk . . .  
 repentance . . .  
 Repentance is an easy moment's work,  
 And more depends on God than me.  
 Well . . . well . . .

I must give up the greater point, which  
 was  
 To poison and corrupt her soul.

[*A pause; LUCRETIA approaches anx-  
 iously, and then shrinks back as  
 he speaks.*

One, two;  
 Ay . . . Rocco and Cristofano my curse  
 Strangled; and Giacomo, I think, will  
 find  
 Life a worse Hell than that beyond the  
 grave:  
 Beatrice shall, if there be skill in hate,  
 Die in despair, blaspheming: to Ber-  
 nardo,  
 He is so innocent, I will bequeath  
 The memory of these deeds, and make  
 his youth  
 The sepulchre of hope, where evil  
 thoughts  
 Shall grow like weeds on a neglected  
 tomb.  
 When all is done, out in the wide Cam-  
 pagna,  
 I will pile up my silver and my gold;  
 My costly robes, paintings, and tapes-  
 tries;  
 My parchments and all records of my  
 wealth,  
 And make a bonfire in my joy, and leave  
 Of my possessions nothing but my name;  
 Which shall be an inheritance to strip  
 Its wearer bare as infamy. That done,  
 My soul, which is a scourge, will I re-  
 sign  
 Into the hands of him who wielded it;  
 Be it for its own punishment or theirs,  
 He will not ask it of me till the lash  
 Be broken in its last and deepest wound;  
 Until its hate be all inflicted. Yet,  
 Lest death outspeed my purpose, let me  
 make  
 Short work and sure . . . [ *Going.*  
*Lucretia.* (*Stops him.*) Oh, stay!  
 It was a feint:  
 She had no vision, and she heard no  
 voice.  
 I said it but to awe thee.  
*Cenci.* That is well.  
 Vile palterer with the sacred truth of  
 God,  
 Be thy soul choked with that blaspheming  
 lie!

For Beatrice worse terrors are in store  
To bend her to my will.

*Lucretia.* Oh! to what will?  
What cruel sufferings more than she has  
known  
Canst thou inflict?

*Cenci.* Andrea! Go call my daughter,  
And if she comes not tell her that I  
come.

What sufferings? I will drag her, step  
by step,

Thro' infamies unheard of among men:  
She shall stand shelterless in the broad  
noon

Of public scorn, for acts blazoned  
abroad,

One among which shall be . . . What?  
Canst thou guess?

She shall become (for what she most  
abhors

Shall have a fascination to entrap  
Her loathing will) to her own conscious  
self

All she appears to others; and when dead,  
As she shall die unshrived and unfor-  
given,

A rebel to her father and her God,  
Her corpse shall be abandoned to the  
hounds;

Her name shall be the terror of the  
earth;

Her spirit shall approach the throne of  
God

Plague-spotted with my curses. I will  
make

Body and soul a monstrous lump of ruin.  
*Enter ANDREA.*

*Andrea.* The Lady Beatrice . . .

*Cenci.* Speak, pale  
slave! What

Said she?

*Andrea.* My Lord, 't was what she  
lookt; she said:

"Go tell my father that I see the gulf  
Of Hell between us two, which he may  
pass,

I will not." [*Exit ANDREA.*

*Cenci.* Go thou quick, Lucretia,  
Tell her to come; yet let her understand  
Her coming is consent: and say, more-  
over,

That if she come not I will curse her.

[*Exit LUCRETIA.*

Ha!

With what but with a father's curse doth  
God

Panic-strike armèd victory, and make  
pale

Cities in their prosperity? The world's  
Father

Must grant a parent's prayer against his  
child

Be he who asks even what men call me.  
Will not the deaths of her rebellious  
brothers

Awe her before I speak? For I on them  
Did imprecate quick ruin, and it came.

*Enter LUCRETIA.*

Well; what? Speak, wretch!

*Lucretia.* She said,  
"I cannot come;

Go tell my father that I see a torrent  
Of his own blood raging between us."

*Cenci (kneeling).* God!

Hear me! If this most specious mass  
of flesh,

Which thou hast made my daughter;  
this my blood,

This particle of my divided being;  
Or rather, this my bane and my disease,  
Whose sight infects and poisons me;  
this devil

Which sprung from me as from a hell,  
was meant

To aught good use; if her bright loveli-  
ness

Was kindled to illumine this dark  
world;

If nurst by thy selectest dew of love  
Such virtues blossom in her as should  
make

The peace of life, I pray thee for my  
sake,

As thou the common God and Father  
art

Of her, and me, and all; reverse that  
doom!

Earth, in the name of God, let her food  
be

Poison, until she be encrusted round  
With leprous stains! Heaven, rain upon  
her head

The blistering drops of the Maremma's  
dew,

Till she be speckled like a toad; parch  
up

Those love-enkindled lips, warp those  
fine limbs

To loathèd lameness! All-beholding  
sun,

Strike in thine envy those life-darting  
eyes

With thine own blinding beams!

*Lucretia.* Peace! Peace!

For thine own sake unsay those dread-  
ful words.

When high God grants he punishes such  
prayers.

*Cenci* (*leaping up, and throwing his  
right hand towards Heaven*). He  
does his will, I mine! This in  
addition,

That if she have a child . . .

*Lucretia.* Horrible thought!

*Cenci.* That if she ever have a child;  
and thou,

Quick Nature! I adjure thee by thy  
God,

That thou be fruitful in her, and in-  
crease

And multiply, fulfilling his command,

And my deep imprecation! May it be

A hideous likeness of herself, that as  
From a distorting mirror, she may see

Her image mixt with what she most  
abhors,

Smiling upon her from her nursing  
breast.

And that the child may from its infancy  
Grow, day by day, more wicked and  
deformed,

Turning her mother's love to misery:

And that both she and it may live  
until

It shall repay her care and pain with  
hate,

Or what may else be more unnatural.

So he may hunt her through the clamor-  
ous scoffs

Of the loud world to a dishonored  
grave.

Shall I revoke this curse? Go, bid her  
come,

Before my words are chronicled in  
Heaven.

[*Exit* LUCRETIA.]

I do not feel as if I were a man,  
But like a fiend appointed to chastise

The offences of some unremembered  
world.

My blood is running up and down my  
veins;

A fearful pleasure makes it prick and  
tingle:

I feel a giddy sickness of strange awe;

My heart is beating with an expectation  
Of horrid joy.

*Enter* LUCRETIA.

What? Speak!

*Lucretia.* She bids thee curse;  
And if thy curses, as they cannot do,

Could kill her soul . . .

*Cenci.* She would not  
come. 'T is well,

I can do both: first take what I demand,  
And then extort concession. To thy  
chamber!

Fly ere I spurn thee: and beware this  
night

That thou cross not my footsteps. It  
were safer

To come between the tiger and his prey.

[*Exit* LUCRETIA.]

It must be late; mine eyes grow weary  
dim

With unaccustomed heaviness of sleep.

Conscience! Oh, thou most insolent of  
lies!

They say that sleep, that healing dew of  
Heaven,

Steeps not in balm the foldings of the  
brain

Which thinks thee an impostor. I will  
go

First to belie thee with an hour of rest,  
Which will be deep and calm, I feel:

and then . . .

O, multitudinous Hell, the fiends will  
shake

Thine arches with the laughter of their  
joy!

There shall be lamentation heard in  
Heaven

As o'er an angel fallen; and upon  
Earth

All good shall droop and sicken, and ill  
things

Shall with a spirit of unnatural life

Stir and be quickened . . . even as I  
am now.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II. — BEFORE THE CASTLE OF  
PETRELLA. *Enter BEATRICE and  
LUCRETIA above on the Ramparts.*

*Beatrice.* They come not yet.  
*Lucretia.* 'T is scarce midnight.  
*Beatrice.* How slow  
Behind the course of thought, even sick  
with speed,  
Lags leaden-footed time!

*Lucretia.* The minutes pass . . .  
If he should wake before the deed is  
done?

*Beatrice.* O mother! He must never  
wake again.

What thou hast said persuades me that  
our act

Will but dislodge a spirit of deep hell  
Out of a human form.

*Lucretia.* 'T is true he spoke  
Of death and judgment with strange  
confidence

For one so wicked; as a man believing  
In God, yet recking not of good or ill.  
And yet to die without confession! . . .

*Beatrice.* Oh!  
Believe that Heaven is merciful and  
just,

And will not add our dread necessity  
To the amount of his offences.

*Enter OLIMPIO and MARZIO, below.*

*Lucretia.* See,  
They come.

*Beatrice.* All mortal things must  
hasten thus  
To their dark end. Let us go down.

[*Exeunt LUCRETIA and BEA-  
TRICE from above.*]

*Olimpio.* How feel you to this work?  
*Marzio.* As one who thinks

A thousand crowns excellent market  
price  
For an old murderer's life. Your cheeks  
are pale.

*Olimpio.* It is the white reflection of  
your own,  
Which you call pale.

*Marzio.* Is that their natural hue?

*Olimpio.* Or 't is my hate and the  
deferred desire  
To wreak it, which extinguishes their  
blood.

*Marzio.* You are inclined then to  
this business?

*Olimpio.* Ay.  
If one should bribe me with a thousand  
crowns

To kill a serpent which had stung my  
child,

I could not be more willing.

*Enter BEATRICE and LUCRETIA, below.*  
Noble ladies!

*Beatrice.* Are ye resolved?

*Olimpio.* Is he asleep?

*Marzio.* Is all  
Quiet?

*Lucretia.* I mixt an opiate with  
his drink:

He sleeps so soundly . . .

*Beatrice.* That his death will be  
But as a change of sin-chastising dreams,  
A dark continuance of the Hell within  
him,

Which God extinguish! But ye are  
resolved?

Ye know it is a high and holy deed?

*Olimpio.* We are resolved.

*Marzio.* As to the how this act  
Be warranted it rests with you.

*Beatrice.* Well, follow!

*Olimpio.* Hush! Hark! What noise  
is that?

*Marzio.* Ha! some one comes!

*Beatrice.* Ye conscience-stricken  
cravens, rock to rest

Your baby hearts. It is the iron gate,  
Which ye left open, swinging to the wind,  
That enters whistling as in scorn. Come,  
follow!

And be your steps like mine, light,  
quick and bold.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — AN APARTMENT IN THE  
CASTLE *Enter BEATRICE and  
LUCRETIA.*

*Lucretia.* They are about it now.

*Beatrice.* Nay, it is done.

*Lucretia.* I have not heard him groan.

*Beatrice.* He will not groan.

*Lucretia.* What sound is that?

*Beatrice.* List! 't is the  
tread of feet

About his bed.

*Lucretia.* My God!  
 If he be now a cold stiff corpse . . .  
*Beatrice.* O, fear not  
 What may be done, but what is left  
 undone:  
 The act seals all.  
*Enter OLIMPPIO and MARZIO.*  
 Is it accomplished?  
*Marzio.* What?  
*Olimpio.* Did you not call?  
*Beatrice.* When?  
*Olimpio.* Now.  
*Beatrice.* I ask if all is over?  
*Olimpio.* We dare not kill an old  
 and sleeping man;  
 His thin gray hair, his stern and reverent  
 brow,  
 His veined hands crosst on his heaving  
 breast,  
 And the calm innocent sleep in which  
 he lay,  
 Quelled me. Indeed, indeed, I cannot  
 do it.  
*Marzio.* But I was bolder; for I chid  
 Olimpio,  
 And bade him bear his wrongs to his  
 own grave  
 And leave me the reward. And now  
 my knife  
 Toucht the loose wrinkled throat, when  
 the old man  
 Stirred in his sleep, and said, "God!  
 hear, O, hear,  
 A father's curse! What, art thou not  
 our father?"  
 And then he laught. I knew it was  
 the ghost  
 Of my dead father speaking through his  
 lips,  
 And could not kill him.  
*Beatrice.* Miserable slaves!  
 Where, if ye dare not kill a sleeping man,  
 Found ye the boldness to return to me  
 With such a deed undone? Base pal-  
 terers!  
 Cowards and traitors! Why, the very  
 conscience  
 Which ye would sell for gold and for  
 revenge  
 Is an equivocation: it sleeps over  
 A thousand daily acts disgracing men;  
 And when a deed where mercy insults  
 Heaven . . .

Why do I talk?  
 [*Snatching a dagger from one of them  
 and raising it.*  
 Hadst thou a tongue to say,  
 She murdered her own father, I must  
 do it!  
 But never dream ye shall outlive him  
 long!  
*Olimpio.* Stop, for God's sake!  
*Marzio.* I will go back and  
 kill him.  
*Olimpio.* Give me the weapon, we  
 must do thy will.  
*Beatrice.* Take it! Depart! Return!  
 [*Exeunt OLIMPPIO and MARZIO.*  
 How pale thou art!  
 We do but that which 't were a deadly  
 crime  
 To leave undone.  
*Lucretia.* Would it were done!  
*Beatrice.* Even whilst  
 That doubt is passing through your  
 mind, the world  
 Is conscious of a change. Darkness  
 and Hell  
 Have swallowed up the vapor they sent  
 forth  
 To blacken the sweet light of life. My  
 breath  
 Comes, methinks, lighter, and the jellied  
 blood  
 Runs freely thro' my veins. Hark!  
*Enter OLIMPPIO and MARZIO.*  
 He is . . .  
*Olimpio.* Dead!  
*Marzio.* We strangled him that  
 there might be no blood;  
 And then we threw his heavy corpse i'  
 the garden  
 Under the balcony; 't will seem it fell.  
*Beatrice (giving them a bag of coin).*  
 Here, take this gold, and hasten  
 to your homes.  
 And, Marzio, because thou wast only awed  
 By that which made me tremble, wear  
 thou this!  
 [*Clothes him in a rich mantle.*  
 It was the mantle which my grandfather  
 Wore in his high prosperity, and men  
 Envied his state: so may they envy  
 thine.  
 Thou wert a weapon in the hand of  
 God

To a just use. Live long and thrive!  
And, mark,  
If thou hast crimes, repent: this deed  
is none.

[*A horn is sounded.*]

*Lucretia.* Hark, 't is the castle horn;  
my God! it sounds

Like the last trump.

*Beatrice.* Some tedious guest  
is coming.

*Lucretia.* The drawbridge is let  
down; there is a tramp

Of horses in the court; fly, hide your-  
selves!

[*Exeunt OLIMPIO and MARZIO.*]

*Beatrice.* Let us retire to counterfeit  
deep rest;

I scarcely need to counterfeit it now:  
The spirit which doth reign within these  
limbs

Seems strangely undisturbed. I could  
even sleep

Fearless and calm: all ill is surely past.  
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—ANOTHER APARTMENT  
IN THE CASTLE. *Enter on one side  
the LEGATE SAVELLA, introduced  
by a Servant, and on the other  
LUCRETIA and BERNARDO.*

*Savella.* Lady, my duty to his Holiness  
Be my excuse that thus unseasonably  
I break upon your rest. I must speak  
with

Count Cenci; doth he sleep?

*Lucretia (in a hurried and confused  
manner).* I think he sleeps;  
Yet wake him not, I pray, spare me  
awhile,

He is a wicked and a wrathful man;  
Should he be roused out of his sleep  
to-night,

Which is, I know, a hell of angry  
dreams,

It were not well; indeed it were not well.  
Wait-till day break . . . (*aside*) O, I am  
deadly sick!

*Savella.* I grieve thus to distress you,  
but the Count  
Must answer charges of the gravest  
import,  
And suddenly; such my commission is.

*Lucretia (with increased agitation).*

I dare not rouse him: I know  
none who dare . . .

'T were perilous; . . . you might as  
safely waken

A serpent; or a corpse in which some  
fiend

Were laid to sleep.

*Savella.* Lady, my moments here  
Are counted. I must rouse him from  
his sleep,

Since none else dare.

*Lucretia (aside).* O, terror! O, de-  
spair!

(*To Bernardo*) Bernardo, conduct you  
the Lord Legate to

Your father's chamber.

[*Exeunt SAVELLA and BERNARDO.*]

*Enter BEATRICE.*

*Beatrice.* 'T is a messenger  
Come to arrest the culprit who now  
stands

Before the throne of unappealable God.  
Both Earth and Heaven, consenting

arbiters,  
Acquit our deed.

*Lucretia.* Oh, agony of fear!

Would that he yet might live! Even  
now I heard

The Legate's followers whisper as they  
past

They had a warrant for his instant death.  
All was prepared by unforbidden means  
Which we must pay so dearly, having  
done.

Even now they search the tower, and  
find the body;

Now they suspect the truth; now they  
consult

Before they come to tax us with the  
fact;

O, horrible, 't is all discovered!

*Beatrice.* Mother,  
What is done wisely, is done well. Be  
bold

As thou art just. 'T is like a truant  
child

To fear that others know what thou hast  
done,

Even from thine own strong conscious-  
ness, and thus

Write on unsteady eyes and altered  
cheeks

All thou wouldst hide. Be faithful to thyself,  
 And fear no other witness but thy fear.  
 For if, as cannot be, some circumstance  
 Should rise in accusation, we can blind  
 Suspicion with such cheap astonishment,  
 Or overbear it with such guiltless pride,  
 As murderers cannot feign. The deed  
 is done,  
 And what may follow now regards not  
 me.  
 I am as universal as the light;  
 Free as the earth-surrounding air; as firm  
 As the world's centre. Consequence,  
 to me,  
 Is as the wind which strikes the solid  
 rock  
 But shakes it not.

[*A cry within and tumult.*

*Voices.* Murder! Murder! Murder!

*Enter* BERNARDO and SAVELLA.

*Savella* (*to his followers*). Go search  
 the castle round; sound the  
 alarm;

Look to the gates that none escape!

*Beatrice.* What now?

*Bernardo.* I know not what to  
 say . . . my father's dead.

*Beatrice.* How; dead! he only sleeps;  
 you mistake, brother.

His sleep is very calm, very like death;  
 'Tis wonderful how well a tyrant  
 sleeps.

He is not dead?

*Bernardo.* Dead; murdered.

*Lucretia* (*with extreme agitation*).

Oh no, no,

He is not murdered though he may be  
 dead;

I have alone the keys of those apartments.

*Savella.* Ha! Is it so?

*Beatrice.* My Lord, I  
 pray excuse us;

We will retire; my mother is not well:  
 She seems quite overcome with this  
 strange horror.

[*Exeunt* LUCRETIA and BEATRICE.]

*Savella.* Can you suspect who may  
 have murdered him?

*Bernardo.* I know not what to  
 think.

*Savella.* Can you name any

Who had an interest in his death?

*Bernardo.*

Alas!

I can name none who had not, and those  
 most

Who most lament that such a deed is  
 done;

My mother, and my sister, and myself.

*Savella.* 'T is strange! There were  
 clear marks of violence.

I found the old man's body in the moon-  
 light

Hanging beneath the window of his  
 chamber,

Among the branches of a pine: he  
 could not

Have fallen there, for all his limbs lay  
 heapt

And effortless; 't is true there was no  
 blood . . .

Favor me, Sir; it much imports your  
 house

That all should be made clear; to tell  
 the ladies

That I request their presence.

[*Exit* BERNARDO.]

*Enter* GUARDS bringing in MARZIO.

*Guard.* We have one.

*Officer.* My Lord, we found this  
 ruffian and another

Lurking among the rocks; there is no  
 doubt

But that they are the murderers of Count  
 Cenci:

Each had a bag of coin; this fellow wore  
 A gold-inwoven robe, which shining

bright  
 Under the dark rocks to the glimmering  
 moon

Betrayed them to our notice: the other  
 fell

Desperately fighting.

*Savella.* What does he confess?

*Officer.* He keeps firm silence; but  
 these lines found on him

May speak.

*Savella.* Their language is at least  
 sincere. [*Reads.*

“TO THE LADY BEATRICE.— That  
 the atonement of what my nature sickens  
 to conjecture may soon arrive, I send  
 thee, at thy brother's desire, those who  
 will speak and do more than I dare  
 write. . . . Thy devoted servant,

“ORSINO.”

*Enter* LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, and  
BERNARDO.

Knowest thou this writing, Lady?  
*Beatrice.* No.  
*Savella.* Nor thou?  
*Lucretia.* (*Her conduct throughout the scene is marked by extreme agitation.*) Where was it found?  
What is it? It should be  
Orsino's hand! It speaks of that strange  
horror  
Which never yet found utterance, but  
which made  
Between that hapless child and her dead  
father  
A gulf of obscure hatred.  
*Savella.* Is it so?  
Is it true, Lady, that thy father did  
Such outrages as to awaken in the  
Unfilial hate?  
*Beatrice.* Not hate, 't was more than  
hate:  
This is most true, yet wherefore question  
me?  
*Savella.* There is a deed demanding  
question done;  
Thou hast a secret which will answer  
not.  
*Beatrice.* What sayest? My Lord,  
your words are bold and rash.  
*Savella.* I do arrest all present in  
the name  
Of the Pope's Holiness. You must to  
Rome.  
*Lucretia.* O, not to Rome! Indeed  
we are not guilty.  
*Beatrice.* Guilty! Who dares talk  
of guilt? My Lord,  
I am more innocent of parricide  
Than is a child born fatherless. . . .  
Dear mother,  
Your gentleness and patience are no  
shield  
For this keen-judging world, this two-  
edged lie,  
Which seems, but is not. What! will  
human laws,  
Rather will ye who are their ministers,  
Bar all access to retribution first,  
And then, when Heaven doth interpose  
to do  
What ye neglect, arming familiar things  
To the redress of an unwonted crime,

Make ye the victims who demanded it  
Culprits? 'T is ye are culprits! That  
poor wretch  
Who stands so pale, and trembling, and  
amazed,  
If it be true he murdered Cenci, was  
A sword in the right hand of justest  
God.  
Wherefore should I have wielded it?  
Unless  
The crimes which mortal tongue dare  
never name  
God therefore scruples to avenge.  
*Savella.* You own  
That you desired his death?  
*Beatrice.* It would have been  
A crime no less than his, if for one  
moment  
That fierce desire had faded in my heart.  
'T is true I did believe, and hope, and  
pray,  
Ay, I even knew . . . for God is wise  
and just,  
That some strange sudden death hung  
over him.  
'T is true that this did happen, and  
most true  
There was no other rest for me on earth,  
No other hope in Heaven . . . now what  
of this?  
*Savella.* Strange thoughts beget  
strange deeds; and here are  
both:  
I judge thee not.  
*Beatrice.* And yet, if you arrest  
me,  
You are the judge and executioner  
Of that which is the life of life: the  
breath  
Of accusation kills an innocent name,  
And leaves for lame acquittal the poor  
life  
Which is a mask without it. 'T is most  
false  
That I am guilty of foul parricide;  
Although I must rejoice, for justest  
cause,  
That other hands have sent my father's  
soul  
To ask the mercy he denied to me.  
Now leave us free; stain not a noble  
house  
With vague surmises of rejected crime;



Add to our sufferings and your own neglect  
 No heavier sum: let them have been enough:  
 Leave us the wreck we have.  
*Savella.* I dare not, Lady.  
 I pray that you prepare yourselves for Rome:  
 There the Pope's further pleasure will be known.  
*Lucretia.* O, not to Rome! O, take us not to Rome!  
*Beatrice.* Why not to Rome, dear mother? There as here  
 Our innocence is as an armèd heel  
 To trample accusation. God is there  
 As here, and with his shadow ever clothes  
 The innocent, the injured and the weak;  
 And such are we. Cheer up, dear Lady, lean  
 On me; collect your wandering thoughts.  
 My Lord,  
 As soon as you have taken some refreshment,  
 And had all such examinations made  
 Upon the spot, as may be necessary  
 To the full understanding of this matter,  
 We shall be ready. Mother; will you come?  
*Lucretia.* Ha! they will bind us to the rack, and wrest  
 Self-accusation from our agony!  
 Will Giacomo be there? Orsino? Marzio?  
 All present; all confronted; all demanding  
 Each from the other's countenance the thing  
 Which is in every heart! O, misery!  
 [*She faints, and is borne out.*]  
*Savella.* She faints: an ill appearance this.  
*Beatrice.* My Lord,  
 She knows not yet the uses of the world.  
 She fears that power is as a beast which grasps  
 And loosens not: a snake whose look transmutes  
 All things to guilt which is its nutriment.  
 She cannot know how well the supine slaves

Of blind authority read the truth of things  
 When written on a brow of guilelessness:  
 She sees not yet triumphant Innocence  
 Stand at the judgment-seat of mortal man,  
 A judge and an accuser of the wrong  
 Which drags it there. Prepare yourself, my Lord;  
 Our suite will join yours in the court below. [*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—AN APARTMENT IN ORSINO'S PALACE. *Enter ORSINO and GIACOMO.*

*Giacomo.* Do evil deeds thus quickly come to end?  
 O, that the vain remorse which must chastise  
 Crimes done, had but as loud a voice to warn  
 As its keen sting is mortal to avenge!  
 O, that the hour when present had cast off  
 The mantle of its mystery, and shown  
 The ghastly form with which it now returns  
 When its scared game is roused, cheering the hounds  
 Of conscience to their prey! Alas! Alas!  
 It was a wicked thought, a piteous deed,  
 To kill an old and hoary-headed father.  
*Orsino.* It has turned out unluckily, in truth.  
*Giacomo.* To violate the sacred doors of sleep;  
 To cheat kind nature of the placid death  
 Which she prepares for overwearied age;  
 To drag from Heaven an unrepentant soul  
 Which might have quencht in reconciling prayers  
 A life of burning crimes . . .  
*Orsino.* You cannot say  
 I urged you to the deed.  
*Giacomo.* O, had I never  
 Found in thy smooth and ready countenance

The mirror of my darkest thoughts;  
hadst thou  
Never with hints and questions made me  
look

Upon the monster of my thought, until  
It grew familiar to desire . . .

*Orsino.* 'T is thus  
Men cast the blame of their unprosperous  
acts

Upon the abettors of their own resolve;  
Or anything but their weak, guilty selves.  
And yet, confess the truth, it is the peril  
In which you stand that gives you this  
pale sickness

Of penitence; confess 't is fear disguised  
From its own shame that takes the man-  
tle now

Of thin remorse. What if we yet were  
safe?

*Giacomo.* How can that be? Already  
Beatrice,

Lucretia and the murderer are in prison.  
I doubt not officers are, whilst we speak,  
Sent to arrest us.

*Orsino.* I have all prepared  
For instant flight. We can escape even  
now,

So we take fleet occasion by the hair.

*Giacomo.* Rather expire in tortures,  
as I may.

What! will you cast by self-accusing  
flight

Assured conviction upon Beatrice?

She, who alone in this unnatural work,  
Stands like God's angel ministered upon  
By fiends; avenging such a nameless  
wrong

As turns black parricide to piety;

Whilst we for basest ends . . . I fear,  
*Orsino,*

While I consider all your words and  
looks,

Comparing them with your proposal now,  
That you must be a villain. For what  
end

Could you engage in such a perilous  
crime,

Training me on with hints, and signs,  
and smiles,

Even to this gulf? Thou art no liar? No,  
Thou art a lie! Traitor and murderer!  
Coward and slave! But, no, defend  
thyself;

[*Drawing.*

Let the sword speak what the indignant  
tongue

Disdains to brand thee with.

*Orsino.* Put up your weapon.

Is it the desperation of your fear  
Makes you thus rash and sudden with a  
friend,

Now ruined for your sake? If honest  
anger

Have moved you, know that what I just  
proposed

Was but to try you. As for me, I think,  
Thankless affection led me to this point,  
From which, if my firm temper could  
repent,

I cannot now recede. Even whilst we  
speak

The ministers of justice wait below:  
They grant me these brief moments.

Now if you  
Have any word of melancholy comfort  
To speak to your pale wife, 't were best  
to pass

Out at the postern, and avoid them so.

*Giacomo.* O, generous friend! How  
canst thou pardon me?

Would that my life could purchase thine!  
*Orsino.* That wish

Now comes a day too late. Haste; fare  
thee well!

Hear'st thou not steps along the corridor!  
[*Exit GIACOMO.*

I'm sorry for it; but the guards are wait-  
ing

At his own gate, and such was my con-  
trivance

That I might rid me both of him and  
them.

I thought to act a solemn comedy  
Upon the painted scene of this new  
world,

And to attain my own peculiar ends  
By some such plot of mingled good and  
ill

As others weave; but there arose a  
Power

Which graspt and snapt the threads of  
my device

And turned it to a net of ruin . . . Ha!  
[*A shout is heard.*

Is that my name I hear proclaimed  
abroad?

But I will pass, wrapt in a vile disguise;

Rags on my back, and a false innocence  
Upon my face, thro' the misdeeming  
crowd

Which judges by what seems. 'T is easy  
then

For a new name and for a country new,  
And a new life, fashioned on old desires,  
To change the honors of abandoned  
Rome.

And these must be the masks of that  
within,

Which must remain unaltered . . . Oh,  
I fear

That what is past will never let me rest!  
Why, when none else is conscious, but  
myself,

Of my misdeeds, should my own heart's  
contempt

Trouble me? Have I not the power to  
fly

My own reproaches? Shall I be the  
slave

Of . . . what? A word? which those  
of this false world

Employ against each other, not them-  
selves;

As men wear daggers not for self-offence.  
But if I am mistaken, where shall I  
Find the disguise to hide me from myself,  
As now I skulk from every other eye?

[Exit.

SCENE II. — A HALL OF JUSTICE.

CAMILLO, JUDGES, *etc.*, are discovered  
seated; MARZIO is led in.

*First Judge.* Accused, do you persist  
in your denial?

I ask you, are you innocent, or guilty?  
I demand who were the participators  
In your offence? Speak truth and the  
whole truth.

*Marzio.* My God! I did not kill  
him; I know nothing;

Olimpio sold the robe to me from which  
You would infer my guilt.

*Second Judge.* Away with him!

*First Judge.* Dare you, with lips yet  
white from the rack's kiss

Speak false? Is it so soft a questioner,  
That you would bandy lovers' talk with it  
Till it wind out your life and soul?  
Away!

*Marzio.* Spare me! O, spare! I  
will confess.

*First Judge.* Then speak.

*Marzio.* I strangled him in his sleep.

*First Judge.* Who urged you to it?

*Marzio.* His own son, Giacomo, and  
the young prelate

Orsino sent me to Petrella; there

The ladies Beatrice and Lucretia

Tempted me with a thousand crowns,  
and I

And my companion forthwith murdered  
him.

Now let me die.

*First Judge.* This sounds as bad as  
truth. Guards, there,

Lead forth the prisoner!

*Enter LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, and  
GIACOMO, guarded.*

Look upon this man;

When did you see him last?

*Beatrice.* We never saw him.

*Marzio.* You know me too well, Lady  
Beatrice.

*Beatrice.* I know thee! How?  
where? when?

*Marzio.* You know 't was I  
Whom you did urge with menaces and  
bribes

To kill your father. When the thing was  
done

You clothed me in a robe of woven gold  
And bade me thrive: how I have thriven,  
you see.

You, my Lord Giacomo, Lady Lucretia,  
You know that what I speak is true.

[*BEATRICE advances towards him; he  
covers his face, and shrinks back.*

O, dart

The terrible resentment of those eyes  
On the dead earth! Turn them away  
from me!

They wound: 't was torture forced the  
truth. My Lords,

Having said this let me be led to death.

*Beatrice.* Poor wretch, I pity thee:  
yet stay awhile.

*Camillo.* Guards, lead him not  
away.

*Beatrice.* Cardinal Camillo,  
You have a good repute for gentleness  
And wisdom: can it be that you sit here  
To countenance a wicked farce like this?

When some obscure and trembling slave  
is dragged  
From sufferings which might shake the  
sternest heart

And bade to answer, not as he believes,  
But as those may suspect or do desire  
Whose questions thence suggest their own  
reply:

And that in peril of such hideous tor-  
ments

As merciful God spares even the damned.  
Speak now

The thing you surely know, which is that  
you,

If your fine frame were stretched upon  
that wheel,

And you were told: "Confess that you  
did poison

Your little nephew; that fair blue-eyed  
child

Who was the lodestar of your life: " —  
and tho'

All see, since his most swift and piteous  
death,

That day and night, and heaven and earth,  
and time

And all the things hoped for or done  
therein

Are changed to you, thro' your exceeding  
grief,

Yet you would say, "I confess any-  
thing:"

And beg from your tormentors, like that  
slave,

The refuge of dishonorable death.

I pray thee, Cardinal, that thou assert  
My innocence.

*Carillo (much moved).* What shall  
we think, my Lords?

Shame on these tears! I thought the  
heart was frozen

Which is their fountain. I would pledge  
my soul

That she is guiltless.

*Judge.* Yet she must be tortured.

*Camillo.* I would as soon have tor-  
tured mine own nephew

(If he now lived he would be just her  
age;

His hair, too, was her color, and his eyes  
Like hers in shape, but blue and not so  
deep)

As that most perfect image of God's love

That ever came sorrowing upon the earth.  
She is as pure as speechless infancy!

*Judge.* Well, be her purity on your  
head, my Lord,

If you forbid the rack. His Holiness  
Enjoined us to pursue this monstrous  
crime

By the severest forms of law; nay even  
To stretch a point against the criminals.  
The prisoners stand accused of parricide  
Upon such evidence as justifies  
Torture.

*Beatrice.* What evidence? This  
man's?

*Judge.* Even so.

*Beatrice (to Marzio).* Come near.

And who art thou thus chosen forth  
Out of the multitude of living men  
To kill the innocent?

*Marzio.* I am Marzio,  
Thy father's vassal.

*Beatrice.* Fix thine eyes on mine;  
Answer to what I ask.

[Turning to the Judges.

I prithee marry,

His countenance: unlike bold calumny  
Which sometimes dares not speak the  
thing it looks,

He dares not look the thing he speaks,  
but bends

His gaze on the blind earth.

(To MARZIO.) What! wilt thou say  
That I did murder my own father?

*Marzio.* Oh!

Spare me! My brain swims round . . .

I cannot speak . . .

It was that horrid torture forced the truth.  
Take me away! Let her not look on  
me!

I am a guilty miserable wretch;  
I have said all I know; now, let me die!

*Beatrice.* My Lords, if by my nature  
I had been

So stern, as to have planned the crime  
alleged,

Which your suspicions dictate to this  
slave,

And the rack makes him utter, do you  
think

I should have left this two-edged instru-  
ment

Of my misdeed; this man, this bloody  
knife

With my own name engraven on the  
heft,  
Lying sheathed amid a world of foes,  
For my own death? That with such  
horrible need  
For deepest silence, I should have neglected  
So trivial a precaution, as the making  
His tomb the keeper of a secret written  
On a thief's memory? What is his poor  
life?  
What are a thousand lives? A parricide  
Had trampled them like dust; and, see,  
he lives!  
(*Turning to MARZIO.*) And thou . . .  
*Marzio.* Oh, spare me!  
Speak to me no more!  
That stern yet piteous look, those solemn  
tones,  
Wound worse than torture.  
(*To the Judges.*) I have told it all;  
For pity's sake lead me away to death.  
*Camillo.* Guards, lead him nearer  
the Lady Beatrice,  
He shrinks from her regard like autumn's  
leaf  
From the keen breath of the serenest  
north.  
*Beatrice.* O thou who tremblest on  
the giddy verge  
Of life and death, pause ere thou answer-  
est me;  
So mayst thou answer God with less dis-  
may:  
What evil have we done thee? I, alas!  
Have lived but on this earth a few sad  
years  
And so my lot was ordered, that a father  
First turned the moments of awakening  
life  
To drops, each poisoning youth's sweet  
hope; and then  
Stabbed with one blow my everlasting  
soul;  
And my untainted fame; and even that  
peace  
Which sleeps within the core of the  
heart's heart;  
But the wound was not mortal; so my  
hate  
Became the only worship I could lift  
To our great Father, who in pity and  
love,

Armed thee, as thou dost say, to cut him  
off;  
And thus his wrong becomes my accusa-  
tion;  
And art thou the accuser? If thou  
hopest  
Mercy in heaven, show justice upon  
earth:  
Worse than a bloody hand is a hard  
heart.  
If thou hast done murders, made thy-  
life's path  
Over the trampled laws of God and man,  
Rush not before thy Judge, and say:  
"My maker,  
I have done this and more; for there  
was one  
Who was most pure and innocent on  
earth;  
And because she endured what never  
any  
Guilty or innocent endured before:  
Because her wrongs could not be told,  
not thought;  
Because thy hand at length did rescue  
her;  
I with my words killed her and all her  
kin."  
Think, I adjure you, what it is to slay  
The reverence living in the minds of  
men  
Towards our ancient house, and stainless  
fame!  
Think what it is to strangle infant pity,  
Cradled in the belief of guileless looks,  
Till it become a crime to suffer. Think  
What 't is to blot with infamy and blood  
All that which shows like innocence, and  
is,  
Hear me, great God! I swear, most  
innocent,  
So that the world lose all discrimination  
Between the sly, fierce, wild regard of  
guilt,  
And that which now compels thee to  
reply  
To what I ask: Am I, or am I not  
A parricide?  
*Marzio.* Thou art not!  
*Judge.* What is this?  
*Marzio.* I here declare those whom  
I did accuse  
Are innocent. 'T is I alone am guilty.

*Judge.* Drag him away to torments;  
let them be  
Subtle and long drawn out, to tear the  
folds

Of the heart's inmost cell. Unbind him  
not  
Till he confess.

*Marzio.* Torture me as ye will:  
A keener pain has wrung a higher truth  
From my last breath. She is most inno-  
cent!

Bloodhounds, not men, glut yourselves  
well with me;

I will not give you that fine piece of  
nature

To rend and ruin.

[*Exit* MARZIO, guarded.]

*Camillo.* What say ye now,  
my Lords?

*Judge.* Let tortures strain the truth  
till it be white

As snow thrice sifted by the frozen wind.

*Camillo.* Yet stained with blood.

*Judge* (to BEATRICE). Know you  
this paper, Lady?

*Beatrice.* Entrap me not with ques-  
tions. Who stands here

As my accuser? Ha! wilt thou be he,  
Who art my judge? Accuser, witness,  
judge,

What, all in one? Here is Orsino's name;  
Where is Orsino? Let his eye meet mine.

What means this scrawl? Alas! ye  
know not what,

And therefore on the chance that it may  
be

Some evil, will ye kill us?

[*Enter an Officer.*]

*Officer.* Marzio's dead.

*Judge.* What did he say?

*Officer.* Nothing. As soon as we  
Had bound him on the wheel, he smiled  
on us,

As one who baffles a deep adversary;  
And holding his breath, died.

*Judge.* There remains nothing  
But to apply the question to those pris-  
oners,

Who yet remain stubborn.

*Camillo.* I overrule  
Further proceedings, and in the behalf  
Of these most innocent and noble per-  
sons

Will use my interest with the Holy  
Father.

*Judge.* Let the Pope's pleasure then  
be done. Meanwhile

Conduct these culprits each to separate  
cells;

And be the engines ready: for this  
night

If the Pope's resolution be as grave,  
Pious, and just as once, I'll wring the  
truth

Out of those nerves and sinews, groan  
by groan. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — THE CELL OF A PRISON.

BEATRICE is discovered asleep on a  
couch. *Enter* BERNARDO.

*Bernardo.* How gently slumber rests  
upon her face,  
Like the last thoughts of some day  
sweetly spent

Closing in night and dreams, and so pro-  
longed.

After such torments as she bore last  
night,

How light and soft her breathing comes.  
Ay, me!

Methinks that I shall never sleep again.  
But I must shake the heavenly dew of rest

From this sweet folded flower, thus . . .  
wake! awake!

What, sister, canst thou sleep?

*Beatrice* (*awaking*). I was just  
dreaming

That we were all in Paradise. Thou  
knowest

This cell seems like a kind of Paradise  
After our father's presence.

*Bernardo.* Dear, dear sister,  
Would that thy dream were not a dream!

O God!

How shall I tell?

*Beatrice.* What wouldst thou  
tell, sweet brother?

*Bernardo.* Look not so calm and  
happy, or even whilst

I stand considering what I have to say  
My heart will break.

*Beatrice.* See now, thou  
mak'st me weep:

How very friendless thou wouldst be,  
dear child,

If I were dead. Say what thou hast to say.

*Bernardo.* They have confest; they could endure no more

The tortures . . .

*Beatrice.* Ha! What was there to confess?

They must have told some weak and wicked lie

To flatter their tormentors. Have they said

That they were guilty? O white innocence,

That thou shouldst wear the mask of guilt to hide

Thine awful and serenest countenance From those who know thee not!

*Enter JUDGE with LUCRETIA and GIACOMO, guarded.*

Ignoble hearts!

For some brief spasms of pain, which are at least

As mortal as the limbs through which they pass,

Are centuries of high splendor laid in dust?

And that eternal honor which should live Sunlike, above the reek of mortal fame,

Changed to a mockery and a bye-word? What!

Will you give up these bodies to be dragged

At horses' heels, so that our hair should sweep

The footsteps of the vain and senseless crowd,

Who, that they may make our calamity Their worship and their spectacle, will leave

The churches and the theatres as void As their own hearts? Shall the light

multitude

Fling, at their choice, curses or faded pity,

Sad funeral flowers to deck a living corpse,

Upon us as we pass to pass away,

And leave . . . what memory of our having been?

Infamy, blood, terror, despair? O thou, Who wert a mother to the parentless,

Kill not thy child! Let not her wrongs kill thee!

Brother, lie down with me upon the rack, And let us each be silent as a corpse; It soon will be as soft as any grave.

'T is but the falsehood it can wring from fear

Makes the rack cruel.

*Giacomo.*

They will tear the

truth

Even from thee at last; those cruel pains: For pity's sake say thou art guilty now.

*Lucretia.* Oh, speak the truth! Let us all quickly die;

And after death, God is our judge, not they;

He will have mercy on us.

*Bernardo.*

If indeed

It can be true, say so, dear sister mine;

And then the Pope will surely pardon you,

And all be well.

*Judge.*

Confess, or I will warp

Your limbs with such keen tortures . . .

*Beatrice.*

Tortures! Turn

The rack henceforth into a spinning wheel!

Torture your dog, that he may tell when last

He lapt the blood his master shed . . . not me!

My pangs are of the mind, and of the heart,

And of the soul; ay, of the inmost soul, Which weeps within tears as of burning

gall

To see, in this ill world where none are true,

My kindred false to their deserted selves; And with considering all the wretched

life

Which I have lived, and its now wretched end,

And the small justice shown by Heaven and Earth

To me or mine; and what a tyrant thou art,

And what slaves these; and what a world we make,

The oppressor and the opprest . . . such pangs compel

My answer. What is it thou wouldst with me?

*Judge.* Art thou not guilty of thy father's death?

*Beatrice.* Or wilt thou rather tax  
 high judging God  
 That he permitted such an act as that  
 Which I have suffered, and which he  
 beheld;  
 Made it unutterable, and took from it  
 All refuge, all revenge, all consequence,  
 But that which thou hast called my  
 father's death?  
 Which is or is not what men call a crime,  
 Which either I have done, or have not  
 done;  
 Say what ye will. I shall deny no more.  
 If ye desire it thus, thus let it be,  
 And so an end of all. Now do your  
 will;

No other pains shall force another word.  
*Judge.* She is convicted, but has not  
 confest.

Be it enough. Until their final sentence  
 Let none have converse with them.  
 You, young Lord,  
 Linger not here!

*Beatrice.* Oh, tear him not away!

*Judge.* Guards, do your duty.

*Bernardo* (*embracing BEATRICE*).  
 Oh! would ye divide

Body from soul?

*Officer.* That is the headsman's  
 business.

[*Exeunt all but LUCRETIA,  
 BEATRICE, and GIACOMO.*]

*Giacomo.* Have I confest? Is it all  
 over now?

No hope! No refuge! O weak, wicked  
 tongue

Which hast destroyed me, would that  
 thou hadst been

Cut out and thrown to dogs first! To  
 have killed

My father first, and then betrayed my  
 sister;

Ay, thee! the one thing innocent and  
 pure

In this black guilty world, to that which I  
 So well deserve! My wife! my little  
 ones!

Destitute, helpless, and I . . . Father!  
 God!

Canst thou forgive even the unforgiving,  
 When their full hearts break thus,  
 thus! . . .

[*Covers his face and weeps.*]

*Lucretia.* O my child!  
 To what a dreadful end are we all come!  
 Why did I yield? Why did I not sustain  
 Those torments? Oh, that I were all  
 dissolved

Into these fast and unavailing tears,  
 Which flow and feel not!

*Beatrice.* What 't was weak to do,  
 'T is weaker to lament, once being done;  
 Take cheer! The God who knew my  
 wrong, and made

Our speedy act the angel of his wrath,  
 Seems, and but seems, to have aban-  
 doned us.

Let us not think that we shall die for  
 this.

Brother, sit near me; give me your firm  
 hand,

You had a manly heart. Bear up! Bear  
 up!

O dearest Lady, put your gentle head  
 Upon my lap, and try to sleep awhile:  
 Your eyes look pale, hollow and over-  
 worn,

With heaviness of watching and slow  
 grief.

Come, I will sing you some low, sleepy  
 tune,

Not cheerful, nor yet sad; some dull old  
 thing,

Some outworn and unused monotony,  
 Such as our country gossips sing and  
 spin,

Till they almost forget they live: lie  
 down!

So, that will do. Have I forgot the  
 words?

Faith! They are sadder than I thought  
 they were.

### SONG

False friend, wilt thou smile or weep  
 When my life is laid asleep?

Little cares for a smile or a tear,  
 The clay-cold corpse upon the bier!

Farewell! Heigho!

What is this whispers low?  
 There is a snake in thy smile, my dear;  
 And bitter poison within thy tear.

Sweet sleep, were death like to thee,  
 Or if thou couldst mortal be,



I would close these eyes of pain;  
When to wake? Never again.

O World! Farewell!

Listen to the passing bell!

It says, thou and I must part,  
With a light and a heavy heart.

[*The scene closes.*]

SCENE IV. — A HALL OF THE PRISON.

*Enter CAMILLO and BERNARDO.*

*Camillo.* The Pope is stern; not to  
be moved or bent.

He lookt as calm and keen as is the  
engine

Which tortures and which kills, exempt  
itself

From aught that it inflicts; a marble  
form,

A rite, a law, a custom: not a man.

He frowned, as if to frown had been the  
trick

Of his machinery, on the advocates  
Presenting the defences, which he tore

And threw behind, muttering with hoarse,  
harsh voice:

“Which among ye defended their old  
father

Killed in his sleep?” Then to another:  
“Thou

Dost this in virtue of thy place; ’t is  
well.”

He turned to me then, looking depreca-  
tion,

And said these three words, coldly:  
“They must die.”

*Bernardo.* And yet you left him not?

*Camillo.* I urged him still;

Pleading, as I could guess, the devilish  
wrong

Which prompted your unnatural parent’s  
death.

And he replied: “Paolo Santa Croce  
Murdered his mother yester evening,

And he is fled. Parricide grows so rife  
That soon, for some just cause no doubt,

the young

Will strangle us all, dozing in our chairs.

Authority, and power, and hoary hair

Are grown crimes capital. You are my  
nephew,

You come to ask their pardon; stay a  
moment;

Here is their sentence; never see me  
more

Till, to the letter, it be all fulfilled.”

*Bernardo.* O God, not so! I did be-  
lieve indeed

That all you said was but sad prepara-  
tion

For happy news. Oh, there are words  
and looks

To bend the sternest purpose! Once I  
knew them,

Now I forget them at my dearest need.  
What think you if I seek him out, and

bathe

His feet and robe with hot and bitter  
tears?

Importune him with prayers, vexing his  
brain

With my perpetual cries, until in rage  
He strike me with his pastoral cross,

and trample

Upon my prostrate head, so that my  
blood

May stain the senseless dust on which he  
treads,

And remorse waken mercy? I will do  
it!

Oh, wait till I return! [*Rushes out.*]

*Camillo.* Alas! poor boy!

A wreck-devoted seaman thus might pray  
To the deaf sea.

*Enter LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, and GIA-  
COMO, guarded.*

*Beatrice.* I hardly dare to fear

That thou bring’st other news than a  
just pardon.

*Camillo.* May God in heaven be less  
inexorable

To the Pope’s prayers, than he has been  
to mine.

Here is the sentence and the warrant.

*Beatrice (wildly).* O

My God! Can it be possible I have  
To die so suddenly? So young to go

Under the obscure, cold, rotting, wormy,  
ground!

To be nailed down into a narrow place;  
To see no more sweet sunshine; hear no

more

Blithe voice of living thing; muse not  
again

Upon familiar thoughts, sad, yet thus  
lost —

How fearful! to be nothing! Or to  
 be . . .  
 What? Oh, where am I? Let me not  
 go mad!  
 Sweet Heaven, forgive weak thoughts!  
 If there should be  
 No God, no Heaven, no Earth in the  
 void world;  
 The wide, gray, lampless, deep, un-  
 peopled world!  
 If all things then should be . . . my  
 father's spirit,  
 His eye, his voice, his touch surrounding  
 me;  
 The atmosphere and breath of my dead  
 life!  
 If sometimes, as a shape more like him-  
 self,  
 Even the form which tortured me on  
 earth,  
 Maskt in gray hairs and wrinkles, he  
 should come  
 And wind me in his hellish arms, and  
 fix  
 His eyes on mine, and drag me down,  
 down, down!  
 For was he not alone omnipotent  
 On Earth, and ever present? Even tho'  
 dead,  
 Does not his spirit live in all that breathe,  
 And work for me and mine still the same  
 ruin,  
 Scorn, pain, despair? Who ever yet  
 returned  
 To teach the laws of death's untrodden  
 realm?  
 Unjust perhaps as those which drive us  
 now,  
 Oh, whither, whither?  
*Lucretia.* Trust in God's sweet  
 love,  
 The tender promises of Christ: ere  
 night,  
 Think, we shall be in Paradise.  
*Beatrice.* 'Tis past!  
 Whatever comes my heart shall sink no  
 more.  
 And yet, I know not why, your words  
 strike chill:  
 How tedious, false and cold seem all  
 things. I  
 Have met with much injustice in this  
 world;

No difference has been made by God or  
 man,  
 Or any power moulding my wretched lot,  
 'Twixt good or evil, as regarded me.  
 I am cut off from the only world I know,  
 From light, and life, and love, in youth's  
 sweet prime.  
 You do well telling me to trust in God,  
 I hope I do trust in him. In whom else  
 Can any trust? And yet my heart is  
 cold.  
 [*During the latter speeches GIACOMO  
 has retired conversing with  
 CAMILLO, who now goes out;  
 GIACOMO advances.*]  
*Giacomo.* Know you not, Mother  
 . . . Sister, know you not?  
 Bernardo even now is gone to implore  
 The Pope to grant our pardon.  
*Lucretia.* Child, perhaps  
 It will be granted. We may all then  
 live  
 To make these woes a tale for distant  
 years:  
 Oh, what a thought! It gushes to my  
 heart  
 Like the warm blood.  
*Beatrice.* Yet both will soon  
 be cold.  
 Oh, trample out that thought! Worse  
 than despair,  
 Worse than the bitterness of death, is  
 hope:  
 It is the only ill which can find place  
 Upon the giddy, sharp and narrow hour  
 Tottering beneath us. Plead with the  
 swift frost  
 That it should spare the eldest flower of  
 spring:  
 Plead with awakening earthquake, o'er  
 whose couch  
 Even now a city stands, strong, fair, and  
 free;  
 Now stench and blackness yawn, like  
 death. Oh, plead  
 With famine, or wind-walking Pesti-  
 lence,  
 Blind lightning, or the deaf sea; not  
 with man!  
 Cruel, cold, formal man; righteous in  
 words,  
 In deeds a Cain. No, Mother, we must  
 die:

Since such is the reward of innocent  
lives;  
Such the alleviation of worst wrongs.  
And whilst our murderers live, and hard,  
cold men,  
Smiling and slow, walk thro' a world of  
tears  
To death as to life's sleep; 't were just  
the grave  
Were some strange joy for us. Come,  
obscure Death,  
And wind me in thine all-embracing  
arms!  
Like a fond mother hide me in thy  
bosom,  
And rock me to the sleep from which  
none wake.  
Live ye, who live, subject to one another  
As we were once, who now . . .

[BERNARDO rushes in.  
*Bernardo.* Oh, horrible,  
That tears, that looks, that hope poured  
forth in prayer,  
Even till the heart is vacant and despairs,  
Should all be vain! The ministers of  
death  
Are waiting round the doors. I thought  
I saw  
Blood on the face of one . . . What if  
't were fancy?  
Soon the heart's blood of all I love on  
earth  
Will sprinkle him, and he will wipe it  
off  
As if 't were only rain. O life! O world!  
Cover me! let me be no more! To see  
That perfect mirror of pure innocence  
Wherein I gazed, and grew happy and  
good,  
Shivered to dust! To see thee, Beatrice,  
Who made all lovely thou didst look  
upon . . .  
Thee, light of life . . . dead, dark!  
while I say, sister,  
To hear I have no sister; and thou,  
Mother,  
Whose love was as a bond to all our  
loves . . .  
Dead! The sweet bond broken!

*Enter CAMILLO and Guards.*

They come! Let me  
Kiss those warm lips before their crim-  
son leaves

Are blighted . . . white . . . cold.  
Say farewell, before  
Death chokes that gentle voice! Oh,  
let me hear  
You speak!

*Beatrice.* Farewell, my tender  
brother. Think  
Of our sad fate with gentleness, as now:  
And let mild, pitying thoughts lighten  
for thee  
Thy sorrow's load. Err not in harsh  
despair,  
But tears and patience. One thing more,  
my child,  
For thine own sake be constant to the  
love  
Thou bearest us; and to the faith that I,  
Tho' wrapt in a strange cloud of crime  
and shame,  
Lived ever holy and unstained. And  
tho'  
Ill tongues shall wound me, and our  
common name  
Be as a mark stamp on thine innocent  
brow  
For men to point at as they pass, do  
thou  
Forbear, and never think a thought un-  
kind  
Of those, who perhaps love thee in their  
graves.  
So mayest thou die as I do; fear and  
pain  
Being subdued. Farewell! Farewell!  
Farewell!

*Bernardo.* I cannot say, farewell!

*Camillo.* O Lady Beatrice!

*Beatrice.* Give yourself no unneces-  
sary pain,  
My dear Lord Cardinal. Here, Mother,  
tie  
My girdle for me, and bind up this hair  
In any simple knot; ay, that does well.  
And yours I see is coming down. How  
often  
Have we done this for one another;  
now  
We shall not do it any more. My  
Lord,  
We are quite ready. Well, 't is very  
well.

THE END.

NOTE ON "THE CENCI," BY  
MRS. SHELLEY.

THE sort of mistake that Shelley made as to the extent of his own genius and powers, which led him deviously at first, but lastly into the direct track that enabled him fully to develop them, is a curious instance of his modesty of feeling, and of the methods which the human mind uses at once to deceive itself, and yet, in its very delusion, to make its way out of error into the path which Nature has marked out as its right one. He often incited me to attempt the writing a tragedy: he conceived that I possessed some dramatic talent, and he was always most earnest and energetic in his exhortations that I should cultivate any talent I possessed, to the utmost. I entertained a truer estimate of my powers; and above all (though at that time not exactly aware of the fact) I was far too young to have any chance of succeeding, even moderately, in a species of composition that requires a greater scope of experience in, and sympathy with, human passion than could then have fallen to my lot,—or than any perhaps, except Shelley, ever possessed, even at the age of twenty-six, at which he wrote "The Cenci."

On the other hand, Shelley most erroneously conceived himself to be destitute of this talent. He believed that one of the first requisites was the capacity of forming and following-up a story or plot. He fancied himself to be defective in this portion of imagination: it was that which gave him least pleasure in the writings of others, though he laid great store by it as the proper framework to support the sublimest efforts of poetry. He asserted that he was too metaphysical and abstract, too fond of the theoretical and the ideal, to succeed as a tragedian. It perhaps is not strange that I shared this opinion with himself; for he had hitherto shown no inclination for, nor given any specimen of his powers in framing and supporting the interest of a story, either in prose or verse. Once or

twice, when he attempted such, he had speedily thrown it aside, as being even disagreeable to him as an occupation.

The subject he had suggested for a tragedy was Charles I.: and he had written to me: "Remember, remember Charles I. I have been already imagining how you would conduct some scenes. The second volume of *St. Leon* begins with this proud and true sentiment: 'There is nothing which the human mind can conceive which it may not execute.' Shakespeare was only a human being." These words were written in 1818, while we were in Lombardy, when he little thought how soon a work of his own would prove a proud comment on the passage he quoted. When in Rome, in 1819, a friend put into our hands the old manuscript account of the story of the Cenci. We visited the Colonna and Doria palaces, where the portraits of Beatrice were to be found; and her beauty cast the reflection of its own grace over her appalling story. Shelley's imagination became strongly excited, and he urged the subject to me as one fitted for a tragedy. More than ever I felt my incompetence; but I entreated him to write it instead; and he began, and proceeded swiftly, urged on by intense sympathy with the sufferings of the human beings whose passions, so long cold in the tomb, he revived, and gifted with poetic language. This tragedy is the only one of his works that he communicated to me during its progress. We talked over the arrangement of the scenes together. I speedily saw the great mistake we had made, and triumphed in the discovery of the new talent brought to light from that mine of wealth (never, alas, through his untimely death, worked to its depths)—his richly gifted mind.

We suffered a severe affliction in Rome by the loss of our eldest child, who was of such beauty and promise as to cause him deservedly to be the idol of our hearts. We left the capital of the world, anxious for a time to escape a spot associated too intimately with his presence and loss.<sup>1</sup> Some friends of ours were

<sup>1</sup> Such feelings haunted him when, in "The

residing in the neighborhood of Leghorn, and we took a small house, Villa Valsovano, about half-way between the town and Monte Nero, where we remained during the summer. Our villa was situated in the midst of a *podere*; the peasants sang as they worked beneath our windows, during the heats of a very hot season, and in the evening the water-wheel creaked as the process of irrigation went on, and the fire-flies flashed from among the myrtle hedges: Nature was bright, sunshiny, and cheerful, or diversified by storms of a majestic terror, such as we had never before witnessed.

At the top of the house there was a sort of terrace. There is often such in Italy, generally roofed: this one was very small, yet not only roofed but glazed. This Shelley made his study; it looked out on a wide prospect of fertile country, and commanded a view of the near sea. The storms that sometimes varied our day showed themselves most picturesquely as they were driven across the ocean; sometimes the dark lurid clouds dipped towards the waves, and became water-spouts that churned up the waters beneath, as they were chased onward and scattered by the tempest. At other times the dazzling sunlight and heat made it almost intolerable to every other; but Shelley basked in both, and his health and spirits revived under their influence. In this airy cell he wrote the principal part of "The Cenci." He was making a study of Calderon at the time, reading his best tragedies with an accomplished lady living near us, to whom his letter from Leghorn was addressed during the following year. He admired Calderon, both for his poetry and his dramatic genius; but it shows his judgment and originality that, though

Cenci," he makes Beatrice speak to Cardinal Camillo of

"that fair blue-eyed child

Who was the lodestar of your life" —

and say, —

"All see, since his most swift and piteous death,  
That day and night, and heaven and earth, and  
time,

And all the things hoped for or done therein,

Are changed to you, through your exceeding  
grief."

greatly struck by his first acquaintance with the Spanish poet, none of his peculiarities crept into the composition of "The Cenci;" and there is no trace of his new studies, except in that passage to which he himself alludes as suggested by one in "El Purgatorio de San Patricio."

Shelley wished "The Cenci" to be acted. He was not a play-goer, being of such fastidious taste that he was easily disgusted by the bad filling-up of the inferior parts. While preparing for our departure from England, however, he saw Miss O'Neil several times. She was then in the zenith of her glory; and Shelley was deeply moved by her impersonation of several parts, and by the graceful sweetness, the intense pathos, and sublime vehemence of passion, she displayed. She was often in his thoughts as he wrote: and, when he had finished, he became anxious that his tragedy should be acted, and receive the advantage of having this accomplished actress to fill the part of the heroine. With this view he wrote the following letter to a friend in London:

"The object of the present letter is to ask a favor of you. I have written a tragedy on a story well known in Italy, and, in my conception, eminently dramatic. I have taken some pains to make my play fit for representation, and those who have already seen it judge favorably. It is written without any of the peculiar feelings and opinions which characterize my other compositions; I have attended simply to the impartial development of such characters as it is probable the persons represented really were, together with the greatest degree of popular effect to be produced by such a development. I send you a translation of the Italian MS. on which my play is founded; the chief circumstance of which I have touched very delicately; for my principal doubt as to whether it would succeed as an acting play hangs entirely on the question as to whether any such a thing as incest in this shape, however treated, would be admitted on the stage. I think, however, it will form no objection; considering, first, that the facts are matter

of history, and, secondly, the peculiar delicacy with which I have treated it.<sup>1</sup>

"I am exceedingly interested in the question of whether this attempt of mine will succeed or not. I am strongly inclined to the affirmative at present; founding my hopes on this—that, as a composition, it is certainly not inferior to any of the modern plays that have been acted, with the exception of "Remorse;" that the interest of the plot is incredibly greater and more real; and that there is nothing beyond what the multitude are contented to believe that they can understand, either in imagery, opinion, or sentiment. I wish to preserve a complete incognito, and can trust to you that, whatever else you do, you will at least favor me on this point. Indeed, this is essential, deeply essential, to its success. After it had been acted, and successfully (could I hope for such a thing), I would own it if I pleased, and use the celebrity it might acquire to my own purposes.

"What I want you to do is to procure for me its presentation at Covent Garden. The principal character, Beatrice, is precisely fitted for Miss O'Neil, and it might even seem to have been written for her (God forbid that I should see her play it—it would tear my nerves to pieces); and in all respects it is fitted only for Covent Garden. The chief male character I confess I should be very unwilling that any one but Kean should play. That is impossible, and I must be contented with an inferior actor."

The play was accordingly sent to Mr. Harris. He pronounced the subject to be so objectionable that he could not even submit the part to Miss O'Neil for perusal, but expressed his desire that the author would write a tragedy on some other subject, which he would gladly accept. Shelley printed a small edition at Leghorn, to insure its correctness; as he was much annoyed by the many mistakes

<sup>1</sup> In speaking of his mode of treating this main incident, Shelley said that it might be remarked that, in the course of the play, he had never mentioned expressly Cenci's worst crime. Every one knew what it must be, but it was never imagined in words—the nearest allusion to it being that portion of Cenci's curse beginning—

"That, if she have a child," etc.

that crept into his text when distance prevented him from correcting the press.

Universal approbation soon stamped "The Cenci" as the best tragedy of modern times. Writing concerning it, Shelley said: "I have been cautious to avoid the introducing faults of youthful composition; diffuseness, a profusion of inapplicable imagery, vagueness, generality, and, as Hamlet says, *words, words.*" There is nothing that is not purely dramatic throughout; and the character of Beatrice, proceeding, from vehement struggle, to horror, to deadly resolution, and lastly to the elevated dignity of calm suffering, joined to passionate tenderness and pathos, is touched with hues so vivid and so beautiful that the poet seems to have read intimately the secrets of the noble heart imaged in the lovely countenance of the unfortunate girl. The Fifth Act is a masterpiece. It is the finest thing he ever wrote, and may claim proud comparison not only with any contemporary, but preceding, poet. The varying feelings of Beatrice are expressed with passionate, heart-reaching eloquence. Every character has a voice that echoes truth in its tones. It is curious, to one acquainted with the written story, to mark the success with which the poet has inwoven the real incidents of the tragedy into his scenes, and yet, through the power of poetry, has obliterated all that would otherwise have shown too harsh or too hideous in the picture. His success was a double triumph; and often after he was earnestly entreated to write again in a style that commanded popular favor, while it was not less instinct with truth and genius. But the bent of his mind went the other way; and, even when employed on subjects whose interest depended on character and incident, he would start off in another direction, and leave the delineations of human passion, which he could depict in so able a manner, for fantastic creations of his fancy, or the expression of those opinions and sentiments, with regard to human nature and its destiny, a desire to diffuse which was the master passion of his soul.

## THE MASK OF ANARCHY.

WRITTEN ON THE OCCASION OF THE MASSACRE AT MANCHESTER.

## I.

As I lay asleep in Italy  
 There came a voice from over the Sea,  
 And with great power it forth led me  
 To walk in the visions of Poesy.

## II.

I met Murder on the way—  
 He had a mask like Castlereagh—  
 Very smooth he looked, yet grim;  
 Seven blood-hounds followed him:

## III.

All were fat; and well they might  
 Be in admirable plight,  
 For one by one, and two by two,  
 He tossed them human hearts to chew  
 Which from his wide cloak he drew.

## IV.

Next came Fraud, and he had on,  
 Like Eldon, an ermined gown;  
 His big tears, for he wept well,  
 Turned to mill-stones as they fell.

## V.

And the little children, who  
 Round his feet played to and fro,  
 Thinking every tear a gem,  
 Had their brains knocked out by them.

## VI.

Clothed with the Bible, as with light,  
 And the shadows of the night,  
 Like Sidmouth, next, Hypocrisy  
 On a crocodile rode by.

## VII.

And many more Destructions played  
 In this ghastly masquerade,  
 All disguised, even to the eyes,  
 Like bishops, lawyers, peers, or spies.

## VIII.

Last came Anarchy: he rode  
 On a white horse, splasht with blood;  
 He was pale even to the lips,  
 Like Death in the Apocalypse.

## IX.

And he wore a kingly crown;  
 And in his grasp a sceptre shone;  
 On his brow this mark I saw—  
 "I AM GOD, AND KING, AND LAW!"

## X.

With a pace stately and fast,  
 Over English land he past,  
 Trampling to a mire of blood  
 The adoring multitude.

## XI.

And a mighty troop around,  
 With their trampling shook the ground,  
 Waving each a bloody sword,  
 For the service of their Lord.

## XII.

And with glorious triumph, they  
 Rode thro' England proud and gay,  
 Drunk as with intoxication  
 Of the wine of desolation.

## XIII.

O'er fields and towns, from sea to sea,  
 Past the Pageant swift and free,  
 Tearing up, and trampling down;  
 Till they came to London town.

## XIV.

And each dweller, panic-stricken,  
 Felt his heart with terror sicken  
 Hearing the tempestuous cry  
 Of the triumph of Anarchy.

## XV.

For with pomp to meet him came,  
Clothed in arms like blood and flame,  
The hired murderers, who did sing  
"Thou art God, and Law, and King."

## XVI.

"We have waited, weak and lone  
For thy coming, Mighty One!  
Our purses are empty, our swords are cold,  
Give us glory, and blood, and gold."

## XVII.

Lawyers and priests, a motley crowd,  
To the earth their pale brows bowed;  
Like a bad prayer not over loud,  
Whispering — "Thou art Law and God."

## XVIII.

Then all cried with one accord,  
"Thou art King, and God, and Lord;  
Anarchy, to thee we bow,  
Be thy name made holy now!"

## XIX.

And Anarchy, the Skeleton,  
Bowed and grinned to every one,  
As well as if his education  
Had cost ten millions to the nation.

## XX.

For he knew the Palaces  
Of our Kings were rightly his;  
His the sceptre, crown, and globe,  
And the gold-inwoven robe.

## XXI.

So he sent his slaves before  
To seize upon the Bank and Tower,  
And was proceeding with intent  
To meet his pensioned Parliament.

## XXII.

When one fled past, a maniac maid,  
And her name was Hope, she said:  
But she looked more like Despair,  
And she cried out in the air:

## XXIII.

"My father Time is weak and gray  
With waiting for a better day;  
See how idiot-like he stands,  
Fumbling with his palsied hands!"

## XXIV.

"He has had child after child,  
And the dust of death is piled  
Over every one but me —  
Misery! oh, Misery!"

## XXV.

Then she lay down in the street,  
Right before the horses' feet,  
Expecting, with a patient eye,  
Murder, Fraud, and Anarchy.

## XXVI.

When between her and her foes  
A mist, a light, an image rose,  
Small at first, and weak, and frail  
Like the vapor of a vale:

## XXVII.

Till as clouds grow on the blast,  
Like tower-crowned giants striding fast,  
And glare with lightnings as they fly,  
And speak in thunder to the sky,

## XXVIII.

It grew — a Shape arrayed in mail  
Brighter than the viper's scale,  
And upborne on wings whose grain  
Was as the light of sunny rain.

## XXIX.

On its helm, seen far away,  
A planet, like the Morning's, lay;  
And those plumes its light rained thro'  
Like a shower of crimson dew.

## XXX.

With step as soft as wind it past  
O'er the heads of men — so fast  
That they knew the presence there,  
And lookt, — and all was empty air.

## XXXI.

As flowers beneath May's footstep  
waken,  
As stars from Night's loose hair are  
shaken,  
As waves arise when loud winds call,  
Thoughts sprung where'er that step did  
fall.



## XXXII.

And the prostrate multitude  
 Lookt — and ankle-deep in blood,  
 Hope, that maiden most serene,  
 Was walking with a quiet mien :

## XXXIII.

And Anarchy, the ghastly birth,  
 Lay dead earth upon the earth;  
 The Horse of Death tameless as wind  
 Flew, and with his hoofs did grind  
 To dust the murderers thronged behind.

## XXXIV.

A rushing light of clouds and splendor,  
 A sense awakening and yet tender  
 Was heard and felt — and at its close  
 These words of joy and fear arose

## XXXV.

As if their own indignant Earth  
 Which gave the sons of England birth  
 Had felt their blood upon her brow,  
 And shuddering with a mother's throes

## XXXVI.

Had turned every drop of blood  
 By which her face had been bedewed  
 To an accent unwithstood, —  
 As if her heart had cried aloud :

## XXXVII.

“ Men of England, heirs of Glory,  
 Heroes of unwritten story,  
 Nurslings of one mighty Mother,  
 Hopes of her, and one another ;

## XXXVIII.

“ Rise like Lions after slumber  
 In unvanquishable number,  
 Shake your chains to earth like dew  
 Which in sleep had fallen on you —  
 Ye are many — they are few.

## XXXIX.

“ What is freedom? — Ye can tell  
 That which slavery is, too well —  
 For its very name has grown  
 To an echo of your own.

## XL.

“ 'T is to work and have such pay  
 As just keeps life from day to day  
 In your limbs, as in a cell  
 For the tyrants' use to dwell

## XLI.

“ So that ye for them are made  
 Loom, and plough, and sword, and  
 spade,  
 With or without your own will bent  
 To their defence and nourishment.

## XLII.

“ 'T is to see your children weak  
 With their mothers pine and peak,  
 When the winter winds are bleak, —  
 They are dying whilst I speak.

## XLIII.

“ 'T is to hunger for such diet  
 As the rich man in his riot  
 Casts to the fat dogs that lie  
 Surfeiting beneath his eye ;

## XLIV.

“ 'T is to let the Ghost of Gold  
 Take from Toil a thousandfold  
 More than e'er its substance could  
 In the tyrannies of old.

## XLV.

“ Paper coin — that forgery  
 Of the title deeds, which ye  
 Hold to something of the worth  
 Of the inheritance of Earth.

## XLVI.

“ 'T is to be a slave in soul  
 And to hold no strong control  
 Over your own wills, but be  
 All that others make of ye.

## XLVII.

“ And at length when ye complain  
 With a murmur weak and vain,  
 'T is to see the Tyrant's crew  
 Ride over your wives and you —  
 Blood is on the grass like dew.

## XLVIII.

“Then it is to feel revenge  
Fiercely thirsting to exchange  
Blood for blood—and wrong for wrong—  
Do not thus when ye are strong.

## XLIX.

“Birds find rest, in narrow nest  
When weary of their winged quest;  
Beasts find fare, in woody lair  
When storm and snow are in the air.<sup>1</sup>

## L.

“Asses, swine, have litter spread  
And with fitting food are fed;  
All things have a home but one —  
Thou, O Englishman, hast none!

## LI.

“This is Slavery — savage men,  
Or wild beasts within a den  
Would endure not as ye do —  
But such ills they never knew.

## LII.

“What art thou Freedom? Oh! could  
slaves  
Answer from their living graves  
This demand — tyrants would flee  
Like a dream’s dim imagery:

## LIII.

“Thou art not, as impostors say,  
A shadow soon to pass away,  
A superstition, and a name  
Echoing from the cave of Fame.

## LIV.

“For the laborer thou art bread,  
And a comely table spread  
From his daily labor come  
To a neat and happy home.

<sup>1</sup> The following Stanza originally intended to come between Stanzas XLIX. and L. was rejected:

“Horses, oxen, have a home,  
When from daily toil they come;  
Household dogs, when the wind roars,  
Find a home within warm doors.”

## LV.

“Thou art clothes, and fire, and food  
For the trampled multitude —  
No — in countries that are free  
Such starvation cannot be  
As in England now we see.

## LVI.

“To the rich thou art a check;  
When his foot is on the neck  
Of his victim, thou dost make  
That he treads upon a snake.

## LVII.

“Thou art Justice — ne’er for gold  
May thy righteous laws be sold  
As laws are in England — thou  
Shield’st alike the high and low.

## LVIII.

“Thou art Wisdom — Freemen never  
Dream that God will damn for ever  
All who think those things untrue  
Of which Priests make such ado.

## LIX.

“Thou art Peace — never by thee  
Would blood and treasure wasted be  
As tyrants wasted them, when all  
Leagued to quench thy flame in Gaul.

## LX.

“What if English toil and blood  
Was poured forth, even as a flood?  
It availed, O Liberty,  
To dim, but not extinguish thee.

## LXI.

“Thou art Love — the rich have kist  
Thy feet, and like him following Christ  
Give their substance to the free  
And thro’ the rough world follow thee,

## LXII.

“Or turn their wealth to arms, and  
make  
War for thy beloved sake  
On wealth, and war, and fraud — whence  
they  
Drew the power which is their prey.

## LXIII.

“Science, Poetry, and Thought  
Are thy lamps; they make the lot  
Of the dwellers in a cot  
So serene, they curse it not.

## LXIV.

“Spirit, Patience, Gentleness,  
All that can adorn and bless  
Art thou — let deeds not words express  
Thine exceeding loveliness.

## LXV.

“Let a great Assembly be  
Of the fearless and the free  
On some spot of English ground  
Where the plains stretch wide around.

## LXVI.

“Let the blue sky overhead,  
The green earth on which ye tread,  
All that must eternal be  
Witness the solemnity.

## LXVII.

“From the corners uttermost  
Of the bounds of English coast;  
From every hut, village, and town  
Where those who live and suffer moan  
For others' misery or their own,

## LXVIII.

“From the workhouse and the prison  
Where pale as corpses newly risen,  
Women, children, young and old  
Groan for pain, and weep for cold —

## LXIX.

“From the haunts of daily life  
Where is waged the daily strife  
With common wants and common cares  
Which sows the human heart with  
tares —

## LXX.

“Lastly from the palaces  
Where the murmur of distress  
Echoes, like the distant sound  
Of a wind alive, around

## LXXI.

“Those prison halls of wealth and  
fashion  
Where some few feel such compassion  
For those who groan, and toil, and wail  
As must make their brethren pale —

## LXXII.

“Ye who suffer woes untold,  
Or to feel, or to behold  
Your lost country bought and sold  
With a price of blood and gold —

## LXXIII.

“Let a vast assembly be,  
And with great solemnity  
Declare with measured words that ye  
Are, as God has made ye, free —

## LXXIV.

“Be your strong and simple words  
Keen to wound as sharpened swords,  
And wide as targes let them be,  
With their shade to cover ye.

## LXXV.

“Let the tyrants pour around  
With a quick and startling sound,  
Like the loosening of a sea,  
Troops of armed emblazonry.

## LXXVI.

“Let the charged artillery drive  
Till the dead air seems alive  
With the clash of clanging wheels,  
And the tramp of horses' heels.

## LXXVII.

“Let the fixed bayonet  
Gleam with sharp desire to wet  
Its bright point in English blood  
Looking keen as one for food.

## LXXVIII.

“Let the horsemen's scymitars  
Wheel and flash, like sphereless stars  
Thirsting to eclipse their burning  
In a sea of death and mourning.

LXXIX.

“Stand ye calm and resolute,  
Like a forest close and mute,  
With folded arms and looks which are  
Weapons of unvanquish't war,

LXXX.

“And let Panic, who outspeeds  
The career of armèd steeds  
Pass, a disregarded shade  
Thro' your phalanx undismayed.

LXXXI.

“Let the laws of your own land,  
Good or ill, between ye stand  
Hand to hand, and foot to foot,  
Arbiters of the dispute: —

LXXXII.

“The old laws of England — they  
Whose reverend heads with age are gray,  
Children of a wiser day;  
And whose solemn voice must be  
Thine own echo — Liberty!

LXXXIII.

“On those who first should violate  
Such sacred heralds in their state  
Rest the blood that must ensue,  
And it will not rest on you.

LXXXIV.

“And if then the tyrants dare  
Let them ride among you there,  
Slash, and stab, and maim, and hew, —  
What they like, that let them do.

LXXXV.

“With folded arms and steady eyes,  
And little fear, and less surprise  
Look upon them as they slay  
Till their rage has died away.

LXXXVI.

“Then they will return with shame  
To the place from which they came,  
And the blood thus shed will speak  
In hot blushes on their cheek.

LXXXVII.

“Every woman in the land  
Will point at them as they stand.  
They will hardly dare to greet  
Their acquaintance in the street.

LXXXVIII.

“And the bold, true warriors  
Who have hugged Danger in the wars  
Will turn to those who would be free  
Ashamed of such base company.

LXXXIX.

“And that slaughter to the Nation  
Shall steam up like inspiration,  
Eloquent, oracular;  
A volcano heard afar.

XC.

“And these words shall then become  
Like oppression's thundered doom  
Ringing thro' each heart and brain,  
Heard again — again — again!

XCI.

“Rise like Lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number —  
Shake your chains to earth like dew  
Which in sleep had fallen on you —  
Ye are many — they are few.”

NOTE ON THE MASK OF ANARCHY,  
BY MRS. SHELLEY.

THOUGH Shelley's first eager desire to excite his countrymen to resist openly the oppressions existent during “the good old times” had faded with early youth, still his warmest sympathies were for the people. He was a republican, and loved a democracy. He looked on all human beings as inheriting an equal right to possess the dearest privileges of our nature; the necessaries of life when fairly earned by labor, and intellectual instruction. His hatred of any despotism that looked upon the people as not to be consulted, or protected from want and ignorance, was intense. He was residing near Leghorn, at Villa Valsovano, writing “The Cenci,” when the news of the Man-

chester Massacre reached us; it roused in him violent emotions of indignation and compassion. The great truth that the many, if accordant and resolute, could control the few, as was shown some years after, made him long to teach his injured countrymen how to resist. Inspired by these feelings, he wrote the "Masque of Anarchy," which he sent to his friend Leigh Hunt, to be inserted in the *Examiner*, of which he was then the editor.

"I did not insert it," Leigh Hunt writes in his valuable and interesting preface to this poem, when he printed it in 1832, "because I thought that the public at large had not become sufficiently discerning to do justice to the sincerity and kind-heartedness of the spirit that walked in this flaming robe of verse." Days of outrage have passed away, and with them the exasperation that would cause such an appeal to the many to be injurious. Without being aware of them, they at one time acted on his suggestions, and gained the day. But they rose when human life was respected by the Minister in power; such was not the case during the Administration which excited Shelley's abhorrence.

The poem was written for the people, and is therefore in a more popular tone than usual: portions strike as abrupt and unpolished, but many stanzas are all his own. I heard him repeat, and admired, those beginning

"My Father Time is old and gray,"

before I knew to what poem they were to belong. But the most touching passage is that which describes the blessed effects of liberty; it might make a patriot of any man whose heart was not wholly closed against his humbler fellow-creatures.

## PETER BELL THE THIRD.

BY MICHING MALLECHO, ESQ.

Is it a party in a parlor,  
Crammed just as they on earth were crammed,  
Some sipping punch — some sipping tea;  
But, as you by their faces see,  
All silent, and all — damned!

*Peter Bell*, by W. WORDSWORTH.

OPHELIA. — What means this, my lord?

HAMLET. — Marry, this is Miching Mallecho; it means mischief.

SHAKESPEARE.

## DEDICATION

TO THOMAS BROWN, ESQ., THE YOUNGER,  
H.F.

DEAR TOM, — Allow me to request you to introduce Mr. Peter Bell to the respectable family of the Fudges. Although he may fall short of those very considerable personages in the more active properties which characterize the Rat and the Apostate, I suspect that even you, their historian, will confess that he surpasses them in the more peculiarly legitimate qualification of intolerable dulness.

You know Mr. Examiner Hunt; well — it was he who presented me to two of the Mr. Bells. My intimacy with the younger Mr. Bell naturally sprung from this introduction to his brothers. And in presenting him to you, I have the satisfaction of being able to assure you that he is considerably the dullest of the three.

There is this particular advantage in an acquaintance with any one of the Peter Bells, that if you know one Peter Bell, you know three Peter Bells; they are not one, but three; not three, but one. An awful mystery, which, after having caused torrents of blood, and having been hymned by groans enough to deafen the music of the spheres, is at length illustrated to the satisfaction of all parties in the theological world, by the nature of Mr. Peter Bell.

Peter is a polyhedric Peter, or a Peter with many sides. He changes colors like a chameleon, and his coat like a snake. He is a Proteus of a Peter. He was at first sublime, pathetic, impressive, profound; then dull; then prosy and dull; and now dull — oh so very dull! it is an ultra-legitimate dulness.

You will perceive that it is not necessary to consider Hell and the Devil as supernatural machinery. The whole scene of my epic is in "this world which is" — so Peter informed us before his conversion to *White Obi* —

“The world of all of us, and where  
We find our happiness, or not at all.”

Let me observe that I have spent six or seven days in composing this sublime piece; the orb of my moon-like genius has made the fourth part of its revolution round the dull earth which you inhabit, driving you mad, while it has retained its calmness and its splendor, and I have been fitting this its last phase “to occupy a permanent station in the literature of my country.”

Your works, indeed, dear Tom, sell better; but mine are far superior. The public is no judge; posterity sets all to rights.

Allow me to observe that so much has been written of Peter Bell, that the present history can be considered only, like the “Iliad,” as a continuation of that series of cyclic poems, which have already been candidates for bestowing immortality upon, at the same time that they receive it from, his character and adventures. In this point of view I have violated no rule of syntax in beginning my composition with a conjunction; the full stop which closes the poem continued by me being, like the full stops at the end of the “Iliad” and “Odyssey,” a full stop of a very qualified import.

Hoping that the immortality which you have given to the Fudges, you will receive from them; and in the firm expectation, that when London shall be an habitation of bitterns; when St. Paul’s and Westminster Abbey shall stand, shapeless and nameless ruins, in the midst of an unpeopled marsh; when the piers of Waterloo Bridge shall become the nuclei of islets of reeds and osiers, and cast the jagged shadows of their broken arches on the solitary stream, some transatlantic commentator will be weighing in the scales of some new and now unimagined system of criticism, the respective merits of the Bells and the Fudges, and their historians. I remain, dear Tom, yours sincerely,

MICHING MALLECHO.

December 1, 1819.

P.S. — Pray excuse the date of place; so soon as the profits of the publication come in, I mean to hire lodgings in a more respectable street.

## PROLOGUE.

PETER BELLS, one, two and three,  
O’er the wide world wandering be. —  
First, the antenatal Peter,  
Wrapt in weeds of the same metre,  
The so long predestined raiment  
Clothed in which to walk his way meant  
The second Peter; whose ambition  
Is to link the proposition,  
As the mean of two extremes —  
(This was learnt from Aldric’s themes)  
Shielding from the guilt of schism  
The orthodox syllogism;  
The First Peter — he who was  
Like the shadow in the glass  
Of the second, yet unripe,  
His substantial antitype. —  
Then came Peter Bell the Second,  
Who henceforward must be reckoned  
The body of a double soul,  
And that portion of the whole  
Without which the rest would seem  
Ends of a disjointed dream. —  
And the Third is he who has  
O’er the grave been forced to pass  
To the other side, which is, —  
Go and try else, — just like this.

Peter Bell the First was Peter  
Smugger, milder, softer, neater,  
Like the soul before it is  
Born from *that* world into *this*.  
The next Peter Bell was he,  
Predevote, like you and me,  
To good or evil as may come;  
His was the severer doom, —  
For he was an evil Cotter,  
And a polygamic Potter.<sup>1</sup>  
And the last is Peter Bell,  
Damned since our first parents fell,  
Damned eternally to Hell —  
Surely he deserves it well!

<sup>1</sup> The oldest scholiasts read —

A dodecagamic Potter.

This is at once more descriptive and more megalophonous, — but the alliteration of the text had captivated the vulgar ear of the herd of later commentators.

## PART THE FIRST.

## DEATH.

## I.

AND Peter Bell, when he had been  
With fresh-imported Hell-fire warmed,  
Grew serious — from his dress and mien  
'T was very plainly to be seen  
Peter was quite reformed.

## II.

His eyes turned up, his mouth turned  
down;  
His accent caught a nasal twang;  
He oiled his hair,<sup>1</sup> there might be heard  
The grace of God in every word  
Which Peter said or sang.

## III.

But Peter now grew old, and had  
An ill no doctor could unravel;  
His torments almost drove him mad; —  
Some said it was a fever bad —  
Some swore it was the gravel.

## IV.

His holy friends then came about,  
And with long preaching and per-  
suasion,  
Convinced the patient that, without  
The smallest shadow of a doubt,  
He was predestined to damnation.

## V.

They said — “Thy name is Peter Bell;  
Thy skin is of a brimstone hue;  
Alive or dead — ay, sick or well —  
The one God made to rhyme with hell;  
The other, I think, rhymes with you.”

<sup>1</sup> To those who have not duly appreciated the distinction between *Whale* and *Russia* oil, this attribute might rather seem to belong to the Dandy than the Evangelic. The effect, when to the windward, is indeed so similar, that it requires a subtle naturalist to discriminate the animals. They belong, however, to distinct genera.

## VI.

Then Peter set up such a yell! —  
The nurse, who with some water gruel  
Was climbing up the stairs, as well  
As her old legs could climb them — fell,  
And broke them both — the fall was  
cruel.

## VII.

The Parson from the casement leapt  
Into the lake of Windermere —  
And many an eel, — though no adept  
In God's right reason for it — kept  
Gnawing his kidneys half a year.

## VIII.

And all the rest rushed thro' the door,  
And tumbled over one another,  
And broke their skulls. — Upon the floor  
Meanwhile sat Peter Bell, and swore,  
And curst his father and his mother;

## IX.

And raved of God, and sin, and death,  
Blaspheming like an infidel;  
And said, that with his clenched teeth,  
He 'd seize the earth from underneath,  
And drag it with him down to hell.

## X.

As he was speaking came a spasm,  
And wrenched his gnashing teeth  
asunder;  
Like one who sees a strange phantasm  
He lay, — there was a silent chasm  
Between his upper jaw and under.

## XI.

And yellow death lay on his face;  
And a fixt smile that was not human  
Told, as I understand the case,  
That he was gone to the wrong place: —  
I heard all this from the old woman.

## XII.

Then there came down from Langdale  
Pike  
A cloud, with lightning, wind and hail;  
It swept over the mountains like  
An ocean, — and I heard it strike  
The woods and crags of Grasmere vale.

## XIII.

And I saw the black storm come  
 Nearer, minute after minute;  
 Its thunder made the cataracts dumb;  
 With hiss, and clash, and hollow hum,  
 It neared as if the Devil was in it.

## XIV.

The Devil *was* in it: — he had bought  
 Peter for half-a-crown; and when  
 The storm which bore him vanisht,  
 naught  
 That in the house that storm had caught  
 Was ever seen again.

## XV.

The gaping neighbors came next day —  
 They found all vanisht from the  
 shore:  
 The Bible, whence he used to pray,  
 Half scorcht under a hen-coop lay;  
 Smasht glass — and nothing more!

## PART THE SECOND.

## THE DEVIL.

## I.

THE DEVIL, I safely can aver,  
 Has neither hoof, nor tail, nor sting;  
 Nor is he, as some sages swear,  
 A spirit, neither here nor there,  
 In nothing — yet in everything.

## II.

He is — what we are; for sometimes  
 The Devil is a gentleman;  
 At others a bard bartering rhymes  
 For sack; a statesman spinning crimes;  
 A swindler, living as he can;

## III.

A thief, who cometh in the night,  
 With whole boots and net pantaloons,  
 Like some one whom it were not right  
 To mention; — or the luckless wight,  
 From whom he steals nine silver  
 spoons.

## IV.

But in this case he did appear  
 Like a slop-merchant from Wapping,  
 And with smug face, and eye severe,  
 On every side did perk and peer  
 Till he saw Peter dead or napping.

## V.

He had on an upper Benjamin  
 (For he was of the driving schism)  
 In the which he wrapt his skin  
 From the storm he travelled in,  
 For fear of rheumatism.

## VI.

He called the ghost out of the corse; —  
 It was exceedingly like Peter, —  
 Only its voice was hollow and hoarse —  
 It had a queerish look of course —  
 Its dress too was a little neater.

## VII.

The Devil knew not his name and lot;  
 Peter knew not that he was Bell:  
 Each had an upper stream of thought,  
 Which made all seem as it was not;  
 Fitting itself to all things well.

## VIII.

Peter thought he had parents dear,  
 Brothers, sisters, cousins, cronies,  
 In the fens of Lincolnshire;  
 He perhaps had found them there  
 Had he gone and boldly shown his

## IX.

Solemn phiz in his own village;  
 Where he thought oft when a boy  
 He 'd clomb the orchard walls to pillage  
 The produce of his neighbor's tillage,  
 With marvellous pride and joy.

## X.

And the Devil thought he had,  
 Mid the misery and confusion  
 Of an unjust war, just made  
 A fortune by the gainful trade  
 Of giving soldiers rations bad —  
 The world is full of strange delusion.



## XI.

That he had a mansion planned  
 In a square like Grosvenor Square,  
 That he was aping fashion, and  
 That he now came to Westmoreland  
 To see what was romantic there.

## XII.

And all this, though quite ideal, —  
 Ready at a breath to vanish, —  
 Was a state not more unreal  
 Than the peace he could not feel,  
 Or the care he could not banish.

## XIII.

After a little conversation,  
 The Devil told Peter, if he chose,  
 He'd bring him to the world of fashion  
 By giving him a situation  
 In his own service — and new clothes.

## XIV.

And Peter bowed, quite pleased and  
 proud,  
 And after waiting some few days  
 For a new livery — dirty yellow  
 Turned up with black — the wretched  
 fellow  
 Was bowed to Hell in the Devil's  
 chaise.

## PART THE THIRD.

## HELL.

## I.

HELL is a city much like London —  
 A populous and a smoky city;  
 There are all sorts of people undone,  
 And there is little or no fun done;  
 Small justice shown, and still less pity.

## II.

There is a Castles, and a Canning,  
 A Cobbett, and a Castlereagh;  
 All sorts of caitiff corpses planning  
 All sorts of cozening for trepanning  
 Corpses less corrupt than they.

## III.

There is a \* \* \*, who has lost  
 His wits, or sold them, none knows  
 which;  
 He walks about a double ghost,  
 And though as thin as Fraud almost —  
 Ever grows more grim and rich.

## IV.

There is a Chancery Court; a King;  
 A manufacturing mob; a set  
 Of thieves who by themselves are sent  
 Similar thieves to represent;  
 An army; and a public debt.

## V.

Which last is a scheme of paper money,  
 And means — being interpreted —  
 “Bees, keep your wax — give us the  
 honey,  
 And we will plant, while skies are sunny,  
 Flowers, which in winter serve in-  
 stead.”

## VI.

There is a great talk of revolution —  
 And a great chance of despotism —  
 German soldiers — camps — confusion —  
 Tumults — lotteries — rage — delusion —  
 Gin — suicide — and methodism.

## VII.

Taxes too, on wine and bread,  
 And meat, and beer, and tea, and  
 cheese,  
 From which those patriots pure are fed,  
 Who gorge before they reel to bed  
 The tenfold essence of all these.

## VIII.

There are mincing women, mewing,  
 (Like cats, who *amant miserè*,<sup>1</sup>)  
 Of their own virtue, and pursuing

<sup>1</sup> One of the attributes in Linnæus's description of the Cat. To a similar cause the caterwauling of more than one species of this genus is to be referred; — except, indeed, that the poor quadruped is compelled to quarrel with its own pleasures, whilst the biped is supposed only to quarrel with those of others.

Their gentler sisters to that ruin,  
Without which — what were chastity?'

## IX.

Lawyers — judges — old hobnobbers  
Are there — bailiffs — chancellors —  
Bishops — great and little robbers —  
Rhymesters — pamphleteers — stock-job-  
bers —  
Men of glory in the wars, —

## X.

Things whose trade is, over ladies  
To lean, and flirt, and stare, and  
simper,  
Till all that is divine in woman  
Grows cruel, courteous, smooth, in-  
human,  
Crucified 'twixt a smile and whimper.

## XI.

Thrusting, toiling, wailing, moiling,  
Frowning, preaching — such a riot!  
Each with never-ceasing labor,  
Whilst he thinks he cheats his neigh-  
bor,  
Cheating his own heart of quiet.

## XII.

And all these meet at levees; —  
Dinners convivial and political; —  
Suppers of epic poets; — teas,  
Where small talk dies in agonies; —  
Breakfasts professional and critical;

## XIII.

Lunches and snacks so aldermanic  
That one would furnish forth ten  
dinners,  
Where reigns a Cretan-tongued panic,  
Lest news Russ, Dutch, or Alemannic  
Should make some losers, and some  
winners; —

<sup>1</sup> What would this husk and excuse for a virtue be without its kernel prostitution, or the kernel prostitution without this husk of a virtue? I wonder the women of the town do not form an association, like the Society for the Suppression of Vice, for the support of what may be called the "King, Church, and Constitution" of their order. But this subject is almost too horrible for a joke.

## XIV.

At conversazioni — balls —  
Conventicles — and drawing-rooms —  
Courts of law — committees — calls  
Of a morning — clubs — book-stalls —  
Churches — masquerades — and tombs

## XV.

And this is Hell — and in this smother  
All are damnable and damned;  
Each one damning, damns the other;  
They are damned by one another,  
By none other are they damned.

## XVI.

'T is a lie to say, "God damns!"<sup>2</sup>  
Where was Heaven's Attorney Gen-  
eral  
When they first gave out such flams?  
Let there be an end of shams,  
They are mines of poisonous mineral.

## XVII.

Statesmen damn themselves to be  
Curst; and lawyers damn their souls  
To the auction of a fee;  
Churchmen damn themselves to see  
God's sweet love in burning coals.

## XVIII.

The rich are damned, beyond all cure,  
To taunt, and starve, and trample on  
The weak and wretched; and the poor  
Damn their broken hearts to endure  
Stripe on stripe, with groan on groan.

## XIX.

Sometimes the poor are damned indeed  
To take, — not means for being  
blest, —  
But Cobbett's snuff, revenge; that weed  
From which the worms that it doth feed  
Squeeze less than they before pos-  
sest.

<sup>2</sup> This libel on our national oath, and this accusation of all our countrymen of being in the daily practice of solemnly asseverating the most enormous falsehood, I fear deserves the notice of a more active Attorney General than that here alluded to.

## XX.

And some few, like we know who,  
 Damned — but God alone knows  
 why —  
 To believe their minds are given  
 To make this ugly Hell a Heaven;  
 In which faith they live and die.

## XXI.

Thus, as in a town, plague-stricken,  
 Each man be he sound or no  
 Must indifferently sicken;  
 As when day begins to thicken,  
 None knows a pigeon from a crow, —

## XXII.

So good and bad, sane and mad,  
 The oppressor and the opprest;  
 Those who weep to see what others  
 Smile to inflict upon their brothers;  
 Lovers, haters, worst and best;

## XXIII.

All are damned — they breathe an air,  
 Thick, infected, joy-dispelling;  
 Each pursues what seems most fair,  
 Mining like moles, through mind, and  
 there  
 Scoop palace-caverns vast, where Care  
 In thronèd state is ever dwelling.

## PART THE FOURTH.

## SIN.

## I.

Lo, Peter in Hell's Grosvenor Square,  
 A footman in the Devil's service!  
 And the misjudging world would swear  
 That every man in service there  
 To virtue would prefer vice.

## II.

But Peter, though now damned, was not  
 What Peter was before damnation.  
 Men oftentimes prepare a lot  
 Which, ere it finds them, is not what  
 Suits with their genuine station.

## III.

All things that Peter saw and felt  
 Had a peculiar aspect to him;  
 And when they came within the belt  
 Of his own nature, seemed to melt,  
 Like cloud to cloud, into him.

## IV.

And so the outward world uniting  
 To that within him, he became  
 Considerably uninviting  
 To those, who meditation slighting,  
 Were moulded in a different frame.

## V.

And he scorned them, and they scorned  
 him;  
 And he scorned all they did; and they  
 Did all that men of their own trim  
 Are wont to do to please their whim,  
 Drinking, lying, swearing, play.

## VI.

Such were his fellow-servants; thus  
 His virtue, like our own, was built  
 Too much on that indignant fuss  
 Hypocrite Pride stirs up in us  
 To bully one another's guilt.

## VII.

He had a mind which was somehow  
 At once circumference and centre  
 Of all he might or feel or know;  
 Nothing went ever out, altho'  
 Something did ever enter.

## VIII.

He had as much imagination  
 As a pint-pot; — he never could  
 Fancy another situation,  
 From which to dart his contemplation,  
 Than that wherein he stood.

## IX.

Yet his was individual mind,  
 And new created all he saw  
 In a new manner, and refined  
 Those new creations, and combined  
 Them, by a master-spirit's law.

## X.

Thus — tho' unimaginative —  
 An apprehension clear, intense,  
 Of his mind's work, had made alive  
 The things it wrought on; I believe  
 Wakening a sort of thought in sense.

## XI.

But from the first 't was Peter's drift  
 To be a kind of moral eunuch,  
 He toucht the hem of Nature's shift,  
 Felt faint — and never dared uplift  
 The closest, all-concealing tunic.

## XII.

She laught the while, with an arch  
 smile  
 And kist him with a sister's kiss,  
 And said — " My best Diogenes,  
 I love you well — but, if you please,  
 Tempt not again my deepest bliss.

## XIII.

" 'T is you are cold — for I, not coy,  
 Yield love for love, frank, warm, and  
 true;  
 And Burns, a Scottish peasant boy —  
 His errors prove it — knew my joy  
 More, learnèd friend, than you.

## XIV.

" *Bocca bacciata non perde ventura  
 Anzi rinnuova come fa la luna* : —  
 So thought Boccaccio, whose sweet words  
 might cure a  
 Male prude, like you, from what you  
 now endure, a  
 Low-tide in soul, like a stagnant  
 laguna."

## XV.

Then Peter rubbed his eyes severe,  
 And smoothed his spacious forehead  
 down,  
 With his broad palm; — 'twixt love and  
 fear,  
 He lookt, as he no doubt felt, queer,  
 And in his dream sate down.

## XVI.

The Devil was no uncommon creature;  
 A leaden-witted thief — just huddled  
 Out of the dross and scum of nature;  
 A toad-like lump of limb and feature,  
 With mind, and heart, and fancy  
 muddled.

## XVII.

He was that heavy, dull, cold thing,  
 The spirit of evil well may be :  
 A drone too base to have a sting;  
 Who gluts, and grimes his lazy wing,  
 And calls lust, luxury.

## XVIII.

Now he was quite the kind of wight  
 Round whom collect, at a fixt era,  
 Venison, turtle, hock, and claret, —  
 Good cheer — and those who come to  
 share it —  
 And best East Indian madeira !

## XIX.

It was his fancy to invite  
 Men of science, wit, and learning,  
 Who came to lend each other light;  
 He proudly thought that his gold's  
 might  
 Had set those spirits burning.

## XX.

And men of learning, science, wit,  
 Considered him as you and I  
 Think of some rotten tree, and sit  
 Lounging and dining under it,  
 Exposed to the wide sky.

## XXI.

And all the while, with loose fat smile,  
 The willing wretch sat winking there,  
 Believing 't was his power that made  
 That jovial scene — and that all paid  
 Homage to his unnoticed chair.

## XXII.

Tho' to be sure this place was Hell;  
 He was the Devil — and all they —  
 What though the claret circled well,  
 And wit, like ocean, rose and fell? —  
 Were damned eternally.

## PART THE FIFTH.

## GRACE.

## I.

AMONG the guests who often staid  
Till the Devil's petits-soupers,  
A man there came, fair as a maid,  
And Peter noted what he said,  
Standing behind his master's chair.

## II.

He was a mighty poet — and  
A subtle-souled psychologist;  
All things he seemed to understand,  
Of old or new — of sea or land —  
But his own mind — which was a mist.

## III.

This was a man who might have turned  
Hell into Heaven — and so in gladness  
A Heaven unto himself have earned;  
But he in shadows undiscerned  
Trusted, — and damned himself to  
madness.

## IV.

He spoke of poetry, and how  
“Divine it was — a light — a love —  
A spirit which like wind doth blow  
As it listeth, to and fro;  
A dew rained down from God above.

## v.

“A power which comes and goes like  
dream,  
And which none can ever trace —  
Heaven's light on earth — Truth's bright-  
est beam.”  
And when he ceased there lay the gleam  
Of those words upon his face.

## VI.

Now Peter, when he heard such talk,  
Would, heedless of a broken pate,  
Stand like a man asleep, or balk  
Some wishing guest of knife or fork,  
Or drop and break his master's plate.

## VII.

At night he oft would start and wake  
Like a lover, and began  
In a wild measure songs to make  
On moor, and glen, and rocky lake,  
And on the heart of man —

## VIII.

And on the universal sky —  
And the wide earth's bosom green, —  
And the sweet, strange mystery  
Of what beyond these things may lie,  
And yet remain unseen.

## IX.

For in his thought he visited  
The spots in which, ere dead and  
damned,  
He his wayward life had led;  
Yet knew not whence the thoughts were  
fed,  
Which thus his fancy crammed.

## X.

And these obscure remembrances  
Stirred such harmony in Peter,  
That whensoever he should please,  
He could speak of rocks and trees  
In poetic metre.

## XI.

For tho' it was without a sense  
Of memory, yet he remembered well  
Many a ditch and quick-set fence;  
Of lakes he had intelligence,  
He knew something of heath and fell.

## XII.

He had also dim recollections  
Of pedlars tramping on their rounds;  
Milk-pans and pails; and odd collections  
Of saws, and proverbs; and reflections  
Old parsons make in burying-grounds.

## XIII.

But Peter's verse was clear, and came  
Announcing from the frozen hearth  
Of a cold age, that none might tame  
The soul of that diviner flame  
It augured to the Earth.

## XIV.

Like gentle rains, on the dry plains,  
 Making that green which late was gray,  
 Or like the sudden moon, that stains  
 Some gloomy chamber's window panes  
 With a broad light like day.

## XV.

For language was in Peter's hand,  
 Like clay, while he was yet a potter;  
 And he made songs for all the land,  
 Sweet both to feel and understand,  
 As pipkins late to mountain cotter.

## XVI.

And Mr. —, the bookseller,  
 Gave twenty pounds for some; — then  
 scorning  
 A footman's yellow coat to wear,  
 Peter, too proud of heart, I fear,  
 Instantly gave the Devil warning.

## XVII.

Whereat the Devil took offence,  
 And swore in his soul a great oath  
 then,  
 "That for his damned impertinence,  
 He'd bring him to a proper sense  
 Of what was due to gentlemen!" —

## PART THE SIXTH.

## DAMNATION.

## I.

"O THAT mine enemy had written  
 A book!" — cried Job: — a fearful  
 curse;  
 If to the Arab, as the Briton,  
 'T was galling to be critic-bitten: —  
 The Devil to Peter wished no worse.

## II.

When Peter's next new book found vent,  
 The Devil to all the first Reviews  
 A copy of it slyly sent,  
 With five-pound note as compliment,  
 And this short notice — "Pray abuse."

## III.

Then *seriatim*, month and quarter,  
 Appeared such mad tirades. — One  
 said —  
 "Peter seduced Mrs. Foy's daughter,  
 Then drowned the mother in Ullswater,  
 The last thing as he went to bed."

## IV.

Another — "Let him shave his head!  
 Where's Dr. Willis? — Or is he joking?  
 What does the rascal mean or hope,  
 No longer imitating Pope,  
 In that barbarian Shakespeare pok-  
 ing?"

## V.

One more, "Is incest not enough?  
 And must there be adultery too?  
 Grace after meat? Miscreant and Liar!  
 Thief! Blackguard! Scoundrel! Fool!  
 Hell-fire  
 Is twenty times too good for you.

## VI.

"By that last book of yours WE think  
 You've double damned yourself to  
 scorn;  
 We warned you whilst yet on the brink  
 You stood. From your black name will  
 shrink  
 The babe that is unborn."

## VII.

All these Reviews the Devil made  
 Up in a parcel, which he had  
 Safely to Peter's house conveyed.  
 For carriage, tenpence Peter paid —  
 Untied them — read them — went half-  
 mad.

## VIII.

"What!" cried he, "this is my reward  
 For nights of thought, and days of toil?  
 Do poets, but to be abhorred  
 By men of whom they never heard,  
 Consume their spirits' oil?"

## IX.

“What have I done to them? — and who  
Is Mrs. Foy? ’T is very cruel  
To speak of me and Betty so!  
Adultery! God defend me! Oh!  
I’ve half a mind to fight a duel.

## X.

“Or,” cried he, a grave look collecting,  
“Is it my genius, like the moon,  
Sets those who stand her face inspecting,  
That face within their brain reflecting,  
Like a crazed bell-chime, out of tune?”

## XI.

For Peter did not know the town,  
But thought, as country readers do,  
For half a guinea or a crown,  
He bought oblivion or renown  
From God’s own voice<sup>1</sup> in a review.

## XII.

All Peter did on this occasion  
Was, writing some sad stuff in prose.  
It is a dangerous invasion  
When poets criticise; their station  
Is to delight, not pose.

## XIII.

The Devil then sent to Leipsic fair,  
For Born’s translation of Kant’s book;  
A world of words, tail foremost, where  
Right — wrong — false — true — and foul  
— and fair,  
As in a lottery-wheel are shook.

## XIV.

Five thousand crammed octavo pages  
Of German psychologies, — he  
Who his *furor verborum* assuages  
Thereon, deserves just seven months’  
wages  
More than will e’er be due to me.

<sup>1</sup> *Vox populi, vox dei.* As Mr. Godwin truly observes of a more famous saying, *of some merit as a popular maxim, but totally destitute of philosophical accuracy.*

## XV.

I lookt on them nine several days,  
And then I saw that they were bad;  
A friend, too, spoke in their dispraise, —  
He never read them; — with amaze  
I found Sir William Drummond had.

## XVI.

When the book came, the Devil sent  
It to P. Verbovale,<sup>2</sup> Esquire,  
With a brief note of compliment,  
By that night’s Carlisle mail. It went,  
And set his soul on fire.

## XVII.

Fire, which *ex luce præbens fumum*,  
Made him beyond the bottom see  
Of truth’s clear well — when I and you  
Ma’am,  
Go, as we shall do, *subter humum*,  
We may know more than he.

## XVIII.

Now Peter ran to seed in soul  
Into a walking paradox;  
For he was neither part nor whole,  
Nor good, nor bad — nor knave nor fool,  
— Among the woods and rocks.

## XIX.

Furious he rode, where late he ran,  
Lashing and spurring his tame hobby;  
Turned to a formal puritan,  
A solemn and unsexual man, —  
He half believed *White Obi*.

## XX.

This steed in vision he would ride,  
High trotting over nine-inch bridges,  
With Flibbertigibbet, imp of pride,  
Mocking and mowing by his side —  
A mad-brained goblin for a guide —  
Over corn-fields, gates, and hedges.

<sup>2</sup> Quasi, *Qui valet verba*: — *i.e.* all the words which have been, are, or may be expended by, for, against, with, or on him. A sufficient proof of the utility of this history. Peter’s progenitor who selected this name seems to have possessed a *pure anticipated cognition* of the nature and modesty of this ornament of his posterity.

## XXI.

After these ghastly rides, he came  
 Home to his heart, and found from  
 thence  
 Much stolen of its accustomed flame;  
 His thoughts grew weak, drowsy, and  
 lame  
 Of their intelligence.

## XXII.

To Peter's view, all seemed one hue;  
 He was no Whig, he was no Tory;  
 No Deist and no Christian he; —  
 He got so subtle, that to be  
 Nothing was all his glory.

## XXIII.

One single point in his belief  
 From his organization sprung,  
 The heart-enrooted faith, the chief  
 Ear in his doctrines' blighted sheaf,  
 That "happiness is wrong;"

## XXIV.

So thought Calvin and Dominic;  
 So think their fierce successors, who  
 Even now would neither stint nor stick  
 Our flesh from off our bones to pick,  
 If they might "do their do."

## XXV.

His morals thus were undermined: —  
 The old Peter — the hard, old Potter  
 Was born anew within his mind;  
 He grew dull, harsh, sly, unrefined,  
 As when he tramped beside the Otter.<sup>1</sup>

## XXVI.

In the death hues of agony  
 Lambently flashing from a fish,  
 Now Peter felt amused to see  
 Shades like a rainbow's rise and flee,  
 Mixt with a certain hungry wish.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A famous river in the new Atlantis of the  
 Dynastophylic Pantisocratists.

<sup>2</sup> See the description of the beautiful colors  
 produced during the agonizing death of a number  
 of trout, in the fourth part of a long poem in  
 blank verse, published within a few years. That

## XXVII.

So in his Country's dying face  
 He lookt — and lovely as she lay,  
 Seeking in vain his last embrace,  
 Wailing her own abandoned case,  
 With hardened sneer he turned away:

## XXVIII.

And coolly to his own soul said; —  
 'Do you not think that we might  
 make  
 A poem on her when she's dead: —  
 Or, no — a thought is in my head —  
 Her shroud for a new sheet I'll take.

## XXIX.

"My wife wants one. — Let who will  
 bury  
 This mangled corpse! And I and you,  
 My dearest Soul, will then make merry,  
 As the Prince Regent did with Sherry, —  
 Ay — and at last desert me too."

## XXX.

And so his Soul would not be gay,  
 But moaned within him; like a fawn  
 Moaning within a cave, it lay  
 Wounded and wasting, day by day,  
 Till all its life of life was gone.

## XXXI.

As troubled skies stain waters clear,  
 The storm in Peter's heart and mind  
 Now made his verses dark and queer:  
 They were the ghosts of what they were,  
 Shaking dim grave-clothes in the wind.

poem contains curious evidence of the gradual  
 hardening of a strong but circumscribed sensi-  
 bility, of the perversion of a penetrating but  
 panic-stricken understanding. The author might  
 have derived a lesson which he had probably for-  
 gotten from these sweet and sublime verses:

"This lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,  
 Taught both by what she \* shows and what  
 conceals,  
 Never to blend our pleasure or our pride  
 With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

\* Nature.



## XXXII.

For he now raved enormous folly,  
Of Baptisms, Sunday-schools, and  
Graves,  
'T would make George Colman melan-  
choly,  
To have heard him, like a male Molly,  
Chanting those stupid staves.

## XXXIII.

Yet the Reviews, who heaped abuse  
On Peter while he wrote for freedom,  
So soon as in his song they spy,  
The folly which soothes tyranny,  
Praise him, for those who feed 'em.

## XXXIV.

"He was a man, too great to scan; —  
A planet lost in truth's keen rays: —  
His virtue, awful and prodigious; —  
He was the most sublime, religious,  
Pure-minded Poet of these days."

## XXXV.

As soon as he read that, cried Peter,  
"Eureka! I have found the way  
To make a better thing of metre  
Than e'er was made by living creature  
Up to this blessed day."

## XXXVI.

Then Peter wrote odes to the Devil; —  
In one of which he meekly said:  
"May Carnage and Slaughter,  
Thy niece and thy daughter,  
May Rapine and Famine,  
Thy gorge ever cramming,  
Glut thee with living and dead!

## XXXVII.

"May death and damnation,  
And consternation,  
Flit up from hell with pure intent!  
Slash them at Manchester,  
Glasgow, Leeds, and Chester;  
Drench all with blood from Avon to  
Trent.

## XXXVIII.

"Let thy body-guard yeomen,  
Hew down babes and women,  
And laugh with bold triumph till Heaven  
be rent.  
When Moloch in Jewry,  
Muncht children with fury,  
It was thou, Devil, dining with pure in-  
tent."<sup>1</sup>

## PART THE SEVENTH.

## DOUBLE DAMNATION.

## I.

THE Devil now knew his proper cue. —  
Soon as he read the ode, he drove  
To his friend Lord MacMurderchouse's,  
A man of interest in both houses,  
And said: — "For money or for love,

## II.

"Pray find some cure or sinecure;  
To feed from the superfluous taxes,  
A friend of ours — a poet — fewer  
Have fluttered tamer to the lure  
Than he." His lordship stands and  
racks his

## III.

Stupid brains, while one might count  
As many beads as he had boroughs, —  
At length replies; from his mean front,  
Like one who rubs out an account,  
Smoothing away the unmeaning fur-  
rows:

## IV.

"It happens fortunately, dear Sir,  
I can. I hope I need require

<sup>1</sup> It is curious to observe how often extremes meet. Cobbett and Peter use the same language for a different purpose: Peter is indeed a sort of metrical Cobbett. Cobbett is, however, more mischievous than Peter, because he pollutes a holy and now unconquerable cause with the principles of legitimate murder; whilst the other only makes a bad one ridiculous and odious.

If either Peter or Cobbett should see this note, each will feel more indignation at being compared to the other than at any censure implied in the moral perversion laid to their charge.

No pledge from you, that he will stir  
In our affairs; — like Oliver,  
That he 'll be worthy of his hire."

## V.

These words exchanged, the news sent off  
To Peter, home the Devil hied, —  
Took to his bed; he had no cough,  
No doctor, — meat and drink enough, —  
Yet that same night he died.

## VI.

The Devil's corpse was leaded down;  
His decent heirs enjoyed his pelf,  
Mourning-coaches, many a one,  
Followed his hearse along the town:—  
Where was the Devil himself?

## VII.

When Peter heard of his promotion,  
His eyes grew like two stars for bliss:  
There was a bow of sleek devotion,  
Engendering in his back; each motion  
Seemed a Lord's shoe to kiss.

## VIII.

He hired a house, bought plate, and  
made  
A genteel drive up to his door,  
With sifted gravel neatly laid, —  
As if defying all who said,  
Peter was ever poor.

## IX.

But a disease soon struck into  
The very life and soul of Peter —  
He walkt about — slept — had the hue  
Of health upon his cheeks — and few  
Dug better — none a heartier eater.

## X.

And yet a strange and horrid curse  
Clung upon Peter, night and day,  
Month after month the thing grew worse,  
And deadlier than in this my verse,  
I can find strength to say.

## XI.

Peter was dull — he was at first  
Dull — oh, so dull — so very dull!

Whether he talkt, wrote, or rehearst —  
Still with this dulness was he curst —  
Dull — beyond all conception — dull.

## XII.

No one could read his books — no mortal,  
But a few natural friends, would hear  
him;  
The parson came not near his portal;  
His state was like that of the immortal  
Described by Swift — no man could  
bear him.

## XIII.

His sister, wife, and children yawned,  
With a long, slow, and drear ennui,  
All human patience far beyond;  
Their hopes of Heaven each would have  
pawned,  
Anywhere else to be.

## XIV.

But in his verse, and in his prose,  
The essence of his dulness was  
Concentred and compressed so close,  
'T would have made Guatimozin doze  
On his red gridiron of brass.

## XV.

A printer's boy, folding those pages,  
Fell slumbrously upon one side;  
Like those famed seven who slept three  
ages.  
To wakeful frenzy's vigil rages,  
As opiates, were the same applied.

## XVI.

Even the Reviewers who were hired  
To do the work of his reviewing,  
With adamantine nerves, grew tired;—  
Gaping and torpid they retired,  
To dream of what they should be  
doing.

## XVII.

And worse and worse, the drowsy curse  
Yawned in him, till it grew a pest —  
A wide contagious atmosphere,  
Creeping like cold through all things  
near;  
A power to infect and to infest.

## XVIII.

His servant-maids and dogs grew dull;  
 His kitten late a sportive elf,  
 The woods and lakes, so beautiful,  
 Of dim stupidity were full,  
 All grew dull as Peter's self.

## XIX.

The earth under his feet — the springs,  
 Which lived within it a quick life,  
 The air, the winds of many wings,  
 That fan it with new murmurings,  
 Were dead to their harmonious strife.

## XX.

The birds and beasts within the wood,  
 The insects, and each creeping thing,  
 Were now a silent multitude;  
 Love's work was left unwrought — no  
 brood  
 Near Peter's house took wing.

## XXI.

And every neighboring cottager  
 Stupidly yawned upon the other:  
 No jack-ass brayed; no little cur  
 Cockt up his ears; — no man would  
 stir  
 To save a dying mother.

## XXII.

Yet all from that charmed district went  
 But some half-idiot and half-knave,  
 Who rather than pay any rent,  
 Would live with marvellous content,  
 Over his father's grave.

## XXIII.

No bailiff dared within that space,  
 For fear of the dull charm, to enter;  
 A man would bear upon his face,  
 For fifteen months in any case,  
 The yawn of such a venture.

## XXIV.

Seven miles above — below — around —  
 This pest of dulness holds its sway;  
 A ghastly life without a sound;  
 To Peter's soul the spell is bound —  
 How should it ever pass away?

NOTE ON PETER BELL THE  
THIRD, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

IN this new edition I have added *Peter Bell the Third*. A critique on Wordsworth's *Peter Bell* reached us at Leghorn, which amused Shelley exceedingly, and suggested this poem.

I need scarcely observe that nothing personal to the author of *Peter Bell* is intended in this poem. No man ever admired Wordsworth's poetry more; — he read it perpetually, and taught others to appreciate its beauties. This poem is, like all others written by Shelley, ideal. He conceived the idealism of a poet — a man of lofty and creative genius — quitting the glorious calling of discovering and announcing the beautiful and good, to support and propagate ignorant prejudices and pernicious errors; imparting to the unenlightened, not that ardor for truth and spirit of toleration which Shelley looked on as the sources of the moral improvement and happiness of mankind, but false and injurious opinions, that evil was good, and that ignorance and force were the best allies of purity and virtue. His idea was that a man gifted, even as transcendently as the author of *Peter Bell*, with the highest qualities of genius, must, if he fostered such errors, be infected with dulness. This poem was written as a warning — not as a narration of the reality. He was unacquainted personally with Wordsworth, or with Coleridge (to whom he alludes in the fifth part of the poem), and therefore, I repeat, his poem is purely ideal; — it contains something of criticism on the compositions of those great poets, but nothing injurious to the men themselves.

No poem contains more of Shelley's peculiar views with regard to the errors into which many of the wisest have fallen, and the pernicious effects of certain opinions on society. Much of it is beautifully written: and, though, like the burlesque drama of *Swellfoot*, it must be looked on as a plaything, it has so much merit and poetry — so much of *himself* in it — that it cannot fail to interest greatly, and by right belongs to the world for whose instruction and benefit it was written.

## LETTER TO MARIA GISBORNE.

LEGHORN, *July 1, 1820.*

THE spider spreads her webs, whether  
she be

In poet's tower, cellar, or barn, or tree;  
The silk-worm in the dark green mul-  
berry leaves

His winding sheet and cradle ever  
weaves;

So I, a thing whom moralists call worm,  
Sit spinning still round this decaying  
form,

From the fine threads of rare and subtle  
thought —

No net of words in garish colors wrought  
To catch the idle buzzers of the day —  
But a soft cell, where when that fades  
away,

Memory may clothe in wings my living  
name

And feed it with the asphodels of fame,  
Which in those hearts which most re-  
member me

Grow, making love an immortality.

Whoever should behold me now, I  
wist,

Would think I were a mighty mechanist,  
Bent with sublime Archimedean art  
To breathe a soul into the iron heart  
Of some machine portentous, or strange  
gin,

Which by the force of figured spells  
might win

Its way over the sea, and sport therein;  
For round the walls are hung dread  
engines, such

As Vulcan never wrought for Jove to  
clutch

Ixion or the Titan: — or the quick  
Wit of that man of God, St. Dominic,  
To convince Atheist, Turk, or Heretic,  
Or those in philanthropic council met,  
Who thought to pay some interest for  
the debt

They owed to Jesus Christ for their sal-  
vation,

By giving a faint foretaste of damnation  
To Shakespeare, Sidney, Spenser, and  
the rest

Who made our land an island of the blest,

When lamp-like Spain, who now relumes  
her fire

On Freedom's hearth, grew dim with  
Empire: —

With thumbscrews, wheels, with tooth  
and spike and jag,

Which fishers found under the utmost  
crag

Of Cornwall and the storm-encompast  
isles,

Where to the sky the rude sea rarely  
smiles

Unless in treacherous wrath, as on the  
morn

When the exulting elements in scorn  
Satiated with destroyed destruction, lay

Sleeping in beauty on their mangled  
prey,

As panthers sleep; — and other strange  
and dread

Magical forms the brick floor over-  
spread, —

Proteus transformed to metal did not  
make

More figures, or more strange; nor did  
he take

Such shapes of unintelligible brass,  
Or heap himself in such a horrid mass

Of tin and iron not to be understood;  
And forms of unimaginable wood,

To puzzle Tubal Cain and all his brood:  
Great screws, and cones, and wheels,

and grooved blocks,  
The elements of what will stand the

shocks  
Of wave and wind and time. — Upon  
the table

More knacks and quips there be than I  
am able

To catalogize in this verse of mine: —  
A pretty bowl of wood — not full of

wine,  
But quicksilver; that dew which the  
gnomes drink

When at their subterranean toil they  
swink,

Pledging the demons of the earthquake,  
who

Reply to them in lava — cry halloo!  
And call out to the cities o'er their  
head, —

Roofs, towers, and shrines, the dying  
and the dead.

Crash through the chinks of earth — and  
 then all quaff  
 Another rouse, and hold their sides and  
 laugh.  
 This quicksilver no gnome has drunk —  
 within  
 The walnut bowl it lies, veinèd and thin,  
 In color like the wake of light that  
 stains  
 The Tuscan deep, when from the moist  
 moon rains  
 The inmost shower of its white fire —  
 the breeze  
 Is still — blue heaven smiles over the  
 pale seas.  
 And in this bowl of quicksilver — for I  
 Yield to the impulse of an infancy  
 Outlasting manhood — I have made to  
 float  
 A rude idealism of a paper boat: —  
 A hollow screw with cogs — Henry will  
 know  
 The thing I mean and laugh at me, — if so  
 He fears not I should do more mischief.  
 — Next  
 Lie bills and calculations much perplext,  
 With steam-boats, frigates, and ma-  
 chinery quaint  
 Traced over them in blue and yellow  
 paint.  
 Then comes a range of mathematical  
 Instruments, for plans nautical and  
 statical;  
 A heap of rosin, a queer broken glass  
 With ink in it; — a china cup that was  
 What it will never be again, I think,  
 A thing from which sweet lips were wont  
 to drink  
 The liquor doctors rail at — and which I  
 Will quaff in spite of them — and when  
 we die  
 We 'll toss up who died first of drinking  
 tea,  
 And cry out, — heads or tails? where'er  
 we be.  
 Near that a dusty paint box, some odd  
 hooks,  
 A half-burnt match, an ivory block,  
 three books,  
 Where conic sections, spherics, loga-  
 rithms,  
 To great Laplace, from Saunderson and  
 Sims,

Lie heapt in their harmonious disarray  
 Of figures, — disentangle them who may.  
 Baron de Tott's Memoirs beside them lie,  
 And some odd volumes of old chemistry.  
 Near those a most inexplicable thing,  
 With lead in the middle — I'm conjectur-  
 ing  
 How to make Henry understand; but  
 no —  
 I 'll leave, as Spenser says, with many  
 mo,  
 This secret in the pregnant womb of  
 time,  
 Too vast a matter for so weak a rhyme.

And here like some weird Archimage  
 sit I,  
 Plotting dark spells, and devilish  
 enginery,  
 The self-impelling steam-wheels of the  
 mind  
 Which pump up oaths from clergymen,  
 and grind  
 The gentle spirit of our meek reviews  
 Into a powdery foam of salt abuse,  
 Ruffling the ocean of their self-con-  
 tent; —  
 I sit — and smile or sigh as is my bent,  
 But not for them — Libeccio rushes  
 round  
 With an inconstant and an idle sound,  
 I heed him more than them — the  
 thunder-smoke  
 Is gathering on the mountains, like a  
 cloak  
 Folded athwart their shoulders broad and  
 bare;  
 The ripe corn under the undulating air  
 Undulates like an ocean; — and the  
 vines  
 Are trembling wide in all their trellist  
 lines —  
 The murmur of the awakening sea doth  
 fill  
 The empty pauses of the blast; — the  
 hill  
 Looks hoary through the white electric  
 rain,  
 And from the glens beyond, in sullen  
 strain,  
 The interrupted thunder howls; above  
 One chasm of heaven smiles, like the eye  
 of Love

On the unquiet world; — while such things are,  
 How could one worth your friendship heed the war  
 Of worms? the shriek of the world's carrion jays,  
 Their censure, or their wonder, or their praise?

You are not here! the quaint witch Memory sees  
 In vacant chairs, your absent images,  
 And points where once you sat, and now should be  
 But are not. — I demand if ever we  
 Shall meet as then we met; — and she replies,  
 Veiling in awe her second-sighted eyes;  
 "I know the past alone — but summon home  
 My sister Hope, — she speaks of all to come."

But I, an old diviner, who knew well  
 Every false verse of that sweet oracle,  
 Turned to the sad enchantress once again,  
 And sought a respite from my gentle pain,

In citing every passage o'er and o'er  
 Of our communion — how on the sea-shore

We watcht the ocean and the sky together,  
 Under the roof of blue Italian weather;  
 How I ran home through last year's thunder-storm,

And felt the transverse lightning linger warm

Upon my cheek — and how we often made

Feasts for each other, where good will outweighed

The frugal luxury of our country cheer,  
 As well it might, were it less firm and clear .

Than ours must ever be; — and how we spun

A shroud of talk to hide us from the sun  
 Of this familiar life, which seems to be  
 But is not, — or is but quaint mockery  
 Of all we would believe, and sadly blame  
 The jarring and inexplicable frame  
 Of this wrong world: — and then anatomize

The purposes and thoughts of men whose eyes  
 Were closed in distant years; — or widely guess

The issue of the earth's great business,  
 When we shall be as we no longer are —

Like babbling gossips safe, who hear the war

Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not; — or how

You listened to some interrupted flow  
 Of visionary rhyme, — in joy and pain  
 Struck from the inmost fountains of my brain,

With little skill perhaps; — or how we sought

Those deepest wells of passion or of thought

Wrought by wise poets in the waste of years,

Staining their sacred waters with our tears;

Quenching a thirst ever to be renewed!  
 Or how I, wisest lady! then indued

The language of a land which now is free,

And winged with thoughts of truth and majesty,

Flits round the tyrant's sceptre like a cloud,

And bursts the peopled prisons, and cries aloud,

"My name is Legion!" — that majestic tongue

Which Calderon over the desert flung  
 Of ages and of nations; and which

found  
 An echo in our hearts, and with the sound

Startled oblivion; — thou wert then to me  
 As is a nurse — when inarticulately

A child would talk as its grown parents do.

If living winds the rapid clouds pursue,  
 If hawks chase doves through the ethereal way,

Huntsmen the innocent deer, and beasts their prey,

Why should not we rouse with the spirit's blast

Out of the forest of the pathless past  
 These recollected pleasures?

You are now  
 In London, that great sea, whose ebb  
 and flow  
 At once is deaf and loud, and on the  
 shore  
 Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for  
 more.  
 Yet in its depth what treasures! You  
 will see  
 That which was Godwin, — greater none  
 than he  
 Tho' fallen — and fallen on evil times —  
 to stand  
 Among the spirits of our age and land,  
 Before the dread tribunal of *to come*  
 The foremost, — while Rebuke cowers  
 pale and dumb.  
 You will see Coleridge — he who sits  
 obscure  
 In the exceeding lustre, and the pure  
 Intense irradiation of a mind,  
 Which, with its own internal lightning  
 blind,  
 Flags wearily through darkness and de-  
 spair —  
 A cloud-encircled meteor of the air,  
 A hooded eagle among blinking owls. —  
 You will see Hunt — one of those happy  
 souls  
 Which are the salt of the earth, and  
 without whom  
 This world would smell like what it is —  
 a tomb;  
 Who is, what others seem; his room no  
 doubt  
 Is still adorned by many a cast from  
 Shout,  
 With graceful flowers tastefully placed  
 about;  
 And coronals of bay from ribbons hung,  
 And brighter wreaths in neat disorder  
 flung;  
 The gifts of the most learn'd among  
 some dozens  
 Of female friends, sisters-in-law, and  
 cousins.  
 And there is he with his eternal puns,  
 Which beat the dullest brain for smiles,  
 like duns  
 Thundering for money at a poet's door;  
 Alas! it is no use to say, "I'm poor!"  
 Or oft in graver mood, when he will look  
 Things wiser than were ever read in book,

Except in Shakespeare's wisest tender-  
 ness. —  
 You will see Hogg, — and I cannot ex-  
 press  
 His virtues, — though I know that they  
 are great,  
 Because he locks, then barricades the  
 gate  
 Within which they inhabit; — of his wit  
 And wisdom, you'll cry out when you  
 are bit.  
 He is a pearl within an oyster shell,  
 One of the richest of the deep; — and  
 there  
 Is English Peacock with his mountain  
 fair  
 Turned into a Flamingo; — that shy bird  
 That gleams i' the Indian air — have you  
 not heard  
 When a man marries, dies, or turns Hin-  
 doo,  
 His best friends hear no more of him? —  
 but you  
 Will see him, and will like him too, I  
 hope,  
 With the milk-white Snowdonian Ante-  
 lope  
 Matcht with this camelopard — his fine  
 wit  
 Makes such a wound; the knife is lost  
 in it;  
 A strain too learn'd for a shallow age,  
 Too wise for selfish bigots; let his page  
 Which charms the chosen spirits of the  
 time,  
 Fold itself up for the serener clime  
 Of years to come, and find its recom-  
 pense  
 In that just expectation. — Wit and sense,  
 Virtue and human knowledge; all that  
 might  
 Make this dull world a business of de-  
 light,  
 Are all combined in Horace Smith. —  
 And these,  
 With some exceptions, which I need not  
 tease  
 Your patience by descanting on, — are  
 all  
 You and I know in London.

I recall  
 My thoughts, and bid you look upon the  
 night.

As water does a sponge, so the moon-  
light  
Fills the void, hollow, universal air —  
What see you?—unpavilioned heaven is  
fair  
Whether the moon, into her chamber  
gone,  
Leaves midnight to the golden stars, or  
wan  
Climbs with diminisht beams the azure  
steep;  
Or whether clouds sail o'er the inverse  
deep,  
Piloted by the many-wandering blast,  
And the rare stars rush thro' them dim  
and fast: —  
All this is beautiful in every land. —  
But what see you beside?— a shabby  
stand  
Of Hackney coaches — a brick house or  
wall  
Fencing some lonely court, white with  
the scrawl  
Of our unhappy politics; — or worse —  
A wretched woman reeling by, whose  
curse  
Mixt with the watchman's, partner of  
her trade,  
You must accept in place of serenade —  
Or yellow-haired Pollonia murmuring  
To Henry, some unutterable thing.  
I see a chaos of green leaves and fruit  
Built round dark caverns, even to the  
root  
Of the living stems that feed them — in  
whose bowers  
There sleep in their dark dew the folded  
flowers;  
Beyond, the surface of the unsickled corn  
Trembles not in the slumbering air, and  
borne  
In circles quaint, and ever-changing  
dance,  
Like winged stars the fire-flies flash and  
glance,  
Pale in the open moonshine, but each one  
Under the dark trees seems a little sun,  
A meteor tamed; a fixt star gone astray  
From the silver regions of the milky  
way; —  
Afar the Contadino's song is heard,  
Rude, but made sweet by distance — and  
a bird

Which cannot be the Nightingale, and  
yet  
I know none else that sings so sweet as it  
At this late hour; — and then all is  
still —  
Now Italy or London, which you will!

Next winter you must pass with me;  
I 'll have  
My house by that time turned into a grave  
Of dead despondence and low-thoughted  
care,  
And all the dreams which our tormentors  
are;  
Oh! that Hunt, Hogg, Peacock, and  
Smith were there,  
With everything belonging to them fair! —  
We will have books, Spanish, Italian,  
Greek;  
And ask one week to make another week  
As like his father, as I 'm unlike mine,  
Which is not his fault, as you may divine.  
Though we eat little flesh and drink no  
wine,  
Yet let 's be merry: we 'll have tea and  
toast;  
Custards for supper, and an endless host  
Of syllabubs and jellies and mince-pies,  
And other such lady-like luxuries, —  
Feasting on which we will philosophize!  
And we 'll have fires out of the Grand  
Duke's wood,  
To thaw the six weeks' winter in our  
blood.  
And then we 'll talk; — what shall we talk  
about?  
Oh! there are themes enough for many a  
bout  
Of thought-entangled descant; — as to  
nerves —  
With cones and parallelograms and curves  
I've sworn to strangle them if once they  
dare  
To bother me — when you are with me  
there.  
And they shall never more sip laudanum,  
From Helicon or Himeros;<sup>1</sup> — well,  
come,  
And in despite of God and of the devil,  
We 'll make our friendly philosophic revel

<sup>1</sup> *Ἴμερος*, from which the river Himeras was named, is, with some slight shade of difference, a synonym of Love.



Outlast the leafless time; till buds and  
flowers  
Warn the obscure inevitable hours,  
Sweet meeting by sad parting to renew; —  
“To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures  
new.”

## THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

TO MARY.

(ON HER OBJECTING TO THE FOLLOWING  
POEM, UPON THE SCORE OF ITS CON-  
TAINING NO HUMAN INTEREST.)

## I.

How, my dear Mary, are you critic-bit-  
ten,  
(For vipers kill, tho' dead,) by some  
review,  
That you condemn these verses I have  
written,  
Because they tell no story, false or true!  
What, tho' no mice are caught by a  
young kitten,  
May it not leap and play as grown cats  
do,  
Till its claws come? Prithee, for this one  
time,  
Content thee with a visionary rhyme.

## II.

What hand would crush the silken-wingèd  
fly,  
The youngest of inconstant April's min-  
ions,  
Because it cannot climb the purest sky,  
Where the swan sings, amid the sun's  
dominions?  
Not thine. Thou knowest 't is its doom  
to die,  
When day shall hide within her twi-  
light pinions  
The lucent eyes, and the eternal smile,  
Serene as thine, which lent it life awhile.

## III.

To thy fair feet a wingèd Vision came,  
Whose date should have been longer  
than a day,

And o'er thy head did beat its wings for  
fame,  
And in thy sight its fading plumes  
display;  
The watery bow burned in the evening  
flame,  
But the shower fell, the swift sun went  
his way —  
And that is dead. Oh, let me not be-  
lieve  
That any thing of mine is fit to live!

## IV.

Wordsworth informs us he was nineteen  
years  
Considering and retouching Peter  
Bell;  
Watering his laurels with the killing tears  
Of slow, dull care, so that their roots  
to hell  
Might pierce, and their wide branches  
blot the spheres  
Of heaven, with dewy leaves and  
flowers; this well  
May be, for Heaven and Earth conspire  
to foil  
The over-busy gardener's blundering toil.

## V.

My Witch indeed is not so sweet a  
creature  
As Ruth or Lucy, whom his graceful  
praise  
Clothes for our grandsons — but she  
matches Peter,  
Tho' he took nineteen years, and  
she three days  
In dressing. Light the vest of flowing  
metre  
She wears; he, proud as dandy with  
his stays,  
Has hung upon his wiry limbs a dress  
Like King Lear's "loopt and windowed  
raggedness."

## VI.

If you strip Peter, you will see a fellow,  
Scorcht by Hell's hyperequatorial cli-  
mate  
Into a kind of a sulphureous yellow:

A lean mark, hardly fit to fling a  
rhyme at;  
In shape a Scaramouch, in hue Othello.  
If you unveil my Witch, no priest nor  
primate  
Can shrive you of that sin, —if sin there  
be  
In love, when it becomes idolatry.

## THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

### I.

BEFORE those cruel Twins, whom at one  
birth  
Incestuous Change bore to her father  
Time,  
Error and Truth, had hunted from the  
Earth  
All those bright natures which adorned  
its prime,  
And left us nothing to believe in, worth  
The pains of putting into learned  
rhyme,  
A Lady-Witch there lived on Atlas' moun-  
tain  
Within a cavern, by a secret fountain.

### II.

Her mother was one of the Atlantides:  
The all-beholding Sun had ne'er behol-  
den  
In his wide voyage o'er continents and  
seas  
So fair a creature, as she lay enfolden  
In the warm shadow of her loveliness; —  
He kist her with his beams, and  
made all golden  
The chamber of gray rock in which she  
lay —  
She, in that dream of joy, dissolved  
away.

### III.

'Tis said, she first was changed into a  
vapor,  
And then into a cloud, such clouds as  
flit,  
Like splendor-wingèd moths about a  
taper,  
Round the red west when the sun dies  
in it:  
And then into a meteor, such as caper

On hill-tops when the moon is in a  
fit:  
Then, into one of those mysterious stars  
Which hide themselves between the  
Earth and Mars.

### IV.

Ten times the Mother of the Months had  
bent  
Her bow beside the folding-star, and  
bidden  
With that bright sign the billows to in-  
dent  
The sea-deserted sand — like children,  
chidden,  
At her command they ever came and  
went —  
Since in that cave a dewy splendor  
hidden  
Took shape and motion: with the living  
form  
Of this embodied Power, the cave grew  
warm.

### V.

A lovely lady garmented in light  
From her own beauty — deep her eyes,  
as are  
Two openings of unfathomable night  
Seen thro' a Temple's cloven roof; —  
her hair  
Dark — the dim brain whirls dizzy with  
delight,  
Picturing her form; her soft smiles  
shone afar,  
And her low voice was heard like love,  
and drew  
All living things towards this wonder new.

### VI.

And first the spotted camelopard came,  
And then the wise and fearless ele-  
phant;  
Then the sly serpent, in the golden  
flame  
Of his own volumes interwolved; — all  
gaunt  
And sanguine beasts her gentle looks  
made tame.  
They drank before her at her sacred  
fount;

And every beast of beating heart grew  
bold,  
Such gentleness and power even to be-  
hold.

## VII.

The brinded lioness led forth her young,  
That she might teach them how they  
should forego  
Their inborn thirst of death; the pard  
unstrung  
His sinews at her feet, and sought to  
know

With looks whose motions spoke without  
a tongue  
How he might be as gentle as the  
doe.

The magic circle of her voice and eyes  
All savage natures did imparadise.

## VIII.

And old Silenus, shaking a green stick  
Of lilies, and the wood-gods in a crew  
Came, blithe, as in the olive copses  
thick  
Cicadæ are, drunk with the noonday  
dew:

And Dryope and Faunus followed quick,  
Teasing the God to sing them some-  
thing new;

Till in this cave they found the lady lone,  
Sitting upon a seat of emerald stone.

## IX.

And universal Pan, 't is said, was there,  
And tho' none saw him, — thro' the  
adamant

Of the deep mountains, thro' the track-  
less air,

And thro' those livid <sup>z</sup>its, like a  
want

He past out of his everlasting lair  
Where the quick heart of the great  
world doth pant,

And felt that wondrous lady all alone, —  
And she felt him, upon her emerald  
throne.

## X.

And every nymph of stream and spread-  
ing tree,

And every shepherdess of Ocean's  
flocks,  
Who drives her white waves over the  
green sea,

And Ocean with the brine on his gray  
locks,

And quaint Priapus with his company,  
All came, much wondering how the  
enwombèd rocks

Could have brought forth so beautiful a  
birth; —

Her love subdued their wonder and their  
mirth.

## XI.

The herdsmen and the mountain maidens  
came,

And the rude kings of pastoral Gara-  
mant —

Their spirits shook within them, as a  
flame

Stirred by the air under a cavern  
gaunt:

Pigmies, and Polyphemes, by many a  
name,

Centaur and Satyr, and such shapes  
as haunt

Wet clefts, — and lumps neither alive nor  
dead,

Dog-headed, bosom-eyed, and bird-  
footed.

## XII.

For she was beautiful — her beauty made  
The bright world dim, and everything  
beside

Seemed like the fleeting image of a  
shade:

No thought of living spirit could abide,  
Which to her looks had ever been be-  
trayed,

On any object in the world so wide,  
On any hope within the circling skies,  
But on her form, and in her inmost eyes.

## XIII.

Which when the Lady knew, she took  
her spindle

And twined three threads of fleecy  
mist, and three

Long lines of light, such as the dawn  
may kindle

The clouds and waves and mountains  
with; and she  
As many star-beams, ere their lamps  
could dwindle

In the belated moon, wound skilfully;  
And with these threads a subtle veil she  
wove —

A shadow for the splendor of her love.

## XIV.

The deep recesses of her odorous dwell-  
ing

Were stored with magic treasures —  
sounds of air,  
Which had the power all spirits of com-  
pelling,

Folded in cells of crystal silence there;  
Such as we hear in youth, and think the  
feeling

Will never die — yet ere we are aware,  
The feeling and the sound are fled and  
gone,

And the regret they leave remains alone,

## XV.

And there lay Visions swift, and sweet,  
and quaint,

Each in its thin sheath, like a chrysalis,  
Some eager to burst forth, some weak  
and faint

With the soft burden of intensest  
bliss;

It was their work to bear to many a saint  
Whose heart adores the shrine which  
holiest is,

Even Love's: — and others white, green,  
gray, and black,

And of all shapes — and each was at her  
beck.

## XVI.

And odors in a kind of aviary

Of ever-blooming Eden-trees she kept,  
Clipt in a floating net, a love-sick Fairy  
Had woven from dew-beams while the  
moon yet slept;

As bats at the wired window of a dairy,  
They beat their vans; and each was  
an adept,

When loosed and missioned, making  
wings of winds,

To stir sweet thoughts or sad, in destined  
minds.

## XVII.

And liquors clear and sweet, whose  
healthful might

Could medicine the sick soul to happy  
sleep,

And change eternal death into a night  
Of glorious dreams — or if eyes needs  
must weep,

Could make their tears all wonder and  
delight,

She in her crystal vials did closely  
keep:

If men could drink of those clear vials,  
't is said

The living were not envied of the dead.

## XVIII.

Her cave was stored with scrolls of  
strange device,

The works of some Saturnian Archi-  
mage,

Which taught the expiations at whose  
price

Men from the Gods might win that  
happy age

Too lightly lost, redeeming native vice;  
And which might quench the Earth-  
consuming rage

Of gold and blood — till men should live  
and move

Harmonious as the sacred stars above;

## XIX.

And how all things that seem untam-  
able,

Not to be checkt and not to be  
confined,

Obey the spells of wisdom's wizard  
skill;

Time, earth, and fire, the ocean and  
the wind,

And all their shapes, and man's im-  
perial will;

And other scrolls whose writings did  
unbind

The inmost lore of Love — let the profane  
Tremble to ask what secrets they contain.

## XX.

And wondrous works of substances un-  
known,

To which the enchantment of her  
 father's power  
 Had changed those ragged blocks of  
 savage stone,  
 Were heapt in the recesses of her  
 bower;  
 Carved lamps and chalices, and vials  
 which shone  
 In their own golden beams — each like  
 a flower,  
 Out of whose depth a fire-fly shakes his  
 light  
 Under a cypress in a starless night.

## XXI.

At first she lived alone in this wild home,  
 And her own thoughts were each a  
 minister,  
 Clothing themselves, or with the ocean  
 foam,  
 Or with the wind, or with the speed  
 of fire,  
 To work whatever purposes might come  
 Into her mind; such power her mighty  
 Sire  
 Had girt them with, whether to fly or  
 run,  
 Through all the regions which he shines  
 upon.

## XXII.

The Ocean-nymphs and Hamadryades,  
 Oreads and Naiads, with long weedy  
 locks,  
 Offered to do her bidding thro' the  
 seas,  
 Under the earth, and in the hollow  
 rocks,  
 And far beneath the matted roots of  
 trees,  
 And in the gnarlèd heart of stubborn  
 oaks,  
 So they might live for ever in the light  
 Of her sweet presence — each a satellite.

## XXIII.

“This may not be,” the Wizard Maid  
 replied;  
 “The fountains where the Naiades  
 bedew  
 Their shining hair, at length are drained  
 and dried;

The solid oaks forget their strength,  
 and strew  
 Their latest leaf upon the mountains  
 wide;  
 The boundless ocean like a drop of  
 dew  
 Will be consumed — the stubborn centre  
 must  
 Be scattered, like a cloud of summer  
 dust.

## XXIV.

“And ye with them will perish, one by  
 one; —  
 If I must sigh to think that this shall  
 be,  
 If I must weep when the surviving Sun  
 Shall smile on your decay — oh, ask  
 not me  
 To love you till your little race is run;  
 I cannot die as ye must — over me  
 Your leaves shall glance — the streams  
 in which ye dwell  
 Shall be my paths henceforth, and so —  
 farewell! —

## XXV.

She spoke and wept: — the dark and  
 azure well  
 Sparkled beneath the shower of her  
 bright tears,  
 And every little circler where they fell  
 Flung to the cavern-roof inconstant  
 spheres  
 And intertangled lines of light: — a  
 knell  
 Of sobbing voices came upon her ears  
 From those departing Forms, o'er the  
 serene  
 Of the white streams and of the forest  
 green.

## XXVI.

All day the Wizard Lady sate aloof,  
 Spelling out scrolls of dread antiquity,  
 Under the cavern's fountain-lighted roof;  
 Or broidering the pictured poesy  
 Of some high tale upon her growing  
 woof,  
 Which the sweet splendor of her  
 smiles could dye

In hues outshining Heaven—and ever  
she  
Added some grace to the wrought poesy.

## XXVII.

While on her hearth lay blazing many a  
piece  
Of sandal-wood, rare gums, and cin-  
namon;  
Men scarcely know how beautiful fire  
is—

Each flame of it is as a precious stone  
Dissolved in ever-moving light, and this  
Belongs to each and all who gaze  
upon.

The Witch beheld it not, for in her hand  
She held a woof that dimmed the burn-  
ing brand.

## XXVIII.

This Lady never slept, but lay in trance  
All night within the fountain—as in  
sleep.

Its emerald crags glowed in her beauty's  
glance;

Thro' the green splendor of the water  
deep

She saw the constellations reel and dance  
Like fire-flies—and withal did ever  
keep

The tenor of her contemplations calm,  
With open eyes, closed feet and folded  
palm.

## XXIX.

And when the whirlwinds and the clouds  
descended

From the white pinnacles of that cold  
hill,

She past at dewfall to a space extended,  
Where in a lawn of flowering asphodel  
Amid a wood of pines and cedars blended,

There yawned an inextinguishable well  
Of crimson fire—full even to the brim,  
And overflowing all the margin trim.

## xxx.

Within the which she lay when the  
fierce war

Of wintry winds shook that innocuous  
liquor

In many a mimic moon and bearded star  
O'er woods and lawns;—the serpent  
heard it flicker

In sleep, and dreaming still, he crept  
afar—

And when the windless snow de-  
scended thicker

Than autumn leaves, she watcht it as  
it came

Melt on the surface of the level flame.

## XXXI.

She had a Boat, which some say Vulcan  
wrought

For Venus, as the chariot of her star;  
But it was found too feeble to be fraught  
With all the ardors in that sphere  
which are,

And so she sold it, and Apollo bought  
And gave it to this daughter: from a  
car

Changed to the fairest and the lightest  
boat

Which ever upon mortal stream did  
float.

## XXXII.

And others say, that, when but three  
hours old,

The first-born Love out of his cradle  
leapt,

And clove dun Chaos with his wings of  
gold,

And like a horticultural adept,  
Stole a strange seed, and wrapt it up in  
mould,

And sowed it in his mother's star, and  
kept

Watering it all the summer with sweet  
dew,

And with his wings fanning it as it grew.

## XXXIII.

The plant grew strong and green, the  
snowy flower

Fell, and the long and gourd-like  
fruit began

To turn the light and dew by inward  
power

To its own substance; woven tracery  
ran

Of light firm texture, ribbed and branching,  
 ing, o'er  
 The solid rind, like a leaf's veined fan —  
 Of which Love scoopt this boat — and  
 with soft motion  
 Piloted it round the circumfluous ocean.

## XXXIV.

This boat she moored upon her fount,  
 and lit  
 A living spirit within all its frame,  
 Breathing the soul of swiftness into it.  
 Coucht on the fountain like a panther tame,  
 One of the twain at Evan's feet that sit —  
 Or as on Vesta's sceptre a swift flame —  
 Or on blind Homer's heart a winged  
 thought, —  
 In joyous expectation lay the boat.

## XXXV.

Then by strange art she kneaded fire and  
 snow  
 Together, tempering the repugnant  
 mass  
 With liquid love — all things together  
 grow  
 Thro' which the harmony of love can  
 pass;  
 And a fair Shape out of her hands did  
 flow —  
 A living Image, which did far surpass  
 In beauty that bright shape of vital stone  
 Which drew the heart out of Pygmalion.

## XXXVI.

A sexless thing it was, and in its growth  
 It seemed to have developept no defect  
 Of either sex, yet all the grace of both, —  
 In gentleness and strength its limbs  
 were deckt;  
 The bosom lightly swelled with its full  
 youth,  
 The countenance was such as might  
 select  
 Some artist that his skill should never die,  
 Imaging forth such perfect purity.

## XXXVII.

From its smooth shoulders hung two rapid  
 wings,

Fit to have borne it to the seventh sphere  
 Tipt with the speed of liquid lightnings,  
 Dyed in the ardors of the atmosphere:  
 She led her creature to the boiling springs  
 Where the light boat was moored, and  
 said: "Sit here!"  
 And pointed to the prow, and took her  
 seat  
 Beside the rudder, with opposing feet.

## XXXVIII.

And down the streams which clove those  
 mountains vast,  
 Around their inland islets, and amid  
 The panther-peopled forests, whose shade  
 cast  
 Darkness and odors, and a pleasure hid  
 In melancholy gloom, the pinnacle past;  
 By many a star-surrounded pyramid  
 Of icy crag cleaving the purple sky,  
 And caverns yawning round unfathomably.

## XXXIX.

The silver noon into the winding dell,  
 With slanted gleam athwart the forest  
 tops,  
 Tempered like golden evening, feebly  
 fell;  
 A green and glowing light, like that  
 which drops  
 From folded lilies in which glow-worms  
 dwell,  
 When earth over her face night's mantle  
 wraps;  
 Between the severed mountains lay on  
 high,  
 Over the stream, a narrow rift of sky.

## XL.

And ever as she went, the Image lay  
 With folded wings and unawakened  
 eyes;  
 And o'er its gentle countenance did play  
 The busy dreams, as thick as summer  
 flies,  
 Chasing the rapid smiles that would not  
 stay,  
 And drinking the warm tears, and the  
 sweet sighs  
 Inhaling, which, with busy murmur vain,  
 They had aroused from that full heart and  
 brain.

## XLI.

And ever down the prone vale, like a  
cloud  
Upon a stream of wind, the pinnacle  
went:  
Now lingering on the pools, in which  
abode  
The calm and darkness of the deep  
content  
In which they paused; now o'er the shal-  
low road  
Of white and dancing waters, all be-  
sprent  
With sand and polisht pebbles:—mor-  
tal boat  
In such a shallow rapid could not float.

## XLII.

And down the earthquaking cataracts  
which shiver  
Their snow-like waters into golden air,  
Or under chasms unfathomable ever  
Sepulchre them, till in their rage they  
tear  
A subterranean portal for the river,  
It fled—the circling sunbows did up-  
bear  
Its fall down the hoar precipice of spray,  
Lighting it far upon its lampless way.

## XLIII.

And when the Wizard Lady would ascend  
The labyrinths of some many-winding  
vale,  
Which to the inmost mountain upward  
tend—  
She called “Hermaphroditus!”—and  
the pale  
And heavy hue which slumber could ex-  
tend  
Over its lips and eyes, as on the gale  
A rapid shadow from a slope of grass,  
Into the darkness of the stream did pass.

## XLIV.

And it unfurled its heaven-colored pin-  
ions,  
With stars of fire spotting the stream  
below;

And from above into the Sun's dominions  
Flinging a glory, like the golden glow  
In which Spring clothes her emerald-  
winged minions,

All interwoven with fine feathery snow  
And moonlight splendor of intensesst rime,  
With which frost paints the pines in win-  
ter time.

## XLV.

And then it winnowed the Elysian air  
Which ever hung about that Lady bright,  
With its ethereal vans—and speeding  
there,

Like a star up the torrent of the night,  
Or a swift eagle in the morning glare  
Breasting the whirlwind with impetu-  
ous flight,

The pinnacle, oared by those enchanted  
wings,  
Clove the fierce streams towards their  
upper springs.

## XLVI.

The water flasht like sunlight by the  
prow

Of a noon-wandering meteor flung to  
Heaven;

The still air seemed as if its waves did  
flow

In tempest down the mountains; loose-  
ly driven

The Lady's radiant hair streamed to and  
fro:

Beneath, the billows having vainly  
striven

Indignant and impetuous, roared to feel  
The swift and steady motion of the keel.

## XLVII.

Or, when the weary moon was in the  
wane,

Or in the noon of interlunar night,  
The Lady-Witch in visions could not chain  
Her spirit; but sailed forth under the  
light

Of shooting stars, and bade extend amain  
Its storm-outsweeping wings the Her-  
maphrodite;

She to the Austral waters took her way,  
Beyond the fabulous Thamondocana;



## XLVIII.

Where, like a meadow which no scythe  
has shaven,  
Which rain could never bend, or whirl-  
blast shake,  
With the Antarctic constellations paven,  
Canopus and his crew, lay the Austral  
lake —  
There she would build herself a windless  
haven  
Out of the clouds whose moving turrets  
make  
The bastions of the storm, when thro'  
the sky  
The spirits of the tempest thundered by;

## XLIX.

A haven beneath whose translucent floor  
The tremulous stars sparkled unfath-  
omably,  
And around which the solid vapors hoar,  
Based on the level waters, to the sky  
Lifted their dreadful crags, and like a  
shore  
Of wintry mountains, inaccessibly  
Hemmed in with rifts and precipices gray,  
And hanging crags, many a cove and bay.

## L.

And whilst the outer lake beneath the  
lash  
Of the wind's scourge, foamed like a  
wounded thing  
And the incessant hail with stony clash  
Ploughed up the waters, and the flag-  
ging wing  
Of the roused cormorant in the lightning  
flash  
Lookt like the wreck of some wind-  
wandering  
Fragment of inky thunder-smoke — this  
haven  
Was as a gem to copy Heaven engraven.

## LI.

On which that Lady played her many  
pranks,  
Circling the image of a shooting star,  
Even as a tiger on Hydaspes' banks  
Outspeeds the antelopes which speed-  
iest are,

In her light boat; and many quips and  
cranks

She played upon the water, till the car  
Of the late moon, like a sick matron wan,  
To journey from the misty east began.

## LII.

And then she called out of the hollow  
turrets  
Of those high clouds, white, golden  
and vermilion,  
The armies of her ministering spirits —  
In mighty legions, million after million,  
They came, each troop emblazoning its  
merits  
On meteor flags; and many a proud  
pavilion  
Of the intertexture of the atmosphere  
They pitch upon the plain of the calm  
mere.

## LIII.

They framed the imperial tent of their  
great Queen  
Of woven exhalations, underlaid  
With lambent lightning-fire, as may be  
seen  
A dome of thin and open ivory inlaid  
With crimson silk — cressets from the  
serene  
Hung there, and on the water for her  
tread  
A tapestry of fleece-like mist was strewn,  
Dyed in the beams of the ascending moon.

## LIV.

And on a throne o'erlaid with starlight,  
caught  
Upon those wandering isles of æry  
dew,  
Which highest shoals of mountain ship-  
wreck not,  
She sate, and heard all that had hap-  
pened new,  
Between the earth and moon, since they  
had brought  
The last intelligence — and now she  
grew  
Pale as that moon, lost in the watery  
night —  
And now she wept, and now she laught  
outright.

## LV.

These were tame pleasures; she would often climb

The steepest ladder of the crudded rack  
Up to some beakèd cape of cloud sublime,  
And like Arion on the dolphin's back  
Ride singing through the shoreless air;—  
oft-time

Following the serpent lightning's  
winding track,  
She ran upon the platforms of the wind,  
And laught to hear the fire-balls roar  
behind.

## LVI.

And sometimes to those streams of upper  
air

Which whirl the earth in its diurnal  
round,  
She would ascend, and win the spirits  
there  
To let her join their chorus. Mortals  
found

That on those days the sky was calm and  
fair,

And mystic snatches of harmonious  
sound  
Wandered upon the earth where'er she  
past,  
And happy thoughts of hope, too sweet  
to last.

## LVII.

But her choice sport was, in the hours of  
sleep,

To glide adown old Nilus, where he  
threads  
Egypt and Æthiopia, from the steep  
Of utmost Axumè, until he spreads,  
Like a calm flock of silver-fleeced sheep,  
His waters on the plain: and crested  
heads

Of cities and proud temples gleam amid,  
And many a vapor-belted pyramid.

## LVIII.

By Mœris and the Mareotid lakes,  
Strewn with faint blooms like bridal-  
chamber floors,  
Where naked boys bridling tame water-  
snakes,  
Or charioteering ghastly alligators,

Had left on the sweet waters mighty  
wakes

Of those huge forms — within the  
brazen doors  
Of the great Labyrinth slept both boy  
and beast,  
Tired with the pomp of their Osirian  
feast.

## LIX.

And where within the surface of the river

The shadows of the massy temples lie,  
And never are erased — but tremble ever  
Like things which every cloud can  
doom to die,

Thro' lotus-paven canals, and where-  
soever

The works of man pierced that se-  
renest sky  
With tombs, and towers, and fanes,  
't was her delight  
To wander in the shadow of the night.

## LX.

With motion like the spirit of that wind  
Whose soft step deepens slumber, her  
light feet

Past through the peopled haunts of hu-  
man kind,

Scattering sweet visions from her pres-  
ence sweet,  
Through fane, and palace-court, and laby-  
rinth mined

With many a dark and subterranean  
street

Under the Nile, thro' chambers high  
and deep

She past, observing mortals in their sleep.

## LXI.

A pleasure sweet doubtless it was to see  
Mortals subdued in all the shapes of  
sleep.

Here lay two sisters twins in infancy;  
There, a lone youth who in his dreams  
did weep;

Within, two lovers linkèd innocently  
In their loose locks which over both  
did creep

Like ivy from one stem;— and there lay  
calm

Old age with snow-bright hair and folded palm.

## LXII.

But other troubled forms of sleep she saw,

Not to be mirrored in a holy song —  
Distortions foul of supernatural awe,  
And pale imaginings of visioned wrong;  
And all the code of custom's lawless law  
Written upon the brows of old and young:

"This," said the Wizard Maiden, "is the strife  
Which stirs the liquid surface of man's life."

## LXIII.

And little did the sight disturb her soul. —

We, the weak mariners of that wide lake

Where'er its shores extend or billows roll,

Our course unpiloted and starless make  
O'er its wild surface to an unknown goal: —

But she in the calm depths her way could take,

Where in bright bowers immortal forms abide

Beneath the weltering of the restless tide.

## LXIV.

And she saw princes coucht under the glow

Of sunlike gems; and round each temple-court

In dormitories ranged, row after row,

She saw the priests asleep — all of one sort —

For all were educated to be so. —

The peasants in their huts, and in the port

The sailors she saw cradled on the waves,

And the dead lulled within their dreamless graves.

## LXV.

And all the forms in which those spirits lay

Were to her sight like the diaphanous

Veils, in which those sweet ladies oft array

Their delicate limbs, who would conceal from us

Only their scorn of all concealment: they  
Move in the light of their own beauty thus.

But these and all now lay with sleep upon them,

And little thought a Witch was looking on them.

## LXVI.

She, all those human figures breathing there,

Beheld as living spirits — to her eyes  
The naked beauty of the soul lay bare,  
And often thro' a rude and worn disguise

She saw the inner form most bright and fair —

And then she had a charm of strange device,

Which, murmured on mute lips with tender tone,

Could make that spirit mingle with her own.

## LXVII.

Alas! Aurora, what wouldst thou have given

For such a charm when Tithon became gray?

Or how much, Venus, of thy silver Heaven

Wouldst thou have yielded, ere Proserpina

Had half (oh! why not all?) the debt forgiven

Which dear Adonis had been doomed to pay,

To any witch who would have taught you it?

The Heliad doth not know its value yet.

## LXVIII.

'Tis said in after times her spirit free

Knew what love was, and felt itself alone —

But holy Dian could not chaster be

Before she stooped to kiss Endymion,

Than now this lady — like a sexless bee

Tasting all blossoms, and confined to  
 none,  
 Among those mortal forms, the Wizard-  
 Maiden  
 Past with an eye serene and heart un-  
 laden.

## LXIX.

To those she saw most beautiful, she gave  
 Strange panacea in a crystal bowl:—  
 They drank in their deep sleep of that  
 sweet wave,  
 And lived thenceforward as if some  
 control,  
 Mightier than life, were in them; and  
 the grave  
 Of such, when death opprest the weary  
 soul,  
 Was as a green and overarching bower  
 Lit by the gems of many a starry flower.

## LXX.

For on the night when they were buried,  
 she  
 Restored the embalmers' ruining, and  
 shook  
 The light out of the funeral lamps, to be  
 A mimic day within that deathly nook;  
 And she unwound the woven imagery  
 Of second childhood's swaddling-  
 bands, and took  
 The coffin, its last cradle, from its niche,  
 And threw it with contempt into a ditch.

## LXXI.

And there the body lay, age after age,  
 Mute, breathing, beating, warm, and  
 undecaying,  
 Like one asleep in a green hermitage,  
 With gentle smiles about its eyelids  
 playing,  
 And living in its dreams beyond the rage  
 Of death or life; while they were still  
 arraying  
 In liveries ever new, the rapid, blind  
 And fleeting generations of mankind.

## LXXII.

And she would write strange dreams upon  
 the brain  
 Of those who were less beautiful, and  
 make

All harsh and crooked purposes more vain  
 Than in the desert is the serpent's wake  
 Which the sand covers;— all his evil gain  
 The miser in such dreams would rise  
 and shake  
 Into a beggar's lap;— the lying scribe  
 Would his own lies betray without a  
 bribe.

## LXXIII.

The priests would write an explanation  
 full,  
 Translating hieroglyphics into Greek,  
 How the god Apis really was a bull,  
 And nothing more; and bid the herald  
 stick  
 The same against the temple doors, and  
 pull  
 The old cant down; they licensed all  
 to speak  
 Whate'er they thought of hawks, and  
 cats, and geese,  
 By pastoral letters to each diocese.

## LXXIV.

The king would dress an ape up in his  
 crown  
 And robes, and seat him on his glori-  
 ous seat,  
 And on the right hand of the sunlike  
 throne  
 Would place a gaudy mock-bird to re-  
 peat  
 The chatterings of the monkey. — Every  
 one  
 Of the prone courtiers crawled to kiss  
 the feet  
 Of their great Emperor, when the morn-  
 ing came,  
 And kist — alas, how many kiss the  
 same!

## LXXV.

The soldiers dreamed that they were  
 blacksmiths, and  
 Walkt out of quarters in somnam-  
 bulism;  
 Round the red anvils you might see them  
 stand  
 Like Cyclopes in Vulcan's sooty  
 abysm,

Beating their swords to ploughshares; —  
 in a band  
 The gaolers sent those of the liberal  
 schism  
 Free through the streets of Memphis,  
 much, I wis  
 To the annoyance of king Amasis.

## LXXVI.

And timid lovers who had been so coy,  
 They hardly knew whether they loved  
 or not,  
 Would rise out of their rest, and take  
 sweet joy,  
 To the fulfilment of their inmost  
 thought;  
 And when next day the maiden and the  
 boy  
 Met one another, both, like sinners  
 caught,  
 Blusht at the thing which each believed  
 was done  
 Only in fancy — till the tenth moon  
 shone;

## LXXVII.

And then the Witch would let them take  
 no ill:  
 Of many thousand schemes which lov-  
 ers find,  
 The Witch found one, — and so they  
 took their fill  
 Of happiness in marriage warm and  
 kind.  
 Friends who, by practice of some envious  
 skill,  
 Were torn apart, a wide wound, mind  
 from mind!  
 She did unite again with visions clear  
 Of deep affection and of truth sincere.

## LXXVIII.

These were the pranks she played among  
 the cities  
 Of mortal men, and what she did to  
 sprites  
 And gods, entangling them in her sweet  
 ditties  
 To do her will, and show their subtle  
 slights,  
**I will declare another time; for it is**

A tale more fit for the weird winter  
 nights,  
 Than for these garish summer days, when  
 we  
 Scarcely believe much more than we can  
 see.

## NOTE ON THE "WITCH OF ATLAS," BY MRS. SHELLEY.

WE spent the summer of 1820 at the Baths of San Giuliano, four miles from Pisa. These baths were of great use to Shelley in soothing his nervous irritability. We made several excursions in the neighborhood. The country around is fertile, and diversified and rendered picturesque by ranges of near hills and more distant mountains. The peasantry are a handsome, intelligent race; and there was a glad some sunny heaven spread over us, that rendered home and every scene we visited cheerful and bright. During some of the hottest days of August, Shelley made a solitary journey on foot to the summit of Monte San Pellegrino — a mountain of some height, on the top of which there is a chapel, the object, during certain days of the year, of many pilgrimages. The excursion delighted him while it lasted; though he exerted himself too much, and the effect was considerable lassitude and weakness on his return. During the expedition he conceived the idea, and wrote, in the three days immediately succeeding to his return, the "Witch of Atlas." This poem is peculiarly characteristic of his tastes — wildly fanciful, full of brilliant imagery, and discarding human interest and passion, to revel in the fantastic ideas that his imagination suggested.

The surpassing excellence of "The Cenci" had made me greatly desire that Shelley should increase his popularity by adopting subjects that would more suit the popular taste than a poem conceived in the abstract and dreamy spirit of the "Witch of Atlas." It was not only that I wished him to acquire popularity as redounding to his fame; but I believed that he would obtain a greater mastery

over his own powers, and greater happiness in his mind, if public applause crowned his endeavors. The few stanzas that precede the poem were addressed to me on my representing these ideas to him. Even now I believe that I was in the right. Shelley did not expect sympathy and approbation from the public; but the want of it took away a portion of the ardor that ought to have sustained him while writing. He was thrown on his own resources, and on the inspiration of his own soul; and wrote because his mind overflowed, without the hope of being appreciated. I had not the most distant wish that he should truckle in opinion, or submit his lofty aspirations for the human race to the low ambition and pride of the many; but I felt sure that, if his poems were more addressed to the common feelings of men, his proper rank among the writers of the day would be acknowledged, and that popularity as a poet would enable his countrymen to do justice to his character and virtues, which in those days it was the mode to attack with the most flagitious calumnies and insulting abuse. That he felt these things deeply cannot be doubted, though he armed himself with the consciousness of acting from a lofty and heroic sense of right. The truth burst from his heart sometimes in solitude, and he would write a few unfinished verses that showed that he felt the sting; among such I find the following: —

‘ Alas! this is not what I thought Life was.

I knew that there were crimes and evil men,  
Misery and hate; nor did I hope to pass

Untoucht by suffering through the rugged  
glen.

In mine own heart I saw as in a glass

The hearts of others. . . . And, when  
I went among my kind, with triple brass

Of calm endurance my weak breast I armed,  
To bear scorn, fear, and hate — a woful mass! ”

I believed that all this morbid feeling would vanish if the chord of sympathy between him and his countrymen were touched. But my persuasions were vain, the mind could not be bent from its natural inclination. Shelley shrunk instinctively from portraying human passion, with its mixture of good and evil, of dis-

appointment and disquiet. Such opened again the wounds of his own heart; and he loved to shelter himself rather in the airiest flights of fancy, forgetting love and hate, and regret and lost hope, in such imaginations as borrowed their hues from sunrise or sunset, from the yellow moonshine or paly twilight, from the aspect of the far ocean or the shadows of the woods, — which celebrated the singing of the winds among the pines, the flow of a murmuring stream, and the thousand harmonious sounds which Nature creates in her solitudes. These are the materials which form the “Witch of Atlas;” it is a brilliant congregation of ideas such as his senses gathered, and his fancy colored, during his rambles in the sunny land he so much loved.

## ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS;

OR

### SWELLFOOT THE TYRANT,

A TRAGEDY

IN TWO ACTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL  
DORIC.

“ Choose Reform or civil war,  
When thro’ thy streets, instead of hare with dogs,  
A CONSORT-QUEEN shall hunt a KING with hogs,  
Riding on the IONIAN MINOTAUR.

### ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Tragedy is one of a triad, or system of three Plays (an arrangement according to which the Greeks were accustomed to connect their dramatic representations), elucidating the wonderful and appalling fortunes of the SWELLFOOT dynasty. It was evidently written by some *learned Theban*, and, from its characteristic dulness, apparently before the duties on the importation of *Attic salt* had been repealed by the Bœotarchs. The tenderness with which he treats

the PIGS proves him to have been a *sus Bvotia*; possibly *Epicuri de grege porcus*; for, as the poet observes,

“A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind.”

No liberty has been taken with the translation of this remarkable piece of antiquity, except the suppressing a seditious and blasphemous Chorus of the Pigs and Bulls at the last act. The word *Hoydipouse* (or more properly *Cedipus*), has been rendered literally *SWELLFOOT*, without its having been conceived necessary to determine whether a swelling of the hind or the fore feet of the Swinish Monarch is particularly indicated.

Should the remaining portions of this Tragedy be found, entitled, “*Swellfoot in Angaria*,” and “*Charité*,” the Translator might be tempted to give them to the reading Public.

## CEDIPUS TYRANNUS.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

TYRANT SWELLFOOT, *King of Thebes.*

IONA TAURINA, *his Queen.*

MAMMON, *Arch-Priest of Famine.*

PURGANAX, } *Wizards, Ministers of*  
DAKRY, } *SWELLFOOT.<sup>1</sup>*  
LAOCTONOS, }

*The GADFLY.* | *MOSES, the Sow-gelder.*  
*The LEECH.* | *SOLOMON, the Porkman.*  
*The RAT.* | *ZEPHANIAH, Pig Butcher.*

*The MINOTAUR.*

*Chorus of the Swinish Multitude.*

GUARDS, ATTENDANTS, PRIESTS, etc.

## SCENE. — THEBES.

### ACT I.

SCENE I. — *A magnificent Temple, built of thigh-bones and death's heads, and tiled with scalps. Over the Altar the statue of Famine, veiled; a number of boars, sows, and sucking pigs, crowned with thistle, shamrock, and oak, sitting on the steps, and clinging round the altar of the Temple.*

<sup>1</sup> PURGANAX, Lord Castlereagh, DAKRY, Lord Eidon, LAOCTONOS, Duke of Wellington.

*Enter SWELLFOOT, in his Royal robes, without perceiving the PIGS.*

*Swellfoot.* Thou supreme Goddess!  
by whose power divine

These graceful limbs are clothed in  
proud array

[*He contemplates himself with satisfaction.*

Of gold and purple, and this kingly  
paunch

Swells like a sail before a favoring  
breeze,

And these most sacred nether promon-  
tories

Lie satisfied with layers of fat; and  
these

Bœotian cheeks, like Egypt's pyramid,  
(Nor with less toil were their founda-  
tions laid,<sup>2</sup>)

Sustain the cone of my untroubled brain,  
That point, the emblem of a pointless  
nothing!

Thou to whom Kings and laurelled  
Emperors,

Radical-butchers, Paper-money-millers,  
Bishops and deacons, and the entire  
army

Of those fat martyrs to the persecution  
Of stifling turtle-soup, and brandy-devils,  
Offer their secret vows! Thou plenteous  
Ceres

Of their Eleusis, hail!

*The Swine.* Eigh! eigh! eigh! eigh!

*Swellfoot.* Ha! what are ye,

Who, crowned with leaves devoted to  
the Furies,

Cling round this sacred shrine?

*Swine.* Aigh! aigh! aigh!

*Swellfoot.* What! ye that are

The very beasts that, offered at her altar  
With blood and groans, salt-cake, and  
fat, and inwards,

Ever propitiate her reluctant will

When taxes are withheld?

*Swine.* Ugh! ugh! ugh!

*Swellfoot.* What! ye who grub

With filthy snouts my red potatoes up

In Allan's rushy bog? Who eat the oats

<sup>2</sup> See Universal History for an account of the number of people who died, and the immense consumption of garlic by the wretched Egyptians, who made a sepulchre for the name as well as the bodies of their tyrants.

Up, from my cavalry in the Hebrides?  
 Who swill the hog-wash soup my cooks  
 digest  
 From bones, and rags, and scraps of  
 shoe-leather,  
 Which should be given to cleaner Pigs  
 than you?

*The Swine. — Semichorus I.*

The same, alas! the same;  
 Though only now the name  
 Of Pig remains to me.

*Semichorus II.*

If 't were your kingly will  
 Us wretched Swine to kill,  
 What should we yield to thee?

*Swellfoot.* Why, skin and bones, and  
 some few hairs for mortar.

*Chorus of Swine.*

I have heard your Laureate sing,  
 That pity was a royal thing;  
 Under your mighty ancestors, we Pigs  
 Were blest as nightingales on myrtle  
 sprigs,

Or grasshoppers that live on noonday  
 dew,

And sung, old annals tell, as sweetly too,  
 But now our sties are fallen in, we catch

The murrain and the mange, the scab  
 and itch;

Sometimes your royal dogs tear down  
 our thatch,

And then we seek the shelter of a  
 ditch;

Hog-wash or grains, or rutabaga, none  
 Has yet been ours since your reign  
 begun.

*First Sow.*

My Pigs, 't is in vain to tug.

*Second Sow.*

I could almost eat my litter.

*First Pig.*

I suck, but no milk will come from  
 the dug.

*Second Pig.*

Our skin and our bones would be  
 bitter.

*The Boars.*

We fight for this rag of greasy rug,

Though a trough of wash would be  
 fitter.

*Semichorus.*

Happier Swine were they than we,  
 Drowned in the Gadarean sea —  
 I wish that pity would drive out the  
 devils,

Which in your royal bosom hold their  
 revels,

And sink us in the waves of thy com-  
 passion!

Alas! the Pigs are an unhappy nation!  
 Now if your Majesty would have our  
 bristles

To bind your mortar with, or fill our  
 colons

With rich blood, or make brawn out of  
 our gristles,

In policy — ask else your royal  
 Solons —

You ought to give us hog-wash and clean  
 straw,

And sties well thatcht; besides it is the  
 law!

*Swellfoot.* This is sedition, and rank  
 blasphemy!

Ho! there, my guards!

*Enter a GUARD.*

*Guard.* Your sacred Majesty.

*Swellfoot.* Call in the Jews, Solomon  
 the court porkman,

Moses the sow-gelder, and Zephaniah  
 The hog-butcher.

*Guard.* They are in waiting, Sire.

*Enter SOLOMON, MOSES, and  
 ZEPHANIAH.*

*Swellfoot.* Out with your knife, old  
 Moses, and spay those Sows,

[*The pigs run about in consternation.*  
 That load the earth with Pigs; cut close  
 and deep,

Moral restraint I see has no effect,  
 Nor prostitution, nor our own example,  
 Starvation, typhus-fever, war, nor  
 prison —

This was the art which the arch-priest  
 of Famine

Hinted at in his charge to the Theban  
 clergy —

Cut close and deep, good Moses.

*Moses.* Let your Majesty

Keep the boars quiet, else —



*Swellfoot.* Zephaniah, cut  
That fat Hog's throat, the brute seems  
overfed;  
Seditious hunks! to whine for want of  
grains.

*Zephaniah.* Your sacred Majesty, he  
has the dropsy; —  
We shall find pints of hydatids in 's liver,  
He has not half an inch of wholesome fat  
Upon his carious ribs —

*Swellfoot.* 'T is all the same,  
He 'll serve instead of riot money, when  
Our murmuring troops bivouac in Thebes'  
streets;  
And January winds, after a day  
Of butchering, will make them relish  
carriion.

Now, Solomon, I'll sell you in a lump  
The whole kit of them.

*Solomon.* Why, your Majesty,  
I could not give —

*Swellfoot.* Kill them out of  
the way,  
That shall be price enough, and let me  
hear  
Their everlasting grunts and whines no  
more!

[*Exeunt, driving in the swine.*]

*Enter MAMMON, the Arch-Priest; and  
PURGANAX, Chief of the Council of  
Wizards.*

*Purganax.* The future looks as black  
as death, a cloud,  
Dark as the frown of Hell, hangs over  
it.

The troops grow mutinous — the revenue  
fails —  
There's something rotten in us — for the  
level  
Of the State slopes, its very bases topple,  
The boldest turn their backs upon them-  
selves!

*Mammon.* Why what's the matter,  
my dear fellow, now?  
Do the troops mutiny? — decimate some  
regiments;  
Does money fail? — come to my mint —  
coin paper,  
Till gold be at a discount, and ashamed  
To show his bilious face, go purge him-  
self,  
In emulation of her vestal whiteness.

*Purganax.* Oh, would that this were  
all! The oracle!!

*Mammon.* Why it was I who spoke  
that oracle,  
And whether I was dead-drunk or in-  
spired,  
I cannot well remember; nor, in truth,  
The oracle itself!

*Purganax.* The words went thus: —  
“Bœotia, choose reform or civil war!  
When thro' thy streets, instead of hare  
with dogs,  
A Consort Queen shall hunt a King with  
hogs,  
Riding on the Ionian Minotaur.”

*Mammon.* Now if the oracle had  
ne'er foretold  
This sad alternative, it must arrive,  
Or not, and so it must now that it has,  
And whether I was urged by grace  
divine,  
Or Lesbian liquor to declare these words,  
Which must, as all words must, be false  
or true;

It matters not: for the same power made  
all,  
Oracle, wine, and me and you — or  
none —  
'T is the same thing. If you knew as  
much  
Of oracles as I do —

*Purganax.* You arch-priests  
Believe in nothing; if you were to dream  
Of a particular number in the Lottery,  
You would not buy the ticket?

*Mammon.* Yet our tickets  
Are seldom blanks. But what steps have  
you taken?  
For prophecies when once they get  
abroad,  
Like liars who tell the truth to serve  
their ends,

Or hypocrites who, from assuming virtue,  
Do the same actions that the virtuous do,  
Contrive their own fulfilment. This  
Iona —

Well — you know what the chaste Pasi-  
phaë did,  
Wife to that most religious King of  
Crete,  
And still how popular the tale is here;  
And these dull Swine of Thebes boast  
their descent

From the free Minotaur. You know  
they still  
Call themselves Bulls, though thus de-  
generate,  
And everything relating to a Bull  
Is popular and respectable in Thebes.  
Their arms are seven Bulls in a field  
gules,  
They think their strength consists in  
eating beef; —  
Now there were danger in the precedent  
If Queen Iona —  
*Purganax.* I have taken good care  
That shall not be. I struck the crust  
o' the earth  
With this enchanted rod, and Hell iay  
bare!  
And from a cavern full of ugly shapes,  
I chose a LEECH, a GADFLY, and a RAT.  
The gadfly was the same which Juno sent  
To agitate Io,<sup>1</sup> and which Ezekiel<sup>2</sup> men-  
tions  
That the Lord whistled for out of the  
mountains  
Of utmost Æthiopia, to torment  
Mesopotamian Babylon. The beast  
Has a loud trumpet like the Scarabee,  
His crookèd tail is barbed with many  
stings,  
Each able to make a thousand wounds,  
and each  
Immedicable; from his convex eyes  
He sees fair things in many hideous  
shapes,  
And trumpets all his falsehood to the  
world.  
Like other beetles he is fed on dung —  
He has eleven feet with which he crawls,  
Trailing a blistering slime, and this foul  
beast  
Has trackt Iona from the Theban  
limits,  
From isle to isle, from city unto city,  
Urging her flight from the far Chersonese  
To fabulous Solyma, and the Ætnean  
Isle,  
Ortygia, Melite, and Calypso's Rock,  
And the swart tribes of Garamant and  
Fez,

<sup>1</sup> The Prometheus Bound of Æschylus.

<sup>2</sup> And the Lord whistled for the gadfly out  
of Æthiopia, and for the bee of Egypt, etc. —  
EZEKIEL.

Æolia and Elysium, and thy shores,  
Parthenope, which now, alas! are free!  
And thro' the fortunate Saturnian  
land,

Into the darkness of the West.

*Mammon.*

But if  
This Gadfly should drive Iona hither?

*Purganax.* Gods! what an *if!* but  
there is my gray RAT:

So thin with want, he can crawl in and  
out

Of any narrow chink and filthy hole,  
And he shall creep into her dressing-  
room,

And —

*Mammon.* My dear friend, where  
are your wits? as if

She does not always toast a piece of  
cheese

And bait the trap? and rats, when lean  
enough

To crawl through *such* chinks —

*Purganax.* But my LEECH —  
a leech

Fit to suck blood, with lubricous round  
rings,

Capaciously expatiative, which make  
His little body like a red balloon,  
As full of blood as that of hydrogen,  
Suckt from men's hearts; insatiably he  
sucks

And clings and pulls — a horse-leech,  
whose deep maw

The plethoric King Swellfoot could not  
fill,

And who, till full, will cling for ever.

*Mammon.*

This  
For Queen Iona might suffice, and less;  
But 't is the swinish multitude I fear,  
And in that fear I have —

*Purganax.* Done what?

*Mammon.*

Disinherited  
My eldest son Chrysaor, because he  
Attended public meetings, and would al-  
ways

Stand prating there of commerce, public  
faith,

Economy, and unadulterate coin

And other topics, ultra-radical;

And have entailed my estate, called the  
Fool's Paradise,

And funds in fairy-money, bonds, and  
bills,

Upon my accomplished daughter Bank-  
notina,

And married her to the Gallows.<sup>1</sup>

*Purganax.* A good match!

*Mammon.* A high connection, Pur-  
ganax. The bridegroom

Is of a very ancient family,  
Of Hounslow Heath, Tyburn, and the  
New Drop,

And has great influence in both Houses;  
— oh!

He makes the fondest husband; nay, *too*  
fond,—

New married people should not kiss in  
public;

But the poor souls love one another so!

And then my little grandchildren, the  
Gibbets,

Promising children as you ever saw,—

The young playing at hanging, the elder  
learning

How to hold radicals. They are well  
taught too,

For every Gibbet says its catechism  
And reads a select chapter in the Bible  
Before it goes to play.

[*A most tremendous humming is heard.*  
*Purganax.* Ha! what do I hear?

*Enter the GADFLY.*

*Mammon.* Your Gadfly, as it seems,  
is tired of gadding.

*Gadfly.* Hum! hum! hum!  
From the lakes of the Alps, and the  
cold gray scalps

Of the mountains, I come,  
Hum! hum! hum!

From Morocco and Fez, and the high  
palaces

Of golden Byzantium;

From the temples divine of old Palestine,  
From Athens and Rome,  
With a ha! and a hum!

I come! I come!

All inn-doors and windows

Were open to me;

I saw all that sin does

Which lamps hardly see

That burn in the night by the curtained  
bed,—

The impudent lamps! for they blusht  
not red,

Dinging and singing,

From slumber I rung her,

Loud as the clank of an iron-  
monger;

Hum! hum! hum!

Far, far, far!

With the trump of my lips, and the sting  
at my hips,

I drove her — afar!

Far, far, far!

From city to city, abandoned of pity,

A ship without needle or star; —

Homeless she past, like a cloud on the  
blast,

Seeking peace, finding war; —

She is here in her car,

From afar, and afar; —

Hum! hum!

I have stung her and wrung her,

The venom is working;—

And if you had hung her

With canting and quirking,

She could not be deader than she will be  
soon;—

I have driven her close to you, under  
the moon,

Night and day, hum! hum! ha!

I have hummed her and drummed her

From place to place, till at last I have  
dumbed her,

Hum! hum! hum!

*Enter the LEECH and the RAT.*

*Leech.* I will suck

Blood or muck!

The disease of the state is a ple-  
thory,

Who so fit to reduce it as I?

*Rat.* I'll slyly seize and

Let blood from her weasand,—

Creeping thro' crevice, and chink, and  
cranny,

With my snakey tail, and my sides so  
scranny.

*Purganax.*

Aroint ye! thou unprofitable worm!

<sup>1</sup> "If one should marry a gallows, and beget  
young gibbets, I never saw one so prone."

[ *To the Leech.*  
And thou, dull beetle, get thee back to  
hell! [ *To the Gadfly.*  
To sting the ghosts of Babylonian kings,  
And the ox-headed Io. —

*Swine (within).*

Ugh, ugh, ugh!  
Hail! Iona the divine,  
We will be no longer swine,  
But Bulls with horns and dewlaps.

*Rat.*

For,  
You know, my lord, the Minotaur —  
*Purganax (fiercely).*

Be silent! get to hell! or I will call  
The cat out of the kitchen. Well, Lord  
Mammon,  
This is a pretty business.

[ *Exit the Rat.*

*Mammon.*

I will go  
And spell some scheme to make it ugly  
then. — [ *Exit.*

*Enter SWELLFOOT.*

*Swellfoot.* She is returned! Taurina  
is in Thebes  
When Swellfoot wishes that she were in  
hell!  
O Hymen, clothed in yellow jealousy,  
And waving o'er the couch of wedded  
kings  
The torch of Discord with its fiery hair;  
This is thy work, thou patron saint of  
queens!  
Swellfoot is wived! tho' parted by the  
sea,  
The very name of wife had conjugal  
rights;  
Her cursed image ate, drank, slept with  
me,  
And in the arms of Adiposa oft  
Her memory has received a husband's—  
[ *A loud tumult, and cries of "Iona  
for ever! — No Swellfoot!"*

*Swellfoot.* Hark!

How the swine cry Iona Taurina;  
I suffer the real presence; Purganax,  
Off with her head!

*Purganax.* But I must first  
impanel

A jury of the Pigs.

*Swellfoot.* Pack them then.

*Purganax.* Or fattening some few in  
two separate sties,  
And giving them clean straw, tying some  
bits  
Of ribbon round their legs — giving their  
Sows  
Some tawdry lace, and bits of lustre  
glass,  
And their young Boars white and red  
rags, and tails  
Of cows, and jay feathers, and sticking  
cauliflowers

Between the ears of the old ones; and  
when  
They are persuaded, that by the inherent  
virtue

Of these things, they are all imperial Pigs,  
Good Lord! they'd rip each other's  
bellies up,

Not to say help us in destroying her.

*Swellfoot.* This plan might be tried  
too; — where's General

Laotonos?

*Enter LAOCTONOS and DAKRY.*

It is my royal pleasure  
That you, Lord General, bring the head  
and body,  
If separate it would please me better,  
hither

Of Queen Iona.

*Laotonos.* That pleasure I well  
knew,

And made a charge with those battalions  
bold,

Called, from their dress and grin, the  
royal Apes,

Upon the Swine, who, in a hollow square  
Enclosed her, and received the first at-  
tack

Like so many Rhinoceroses, and then  
Retreating in good order, with bare tusks  
And wrinkled snouts presented to the foe,  
Bore her in triumph to the public sty.

What is still worse, some Sows upon the  
ground

Have given the Ape-guards apples, nuts,  
and gin,

And they all whisk their tails aloft, and  
cry,

"Long live Iona! down with Swell-  
foot!"

*Purganax.* Hark!

*The Swine (without).* Long live  
Iona! down with Swellfoot!

*Dakry.* I

Went to the garret of the Swineherd's  
tower,

Which overlooks the sty, and made a  
long

Harangue (all words) to the assembled  
Swine,

Of delicacy, mercy, judgment, law,

Morals, and precedents, and purity,

Adultery, destitution, and divorce,

Piety, faith, and state necessity,

And how I loved the Queen!— and then

I wept

With the pathos of my own eloquence,

And every tear turned to a mill-stone,  
which

Brained many a gaping Pig, and there  
was made

A slough of blood and brains upon the  
place,

Greased with the pounded bacon; round  
and round

The mill-stones rolled, ploughing the  
pavement up,

And hurling sucking Pigs into the air,

With dust and stones. —

*Enter MAMMON.*

*Mammon.* I wonder that

gray wizards

Like you should be so beardless in their  
schemes;

It had been but a point of policy

To keep Iona and the Swine apart.

Divide and rule! but ye have made a  
junction

Between two parties who will govern  
you

But for my art. — Behold this BAG! it  
is

The poison BAG of that Green Spider  
huge,

On which our spies skulked in ovation  
thro'

The streets of Thebes, when they were  
paved with dead:

A bane so much the deadlier fills it  
now,

As calumny is worse than death, — for  
here

The Gadfly's venom, fifty times distilled,  
Is mingled with the vomit of the Leech,

In due proportion, and black ratsbane,  
which

That very Rat, who, like the Pontic tyrant,  
Nurtures himself on poison, dare not  
touch; —

All is sealed up with the broad seal of  
Fraud,

Who is the Devil's Lord High Chancellor,  
And over it the Primate of all Hell

Murmured this pious baptism: — "Be  
thou called

The GREEN BAG; and this power and  
grace be thine:

That thy contents, on whomsoever  
poured,

Turn innocence to guilt, and gentlest  
looks

To savage, foul, and fierce deformity.

Let all baptized by thy infernal dew

Be called adulterer, drunkard, liar,  
wretch!

No name left out which orthodoxy loves,  
Court Journal or legitimate Review! —

Be they called tyrant, beast, fool, glut-  
ton, lover

Of other wives and husbands than their  
own —

The heaviest sin on this side of the Alps!

Wither they to a ghastly caricature

Of what was human! — let not man or  
beast

Behold their face with unaverted eyes!

Or hear their names with ears that tingle  
not

With blood of indignation, rage, and  
shame!" —

This is a perilous liquor; — good my  
Lords. —

[SWELLFOOT *approaches to touch the*  
GREEN BAG.

Beware! for God's sake, beware! — if  
you should break

The seal, and touch the fatal liquor —

*Purganax.*

There,

Give it to me. I have been used to  
handle

All sorts of poisons. His dread Majesty  
Only desires to see the color of it.

*Mammon.* Now, with a little com-

mon sense, my Lords,

Only undoing all that has been done

(Yet so as it may seem we but confirm it),  
 Our victory is assured. We must entice Her Majesty from the sty, and make the Pigs Believe that the contents of the GREEN BAG Are the true test of guilt or innocence. And that, if she be guilty, 't will transform her To manifest deformity like guilt. If innocent, she will become transfigured Into an angel, such as they say she is; And they will see her flying through the air,  
 So bright that she will dim the noonday sun;  
 Showering down blessings in the shape of comfits.  
 This, trust a priest, is just the sort of thing Swine will believe. I'll wager you will see them Climbing upon the thatch of their low sties,  
 With pieces of smoked glass, to watch her sail Among the clouds, and some will hold the flaps Of one another's ears between their teeth,  
 To catch the coming hail of comfits in. You, Purganax, who have the gift o' the gab,  
 Make them a solemn speech to this effect:  
 I go to put in readiness the feast Kept to the honor of our goddess Famine,  
 Where, for more glory, let the ceremony Take place of the uglification of the Queen.  
*Dakry (to Swellfoot).* I, as the keeper of your sacred conscience,  
 Humbly remind your Majesty that the care Of your high office, as man-milliner To red Bellona, should not be deferred.  
*Purganax.* All part in happier plight to meet again. [Exeunt.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—THE PUBLIC STY.

*The Boars in full Assembly.*

*Enter PURGANAX.*

*Purganax.* Grant me your patience, Gentlemen and Boars,  
 Ye, by whose patience under public burdens The glorious constitution of these sties Subsists, and shall subsist. The lean-pig rates Grow with the growing populace of Swine,  
 The taxes, that true source of piggishness (How can I find a more appropriate term To include religion, morals, peace, and plenty,  
 And all that fit Bœotia as a nation To teach the other nations how to live?) Increase with piggishness itself; and still Does the revenue, that great spring of all The patronage, and pensions, and by-payments,  
 Which free-born Pigs regard with jealous eyes,  
 Diminish, till at length, by glorious steps, All the land's produce will be merged in taxes,  
 And the revenue will amount to — nothing!  
 The failure of a foreign market for Sausages, bristles, and blood-puddings,  
 And such home manufactures is but partial;  
 And, that the population of the Pigs, Instead of hog-wash, has been fed on straw  
 And water, is a fact which is — you know —  
 That is — it is a state-necessity — Temporary, of course. Those impious Pigs,  
 Who, by frequent squeaks, have dared impugn The settled Swellfoot system, or to make Irreverent mockery of the genuflexions Inculcated by the arch-priest, have been whipt

Into a loyal and an orthodox: whine.  
Things being in this happy state, the  
Queen

Iona —

(*A loud cry from the PIGS.*) She is innocent! most innocent!

*Purganax.* That is the very thing that I was saying,

Gentlemen Swine; the Queen Iona being Most innocent, no doubt, returns to Thebes, And the lean Sows and Boars collect about her,

Wishing to make her think that WE believe

(I mean those more substantial Pigs, who will

Rich hog-wash, while the others mouth damp straw)

That she is guilty; thus, the Lean-Pig faction

Seeks to obtain that hog-wash, which has been

Your immemorial right, and which I will

Maintain you in to the last drop of —

*A Boar (interrupting him).* What Does any one accuse her of?

*Purganax.* Why, no one Makes any positive accusation; — but There were hints dropt, and so the privy wizards

Conceived that it became them to advise His Majesty to investigate their truth; — Not for his own sake; he could be content

To let his wife play any pranks she pleased,

If, by that sufferance, *he* could please the Pigs;

But then he fears the morals of the Swine, The Sows especially, and what effect It might produce upon the purity and Religion of the rising generation

Of sucking Pigs, if it could be suspected That Queen Iona — [*A pause.*]

*First Boar.* Well, go on; we long To hear what she can possibly have done.

*Purganax.* Why, it is hinted, that a certain Bull —

Thus much is *known*: — the milk-white Bulls that feed

Beside Clitumnus and the crystal lakes Of the Cisalpine mountains, in fresh dews

Of lotus-grass and blossoming asphodel, Sleeking their silken hair, and with sweet breath

Loading the morning winds until they faint

With living fragrance, are so beautiful! — Well, *I* say nothing; — but Europa rode

On such a one from Asia into Crete, And the enamoured sea grew calm beneath

His gliding beauty. And Pasiphaë, Iona's grandmother, — but *she* is innocent!

And that both you and I, and all assert.

*First Boar.* Most innocent!

*Purganax.* Behold this BAG; a Bag —

*Second Boar.* Oh! no GREEN BAGS!! Jealousy's eyes are green,

Scorpions are green, and water-snakes, and efts,

And verdigris, and —

*Purganax.* Honorable Swine, In piggish souls can prepossessions reign? Allow me to remind you, grass is green — All flesh is grass; — no bacon but is flesh —

Ye are but bacon. This divining BAG (Which is not green, but only bacon color)

Is filled with liquor, which if sprinkled o'er

A woman guilty of — we all know what — Makes her so hideous, till she finds one blind

She never can commit the like again.

If innocent, she will turn into an angel, And rain down blessings in the shape of comfits

As she flies up to heaven. Now, my proposal

Is to convert her sacred Majesty Into an angel (as I am sure we shall do), By pouring on her head this mystic water.

[*Showing the Bag.*]

I know that she is innocent; I wish Only to prove her so to all the world.

*First Boar.* Excellent, just, and noble Purganax.

*Second Boar.* How glorious it will  
be to see her Majesty

Flying above our heads, her petticoats  
Streaming like — like — like —

*Third Boar.* Any thing.

*Purganax.* Oh, no!

But like a standard of an admiral's ship,  
Or like the banner of a conquering host,  
Or like a cloud dyed in the dying day,  
Unravelled on the blast from a white  
mountain;

Or like a meteor, or a war-steed's mane,  
Or waterfall from a dizzy precipice  
Scattered upon the wind.

*First Boar.* Or a cow's tail.

*Second Boar.* Or any thing, as the  
learned Boar observed.

*Purganax.* Gentlemen Boars, I move  
a resolution,

That her most sacred Majesty should be  
Invited to attend the feast of Famine,  
And to receive upon her chaste white  
body

Dews of Apotheosis from this BAG.

[*A great confusion is heard of the PIGS  
OUT OF DOORS, which communicates  
itself to those within. During the first  
Strophe, the doors of the Stye are staved  
in, and a number of exceedingly lean  
PIGS and SOWS and BOARS rush in.*

*Semichorus I.*

No! Yes!

*Semichorus II.*

Yes! No!

*Semichorus I.*

A law!

*Semichorus II.*

A flaw!

*Semichorus I.*

Porkers, we shall lose our wash,  
Or must share it with the Lean-Pigs!

*First Boar.*

Order! order! be not rash!  
Was there ever such a scene, Pigs!

*An old Sow (rushing in).*

I never saw so fine a dash  
Since I first began to wean Pigs.

*Second Boar (solemnly).*

The Queen will be an angel time enough.

I vote, in form of an amendment, that  
Purganax rub a little of that stuff  
Upon his face.

*Purganax (His heart is seen to beat  
through his waistcoat).*

Gods! What would ye be at?

*Semichorus I.*

Purganax has plainly shown a  
Cloven foot and jack-daw feather.

*Semichorus II.*

I vote Swellfoot and Iona  
Try the magic test together;  
Whenever royal spouses bicker,  
Both should try the magic liquor.

*An old Boar (aside).*

A miserable state is that of Pigs,  
For if their drivers would tear caps  
and wigs,  
The Swine must bite each other's ear  
therefore.

*An old Sow (aside).*

A wretched lot Jove has assigned to  
Swine,  
Squabbling makes Pig-herds hungry,  
and they dine  
On bacon, and whip sucking-Pigs the  
more.

*Chorus.*

Hog-wash has been ta'en away:  
If the Bull-Queen is divested,  
We shall be in every way  
Hunted, stript, exposed, molested;  
Let us do whate'er we may,  
That she shall not be arrested.  
QUEEN, we trench you with walls of  
brawn,  
And palisades of tusks, sharp as a  
bayonet:  
Place your most sacred person here.  
We pawn  
Our lives that none a finger dare to  
lay on it.  
Those who wrong you, wrong us;  
Those who hate you, hate us;  
Those who sting you, sting us;  
Those who bait you, bait us;  
The oracle is now about to be  
Fulfilled by circumvolving destiny;  
Which says: "Thebes, choose reform  
or civil war,



When through your streets, instead of  
hare with dogs,

A CONSORT QUEEN shall hunt a KING  
with hogs,

Riding upon the IONIAN MINO-  
TAUR.”

*Enter IONA TAURINA.*

*Iona Taurina (coming forward).*

Gentlemen Swine, and gentle Lady-  
Pigs,

The tender heart of every Boar acquits  
Their QUEEN, of any act incongruous  
With native piggishness, and she reposing  
With confidence upon the grunting nation,  
Has thrown herself, her cause, her life,  
her all,

Her innocence, into their hoggish arms;  
Nor has the expectation been deceived  
Of finding shelter there. Yet know,  
great Boars

(For such who ever lives among you  
finds you,

And so do I), the innocent are proud!  
I have accepted your protection only  
In compliment of your kind love and care,  
Not for necessity. The innocent

Are safest there where trials and dangers  
wait;

Innocent Queens o'er white-hot plough-  
shares tread

Unsinged, and ladies, Erin's laureate  
sings it,<sup>1</sup>

Deckt with rare gems, and beauty rarer  
still,

Walkt from Killarney to the Giant's  
Causeway,

Thro' rebels, smugglers, troops of  
yeomanry,

White-boys, and Orange-boys, and con-  
stables,

Tithe-proctors, and excise people, unin-  
jured!

Thus I!—

Lord PURGANAX, I do commit myself  
into your custody, and am prepared

To stand the test, whatever it may be!

*Purganax.* This magnanimity in  
your sacred Majesty

Must please the Pigs. You cannot fail  
of being

A heavenly angel. Smoke your bits of  
glass,

Ye loyal Swine, or her transfiguration  
Will blind your wondering eyes.

*An old Boar (aside).* Take care,  
my Lord,

They do not smoke you first.

*Purganax.* At the approach-  
ing feast

Of Famine, let the expiation be.

*Swine.* Content! content!

*Iona Taurina (aside).* I, most  
content of all,

Know that my foes even thus prepare  
their fall! [*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE II.— *The interior of the Tem-  
ple of FAMINE. The statue of the  
Goddess, a skeleton clothed in party-  
colored rags, seated upon a heap of skulls  
and loaves intermingled. A number of  
exceedingly fat Priests in black garments  
arrayed on each side, with marrow-bones  
and cleavers in their hands. A flourish  
of trumpets.*

*Enter MAMMON as arch-priest, SWELL-  
FOOT, DAKRY, PURGANAX, LAO-  
CTONOS, followed by IONA TAURINA  
guarded. On the other side enter the  
SWINE.*

*Chorus of PRIESTS, accompanied by  
the Court Porkman on marrow-  
bones and cleavers.*

GODDESS bare, and gaunt, and pale,  
Empress of the world, all hail!

What tho' Cretans old called thee  
City-crested Cybele?

We call thee FAMINE!

Goddess of fasts and feasts, starving and  
cramming!

Thro' thee, for emperors, kings, and  
priests and lords,

Who rule by viziers, sceptres, banknotes,  
words,

The earth pours forth its plenteous  
fruits,

Corn, wool, linen, flesh, and roots—  
Those who consume these fruits thro' thee  
grow fat,

Those who produce these fruits thro'  
thee grow lean,

<sup>1</sup> “ Rich and rare were the gems she wore.”  
See Moore's “ Irish Melodies.”

Whatever change takes place, oh, stick to that!

And let things be as they have ever been;

At least while we remain thy priests,  
And proclaim thy fasts and feasts!

Thro' thee the sacred SWELLFOOT dynasty

Is based upon a rock amid that sea  
Whose waves are Swine — so let it ever be!

[SWELLFOOT, *etc.*, seat themselves at a table magnificently covered at the upper end of the temple. Attendants pass over the stage with hog-wash in pails. A number of Pigs, exceedingly lean, follow them licking up the wash.

*Mammon.* I fear your sacred Majesty has lost

The appetite which you were used to have.

Allow me now to recommend this dish —  
A simple kickshaw by your Persian cook,  
Such as is served at the great King's second table.

The price and pains which its ingredients cost,

Might have maintained some dozen families

A winter or two — not more — so plain a dish

Could scarcely disagree.

*Swellfoot.* After the trial,

And these fastidious Pigs are gone, perhaps

I may recover my lost appetite, —

I feel the gout flying about my stomach —  
Give me a glass of Maraschino punch.

*Purganax* (*filling his glass, and standing up*). The glorious constitution of the Pigs!

*All.* A toast! a toast! stand up and three times three!

*Dakry.* No heel-taps — darken day-lights! —

*Laotonos.* Claret, somehow,  
Puts me in mind of blood, and blood of claret!

*Swellfoot.* Laotonos is fishing for a compliment,

But 't is his due. Yes, you have drunk more wine,

And shed more blood than any man in Thebes.

[*To PURGANAX.*

For God's sake stop the grunting of those Pigs!

*Purganax.* We dare not, Sire 't is Famine's privilege.

*Chorus of Swine.*

Hail to thee, hail to thee, Famine!

Thy throne is on blood, and thy robe is of rags;

Thou devil which livest on damning;  
Saint of new churches, and cant,  
and GREEN BAGS,

Till in pity and terror thou risest,  
Confounding the schemes of the wisest,  
When thou liftest thy skeleton form,

When the loaves and the skulls roll about,

We will greet thee — the voice of a storm

Would be lost in our terrible shout!

Then hail to thee, hail to thee, Famine!

Hail to thee, Empress of Earth!

When thou risest, dividing possessions;  
When thou risest, uprooting oppressions;

In the pride of thy ghastly mirth.

Over palaces, temples, and graves,  
We will rush as thy minister-slaves,  
Trampling behind in thy train,  
Till all be made level again!

*Mammon.* I hear a crackling of the giant bones

Of the dread image, and in the black pits  
Which once were eyes, I see two livid flames.

These prodigies are oracular, and show  
The presence of the unseen Deity.  
Mighty events are hastening to their doom!

*Swellfoot.* I only hear the lean and mutinous Swine

Grunting about the temple.

*Dakry.* In a crisis  
Of such exceeding delicacy, I think  
We ought to put her Majesty, the QUEEN,  
Upon her trial without delay.

*Mammon.* THE BAG  
Is here.

*Purganax.* I have rehearsed  
the entire scene

With an ox bladder and some ditch-water,

On Lady P.—it cannot fail. (*Taking up the bag.*) Your Majesty

[*To SWELLFOOT.*

In such a filthy business had better Stand on one side, lest it should sprinkle you,

A spot or two on me would do no harm, Nay, it might hide the blood, which the sad genius

Of the Green Isle has fixt, as by a spell, Upon my brow—which would stain all its seas,

But which those seas could never wash away!

*Iona Taurina.* My Lord, I am ready—nay, I am impatient

To undergo the test.

[*A graceful figure in a semi-transparent veil passes unnoticed through the Temple; the word LIBERTY is seen through the veil, as if it were written in fire upon its forehead. Its words are almost drowned in the furious grunting of the PIGS, and the business of the trial. She kneels on the steps of the Altar, and speaks in tones at first faint and low, but which ever become louder and louder.*

Mighty Empress! Death's white wife!

Ghastly mother-in-law of life!

By the God who made thee such,

By the magic of thy touch,

By the starving and the cramming,

Of fasts and feasts! by thy dread self,

O Famine!

I charge thee! when thou wake the multitude

Thou lead them not upon the paths of blood.

The earth did never mean her foison

For those who crown life's cup with poison

Of fanatic rage and meaningless revenge—

But for those radiant spirits, who are still

The standard-bearers in the van of Change.

Be they th' appointed stewards, to fill The lap of Pain, and Toil, and Age!—Remit, O Queen! thy accustomed rage!

Be what thou art not! In voice faint and low

FREEDOM calls *Famine*,—her eternal foe, To brief alliance, hollow truce.—Rise now!

[*Whilst the Veiled Figure has been chanting this strophe, MAMMON, DAKRY, LAOCTONOS, and SWELLFOOT, have surrounded IONA TAURINA, who, with her hands folded on her breast, and her eyes lifted to Heaven, stands, as with saint-like resignation, to wait the issue of the business, in perfect confidence of her innocence.*

[*PURGANAX, after unsealing the GREEN BAG, is gravely about to pour the liquor upon her head, when suddenly the whole expression of her figure and countenance changes; she snatches it from his hand with a loud laugh of triumph, and empties it over SWELLFOOT and his whole Court, who are instantly changed into a number of filthy and ugly animals, and rush out of the Temple. The image of FAMINE then arises with a tremendous sound, the PIGS begin scrambling for the loaves, and are tripped up by the skulls; all those who eat the loaves are turned into BULLS, and arrange themselves quietly behind the altar. The image of FAMINE sinks through a chasm in the earth, and a MINOTAUR rises.*

*Minotaur.* I am the Ionian Minotaur, the mightiest

Of all Europa's taurine progeny—

I am the old traditional Man-Bull;

And from my ancestors having been Ionian,

I am called Ion, which, by interpretation,

Is JOHN; in plain Theban, that is to say,

My name's JOHN BULL; I am a famous hunter,

And can leap any gate in all Bœotia,

Even the palings of the royal park,

Or double ditch about the new enclosures;

And if your Majesty will deign to mount me,

At least till you have hunted down your game,

I will not throw you.

*Iona Taurina.* (During this speech she has been putting on boots and spurs, and a hunting cap, buckishly cocked on one side, and tucking up her hair, she leaps nimbly on his back.) Ho! ho! tallyho! tallyho! ho! ho!

Come, let us hunt these ugly badgers down,

These stinking foxes, these devouring otters,

These hares, these wolves, these anything but men.

Hey, for a whipper-in! my loyal Pigs,  
Now let your noses be as keen as beagles,  
Your steps as swift as greyhounds, and  
your cries

More dulcet and symphonious than the bells

Of village-towers, on sunshine holiday;  
Wake all the dewy woods with jangling music.

Give them no law (are they not beasts of blood?)

But such as they gave you. Tallyho!  
ho!

Thro' forest, furze, and bog, and den, and desert,

Pursue the ugly beasts! tallyho! ho!

*Full Chorus of IONA and the SWINE.*

Tallyho! tallyho!

Thro' rain, hail, and snow,

Thro' brake, gorse, and briar,

Thro' fen, flood, and mire,

We go! we go!

Tallyho! tallyho!

Thro' pond, ditch, and slough.

Wind them, and find them,

Like the Devil behind them,

Tallyho! tallyho!

[*Exeunt, in full cry; IONA driving on the SWINE, with the empty GREEN BAG.*]

THE END

NOTE ON ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS,  
BY MRS. SHELLEY.

In the brief journal I kept in those days, I find recorded, in August 1820,

Shelley "begins 'Swellfoot the Tyrant,' suggested by the pigs at the fair of San Giuliano." This was the period of Queen Caroline's landing in England, and the struggles made by George IV. to get rid of her claims; which failing, Lord Castle-reagh placed the "*Green Bag*" on the table of the House of Commons, demanding in the King's name that an inquiry should be instituted into his wife's conduct. These circumstances were the theme of all conversation among the English. We were then at the Baths of San Giuliano. A friend came to visit us on the day when a fair was held in the square beneath our windows: Shelley read to us his "Ode to Liberty;" and was riotously accompanied by the grunting of a quantity of pigs brought for sale to the fair. He compared it to the "chorus of frogs" in the satiric drama of Aristophanes; and, it being an hour of merriment, and one ludicrous association suggesting another, he imagined a political-satirical drama on the circumstances of the day, to which the pigs would serve as chorus — and "Swellfoot" was begun. When finished, it was transmitted to England, printed, and published anonymously; but stifled at the very dawn of its existence by the Society for the Suppression of Vice, who threatened to prosecute it, if not immediately withdrawn. The friend who had taken the trouble of bringing it out, of course, did not think it worth the annoyance and expense of a contest, and it was laid aside.

Hesitation of whether it would do honor to Shelley prevented my publishing it at first. But I cannot bring myself to keep back anything he ever wrote; for each word is fraught with the peculiar views and sentiments which he believed to be beneficial to the human race, and the bright light of poetry irradiates every thought. The world has a right to the entire compositions of such a man; for it does not live and thrive by the outworn lesson of the dullard or the hypocrite, but by the original free thoughts of men of genius, who aspire to pluck bright truth

"from the pale-faced moon;

Or dive into the bottom of the deep  
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,  
And pluck up drowned"

truth. Even those who may dissent from his opinions will consider that he was a man of genius, and that the world will take more interest in his slightest word than from the waters of Lethe which are so eagerly prescribed as medicinal for all its wrongs and woes. This drama, however, must not be judged for more than was meant. It is a mere plaything of the imagination; which even may not excite smiles among many, who will not see wit in those combinations of thought which were full of the ridiculous to the author. But, like everything he wrote, it breathes that deep sympathy for the sorrows of humanity, and indignation against its oppressors, which make it worthy of his name.

### EPIPSYCHIDION.

VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE NOBLE  
AND UNFORTUNATE LADY, EMILIA  
V —,

NOW IMPRISONED IN THE CON-  
VENT OF —

L'anima amante si slancia fuori del creato, e  
si crea nel infinito un Mondo tutto per essa,  
diverso assai da questo oscuro e pauroso baratro.  
HER OWN WORDS.

My Song, I fear that thou wilt find  
but few  
Who fitly shall conceive thy reasoning,  
Of such hard matter dost thou entertain;  
Whence, if by misadventure, chance  
should bring  
Thee to base company (as chance may  
do),  
Quite unaware of what thou dost contain,  
I prithee, comfort thy sweet self again,  
My last delight! tell them that they are  
dull,  
And bid them own that thou art beautiful.

### ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Writer of the following Lines died at Florence, as he was preparing for a voyage to one of the wildest of the Sporades, which he had bought, and where he had fitted up the ruins of an old building, and where it was his hope to have realized a scheme of life, suited perhaps to that happier and better world of which he is now an inhabitant, but hardly practicable in this. His life was singular; less on account of the romantic vicissitudes which diversified it, than the ideal tinge which it received from his own character and feelings. The present Poem, like the Vita Nuova of Dante, is sufficiently intelligible to a certain class of readers without a matter-of-fact history of the circumstances to which it relates; and to a certain other class it must ever remain incomprehensible, from a defect of a common organ of perception for the ideas of which it treats. Not but that, *gran vergogna sarebbe a colui, che rimasse cosa sotto veste di figura, o di colore rettorico: e domandato non sapesse denudare le sue parole da cotal veste, in guisa che avessero verace intendimento.*

The present poem appears to have been intended by the Writer as the dedication to some longer one. The stanza on the opposite page is almost a literal translation from Dante's famous Canzone

*Voi, ch' intendendo, il terzo ciel movete, etc.*

The presumptuous application of the concluding lines to his own composition will raise a smile at the expense of my unfortunate friend; be it a smile not of contempt, but pity. S.

### EPIPSYCHIDION.

SWEET Spirit! Sister of that orphan  
one,  
Whose empire is the name thou weapest  
on,  
In my heart's temple I suspend to thee  
These votive wreaths of withered  
memory.

Poor captive bird! who, from thy  
 narrow cage,  
 Pourest such music, that it might assuage  
 The rugged hearts of those who prisoned  
 thee,  
 Were they not deaf to all sweet melody;  
 This song shall be thy rose: its petals  
 pale  
 Are dead, indeed, my adored Nightin-  
 gale!  
 But soft and fragrant is the faded  
 blossom,  
 And it has no thorn left to wound thy  
 bosom.

High, spirit-wingèd Heart! who dost  
 forever  
 Beat thine unfeeling bars with vain en-  
 deavor,  
 Till those bright plumes of thought, in  
 which arrayed  
 It over-soared this low and worldly  
 shade,  
 Lie shattered; and thy panting, wounded  
 breast  
 Stains with dear blood its unmaternal  
 nest!  
 I weep vain tears: blood would less  
 bitter be,  
 Yet poured forth gladlier, could it profit  
 thee.

Seraph of Heaven! too gentle to be  
 human,  
 Veiling beneath that radiant form of  
 Woman  
 All that is insupportable in thee  
 Of light, and love, and immortality!  
 Sweet Benediction in the eternal Curse!  
 Veiled Glory of this lampless Universe!  
 Thou Moon beyond the clouds! Thou  
 living Form  
 Among the Dead! Thou Star above the  
 Storm!  
 Thou Wonder, and thou Beauty, and  
 thou Terror!  
 Thou Harmony of Nature's art! Thou  
 Mirror  
 In whom, as in the splendor of the Sun,  
 All shapes look glorious which thou  
 gazest on!  
**Ay,** even the dim words which obscure  
 thee now

Flash, lightning-like, with unaccustomed  
 glow;  
 I pray thee that thou blot from this sad  
 song  
 All of its much mortality and wrong,  
 With those clear drops, which start like  
 sacred dew  
 From the twin lights thy sweet soul  
 darkens thro',  
 Weeping, till sorrow becomes ecstasy:  
 Then smile on it, so that it may not die.

I never thought before my death to  
 see  
 Youth's vision thus made perfect. Emily,  
 I love thee; tho' the world by no thin  
 name  
 Will hide that love, from its unvalued  
 shame.  
 Would we two had been twins of the  
 same mother!  
 Or, that the name my heart lent to  
 another  
 Could be a sister's bond for her and  
 thee,  
 Blending two beams of one eternity!  
 Yet were one lawful and the other true,  
 These names, tho' dear, could paint not,  
 as is due,  
 How beyond refuge I am thine. Ah me!  
 I am not thine: I am a part of *thee*.

Sweet Lamp! my moth-like Muse has  
 burnt its wings;  
 Or, like a dying swan who soars and  
 sings,  
 Young Love should teach Time, in his  
 own gray style,  
 All that thou art. Art thou not void of  
 guile,  
 A lovely soul formed to be blest and  
 bless?  
 A well of sealed and secret happiness,  
 Whose waters like blithe light and music  
 are,  
 Vanquishing dissonance and gloom? A  
 Star  
 Which moves not in the moving Heavens,  
 alone?  
 A smile amid dark frowns? a gentle  
 tone  
 Amid rude voices? a beloved light?  
 A Solitude, a Refuge, a Delight?

A Lute, which those whom Love has  
taught to play  
Make music on, to soothe the roughest  
day  
And lull fond grief asleep? a buried  
treasure?  
A cradle of young thoughts of wingless  
pleasure;  
A violet-shrouded grave of Woe?—I  
measure  
The world of fancies, seeking one like  
thee,  
And find—alas! mine own infirmity.

She met me, Stranger, upon life's  
rough way,  
And lured me towards sweet Death; as  
Night by Day,  
Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift  
Hope,  
Led into light, life, peace. An ante-  
lope,  
In the suspended impulse of its light-  
ness,  
Were less ethereally light: the brightness  
Of her divinest presence trembles thro'  
Her limbs, as underneath a cloud of dew  
Embodied in the windless Heaven of  
June  
Amid the splendor-wingèd stars, the  
Moon  
Burns, inextinguishably beautiful:  
And from her lips, as from a hyacinth  
full  
Of honey-dew, a liquid murmur drops,  
Killing the sense with passion; sweet as  
stops  
Of planetary music heard in trance.  
In her mild lights the starry spirits  
dance,  
The sunbeams of those wells which ever  
leap  
Under the lightnings of the soul—too  
deep  
For the brief fathom-line of thought or  
sense.  
The glory of her being, issuing thence,  
Stains the dead, blank, cold air with a  
warm shade  
Of unentangled intermixture, made  
By Love, of light and motion: one in-  
tense  
Diffusion, one serene Omnipresence,

Whose flowing outlines mingle in their  
flowing  
Around her cheeks and utmost fingers  
glowing  
With the unintermitted blood, which  
there  
Quivers (as in a fleece of snow-like air  
The crimson pulse of living morning  
quiver),  
Continuously prolonged, and ending  
never,  
Till they are lost, and in that Beauty  
furl  
Which penetrates and clasps and fills the  
world;  
Scarce visible from extreme loveliness.  
Warm fragrance seems to fall from her  
light dress  
And her loose hair; and where some  
heavy tress  
The air of her own speed has disentwined,  
The sweetness seems to satiate the faint  
wind;  
And in the soul a wild odor is felt,  
Beyond the sense, like fiery dew that melt  
Into the bosom of a frozen bud. —  
See where she stands! a mortal shape in-  
duced  
With love and life and light and deity,  
And motion which may change but can  
not die;  
An image of some bright Eternity;  
A shadow of some golden dream; a Splen-  
dor  
Leaving the third sphere pilotless; a ten-  
der  
Reflection of the eternal Moon of Love  
Under whose motions life's dull billows  
move;  
A Metaphor of Spring and Youth and  
Morning;  
A Vision like incarnate April, warning,  
With smiles and tears, Frost the Anatomy  
Into his summer grave.

Ah, woe is me!

What have I dared? where am I lifted?  
how  
Shall I descend, and perish not? I know  
That Love makes all things equal: I have  
heard  
By mine own heart this joyous truth  
averred:

The spirit of the worm beneath the sod  
In love and worship blends itself with  
God.

Spouse! Sister! Angel! Pilot of the  
Fate

Whose course has been so starless! Oh,  
too late

Belovèd! Oh, too soon adored, by me!  
For in the fields of immortality  
My spirit should at first have worshipt  
thine,

A divine presence in a place divine;  
Or should have moved beside it on this  
earth,

A shadow of that substance, from its  
birth:

But not as now:— I love thee; yes, I  
feel

That on the fountain of my heart a seal  
Is set, to keep its waters pure and bright  
For thee, since in those *tears* thou hast  
delight.

We — are we not formed, as notes of mu-  
sic are,

For one another, tho' dissimilar;  
Such difference without discord, as can  
make

Those sweetest sounds, in which all spirits  
shake

As trembling leaves in a continuous air?

Thy wisdom speaks in me, and bids me  
dare

Beacon the rocks on which high hearts  
are wreckt.

I never was attached to that great sect,  
Whose doctrine is, that each one should  
select

Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend,  
And all the rest, tho' fair and wise,  
commend

To cold oblivion, tho' it is in the code  
Of modern morals, and the beaten road  
Which those poor slaves with weary foot-  
step tread,

Who travel to their home among the dead  
By the broad highway of the world, and  
so

With one chained friend, perhaps a jealous  
foe,

The dreariest and the longest journey  
go.

True Love in this differs from gold and  
clay,

That to divide is not to take away.

Love is like understanding, that grows  
bright,

Gazing on many truths; 't is like thy  
light,

Imagination! which from earth and sky,  
And from the depths of human fantasy,  
As from a thousand prisms and mirrors,  
fills

The Universe with glorious beams, and  
kills

Error, the worm, with many a sunlike  
arrow

Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow  
The heart that loves, the brain that con-  
templates,

The life that wears, the spirit that creates  
One object, and one form, and builds  
thereby

A sepulchre for its eternity.

Mind from its object differs most in  
this:

Evil from good: misery from happiness;  
The baser from the nobler; the impure  
And frail, from what is clear and must  
endure.

If you divide suffering and dross, you may  
Diminish till it is consumed away;

If you divide pleasure and love and  
thought,

Each part exceeds the whole; and we  
know not

How much, while any yet remains un-  
shared,

Of pleasure may be gained, of sorrow  
spared:

This truth is that deep well, whence sages  
draw

The unenvied light of hope; the eternal  
law

By which those live, to whom this world  
of life

Is as a garden ravaged, and whose strife  
Tills for the promise of a later birth  
The wilderness of this Elysian earth.

There was a Being whom my spirit oft  
Met on its visioned wanderings, far aloft,  
In the clear golden prime of my youth's  
dawn,

Upon the fairy isles of sunny lawn,



Amid the enchanted mountains, and the  
 caves  
 Of divine sleep, and on the air-like waves  
 Of wonder-level dream, whose tremulous  
 floor  
 Paved her light steps;— on an imagined  
 shore,  
 Under the gray beak of some promontory  
 She met me, robed in such exceeding  
 glory,  
 That I beheld her not. In solitudes  
 Her voice came to me thro' the whis-  
 pering woods,  
 And from the fountains, and the odors  
 deep  
 Of flowers, which, like lips murmuring  
 in their sleep  
 Of the sweet kisses which had lulled  
 them there,  
 Breathed but of *her* to the enamoured air;  
 And from the breezes whether low or  
 loud,  
 And from the rain of every passing cloud,  
 And from the singing of the summer  
 birds,  
 And from all sounds, all silence. In the  
 words  
 Of antique verse and high romance, —  
 in form,  
 Sound, color — in whatever checks that  
 Storm  
 Which with the shattered present chokes  
 the past;  
 And in that best philosophy, whose taste  
 Makes this cold common hell, our life, a  
 doom  
 As glorious as a fiery martyrdom;  
 Her Spirit was the harmony of truth. —

Then, from the caverns of my dreamy  
 youth  
 I sprang, as one sandalled with plumes of  
 fire,  
 And towards the loadstar of my one  
 desire,  
 I flitted, like a dizzy moth, whose flight  
 Is as a dead leaf's in the owlet light,  
 When it would seek in Hesper's setting  
 sphere  
 A radiant death, a fiery sepulchre,  
 As if it were a lamp of earthly flame. —  
 But She, whom prayers or tears then  
 could not tame,

Past, like a God throned on a wingèd  
 planet,  
 Whose burning plumes to tenfold swift-  
 ness fan it,  
 Into the dreary cone of our life's shade;  
 And as a man with mighty loss dis-  
 mayèd,  
 I would have followed, tho' the grave  
 between  
 Yawned like a gulf whose spectres are  
 unseen:  
 When a voice said:— “O Thou of hearts  
 the weakest,  
 The phantom is beside thee whom thou  
 seekest.”  
 Then I— “Where?” the world's echo  
 answered “where!”  
 And in that silence, and in my despair,  
 I questioned every tongueless wind that  
 flew  
 Over my tower of mourning, if it knew  
 Whither 't was fled, this soul out of my  
 soul;  
 And murmured names and spells which  
 have control  
 Over the sightless tyrants of our fate;  
 But neither prayer nor verse could dissi-  
 pate  
 The night which closed on her; nor  
 uncreate  
 That world within this Chaos, mine and  
 me,  
 Of which she was the veiled Divinity,  
 The world I say of thoughts that wor-  
 shipt her:  
 And therefore I went forth, with hope  
 and fear  
 And every gentle passion sick to death,  
 Feeding my course with expectation's  
 breath,  
 Into the wintry forest of our life;  
 And struggling thro' its error with vain  
 strife,  
 And stumbling in my weakness and my  
 haste,  
 And half bewildered by new forms, I  
 past  
 Seeking among those untaught foresters  
 If I could find one form resembling hers,  
 In which she might have maskt herself  
 from me.  
 There, — One, whose voice was venomèd  
 melody

Sate by a well, under blue nightshade  
 bowers;  
 The breath of her false mouth was like  
 faint flowers,  
 Her touch was as electric poison, — flame  
 Out of her looks into my vitals came,  
 And from her living cheeks and bosom  
 flew  
 A killing air, which pierced like honey-  
 dew  
 Into the core of my green heart, and lay  
 Upon its leaves; until, as hair grown  
 gray  
 O'er a young brow, they hid its unblown  
 prime  
 With ruins of unseasonable time.

In many mortal forms I rashly sought  
 The shadow of that idol of my thought.  
 And some were fair — but beauty dies  
 away:  
 Others were wise — but honeyed words  
 betray:  
 And One was true — oh! why not true to  
 me?  
 Then, as a hunted deer that could not  
 flee,  
 I turned upon my thoughts, and stood at  
 bay,  
 Wounded and weak and panting; the  
 cold day  
 Trembled, for pity of my strife and pain.  
 When, like a noonday dawn, there shone  
 again  
 Deliverance. One stood on my path  
 who seemed  
 As like the glorious shape which I had  
 dreamed,  
 As is the Moon, whose changes ever run  
 Into themselves, to the eternal Sun;  
 The cold chaste Moon, the Queen of  
 Heaven's bright isles,  
 Who makes all beautiful on which she  
 smiles,  
 That wandering shrine of soft yet icy  
 flame  
 Which ever is transformed, yet still the  
 same,  
 And warms not but illumines. Young  
 and fair  
 As the descended Spirit of that sphere,  
 She hid me, as the Moon may hide the  
 night

From its own darkness, until all was  
 bright  
 Between the Heaven and Earth of my  
 calm mind,  
 And, as a cloud charioted by the wind,  
 She led me to a cave in that wild place,  
 And sate beside me, with her downward  
 face  
 Illumining my slumbers, like the Moon  
 Waxing and waning o'er Endymion.  
 And I was laid asleep, spirit and limb,  
 And all my being became bright or dim  
 As the Moon's image in a summer sea,  
 According as she smiled or frowned on  
 me;  
 And there I lay, within a chaste cold  
 bed:  
 Alas, I then was nor alive nor dead:—  
 For at her silver voice came Death and  
 Life,  
 Unmindful each of their accustomed  
 strife,  
 Maskt like twin babes, a sister and a  
 brother,  
 The wandering hopes of one abandoned  
 mother,  
 And thro' the cavern without wings they  
 flew,  
 And cried "Away, he is not of our  
 crew."  
 I wept, and tho' it be a dream, I  
 weep.

What storms then shook the ocean of  
 my sleep,  
 Blotting that Moon, whose pale and  
 waning lips  
 Then shrank as in the sickness of  
 eclipse;—  
 And how my soul was as a lampless  
 sea,  
 And who was then its Tempest; and  
 when She,  
 The Planet of that hour, was quencht,  
 what frost  
 Crept o'er those waters, till from coast to  
 coast  
 The moving billows of my being fell  
 Into a death of ice, immovable;—  
 And then — what earthquakes made it  
 gape and split,  
 The white Moon smiling all the while on  
 it,

These words conceal:—If not, each  
word would be  
The key of stanchless tears. Weep not  
for me!

At length, into the obscure Forest  
came  
The Vision I had sought thro' grief and  
shame.

Athwart that wintry wilderness of thorns  
Flasht from her motion splendor like  
the Morn's,

And from her presence life was radiated  
Thro' the gray earth and branches bare  
and dead;

So that her way was paved, and roofed  
above

With flowers as soft as thoughts of bud-  
ding love;

And music from her respiration spread  
Like light, — all other sounds were pene-  
trated

By the small, still, sweet spirit of that  
sound,

So that the savage winds hung mute  
around;

And odors warm and fresh fell from her  
hair

Dissolving the dull cold in the frore air:  
Soft as an Incarnation of the Sun,  
When light is changed to love, this  
glorious One

Floated into the cavern where I lay,  
And called my Spirit, and the dreaming  
clay

Was lifted by the thing that dreamed  
below

As smoke by fire, and in her beauty's  
glow

I stood, and felt the dawn of my long  
night

Was penetrating me with living light:  
I knew it was the Vision veiled from me  
So many years — that it was Emily.

Twin Spheres of light who rule this  
passive Earth,

This world of love, this *me*; and into  
birth

Awaken all its fruits and flowers, and  
dart

Magnetic might into its central heart;

And lift its billows and its mists, and  
guide

By everlasting laws, each wind and tide  
To its fit cloud, and its appointed cave;  
And lull its storms, each in the craggy  
grave

Which was its cradle, luring to faint  
bowers

The armies of the rainbow-wingèd  
showers;

And, as those married lights, which  
from the towers

Of Heaven look forth and fold the  
wandering globe

In liquid sleep and splendor, as a robe;  
And all their many-mingled influence

blend,  
If equal, yet unlike, to one sweet end;—

So ye, bright regents, with alternate  
sway

Govern my sphere of being, night and  
day!

Thou, not disdaining even a borrowed  
might;

Thou, not eclipsing a remoter light;  
And, thro' the shadow of the seasons

three,

From Spring to Autumn's sere maturity,  
Light it into the Winter of the tomb,

Where it may ripen to a brighter bloom.  
Thou too, O Comet beautiful and fierce,

Who drew the heart of this frail Universe  
Towards thine own; till, wreckt in that

convulsion,  
Alternating attraction and repulsion,

Thine went astray and that was rent in  
twain;

Oh, float into our azure heaven again!  
Be there love's folding-star at thy return;

The living Sun will feed thee from its  
urn

Of golden fire; the Moon will veil her  
horn

In thy last smiles; adoring Even and  
Morn

Will worship thee with incense of calm  
breath

And lights and shadows; as the star of  
Death

And Birth is worshiped by those sisters  
wild

Called Hope and Fear — upon the heart  
are piled

Their offerings, — of this sacrifice divine  
A World shall be the altar.

Lady mine,

Scorn not these flowers of thought, the  
fading birth  
Which from its heart of hearts that plant  
puts forth  
Whose fruit, made perfect by thy sunny  
eyes,  
Will be as of the trees of Paradise.

The day is come, and thou wilt fly  
with me.

To whatso'er of dull mortality  
Is mine, remain a vestal sister still;  
To the intense, the deep, the imperish-  
able,

Not mine but me, henceforth be thou  
united

Even as a bride, delighting and de-  
lighted.

The hour is come:— the destined Star  
has risen

Which shall descend upon a vacant  
prison.

The walls are high, the gates are strong,  
thick set

The sentinels — but true love never yet  
Was thus constrained: it overleaps all  
fence:

Like lightning, with invisible violence  
Piercing its continents; like Heaven's  
free breath,

Which he who grasps can hold not;  
liker Death,

Who rides upon a thought, and makes  
his way

Thro' temple, tower, and palace, and  
the array

Of arms: more strength has Love than  
he or they;

For it can burst his charnel, and make  
free

The limbs in chains, the heart in  
agony,

The soul in dust and chaos.

Emily,

A ship is floating in the harbor now,  
A wind is hovering o'er the mountain's  
brow;

There is a path on the sea's azure floor,  
No keel has ever ploughed that path  
before;

The halcyons brood around the foamless  
isles;

The treacherous Ocean has forsworn its  
wives;

The merry mariners are bold and free:  
Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail  
with me?

Our bark is as an albatross, whose nest  
Is a far Eden of the purple East;  
And we between her wings will sit, while  
Night

And Day, and Storm, and Calm, pursue  
their flight,

Our ministers, along the boundless Sea,  
Treading each other's heels, unheededly.

It is an isle under Ionian skies,  
Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise,

And, for the harbors are not safe and  
good,

This land would have remained a soli-  
tude

But for some pastoral people native  
there,

Who from the Elysian, clear, and golden  
air

Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,  
Simple and spirited, innocent and bold.

The blue Ægean girds this chosen  
home,

With ever-changing sound and light and  
foam,

Kissing the sifted sands, and caverns  
hoar;

And all the winds wandering along the  
shore

Undulate with the undulating tide:  
There are thick woods where sylvan  
forms abide;

And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,  
As clear as elemental diamond,

Or serene morning air; and far beyond,  
The mossy tracks made by the goats and  
deer

(Which the rough shepherd treads but  
once a year),

Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers,  
and halls

Built round with ivy, which the water-  
falls

Illuminating, with sound that never fails  
Accompany the noonday nightingales;

And all the place is peopled with sweet  
airs;

The light clear element which the isle wears  
 Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,  
 Which floats like mist laden with unseen showers  
 And falls upon the eyelids like faint sleep;  
 And from the moss violets and jonquils peep,  
 And dart their arrowy odor thro' the brain  
 Till you might faint with that delicious pain.  
 And every motion, odor, beam, and tone,  
 With that deep music is in unison:  
 Which is a soul within the soul — they seem  
 Like echoes of an antenatal dream. —  
 It is an isle 'twixt Heaven, Air, Earth, and Sea,  
 Cradled, and hung in clear tranquillity;  
 Bright as that wandering Eden Lucifer,  
 Washt by the soft blue Oceans of young air.  
 It is a favored place. Famine or Blight,  
 Pestilence, War, and Earthquake, never light  
 Upon its mountain-peaks; blind vultures, they  
 Sail onward far upon their fatal way:  
 The wingèd storms, chanting their thunder-psalm  
 To other lands, leave azure chasms of calm  
 Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,  
 From which its fields and woods ever renew  
 Their green and golden immortality.  
 And from the sea there rise, and from the sky  
 There fall, clear exhalations, soft and bright,  
 Veil after veil, each hiding some delight,  
 Which Sun or Moon or zephyr draw aside,  
 Till the isle's beauty, like a naked bride  
 Glowing at once with love and loveliness,  
 Blushes and trembles at its own excess:  
 Yet, like a buried lamp, a Soul no less  
 Burns in the heart of this delicious isle,  
 An atom of the Eternal, whose own smile  
 Unfolds itself, and may be felt, not seen

O'er the gray rocks, blue waves, and forests green,  
 Filling their bare and void interstices. —  
 But the chief marvel of the wilderness  
 Is a lone dwelling, built by whom or how  
 None of the rustic island-people know:  
 'Tis not a tower of strength, tho' with its height  
 It overtops the woods; but, for delight,  
 Some wise and tender Ocean-King, ere crime  
 Had been invented, in the world's young prime,  
 Reared it, a wonder of that simple time,  
 An envy of the isles, a pleasure-house  
 Made sacred to his sister and his spouse.  
 It scarce seems now a wreck of human art,  
 But, as it were Titanic; in the heart  
 Of Earth having assumed its form, then grown  
 Out of the mountains, from the living stone,  
 Lifting itself in caverns light and high:  
 For all the antique and learnèd imagery  
 Has been erased, and in the place of it  
 The ivy and the wild-vine interknit  
 The volumes of their many-twining stems;  
 Parasite flowers illumine with dewy gems  
 The lampless halls, and when they fade,  
 the sky  
 Peeps through their winter-woof of tracery  
 With moonlight patches, or star-atoms keen,  
 Or fragments of the day's intense serene; —  
 Working mosaic on the Parian floors.  
 And, day and night, aloof, from the high towers  
 And terraces, the Earth and Ocean seem  
 To sleep in one another's arms, and dream  
 Of waves, flowers, clouds, woods, rocks,  
 and all that we  
 Read in their smiles, and call reality.

This isle and house are mine, and I  
 have vowed  
 Thee to be lady of the solitude. —  
 And I have fitted up some chambers there  
 Looking towards the golden Eastern  
 air,

And level with the living winds, which  
     flow  
 Like waves above the living waves be-  
     low. —  
 I have sent books and music there, and  
     all  
 Those instruments with which high spirits  
     call  
 The future from its cradle, and the past  
 Out of its grave, and make the present  
     last  
 In thoughts and joys which sleep, but  
     can not die,  
 Folded within their own eternity.  
 Our simple life wants little, and true taste  
 Hires not the pale drudge Luxury, to  
     waste  
 The scene it would adorn, and therefore  
     still,  
 Nature, with all her children, haunts the  
     hill.  
 The ring-dove, in the embowering ivy,  
     yet  
 Keeps up her love-lament, and the owls  
     flit  
 Round the evening tower, and the young  
     stars glance  
 Between the quick bats in their twilight  
     dance;  
 The spotted deer bask in the fresh moon-  
     light  
 Before our gate, and the slow, silent night  
 Is measured by the pants of their calm  
     sleep.  
 Be this our home in life, and when years  
     heap  
 Their withered hours, like leaves, on our  
     decay,  
 Let us become the overhanging day,  
 The living soul of this Elysian isle,  
 Conscious, inseparable, one. Meanwhile  
 We two will rise, and sit, and walk to-  
     gether,  
 Under the roof of blue Ionian weather,  
 And wander in the meadows, or ascend  
 The mossy mountains, where the blue  
     heavens bend  
 With lightest winds, to touch their para-  
     mour;  
 Or linger, where the pebble-paven shore,  
 Under the quick, faint kisses of the sea  
 Trembles and sparkles as with ecstasy, —  
 Possessing and possess by all that is

Within that calm circumference of bliss,  
 And by each other, till to love and live  
 Be one:— or, at the noontide hour, ar-  
     rive  
 Where some old cavern hoar seems yet  
     to keep  
 The moonlight of the expired night  
     asleep,  
 Thro' which the awakened day can never  
     peep;  
 A veil for our seclusion, close as Night's,  
 Where secure sleep may kill thine inno-  
     cent lights;  
 Sleep, the fresh dew of languid love, the  
     rain  
 Whose drops quench kisses till they burn  
     again.  
 And we will talk, until thought's melody  
 Become too sweet for utterance, and it  
     die  
 In words, to live again in looks, which  
     dart  
 With thrilling tone into the voiceless  
     heart,  
 Harmonizing silence without a sound.  
 Our breath shall intermix, our bosoms  
     bound,  
 And our veins beat together; and our  
     lips  
 With other eloquence than words, eclipse  
 The soul that burns between them, and  
     the wells  
 Which boil under our being's inmost  
     cells,  
 The fountains of our deepest life, shall  
     be  
 Confused in passion's golden purity,  
 As mountain-springs under the morning  
     Sun.  
 We shall become the same, we shall be  
     one  
 Spirit within two frames, oh! wherefore  
     two?  
 One passion in twin-hearts, which grows  
     and grew,  
 Till like two meteors of expanding flame,  
 Those spheres instinct with it become  
     the same,  
 Touch, mingle, are transfigured; ever  
     still  
 Burning, yet ever inconsumable:  
 In one another's substance finding  
     food,

Like flames too pure and light and un-  
imbued  
To nourish their bright lives with baser  
prey,  
Which point to Heaven and can not pass  
away:  
One hope within two wills, one will  
beneath  
Two overshadowing minds, one life, one  
death,  
One Heaven, one Hell, one immortality,  
And one annihilation. Woe is me!  
The winged words on which my soul  
would pierce  
Into the height of love's rare Universe,  
Are chains of lead around its flight of  
fire —  
I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire!

Weak Verses, go, kneel at your Sover-  
eign's feet,  
And say:— "We are the masters of thy  
slave;  
What wouldst thou with us and ours  
and thine?"  
Then call your sisters from Oblivion's  
cave,  
All singing loud: "Love's very pain is  
sweet.  
But its reward is in the world divine  
Which, if not here, it builds beyond the  
grave."  
So shall ye live when I am there. Then  
haste  
Over the hearts of men, until ye meet  
Marina, Vanna, Primus, and the rest,  
And bid them love each other and be  
blest:  
And leave the troop which errs, and  
which reproves,  
And come and be my guest, — for I am  
Love's.

FRAGMENTS CONNECTED  
WITH EPIPSYCHIDION.

Here, my dear friend, is a new book for  
you;  
I have already dedicated two  
To other friends, one female and one  
male, —

What you are is a thing that I must veil;  
What can this be to those who praise or  
rail?  
I never was attacht to that great sect  
Whose doctrine is that each one should  
select  
Out of the world a mistress or a friend,  
And all the rest, tho' fair and wise,  
commend  
To cold oblivion — tho' 't is in the  
code  
Of modern morals, and the beaten road  
Which those poor slaves with weary foot-  
steps tread  
Who travel to their home among the  
dead  
By the broad highway of the world —  
and so  
With one sad friend, and many a jealous  
foe,  
The dreariest and the longest journey go.

Free love has this, different from gold  
and clay,  
That to divide is not to take away.  
Like ocean, which the general north  
wind breaks  
Into ten thousand waves, and each one  
makes  
A mirror of the moon — like some great  
glass,  
Which did distort whatever form might  
pass,  
Dasht into fragments by a playful child,  
Which then reflects its eyes and forehead  
mild;  
Giving for one, which it could ne'er  
express,  
A thousand images of loveliness.

If I were one whom the loud world  
held wise,  
I should disdain to quote authorities  
In commendation of this kind of love: —  
Why there is first the God in heaven  
above,  
Who wrote a book called Nature, 't is to  
be  
Reviewed, I hear, in the next Quarterly;  
And Socrates, the Jesus Christ of Greece,  
And Jesus Christ himself did never cease  
To urge all living things to love each  
other,

And to forgive their mutual faults, and  
smother  
The Devil of disunion in their souls.

I love you! — Listen, O embodied Ray  
Of the great Brightness; I must pass  
away

While you remain, and these light words  
must be

Tokens by which you may remember me.  
Start not—the thing you are is unbe-  
trayed,

If you are human, and if but the shade  
Of some sublimer spirit.

And as to friend or mistress, 't is a form;  
Perhaps I wish you were one. Some  
declare

You a familiar spirit, as you are;  
Others with a more inhuman  
Hint that, tho' not my wife, you are a  
woman,

What is the color of your eyes and hair?  
Why, if you were a lady, it were fair

The world should know—but, as I am  
afraid,

The Quarterly would bait you if betrayed;  
And if, as it will be sport to see them  
stumble

Over all sorts of scandals, hear them  
mumble

Their litany of curses — some guess right,  
And others swear you're a Hermaph-  
rodite;

Like that sweet marble monster of both  
sexes,

With looks so sweet and gentle that it  
vexes

The very soul that the soul is gone  
Which lifted from her limbs the veil of  
stone.

It is a sweet thing, friendship, a dear  
balm,

A happy and auspicious bird of calm,  
Which rides o'er life's ever tumultuous  
Ocean;

A God that broods o'er chaos in com-  
motion;

A flower which fresh as Lapland roses  
are,

Lifts its bold head into the world's frore  
air,

And blooms most radiantly when others  
die,

Health, hope, and youth, and brief pros-  
perity;

And with the light and odor of its bloom,  
Shining within the dungeon and the  
tomb;

Whose coming is as light and music are  
Mid dissonance and gloom — a star  
Which moves not mid the moving  
heavens alone —

A smile among dark frowns — a gentle  
tone

Among rude voices, a beloved light,  
A solitude, a refuge, a delight.

If I had but a friend! Why, I have  
three

Even by my own confession; there may  
be

Some more, for what I know, for 't is  
my mind

To call my friends all who are wise and  
kind, —

And these, Heaven knows, at best are  
very few;

But none can ever be more dear than  
you.

Why should they be? My muse has lost  
her wings,

Or like a dying swan who soars and  
sings,

I should describe you in heroic style,  
But as it is, are you not void of guile?

A lovely soul, formed to be blest and  
bless:

A well of sealed and secret happiness;  
A lute which those whom Love has  
taught to play

Make music on to cheer the roughest  
day,

And enchant sadness till it sleeps?

To the oblivion whither I and thou,  
All loving and all lovely, hasten now

With steps, ah, too unequal! may we  
meet

In one Elysium or one winding sheet!

If any should be curious to discover  
Whether to you I am a friend or lover,  
Let them read Shakespeare's sonnets,  
taking thence

A whetstone for their dull intelligence



That tears and will not cut, or let them  
 guess  
 How Diotima, the wise prophctess,  
 Instructed the instructor, and why he  
 Rebuked the infant spirit of melody  
 On Agathon's sweet lips, which as he  
 spoke  
 Was as the lovely star when morn has  
 broke  
 The roof of darkness, in the golden  
 dawn,  
 Half-hidden, and yet beautiful.  
 I'll pawn  
 My hopes of Heaven—you know what  
 they are worth—  
 That the presumptuous pedagogues of  
 Earth,  
 If they could tell the riddle offered here  
 Would scorn to be, or being to appear  
 What now they seem and are—but let  
 them chide,  
 They have few pleasures in the world  
 beside;  
 Perhaps we should be dull were we not  
 chidden,  
 Paradise fruits are sweetest when for-  
 bidden.  
 Folly can season Wisdom, Hatred Love.  
 Farewell, if it can be to say farewell  
 To those who—  
 I will not, as most dedicators do,  
 Assure myself and all the world and you,  
 That you are faultless—would to God  
 they were  
 Who taunt me with your love! I then  
 should wear  
 These heavy chains of life with a light  
 spirit,  
 And would to God I were, or even as  
 near it  
 As you, dear heart. Alas! what are we?  
 Clouds  
 Driven by the wind in warring multi-  
 tudes,  
 Which rain into the bosom of the earth,  
 And rise again, and in our death and  
 birth,  
 And thro' our restless life, take as from  
 heaven  
 Hues which are not our own, but which  
 are given,

And then withdrawn, and with incon-  
 stant glance  
 Flash from the spirit to the countenance.  
 There is a Power, a Love, a Joy, a God  
 Which makes in mortal hearts its brief  
 abode,  
 A Pythian exhalation, which inspires  
 Love, only love—a wind which o'er the  
 wires  
 Of the soul's giant harp—  
 There is a mood which language faints  
 beneath;  
 You feel it striding, as Almighty Death  
 His bloodless steed.  
 . . . . .  
 And what is that most brief and bright  
 delight  
 Which rushes through the touch and  
 through the sight,  
 And stands before the spirit's inmost  
 throne,  
 A naked Seraph? None hath ever  
 known.  
 Its birth is darkness, and its growth  
 desire;  
 Untameable and flect and fierce as fire,  
 Not to be touched but to be felt alone,  
 It fills the world with glory—and is  
 gone.  
 . . . . .  
 It floats with rainbow pinions o'er the  
 stream  
 Of life, which flows, like a dream  
 Into the light of morning, to the grave  
 As to an ocean.  
 . . . . .  
 What is that joy which serene infancy  
 Perceives not, as the hours content them  
 by,  
 Each in a chain of blossoms, yet enjoys  
 The shapes of this new world, in giant  
 toys  
 Wrought by the busy ever new?  
 Remembrance borrows Fancy's glass, to  
 show  
 These forms more sincere  
 Than now they are, than then, perhaps,  
 they were.  
 When everything familiar seemed to be  
 Wonderful, and the immortality  
 Of this great world, which all things  
 must inherit,

Was felt as one with the awakening  
spirit,  
Unconscious of itself, and of the strange  
Distinctions which in its proceeding  
change  
It feels and knows, and mourns as if  
each were  
A desolation.

Were it not a sweet refuge, Emily,  
For all those exiles from the dull insane  
Who vex this pleasant world with pride  
and pain,  
For all that band of sister-spirits known  
To one another by a voiceless tone?

### ADONAIS:

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN  
KEATS, AUTHOR OF ENDYMION,  
HYPERION, ETC.

Ἄσπῆρ πρὶν μὲν ἤλαμπες ἐνὶ ζώουσιν Ἐώος  
Νῦν δὲ θανῶν λάμπεις Ἐσπερος ἐν φθιμένοις.  
PLATO.

### PREFACE.

Φάρμακον ἤλθε, Βίων, ποτὶ σὸν στόμα, φάρμακον  
εἶδες.  
Πῶς τεν τοῖς χεῖλεσσι ποτέδραμε, κοῦκ ἐγλυ-  
κάνθη;  
Τίς δὲ βροτὸς τοσσούτον ἀνάμερος, ἢ κεράσαι τοι,  
Ἢ δοῦναι λαλέοντι τὸ φάρμακον; ἐκφυγεν ὠδάν.  
MOSCHUS, ΕΡΙΤΑΡΗ. ΒΙΟΝ.

IT is my intention to subjoin to the London edition of this poem a criticism upon the claims of its lamented object to be classed among the writers of the highest genius who have adorned our age. My known repugnance to the narrow principles of taste on which several of his earlier compositions were modelled prove at least that I am an impartial judge. I consider the fragment of Hyperion, as second to nothing that was ever produced by a writer of the same years.

John Keats died at Rome of a consumption, in his twenty-fourth year, on the — of — 1821; and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the Protestants in that city, under the pyramid which is the tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls and towers, now mouldering and desolate, which formed

the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place.

The genius of the lamented person to whose memory I have dedicated these unworthy verses was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful; and where cankerworms abound, what wonder if its young flower was blighted in the bud? The savage criticism on his Endymion, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind; the agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a bloodvessel in the lungs; a rapid consumption ensued, and the succeeding acknowledgments from more candid critics of the true greatness of his powers were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows, or one like Keats's composed of more penetrable stuff. One of their associates is, to my knowledge, a most base and unprincipled calumniator. As to "Endymion," was it a poem, whatever might be its defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated, with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, "Paris," and "Woman," and a "Syrian Tale," and Mrs. Lefanu, and Mr. Barrett, and Mr. Howard Payne, and a long list of the illustrious obscure? Are these the men who in their venal good nature presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels? Against what woman taken in adultery dares the foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobrious stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse, that, mur-

derer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the *Elegy* was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of *Endymion* was exasperated by the bitter sense of unrequited benefits; the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius, than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed, "almost risked his own life, and sacrificed every prospect to unwearied attendance upon his dying friend." Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from "such stuff as dreams are made of." His conduct is a golden augury of the success of his future career — may the unextinguished Spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil, and plead against Oblivion for his name!

## ADONAIS

## I.

I WEEP for Adonais — he is dead!  
 Oh weep for Adonais! tho' our tears  
 Thaw not the frost which binds so  
 dear a head!  
 And thou, sad Hour, selected from all  
 years  
 To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure  
 compeers,  
 And teach them thine own sorrow!  
 Say: "With me  
 Died Adonais; till the future dares

Forget the Past, his fate and fame  
 shall be  
 An echo and a light unto eternity!"

## II.

Where wert thou mighty Mother, when  
 he lay,  
 When thy Son lay, pierced by the  
 shaft which flies  
 In darkness? where was lorn Urania  
 When Adonais died? With veiled  
 eyes,  
 Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise  
 She sate, while one, with soft enam-  
 oured breath,  
 Rekindled all the fading melodies,  
 With which, like flowers that mock  
 the corse beneath,  
 He had adorned and hid the coming  
 bulk of death.

## III.

Oh weep for Adonais — he is dead!  
 Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and  
 weep!  
 Yet wherefore? Quench within their  
 burning bed  
 Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart  
 keep  
 Like his, a mute and uncomplaining  
 sleep;  
 For he is gone, where all things wise  
 and fair  
 Descend; — oh, dream not that the  
 amorous Deep  
 Will yet restore him to the vital air;  
 Death feeds on his mute voice, and  
 laughs at our despair.

## IV.

Most musical of mourners, weep  
 again!  
 Lament anew, Urania! — He died,  
 Who was the Sire of an immortal  
 strain,  
 Blind, old, and lonely, when his coun-  
 try's pride,  
 The priest, the slave, and the liberti-  
 cide,  
 Trampled and mockt with many a  
 loathed rite

Of lust and blood; he went, un-  
terrified,  
Into the gulf of death; but his clear  
Sprite  
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among  
the sons of light.

## v.

Most musical of mourners, weep  
anew!  
Not all to that bright station dared to  
climb;  
And happier they their happiness who  
knew,  
Whose tapers yet burn thro' that night  
of time  
In which suns perisht; others more  
sublime,  
Struck by the envious wrath of man or  
God,  
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent  
prime;  
And some yet live, treading the thorny  
road,  
Which leads, thro' toil and hate, to  
Fame's serene abode.

## VI.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one  
has perisht,  
The nursing of thy widowhood, who  
grew,  
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden  
cherisht,  
And fed with true-love tears, instead  
of dew;  
Most musical of mourners, weep  
anew!  
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and  
the last,  
The bloom, whose petals nipt before  
they blew  
Died on the promise of the fruit, is  
waste;  
The broken lily lies — the storm is over-  
past.

## VII.

To that high Capital, where kingly  
Death  
Keeps his pale court in beauty and  
decay,

He came; and bought, with price of  
purest breath,  
A grave among the eternal. — Come  
away!  
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian  
day  
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while  
still  
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;  
Awake him not! surely he takes his  
fill  
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all  
ill.

## VIII.

He will awake no more, oh, never  
more! —  
Within the twilight chamber spreads  
apace,  
The shadow of white Death, and at  
the door  
Invisible Corruption waits to trace  
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-  
place;  
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and  
awe  
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to  
deface  
So fair a prey, till darkness, and the  
law  
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal  
curtain draw.

## IX.

Oh weep for Adonais! — The quick  
Dreams,  
The passion-wingèd Ministers of  
thought,  
Who were his flocks, whom near the  
living streams  
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom  
he taught  
The love which was its music, wander  
not, —  
Wander no more, from kindling brain  
to brain,  
But droop there, whence they sprung;  
and mourn their lot  
Round the cold heart, where, after  
their sweet pain,  
They ne'er will gather strength, or find  
a home again.

## X.

And one with trembling hands clasps  
 his cold head,  
 And fans him with her moonlight  
 wings, and cries;  
 "Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is  
 not dead;  
 See, on the silken fringe of his faint  
 eyes,  
 Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there  
 lies  
 A tear some Dream has loosened  
 from his brain,"  
 Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!  
 She knew not 't was her own; as with  
 no stain  
 She faded, like a cloud which had out-  
 wept its rain.

## XI.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew  
 Washt his light limbs as if embalming  
 them;  
 Another clipt her profuse locks, and  
 threw  
 The wreath upon him, like an anadem,  
 Which frozen tears instead of pearls  
 begem;  
 Another in her wilful grief would break  
 Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to  
 stem  
 A greater loss with one which was  
 more weak;  
 And dull the barbèd fire against his  
 frozen cheek.

## XII.

Another Splendor on his mouth alit,  
 That mouth, whence it was wont to  
 draw the breath  
 Which gave it strength to pierce the  
 guarded wit,  
 And pass into the panting heart be-  
 neath  
 With lightning and with music: the  
 damp death  
 Quencht its caress upon his icy lips;  
 And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath  
 Of moonlight vapor, which the cold  
 night clips,  
 It flusht thro' his pale limbs, and past to  
 its eclipse.

## XIII.

And others came . . . Desires and  
 Adorations,  
 Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Des-  
 tinies,  
 Splendors, and Glooms, and glimmer-  
 ing Incarnations  
 Of hopes and fears, and twilight  
 Fantasies;  
 And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,  
 And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by  
 the gleam  
 Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,  
 Came in slow pomp;—the moving  
 pomp might seem  
 Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal  
 stream.

## XIV.

All he had loved, and moulded into  
 thought,  
 From shape, and hue, and odor, and  
 sweet sound,  
 Lamented Adonais. Morning sought  
 Her eastern watchtower, and her hair  
 unbound,  
 Wet with the tears which should adorn  
 the ground,  
 Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle  
 day;  
 Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,  
 Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,  
 And the wild winds flew round, sobbing  
 in their dismay.

## XV.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless  
 mountains,  
 And feeds her grief with his remem-  
 bered lay,  
 And will no more reply to winds or  
 fountains,  
 Or amorous birds perch on the young  
 green spray,  
 Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing  
 day;  
 Since she can mimic not his lips, more  
 dear  
 Than those for whose disdain she  
 pined away  
 Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear  
 Murmur, between their songs, is all the  
 woodmen hear.

## XVI.

Grief made the young Spring wild,  
 and she threw down  
 Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn  
 were,  
 Or they dead leaves; since her delight  
 is flown  
 For whom should she have waked the  
 sullen year?  
 To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear  
 Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both  
 Thou, Adonais: wan they stand and  
 sere  
 Amid the faint companions of their  
 youth,  
 With dew all turned to tears; odor, to  
 sighing ruth.

## XVII.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale  
 Mourns not her mate with such melo-  
 dious pain;  
 Not so the eagle, who like thee could  
 scale  
 Heaven, and could nourish in the  
 sun's domain  
 Her mighty youth with morning, doth  
 complain,  
 Soaring and screaming round her  
 empty nest,  
 As Albion wails for thee: the curse  
 of Cain  
 Light on his head who pierced thy  
 innocent breast,  
 And scared the angel soul that was its  
 earthly guest!

## XVIII.

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and  
 gone,  
 But grief returns with the revolving  
 year;  
 The airs and streams renew their joy-  
 ous tone;  
 The ants, the bees, the swallows re-  
 appear;  
 Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead  
 Seasons' bier;  
 The amorous birds now pair in every  
 brake,  
 And build their mossy homes in field  
 and brere;

And the green lizard, and the golden  
 snake,  
 Like unimprisoned flames, out of their  
 trance awake.

## XIX.

Thro' wood and stream and field and  
 hill and Ocean  
 A quickening life from the Earth's  
 heart has burst  
 As it has ever done, with change and  
 motion,  
 From the great morning of the world  
 when first  
 God dawned on Chaos; in its stream  
 immerst  
 The lamps of Heaven flash with a  
 softer light;  
 All baser things pant with life's sacred  
 thirst;  
 Diffuse themselves; and spend in  
 love's delight,  
 The beauty and the joy of their renewèd  
 might.

## XX.

The leprous corpse toucht by this  
 spirit tender  
 Exhales itself in flowers of gentle  
 breath;  
 Like incarnations of the stars, when  
 splendour  
 Is changed to fragrance, they illumine  
 death  
 And mock the merry worm that wakes  
 beneath;  
 Naught we know, dies. Shall that  
 alone which knows  
 Be as a sword consumed before the  
 sheath  
 By sightless lightning? — the intense  
 atom glows  
 A moment, then is quencht in a most  
 cold repose.

## XXI.

Alas! that all we loved of him should  
 be,  
 But for our grief, as if it had not been,  
 And grief itself be mortal! Woe is  
 me!  
 Whence are we, and why are we? of  
 what scene

The actors or spectators? Great and mean  
 Meet massed in death, who lends what  
 life must borrow.  
 As long as skies are blue, and fields  
 are green,  
 Evening must usher night, night urge  
 the morrow,  
 Month follow month with woe, and year  
 wake year to sorrow.

## XXII.

*He* will awake no more, oh, never  
 more!  
 "Wake thou," cried Misery, "child-  
 less Mother, rise  
 Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy  
 heart's core,  
 A wound more fierce than his with  
 tears and sighs."  
 And all the Dreams that watch  
 Urania's eyes,  
 And all the Echoes whom their sister's  
 song  
 Had held in holy silence, cried:  
 "Arise!"  
 Swift as a Thought by the snake Mem-  
 ory stung,  
 From her ambrosial rest the fading  
 Splendor sprung.

## XXIII.

She rose like an autumnal Night, that  
 springs  
 Out of the East, and follows wild and  
 drear  
 The golden Day, which, on eternal  
 wings,  
 Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,  
 Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow  
 and fear  
 So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;  
 So saddened round her like an atmos-  
 phere  
 Of stormy mist; so swept her on her  
 way  
 Even to the mournful place where Ado-  
 nais lay.

## XXIV.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,  
 Thro' camps and cities rough with  
 stone, and steel,

And human hearts, which to her airy  
 tread  
 Yielding not, wounded the invisible  
 Palms of her tender feet where'er  
 they fell:  
 And barb'd tongues, and thoughts  
 more sharp than they  
 Rent the soft Form they never could  
 repel,  
 Whose sacred blood, like the young  
 tears of May,  
 Paved with eternal flowers that undeserv-  
 ing way.

## XXV.

In the death chamber for a moment  
 Death,  
 Shamed by the presence of that living  
 Might,  
 Blusht to annihilation, and the breath  
 Revisited those lips, and life's pale  
 light  
 Flasht thro' those limbs, so late her  
 dear delight.  
 "Leave me not wild and drear and  
 comfortless,  
 As silent lightning leaves the starless  
 night!  
 Leave me not!" cried Urania: her  
 distress  
 Roused Death: Death rose and smiled,  
 and met her vain caress.

## XXVI.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once  
 again;  
 Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may  
 live;  
 And in my heartless breast and burn-  
 ing brain  
 That word, that kiss shall all thoughts  
 else survive,  
 With food of saddest memory kept  
 alive,  
 Now thou art dead, as if it were a  
 part  
 Of thee, my Adonais! I would give  
 All that I am to be as thou now art!  
 But I am chained to Time, and can not  
 thence depart!"

## XXVII.

“O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,  
 Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men  
 Too soon, and with weak hands tho’ mighty heart  
 Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?  
 Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was then  
 Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?  
 Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when  
 Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,  
 The monsters of life’s waste had fled from thee like deer.

## XXVIII.

“The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;  
 The obscene ravens, clamorous o’er the dead;  
 The vultures to the conqueror’s banner true  
 Who feed where Desolation first has fed,  
 And whose wings rain contagion;— how they fled,  
 When like Apollo, from his golden bow,  
 The Pythian of the age one arrow sped  
 And smiled!— The spoilers tempt no second blow,  
 They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

## XXIX.

“The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;  
 He sets, and each ephemeral insect then  
 Is gathered into death without a dawn,  
 And the immortal stars awake again;  
 So is it in the world of living men:  
 A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight  
 Making earth bare and veiling heaven,  
 and when

It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light  
 Leave to its kindred lamp the spirit’s awful night.”

## XXX.

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came,  
 Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;  
 The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame  
 Over his living head like Heaven is bent,  
 An early but enduring monument,  
 Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song  
 In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent  
 The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,  
 And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

## XXXI.

Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,  
 A phantom among men; companionless  
 As the last cloud of an expiring storm  
 Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,  
 Had gazed on Nature’s naked loveliness,  
 Actæon-like, and now he fled astray  
 With feeble steps o’er the world’s wilderness,  
 And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,  
 Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

## XXXII.

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift—  
 A Love in desolation maskt;— a Power  
 Girt round with weakness;— it can scarce uplift  
 The weight of the superincumbent hour;  
 It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,  
 A breaking billow;— even whilst we speak



Is it not broken? On the withering  
flower  
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a  
cheek  
The life can burn in blood, even while  
the heart may break.

## XXXIII.

His head was bound with pansies over-  
blown,  
And faded violets, white, and pied,  
and blue;  
And a light spear topt with a cypress  
cone,  
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy  
tresses grew  
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday  
dew,  
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart  
Shook the weak hand that graspt it;  
of that crew  
He came the last, neglected and apart;  
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the  
hunter's dart.

## XXXIV.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan  
Smiled thro' their tears; well knew  
that gentle band  
Who in another's fate now wept his  
own;  
As in the accents of an unknown land,  
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania  
scanned  
The Stranger's mien, and murmured:  
"Who art thou?"  
He answered not, but with a sudden  
hand  
Made bare his branded and ensanguined  
brow,  
Which was like Cain's or Christ's — oh,  
that it should be so!

## XXXV.

What softer voice is husht over the  
dead?  
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle  
thrown?  
What form leans sadly o'er the white  
deathbed,  
In mockery of monumental stone,

The heavy heart heaving without a  
moan?

If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,  
Taught, soothed, loved, honored the  
departed one;

Let me not vex, with inharmonious  
sighs

The silence of that heart's accepted sac-  
rifice.

## XXXVI.

Our Adonais has drunk poison — oh!  
What deaf and viperous murderer could  
crown

Life's early cup with such a draught  
of woe?

The nameless worm would now itself  
disown:

It felt, yet could escape the magic tone  
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and  
wrong,

But what was howling in one breast  
alone,

Silent with expectation of the song.  
Whose master's hand is cold, whose  
silver lyre unstrung.

## XXXVII.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy  
fame!

Live! fear no heavier chastisement  
from me,

Thou noteless blot on a remembered  
name!

But be thyself, and know thyself to be!  
And ever at thy season be thou free

To spill the venom when thy fangs o'er-  
flow:

Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling  
to thee;

Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret  
brow,

And like a beaten hound tremble thou  
shalt — as now.

## XXXVIII.

Nor let us weep that our delight is  
fled

Far from these carrion kites that  
scream below;

He wakes or sleeps with the enduring  
dead;

Thou canst not soar where he is sitting  
 now. —  
 Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit  
 shall flow  
 Back to the burning fountain whence  
 it came,  
 A portion of the Eternal, which must  
 glow  
 Thro' time and change, unquenchably  
 the same,  
 Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid  
 hearth of shame.

## XXXIX.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth  
 not sleep —  
 He hath awakened from the dream of  
 life —  
 'T is we, who lost in stormy visions,  
 keep  
 With phantoms an unprofitable strife,  
 And in mad trance, strike with our  
 spirit's knife  
 Invulnerable nothings. — *We* decay  
 Like corpses in a charnel; fear and  
 grief  
 Convulse us and consume us day by  
 day,  
 And cold hopes swarm like worms within  
 our living clay. )

## XL.

( He has outsoared the shadow of our  
 night;  
 Envy and calumny and hate and pain,  
 And that unrest which men miscall  
 delight,  
 Can touch him not and torture not  
 again;  
 From the contagion of the world's  
 slow stain  
 He is secure, and now can never  
 mourn  
 A heart grown cold, a head grown  
 gray in vain;  
 Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased  
 to burn,  
 With sparkless ashes load an unlamented  
 urn.

## XLI.

He lives, he wakes — 't is Death is  
 dead, not he;

Mourn not for Adonais. — Thou young  
 Dawn  
 Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from  
 thee  
 The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;  
 Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to  
 moan!  
 Cease ye faint flowers and fountains,  
 and thou Air  
 Which like a mourning veil thy scarf  
 hadst thrown  
 O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave  
 it bare  
 Even to the joyous stars which smile on  
 its despair!

## XLII.

( He is made one with Nature: there  
 is heard  
 His voice in all her music, from the  
 moan  
 Of thunder to the song of night's  
 sweet bird;  
 He is a presence to be felt and known  
 In darkness and in light, from herb  
 and stone,  
 Spreading itself where'er that Power  
 may move  
 Which has withdrawn his being to its  
 own;  
 Which wields the world with never  
 wearied love,  
 Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it  
 above.

## XLIII.

He is a portion of the loveliness  
 Which once he made more lovely: he  
 doth bear  
 His part, while the one Spirit's plastic  
 stress  
 Sweeps thro' the dull dense world,  
 compelling there  
 All new successions to the forms they  
 wear;  
 Torturing the unwilling dross that  
 checks its flight  
 To its own likeness, as each mass may  
 bear;  
 And bursting in its beauty and its  
 might  
 From trees and beasts and men into the  
 Heaven's light.

## XLIV.

The splendors of the firmament of  
 time  
 May be eclipsed, but are extinguished  
 not;  
 Like stars to their appointed height  
 they climb  
 And death is a low mist which can not  
 blot  
 The brightness it may veil. When  
 lofty thought  
 Lifts a young heart above its mortal  
 lair,  
 And love and life contend in it, for  
 what  
 Shall be its earthly doom, the dead  
 live there  
 And move like winds of light on dark  
 and stormy air.)

## XLV.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown  
 Rose from their thrones, built beyond  
 mortal thought,  
 Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton  
 Rose pale, his solemn agony had not  
 Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he  
 fought  
 And as he fell and as he lived and  
 loved  
 Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,  
 Arose; and Lucan, by his death ap-  
 proved:  
 Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing  
 removed.

## XLVI.

And many more, whose names on  
 Earth are dark,  
 But whose transmitted effluence can-  
 not die  
 So long as fire outlives the parent  
 spark,  
 Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.  
 "Thou art become as one of us,"  
 they cry,  
 "It was for thee yon kingless sphere  
 has long  
 Swung blind in unascended majesty,  
 Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song.  
 Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper  
 of our throng!"

## XLVII.

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh come  
 forth  
 Fond wretch! and know thyself and  
 him aright.  
 Clasp with thy panting soul the pen-  
 dulous Earth;  
 As from a centre, dart thy spirit's  
 light  
 Beyond all worlds, until its spacious  
 might  
 Siate the void circumference: then  
 shrink  
 Even to a point within our day and  
 night;  
 And keep thy heart light lest it make  
 thee sink  
 When hope has kindled hope, and lured  
 thee to the brink.

## XLVIII.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre  
 Oh! not of him, but of our joy: 't is  
 naught  
 That ages, empires, and religions there  
 Lie buried in the ravage they have  
 wrought;  
 For such as he can lend, — they bor-  
 row not  
 Glory from those who made the world  
 their prey;  
 And he is gathered to the kings of  
 thought  
 Who waged contention with their time's  
 decay,  
 And of the past are all that can not pass  
 away.

## XLIX.

Go thou to Rome, — at once the Para-  
 dise,  
 The grave, the city, and the wilder-  
 ness;  
 And where its wrecks like shattered  
 mountains rise,  
 And flowering weeds, and fragrant  
 copses dress  
 The bones of Desolation's nakedness  
 Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall  
 lead  
 Thy footsteps to a slope of green access

Where, like an infant's smile, over the  
dead  
A light of laughing flowers along the  
grass is spread.

## L.

And gray walls moulder round, on  
which dull Time  
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary  
brand;  
And one keen pyramid with wedge  
sublime,  
Pavilioning the dust of him who  
planned  
This refuge for his memory, doth stand  
Like flame transformed to marble; and  
beneath,  
A field is spread, on which a newer  
band  
Have pitch in Heaven's smile their  
camp of death  
Welcoming him we lose with scarce ex-  
tinguished breath.

## LI.

Here pause: these graves are all too  
young as yet  
To have outgrown the sorrow which  
consigned  
Its charge to each; and if the seal is  
set,  
Here, on one fountain of a mourning  
mind,  
Break it not thou! too surely shalt  
thou find  
Thine own well full, if thou returnest  
home,  
Of tears and gall. From the world's  
bitter wind  
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.  
What Adonais is, why fear we to be-  
come?

## LII.

The One remains, the many change  
and pass;  
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's  
shadows fly;  
Life, like a dome of many-colored  
glass,  
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,

Until Death tramples it to fragments.

— Die,

If thou wouldst be with that which  
thou dost seek!

Follow where all is fled!—Rome's  
azure sky,

Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words,  
are weak  
The glory they transfuse with fitting  
truth to speak.

## LIII.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink,  
my Heart?

Thy hopes are gone before: from all  
things here

They have departed; thou shouldst  
now depart!

A light is past from the revolving year.  
And man, and woman; and what still  
is dear

Attracts to crush, repels to make thee  
wither.

The soft sky smiles, — the low wind  
whispers near;

'T is Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,  
No more let Life divide what Death can  
join together.

## LIV.

That Light whose smile kindles the  
Universe,

That Beauty in which all things work  
and move,

That Benediction which the eclipsing  
Curse

Of birth can quench not, that sustain-  
ing Love

Which thro' the web of being blindly  
wove

By man and beast and earth and air  
and sea,

Burns bright or dim, as each are mir-  
rors of

The fire for which all thirst; now beams  
on me,

Consuming the last clouds of cold mor-  
tality.

## LV.

The breath whose might I have in-  
voked in song

Descends on me; my spirit's bark is  
 \ driven,  
 Far from the shore, far from the trem-  
 bling throng  
 Whose sails were never to the tempest  
 given;  
 The massy earth and spherèd skies are  
 riven!  
 I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;  
 Whilst burning thro' the inmost veil of  
 Heaven,  
 The soul of Adonais, like a star,  
 Beacons from the abode where the Eter-  
 nal are.

### CANCELLED PASSAGES FROM ADONAIS.

#### PASSAGES OF THE PREFACE.

. . . the expression of my indignation  
 and sympathy. I will allow myself a first  
 and last word on the subject of calumny  
 as it relates to me. As an author I have  
 dared and invited censure. If I under-  
 stand myself, I have written neither for  
 profit nor for fame. I have employed my  
 poetical compositions and publications  
 simply as the instruments of that sym-  
 pathy between myself and others which  
 the ardent and unbounded love I cherished  
 for my kind incited me to acquire. I ex-  
 pected all sorts of stupidity and insolent  
 contempt from those . . .

. . . These compositions (excepting  
 the tragedy of the "Cenci," which was  
 written rather to try my powers than to  
 unburden my full heart) are insufficiently  
 . . . commendation than perhaps they de-  
 serve, even from their bitterest enemies;  
 but they have not attained any correspond-  
 ing popularity. As a man, I shrink from  
 notice and regard; the ebb and flow of  
 the world vexes me; I desire to be left  
 in peace. Persecution, contumely, and  
 calumny, have been heaped upon me in  
 profuse measure; and domestic conspiracy  
 and legal oppression have violated in my  
 person the most sacred rights of nature  
 and humanity. The bigot will say it was  
 the recompense of my errors; the man of  
 the world will call it the result of my im-

prudence; but never upon one head . . .  
 . . . Reviewers, with some rare excep-  
 tions, are a most stupid and malignant  
 race. As a bankrupt thief turns thief-  
 taker in despair, so an unsuccessful author  
 turns critic. But a young spirit panting  
 for fame, doubtful of its powers, and cer-  
 tain only of its aspirations, is ill-qualified  
 to assign its true value to the sneer of this  
 world. He knows not that such stuff as  
 this is of the abortive and monstrous  
 births which time consumes as fast as it  
 produces. He sees the truth and false-  
 hood, the merits and demerits, of his case  
 inextricably entangled . . . No personal  
 offence should have drawn from me this  
 public comment upon such stuff . . .

. . . The offence of this poor victim  
 seems to have consisted solely in his in-  
 timacy with Leigh Hunt, Mr. Hazlitt,  
 and some other enemies of despotism  
 and superstition. My friend Hunt has a  
 very hard skull to crack, and will take a  
 deal of killing. I do not know much of  
 Mr. Hazlitt, but . . .

. . . I knew personally but little of  
 Keats; but on the news of his situation  
 I wrote to him, suggesting the propriety  
 of trying the Italian climate, and invit-  
 ing him to join me. Unfortunately he  
 did not allow me . . .

#### PASSAGES OF THE POEM.

And ever as he went he swept a lyre  
 Of unaccustomed shape, and  
 strings  
 Now like the . . . of impetuous  
 fire,  
 Which shakes the forest with its mur-  
 murings,  
 Now like the rush of the aërial wings  
 Of the enamoured wind among the  
 treen,  
 Whispering unimaginal things,  
 And dying on the streams of dew  
 serene,  
 Which feed the unmown meads with  
 ever-during green.

. . .  
 . . .  
 . . .  
 And the green Paradise which western  
 waves

Embosom in their ever-wailing sweep,  
 Talking of freedom to their tongue-  
 less caves,  
 Or to the spirits which within them  
 keep  
 A record of the wrongs which, tho'  
 they sleep,  
 Die not, but dream of retribution,  
 heard  
 His hymns, and echoing them from  
 steep to steep,  
 Kept —

And then came one of sweet and  
 earnest looks,  
 Whose soft smiles to his dark and  
 night-like eyes  
 Were as the clear and ever-living  
 brooks  
 Are to the obscure fountains whence  
 they rise,  
 Showing how pure they are : a Paradise  
 Of happy truth upon his forehead low  
 Lay, making wisdom lovely, in the  
 guise  
 Of earth-awakening morn upon the  
 brow  
 Of star-deserted heaven, while ocean  
 gleams below.

His song, though very sweet, was low  
 and faint,  
 A simple strain —

A mighty Phantasm, half  
 concealed  
 In darkness of his own exceeding  
 light,  
 Which clothed his awful presence un-  
 revealed,  
 Charioted on the night  
 Of thunder-smoke, whose skirts were  
 chrysolite.  
 And like a sudden meteor, which out-  
 strips  
 The splendor-wingèd chariot of the  
 sun,  
 eclipse  
 The armies of the golden stars, each  
 one  
 Pavilioned in its tent of light — all  
 strewn  
 Over the chasms of blue night —

## HELLAS.

A LYRICAL DRAMA.

MANTIS 'EIM' 'ΕΣΘΛΟΝ 'ΑΓΩΝΩΝ  
 CÆDIP. COLON.

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY

PRINCE ALEXANDER MAVROCORDATO

LATE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

TO THE HOSPODAR OF WALLACHIA

THE DRAMA OF HELLAS

IS INSCRIBED

AS AN IMPERFECT TOKEN

OF THE

ADMIRATION, SYMPATHY, AND FRIENDSHIP

OF

THE AUTHOR.

PISA, *November 1, 1821.*

## PREFACE.

THE poem of "Hellas," written at the suggestion of the events of the moment, is a mere improvise, and derives its interest (should it be found to possess any) solely from the intense sympathy which the Author feels with the cause he would celebrate.

The subject, in its present state, is insusceptible of being treated otherwise than lyrically, and if I have called this poem a drama from the circumstance of its being composed in dialogue, the license is not greater than that which has been assumed by other poets who have called their productions epics, only because they have been divided into twelve or twenty-four books.

The "Persæ" of Æschylus afforded me the first model of my conception, although the decision of the glorious contest now waging in Greece being yet suspended forbids a catastrophe parallel to the return of Xerxes and the desolation of the Persians. I have, therefore, contented

myself with exhibiting a series of lyric pictures, and with having wrought upon the curtain of futurity, which falls upon the unfinished scene, such figures of indistinct and visionary delineation as suggest the final triumph of the Greek cause as a portion of the cause of civilization and social improvement.

The drama (if drama it must be called) is, however, so inartificial that I doubt whether, if recited on the Thespian wagon to an Athenian village at the Dionysiac, it would have obtained the prize of the goat. I shall bear with equanimity any punishment, greater than the loss of such a reward which the Aristarchi of the hour may think fit to inflict.

The only *goat-song* which I have yet attempted has, I confess, in spite of the unfavorable nature of the subject, received a greater and a more valuable portion of applause than I expected or than it deserved.

Common fame is the only authority which I can allege for the details which form the basis of the poem, and I must trespass upon the forgiveness of my readers for the display of newspaper erudition to which I have been reduced. Undoubtedly, until the conclusion of the war, it will be impossible to obtain an account of it sufficiently authentic for historical materials; but poets have their privilege, and it is unquestionable that actions of the most exalted courage have been performed by the Greeks—that they have gained more than one naval victory, and that their defeat in Wallachia was signalized by circumstances of heroism more glorious even than victory.

The apathy of the rulers of the civilized world to the astonishing circumstance of the descendants of that nation to which they owe their civilization, rising as it were from the ashes of their ruin, is something perfectly inexplicable to a mere spectator of the shows of this mortal scene. We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts have their root in Greece. But for Greece—Rome, the instructor, the conqueror, or the metropolis of our ancestors, would have spread no illumination

with her arms, and we might still have been savages and idolaters; or, what is worse, might have arrived at such a stagnant and miserable state of social institution as China and Japan possess.

The human form and the human mind attained to a perfection in Greece which has impressed its image on those faultless productions, whose very fragments are the despair of modern art, and has propagated impulses which cannot cease, through a thousand channels of manifest or imperceptible operation, to ennoble and delight mankind until the extinction of the race.

The modern Greek is the descendant of those glorious beings whom the imagination almost refuses to figure to itself as belonging to our kind, and he inherits much of their sensibility, their rapidity of conception, their enthusiasm, and their courage. If in many instances he is degraded by moral and political slavery to the practice of the basest vices it engenders, and that below the level of ordinary degradation; let us reflect that the corruption of the best produces the worst, and that habits which subsist only in relation to a peculiar state of social institution may be expected to cease as soon as that relation is dissolved. In fact, the Greeks, since the admirable novel of "Anastasis" could have been a faithful picture of their manners, have undergone most important changes; the flower of their youth, returning to their country from the universities of Italy, Germany, and France, have communicated to their fellow-citizens the latest results of that social perfection of which their ancestors were the original source. The university of Chios contained before the breaking out of the revolution eight hundred students, and among them several Germans and Americans. The munificence and energy of many of the Greek princes and merchants, directed to the renovation of their country with a spirit and a wisdom which has few examples, is above all praise.

The English permit their own oppressors to act according to their natural sympathy with the Turkish tyrant, and to brand

upon their name the indelible blot of an alliance with the enemies of domestic happiness, of Christianity and civilization.

Russia desires to possess, not to liberate Greece; and is contented to see the Turks, its natural enemies, and the Greeks, its intended slaves, enfeeble each other until one or both fall into its net. The wise and generous policy of England would have consisted in establishing the independence of Greece, and in maintaining it both against Russia and the Turk;—but when was the oppressor generous or just?

The Spanish Peninsula is already free. France is tranquil in the enjoyment of a partial exemption from the abuses which its unnatural and feeble government are vainly attempting to revive. The seed of blood and misery has been sown in Italy, and a more vigorous race is arising to go forth to the harvest. The world waits only the news of a revolution of Germany to see the tyrants who have pinned themselves on its supineness precipitated into the ruin from which they shall never arise. Well do these destroyers of mankind know their enemy, when they impute the insurrection in Greece to the same spirit before which they tremble throughout the rest of Europe, and that enemy well knows the power and the cunning of its opponents, and watches the moment of their approaching weakness and inevitable division to wrest the bloody sceptres from their grasp.

## HELLAS.

### A LYRICAL DRAMA.

#### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MAHMUD.

HASSAN.

DAOOD.

AHASUERUS, a Jew.

CHORUS of Greek Captive Women.  
Messengers, Slaves, and Attendants.

SCENE, Constantinople. TIME, Sunset.

### SCENE. — A TERRACE ON THE SERAGLIO.

MAHMUD *sleeping, an Indian Slave sitting beside his Couch.*

*Chorus of Greek Captive Women.*

WE strew these opiate flowers  
On thy restless pillow,—  
They were stript from Orient bowers,  
By the Indian billow.

Be thy sleep  
Calm and deep,  
Like theirs who fell — not ours who  
weep!

*Indian.*

Away, unlovely dreams!  
Away, false shapes of sleep!  
Be his, as Heaven seems,  
Clear, and bright, and deep!  
Soft as love, and calm as death,  
Sweet as a summer night without a  
breath.

*Chorus.*

Sleep, sleep! our song is laden  
With the soul of slumber;  
It was sung by a Samian maiden,  
Whose lover was of the number  
Who now keep  
That calm sleep  
Whence none may wake, where none  
shall weep.

*Indian.*

I touch thy temples pale!  
I breathe my soul on thee!  
And could my prayers avail,  
All my joy should be  
Dead, and I would live to weep,  
So thou might'st win one hour of quiet  
sleep.

*Chorus.*

Breathe low, low  
The spell of the mighty mistress now!  
When Conscience lulls her sated snake,  
And Tyrants sleep, let Freedom wake.  
Breathe low — low  
The words which, like secret fire, shall  
flow  
Thro' the veins of the frozen earth —  
low, low!



*Semichorus I.*

Life may change, but it may fly not;  
 Hope may vanish, but can die not;  
 Truth be veiled, but still it burneth;  
 Love repulsed, — but it returneth !

*Semichorus II.*

Yet were life a charnel where  
 Hope lay confined with Despair;  
 Yet were truth a sacred lie,  
 Love were lust —

*Semichorus I.*

If Liberty  
 Lent not life its soul of light,  
 Hope its iris of delight,  
 Truth its prophet's robe to wear,  
 Love its power to give and bear.

*Chorus.*

In the great morning of the world,  
 The spirit of God with might unfurled  
 The flag of Freedom over Chaos,  
 And all its banded anarchs fled,  
 Like vultures frightened from Imaus,  
 Before an earthquake's tread. —  
 So from Time's tempestuous dawn  
 Freedom's splendor burst and shone: —  
 Thermopylæ and Marathon  
 Caught, like mountains beacon-lighted,  
 The springing Fire. — The winged  
 glory  
 On Philippi half-alighted,  
 Like an eagle on a promontory.  
 Its unwearied wings could fan  
 The quenchless ashes of Milan.  
 From age to age, from man to man,  
 It lived; and lit from land to land  
 Florence, Albion, Switzerland.

Then night fell; and, as from night,  
 Reassuming fiery flight,  
 From the West swift Freedom came,  
 Against the course of Heaven and  
 doom,  
 A second sun arrayed in flame,  
 To burn, to kindle, to illumine.  
 From far Atlantis its young beams  
 Chased the shadows and the dreams.  
 France, with all her sanguine steams,  
 Hid, but quenched it not; again  
 Through clouds its shafts of glory rain  
 From utmost Germany to Spain.

As an eagle fed with morning  
 Scorns the embattled tempests' warning,  
 When she seeks her aerie hanging  
 In the mountain-cedar's hair,  
 And her brood expect the clanging  
 Of her wings thro' the wild air,  
 Sick with famine: — Freedom, so  
 To what of Greece remaineth now  
 Returns; her hoary ruins glow  
 Like Orient mountains lost in day;  
 Beneath the safety of her wings  
 Her renovated nurslings prey,  
 And in the naked lightnings  
 Of truth they purge their dazzled eyes.  
 Let Freedom leave — where'er she flies,  
 A Desert, or a Paradise:  
 Let the beautiful and the brave  
 Share her glory, or a grave.

*Semichorus I.*

With the gifts of gladness  
 Greece did thy cradle strew;

*Semichorus II.*

With the tears of sadness  
 Greece did thy shroud bedew !

*Semichorus I.*

With an orphan's affection  
 She followed thy bier thro' Time;

*Semichorus II.*

And at thy resurrection  
 Reappearst, like thou, sublime !

*Semichorus I.*

If Heaven should resume thee,  
 To Heaven shall her spirit ascend;

*Semichorus II.*

If Hell should entomb thee,  
 To Hell shall her high hearts bend.

*Semichorus I.*

If Annihilation —

*Semichorus II.*

Dust let her glories be !  
 And a name and a nation  
 Be forgotten, Freedom, with thee !

*Indian.*

His brow grows darker — breathe not —  
 move not !  
 He starts — he shudders — ye that love  
 not,

With your panting loud and fast,  
Have awakened him at last.

*Mahmud* (*starting from his sleep*). Man  
the Seraglio-guard! make fast the  
gate.

What! from a cannonade of three short  
hours?

'T is false! that breach towards the Bos-  
porus

Cannot be practicable yet — who stirs?  
Stand to the match; that when the foe  
prevails

One spark may mix in reconciling ruin  
The conqueror and the conquered!  
Heave the tower

Into the gap — wrench off the roof.

(*Enter HASSAN.*) Ha! what!

The truth of day lightens upon my dream  
And I am Mahmud still.

*Hassan.* Your Sublime Highness  
Is strangely moved.

*Mahmud.* The times do cast  
strange shadows

On those who watch and who must rule  
their course,

Lest they, being first in peril as in glory,  
Be whelmed in the fierce ebb: — and these  
are of them.

Thrice has a gloomy vision hunted me  
As thus from sleep into the troubled day;  
It shakes me as the tempest shakes the  
sea,

Leaving no figure upon memory's glass.  
Would that — no matter. Thou didst  
say thou knewest

A Jew, whose spirit is a chronicle  
Of strange and secret and forgotten  
things.

I bade thee summon him: — 't is said his  
tribe

Dream, and are wise interpreters of  
dreams.

*Hassan.* The Jew of whom I spake is  
old, — so old

He seems to have outlived a world's de-  
cay;

The hoary mountains and the wrinkled  
ocean

Seem younger still than he; — his hair and  
beard

Are whiter than the tempest-sifted snow;  
His cold pale limbs and pulseless arteries  
Are like the fibres of a cloud instinct

With light, and to the soul that quickens  
them

Are as the atoms of the mountain-drift  
To the winter-wind; — but from his eye  
looks forth

A life of unconsumèd thought which  
pierces

The present, and the past, and the to-  
come.

Some say that this is he whom the great  
prophet

Jesus, the son of Joseph, for his mockery  
Mockt with the curse of immortality.

Some feign that he is Enoch; others  
dream

He was pre-adamite and has survived

Cycles of generation and of ruin.

The sage, in truth, by dreadful abstinence  
And conquering penance of the mutinous

flesh,

Deep contemplation, and unwearied study,  
In years outstretcht beyond the date of  
man,

May have attained to sovereignty and  
science

Over those strong and secret things and  
thoughts

Which others fear and know not.

*Mahmud.* I would talk

With this old Jew.

*Hassan.* Thy will is even now  
Made known to him, where he dwells in  
a sea-cavern

Mid the Demonesi, less accessible

Than thou or God! He who would  
question him

Must sail alone at sunset, where the  
stream

Of Ocean sleeps around those foamless  
isles,

When the young moon is westering as  
now,

And evening airs wander upon the wave;  
And when the pines of that bee-pasturing  
isle,

Green Erebinthus, quench the fiery  
shadow

Of his gilt prow within the sapphire  
water,

Then must the lonely helmsman cry aloud  
“Ahasuerus!” and the caverns round

Will answer “Ahasuerus!” If his prayer  
Be granted, a faint meteor will arise

Lighting him over Marmora, and a wind  
Will rush out of the sighing pine-forest,  
And with the wind a storm of harmony  
Unutterably sweet, and pilot him  
Thro' the soft twilight to the Bosphorus:  
Thence at the hour and place and circum-  
stance

Fit for the matter of their conference  
The Jew appears. Few dare, and few  
who dare  
Win the desired communion — but that  
shout

Bodes — [*A shout within.*  
*Mahmud.* Evil, doubtless; like  
all human sounds.

Let me converse with spirits.  
*Hassan.* That shout again.  
*Mahmud.* This Jew whom thou hast  
summoned —

*Hassan.* Will be here —  
*Mahmud.* When the omnipotent  
hour to which are yoked

He, I, and all things shall compel —  
enough.

Silence those mutineers — that drunken  
crew,  
That crowd about the pilot in the storm.  
Ay! strike the foremost shorter by a  
head!

They weary me, and I have need of rest.  
Kings are like stars — they rise and set,  
they have

The worship of the world, but no repose.  
[*Exeunt severally.*

*Chorus.*

Worlds on worlds are rolling ever  
From creation to decay,  
Like the bubbles on a river  
Sparkling, bursting, borne away.  
But they are still immortal  
Who, thro' birth's Orient portal  
And death's dark chasm hurrying to  
and fro,  
Clothe their unceasing flight  
In the brief dust and light  
Gathered around their chariots as they  
go;  
New shapes they still may weave,  
New gods, new laws receive,  
Bright or dim are they as the robes they  
last  
On Death's bare ribs had cast.

A power from the unknown God,  
A Promethean conqueror came;  
Like a triumphal path he trod  
The thorns of death and shame.  
A mortal shape to him  
Was like the vapor dim  
Which the Orient planet animates with  
light;  
Hell, Sin, and Slavery came,  
Like bloodhounds mild and tame,  
Nor preyed, until their Lord had taken  
flight;  
The moon of Mahomet  
Arose, and it shall set:  
While blazoned as on heaven's immortal  
noon  
The cross leads generations on.

Swift as the radiant shapes of sleep  
From one whose dreams are Para-  
dise  
Fly, when the fond wretch wakes to  
weep,  
And day peers forth with her blank  
eyes;  
So fleet, so faint, so fair,  
The Powers of earth and air  
Fled from the folding star of Bethle-  
hem:  
Apollo, Pan, and Love,  
And even Olympian Jove  
Grew weak, for killing Truth had glared  
on them;

Our hills and seas and streams  
Dispeopled of their dreams,  
Their waters turned to blood, their dew  
to tears,  
Wailed for the golden years.

*Enter MAHMUD, HASSAN, DAOOD,  
and others.*

*Mahmud.* More gold? our ancestors  
bought gold with victory,

And shall I sell it for defeat?  
*Daood.* The Janizars

Clamor for pay.  
*Mahmud.* Go! bid them pay  
themselves

With Christian blood! Are there no  
Grecian virgins

Whose shrieks and spasms and tears they  
may enjoy?

No infidel children to impale on spears?  
No hoary priests after that Patriarch

Who bent the curse against his country's  
heart,  
Which clove his own at last? Go! bid  
them kill;

Blood is the seed of gold.

*Daood.* It has been sown,  
And yet the harvest to the sickle-men  
Is as a grain to each.

*Mahmud.* Then, take this signet,  
Unlock the seventh chamber in which lie  
The treasures of victorious Solyman, —  
An empire's spoil stored for a day of  
ruin.

O spirit of my sires! is it not come?  
The prey-birds and the wolves are gorged  
and sleep;

But these, who spread their feast on the  
red earth,

Hunger for gold, which fills not. — See  
them fed;

Then, lead them to the rivers of fresh  
death. [*Exit* DAOOD.]

O miserable dawn, after a night  
More glorious than the day which it  
usurpt!

O faith in God! O power on earth! O  
word

Of the great prophet, whose o'ershadow-  
ing wings

Darkened the thrones and idols of the  
West,

Now bright! — For thy sake cursèd be  
the hour,

Even as a father by an evil child,  
When the Orient moon of Islam rolled  
in triumph

From Caucasus to White Ceraunia!

Ruin above, and anarchy below;  
Terror without, and treachery within;  
The Chalice of destruction full, and all  
Thirsting to drink; and who among us  
dares

To dash it from his lips? and where is  
Hope?

*Hassan.* The lamp of our dominion  
still rides high;

One God is God — Mahomet is his  
prophet.

Four hundred thousand Moslems from  
the limits

Of utmost Asia, irresistibly  
Throng, like full clouds at the Sirocco's  
cry;

But not like them to weep their strength  
in tears:

They bear destroying lightning, and their  
step

Wakes earthquake to consume and over-  
whelm,

And reign in ruin. Phrygian Olympus,  
Tmolus, and Latmos, and Mycale,  
roughen

With horrent arms; and lofty ships even  
now,

Like vapors anchored to a mountain's  
edge,

Freighted with fire and whirlwind, wait  
at Scala

The convoy of the ever-veering wind.  
Samos is drunk with blood; — the Greek  
has paid

Brief victory with swift loss and long  
despair.

The false Moldavian serfs fled fast and  
far,

When the fierce shout of Allah-illa-  
Allah!

Rose like the war-cry of the northern  
wind

Which kills the sluggish clouds, and  
leaves a flock

Of wild swans struggling with the naked  
storm.

So were the lost Greeks on the Danube's  
day!

If night is mute, yet the returning sun  
Kindles the voices of the morning birds;

Nor at thy bidding less exultingly  
Than birds rejoicing in the golden day,

The Anarchies of Africa unleash  
Their tempest-wingèd cities of the sea,

To speak in thunder to the rebel world.  
Like sulphurous clouds, half-shattered

by the storm,  
They sweep the pale Ægean, while the  
Queen

Of Ocean, bound upon her island-throne,  
Far in the West sits mourning that her  
sons

Who frown on Freedom spare a smile  
for thee:

Russia still hovers, as an eagle might  
Within a cloud, near which a kite and  
crane

Hang tangled in inextricable fight,  
To stoop upon the victor; — for she fears

The name of Freedom, even as she hates  
 thine.  
 But recreant Austria loves thee as the  
 Grave  
 Loves Pestilence, and her slow dogs of  
 war  
 Flesht with the chase, come up from  
 Italy,  
 And howl upon their limits; for they see  
 The panther, Freedom, fled to her old  
 cover,  
 Amid seas and mountains, and a mightier  
 brood  
 Crouch round. What Anarch wears a  
 crown or mitre,  
 Or bears the sword, or grasps the key of  
 gold,  
 Whose friends are not thy friends, whose  
 foes thy foes?  
 Our arsenals and our armories are full;  
 Our forts defy assault; ten thousand can-  
 non  
 Lie ranged upon the beach, and hour by  
 hour  
 Their earth-convulsing wheels affright the  
 city;  
 The galloping of fiery steeds makes pale  
 The Christian merchant; and the yellow  
 Jew  
 Hides his hoard deeper in the faithless  
 earth.  
 Like clouds, and like the shadows of the  
 clouds,  
 Over the hills of Anatolia,  
 Swift in wide troops the Tartar chivalry  
 Sweep;— the far-flashing of their starry  
 lances  
 Reverberates the dying light of day.  
 We have one God, one King, one Hope,  
 one Law;  
 But many-headed Insurrection stands  
 Divided in itself, and soon must fall.  
*Mahmud.* Proud words, when deeds  
 come short, are seasonable;  
 Look, Hassan, on yon crescent moon, em-  
 blazoned  
 Upon that shattered flag of fiery cloud  
 Which leads the rear of the departing  
 day;  
 Wan emblem of an empire fading now!  
 See how it trembles in the blood-red air,  
 And like a mighty lamp whose oil is  
 spent

Shrinks on the horizon's edge, while,  
 from above,  
 One star with insolent and victorious  
 light  
 Hovers above its fall, and with keen  
 beams,  
 Like arrows thro' a fainting antelope,  
 Strikes its weak form to death.  
*Hassan.* Even as that moon  
 Renews itself —  
*Mahmud.* Shall we be not  
 renewed!  
 Far other bark than ours were needed  
 now  
 To stem the torrent of descending time:  
 The spirit that lifts the slave before his  
 lord  
 Stalks through the capitals of armèd  
 kings,  
 And spreads his ensign in the wilderness:  
 Exults in chains; and, when the rebel  
 falls,  
 Cries like the blood of Abel from the  
 dust;  
 And the inheritors of the earth, like  
 beasts  
 When earthquake is unlesht, with idiot  
 fear  
 Cower in their kingly dens — as I do now.  
 What were Defeat when Victory must  
 appal?  
 Or Danger, when Security looks pale? —  
 How said the messenger — who, from  
 the fort  
 Islanded in the Danube, saw the battle  
 Of Bucharest? — that —  
*Hassan.* Ibrahim's scimitar  
 Drew with its gleam swift victory from  
 heaven,  
 To burn before him in the night of bat-  
 tle —  
 A light and a destruction.  
*Mahmud.* Ay! the day  
 Was ours: but how? —  
*Hassan.* The light Wallachians,  
 The Arnaut, Servian, and Albanian allies  
 Fled from the glance of our artillery  
 Almost before the thunder-stone alit.  
 One half the Grecian army made a bridge  
 Of safe and slow retreat, with Moslem  
 dead  
 The other —  
*Mahmud.* Speak — tremble not. —

*Hassan.* Islanded  
 By victor myriads, formed in hollow  
 square  
 With rough and steadfast front, and thrice  
 flung back  
 The deluge of our foaming cavalry;  
 Thrice their keen wedge of battle pierced  
 our lines.  
 Our baffled army trembled like one man  
 Before a host, and gave them space; but  
 soon,  
 From the surrounding hills, the batteries  
 blazed,  
 Kneading them down with fire and iron  
 rain:  
 Yet none approacht; till, like a field of  
 corn  
 Under the hook of the swart sickle-man,  
 The band, intrencht in mounds of Turk-  
 ish dead,  
 Grew weak and few.—Then said the  
 Pacha, “Slaves,  
 Render yourselves — they have abandoned  
 you —  
 What hope of refuge, or retreat, or aid?  
 We grant your lives.” “Grant that  
 which is thine own!”  
 Cried one, and fell upon his sword and  
 died!  
 Another — “God, and man, and hope  
 abandon me;  
 But I to them, and to myself, remain  
 Constant:” — he bowed his head and his  
 heart burst.  
 A third exclaimed, “There is a refuge,  
 tyrant,  
 Where thou darest not pursue, and canst  
 not harm,  
 Should'st thou pursue; there we shall  
 meet again.”  
 Then held his breath, and, after a brief  
 spasm,  
 The indignant spirit cast its mortal gar-  
 ment  
 Among the slain — dead earth upon the  
 earth!  
 So these survivors, each by different ways,  
 Some strange, all sudden, none dishon-  
 orable,  
 Met in triumphant death; and when our  
 army  
 Closed in, while yet wonder, and awe,  
 and shame,

Held back the base hyenas of the battle  
 That feed upon the dead and fly the  
 living,  
 One rose out of the chaos of the slain:  
 And if it were a corpse which some dread  
 spirit  
 Of the old saviors of the land we rule  
 Had lifted in its anger wandering by;—  
 Or if there burned within the dying man  
 Unquenchable disdain of death, and  
 faith  
 Creating what it feigned;—I cannot  
 tell—  
 But he cried, “Phantoms of the free, we  
 come!  
 Armies of the Eternal, ye who strike  
 To dust the citadels of sanguine kings,  
 And shake the souls throned on their  
 stony hearts,  
 And thaw their frost-work diadems like  
 dew;—  
 O ye who float around this clime, and  
 weave  
 The garment of the glory which it wears,  
 Whose fame, tho' earth betray the dust  
 it claspt,  
 Lies sepulchred in monumental thought;  
 Progenitors of all that yet is great,  
 Ascribe to your bright senate, O accept  
 In your high ministrations, us, your  
 sons—  
 Us first, and the more glorious yet to  
 come!  
 And ye, weak conquerors! giants who  
 look pale  
 When the crusht worm rebels beneath  
 your tread,  
 The vultures and the dogs, your pen-  
 sioners tame,  
 Are overgorged; but, like oppressors, still  
 They crave the relic of Destruction's  
 feast.  
 The exhalations and the thirsty winds  
 Are sick with blood; the dew is foul  
 with death;  
 Heaven's light is quencht in slaughter:  
 thus, where'er  
 Upon your camps, cities, or towers, or  
 fleets,  
 The obscene birds the reeking remnants  
 cast  
 Of these dead limbs, — upon your streams  
 and mountains,

Upon your fields, your gardens, and your  
 housetops,  
 Where'er the winds shall creep, or the  
 clouds fly,  
 Or the dews fall, or the angry sun look  
 down  
 With poisoned light — Famine and Pesti-  
 lence,  
 And Panic, shall wage war upon our  
 side!  
 Nature from all her boundaries is moved  
 Against ye: Time has found ye light as  
 foam.  
 The Earth rebels; and Good and Evil  
 stake  
 Their empire o'er the unborn world of  
 men  
 On this one cast; — but ere the die be  
 thrown,  
 The renovated genius of our race,  
 Proud umpire of the impious game, de-  
 scends  
 A seraph-wingèd Victory, bestriding  
 The tempest of the Omnipotence of God,  
 Which sweeps all things to their ap-  
 pointed doom,  
 And you to oblivion!" — More he would  
 have said,  
 But —  
*Mahmud.* Died — as thou  
 shouldst ere thy lips had painted  
 Their ruin in the hues of our success.  
 A rebel's crime gilt with a rebel's tongue!  
 Your heart is Greek, Hassan.  
*Hassan.* It may be so:  
 A spirit not my own wrencht me within,  
 And I have spoken words I fear and hate:  
 Yet would I die for —  
*Mahmud.* Live! oh live! outlive  
 Me and this sinking empire. But the  
 fleet —  
*Hassan.* Alas! —  
*Mahmud.* The fleet which,  
 like a flock of clouds  
 Chased by the wind, flies the insurgent  
 banner.  
 Our wingèd-castles from their merchant  
 ships!  
 Our myriads before their weak pirate  
 bands!  
 Our arms before their chains! our years  
 of empire  
 Before their centuries of servile fear!

Death is awake! Repulse is on the  
 waters!  
 They own no more the thunder-bearing  
 banner  
 Of Mahmud; but, like hounds of a base  
 breed,  
 Gorge from a stranger's hand, and rend  
 their master.  
*Hassan.* Latmos, and Ampelos, and  
 Phanæ, saw  
 The wreck —  
*Mahmud.* The caves of the  
 Icarian isles  
 Told each to the other in loud mockery,  
 And with the tongue as of a thousand  
 echoes,  
 First of the sea-convulsing fight — and,  
 then, —  
 Thou darrest to speak — senseless are the  
 mountains:  
 Interpret thou their voice!  
*Hassan.* My presence bore  
 A part in that day's shame. The Grecian  
 fleet  
 Bore down at daybreak from the North,  
 and hung  
 As multitudinous on the ocean line,  
 As cranes upon the cloudless Thracian  
 wind.  
 Our squadron, convoying ten thousand  
 men,  
 Was stretching towards Nauplia when the  
 battle  
 Was kindled. —  
 First thro' the hail of our artillery  
 The agile Hydriote barks with press of  
 sail  
 Dasht: — ship to ship, cannon to cannon,  
 man  
 To man were grappled in the embrace of  
 war,  
 Inextricable but by death or victory.  
 The tempest of the raging fight convulst  
 To its crystalline depths that stainless sea,  
 And shook Heaven's roof of golden morn-  
 ing clouds,  
 Poised on a hundred azure mountain  
 isles.  
 In the brief trances of the artillery  
 One cry from the destroyed and the de-  
 stroyer  
 Rose, and a cloud of desolation wrapt  
 The unforeseen event, till the north wind

Sprung from the sea, lifting the heavy  
 veil  
 Of battle-smoke — then victory — vic-  
 tory!  
 For, as we thought, three frigates from  
 Algiers  
 Bore down from Naxos to our aid, but  
 soon  
 The abhorred cross glimmered behind,  
 before,  
 Among, around us; and that fatal sign  
 Dried with its beams the strength in Mos-  
 lem hearts,  
 As the sun drinks the dew. — What more?  
 We fled! —  
 Our noonday path over the sanguine foam  
 Was beaconed, — and the glare struck  
 the sun pale, —  
 By our consuming transports; the fierce  
 light  
 Made all the shadows of our sails blood-  
 red,  
 And every countenance blank. Some  
 ships lay feeding  
 The ravening fire, even to the water's  
 level;  
 Some were blown up; some, settling  
 heavily,  
 Sunk; and the shrieks of our companions  
 died  
 Upon the wind, that bore us fast and far,  
 Even after they were dead. Nine thou-  
 sand perish!  
 We met the vultures legioned in the air  
 Stemming the torrent of the tainted wind;  
 They, screaming from their cloudy moun-  
 tain peaks,  
 Stoopt thro' the sulphurous battle-smoke  
 and perchd  
 Each on the weltering carcase that we  
 loved,  
 Like its ill angel or its damnèd soul  
 Riding upon the bosom of the sea.  
 We saw the dog-fish hastening to their  
 feast.  
 Joy waked the voiceless people of the sea,  
 And ravening Famine left his ocean cave  
 To dwell with War, with us, and with  
 Despair.  
 We met night three hours to the west of  
 Patmos,  
 And with night, tempest —  
*Mahmud.*

Cease!

*Enter a Messenger.**Messenger.*

Your

Sublime Highness,  
 That Christian hound, the Muscovite Am-  
 bassador  
 Has left the city. — If the rebel fleet  
 Had anchored in the port, had victory  
 Crowned the Greek legions in the Hippo-  
 drome,  
 Panic were tamer. — Obedience and Mu-  
 tity,  
 Like giants in contention planet-struck,  
 Stand gazing on each other. — There is  
 peace  
 In Stamboul. —  
*Mahmud.* Is the grave not  
 calmer still?

Its ruins shall be mine.

*Hassan.*

Fear not the Russian:

The tiger leagues not with the stag at bay  
 Against the hunter, — Cunning, base, and  
 cruel,  
 He crouches, watching till the spoil be  
 won,  
 And must be paid for his reserve in blood.  
 After the war is fought, yield the sleek  
 Russian  
 That which thou canst not keep, his de-  
 served portion  
 Of blood, which shall not flow thro'  
 streets and fields,  
 Rivers and seas, like that which we may  
 win,  
 But stagnate in the veins of Christian  
 slaves!

*Enter second Messenger.**Second Messenger.*

Nauplia, Tripo-  
 lizza, Mothon, Athens,  
 Navarin, Artas, Monembasia,  
 Corinth, and Thebes are carried by  
 assault,  
 And every Islamite who made his dogs  
 Fat with the flesh of Galilean slaves  
 Past at the edge of the sword: the lust  
 of blood  
 Which made our warriors drunk is  
 quencht in death;  
 But like a fiery plague breaks out anew  
 In deeds which make the Christian cause  
 look pale  
 In its own light. The garrison of Patras  
 Has store but for ten days, nor is there  
 hope



But from the Briton: at once slave and tyrant  
 His wishes still are weaker than his fears,  
 Or he would sell what faith may yet remain  
 From the oaths broke in Genoa and in Norway;  
 And if you buy him not, your treasury  
 Is empty even of promises — his own coin.

The freedman of a western poet chief  
 Holds Attica with seven thousand rebels,  
 And has beat back the Pacha of Negropont:

The aged Ali sits in Yanina  
 A crownless metaphor of empire:  
 His name, that shadow of his withered might,

Holds our besieging army like a spell  
 In prey to famine, pest, and mutiny;  
 He, bastioned in his citadel, looks forth  
 Joyless upon the sapphire lake that mirrors

The ruins of the city where he reigned  
 Childless and sceptreless. The Greek  
 has reapt

The costly harvest his own blood  
 matured,  
 Not the sower, Ali — who has bought a truce

From Ypsilanti with ten camel loads  
 Of Indian gold.

*Enter a third Messenger.*

*Mahmud.* What more?

*Third Messenger.* The Christian tribes  
 Of Lebanon and the Syrian wilderness  
 Are in revolt; — Damascus, Hems,  
 Aleppo

Tremble; — the Arab menaces Medina,  
 The Ethiop has intrencht himself in  
 Sennaar,

And keeps the Egyptian rebel well employed,

Who denies homage, claims investiture  
 As price of tardy aid. Persia demands  
 The cities on the Tigris, and the Georgians  
 Refuse their living tribute. Crete and  
 Cyprus,

Like mountain-twins that from each  
 other's veins  
 Catch the volcano-fire and earthquake  
 spasm,

Shake in the general fever. Thro' the  
 city,

Like birds before a storm, the Santons  
 shriek,

And prophesyings horrible and new  
 Are heard among the crowd: that sea  
 of men

Sleeps on the wrecks it made, breathless  
 and still.

A Dervise, learned in the Koran, preaches  
 That it is written how the sins of Islam  
 Must raise up a destroyer even now.

The Greeks expect a Saviour from the  
 west,

Who shall not come, men say, in clouds  
 and glory,

But in the omnipresence of that spirit  
 In which all live and are. Ominous  
 signs

Are blazoned broadly on the noonday  
 sky:

One saw a red cross stampt upon the  
 sun;

It has rained blood; and monstrous births  
 declare

The secret wrath of Nature and her  
 Lord.

The army encamp't upon the Cydaris,  
 Was roused last night by the alarm of  
 battle,

And saw two hosts conflicting in the  
 air,

The shadows doubtless of the unborn  
 time

Cast on the mirror of the night. While  
 yet

The fight hung balanced, there arose a  
 storm

Which swept the phantoms from among  
 the stars.

At the third watch the spirit of the  
 plague

Was heard abroad flapping among the  
 tents;

Those who relieved watch found the  
 sentinels dead.

The last news from the camp is, that a  
 thousand

Have sickened, and —

*Enter a fourth Messenger.*

*Mahmud.* And thou, pale  
 ghost, dim shadow

Of some untimely rumor, speak!

*Fourth Messenger.* One comes  
Fainting with toil, covered with foam  
and blood:  
He stood, he says, upon Chelonites'  
Promontory, which overlooks the isles  
that groan  
Under the Briton's frown, and all their  
waters  
Then trembling in the splendor of the  
moon,  
When, as the wandering clouds unveiled  
or hid  
Her boundless light, he saw two adverse  
fleets  
Stalk through the night in the horizon's  
glimmer,  
Mingling fierce thunders and sulphure-  
ous gleams,  
And smoke which strangled every infant  
wind  
That soothed the silver clouds thro' the  
deep air.  
At length the battle slept, but the  
Sirocco  
Awoke, and drove his flock of thunder-  
clouds  
Over the sea-horizon, blotting out  
All objects — save that in the faint  
moon-glimpse  
He saw, or dreamed he saw, the Turkish  
admiral  
And two the loftiest of our ships of war,  
With the bright image of that Queen of  
Heaven  
Who hid, perhaps, her face for grief,  
reverst;  
And the abhorred cross —

*Enter an Attendant.*

*Attendant.* Your Sublime High-  
ness,  
The Jew, who —  
*Mahmud.* Could not come  
more seasonably:  
Bid him attend. I 'll hear no more!  
too long  
We gaze on danger thro' the mist of  
fear,  
And multiply upon our shattered hopes  
The images of ruin. Come what will!  
To-morrow and to-morrow are as lamps  
Set in our path to light us to the edge  
Thro' rough and smooth, nor can we  
suffer aught

Which he inflicts not in whose hand we  
are. [*Exeunt.*]

*Semichorus I.*

Would I were the wingèd cloud  
Of a tempest swift and loud!  
I would scorn  
The smile of morn  
And the wave where the moonrise is  
born!  
I would leave  
The spirits of eve  
A shroud for the corpse of the day to  
weave  
From other threads than mine!  
Bask in the deep blue noon divine  
Who would? Not I.

*Semichorus II.*

Whither to fly?

*Semichorus I.*

Where the rocks that gird the Ægean  
Echo to the battle pæan  
Of the free —  
I would flee  
A tempestuous herald of victory!  
My golden rain  
For the Grecian slain  
Should mingle in tears with the bloody  
main,  
And my solemn thunder-knell  
Should ring to the world the passing  
bell  
Of tyranny.

*Semichorus II.*

Ah king! wilt thou chain  
The rack and the rain?  
Wilt thou fetter the lightning and hurri-  
cane?  
The storms are free,  
But we —

*Chorus.*

O Slavery! thou frost of the world's  
prime,  
Killing its flowers and leaving its thorns  
bare!  
Thy touch has stampt these limbs with  
crime,  
These brows thy branding garland  
bear,

But the free heart, the impassive soul  
Scorn thy control!

*Semichorus I.*

Let there be light! said Liberty,  
And like sunrise from the sea,  
Athens arose! — Around her born,  
Shone like mountains in the morn  
Glorious states; — and are they now  
Ashes, wrecks, oblivion?

*Semichorus II.*

Go,  
Where Thermæ and Asopus swallowed  
Persia, as the sand does foam,  
Deluge upon deluge followed,  
Discord, Macedon, and Rome:  
And lastly thou!

*Semichorus I.*

Temples and towers,  
Citadels and marts, and they  
Who live and die there, have been ours,  
And may be thine, and must decay;  
But Greece and her foundations are  
Built below the tide of war,  
Based on the crystalline sea  
Of thought and its eternity;  
Her citizens, imperial spirits,  
Rule the present from the past,  
On all this world of men inherits  
Their seal is set.

*Semichorus II.*

Hear ye the blast,  
Whose Orphic thunder thrilling calls  
From ruin her Titanian walls?  
Whose spirit shakes the sapless bones  
Of Slavery! Argos, Corinth, Crete  
Hear, and from their mountain thrones  
The dæmons and the nymphs repeat  
The harmony.

*Semichorus I.*

I hear! I hear!

*Semichorus II.*

The world's eyeless charioteer,  
Destiny, is hurrying by!  
What faith is crushed, what empire bleeds  
Beneath her earthquake-footed steeds?

What eagle-winged victory sits  
At her right hand? what shadow flits  
Before? what splendor rolls behind?  
Ruin and renovation cry  
Who but We?

*Semichorus I.*

I hear! I hear!  
The hiss as of a rushing wind,  
The roar as of an ocean foaming,  
The thunder as of earthquake coming.  
I hear! I hear!  
The crash as of an empire falling,  
The shrieks as of a people calling  
Mercy! mercy! — How they thrill!  
Then a shout of "kill! kill! kill!"  
And then a small still voice, thus —

*Semichorus II.*

Fear,  
Revenge and Wrong bring forth their  
kind,  
The foul cubs like their parents are,  
Their den is in the guilty mind,  
And Conscience feeds them with de-  
spair.

*Semichorus I.*

In sacred Athens, near the fane  
Of Wisdom, Pity's altar stood:  
Serve not the unknown God in vain,  
But pay that broken shrine again,  
Love for hate and tears for blood.  
*Enter MAHMUD and AHASUERUS.*  
*Mahmud.* Thou art a man, thou  
sayest, even as we.  
*Ahasuerus.* No more!  
*Mahmud.* But raised above  
thy fellow-men  
By thought, as I by power.  
*Ahasuerus.* Thou sayest so.  
*Mahmud.* Thou art an adept in the  
difficult lore  
Of Greek and Frank philosophy; thou  
numberest  
The flowers and thou measurest the stars;  
Thou severest element from element;  
Thy spirit is present in the past, and sees  
The birth of this old world thro' all its  
cycles  
Of desolation and of loveliness,  
And when man was not, and how man  
became

The monarch and the slave of this low  
 sphere,  
 And all its narrow circles — it is much —  
 I honor thee, and would be what thou art  
 Were I not what I am; but the unborn  
 hour,  
 Cradled in fear and hope, conflicting  
 storms,  
 Who shall unveil? Nor thou, nor I, nor  
 any  
 Mighty or wise. I apprehended not  
 What thou hast taught me, but I now  
 perceive  
 That thou art no interpreter of dreams;  
 Thou dost not own that art, device, or  
 God,  
 Can make the future present — let it  
 come!  
 Moreover thou disdainest us and ours;  
 Thou art as God, whom thou contem-  
 platest.  
*Ahasuerus.* Disdain thee? — not the  
 worm beneath my feet!  
 The Fathomless has care for meaner  
 things  
 Than thou canst dream, and has made  
 pride for those  
 Who would be what they may not, or  
 would seem  
 That which they are not. Sultan! talk  
 no more  
 Of thee and me, the future and the  
 past;  
 But look on that which cannot change —  
 the One,  
 The unborn and the undying. Earth and  
 ocean,  
 Space, and the isles of life or light that  
 gem  
 The sapphire floods of interstellar air,  
 This firmament pavilioned upon chaos,  
 With all its cressets of immortal fire,  
 Whose outwall, bastionèd impregnably  
 Against the escape of boldest thoughts,  
 repels them  
 As Calpe the Atlantic clouds — this Whole  
 Of suns, and worlds, and men, and  
 beasts, and flowers,  
 With all the silent or tempestuous work-  
 ings  
 By which they have been, are, or cease  
 to be,  
 Is but a vision; — all that it inherits

Are motes of a sick eye, bubbles and  
 dreams;  
 Thought is its cradle and its grave, nor  
 less  
 The future and the past are idle shadows  
 Of thought's eternal flight — they have no  
 being:  
 Naught is but that which feels itself to be.  
*Mahmud.* What meanest thou? Thy  
 words stream like a tempest  
 Of dazzling mist within my brain — they  
 shake  
 The earth on which I stand, and hang  
 like night  
 On Heaven above me. What can they  
 avail?  
 They cast on all things surest, brightest,  
 best,  
 Doubt, insecurity, astonishment.  
*Ahasuerus.* Mistake me not! All is  
 contained in each.  
 Dodona's forest to an acorn's cup  
 Is that which has been, or will be, to  
 that  
 Which is — the absent to the present  
 Thought  
 Alone, and its quick elements, Will,  
 Passion,  
 Reason, Imagination, cannot die;  
 They are, what that which they regard  
 appears,  
 The stuff whence mutability can weave  
 All that it hath dominion o'er, worlds,  
 worms,  
 Empires, and superstitions. What has  
 thought  
 To do with time, or place, or circum-  
 stance?  
 Wouldst thou behold the future? — ask  
 and have!  
 Knock and it shall be opened — look  
 and, lo!  
 The coming age is shadowed on the past  
 As on a glass.  
*Mahmud.* Wild, wilder thoughts  
 convulse  
 My spirit — Did not Mahomet the  
 Second  
 Win Stamboul?  
*Ahasuerus.* Thou wouldst ask  
 that giant spirit  
 The written fortunes of thy house and  
 faith.

Thou wouldst cite one out of the grave  
to tell

How what was born in blood must die.

*Mahmud.* Thy words

Have power on me! I see —

*Ahasuerus.* What hearest thou?

*Mahmud.* A far whisper —

Terrible silence.

*Ahasuerus.* What succeeds?

*Mahmud.* The sound

As of the assault of an imperial city,

The hiss of inextinguishable fire,

The roar of giant cannon; the earth-  
quaking

Fall of vast bastions and precipitous  
towers,

The shock of crags shot from strange  
enginery,

The clash of wheels, and clang of armèd  
hoofs,

And crash of brazen mail as of the  
wreck

Of adamantine mountains — the mad  
blast

Of trumpets, and the neigh of raging  
steeds,

And shrieks of women whose thrill jars  
the blood,

And one sweet laugh, most horrible to  
hear,

As of a joyous infant waked and playing  
With its dead mother's breast, and now  
more loud

The mingled battle-cry, — ha! hear I  
not

“*Ἐν τούτῳ νίκη.*” “Allah-illah-Allah!”

*Ahasuerus.* The sulphurous mist is  
raised — thou seest —

*Mahmud.* A chasm,

As of two mountains in the wall of Stam-  
boul;

And in that ghastly breach the Islamites,  
Like giants on the ruins of a world,

Stand in the light of sunrise. In the  
dust

Glimmers a kingless diadem, and one

Of regal port has cast himself beneath  
The stream of war. Another proudly

clad

In golden arms spurs a Tartarian barb

Into the gap, and with his iron mace

Directs the torrent of that tide of men,

And seems — he is — Mahomet!

*Ahasuerus.*

What thou seest

Is but the ghost of thy forgotten dream.

A dream itself, yet less, perhaps, than  
that

Thou call'st reality. Thou mayst  
behold

How cities, on which Empire sleeps  
enthroned,

Bow their towered crests to mutability.

Poised by the flood, e'en on the height  
thou holdest,

Thou mayst now learn how the full tide  
of power

Ebbs to its depths. — Inheritor of glory,  
Conceived in darkness, born in blood,  
and nourisht

With tears and toil, thou seest the mortal  
throes

Of that whose birth was but the same.  
The Past

Now stands before thee like an Incarna-  
tion

Of the To-come; yet wouldst thou com-  
mune with

That portion of thyself which was ere  
thou

Didst start for this brief race whose  
crown is death,

Dissolve with that strong faith and fer-  
vent passion

Which called it from the uncreated deep,  
Yon cloud of war, with its tempestuous

phantoms

Of raging death; and draw with mighty  
will

The imperial shade hither.

[*Exit* AHASUERUS.]

*Mahmud.*

Approach!

*Phantom.*

I come

Thence whither thou must go! The  
grave is fitter

To take the living than give up the dead;  
Yet has thy faith prevailed, and I am

here.

The heavy fragments of the power which  
fell

When I arose, like shapeless crags and  
clouds,

Hang round my throne on the abyss, and  
voices

Of strange lament soothe my supreme  
repose,

Wailing for glory never to return. —

A later Empire nods in its decay:  
The autumn of a greener faith is come,  
And wolfish change, like winter, howls  
to strip.

The foliage in which Fame, the eagle,  
built

Her aerie, while Dominion whelpt be-  
low.

The storm is in its branches, and the frost  
Is on its leaves, and the blank deep ex-  
pects

Oblivion on oblivion, spoil on spoil,  
Ruin on ruin: — Thou art slow, my son;  
The Anarchs of the world of darkness  
keep

A throne for thee, round which thine  
empire lies

Boundless and mute; and for thy subjects  
thou,

Like us, shalt rule the ghosts of mur-  
dered life,

The phantoms of the powers who rule  
thee now —

Mutinous passions, and conflicting fears,  
And hopes that sate themselves on dust  
and die! —

Stript of their mortal strength, as thou  
of thine.

Islam must fall, but we will reign to-  
gether

Over its ruins in the world of death: —  
And if the trunk be dry, yet shall the  
seed

Unfold itself even in the shape of that  
Which gathers birth in its decay. Wo!  
wo!

To the weak people tangled in the grasp  
Of its last spasms.

*Mahmud.* Spirit, wo to all!  
Wo to the wronged and the avenger!  
Wo

To the destroyer, wo to the destroyed!  
Wo to the dupe, and wo to the de-  
ceiver!

Wo to the opprest, and wo to the  
oppressor!

Wo both to those that suffer and inflict;  
Those who are born and those who die!

But say,  
Imperial shadow of the thing I am,  
When, how, by whom, Destruction must  
accomplish

Her consummation?

*Phantom.* Ask the cold pale Hour,  
Rich in reversion of impending death,  
When *he* shall fall upon whose ripe gray  
hairs

Sit Care, and Sorrow, and Infirmity —  
The weight which Crime, whose wings  
are plumed with years,

Leaves in his flight from ravaged heart  
to heart

Over the heads of men, under which  
burden

They bow themselves unto the grave:  
fond wretch!

He leans upon his crutch, and talks of  
years

To come, and how in hours of youth re-  
newed

He will renew lost joys, and —  
*Voice without.* Victory! Victory!

[*The Phantom vanishes.*]

*Mahmud.* What sound of the impor-  
tunate earth has broken

My mighty trance?  
*Voice without.* Victory! Victory!

*Mahmud.* Weak lightning before  
darkness! poor faint smile

Of dying Islam! Voice which art the  
response

Of hollow weakness! Do I wake and  
live?

Were there such things, or may the un-  
quiet brain,

Vext by the wise mad talk of the old  
Jew,

Have shaped itself these shadows of its  
fear?

It matters not! — for naught we see or  
dream,

Possess, or lose, or grasp at, can be  
worth

More than it gives or teaches. Come  
what may,

The future must become the past, and I  
As they were to whom once this present

hour,  
This gloomy crag of time to which I  
cling,

Seemed an Elysian isle of peace and joy  
Never to be attained. — I must rebuke

This drunkenness of triumph ere it die,  
And dying, bring despair. Victory!

poor slaves!

[*Exit MAHMUD.*]

*Voice without.* Shout in the jubilee  
of death! The Greeks

Are as a brood of lions in the net  
Round which the kingly hunters of the  
earth

Stand smiling. Anarchs, ye whose daily  
food

Are curses, groans, and gold, the fruit of  
death

From Thule to the girdle of the world,  
Come, feast! the board groans with the  
flesh of men;

The cup is foaming with a nation's  
blood,

Famine and Thirst await! eat, drink,  
and die!

*Semichorus I.*

Victorious Wrong, with vulture scream,  
Salutes the risen sun, pursues the flying  
day!

I saw her, ghastly as a tyrant's dream,  
Perch on the trembling pyramid of night,  
Beneath which earth and all her realms  
pavilioned lay

In visions of the dawning undelight.

Who shall impede her flight?

Who rob her of her prey?

*Voice without.* Victory! Victory!  
Russia's famisht eagles

Dare not to prey beneath the crescent's  
light.

Impale the remnant of the Greeks!  
despoil!

Violate! make their flesh cheaper than  
dust!

*Semichorus II.*

Thou voice which art

The herald of the ill in splendor hid!

Thou echo of the hollow heart

Of monarchy, bear me to thine abode

When desolation flashes o'er a world  
destroyed:

Oh, bear me to those isles of jagged  
cloud

Which float like mountains on the  
earthquake, mid

The momentary oceans of the lightning,  
Or to some toppling promontory proud

Of solid tempest whose black pyramid,  
Riven, overhangs the founts intensely

brightning

Of those dawn-tinted deluges of fire  
Before their waves expire,  
When heaven and earth are light, and  
only light

In the thunder night!

*Voice without.* Victory! Victory!  
Austria, Russia, England,

And that tame serpent, that poor shadow,  
France,

Cry peace, and that means death when  
monarchs speak.

Ho, there! bring torches, sharpen those  
red stakes,

These chains are light, fitter for slaves  
and poisoners

Than Greeks. Kill! plunder! burn!  
let none remain.

*Semichorus I.*

Alas! for Liberty!

If numbers, wealth, or unfulfilling years,  
Or fate, can quell the free!

Alas! for Virtue, when

Torments, or contumely, or the sneers  
Of erring judging men

Can break the heart where it abides.

Alas! if Love, whose smile makes this  
obscure world splendid,

Can change with its false times and  
tides,

Like hope and terror, —

Alas for Love!

And Truth, who wanderest lone and  
unbefriended,

If thou canst veil thy lie-consuming  
mirror

Before the dazzled eyes of Error,

Alas for thee! Image of the Above.

*Semichorus II.*

Repulse, with plumes from con-  
quest torn,

Led the ten thousand from the limits of  
the morn

Thro' many an hostile Anarchy!

At length they wept aloud, and cried,  
"The Sea! the Sea!"

Thro' exile, persecution, and  
despair,

Rome was, and young Atlantis  
shall become

The wonder, or the terror, or the  
tomb

Of all whose step wakes Power lulled in  
her savage lair :

But Greece was as a hermit child,  
Whose fairest thoughts and limbs  
were built

To woman's growth, by dreams so mild,  
She knew not pain or guilt;  
And now, O Victory, blush! and Empire  
tremble

When ye desert the free —  
If Greece must be

A wreck, yet shall its fragments re-  
assemble,

And build themselves again impregnably  
In a diviner clime,

To Amphionic music on some Cape sub-  
lime,

Which frowns above the idle foam of  
Time.

*Semichorus I.*

Let the tyrants rule the desert they have  
made;

Let the free possess the paradise they  
claim;

Be the fortune of our fierce oppressors  
weighed

With our ruin, our resistance, and  
our name!

*Semichorus II.*

Our dead shall be the seed of their  
decay,

Our survivors be the shadow of their  
pride,

Our adversity a dream to pass away —  
Their dishonor a remembrance to  
abide!

*Voice without.* Victory! Victory!

The bought Briton sends

The keys of ocean to the Islamite. —

Now shall the blazon of the cross be  
veiled,

And British skill directing Othman might,  
Thunder-strike rebel victory. Oh, keep  
holy

This jubilee of unrevengèd blood!

Kill! crush! despoil! Let not a Greek  
escape!

*Semichorus I.*

Darkness has dawned in the East

On the noon of time:

The death-birds descend to their feast,  
From the hungry clime.

Let Freedom and Peace flee far  
To a sunnier strand,

And follow Love's folding star  
To the Evening land!

*Semichorus II.*

The young moon has fed

Her exhausted horn,

With the sunset's fire:

The weak day is dead,

But the night is not born;

And, like loveliness panting with wild de-  
sire

While it trembles with fear and delight,

Hesperus flies from awakening night,

And pants in its beauty and speed with  
light

Fast flashing, soft, and bright.

Thou beacon of love! thou lamp of the  
free!

Guide us far, far away,

To climes where now veiled by the ardor  
of day

Thou art hidden

From waves on which weary Noon,

Faints in her summer swoon,

Between kingless continents sinless  
as Eden,

Around mountains and islands in-  
violably

Prankt on the sapphire sea.

*Semichorus I.*

Thro' the sunset of hope,

Like the shapes of a dream,

What Paradise islands of glory  
gleam!

Beneath Heaven's cope,

Their shadows more clear float by —

The sound of their oceans, the light  
of their sky,

The music and fragrance their soli-  
tudes breathe

Burst, like morning on dream, or like  
Heaven on death

Thro' the walls of our prison;

And Greece, which was dead, is arisen!

*Chorus.*

The world's great age begins anew,

The golden years return,



The earth doth like a snake renew  
 Her winter weeds outworn:  
 Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires  
 gleam,  
 Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains  
 From waves serener far;  
 A new Peneus rolls his fountains  
 Against the morning star.  
 Where fairer Tempes bloom, there  
 sleep  
 Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,  
 Fraught with a later prize;  
 Another Orpheus sings again,  
 And loves, and weeps, and dies.  
 A new Ulysses leaves once more  
 Calypso for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,  
 If earth Death's scroll must be!  
 Nor mix with Laian rage the joy  
 Which dawns upon the free:  
 Altho' a subtler Sphinx renew  
 Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,  
 And to remoter time  
 Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,  
 The splendor of its prime;  
 And leave, if naught so bright may live,  
 All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose  
 Shall burst, more bright and good  
 Than all who fell, than One who rose,  
 Than many unsubdued:  
 Not gold, not blood, their altar  
 dowers,  
 But votive tears and symbol flowers.

Oh, cease! must hate and death return?  
 Cease! must men kill and die?  
 Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn  
 Of bitter prophecy.  
 The world is weary of the past,  
 Oh, might it die or rest at last!

## NOTES.

(1) *The quenchless ashes of Milan* [p. 437].

MILAN was the centre of the resistance of the Lombard league against the Austrian tyrant. Frederic Barbarossa burnt the city to the ground, but liberty lived in its ashes, and it rose like an exhalation from its ruin. See Sismondi's "Histoire des Républiques Italiennes," a book which has done much towards awakening the Italians to an imitation of their great ancestors.

(2) *The Chorus* [p. 437].

The popular notions of Christianity are represented in this chorus as true in their relation to the worship they superseded, and that which in all probability they will supersede, without considering their merits in a relation more universal. The first stanza contrasts the immortality of the living and thinking beings which inhabit the planets, and to use a common and inadequate phrase, *clothe themselves in matter*, with the transience of the noblest manifestations of the external world.

The concluding verses indicate a progressive state of more or less exalted existence, according to the degree of perfection which every distinct intelligence may have attained. Let it not be supposed that I mean to dogmatize upon a subject, concerning which all men are equally ignorant, or that I think the Gordian knot of the origin of evil can be disentangled by that or any similar assertions. The received hypothesis of a Being resembling men in the moral attributes of his nature, having called us out of non-existence, and after inflicting on us the misery of the commission of error, should superadd that of the punishment and the privations consequent upon it, still would remain inexplicable and incredible. That there is a true solution of the riddle, and that in our present state that solution is unattainable by us, are propositions which may be regarded as equally certain: meanwhile, as it is the province of the poet to attach himself to

those ideas which exalt and ennoble humanity, let him be permitted to have conjectured the condition of that futurity towards which we are all impelled by an inextinguishable thirst for immortality. Until better arguments can be produced than sophisms which disgrace the cause, this desire itself must remain the strongest and the only presumption that eternity is the inheritance of every thinking being.

(3) *No hoary priests after that patriarch*  
[p. 439].

The Greek Patriarch after having been compelled to fulminate an anathema against the insurgents was put to death by the Turks.

Fortunately the Greeks have been taught that they cannot buy security by degradation, and the Turks, though equally cruel, are less cunning than the smooth-faced tyrants of Europe. As to the anathema, his Holiness might as well have thrown his mitre at Mount Athos for any effect that it produced. The chiefs of the Greeks are almost all men of comprehension and enlightened views on religion and politics.

(4) *The freedman of a western poet chief*  
[p. 445].

A Greek who had been Lord Byron's servant commands the insurgents in Attica. This Greek, Lord Byron informs me, though a poet and an enthusiastic patriot, gave him rather the idea of a timid and unenterprising person. It appears that circumstances make men what they are, and that we all contain the germ of a degree of degradation or of greatness whose connection with our character is determined by events.

(5) *The Greeks expect a Saviour from the west* [p. 445].

It is reported that this Messiah had arrived at a seaport near Lacedæmon in an American brig. The association of names and ideas is irresistibly ludicrous, but the prevalence of such a rumor strongly marks the state of popular enthusiasm in Greece.

(6) *The sound as of the assault of an Imperial city* [p. 449].

For the vision of Mahmud of the taking of Constantinople in 1453, see Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," vol. xii. p. 223.

The manner of the invocation of the spirit of Mahomet the Second will be censured as over subtle. I could easily have made the Jew a regular conjurer, and the Phantom an ordinary ghost. I have preferred to represent the Jew as disclaiming all pretension, or even belief, in supernatural agency, and as tempting Mahmud to that state of mind in which ideas may be supposed to assume the force of sensations through the confusion of thought with the objects of thought, and the excess of passion animating the creations of imagination.

It is a sort of natural magic, susceptible of being exercised in a degree by any one who should have made himself master of the secret associations of another's thoughts.

(7) *The Chorus* [p. 452].

The final chorus is indistinct and obscure, as the event of the living drama whose arrival it foretells. Prophecies of wars, and rumors of wars, etc., may safely be made by poet or prophet in any age, but to anticipate however darkly a period of regeneration and happiness is a more hazardous exercise of the faculty which bards possess or feign. It will remind the reader "*magno nec proximo intervallo*" of Isaiah and Virgil, whose ardent spirits overleaping the actual reign of evil which we endure and bewail, already saw the possible and perhaps approaching state of society in which the "*lion shall lie down with the lamb*," and "*omnis feret omnia tellus*." Let these great names be my authority and my excuse.

(8) *Saturn and Love their long repose shall burst* [p. 453].

Saturn and Love were among the deities of a real or imaginary state of inno-

cence and happiness. *All those who fell*, or the Gods of Greece, Asia, and Egypt; the *One who rose*, or Jesus Christ, at whose appearance the idols of the Pagan World were amerced of their worship; and *the many unsubdued*, or the monstrous objects of the idolatry of China, India, the Antarctic islands, and the native tribes of America, certainly have reigned over the understandings of men in conjunction or in succession, during periods in which all we know of evil has been in a state of portentous, and, until the revival of learning and the arts, perpetually increasing activity. The Grecian gods seem indeed to have been personally more innocent, although it cannot be said, that as far as temperance and chastity are concerned, they gave so edifying an example as their successor. The sublime human character of Jesus Christ was deformed by an imputed identification with a power, who tempted, betrayed, and punished the innocent beings who were called into existence by his sole will; and for the period of a thousand years, the spirit of this most just, wise, and benevolent of men, has been propitiated with myriads of hecatombs of those who approached the nearest to his innocence and wisdom, sacrificed under every aggravation of atrocity and variety of torture. The horrors of the Mexican, the Peruvian, and the Indian superstitions are well known.

NOTE ON HELLAS, BY MRS.  
SHELLEY.

THE South of Europe was in a state of great political excitement at the beginning of the year 1821. The Spanish Revolution had been a signal to Italy; secret societies were formed; and, when Naples rose to declare the Constitution, the call was responded to from Brundisium to the foot of the Alps. To crush these attempts to obtain liberty, early in 1821 the Austrians poured their armies into the Peninsula: at first their coming rather seemed to add energy and resolution to a people long enslaved. The Pied-

montese asserted their freedom; Genoa threw off the yoke of the King of Sardinia; and, as if in playful imitation, the people of the little state of Massa and Carrara gave the *congé* to their sovereign, and set up a republic.

Tuscany alone was perfectly tranquil. It was said that the Austrian minister presented a list of sixty Carbonari to the Grand Duke, urging their imprisonment; and the Grand Duke replied, "I do not know whether these sixty men are Carbonari, but I know, if I imprison them, I shall directly have sixty thousand start up." But, though the Tuscans had no desire to disturb the paternal government beneath whose shelter they slumbered, they regarded the progress of the various Italian revolutions with intense interest, and hatred for the Austrian was warm in every bosom. But they had slender hopes; they knew that the Neapolitans would offer no fit resistance to the regular German troops, and that the overthrow of the constitution in Naples would act as a decisive blow against all struggles for liberty in Italy.

We have seen the rise and progress of reform. But the Holy Alliance was alive and active in those days, and few could dream of the peaceful triumph of liberty. It seemed then that the armed assertion of freedom in the South of Europe was the only hope of the liberals, as, if it prevailed, the nations of the north would imitate the example. Happily the reverse has proved the fact. The countries accustomed to the exercise of the privileges of freemen, to a limited extent, have extended, and are extending, these limits. Freedom and knowledge have now a chance of proceeding hand in hand; and, if it continue thus, we may hope for the durability of both. Then, as I have said — in 1821 — Shelley, as well as every other lover of liberty, looked upon the struggles in Spain and Italy as decisive of the destinies of the world, probably for centuries to come. The interest he took in the progress of affairs was intense. When Genoa declared itself free, his hopes were at their highest. Day after day he read the bulletins of the Austrian

army, and sought eagerly to gather tokens of its defeat. He heard of the revolt of Genoa with emotions of transport. His whole heart and soul were in the triumph of the cause. We were living at Pisa at that time; and several well-informed Italians, at the head of whom we may place the celebrated Vaccà, were accustomed to seek for sympathy in their hopes from Shelley: they did not find such for the despair they too generally experienced, founded on contempt for their southern countrymen.

While the fate of the progress of the Austrian armies then invading Naples was yet in suspense, the news of another revolution filled him with exultation. We had formed the acquaintance at Pisa of several Constantinopolitan Greeks, of the family of Prince Caradja, formerly Hospodar of Wallachia; who, hearing that the bowstring, the accustomed finale of his viceroyalty, was on the road to him, escaped with his treasures, and took up his abode in Tuscany. Among these was the gentleman to whom the drama of "Hellas" is dedicated. Prince Mavrocordat was warmed by those aspirations for the independence of his country which filled the hearts of many of his countrymen. He often intimated the possibility of an insurrection in Greece; but we had no idea of its being so near at hand, when, on the 1st of April, 1821, he called on Shelley, bringing the proclamation of his cousin, Prince Ypsilanti, and, radiant with exultation and delight, declared that henceforth Greece would be free.

Shelley had hymned the dawn of liberty in Spain and Naples, in two odes dictated by the warmest enthusiasm; he felt himself naturally impelled to decorate with poetry the uprising of the descendants of that people whose works he regarded with deep admiration, and to adopt the vaticinary character in prophesying their success. "Hellas" was written in a moment of enthusiasm. It is curious to remark how well he overcomes the difficulty of forming a drama out of such scant materials. His prophecies, indeed, came true in their general, not their particular, purport. He did not foresee the death

of Lord Londonderry, which was to be the epoch of a change in English politics, particularly as regarded foreign affairs; nor that the navy of his country would fight for instead of against the Greeks, and by the battle of Navarino secure their enfranchisement from the Turks. Almost against reason, as it appeared to him, he resolved to believe that Greece would prove triumphant; and in this spirit, auguring ultimate good, yet grieving over the vicissitudes to be endured in the interval, he composed his drama.

"Hellas" was among the last of his compositions, and is among the most beautiful. The choruses are singularly imaginative, and melodious in their versification. There are some stanzas that beautifully exemplify Shelley's peculiar style; as, for instance, the assertion of the intellectual empire which must be forever the inheritance of the country of Homer, Sophocles, and Plato:

" But Greece and her foundations are  
Built below the tide of war;  
Based on the crystalline sea  
Of thought and its eternity."

And again, that philosophical truth felicitously imaged forth —

" Revenge and Wrong bring forth their kind:  
The foul cubs like their parents are;  
Their den is in the guilty mind,  
And Conscience feeds them with despair."

The conclusion of the last chorus is among the most beautiful of his lyrics. The imagery is distinct and majestic; the prophecy, such as poets love to dwell upon, the Regeneration of Mankind — and that regeneration reflecting back splendor on the foregone time, from which it inherits so much of intellectual wealth, and memory of past virtuous deeds, as must render the possession of happiness and peace of tenfold value.

#### FRAGMENTS OF AN UNFINISHED DRAMA.

THE following fragments are part of a Drama undertaken for the amusement of the individuals who composed our intimate society, but left unfinished. I have

preserved a sketch of the story as far as it had been shadowed in the poet's mind.

An Enchantress, living in one of the islands of the Indian Archipelago, saves the life of a Pirate, a man of savage but noble nature. She becomes enamoured of him; and he, inconstant to his mortal love, for a while returns her passion; but at length, recalling the memory of her whom he left, and who laments his loss, he escapes from the Enchanted Island, and returns to his lady. His mode of life makes him again go to sea, and the Enchantress seizes the opportunity to bring him, by a spirit-brewed tempest, back to her Island. M. W. S.

SCENE, BEFORE THE CAVERN OF THE INDIAN ENCHANTRESS. *The ENCHANTRESS comes forth.*

*Enchantress.*

HE came like a dream in the dawn of life,

He fled like a shadow before its noon;

He is gone, and my peace is turned to strife,

And I wander and wane like the weary moon.

Oh, sweet Echo, wake,

And for my sake

Make answer the while my heart shall break!

But my heart has a music which Echo's lips,

Though tender and true, yet can answer not,

And the shadow that moves in the soul's eclipse

Can return not the kiss by his now forgot;

Sweet lips! he who hath

On my desolate path

Cast the darkness of absence, worse than death!

*The ENCHANTRESS makes her spell: she is answered by a Spirit.*

*Spirit.* Within the silent centre of the earth

My mansion is; where I have lived insphered

From the beginning, and around my sleep  
Have woven all the wondrous imagery  
Of this dim spot, which mortals call the world;

Infinite depths of unknown elements  
Massed into one impenetrable mask;  
Sheets of immeasurable fire, and veins  
Of gold and stone, and adamantine iron.  
And as a veil in which I walk thro' Heaven

I have wrought mountains, seas, and waves, and clouds,

And lastly light, whose interfusion dawns  
In the dark space of interstellar air.

A good Spirit, who watches over the Pirate's fate, leads, in a mysterious manner, the lady of his love to the Enchanted Isle; and has also led thither a Youth, who loves the lady, but whose passion she returns only with a sisterly affection. The ensuing scene takes place between them on their arrival at the Isle, where they meet, but without distinct mutual recognition.

[ANOTHER SCENE]

INDIAN YOUTH *and* LADY.

*Indian.* And, if my grief should still be dearer to me  
Than all the pleasures in the world beside,

Why would you lighten it? —

*Lady.* I offer only  
That which I seek, some human sympathy

In this mysterious island.

*Indian.* Oh! my friend,  
My sister, my beloved! — What do I say?

My brain is dizzy, and I scarce know whether

I speak to thee or her.

*Lady.* Peace, perturbed heart!  
I am to thee only as thou to mine,  
The passing wind which heals the brow  
at noon,

And may strike cold into the breast at night,

Yet cannot linger where it soothes the  
most,

Or long soothe, could it linger.

*Indian.*

But you said

You also loved?

*Lady.*

Loved! Oh, I love.

Methinks

This word of love is fit for all the world,  
And that for gentle hearts another  
name

Would speak of gentler thoughts than  
the world owns.

I have loved.

*Indian.*

And thou lovest  
not? if so

Young as thou art thou canst afford to  
weep.

*Lady.* Oh! would that I could claim  
exemption

From all the bitterness of that sweet  
name.

I loved, I love, and when I love no  
more

Let joys and grief perish, and leave  
despair

To ring the knell of youth. He stood  
beside me,

The embodied vision of the brightest  
dream,

Which like a dawn heralds the day of  
life;

The shadow of his presence made my  
world

A paradise. All familiar things he  
toucht,

All common words he spoke, became to  
me

Like forms and sounds of a diviner  
world.

He was as is the sun in his fierce youth,  
As terrible and lovely as a tempest;

He came, and went, and left me what I  
am.

Alas! Why must I think how oft we  
two

Have sat together near the river springs,  
Under the green pavilion which the  
willow

Spreads on the floor of the unbroken  
fountain,

Strewn by the nurslings that linger there,  
Over that islet paved with flowers and  
moss,

While the musk-rose leaves, like flakes  
of crimson snow,

Showered on us, and the dove mourned  
in the pine,

Sad prophetic of sorrows not her own?  
The crane returned to her unfrozen

haunt,  
And the false cuckoo bade the Spring

good morn;

And on a wintry bough the widowed  
bird,

Hid in the deepest night of ivy-leaves,  
Renewed the vigils of a sleepless sor-  
row.

I, left like her, and leaving one like her,  
Alike abandoned and abandoning

(Oh! unlike her in this!) the gentlest  
youth,

Whose love had made my sorrows dear  
to him,

Even as my sorrow made his love to  
me!

*Indian.* One curse of Nature stamps  
in the same mould

The features of the wretched; and they  
are

As like as violet to violet,  
When memory, the ghost, their odors

keeps  
Mid the cold relics of abandoned joy.—  
Proceed.

*Lady.* He was a simple inno-  
cent boy.

I loved him well, but not as he desired;  
Yet even thus he was content to be:—

A short content, for I was—  
*Indian [aside].* God of heaven!

From such an islet, such a river-  
spring!—

I dare not ask her if there stood upon it  
A pleasure-dome surmounted by a cres-  
cent,

With steps to the blue water. [*Aloud.*]  
It may be

That Nature masks in life several copies  
Of the same lot, so that the sufferers

May feel another's sorrow as their own,  
And find in friendship what they lost in  
love.

That cannot be: yet it is strange that  
we,

From the same scene, by the same path  
to this

Realm of abandonment — But speak!  
your breath —

Your breath is like soft music, your  
words are

The echoes of a voice which on my  
heart

Sleeps like a melody of early days.

But as you said —

*Lady.* He was so awful, yet  
So beautiful in mystery and terror,  
Calming me as the loveliness of heaven  
Soothes the unquiet sea: — and yet not  
so,

For he seemed stormy, and would often  
seem

A quenchless sun maskt in portentous  
clouds;

For such his thoughts, and even his  
actions were;

But he was not of them, nor they of  
him,

But as they hid his splendor from the  
earth.

Some said he was a man of blood and  
peril,

And steep in bitter infamy to the lips.

More need was there I should be inno-  
cent,

More need that I should be most true  
and kind,

And much more need that there should  
be found one

To share remorse and scorn and soli-  
tude,

And all the ills that wait on those who  
do

The tasks of ruin in the world of life.

He fled, and I have followed him.

*Indian.* Such a one  
Is he who was the winter of my peace.

But, fairest stranger, when didst thou  
depart

From the far hills where rise the springs  
of India,

How didst thou pass the intervening  
sea?

*Lady.* If I be sure I am not dream-  
ing now,

I should not doubt to say it was a dream.

Methought a star came down from heaven,  
And rested mid the plants of India,

Which I had given a shelter from the  
frost

Within my chamber. There the meteor  
lay,

Panting forth light among the leaves  
and flowers,

As if it lived, and was outworn with  
speed;

Or that it loved, and passion made the  
pulse

Of its bright life throb like an anxious  
heart,

Till it diffused itself, and all the chamber  
And walls seemed melted into emerald  
fire

That burned not; in the midst of which  
appeared

A spirit like a child, and laught aloud

A thrilling peal of such sweet merriment  
As made the blood tingle in my warm  
feet:

Then bent over a vase, and murmuring  
Low, unintelligible melodies,

Placed something in the mould like  
melon seeds,

And slowly faded, and in place of it  
A soft hand issued from the veil of fire,

Holding a cup like a magnolia flower,  
And poured upon the earth within the  
vase

The element with which it overflowed,  
Brighter than morning light, and purer  
than

The water of the springs of Himalah.

*Indian.* You waked not?

*Lady.* Not until my dream  
became

Like a child's legend on the tideless  
sand,

Which the first foam erases half, and half  
Leaves legible. At length I rose, and  
went,

Visiting my flowers from pot to pot, and  
thought

To set new cuttings in the empty urns,  
And when I came to that beside the  
lattice,

I saw two little dark-green leaves  
Lifting the light mould at their birth,  
and then

I half-remembered my forgotten dream.  
And day by day, green as a gourd in  
June,

The plant grew fresh and thick, yet no  
one knew

What plant it was; its stem and tendrils  
 seemed  
 Like emerald snakes, mottled and dia-  
 mounded  
 With azure mail and streaks of woven  
 silver;  
 And all the sheaths that folded the dark  
 buds  
 Rose like the crest of cobra-di-capel,  
 Until the golden eye of the bright flower,  
 Through the dark lashes of those veined  
 lids,  
 Disencumbered of their silent sleep,  
 Gazed like a star into the morning light.  
 Its leaves were delicate, you almost saw  
 The pulses  
 With which the purple velvet flower was  
 fed  
 To overflow, and like a poet's heart  
 Changing bright fancy to sweet senti-  
 ment,  
 Changed half the light to fragrance. It  
 soon fell,  
 And to a green and dewy embryo-fruit  
 Left all its treasured beauty. Day by  
 day  
 I nurst the plant, and on the double  
 flute  
 Played to it on the sunny winter days  
 Soft melodies, as sweet as April rain  
 On silent leaves, and sang those words  
 in which  
 Passion makes Echo taunt the sleeping  
 strings;  
 And I would send tales of forgotten love  
 Late into the lone night, and sing wild  
 songs  
 Of maids deserted in the olden time,  
 And weep like a soft cloud in April's  
 bosom  
 Upon the sleeping eyelids of the plant,  
 So that perhaps it dreamed that Spring  
 was come,  
 And crept abroad into the moonlight air,  
 And loosened all its limbs, as, noon by  
 noon,  
 The sun averted less his oblique beam.

*Indian.* And the plant died not in  
 the frost?

*Lady.* It grew;

And went out of the lattice which I left  
 Half open for it, trailing its quaint spires  
 Along the garden and across the lawn,

And down the slope of moss and thro'  
 the tufts  
 Of wild-flower roots, and stumps of trees  
 o'ergrown  
 With simple lichens, and old hoary  
 stones,  
 On to the margin of the glassy pool,  
 Even to a nook of unblown violets  
 And lilies-of-the-valley yet unborn,  
 Under a pine with ivy overgrown.  
 And there its fruit lay like a sleeping  
 lizard  
 Under the shadows; but when Spring  
 indeed  
 Came to unswathe her infants, and the  
 lilies  
 Peeped from their bright green masks to  
 wonder at  
 This shape of Autumn couched in their  
 recess,  
 Then it dilated, and it grew until  
 One half lay floating on the fountain  
 wave,  
 Whose pulse, elapst in unlike sym-  
 pathies,  
 Kept time  
 Among the snowy water-lily buds.  
 Its shape was such as Summer melody  
 Of the south wind in spicy vales might  
 give  
 To some light cloud bound from the  
 golden dawn  
 To fairy isles of evening, and it seemed  
 In hue and form that it had been a  
 mirror  
 Of all the hues and forms around it and  
 Upon it pictured by the sunny beams  
 Which, from the bright vibrations of the  
 pool,  
 Were thrown upon the rafters and the  
 roof  
 Of boughs and leaves, and on the pillared  
 stems  
 Of the dark sylvan temple, and reflec-  
 tions  
 Of every infant flower and star of moss  
 And veined leaf in the azure odorous air.  
 And thus it lay in the Elysian calm  
 Of its own beauty, floating on the line  
 Which, like a film in purest space,  
 divided  
 The heaven beneath the water from the  
 heaven



Above the clouds; and every day I went  
Watching its growth and wondering;  
And as the day grew hot, methought I  
saw

A glassy vapor dancing on the pool,  
And on it little quaint and filmy shapes,  
With dizzy motion, wheel and rise and  
fall,

Like clouds of gnats with perfect lineaments.

O friend, sleep was a veil uplift from  
heaven—

As if heaven dawned upon the world of  
dream—

When darkness rose on the extinguished  
day

Out of the eastern wilderness.

*Indian.*

I too

Have found a moment's paradise in sleep  
Half compensate a hell of waking sor-

row.

## CHARLES THE FIRST.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING CHARLES I.

QUEEN HENRIETTA.

LAUD, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*

WENTWORTH, *Earl of Strafford.*

LORD COTTINGTON.

LORD WESTON.

LORD COVENTRY.

WILLIAMS, *Bishop of Lincoln.*

Secretary LYTTTELTON.

JUXON.

ST. JOHN.

ARCHY, *the Court Fool.*

HAMPDEN.

PYM.

CROMWELL.

CROMWELL'S DAUGHTER.

SIR HARRY VANE *the younger.*

LEIGHTON.

BASTWICK.

PRYNNE.

*Gentlemen of the Inns of Court, Citizens, Pursuivants, Marshalsmen, Law Students, Judges, Clerk.*

SCENE I. — THE MASK OF THE INNS  
OF COURT.

*A Pursuivant.* Place, for the Marshal  
of the Mask!

*First Citizen.* What thinkest thou of  
this quaint mask which turns,  
Like morning from the shadow of the  
night,

The night to day, and London to a  
place

Of peace and joy?

*Second Citizen.*

And Hell to

Heaven.

Eight years are gone,

And they seem hours, since in this popu-  
lous street

I trod on grass made green by summer's  
rain,

For the red plague kept state within  
that palace

Where now reigns vanity. In nine years  
more

The roots will be refresht with civil  
blood;

And thank the mercy of insulted Heaven  
That sin and wrongs wound as an

orphan's cry,

The patience of the great Avenger's ear.

*A Youth.* Yet, father, 't is a happy  
sight to see,

Beautiful, innocent, and unforbidden

By God or man;—'t is like the bright  
procession

Of skyeey visions in a solemn dream

From which men wake as from a para-  
dise,

And draw new strength to tread the  
thorns of life.

If God be good, wherefore should this  
be evil?

And if this be not evil, dost thou not  
draw

Unseasonable poison from the flowers

Which bloom so rarely in this barren  
world?

Oh, kill these bitter thoughts which  
make the present

Dark as the future!—

When Avarice and Tyranny, vigilant  
Fear,

And open-eyed Conspiracy lie sleeping

As on Hell's threshold; and all gentle  
thoughts

Waken to worship Him who giveth  
joys

With his own gift.



Stamp on the face of man? Curses  
upon him,  
The impious tyrant!

*Second Citizen.* It is said besides  
That lewd and papist drunkards may  
profane

The Sabbath with their . . .  
And has permitted that most heathenish  
custom

Of dancing round a pole drest up with  
wreaths  
On May-day.

A man who thus twice crucifies his God  
May well his brother. — In my  
mind, friend,

The root of all this ill is prelacy.  
I would cut up the root.

*Third Citizen.* And by what  
means?

*Second Citizen.* Smiting each Bishop  
under the fifth rib.

*Third Citizen.* You seem to know  
the vulnerable place

Of these same crocodiles.

*Second Citizen.* I learnt it in  
Egyptian bondage, sir. Your worm of  
Nile

Betrays not with its flattering tears like  
they;

For, when they cannot kill, they whine  
and weep.

Nor is it half so greedy of men's bodies  
As they of soul and all; nor does it  
wallow

In slime as they in simony and lies  
And close lusts of the flesh.

*A Marshalsman.* Give place, give  
place!

You torch-bearers, advance to the great  
gate,

And then attend the Marshal of the  
Mask

Into the royal presence.

*A Law Student.* What thinkest  
thou

Of this quaint show of ours, my aged  
friend?

Even now we see the redness of the  
torches

Inflame the night to the eastward, and  
the clarions

Gasp to us on the wind's wave. It  
comes!

And their sounds, floating hither round  
the pageant,  
Rouse up the astonished air.

*First Citizen.* I will not think but  
that our country's wounds  
May yet be healed. The king is just  
and gracious,

Tho' wicked counsels now pervert his  
will:

These once cast off —

*Second Citizen.* As adders cast  
their skins

And keep their venom, so kings often  
change;

Councils and counsellors hang on one  
another,

Hiding the loathsome . . .

Like the base patchwork of a leper's  
rags.

*The Youth.* O, still those dissonant  
thoughts! — List how the music  
Grows on the enchanted air! And see,  
the torches

Restlessly flashing, and the crowd di-  
vided

Like waves before an admiral's prow!

*A Marshalsman.* Give place  
To the Marshal of the Mask!

*A Pursuivant.* Room for  
the King!

*The Youth.* How glorious! See  
those thronging chariots

Rolling, like painted clouds before the  
wind,

Behind their solemn steeds: how some  
are shaped

Like curvèd shells dyed by the azure  
depths

Of Indian seas; some like the new-born  
moon;

And some like cars in which the Romans  
climbed

(Canopied by Victory's eagle-wings out-  
spread)

The Capitolian! — See how gloriously  
The mettled horses in the torchlight stir  
Their gallant riders, while they check  
their pride,

Like shapes of some diviner element  
Than English air, and beings nobler than  
The envious and admiring multitude.

*Second Citizen.* Ay, there they are —  
Nobles, and sons of nobles, patentees,

Monopolists, and stewards of this poor farm,  
On whose lean sheep sit the prophetic crows.

Here is the pomp that strips the houseless orphan,

Here is the pride that breaks the desolate heart.

These are the lilies glorious as Solomon,  
Who toil not, neither do they spin, — unless

It be the webs they catch poor rogues withal.

Here is the surfeit which to them who earn

The niggard wages of the earth, scarce leaves

The tithe that will support them till they crawl

Back to her cold hard bosom. Here is health

Followed by grim disease, glory by shame,

Waste by lame famine, wealth by squalid want,

And England's sin by England's punishment.

And, as the effect pursues the cause foregone,

Lo, giving substance to my words, behold

At once the sign and the thing signified —  
A troop of cripples, beggars, and lean outcasts,

Horst upon stumbling jades, carted with dung,

Dragged for a day from cellars and low cabins

And rotten hiding-holes, to point the moral

Of this presentment, and bring up the rear

Of painted pomp with misery!

*The Youth.* 'T is but  
The anti-mask, and serves as discords do

In sweetest music. Who would love  
May flowers

If they succeeded not to Winter's flaw;  
Or day unchanged by night; or joy itself

Without the touch of sorrow?

*Second Citizen.* I and thou —  
*A Marshalsman.* Place, give place!

SCENE II. — A CHAMBER IN WHITE-HALL. *Enter the KING, QUEEN, LAUD, LORD STRAFFORD, LORD COTTINGTON, and other Lords; ARCHY; also ST. JOHN, with some Gentlemen of the Inns of Court.*

*King.* Thanks, gentlemen. I heartily accept  
This token of your service: your gay mask

Was performed gallantly. And it shows well

When subjects twine such flowers of observance

With the sharp thorns that deck the English crown.

A gentle heart enjoys what it confers,  
Even as it suffers that which it inflicts,

Tho' Justice guides the stroke.  
Accept my hearty thanks.

*Queen.* And, gentlemen,  
Call your poor Queen your debtor.

Your quaint pageant  
Rose on me like the figures of past years,

Treading their still path back to infancy,  
More beautiful and mild as they draw nearer

The quiet cradle. I could have almost wept

To think I was in Paris, where these shows

Are well devised — such as I was ere yet  
My young heart shared a portion of the burden,

The careful weight, of this great monarchy.

There, gentlemen, between the sovereign's pleasure

And that which it regards, no clamor lifts

Its proud interposition.  
In Paris ribald censurers dare not move

Their poisonous tongues against these sinless sports;

And *his* smile  
Warms those who bask in it, as ours would do

If . . . Take my heart's thanks: add them, gentlemen,

To those good words which, were he King of France,

My royal lord would turn to golden deeds.

*St. John.* Madam, the love of Englishmen can make

The lightest favor of their lawful king  
Outweigh a despot's. — We humbly take  
our leaves,

Enrich by smiles which France can  
never buy.

[*Exeunt* ST. JOHN and the Gentlemen of the Inns of Court.

*King.* My Lord Archbishop,

Mark you what spirit sits in St. John's eyes?

Methinks it is too saucy for this presence.

*Archy.* Yes, pray your Grace look: for, like an unsophisticated [eye] sees everything upside down, you who are wise will discern the shadow of an idiot in lawn sleeves and a rochet setting springs to catch woodcocks in hay-making time. Poor Archy, whose owl-eyes are tempered to the error of his age, and because he is a fool, and by special ordinance of God forbidden ever to see himself as he is, sees now in that deep eye a blindfold devil sitting on the ball, and weighing words out between king and subjects. One scale is full of promises, and the other full of protestations: and then another devil creeps behind the first out of the dark windings [of a] pregnant lawyer's brain, and takes the bandage from the other's eyes, and throws a sword into the left-hand scale, for all the world like my Lord Essex's there.

*Strafford.* A rod in pickle for the Fool's back!

*Archy.* Ay, and some are now smiling whose tears will make the brine; for the Fool sees —

*Strafford.* Insolent! You shall have your coat turned and be whipt out of the palace for this.

*Archy.* When all the fools are whipt, and all the Protestant writers, while the knaves are whipping the fools ever since a thief was set to catch a thief. If all turncoats were whipt out of palaces, poor Archy would be disgraced in good company. Let the knaves whip the fools, and all the fools laugh at it. [Let the] wise and goodly slit each other's

noses and ears (having no need of any sense of discernment in their craft); and the knaves, to marshal them, join in a procession to Bedlam, to entreat the madmen to omit their sublime Platonic contemplations, and manage the state of England. Let all the honest men who lie pinched up at the prisons or the pillories, in custody of the pursuivants of the High-Commission Court, marshal them.

*Enter* Secretary LYTTTELTON, with papers.

*King* (looking over the papers). These stiff Scots

His Grace of Canterbury must take order  
To force under the Church's yoke. —

You, Wentworth,

Shall be myself in Ireland, and shall add  
Your wisdom, gentleness, and energy,

To what in me were wanting. — My  
Lord Weston,

Look that those merchants draw not  
without loss

Their bullion from the Tower; and, on  
the payment

Of shipmoney, take fullest compensation  
For violation of our royal forests,

Whose limits, from neglect, have been  
o'ergrown

With cottages and cornfields. 'The ut-  
termost

Farthing exact from those who claim ex-  
emption

From knighthood: that which once was  
a reward

Shall thus be made a punishment, that  
subjects

May know how majesty can wear at will  
The rugged mood. — My Lord of Coven-  
entry,

Lay my command upon the Courts below  
That bail be not accepted for the pris-  
oners

Under the warrant of the Star Chamber.  
The people shall not find the stubborn-  
ness

Of Parliament a cheap or easy method  
Of dealing with their rightful sovereign:  
And doubt not this, my Lord of Coven-  
try,

We will find time and place for fit re-  
buke. —

My Lord of Canterbury.

*Archy.* The fool is here.  
*Laud.* I crave permission of your Majesty  
 To order that this insolent fellow be  
 Chastised: he mocks the sacred character,  
 Scoffs at the state, and —  
*King.* What, my Archy?  
 He mocks and mimics all he sees and  
 hears,  
 Yet with a quaint and graceful license —  
 Prithee  
 For this once do not as Prynne would,  
 were he  
 Primate of England. With your Grace's  
 leave,  
 He lives in his own world; and, like a  
 parrot  
 Hung in his gilded prison from the  
 window  
 Of a queen's bower over the public way,  
 Blasphemers with a bird's mind: — his  
 words, like arrows  
 Which know no aim beyond the archer's  
 wit,  
 Strike sometimes what eludes philosophy. —  
 (*To ARCHY.*) Go, sirrah, and repent of  
 your offence  
 Ten minutes in the rain: be it your  
 penance  
 To bring news how the world goes there.  
 [*Exit ARCHY.*  
 Poor Archy!  
 He weaves about himself a world of  
 mirth  
 Out of the wreck of ours.  
*Laud.* I take with patience, as my  
 Master did,  
 All scoffs permitted from above.  
*King.* My lord,  
 Pray overlook these papers. Archy's  
 words  
 Had wings, but these have talons.  
*Queen.* And the lion  
 That wears them must be tamed. My  
 dearest lord,  
 I see the new-born courage in your eye  
 Armed to strike dead the spirit of the  
 time,  
 Which spurs to rage the many-headed  
 beast.  
 Do thou persist: for, faint but in resolve,

And it were better thou hadst still re-  
 mained  
 The slave of thine own slaves, who tear  
 like curs  
 The fugitive, and flee from the pursuer;  
 And Opportunity, that empty wolf,  
 Flies at his throat who falls. Subdue  
 thy actions  
 Even to the disposition of thy purpose,  
 And be that tempered as the Ebro's  
 steel;  
 And banish weak-eyed Mercy to the  
 weak,  
 Whence she will greet thee with a gift  
 of peace,  
 And not betray thee with a traitor's kiss,  
 As when she keeps the company of  
 rebels,  
 Who think that she is Fear. This do,  
 lest we  
 Should fall as from a glorious pinnacle  
 In a bright dream, and wake as from a  
 dream  
 Out of our worship state.  
*King.* Belovèd friend,  
 God is my witness that this weight of  
 power,  
 Which he sets me my earthly task to  
 wield  
 Under his law, is my delight and pride  
 Only because thou lovest that and me.  
 For a king bears the office of a God  
 To all the under world; and to his God  
 Alone he must deliver up his trust,  
 Unshorn of its permitted attributes.  
 [It seems] now as the baser elements  
 Had mutinied against the golden sun  
 That kindles them to harmony, and  
 quells  
 Their self-destroying rapine. The wild  
 million  
 Strike at the eye that guides them; like  
 as humors  
 Of the distempered body that conspire  
 Against the spirit of life throned in the  
 heart, —  
 And thus become the prey of one another,  
 And last of death —  
*Strafford.* That which would be am-  
 bition in a subject  
 Is duty in a sovereign; for on him,  
 As on a keystone, hangs the arch of  
 life,

Whose safety is its strength. Degree  
and form,  
And all that makes the age of reasoning  
man  
More memorable than a beast's, depend  
On this — that Right should fence itself  
inviolably  
With power; in which respect the state  
of England  
From usurpation by the insolent commons  
Cries for reform.  
Get treason, and spare treasure. Fee  
with coin  
The loudest murmurers; feed with jeal-  
ousies  
Opposing factions, — be thyself of none;  
And borrow gold of many, for those  
who lend  
Will serve thee till thou payest them;  
and thus  
Keep the fierce spirit of the hour at bay,  
Till time, and its coming generations  
Of nights and days unborn, bring some  
one chance,

Or war, or pestilence, or Nature's self,  
By some distemperature or terrible sign,  
Be as an arbiter betwixt themselves.

Nor let your Majesty  
Doubt here the peril of the unseen event.  
How did your brother kings, coheritors  
In your high interest in the subject earth,  
Rise past such troubles to that height of  
power  
Where now they sit, and awfully serene  
Smile on the trembling world? Such  
popular storms  
Philip the Second of Spain, this Lewis  
of France,  
And late the German head of many  
bodies,  
And every petty lord of Italy,  
Quelled or by arts or arms. Is England  
poorer  
Or feebler? or art thou who wield'st her  
power  
Tamer than they? or shall this island  
be —  
[Girdled] by its inviolable waters —  
To the world present and the world to  
come  
Sole pattern of extinguisht monarchy?  
Not if thou dost as I would have thee do.

*King.* Your words shall be my deeds:  
You speak the image of my thought.

My friend  
(If kings can have a friend, I call thee  
so),  
Beyond the large commission which be-  
longs  
Under the great seal of the realm, take  
this:

And, for some obvious reasons, let there  
be

No seal on it, except my kingly word  
And honor as I am a gentleman.

Be — as thou art within my heart and  
mind —

Another self, here and in Ireland:

Do what thou judgest well, take amplest  
license,

And stick not even at questionable  
means.

Hear me, Wentworth. My word is as a  
wall

Between thee and this world thine  
enemy —

That hates thee, for thou lovest me.

*Strafford.* I own  
No friend but thee, no enemies but thine:  
Thy lightest thought is my eternal law.

How weak, how short, is life to pay —

*King.* Peace, peace!

Thou ow'st me nothing yet.

(*To LAUD.*) My lord, what say  
Those papers?

*Laud.* Your Majesty has ever inter-  
posed,

In lenity towards your native soil,  
Between the heavy vengeance of the  
Church

And Scotland. Mark the consequence  
of warming

This brood of northern vipers in your  
bosom.

The rabble, instructed no doubt

By Loudon, Lindsay, Hume, and false  
Argyll

(For the waves never menace heaven  
until

Scourged by the wind's invisible tyr-  
anny),

Have in the very temple of the Lord

Done outrage to his chosen ministers.

They scorn the liturgy of the holy  
Church,

Refuse to obey her canons, and deny  
 The apostolic power with which the  
 Spirit  
 Has filled its elect vessels, even from him  
 Who held the keys with power to loose  
 and bind,  
 To him who now pleads in this royal  
 presence. —  
 Let ampler powers and new instructions  
 be  
 Sent to the High Commissioners in  
 Scotland.  
 To death, imprisonment, and confisca-  
 tion,  
 Add torture, add the ruin of the kindred  
 Of the offender, add the brand of in-  
 famy,  
 Add mutilation: and if this suffice not,  
 Unleash the sword and fire, and in their  
 thirst  
 They may lick up that scum of schis-  
 matics.  
 I laugh at those weak rebels who, de-  
 siring  
 What we possess, still prate of Christian  
 peace,  
 As if those dreadful arbitrating messen-  
 gers  
 Which play the part of God 'twixt right  
 and wrong,  
 Should be let loose against the innocent  
 sleep  
 Of templed cities and the smiling fields,  
 For some poor argument of policy  
 Which touches our own profit or our  
 pride,  
 (Where it indeed were Christian charity  
 To turn the cheek even to the smiter's  
 hand:)  
 And, when our great Redeemer, when  
 our God,  
 When he who gave, accepted, and re-  
 tained,  
 Himself in propitiation of our sins,  
 Is scorned in his immediate ministry,  
 With hazard of the inestimable loss  
 Of all the truth and discipline which is  
 Salvation to the extremest generation  
 Of men innumerable, they talk of peace!  
 Such peace as Canaan found, let Scot-  
 land now:  
 For, by that Christ who came to bring a  
 sword,

Not peace, upon the earth, and gave  
 command  
 To his disciples at the passover  
 That each should sell his robe and buy a  
 sword, —  
 Once strip that minister of naked wrath,  
 And it shall never sleep in peace again  
 Till Scotland bend or break.  
*King.* My Lord Arch-  
 bishop,  
 Do what thou wilt and what thou canst  
 in this.  
 Thy earthly even as thy heavenly King  
 Gives thee large power in his unquiet  
 realm.  
 But we want money, and my mind mis-  
 gives me  
 That for so great an enterprise, as yet,  
 We are unfurnisht.  
*Strafford.* Yet it may not  
 long  
 Rest on our wills.  
*Cottington.* The expenses  
 Of gathering shipmoney, and of dis-  
 training  
 For every petty rate (for we encounter  
 A desperate opposition inch by inch  
 In every warehouse and on every farm)  
 Have swallowed up the gross sum of  
 the imposts;  
 So that, tho' felt as a most grievous  
 scourge  
 Upon the land, they stand us in small  
 stead  
 As touches the receipt.  
*Strafford.* 'T is a conclu-  
 sion  
 Most arithmetical: and thence you infer  
 Perhaps the assembling of a parliament.  
 Now, if a man should call his dearest  
 enemies  
 To sit in licensed judgment on his life,  
 His Majesty might wisely take that  
 course.  
 [*Aside to COTTINGTON.*  
 It is enough to expect from these lean  
 imposts  
 That they perform the office of a scourge,  
 Without more profit. (*Aloud.*) Fines  
 and confiscations,  
 And a forced loan from the refractory  
 city,  
 Will fill our coffers: and the golden love



Of loyal gentlemen and noble friends  
For the worshipt father of our com-  
mon country,

With contributions from the Catholics,  
Will make Rebellion pale in our excess.  
Be these the expedients until time and  
wisdom

Shall frame a settled state of govern-  
ment.

*Laud.* And weak expedients they!  
Have we not drained

All, till the which seemed  
A mine exhaustless?

*Strafford.* And the love  
which is,

If loyal hearts could turn their blood to  
gold.

*Laud.* Both now grow barren: and  
I speak it not

As loving parliaments, which, as they  
have been

In the right hand of bold bad mighty  
kings

The scourges of the bleeding Church, I  
hate.

Methinks they scarcely can deserve our  
fear.

*Strafford.* Oh! my dear liege, take  
back the wealth thou gavest:

With that, take all I held, but as in  
trust

For thee, of mine inheritance: leave  
me but

This unprovided body for thy service,  
And a mind dedicated to no care

Except thy safety: — but assemble not  
A parliament. Hundreds will bring,

like me,  
Their fortunes, as they would their blood,  
before —

*King.* No! thou who judgest them  
art but one. Alas!

We should be too much out of love with  
Heaven,

Did this vile world show many such as  
thee,

Thou perfect, just, and honorable man!  
Never shall it be said that Charles of

England

Stript those he loved for fear of those he  
scorns;

Nor will he so much misbecome his throne  
As to impoverish those who most adorn

And best defend it. That you urge, dear  
Strafford,

Inclines me rather —

*Queen.*

To a parlia-

ment?

Is this thy firmness? and thou wilt pre-  
side

Over a knot of censurers,  
To the unswearing of thy best resolves,

And choose the worst, when the worst  
comes too soon?

Plight not the worst before the worst  
must come.

Oh, wilt thou smile whilst our ribald foes,  
Drest in their own usurpt authority,

Sharpen their tongues on Henrietta's  
fame?

It is enough! Thou lovest me no more!  
[ *Weeps.*

*King.* Oh, Henrietta!

[ *They talk apart.*

*Cottington* (to LAUD).

Money we

have none:

And all the expedients of my Lord of  
Strafford

Will scarcely meet the arrears.

*Laud.*

Without

delay

An army must be sent into the north;  
Followed by a Commission of the Church,

With amplest power to quench in fire  
and blood,

And tears and terror, and the pity of hell,  
The intenser wrath of Heresy. God will

give

Victory; and victory over Scotland give  
The lion England tamed into our hands.

That will lend power, and power bring  
gold.

*Cottington.*

Meanwhile

We must begin first where your Grace  
leaves off.

Gold must give power, or —

*Laud.*

I am not averse

From the assembling of a parliament.  
Strong actions and smooth words might

teach them soon

The lesson to obey. And are they not  
A bubble fashioned by the monarch's

mouth,

The birth of one light breath? If they  
serve no purpose,

A word dissolves them.

*Strafford.* The engine of parliaments  
Might be deferred until I can bring over  
The Irish regiments: they will serve to  
assure  
The issue of the war against the Scots.  
And, this game won — which if lost, all  
is lost —

Gather these chosen leaders of the rebels,  
And call them, if you will, a parliament.

*King.* Oh, be our feet still tardy to  
shed blood,  
Guilty tho' it may be! I would still  
spare

The stubborn country of my birth, and  
ward

From countenances which I loved in  
youth

The wrathful Church's lacerating hand.  
(*To LAUD*). Have you o'erlookt the  
other articles?

[*Re-enter ARCHY.*

*Laud.* Hazlerig, Hampden, Pym,  
young Harry Vane,  
Cromwell, and other rebels of less note,  
Intend to sail with the next favoring  
wind

For the Plantations.

*Archy.* Where they think to found  
A commonwealth like Gonzalo's in the  
play,

Gynæcocœnic and pantisocratic.

*King.* What's that, sirrah?

*Archy.* New devil's politics.  
Hell is the pattern of all commonwealths:  
Lucifer was the first republican.

Will you hear Merlin's prophecy, how  
three posts

“In one brainless skull, when the  
whitethorn is full,

Shall sail round the world, and come  
back again:

Shall sail round the world in a brain-  
less skull,

And come back again when the moon  
is at full:” —

When, in spite of the Church,  
They will hear homilies of whatever  
length

Or form they please.

*Cottington.* So please your Majesty to  
sign this order

For their detention.

*Archy.* If your Majesty were tormented  
night and day by fever, gout,  
rheumatism, and stone, and asthma, etc.,  
and you found these diseases had secretly  
entered into a conspiracy to abandon you,  
should you think it necessary to lay an  
embargo on the port by which they meant  
to dispeople your unquiet kingdom of  
man?

*King.* If fear were made for kings,  
the Fool mocks wisely;  
But in this case — (*writing*). Here, my  
lord, take the warrant,  
And see it duly executed forthwith. —  
That imp of malice and mockery shall be  
punisht.

[*Exeunt all but KING, QUEEN,  
and ARCHY.*

*Archy.* Ay, I am the physician of  
whom Plato prophesied, who was to be  
accused by the confectioner before a jury  
of children, who found him guilty with-  
out waiting for the summing-up, and  
hanged him without benefit of clergy.  
Thus Baby Charles, and the Twelfth-  
night Queen of Hearts, and the over-  
grown schoolboy Cottington, and that  
little urchin Laud — who would reduce a  
verdict of “guilty, death,” by famine, if  
it were impregnable by composition —  
all impanelled against poor Archy for  
presenting them bitter physic the last day  
of the holidays.

*Queen.* Is the rain over, sirrah?

*King.* When it rains  
And the sun shines, 't will rain again to-  
morrow:

And therefore never smile till you've  
done crying.

*Archy.* But 't is all over now: like the  
April anger of woman, the gentle sky has  
wept itself serene.

*Queen.* What news abroad? how  
looks the world this morning?

*Archy.* Gloriously as a grave covered  
with virgin flowers. There 's a rainbow  
in the sky. Let your Majesty look at it,  
for

“A rainbow in the morning  
Is the shepherd's warning;”

and the flocks of which you are the pas-  
tor are scattered among the mountain-

tops, where every drop of water is a flake of snow, and the breath of May pierces like a January blast.

*King.* The sheep have mistaken the wolf for their shepherd, my poor boy; and the shepherd, the wolves for their watchdogs.

*Queen.* But the rainbow was a good sign, Archy: it says that the waters of the deluge are gone, and can return no more.

*Archy.* Ay, the salt-water one: but that of tears and blood must yet come down, and that of fire follow, if there be any truth in lies.—The rainbow hung over the city with all its shops, . . . and churches, from north to south, like a bridge of congregated lightning pieced by the masonry of heaven—like a balance in which the angel that distributes the coming hour was weighing that heavy one whose poise is now felt in the lightest hearts, before it bows the proudest heads under the meanest feet.

*Queen.* Who taught you this trash, sirrah?

*Archy.* A torn leaf out of an old book trampled in the dirt.—But for the rainbow. It moved as the sun moved, and . . . until the top of the Tower . . . of a cloud through its left-hand tip, and Lambeth Palace look as dark as a rock before the other. Methought I saw a crown figured upon one tip, and a mitre on the other. So, as I had heard treasures were found where the rainbow quenches its points upon the earth, I set off, and at the Tower—But I shall not tell your Majesty what I found close to the closet-window on which the rainbow had glimmered.

*King.* Speak: I will make my Fool my conscience.

*Archy.* Then conscience is a fool.—I saw there a cat caught in a rat-trap. I heard the rats squeak behind the wainscots: it seemed to me that the very mice were consulting on the manner of her death.

*Queen.* Archy is shrewd and bitter.

*Archy.* Like the season, so blow the winds.—But at the other end of the rainbow, where the gray rain

was tempered along the grass and leaves by a tender interfusion of violet and gold in the meadows beyond Lambeth, what think you that I found instead of a mitre?

*King.* Vane's wits perhaps.

*Archy.* Something as vain. I saw a gross vapor hovering in a stinking ditch over the carcass of a dead ass, some rotten rags, and broken dishes—the wrecks of what once administered to the stuffing-out and the ornament of a worm of worms. His Grace of Canterbury expects to enter the New Jerusalem some Palm Sunday in triumph on the ghost of this ass.

*Queen.* Enough, enough! Go desire Lady Jane

She place my lute, together with the music

Mari received last week from Italy, In my boudoir, and—[*Exit ARCHY.*]

*King.* I'll go in.

*Queen.* My beloved lord, Have you not noted that the Fool of late Has lost his careless mirth, and that his words

Sound like the echoes of our saddest fears?

What can it mean? I should be loath to think

Some factious slave had tutored him.

*King.* Oh, no! He is but Occasion's pupil. Partly 't is That our minds piece the vacant intervals Of his wild words with their own fashioning,—

As in the imagery of summer clouds, Or coals of the winter fire, idlers find The perfect shadows of their teeming thoughts:

And partly, that the terrors of the time Are sown by wandering Rumor in all spirits;

And in the lightest and the least, may best

Be seen the current of the coming wind.

*Queen.* Your brain is overwrought with these deep thoughts.

Come, I will sing to you; let us go try These airs from Italy; and, as we pass The gallery, we'll decide where that Correggio

Shall hang—the Virgin Mother

With her child, born the King of heaven  
and earth,  
Whose reign is men's salvation. And  
you shall see  
A cradled miniature of yourself asleep,  
Stamp't on the heart by never-erring  
love;  
Liker than any Vandyke ever made,  
A pattern to the unborn age of thee,  
Over whose sweet beauty I have wept  
for joy  
A thousand times, and now should weep  
for sorrow,  
Did I not think that after we were dead  
Our fortunes would spring high in him,  
and that  
The cares we waste upon our heavy  
crown  
Would make it light and glorious as a  
wreath  
Of Heaven's beams for his dear innocent  
brow.  
*King.* Dear Henrietta!

SCENE III. — THE STAR CHAMBER.  
*LAUD, JUXON, STRAFFORD, and others,*  
*as Judges. PRYNNE as a Prisoner,*  
*and then BASTWICK.*

*Laud.* Bring forth the prisoner Bast-  
wick: let the clerk  
Recite his sentence.

*Clerk.* "That he pay five  
thousand  
Pounds to the king, lose both his ears,  
be branded  
With red-hot iron on the cheek and fore-  
head,  
And be imprisoned within Lancaster  
Castle  
During the pleasure of the Court."

*Laud.* Prisoner,  
If you have aught to say wherefore this  
sentence

Should not be put into effect, now speak.  
*Juxon.* If you have aught to plead in  
mitigation,

Speak.  
*Bastwick.* Thus, my lords. If,  
like the prelates, I  
Were an invader of the royal power,  
A public scorner of the word of God,

Profane, idolatrous, popish, superstitious,  
Impious in heart and in tyrannic act,  
Void of wit, honesty, and temperance;  
If Satan were my lord, as theirs,— our God  
Pattern of all I should avoid to do;  
Were I an enemy of my God and King  
And of good men, as ye are;— I should  
merit

Your fearful state and gilt prosperity,  
Which, when ye wake from the last sleep,  
shall turn

To cowl and robes of everlasting fire.  
But, as I am, I bid ye grudge me not  
The only earthly favor ye can yield,  
Or I think worth acceptance at your  
hands,—

Scorn, mutilation, and imprisonment.  
Even as my Master did,

Until Heaven's kingdom shall descend  
on earth,

Or earth be like a shadow in the light  
Of heaven absorbed—some few tumult-  
uous years

Will pass, and leave no wreck of what  
opposes

His will whose will is power.

*Laud.* Officer, take the prisoner from  
the bar,

And be his tongue slit for his insolence.  
*Bastwick.* While this hand holds a  
pen—

*Laud.* Be his hands—  
*Juxon.* Stop!

Forbear, my lord! The tongue, which  
now can speak

No terror, would interpret, being dumb,  
Heaven's thunder to our harm; . . .

And hands, which now write only their  
own shame,

With bleeding stumps might sign our  
blood away.

*Laud.* Much more such "mercy"  
among men would be,

Did all the ministers of Heaven's revenge  
Flinch thus from earthly retribution. I  
Could suffer what I would inflict.

[*Exit BASTWICK guarded.*  
Bring up

The Lord Bishop of Lincoln.—  
(*To Strafford*). Know you not

That, in distraining for ten thousand  
pounds

Upon his books and furniture at Lincoln,

Were found these scandalous and seditious letters

Sent from one Osbaldistone, who is fled?  
I speak it not as touching this poor person;

But of the office which should make it holy,

Were it as vile as it was ever spotless.

Mark too, my lord, that this expression strikes

His Majesty, if I misinterpret not.

*Enter BISHOP WILLIAMS guarded.*

*Strafford.* 'T were politic and just that Williams taste

The bitter fruit of his connection with The schismatics. But you, my Lord

Archbishop,

Who owed your first promotion to his favor,

Who grew beneath his smile —

*Laud.* Would therefore beg

The office of his judge from this High Court, —

That it shall seem, even as it is, that I, In my assumption of this sacred robe, Have put aside all worldly preference, All sense of all distinction of all persons, All thoughts but of the service of the Church. —

Bishop of Lincoln!

*Williams.* Peace, proud hierarch!

I know my sentence, and I own it just.

Thou wilt repay me less than I deserve,

In stretching to the utmost

. . . . .

SCENE IV. — HAMPDEN, PYM, CROMWELL, *his Daughter*, and young SIR HARRY VANE.

*Hampden.* England, farewell, thou who hast been my cradle,

Shalt never be my dungeon or my grave!

I held what I inherited in thee,

As pawn for that inheritance of freedom

Which thou hast sold for thy despoiler's smile:

How can I call thee England, or my country? —

Does the wind hold?

*Vane.* The vanes sit steady

Upon the Abbey towers. The silver lightnings

Of the evening star, spite of the city's smoke,

Tell that the north wind reigns in the upper air.

Mark too that flock of fleecy-wingèd clouds

Sailing athwart St. Margaret's.

*Hampden.* Hail, fleet herald

Of tempest! that rude pilot who shall guide

Hearts free as his, to realms as pure as thee,

Beyond the shot of tyranny,

Beyond the webs of that swoln spider. . .

Beyond the curses, calumnies, and lies

Of atheist priests! And thou

Fair star, whose beam lies on the wide Atlantic,

Athwart its zones of tempest and of calm,

Bright as the path to a beloved home,

Oh, light us to the isles of the evening land!

Like floating Edens cradled in the glimmer

Of sunset, through the distant mist of years

Toucht by departing hope, they gleam! lone regions,

Where power's poor dupes and victims yet have never

Propitiated the savage fear of kings

With purest blood of noblest hearts; whose dew

Is yet unstained with tears of those who wake

To weep each day the wrongs on which it dawns;

Whose sacred silent air owns yet no echo

Of formal blasphemies; nor impious rites

Wrest man's free worship, from the God who loves,

To the poor worm who envies us his love!

Receive, thou young of Paradise, These exiles from the old and sinful world!

. . . . .

This glorious clime, this firmament, whose lights

Dart mitigated influence thro' their veil

Of pale blue atmosphere; whose tears  
 keep green  
 The pavement of this moist all-feeding  
 earth;  
 This vaporous horizon, whose dim round  
 Is bastioned by the circumfluous sea,  
 Repelling invasion from the sacred  
 towers,  
 Presses upon me like a dungeon's grate,  
 A low dark roof, a damp and narrow  
 wall.  
 The boundless universe  
 Becomes a cell too narrow for the soul  
 That owns no master; while the loath-  
 liest ward  
 Of this wide prison, England, is a nest  
 Of cradling peace built on the mountain  
 tops, —  
 To which the eagle spirits of the free,  
 Which range thro' heaven and earth,  
 and scorn the storm  
 Of time, and gaze upon the light of  
 truth,  
 Return to brood on thoughts that cannot  
 die  
 And cannot be repelled.  
 Like eaglets floating in the heaven of  
 time,  
 They soar above their quarry, and shall  
 stoop  
 Thro' palaces and temples thunder-proof.

## SCENE V.

*Archy.* I'll go live under the ivy  
 that overgrows the terrace, and count  
 the tears shed on its old roots as the  
 [wind] plays the song of

"A widow bird sate mourning  
 Upon a wintry bough."

[Sings.]

Heigho! the lark and the owl!  
 One flies the morning, and one lulls  
 the night: —  
 Only the nightingale, poor fond soul,  
 Sings like the fool through darkness  
 and light.

"A widow bird sate mourning for her  
 love  
 Upon a wintry bough;

The frozen wind crept on above,  
 The freezing stream below.

"There was no leaf upon the forest bare,  
 No flower upon the ground,  
 And little motion in the air  
 Except the mill-wheel's sound."

## THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.

SWIFT as a spirit hastening to his task  
 Of glory and of good, the Sun sprang  
 forth  
 Rejoicing in his splendor, and the mask

Of darkness fell from the awakened  
 Earth —  
 The smokeless altars of the mountain  
 snows  
 Flamed above crimson clouds, and at  
 the birth

Of light, the Ocean's orison arose,  
 To which the birds tempered their matin  
 lay.  
 All flowers in field or forest which un-  
 close

Their trembling eyelids to the kiss of  
 day,  
 Swinging their censers in the element,  
 With orient incense lit by the new ray

Burned slow and inconsumably, and sent  
 Their odorous sighs up to the smiling  
 air;  
 And, in succession due, did continent,

Isle, ocean, and all things that in them  
 wear  
 The form and character of mortal mould,  
 Rise as the Sun their father rose, to  
 bear

Their portion of the toil, which he of  
 old  
 Took as his own, and then imposed on  
 them:  
 But I, whom thoughts which must re-  
 main untold

Had kept as wakeful as the stars that  
gem  
The cone of night, now they were laid  
asleep  
Stretcht my faint limbs beneath the hoary  
stem

Which an old chestnut flung athwart the  
steep  
Of a green Apennine: before me fled  
The night; behind me rose the day;  
the deep

Was at my feet, and Heaven above my  
head,  
When a strange trance over my fancy  
grew  
Which was not slumber, for the shade it  
spread

Was so transparent, that the scene came  
thro'  
As clear as when a veil of light is drawn  
O'er evening hills they glimmer; and I  
knew

That I had felt the freshness of that  
dawn,  
Bathed in the same cold dew my brow  
and hair,  
And sat as thus upon that slope of  
lawn

Under the self-same bough, and heard  
as there  
The birds, the fountains and the ocean  
hold  
Sweet talk in music thro' the enamoured  
air,  
And then a vision on my brain was  
rolled.

As in that trance of wondrous thought  
I lay,  
This was the tenor of my waking  
dream: —  
Methought I sate beside a public way

Thick strewn with summer dust, and a  
great stream  
Of people there was hurrying to and  
fro,

Numerous as gnats upon the evening  
gleam,

All hastening onward, yet none seemed  
to know  
Whither he went, or whence he came  
or why  
He made one of the multitude, and so

Was borne amid the crowd, as thro'  
the sky  
One of the million leaves of summer's  
bier;  
Old age and youth, manhood and in-  
fancy

Mixt in one mighty torrent did appear,  
Some flying from the thing they feared,  
and some  
Seeking the object of another's fear;

And others as with steps towards the  
tomb,  
Pored on the trodden worms that crawled  
beneath,  
And others mournfully within the gloom

Of their own shadow walkt and called  
it death;  
And some fled from it as it were a  
ghost,  
Half fainting in the affliction of vain  
breath:

But more, with motions which each  
other crost,  
Pursued or shunned the shadows the  
clouds threw,  
Or birds within the noonday ether lost,

Upon that path where flowers never  
grew, —  
And, weary with vain toil and faint for  
thirst,  
Heard not the fountains, whose melodi-  
ous dew

Out of their mossy cells forever burst;  
Nor felt the breeze which from the  
forest told  
Of grassy paths and wood-lawns inter-  
sperst





Till the great winter lay the form and  
name  
Of this green earth with them forever  
low;—

All but the sacred few who could not  
tame  
Their spirits to the conquerors — but as  
soon  
As they had toucht the world with liv-  
ing flame,

Fled back like eagles to their native  
noon,  
Or those who put aside the diadem  
Of earthly thrones or gems . . .

Were there, of Athens or Jerusalem,  
Were neither mid the mighty captives  
seen  
Nor mid the ribald crowd that followed  
them,

Nor those who went before fierce and  
obscene.  
The wild dance maddens in the van, and  
those  
Who lead it — fleet as shadows on the  
green,

Outsped the chariot, and without repose  
Mix with each other in tempestuous  
measure  
To savage music, wilder as it grows,

They, tortured by their agonizing pleas-  
ure,  
Convulst and on the rapid whirlwinds  
spun  
Of that fierce spirit, whose unholy leisure

Was soothed by mischief since the world  
begun,  
Throw back their heads and loose their  
streaming hair;  
And in their dance round her who dims  
the sun,

Maidens and youths fling their wild arms  
in air  
As their feet twinkle; they recede, and  
now  
Bending within each other's atmosphere,

Kindle invisibly — and as they glow,  
Like moths by light attracted and re-  
pelled,  
Oft to their bright destruction come and  
go,

Till like two clouds into one vale im-  
pelled,  
That shake the mountains when their  
lightnings mingle  
And die in rain — the fery band which  
held

Their natures, snaps — while the shock  
still may tingle;  
One falls and then another in the path  
Senseless — nor is the desolation single,

Yet ere I can say *where* — the chariot  
hath  
Past over them — nor other trace I find  
But as of foam after the ocean's wrath

Is spent upon the desert shore; — behind,  
Old men and women foully disarrayed,  
Shake their gray hairs in the insulting  
wind,

And follow in the dance, with limbs de-  
cayed,  
Seeking to reach the light which leaves  
them still  
Farther behind and deeper in the shade.

But not the less with impotence of will  
They wheel, though ghastly shadows in-  
terpose  
Round them and round each other, and  
fulfil

Their work, and in the dust from whence  
they rose  
Sink, and corruption veils them as they  
lie,  
And past in these performs what  
in those.

Struck to the heart by this sad pa-  
geantry,  
Half to myself I said — And what is  
this?  
Whose shape is that within the car?  
And why —

I would have added — is all here amiss? —  
But a voice answered — “Life!” — I  
turned, and knew

(O Heaven, have mercy on such wretch-  
edness!)

That what I thought was an old root  
which grew

To strange distortion out of the hillside,  
Was indeed one of those deluded crew,

And that the grass, which methought  
hung so wide

And white, was but his thin discolored  
hair,

And that the holes he vainly sought to  
hide,

Were or had been eyes: — “If thou  
canst, forbear

To join the dance, which I had well for-  
borne!”

Said the grim Feature (of my thought  
aware).

“I will unfold that which to this deep  
scorn

Led me and my companions, and relate  
The progress of the pageant since the  
morn;

“If thirst of knowledge shall not then  
abate,

Follow it thou even to the night, but I  
Am weary.” — Then like one who with  
the weight

Of his own words is staggered, wearily  
He paused; and ere he could resume, I  
cried:

“First, who art thou?” — “Before thy  
memory,

“I feared, loved, hated, suffered, did  
and died,

And if the spark with which Heaven lit  
my spirit

Had been with purer nutriment supplied,

“Corruption would not now thus much  
inherit

Of what was once Rousseau, — nor this  
disguise

Stain that which ought to have disdained  
to wear it;

“If I have been extinguishd, yet there  
rise

A thousand beacons from the spark I  
bore” —

“And who are those chained to the  
car?” — “The wise,

“The great, the unforgotten, — they  
who wore

Mitres and helms and crowns, or wreaths  
of light,

Signs of thought’s empire over thought  
— their lore

“Taught them not this, to know them-  
selves; their might

Could not repress the mystery within,  
And for the morn of truth they feigned,  
deep night

“Caught them ere evening.” — “Who  
is he with chin

Upon his breast, and hands crost on his  
chain?” —

“The child of a fierce hour; he sought  
to win

“The world, and lost all that it did con-  
tain

Of greatness, in its hope destroyed; and  
more

Of fame and peace than virtue’s self can  
gain

“Without the opportunity which bore  
Him on its eagle pinions to the peak

From which a thousand climbers have  
before

“Fallen, as Napoleon fell.” I felt my  
cheek

Alter, to see the shadow pass away,  
Whose grasp had left the giant world so  
weak,

That every pygmy kickt it as it lay;  
And much I grieved to think how power  
and will

In opposition rule our mortal day,

And why God made irreconcilable  
Good and the means of good; and for  
despair

I half disdained mine eyes' desire to fill

With the spent vision of the times that  
were

And scarce have ceast to be. "Dost  
thou behold,"

Said my guide, "those spoilers spoiled,  
Voltaire,

"Frederick, and Paul, Catherine, and  
Leopold,

And hoary anarchs, demagogues, and  
sage —  
names which the world thinks always  
old,

"For in the battle Life and they did  
wage,

She remained conqueror. I was over-  
come

By my own heart alone, which neither  
age,

"Nor tears, nor infamy, nor now the  
tomb

Could temper to its object." — "Let  
them pass,"

I cried, "the world and its mysterious  
doom

"Is not so much more glorious than it  
was,

That I desire to worship those who drew  
New figures on its false and fragile glass

"As the old faded." — "Figures ever  
new

Rise on the bubble, paint them as you  
may;

We have but thrown, as those before us  
threw,

"Our shadows on it as it past away.

But mark how chained to the triumphal  
chair

The mighty phantoms of an elder day;

"All that is mortal of great Plato there  
Expiates the joy and woe his master

knew not;

The star that ruled his doom was far too  
fair,

"And life, where long that flower of  
Heaven grew not,

Conquered that heart by love, which gold,  
or pain,

Or age, or sloth, or slavery could subdue  
not.

"And near him walk the twain,  
The tutor and his pupil, whom Dominion  
Followed as tame as vulture in a chain.

"The world was darkened beneath either  
pinion

Of him whom from the flock of conquer-  
ors

Fame singled out for her thunder-bearing  
minion;

"The other long outlived both woes and  
wars,

Throned in the thoughts of men, and  
still had kept

The jealous key of truth's eternal doors.

"If Bacon's eagle spirit had not leapt  
Like lightning out of darkness — he com-  
pelled

The Proteus shape of Nature as it slept

"To wake, and lead him to the caves  
that held

The treasure of the secrets of its reign.  
See the great bards of elder time, who  
quelled

"The passions which they sung, as by  
their strain

May well be known: their living melody  
Temper its own contagion to the vein

"Of those who were infected with it — I  
Have suffered what I wrote, or viler  
pain!

And so my words have seeds of misery —

"Even as the deeds of others, not as  
theirs."

And then he pointed to a company,

Midst whom I quickly recognized the  
 heirs  
 Of Cæsar's crime, from him to Constan-  
 tine;  
 The anarch chiefs, whose force and mur-  
 derous snares

Had founded many a sceptre-bearing line,  
 And spread the plague of gold and blood  
 abroad:  
 And Gregory and John, and men divine,

Who rose like shadows between man and  
 God;  
 Till that eclipse, still hanging over  
 heaven,  
 Was worshipt by the world o'er which  
 they strode,

For the true sun it quencht — "Their  
 power was given  
 But to destroy," replied the leader: —  
 "I

Am one of those who have created, even

"If it be but a world of agony." —  
 "Whence camest thou? and whither  
 goest thou?  
 How did thy course begin?" I said,  
 "and why?"

"Mine eyes are sick of this perpetual  
 flow  
 Of people, and my heart sick of one sad  
 thought —  
 Speak!" — "Whence I am, I partly  
 seem to know,

"And how and by what paths I have  
 been brought  
 To this dread pass, methinks even thou  
 mayst guess; —  
 Why this should be, my mind can com-  
 pass not;

"Whither the conqueror hurries me still  
 less; —  
 But follow thou, and from spectator turn  
 Actor or victim in this wretchedness,

"And what thou wouldst be taught I  
 then may learn  
 From thee. Now listen: — In the April  
 prime,  
 When all the forest tips began to burn

"With kindling green, toucht by the  
 azure clime  
 Of the young season, I was laid asleep  
 Under a mountain, which from unknown  
 time

"Had yawnd into a cavern, high and  
 deep;  
 And from it came a gentle rivulet,  
 Whose water, like clear air, in its calm  
 sweep

"Bent the soft grass, and kept forever  
 wet  
 The stems of the sweet flowers, and filled  
 the grove  
 With sounds, which whoso hears must  
 needs forget

"All pleasure and all pain, all hate and  
 love,  
 Which they had known before that hour  
 of rest;  
 A sleeping mother then would dream  
 not of

"Her only child who died upon the  
 breast  
 At eventide — a king would mourn no  
 more  
 The crown of which his brows were dis-  
 possess

"When the sun lingered o'er his ocean  
 floor,  
 To gild his rival's new prosperity.  
 Thou wouldst forget thus vainly to de-  
 plore

"Ills, which if ills can find no cure from  
 thee,  
 The thought of which no other sleep will  
 quell,  
 Nor other music blot from memory,

"So sweet and deep is the oblivious  
 spell;  
 And whether life had been before that  
 sleep  
 The heaven which I imagine, or a hell

"Like this harsh world in which I wake  
 to weep,

I know not. I arose, and for a space  
The scene of woods and waters seemed  
to keep,

“Tho’ it was now broad day, a gentle  
trace  
Of light diviner than the common sun  
Sheds from the common earth, and all the  
place

“ Was filled with magic sounds woven  
into one  
Oblivious melody, confusing sense  
Amid the gliding waves and shadows  
dun;

“ And, as I lookt, the bright omni-  
presence  
Of morning thro’ the orient cavern  
flowed,  
And the sun’s image radiantly intense

“ Burned on the waters of the well that  
glowed  
Like gold, and threaded all the forest’s  
maze  
With winding paths of emerald fire;  
there stood

“ Amid the sun, as he amid the blaze  
Of his own glory, on the vibrating  
Floor of the fountain, paved with flash-  
ing rays,

“ A Shape all light, which with one hand  
did fling  
Dew on the earth, as if she were the  
dawn,  
And the invisible rain did ever sing

“ A silver music on the mossy lawn;  
And still before me on the dusky grass,  
Iris her many-colored scarf had drawn:

“ In her right hand she bore a crystal  
glass,  
Mantling with bright Nepenthe; the  
fierce splendor  
Fell from her as she moved under the  
mass

“ Of the deep cavern, and with palms  
so tender,

Their tread broke not the mirror of its  
billow,  
Glided along the river, and did bend her

“ Head under the dark boughs, till like  
a willow,  
Her fair hair swept the bosom of the  
stream  
That whispered with delight to be its  
pillow.

“ As one enamoured is upborne in dream  
O’er lily-paven lakes mid silver mist,  
To wondrous music, so this shape might  
seem

“ Partly to tread the waves with feet  
which kist  
The dancing foam; partly to glide along  
The air which roughened the moist  
amethyst,

“ Or the faint morning beams that fell  
among  
The trees, or the soft shadows of the  
trees;  
And her feet, ever to the ceaseless song

“ Of leaves, and winds, and waves, and  
birds, and bees,  
And falling drops, moved in a measure  
new  
Yet sweet, as on the summer evening  
breeze,

“ Up from the lake a shape of golden  
dew  
Between two rocks, athwart the rising  
moon,  
Dances i’ the wind, where never eagle  
flew;

“ And still her feet, no less than the  
sweet tune  
To which they moved, seemed as they  
moved to blot  
The thoughts of him who gazed on them;  
and soon

“ All that was, seemed as if it had been  
not;  
And all the gazer’s mind was strewn be-  
neath

Her feet like embers; and she, thought  
by thought,

“Trampled its sparks into the dust of  
death;

As day upon the threshold of the east  
Treads out the lamps of night, until the  
breath

“Of darkness re-illumine even the least  
Of heaven’s living eyes—like day she  
came,

Making the night a dream; and ere she  
ceast

“To move, as one between desire and  
shame

Suspended, I said— If, as it doth seem,  
Thou comest from the realm without a  
name,

● “Into this valley of perpetual dream,  
Show whence I came, and where I am,  
and why—

Pass not away upon the passing stream.

“Arise and quench thy thirst, was her  
reply.

And as a shut lily stricken by the wand  
Of dewy morning’s vital alchemy,

“I rose; and, bending at her sweet com-  
mand,

Toucht with faint lips the cup she  
raised,

And suddenly my brain became as sand

“Where the first wave had more than  
half erased

The track of deer on desert Labrador;  
Whilst the wolf, from which they fled  
amazed,

“Leaves his stamp visibly upon the  
shore,

Until the second bursts;— so on my sight  
Burst a new vision, never seen before,

“And the fair shape waned in the com-  
ing light,

As veil by veil the silent splendor drops  
From Lucifer, amid the chrysolite

“Of sunrise, ere it tinge the mountain  
tops;

And as the presence of that fairest  
planet,

Altho’ unseen, is felt by one who  
hopes

“That his day’s path may end as he be-  
gan it,

In that star’s smile, whose light is like  
the scent

Of a jonquil when evening breezes fan  
it,

“Or the soft note in which his dear  
lament

The Brescian shepherd breathes, or the  
caress

That turned his weary slumber to con-  
tent;

“So knew I in that light’s severe excess  
The presence of that shape which on the  
stream

Moved, as I moved along the wilderness

“More dimly than a day-appearing  
dream,

The ghost of a forgotten form of sleep;  
A light of heaven, whose half-extin-  
guisht beam

“Thro’ the sick day in which we  
wake to weep,

Glimmers, forever sought, forever lost;  
So did that shape its obscure tenor keep

“Beside my path, as silent as a ghost;  
But the new Vision, and the cold bright

car,  
With solemn speed and stunning music,  
crost

“The forest, and as if from some dread  
war

Triumphantly returning, the loud million  
Fiercely extolled the fortune of her star.

“A moving arch of victory, the ver-  
million

And green and azure plumes of Iris had  
Built high over her wind-wingèd pavilion,

“ And underneath ethereal glory clad  
The wilderness, and far before her flew  
The tempest of the splendor, which forbade

“ Shadow to fall from leaf and stone;  
the crew  
Seemed in that light, like atomies to dance  
Within a sunbeam;— some upon the new

“ Embroidery of flowers, that did enhance  
The grassy vesture of the desert, played,  
Forgetful of the chariot’s swift advance;

“ Others stood gazing, till within the shade  
Of the great mountain its light left them dim;  
Others outsped it; and others made

“ Circles around it, like the clouds that swim  
Round the high moon in a bright sea of air;  
And more did follow, with exulting hymn,

“ The chariot and the captives fettered there:—  
But all like bubbles on an eddying flood  
Fell into the same track at last, and were

“ Borne onward. I among the multitude  
Was swept— me, sweetest flowers delayed not long;  
Me, not the shadow nor the solitude;

“ Me, not that falling stream’s Lethæan song;  
Me, not the phantom of that early form,  
Which moved upon its motion— but among

“ The thickest billows of that living storm  
I plunged, and bared my bosom to the clime  
Of that cold light, whose airs too soon deform.

“ Before the chariot had begun to climb  
The opposing steep of that mysterious dell,  
Behold a wonder worthy of the rhyme

“ Of him who from the lowest depths of hell,  
Thro’ every paradise and through all glory,  
Love led serene, and who returned to tell

“ The words of hate and awe; the wondrous story  
How all things are transfigured except Love;  
For deaf as is a sea, which wrath makes hoary,

“ The world can hear not the sweet notes that move  
The sphere whose light is melody to lovers—  
A wonder worthy of his rhyme. The grove

“ Grew dense with shadows to its inmost covers,  
The earth was gray with phantoms, and the air  
Was peopled with dim forms, as when there hovers

“ A flock of vampire-bats before the glare  
Of the tropic sun, bringing, ere evening,  
Strange night upon some Indian isle;— thus were

“ Phantoms diffused around; and some did fling  
Shadows of shadows, yet unlike themselves,  
Behind them; some like eaglets on the wing

“ Were lost in the white day; others like elves  
Danced in a thousand unimagined shapes  
Upon the sunny streams and grassy shelves;

“ And others sate chattering like restless  
apes

On vulgar hands, . . .  
Some made a cradle of the ermined capes

“ Of kingly mantles; some across the  
tiar

Of pontiffs sate like vultures; others  
played  
Under the crown which girt with empire

“ A baby’s or an idiot’s brow, and made  
Their nests in it. The old anatomies  
Sate hatching their bare broods under the  
shade

“ Of demon wings, and laught from  
their dead eyes

To reassume the delegated power,  
Arrayed in which those worms did mon-  
archize,

“ Who made this earth their charnel.  
Others more

Humble, like falcons, sate upon the fist  
Of common men, and round their heads  
did soar;

“ Or like small gnats and flies, as thick  
as mist

On evening marshes, thronged about the  
brow

Of lawyers, statesmen, priest and theo-  
rist;—

“ And others, like discolored flakes of  
snow

On fairest bosoms and the sunniest hair,  
Fell, and were melted by the youthful  
glow

“ Which they extinguisht; and, like  
tears, they were

A veil to those from whose faint lids they  
rained

In drops of sorrow. I became aware

“ Of whence those forms proceeded  
which thus stained

The track in which we moved. After  
brief space,

From every form the beauty slowly  
waned;

“ From every firmest limb and fairest  
face

The strength and freshness fell like dust,  
and left

The action and the shape without the  
grace

“ Of life. The marble brow of youth  
was cleft

With care; and in those eyes where once  
hope shone,

Desire, like a lioness bereft

“ Of her last cub, glared ere it died;  
each one

Of that great crowd sent forth incessantly  
These shadows, numerous as the dead  
leaves blown

“ In autumn evening from a poplar-tree.  
Each like himself and like each other  
were

At first; but some distorted seemed to be

“ Obscure clouds, moulded by the casual  
air;

And of this stuff the car’s creative ray  
Wrought all the busy phantoms that  
were there,

“ As the sun shapes the clouds; thus on  
the way

Mask after mask fell from the counte-  
nance

And form of all; and long before the  
day

“ Was old, the joy which waked like  
heaven’s glance

The sleepers in the oblivious valley,  
died;

And some grew weary of the ghastly  
dance,

“ And fell, as I have fallen, by the way-  
side;—

Those soonest from whose forms most  
shadows past,

And least of strength and beauty did  
abide.

“ Then, what is life? I cried.”



CANCELLED OPENING OF  
"THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE."

OUT of the eastern shadow of the Earth,  
Amid the clouds upon its margin gray  
Scattered by Night to swathe in its bright  
birth

In gold and fleecy snow the infant  
Day,  
The glorious Sun uprose: beneath his  
light,  
The earth and all . . .

EARLY POEMS.

STANZA, WRITTEN AT  
BRACKNELL.

THY dewy looks sink in my breast;  
Thy gentle words stir poison there;  
Thou hast disturbed the only rest  
That was the portion of despair!  
Subdued to Duty's hard control,  
I could have borne my wayward lot:  
The chains that bind this ruined soul  
Had cankered then—but crusht it  
not.

STANZAS. — APRIL, 1814.

AWAY! the moor is dark beneath the  
moon,  
Rapid clouds have drunk the last pale  
beam of even:  
Away! the gathering winds will call the  
darkness soon,  
And profoundest midnight shroud the  
serene lights of heaven.

Pause not! The time is past! Every  
voice cries, Away!  
Tempt not with one last tear thy friend's  
ungentle mood:  
Thy lover's eye, so glazed and cold,  
dares not entreat thy stay:  
Duty and dereliction guide thee back  
to solitude.

Away, away! to thy sad and silent home;  
Pour bitter tears on its desolated hearth;  
Watch the dim shades as like ghosts they  
go and come,  
And complicate strange webs of mel-  
ancholy mirth.

The leaves of wasted autumn woods shall  
float around thine head:  
The blooms of dewy spring shall  
gleam beneath thy feet:  
But thy soul or this world must fade in  
the frost that binds the dead,  
Ere midnight's frown and morning's  
smile, ere thou and peace may  
meet.

The cloud — shadows of midnight possess  
their own repose,  
For the weary winds are silent, or the  
moon is in the deep:  
Some respite to its turbulence unresting  
ocean knows;  
Whatever moves, or toils, or grieves,  
hath its appointed sleep.

Thou in the grave shalt rest — yet till the  
phantoms flee  
Which that house and heath and garden  
made dear to thee erewhile,  
Thy remembrance, and repentance, and  
deep musings are not free  
From the music of two voices and the  
light of one sweet smile.

TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT  
GODWIN.

I.

MINE eyes were dim with tears unshed;  
Yes, I was firm — thus wert not thou; —  
My baffled looks did fear yet dread  
To meet thy looks — I could not know  
How anxiously they sought to shine  
With soothing pity upon mine.

II.

To sit and curb the soul's mute rage  
Which preys upon itself alone;  
To curse the life which is the cage  
Of fettered grief that dares not groan,

Hiding from many a careless eye  
The scornèd load of agony.

## III.

Whilst thou alone, then not regarded,  
The thou alone should be,  
To spend years thus, and be rewarded,  
As thou, sweet love, requited me  
When none were near — Oh! I did wake  
From torture for that moment's sake.

## IV.

Upon my heart thy accents sweet  
Of peace and pity fell like dew  
On flowers half dead; — thy lips did meet  
Mine tremblingly; thy dark eyes threw  
Their soft persuasion on my brain,  
Charming away its dream of pain.

## V.

We are not happy, sweet! our state  
Is strange and full of doubt and fear;  
More need of words that ills abate; —  
Reserve or censure come not near  
Our sacred friendship, lest there be  
No solace left for thee and me.

## VI.

Gentle and good and mild thou art,  
Nor can I live if thou appear  
Aught but thyself, or turn thine heart  
Away from me, or stoop to wear  
The mask of scorn, altho' it be  
To hide the love thou feel'st for me.

## TO ———

YET look on me — take not thine eyes  
away,  
Which feed upon the love within mine  
own,  
Which is indeed but the reflected ray  
Of thine own beauty from my spirit  
thrown.  
Yet speak to me — thy voice is as the  
tone  
Of my heart's echo, and I think I hear  
That thou yet lovest me; yet thou  
alone

Like one before a mirror, without care  
Of aught but thine own features, imaged  
there;

And yet I wear out life in watching  
thee;

A toil so sweet at times, and thou in-  
deed  
Art kind when I am sick, and pity me.

## MUTABILITY.

WE are as clouds that veil the midnight  
moon;

How restlessly they speed, and gleam,  
and quiver,  
Streaking the darkness radiantly! — yet  
soon

Night closes round, and they are lost  
forever;

Or like forgotten lyres, whose dissonant  
strings

Give various response to each varying  
blast,  
To whose frail frame no second motion  
brings

One mood or modulation like the last.

We rest. A dream has power to poi-  
son sleep;

We rise. One wandering thought  
pollutes the day;

We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or  
weep;

Embrace fond woe or cast our cares  
away:

It is the same! For, be it joy or sorrow,  
The path of its departure still is free:  
Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his  
morrow;

Naught may endure but Mutability.

## ON DEATH.

THERE IS NO WORK, NOR DEVICE, NOR KNOWL-  
EDGE, NOR WISDOM, IN THE GRAVE, WHITHER  
THOU GOEST. *Ecclesiastes.*

THE pale, the cold, and the moony smile  
Which the meteor beam of a starless  
night

Sheds on a lonely and sea-girt isle,  
 Ere the dawning of morn's undoubted  
 light,  
 Is the flame of life so fickle and wan  
 That flits round our steps till their strength  
 is gone.

O man! hold thee on in courage of soul  
 Thro' the stormy shades of thy worldly  
 way,  
 And the billows of cloud that around  
 thee roll  
 Shall sleep in the light of a wondrous  
 day,  
 Where hell and heaven shall leave thee  
 free  
 To the universe of destiny.

This world is the nurse of all we know,  
 This world is the mother of all we feel,  
 And the coming of death is a fearful blow  
 To a brain unencompassed with nerves  
 of steel;  
 When all that we know, or feel, or see,  
 Shall pass like an unreal mystery.

The secret things of the grave are there,  
 Where all but this frame must surely  
 be,  
 Tho' the fine-wrought eye and the  
 wondrous ear  
 No longer will live to hear or to see  
 All that is great and all that is strange  
 In the boundless realm of unending  
 change.

Who telleth a tale of unspeaking death?  
 Who lifteth the veil of what is to come?  
 Who painteth the shadows that are be-  
 neath  
 The wide-winding caves of the peopled  
 tomb?  
 Or uniteth the hopes of what shall be  
 With the fears and the love for that  
 which we see?

#### A SUMMER EVENING CHURCH- YARD.

LECHLADE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

THE wind has swept from the wide at-  
 mosphere

Each vapor that obscured the sunset's  
 ray;  
 And pallid Evening twines its beaming  
 hair  
 In duskier braids around the languid  
 eyes of Day:  
 Silence and Twilight, unbeloved of men,  
 Creep hand in hand from yon obscurest  
 glen.

They breathe their spells towards the de-  
 parting day,  
 Encompassing the earth, air, stars, and  
 sea;  
 Light, sound, and motion own the potent  
 sway,  
 Responding to the charm with its own  
 mystery.  
 The winds are still, or the dry church-  
 tower grass  
 Knows not their gentle motions as they  
 pass.

Thou too, aërial Pile! whose pinnacles  
 Point from one shrine like pyramids of  
 fire,  
 Obeyest in silence their sweet solemn  
 spells,  
 Clothing in hues of heaven thy dim and  
 distant spire,  
 Around whose lessening and invisible  
 height  
 Gather among the stars the clouds of  
 night.

The dead are sleeping in their sepulchres:  
 And, mouldering as they sleep, a thrill-  
 ing sound  
 Half sense, half thought, among the  
 darkness stirs,  
 Breathed from their wormy beds all liv-  
 ing things around,  
 And mingling with the still night and  
 mute sky  
 Its awful hush is felt inaudibly.

Thus solemnized and softened, death is  
 mild  
 And terrorless as this serenest night:  
 Here could I hope, like some inquiring  
 child  
 Sporting on graves, that death did hide  
 from human sight

Sweet secrets, or beside its breathless  
sleep  
That loveliest dreams perpetual watch did  
keep.

## TO COLERIDGE.

ΔΑΚΡΥΣΙ ΔΙΟΙΣΩ ΠΟΤΜΟΝ ἈΠΟΤΜΟΝ·

OH! there are spirits of the air,  
And genii of the evening breeze,  
And gentle ghosts, with eyes as fair  
As star-beams among twilight trees:—  
Such lovely ministers to meet  
Oft hast thou turned from men thy lonely  
feet.

With mountain winds, and babbling  
springs,  
And moonlight seas, that are the voice  
Of these inexplicable things  
Thou didst hold commune, and rejoice  
When they did answer thee; but they  
Cast, like a worthless boon, thy love  
away.

And thou hast sought in starry eyes  
Beams that were never meant for  
thine,  
Another's wealth:—tame sacrifice  
To a fond faith! still dost thou pine?  
Still dost thou hope that greeting hands,  
Voice, looks, or lips, may answer thy  
demands?

Ah! wherefore didst thou build thine  
hope  
On the false earth's inconstancy?  
Did thine own mind afford no scope  
Of love, or moving thoughts to thee?  
That natural scenes or human smiles  
Could steal the power to wind thee in  
their wiles.

Yes, all the faithless smiles are fled  
Whose falsehood left thee broken-  
hearted;  
The glory of the moon is dead;  
Night's ghosts and dreams have now  
departed;  
Thine own soul still is true to thee,  
But changed to a foul fiend thro'  
misery.

This fiend, whose ghastly presence ever  
Beside thee like thy shadow hangs,  
Dream not to chase; — the mad endea-  
vor  
Would scourge thee to severer pangs.  
Be as thou art. Thy settled fate,  
Dark as it is, all change would aggravate.

## TO WORDSWORTH.

POET of Nature, thou hast wept to know  
That things depart which never may  
return:  
Childhood and youth, friendship and  
love's first glow,  
Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving  
thee to mourn.  
These common woes I feel. One loss is  
mine  
Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone de-  
plore.  
Thou wert as a lone star, whose light  
did shine  
On some frail bark in winter's midnight  
roar:  
Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge  
stood  
Above the blind and battling multitude:  
In honored poverty thy voice did weave  
Songs consecrate to truth and liberty, —  
Deserting these, thou leavest me to  
grieve,  
Thus having been, that thou shouldst  
cease to be.

FEELINGS OF A REPUBLICAN  
ON THE FALL OF BONAPARTE.

I HATED thee, fallen tyrant! I did groan  
To think that a most unambitious slave,  
Like thou, shouldst dance and revel on  
the grave  
Of Liberty. Thou mightst have built  
thy throne  
Where it had stood even now: thou  
didst prefer  
A frail and bloody pomp which time has  
swept  
In fragments towards oblivion. Mas-  
sacre,  
For this I prayed, would on thy sleep  
have crept,

Treason and Slavery, Rapine, Fear, and  
Lust,  
And stifled thee, their minister. I know  
Too late, since thou and France are in  
the dust,  
That virtue owns a more eternal foe  
Than force or fraud: old Custom, legal  
Crime,  
And bloody Faith the foulest birth of  
time.

## LINES.

## I.

THE cold earth slept below,  
Above the cold sky shone;  
And all around, with a chilling sound,  
From caves of ice and fields of snow,  
The breath of night like death did  
flow  
Beneath the sinking moon.

## II.

The wintry hedge was black,  
The green grass was not seen,  
The birds did rest on the bare thorn's  
breast,  
Whose roots, beside the pathway track,  
Had bound their folds o'er many a  
crack,  
Which the frost had made between.

## III.

Thine eyes glowed in the glare  
Of the moon's dying light;  
As a fen-fire's beam on a sluggish stream,  
Gleams dimly, so the moon shone  
there,  
And it yellowed the strings of thy  
raven hair,  
That shook in the wind of night.

## IV.

The moon made thy lips pale, be-  
loved —  
The wind made thy bosom chill —  
The night did shed on thy dear head  
Its frozen dew, and thou didst lie  
Where the bitter breath of the naked  
sky  
Might visit thee at will.

NOTE ON THE EARLY POEMS, BY  
MRS. SHELLEY.

THE remainder of Shelley's Poems will be arranged in the order in which they were written. Of course, mistakes will occur in placing some of the shorter ones; for, as I have said, many of these were thrown aside, and I never saw them till I had the misery of looking over his writings after the hand that traced them was dust; and some were in the hands of others, and I never saw them till now. The subjects of the poems are often to me an unerring guide; but on other occasions I can only guess, by finding them in the pages of the same manuscript book that contains poems with the date of whose composition I am fully conversant. In the present arrangement all his poetical translations will be placed together at the end.

The loss of his early papers prevents my being able to give any of the poetry of his boyhood. Of the few I give as Early Poems, the greater part were published with *Alastor*; some of them were written previously, some at the same period. The poem beginning "Oh, there are spirits in the air" was addressed in idea to Coleridge, whom he never knew; and at whose character he could only guess imperfectly, through his writings, and accounts he heard of him from some who knew him well. He regarded his change of opinions as rather an act of will than conviction, and believed that in his inner heart he would be haunted by what Shelley considered the better and holier aspirations of his youth. The summer evening that suggested to him the poem written in the churchyard of Lechlade occurred during his voyage up the Thames in 1815. He had been advised by a physician to live as much as possible in the open air; and a fortnight of a bright warm July was spent in tracing the Thames to its source. He never spent a season more tranquilly than the summer of 1815. He had just recovered from a severe pulmonary attack; the weather was warm and pleasant. He

lived near Windsor Forest; and his life was spent under its shades or on the water, meditating subjects for verse. Hitherto, he had chiefly aimed at extending his political doctrines, and attempted so to do by appeals in prose essays to the people, exhorting them to claim their rights; but he had now begun to feel that the time for action was not ripe in England, and that the pen was the only instrument wherewith to prepare the way for better things.

In the scanty journals kept during those years I find a record of the books that Shelley read during several years. During the years of 1814 and 1815 the list is extensive. It includes, in Greek, Homer, Hesiod, Theocritus, the histories of Thucydides and Herodotus, and Diogenes Laertius. In Latin, Petronius, Suetonius, some of the works of Cicero, a large proportion of those of Seneca and Livy. In English, Milton's Poems, Wordsworth's "Excursion," Southey's "Madoc" and "Thalaba," Locke "On Human Understanding," Bacon's "Novum Organum. In Italian, Ariosto, Tasso, and Alfieri. In French, the "Rêveries d'un Solitaire" of Rousseau. To these may be added several modern books of travels. He read few novels.

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1816.

### THE SUNSET.

THERE late was One within whose subtle  
being,  
As light and wind within some delicate  
cloud  
That fades amid the blue noon's burning  
sky,  
Genius and death contended. None  
may know  
The sweetness of the joy which made his  
breath  
Fail, like the trances of the summer air,  
When, with the Lady of his love, who  
then  
First knew the unreserve of mingled  
being,  
He walked along the pathway of a field

Which to the east a hoar wood shadowed  
o'er,  
But to the west was open to the sky.  
There now the sun had sunk, but lines  
of gold  
Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the  
points  
Of the far level grass and nodding flowers  
And the old dandelion's hoary beard,  
And, mingled with the shades of twilight, lay  
On the brown massy woods; — and in the  
east  
The broad and burning moon lingeringly  
rose  
Between the black trunks of the crowded  
trees,  
While the faint stars were gathering  
overhead. —  
"Is it not strange, Isabel," said the  
youth,  
"I never saw the sun? We will walk  
here  
To-morrow; thou shalt look on it with  
me."

That night the youth and lady mingled  
lay  
In love and sleep — but when the morn-  
ing came  
The lady found her lover dead and  
cold.  
Let none believe that God in mercy gave  
That stroke. The lady died not, nor  
grew wild,  
But year by year lived on — in truth I  
think  
Her gentleness and patience and sad  
smiles,  
And that she did not die, but lived to  
tend  
Her aged father, were a kind of mad-  
ness,  
If madness 't is to be unlike the world.  
For but to see her were to read the tale  
Woven by some subtlest bard, to make  
hard hearts  
Dissolve away in wisdom-working  
grief;—  
Her eyes were black and lustreless and  
wan:  
Her eyelashes were worn away with  
tears,

Her lips and cheeks were like things  
 dead — so pale;  
 Her hands were thin, and thro' their  
 wandering veins  
 And weak articulations might be seen  
 Day's ruddy light. The tomb of thy  
 dead self  
 Which one vext ghost inhabits, night  
 and day,  
 Is all, lost child, that now remains of  
 thee!

“Inheritor of more than earth can  
 give,  
 Passionless calm and silence unproved,  
 Whether the dead find, oh, not sleep!  
 but rest,  
 And are the uncomplaining things they  
 seem,  
 Or live, or drop in the deep sea of  
 Love;  
 Oh, that like thine, mine epitaph were  
 — Peace!”  
 This was the only moan she ever made.

## HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY.

### I.

THE awful shadow of some unseen  
 Power  
 Floats tho' unseen amongst us, —  
 visiting  
 This various world with as inconstant  
 wing  
 As summer winds that creep from flower  
 to flower, —  
 Like moonbeams that behind some piny  
 mountain shower,  
 It visits with inconstant glance  
 Each human heart and countenance;  
 Like hues and harmonies of evening, —  
 Like clouds in starlight widely  
 spread, —  
 Like memory of music fled, —  
 Like aught that for its grace may be  
 Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

### II.

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate  
 With thine own hues all thou dost  
 shine upon

Of human thought or form, — where  
 art thou gone?  
 Why dost thou pass away and leave our  
 state,  
 This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and  
 desolate?  
 Ask why the sunlight not forever  
 Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain  
 river,  
 Why aught should fail and fade that once  
 is shown,  
 Why fear and dream and death and  
 birth  
 Cast on the daylight of this earth  
 Such gloom, — why man has such a  
 scope  
 For love and hate, despondency and  
 hope?

### III.

No voice from some sublimer world hath  
 ever  
 To sage or poet these responses given —  
 Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost,  
 and Heaven,  
 Remain the records of their vain endeavor,  
 Frail spells — whose uttered charm might  
 not avail to sever,  
 From all we hear and all we see,  
 Doubt, chance, and mutability.  
 Thy light alone — like mist o'er moun-  
 tains driven,  
 Or music by the night wind sent,  
 Thro' strings of some still instru-  
 ment,  
 Or moonlight on a midnight stream,  
 Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet  
 dream.

### IV.

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds  
 depart  
 And come, for some uncertain mo-  
 ments lent,  
 Man were immortal, and omnipotent,  
 Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou  
 art,  
 Keep with thy glorious train firm state  
 within his heart.  
 Thou messenger of sympathies,  
 That wax and wane in lovers' eyes —  
 Thou — that to human thought art nour-  
 ishment,

Like darkness to a dying flame!  
 Depart not as thy shadow came,  
 Depart not—lest the grave should be,  
 Like life and fear, a dark reality.

## v.

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped  
 Thro' many a listening chamber, cave  
 and ruin,  
 And starlight wood, with fearful steps  
 pursuing  
 Hopes of high talk with the departed  
 dead.  
 I called on poisonous names with which  
 our youth is fed;  
 I was not heard—I saw them not—  
 When musing deeply on the lot  
 Of life, at the sweet time when winds  
 are wooing  
 All vital things that wake to bring  
 News of birds and blossoming,—  
 Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;  
 I shriekt, and claspt my hands in  
 ecstasy!

## vi.

I vowed that I would dedicate my pow-  
 ers  
 To thee and thine—have I not kept  
 the vow?  
 With beating heart and streaming eyes,  
 even now  
 I call the phantoms of a thousand hours  
 Each from his voiceless grave: they have  
 in visioned bowers  
 Of studious zeal or love's delight  
 Outwatcht with me the envious  
 night—  
 They know that never joy illumed my  
 brow  
 Unlinkt with hope that thou wouldst  
 free  
 This world from its dark slavery,  
 That thou—O awful LOVELINESS,  
 Wouldst give whate'er these words can-  
 not express.

## vii.

The day becomes more solemn and se-  
 rene  
 When noon is past—there is a har-  
 mony

In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,  
 Which thro' the summer is not heard or  
 seen,  
 As if it could not be, as if it had not  
 been!

Thus let thy power, which like the  
 truth  
 Of nature on my passive youth  
 Descended, to my onward life supply  
 Its calm—to one who worships thee,  
 And every form containing thee,  
 Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did  
 bind  
 To fear himself, and love all human kind.

## MONT BLANC.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE VALE OF  
 CHAMOUNI.

## I.

THE everlasting universe of things  
 Flows thro' the mind, and rolls its rapid  
 waves,  
 Now dark—now glittering—now re-  
 flecting gloom—  
 Now lending splendor, where from secret  
 springs  
 The source of human thought its tribute  
 brings  
 Of waters,—with a sound but half its  
 own,  
 Such as a feeble brook will oft assume  
 In the wild woods, among the mountains  
 lone,  
 Where waterfalls around it leap for ever,  
 Where woods and winds contend, and a  
 vast river  
 Over its rocks ceaselessly bursts and  
 raves.

## II.

Thus thou, Ravine of Arve—dark, deep  
 Ravine—  
 Thou many-colored, many-voicèd vale,  
 Over whose pines, and crags, and caverns  
 sail  
 Fast cloud-shadows and sunbeams: awful  
 scene,  
 Where Power in likeness of the Arve  
 comes down



From the ice gulfs that gird his secret throne,  
 Bursting thro' these dark mountains like the flame  
 Of lightning thro' the tempest; — thou dost lie,  
 Thy giant brood of pines around thee clinging,  
 Children of elder time, in whose devotion  
 The chainless winds still come and ever came  
 To drink their odors, and their mighty swinging  
 To hear — an old and solemn harmony;  
 Thine earthly rainbows stretch across the sweep  
 Of the ethereal waterfall, whose veil  
 Robes some unsculptured image; the strange sleep  
 Which when the voices of the desert fail  
 Wraps all in its own deep eternity; —  
 Thy caverns echoing to the Arve's commotion,  
 A loud, lone sound no other sound can tame;  
 Thou art pervaded with that ceaseless motion,  
 Thou art the path of that unresting sound —  
 Dizzy Ravine! and when I gaze on thee  
 I seem as in a trance sublime and strange  
 To muse on my own separate fantasy,  
 My own, my human mind, which passively  
 Now renders and receives fast influences,  
 Holding an unremitting interchange  
 With the clear universe of things around;  
 One legion of wild thoughts, whose wandering wings  
 Now float above thy darkness, and now rest  
 Where that or thou art no unbidden guest,  
 In the still cave of the witch Poesy,  
 Seeking among the shadows that pass by  
 Ghosts of all things that are, some shade of thee,  
 Some phantom, some faint image; till the breast  
 From which they fled recalls them, thou art there!

## III.

Some say that gleams of a remoter world  
 Visit the soul in sleep, — that death is slumber,  
 And that its shapes the busy thoughts outnumber  
 Of those who wake and live. — I look on high;  
 Has some unknown omnipotence unfurled  
 The veil of life or death? or do I lie  
 In dream, and does the mightier world of sleep  
 Spread far around and inaccessible  
 Its circles? For the very spirit fails,  
 Driven like a homeless cloud from steep to steep  
 That vanishes among the viewless gales!  
 Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky,  
 Mont Blanc appears, — still, snowy, and serene —  
 Its subject mountains their unearthly forms  
 Pile around it, ice and rock; broad vales between  
 Of frozen floods, unfathomable deeps,  
 Blue as the overhanging heaven, that spread  
 And wind among the accumulated steeps;  
 A desert peopled by the storms alone,  
 Save when the eagle brings some hunter's bone,  
 And the wolf tracks her there — how hideously  
 Its shapes are heapt around! rude, bare, and high,  
 Ghastly, and scarred, and riven. — Is this the scene  
 Where the old Earthquake-dæmon taught her young  
 Ruin? Were these their toys? or did a sea  
 Of fire, envelop once this silent snow?  
 None can reply — all seems eternal now.  
 The wilderness has a mysterious tongue  
 Which teaches awful doubt, or faith so mild,  
 So solemn, so serene, that man may be  
 But for such faith with Nature reconciled;  
 Thou hast a voice, great Mountain, to repeal

Large codes of fraud and woe; not understood  
 By all, but which the wise, and great,  
 and good  
 Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel.

## IV.

The fields, the lakes, the forests, and the  
 streams,  
 Ocean, and all the living things that  
 dwell  
 Within the dædal earth; lightning and  
 rain,  
 Earthquake, and fiery flood, and hurri-  
 cane,  
 The torpor of the year when feeble  
 dreams  
 Visit the hidden buds, or dreamless sleep  
 Holds every future leaf and flower;—  
 the bound  
 With which from that detested trance  
 they leap;  
 The works and ways of man, their death  
 and birth,  
 And that of him and all that his may be;  
 All things that move and breathe with  
 toil and sound  
 Are born and die; revolve, subside, and  
 swell.  
 Power dwells apart in its tranquillity  
 Remote, serene, and inaccessible:  
 And *this*, the naked countenance of  
 earth,  
 On which I gaze, even these primeval  
 mountains  
 Teach the adverting mind. The glaciers  
 creep  
 Like snakes that watch their prey, from  
 their far fountains,  
 Slow rolling on; there, many a precipice,  
 Frost and the Sun in scorn of mortal  
 power  
 Have piled: dome, pyramid, and pinna-  
 cle,  
 A city of death, distinct with many a  
 tower  
 And wall impregnable of beaming ice.  
 Yet not a city, but a flood of ruin  
 Is there, that from the boundaries of the  
 sky  
 Rolls its perpetual stream; vast pines are  
 strewing

Its destined path, or in the mangled soil  
 Branchless and shattered stand; the  
 rocks, drawn down  
 From yon remotest waste, have over-  
 thrown  
 The limits of the dead and living world,  
 Never to be reclaimed. The dwelling-  
 place  
 Of insects, beasts, and birds, becomes  
 its spoil;  
 Their food and their retreat for ever  
 gone,  
 So much of life and joy is lost. The  
 race  
 Of man, flies far in dread; his work and  
 dwelling  
 Vanish, like smoke before the tempest's  
 stream,  
 And their place is not known. Below,  
 vast caves  
 Shine in the rushing torrents' restless  
 gleam.  
 Which from those secret chasms a tu-  
 mult welling  
 Meet in the vale, and one majestic River,  
 The breath and blood of distant lands,  
 forever  
 Rolls its loud waters to the ocean waves,  
 Breathes its swift vapors to the circling  
 air.

## V.

Mont Blanc yet gleams on high:— the  
 power is there,  
 The still and solemn power of many  
 sights,  
 And many sounds, and much of life and  
 death.  
 In the calm darkness of the moonless  
 nights,  
 In the lone glare of day, the snows de-  
 scend  
 Upon that Mountain; none beholds them  
 there,  
 Nor when the flakes burn in the sinking  
 sun,  
 Or the star-beams dart thro' them:—  
 Winds contend  
 Silently there, and heap the snow with  
 breath  
 Rapid and strong, but silently! Its home  
 The voiceless lightning in these solitudes  
 Keeps innocently, and like vapor broods

Over the snow. The secret strength of things  
Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome  
Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!  
And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea,  
If to the human mind's imaginings  
Silence and solitude were vacancy?

July 23, 1816.

### CANCELLED PASSAGE OF MONT BLANC.

THERE is a voice, not understood by all,  
Sent from these desert-caves. It is the  
roar  
Of the rent ice-cliff which the sunbeams  
call,  
Plunging into the vale — it is the blast  
Descending on the pines — the torrents  
pour. . . .

### FRAGMENT: HOME.

DEAR home, thou scene of earliest hopes  
and joys,  
The least of which wronged Memory  
ever makes  
Bitterer than all thine unremembered  
tears.

### FRAGMENT: HELEN AND HENRY.

A SHOVEL of his ashes took  
From the hearth's obscurest nook,  
Muttering mysteries as she went.  
Helen and Henry knew that Granny  
Was as much afraid of ghosts as any,  
And so they followed hard —  
But Helen clung to her brother's arm,  
And her own spasm made her shake.

### NOTE ON POEMS OF 1816, BY MRS. SHELLEY.

SHELLEY wrote little during this year. The poem entitled "The Sunset" was written in the Spring of the year, while still residing at Bishopgate. He spent the summer on the shores of the Lake of

Geneva. "The Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" was conceived during his voyage round the lake with Lord Byron. He occupied himself during this voyage reading the "Nouvelle Héloïse" for the first time. The reading it on the very spot where the scenes are laid added to the interest; and he was at once surprised and charmed by the passionate eloquence and earnest entralling interest that pervade this work. There was something in the character of Saint-Preux, in his abnegation of self, and in the worship he paid to Love, that coincided with Shelley's own disposition; and, though differing in many of the views and shocked by others, yet the effect of the whole was fascinating and delightful.

"Mont Blanc" was inspired by a view of that mountain and its surrounding peaks and valleys, as he lingered on the Bridge of Arve on his way through the Valley of Chamouni. Shelley makes the following mention of this poem in his publication of the "History of Six Weeks' Tour, and Letters from Switzerland": "The poem entitled "Mont Blanc" is written by the author of the two letters from Chamouni and Vevai. It was composed under the immediate impression of the deep and powerful feelings excited by the objects which it attempts to describe; and, as an undisciplined overflowing of the soul, rests its claim to approbation on an attempt to imitate the untamable wildness and inaccessible solemnity from which those feelings sprang."

This was an eventful year, and less time was given to study than usual. In the list of his reading I find, in Greek, Theocritus, the "Prometheus" of Æschylus, several of Plutarch's Lives, and the works of Lucian. In Latin, Lucretius, Pliny's Letters, the "Annals" and "Germany" of Tacitus. In French, the "History of the French Revolution" by Lacretelle. He read for the first time, this year, Montaigne's Essays, and regarded them ever after as one of the most delightful and instructive books in the world. The list is scanty in English works: Locke's Essay, "Political Jus-

tice," and Coleridge's "Lay Sermon," form nearly the whole. It was his frequent habit to read aloud to me in the evening; in this way we read, this year, the New Testament, "Paradise Lost," Spenser's "Faëry Queen," and "Don Quixote."

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1817.

### MARIANNE'S DREAM.

#### I.

A PALE dream came to a Lady fair,  
And said, "A boon, a boon, I pray!  
I know the secrets of the air,  
And things are lost in the glare of day,  
Which I can make the sleeping see,  
If they will put their trust in me.

#### II.

And thou shalt know of things unknown,  
If thou wilt let me rest between  
The veiny lids, whose fringe is thrown  
Over thine eyes so dark and sheen: "  
And half in hope, and half in fright,  
The Lady closed her eyes so bright.

#### III.

At first all deadly shapes were driven  
Tumultuously across her sleep,  
And o'er the vast cope of bending heaven  
All ghastly-visaged clouds did sweep;  
And the Lady ever looked to spy  
If the golden sun shone forth on high.

#### IV.

And as towards the east she turned,  
She saw aloft in the morning air,  
Which now with hues of sunrise burned,  
A great black Anchor rising there;  
And wherever the Lady turned her eyes,  
It hung before her in the skies.

#### v.

The sky was blue as the summer sea,  
The depths were cloudless overhead,  
The air was calm as it could be,  
There was no sight or sound of dread,

But that black Anchor floating still  
Over the piny eastern hill.

#### VI.

The Lady grew sick with a weight of fear,  
To see that Anchor ever hanging,  
And veiled her eyes; she then did hear  
The sound as of a dim low clanging,  
And looked abroad if she might know  
Was it aught else, or but the flow  
Of the blood in her own veins, to and fro.

#### VII.

There was a mist in the sunless air,  
Which shook as it were with an earth-  
quake's shock,  
But the very weeds that blossomed there  
Were moveless, and each mighty rock  
Stood on its basis steadfastly;  
The Anchor was seen no more on high.

#### VIII.

But piled around, with summits hid  
In lines of cloud at intervals,  
Stood many a mountain pyramid  
Among whose everlasting walls  
Two mighty cities shone, and ever  
Thro' the red mist their domes did  
quiver.

#### IX.

On two dread mountains, from whose  
crest,  
Might seem, the eagle, for her brood,  
Would ne'er have hung her dizzy nest,  
Those tower-encircled cities stood.  
A vision strange such towers to see,  
Sculptured and wrought so gorgeously,  
Where human art could never be.

#### X.

And columns framed of marble white.  
And giant fanes, dome over dome  
Piled, and triumphant gates, all bright  
With workmanship, which could not  
come  
From touch of mortal instrument  
Shot o'er the vales, or lustre lent  
From its own shapes magnificent.

## XI.

But still the Lady heard that clang  
 Filling the wide air far away;  
 And still the mist whose light did hang  
 Among the mountains shook away  
 So that the Lady's heart beat fast,  
 As half in joy, and half aghast,  
 On those high domes her look she cast.

## XII.

Sudden, from out that city sprung  
 A light that made the earth grow red;  
 Two flames that each with quivering  
 tongue  
 Licked its high domes, and overhead  
 Among those mighty towers and fanes  
 Dropt fire, as a volcano rains  
 Its sulphurous ruin on the plains.

## XIII.

And hark! a rush as if the deep  
 Had burst its bonds; she lookt be-  
 hind  
 And saw over the western steep  
 A raging flood descend, and wind  
 Thro' that wild vale; she felt no fear,  
 But said within herself, 'Tis clear  
 These towers are Nature's own, and she  
 To save them has sent forth the sea.

## XIV.

And now those raging billows came  
 Where that fair Lady sate, and she  
 Was borne towards the showering flame  
 By the wild waves heapt tumultu-  
 ously  
 And on a little plank, the flow  
 Of the whirlpool bore her to and fro.

## XV.

The flames were fiercely vomited  
 From every tower and every dome,  
 And dreary light did widely shed  
 O'er that vast flood's suspended foam,  
 Beneath the smoke which hung its night  
 On the stained cope of heaven's light.

## XVI.

The plank whereon the lady sate  
 Was driven thro' the chasms, about  
 and about,

Between the peaks so desolate  
 Of the drowning mountains, in and  
 out,  
 As the thistle-beard on a whirlwind  
 sails —  
 While the flood was filling those hollow  
 vales.

## XVII.

At last her plank an eddy crost,  
 And bore her to the city's wall,  
 Which now the flood had reacht almost;  
 It might the stoutest heart appal  
 To hear the fire roar and hiss  
 Thro' the domes of those mighty  
 palaces.

## XVIII.

The eddy whirled her round and round  
 Before a gorgeous gate, which stood  
 Piercing the clouds of smoke which  
 bound  
 Its æry arch with light like blood;  
 She lookt on that gate of marble clear  
 With wonder that extinguisht fear.

## XIX.

For it was filled with sculptures rarest,  
 Of forms most beautiful and strange,  
 Like nothing human, but the fairest  
 Of wingèd shapes, whose legions range  
 Throughout the sleep of those that are,  
 Like this same Lady, good and fair.

## XX.

And as she lookt, still lovelier grew  
 Those marble forms; — the sculptor  
 sure  
 Was a strong spirit, and the hue  
 Of his own mind did there endure  
 After the touch, whose power had braided  
 Such grace, was in some sad change  
 faded.

## XXI.

She lookt, the flames were dim, the  
 flood  
 Grew tranquil as a woodland river  
 Winding thro' hills in solitude;

Those marble shapes then seemed to  
quiver  
And their fair limbs to float in motion,  
Like weeds unfolding in the ocean.

## XXII.

And their lips moved; one seemed to  
speak,

When suddenly the mountains crackt,  
And thro' the chasm the flood did  
break

With an earth-uplifting cataract:  
The statues gave a joyous scream,  
And on its wings the pale thin dream  
Lifted the Lady from the stream.

## XXIII.

The dizzy flight of that phantom pale  
Waked the fair Lady from her sleep,  
And she arose, while from the veil

Of her dark eyes the dream did creep,  
And she walkt about as one who knew  
That sleep has sights as clear and true  
As any waking eyes can view.

## TO CONSTANTIA, SINGING.

## I.

THUS to be lost and thus to sink and  
die,

Perchance were death indeed! — Con-  
stantia, turn!

In thy dark eyes a power like light doth  
lie,

Even tho' the sounds which were thy  
voice, which burn

Between thy lips, are laid to sleep;

Within thy breath, and on thy hair,  
like odor it is yet,

And from thy touch like fire doth leap.

Even while I write, my burning cheeks  
are wet,

Alas, that the torn heart can bleed, but  
not forget!

## II.

A breathless awe, like the swift change  
Unseen, but felt in youthful slumbers,  
Wild, sweet, but uncommunicably strange,

Thou breathest now in fast ascending  
numbers.

The cope of heaven seems rent and  
cloven

By the enchantment of thy strain,  
And on my shoulders wings are woven,  
To follow its sublime career,

Beyond the mighty moons that wane  
Upon the verge of nature's utmost  
sphere,

Till the world's shadowy walls are past  
and disappear.

## III.

Her voice is hovering o'er my soul — it  
lingers

O'ershadowing it with soft and lulling  
wings,

The blood and life within those snowy  
fingers

Teach witchcraft to the instrumental  
strings.

My brain is wild, my breath comes  
quick —

The blood is listening in my frame,  
And thronging shadows, fast and thick,  
Fall on my overflowing eyes;

My heart is quivering like a flame;  
As morning dew, that in the sunbeam  
dies,

I am dissolved in these consuming  
ecstasies.

## IV.

I have no life, Constantia, now, but thee,  
Whilst, like the world-surrounding air,  
thy song

Flows on, and fills all things with mel-  
ody. —

Now is thy voice a tempest swift and  
strong,

On which, like one in trance upborne,  
Secure o'er rocks and waves I sweep,  
Rejoicing like a cloud of morn.

Now 't is the breath of summer night,  
Which when the starry waters sleep,

Round western isles, with incense-  
blossoms bright,

Lingering, suspends my soul in its  
voluptuous flight.

## TO CONSTANTIA.

## I.

THE rose that drinks the fountain dew  
 In the pleasant air of noon,  
 Grows pale and blue with altered hue —  
 In the gaze of the nightly moon;  
 For the planet of frost, so cold and  
 bright,  
 Makes it wan with her borrowed light.

## II.

Such is my heart — roses are fair,  
 And that at best a withered blossom;  
 But thy false care did idly wear  
 Its withered leaves in a faithless bosom;  
 And fed with love, like air and dew,  
 Its growth —

## FRAGMENT: TO ONE SINGING.

MY spirit like a charmed bark doth swim  
 Upon the liquid waves of thy sweet  
 singing,  
 Far away into the regions dim  
 Of rapture — as a boat, with swift  
 sails winging  
 Its way adown some many-winding river.

## A FRAGMENT: TO MUSIC.

SILVER key of the fountain of tears,  
 Where the spirit drinks till the brain  
 is wild;  
 Softest grave of a thousand fears,  
 Where their mother, Care, like a  
 drowsy child,  
 Is laid asleep in flowers.

ANOTHER FRAGMENT TO  
MUSIC.

No, Music, thou art not the "food of  
 Love,"  
 Unless Love feeds upon its own sweet  
 self,  
 Till it becomes all Music murmurs of.

## "MIGHTY EAGLE."

SUPPOSED TO BE ADDRESSED TO  
 WILLIAM GODWIN.

MIGHTY eagle! thou that soarest  
 O'er the misty mountain forest  
 And amid the light of morning  
 Like a cloud of glory hiest,  
 And when night descends defiest  
 The embattled tempests' warning!

## TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

## I.

THY country's curse is on thee, darkest  
 crest  
 Of that foul, knotted, many-headed  
 worm  
 Which rends our Mother's bosom —  
 Priestly Pest!  
 Maskt Resurrection of a buried Form!

## II.

Thy country's curse is on thee! Justice  
 sold,  
 Truth trampled, Nature's landmarks  
 overthrown,  
 And heaps of fraud-accumulated gold,  
 Plead, loud as thunder, at Destruc-  
 tion's throne.

## III.

And, whilst that sure slow Angel which  
 aye stands  
 Watching the beck of Mutability  
 Delays to execute her high commands,  
 And, tho' a nation weeps, spares  
 thine and thee,

## IV.

O let a father's curse be on thy soul,  
 And let a daughter's hope be on thy  
 tomb;  
 Be both, on thy gray head, a leaden  
 cowl  
 To weigh thee down to thine approach  
 ing doom!

## v.

I curse thee! By a parent's outraged love,  
 By hopes long cherish'd and too lately  
 lost,  
 By gentle feelings thou couldst never  
 prove,  
 By griefs which thy stern nature never  
 crost;

## vi.

By those infantine smiles of happy light,  
 Which were a fire within a stranger's  
 hearth,  
 Quencht even when kindled, in un-  
 timely night,  
 Hiding the promise of a lovely birth;

## vii.

By those unpractis'd accents of young  
 speech,  
 Which he who is a father thought to  
 frame  
 To gentlest lore, such as the wisest  
 teach —  
*Thou* strike the lyre of mind! O grief  
 and shame!

## viii.

By all the happy see in children's  
 growth —  
 That undevelop'd flower of budding  
 years —  
 Sweetness and sadness interwoven both,  
 Source of the sweetest hopes and sad-  
 dest fears —

## ix.

By all the days under an hireling's care,  
 Of dull constraint and bitter heaviness, —  
 O wretched ye if ever ye were, —  
 Sadder than orphans, yet not father-  
 less!

## x.

By the false cant which on their inno-  
 cent lips  
 Must hang like poison on an opening  
 bloom,

By the dark creeds which cover with  
 eclipse  
 Their pathway from the cradle to the  
 tomb —

## xi.

By thy most impious Hell, and all its  
 terror;  
 By all the grief, the madness, and the  
 guilt  
 Of thine impostures, which must be  
 their error —  
 That sand on which thy crumbling  
 power is built —

## xii.

By thy complicity with lust and hate —  
 Thy thirst for tears — thy hunger after  
 gold —  
 The ready frauds which ever on thee  
 wait —  
 The servile arts in which thou hast  
 grown old —

## xiii.

By thy most killing sneer, and by thy  
 smile —  
 By all the arts and snares of thy black  
 den,  
 And — for thou canst outweep the croco-  
 dile —  
 By thy false tears — those millstones  
 braining men —

## xiv.

By all the hate which checks a father's  
 love —  
 By all the scorn which kills a father's  
 care —  
 By those most impious hands which dared  
 remove  
 Nature's high bounds — by thee — and  
 by despair —

## xv.

Yes, the despair which bids a father  
 groan,  
 And cry, "My children are no longer  
 mine —



The blood within those veins may be  
mine own,  
But — Tyrant — their polluted souls  
are thine; — ”

## XVI.

I curse thee — though I hate thee not —  
O slave!  
If thou couldst quench the earth-con-  
suming Hell  
Of which thou art a dæmon, on thy grave  
This curse should be a blessing. Fare  
thee well!

## TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

## I.

THE billows on the beach are leaping  
around it,  
The bark is weak and frail,  
The sea looks black, and the clouds that  
bound it  
Darkly strew the gale.  
Come with me, thou delightful child,  
Come with me, tho' the wave is wild,  
And the winds are loose, we must not  
stay,  
Or the slaves of the law may rend thee  
away.

## II.

They have taken thy brother and sister  
dear,  
They have made them unfit for thee;  
They have withered the smile and dried  
the tear  
Which should have been sacred to me.  
To a blighting faith and a cause of crime  
They have bound them slaves in youthly  
prime,  
And they will curse my name and thee  
Because we are fearless and free.

## III.

Come thou, belovèd as thou art;  
Another sleepeth still

Near thy sweet mother's anxious heart,  
Which thou with joy shalt fill,  
With fairest smiles of wonder thrown  
On that which is indeed our own,  
And which in distant lands will be  
The dearest playmate unto thee.

## IV.

Fear not the tyrants will rule for ever,  
Or the priests of the evil faith:  
They stand on the brink of that raging  
river,  
Whose waves they have tainted with  
death.  
It is fed from the depth of a thousand  
dells,  
Around them it foams and rages and  
swells;  
And their swords and their sceptres I  
floating see,  
Like wrecks on the surge of eternity.

## V.

Rest, rest, and shriek not, thou gentle  
child!  
The rocking of the boat thou fearest,  
And the cold spray and the clamor  
wild? —  
There sit between us two, thou dear-  
est —  
Me and thy mother — well we know  
The storm at which thou tremblest so,  
With all its dark and hungry graves,  
Less cruel than the savage slaves  
Who hunt us o'er these sheltering waves.

## VI.

This hour will in thy memory  
Be a dream of days forgotten long,  
We soon shall dwell by the azure sea  
Of serene and golden Italy,  
Or Greece, the Mother of the free;  
And I will teach thine infant tongue  
To call upon those heroes old  
In their own language, and will mould  
Thy growing spirit in the flame  
Of Grecian lore, that by such name  
A patriot's birthright thou mayst claim!

FROM THE ORIGINAL DRAFT  
OF THE POEM TO WILLIAM  
SHELLEY.

## I.

THE world is now our dwelling-place;  
Where'er the earth one fading trace  
Of what was great and free does keep,  
That is our home! . . .  
Mild thoughts of man's ungentle race  
Shall our contented exile reap;  
For who that in some happy place  
His own free thoughts can freely chase  
By woods and waves can clothe his face  
In cynic smiles? Child! we shall  
weep.

## II.

This lament,  
The memory of thy grievous wrong  
Will fade . . .  
But genius is omnipotent  
To hallow . . .

## ON FANNY GODWIN.

HER voice did quiver as we parted,  
Yet knew I not that heart was broken  
From which it came, and I departed  
Heeding not the words then spoken.  
Misery — O Misery,  
This world is all too wide for thee.

## LINES.

## I.

THAT time is dead for ever, child,  
Drowned, frozen, dead for ever!  
We look on the past  
And stare aghast  
At the spectres wailing, pale and ghast,  
Of hopes which thou and I beguiled  
To death on life's dark river.

## II.

The stream we gazed on then, rolled by;  
Its waves are unreturning;  
But we yet stand  
In a lone land,

Like tombs to mark the memory  
Of hopes and fears, which fade and flee  
In the light of life's dim morning.

## DEATH.

## I.

THEY die — the dead return not —  
Misery  
Sits near an open grave and calls them  
over,  
A Youth with hoary hair and haggard  
eye —  
They are the names of kindred, friend  
and lover,  
Which he so feebly calls — they all are  
gone!  
Fond wretch, all dead, those vacant  
names alone,  
This most familiar scene, my pain —  
These tombs alone remain.

## II.

Misery, my sweetest friend — oh! weep  
no more!  
Thou wilt not be consoled — I wonder  
not!  
For I have seen thee from thy dwelling's  
door  
Watch the calm sunset with them, and  
this spot  
Was even as bright and calm, but tran-  
sitory,  
And now thy hopes are gone, thy hair is  
hoary;  
This most familiar scene, my pain —  
These tombs alone remain.

## OTHO.

## I.

THOU wert not, Cassius, and thou couldst  
not be,  
Last of the Romans, tho' thy memory  
claim  
From Brutus his own glory — and on  
thee  
Rests the full splendor of his sacred  
fame;

Nor he who dared make the foul tyrant  
 quail  
 Amid his cowering senate with thy  
 name,  
 Tho' thou and he were great — it will  
 avail  
 To thine own fame that Otho's should  
 not fail.

II.

'T will wrong thee not — thou wouldst,  
 if thou couldst feel,  
 Abjure such envious fame — great  
 Otho died  
 Like thee — he sanctified his country's  
 steel,  
 At once the tyrant and tyrannicide,  
 In his own blood — a deed it was to  
 bring  
 Tears from all men — tho' full of  
 gentle pride,  
 Such pride as from impetuous love may  
 spring,  
 That will not be refused its offering.

FRAGMENTS SUPPOSED TO  
 BE PARTS OF OTHO.

I.

THOSE whom nor power, nor lying faith,  
 nor toil,  
 Nor custom, queen of many slaves,  
 makes blind,  
 Have ever grieved that man should be  
 the spoil  
 Of his own weakness, and with earnest  
 mind  
 Fed hopes of its redemption, these recur  
 Chastened by deathful victory now,  
 and find  
 Foundations in this foulest age, and stir  
 Me whom they cheer to be their minister.

II.

Dark is the realm of grief: but human  
 things  
 Those may not know who cannot weep  
 for them.

III.

Once more descend  
 The shadows of my soul upon man-  
 kind,  
 For to those hearts with which they  
 never blend,  
 Thoughts are but shadows which the  
 flashing mind  
 From the swift clouds which track its  
 flight of fire,  
 Casts on the gloomy world it leaves  
 behind.

FRAGMENT: A CLOUD-  
 CHARIOT.

O THAT a chariot of cloud were mine!  
 Of cloud which the wild tempest  
 weaves in air,  
 When the moon over the ocean's line  
 Is spreading the locks of her bright  
 gray hair.  
 O that a chariot of cloud were mine!  
 I would sail on the waves of the bil-  
 lowy wind  
 To the mountain peak and the rocky  
 lake,  
 And the . . .

FRAGMENT: TO ONE FREED  
 FROM PRISON.

FOR me, my friend, if not that tears did  
 tremble  
 In my faint eyes, and that my heart  
 beat fast  
 With feelings which make rapture pain  
 resemble,  
 Yet, from thy voice that falsehood  
 starts aghast,  
 I thank thee — let the tyrant keep  
 His chains and tears, yea let him weep  
 With rage to see thee freshly risen,  
 Like strength from slumber, from the  
 prison,  
 In which he vainly hoped the soul to  
 bind  
 Which on the chains must prey that fet-  
 ter humankind.

## FRAGMENT: SATAN AT LARGE.

A GOLDEN-WINGED Angel stood  
 Before the Eternal Judgment-seat:  
 His looks were wild, and Devils' blood  
 Stained his dainty hands and feet.  
 The Father and the Son  
 Knew that strife was now begun.  
 They knew that Satan had broken his  
 chain,  
 And with millions of demons in his train,  
 Was ranging over the world again.  
 Before the Angel had told his tale,  
 A sweet and a creeping sound  
 Like the rushing of wings was heard  
 around;  
 And suddenly the lamps grew pale—  
 The lamps, before the Archangels seven,  
 That burn continually in heaven.

FRAGMENT: UNSATISFIED  
 DESIRE.

To thirst and find no fill—to wail and  
 wander  
 With short uneasy steps—to pause and  
 ponder—  
 To feel the blood run thro' the veins and  
 tingle  
 Where busy thought and blind sensation  
 mingle;  
 To nurse the image of unfelt caresses  
 Till dim imagination just possesses  
 The half created shadow.

## FRAGMENT: LOVE IMMORTAL.

WEALTH and dominion fade into the  
 mass  
 Of the great sea of human right and  
 wrong,  
 When once from our possession they  
 must pass;  
 But love, though misdirected, is among  
 The things which are immortal, and sur-  
 pass  
 All that frail stuff which will be—or  
 which was.

FRAGMENT: THOUGHTS IN  
 SOLITUDE.

My thoughts arise and fade in solitude,  
 The verse that would invest them  
 melts away  
 Like moonlight in the heaven of  
 spreading day:  
 How beautiful they were, how firm they  
 stood,  
 Flecking the starry sky like woven pearl!

FRAGMENT: THE FIGHT  
 WAS O'ER.

THE fight was o'er: the flashing thro'  
 the gloom  
 Which robes the cannon as he wings a  
 tomb  
 Had ceast.

## A HATE-SONG.

A HATER he came and sat by a ditch,  
 And he took an old crackt lute;  
 And he sang a song which was more of  
 a screech  
 'Gainst a woman that was a brute.

## LINES TO A CRITIC.

## I.

HONEY from silkworms who can gather,  
 Or silk from the yellow bee?  
 The grass may grow in winter weather  
 As soon as hate in me.

## II.

Hate men who cant, and men who pray,  
 And men who rail like thee;  
 An equal passion to repay  
 They are not coy like me.

## III.

Or seek some slave of power and gold,  
 To be thy dear heart's mate,

Thy love will move that bigot cold  
Sooner than me thy hate.

## IV.

A passion like the one I prove  
Cannot divided be;  
I hate thy want of truth and love —  
How should I then hate thee?

## OZYMANDIAS.

I MET a traveller from an antique land  
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs  
of stone  
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the  
sand,  
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose  
frown,  
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold com-  
mand,  
Tell that its sculptor well those passions  
read  
Which yet survive, stamp'd on these  
lifeless things,  
The hand that mockt them and the  
heart that fed:  
And on the pedestal these words appear:  
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and des-  
pair!'  
Nothing beside remains. Round the de-  
cay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and  
bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far  
away."

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1817, BY  
MRS. SHELLEY.

THE very illness that oppressed, and the aspect of death which had approached so near Shelley, appear to have kindled to yet keener life the Spirit of Poetry in his heart. The restless thoughts kept awake by pain clothed themselves in verse. Much was composed during this year. The "Revolt of Islam," written and printed, was a great effort — "Rosalind and Helen" was begun — and the

fragments and poems I can trace to the same period show how full of passion and reflection were his solitary hours.

In addition to such poems as have an intelligible aim and shape, many a stray idea and transitory emotion found imperfect and abrupt expression, and then again lost themselves in silence. As he never wandered without a book and without implements of writing, I find many such, in his manuscript books, that scarcely bear record; while some of them, broken and vague as they are, will appear valuable to those who love Shelley's mind, and desire to trace its workings.

He projected also translating the Hymns of Homer; his version of several of the shorter ones remains, as well as that to Mercury already published in the "Posthumous Poems." His readings this year were chiefly Greek. Besides the Hymns of Homer and the "Iliad," he read the Dramas of Æschylus and Sophocles, the "Symposium" of Plato, and Arrian's "Historia Indica." In Latin, Apuleius alone is named. In English, the Bible was his constant study; he read a great portion of it aloud in the evening. Among these evening readings I find also mentioned the "Faëry Queen;" and other modern works, the production of his contemporaries, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Moore, and Byron.

His life was now spent more in thought than action — he had lost the eager spirit which believed it could achieve what it projected for the benefit of mankind. And yet in the converse of daily life Shelley was far from being a melancholy man. He was eloquent when philosophy or politics or taste were the subjects of conversation. He was playful; and indulged in the wild spirit that mocked itself and others — not in bitterness, but in sport. The author of "Nightmare Abbey" seized on some points of his character and some habits of his life when he painted Scythrop. He was not addicted to "port or madeira," but in youth he had read of "Illuminati and Eleutherarchs," and believed that he possessed the power of operating an immediate change in the minds of men and

the state of society. These wild dreams had faded; sorrow and adversity had struck home; but he struggled with despondency as he did with physical pain. There are few who remember him sailing paper boats, and watching the navigation of his tiny craft with eagerness — or repeating with wild energy “The Ancient Mariner,” and Southey’s “Old Woman of Berkeley;” but those who do will recollect that it was in such, and in the creations of his own fancy when that was most daring and ideal, that he sheltered himself from the storms and disappointments, the pain and sorrow, that beset his life.

No words can express the anguish he felt when his elder children were torn from him. In his first resentment against the Chancellor, on the passing of the decree, he had written a curse, in which there breathes, besides haughty indignation, all the tenderness of a father’s love, which could imagine and fondly dwell upon its loss and the consequences.

At one time, while the question was still pending, the Chancellor had said some words that seemed to intimate that Shelley should not be permitted the care of any of his children, and for a moment he feared that our infant son would be torn from us. He did not hesitate to resolve, if such were menaced, to abandon country, fortune, everything, and to escape with his child; and I find some unfinished stanzas addressed to this son, whom afterwards we lost at Rome, written under the idea that we might suddenly be forced to cross the sea, so to preserve him. This poem, as well as the one previously quoted, were not written to exhibit the pangs of distress to the public; they were the spontaneous outbursts of a man who brooded over his wrongs and woes, and was impelled to shed the grace of his genius over the uncontrollable emotions of his heart. I ought to observe that the fourth verse of this effusion is introduced in “Rosalind and Helen.” When afterwards this child died at Rome, he wrote, *à propos* of the English burying-ground in that city: “This spot is the repository of a sacred loss, of which the

yearnings of a parent’s heart are now prophetic; he is rendered immortal by love, as his memory is by death. My beloved child lies buried here. I envy death the body far less than the oppressors the minds of those whom they have torn from me. The one can only kill the body, the other crushes the affections.

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1818.

### TO THE NILE.

MONTH after month the gathered rains  
descend

Drenching yon secret Æthiopian dells,  
And from the desert’s ice-girt pinnacles  
Where Frost and Heat in strange em-  
braces blend

On Atlas, fields of moist snow half de-  
pend.

Girt there with blasts and meteors, Tem-  
pest dwells

By Nile’s aerial urn, with rapid spells  
Urging those waters to their mighty end.  
O’er Egypt’s land of Memory floods are  
level

And they are thine, O Nile! — and well  
thou knowest

That soul-sustaining airs and blasts of  
evil

And fruits and poisons spring where’er  
thou flowest.

Beware O Man — for knowledge must to  
thee

Like the great flood to Egypt, ever be.

### PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES.

LISTEN, listen, Mary mine,  
To the whisper of the Apennine,  
It bursts on the roof like the thunder’s  
roar,

Or like the sea on a northern shore,  
Heard in its raging ebb and flow  
By the captives pent in the cave below.  
The Apennine in the light of day  
Is a mighty mountain dim and gray,  
Which between the earth and sky doth  
lay;

But when night comes, a chaos dread  
On the dim starlight then is spread,  
And the Apennine walks abroad with the  
storm.

## THE PAST.

## I.

WILT thou forget the happy hours  
Which we buried in Love's sweet bowers,  
Heaping o'er their corpses cold  
Blossoms and leaves, instead of mould?  
Blossoms which were the joys that fell,  
And leaves, the hopes that yet re-  
main.

## II.

Forget the dead, the past? O yet  
There are ghosts that may take revenge  
for it,  
Memories that make the heart a tomb,  
Regrets which glide thro' the spirit's  
gloom,  
And with ghastly whispers tell  
That joy, once lost, is pain.

## TO MARY —.

O MARY dear, that you were here,  
With your brown eyes bright and clear  
And your sweet voice, like a bird  
Singing love to its lone mate  
In the ivy bower disconsolate;  
Voice the sweetest ever heard!  
And your brow more . . .  
Than the sky  
Of this azure Italy.  
Mary dear, come to me soon,  
I am not well whilst thou art far;  
As sunset to the spherèd moon,  
As twilight to the western star,  
Thou, belovèd, art to me.

O Mary dear, that you were here;  
The Castle echo whispers "Here!"

## ON A FADED VIOLET.

## I.

THE odor from the flower is gone  
Which like thy kisses breathed on me;

The color from the flower is flown  
Which glowed of thee and only thee!

## II.

A shrivelled, lifeless, vacant form,  
It lies on my abandoned breast,  
And mocks the heart which yet is warm,  
With cold and silent rest.

## III.

I weep, — my tears revive it not!  
I sigh, — it breathes no more on me;  
Its mute and uncomplaining lot  
Is such as mine should be.

## LINES

WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN  
HILLS.

OCTOBER, 1818.

MANY a green isle needs must be  
In the deep wide sea of misery,  
Or the mariner, worn and wan,  
Never thus could voyage on  
Day and night, and night and day,  
Drifting on his dreary way,  
With the solid darkness black  
Closing round his vessel's track;  
Whilst above, the sunless sky,  
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,  
And behind the tempest fleet  
Hurries on with lightning feet,  
Riving sail, and cord, and plank,  
Till the ship has almost drank  
Death from the o'er-brimming deep;  
And sinks down, down, like that sleep  
When the dreamer seems to be  
Weltering through eternity;  
And the dim low line before  
Of a dark and distant shore  
Still recedes. as ever still  
Longing with divided will,  
But no power to seek or shun,  
He is ever drifted on  
O'er the unreposing wave  
To the haven of the grave.  
What, if there no friends will greet;  
What, if there no heart will meet  
His with love's impatient beat;

Wander wheresoe'er he may,  
 Can he dream before that day  
 To find refuge from distress  
 In friendship's smile, in love's caress?  
 Then 't will wreak him little woe  
 Whether such there be or no:  
 Senseless is the breast, and cold,  
 Which relenting love would fold;  
 Bloodless are the veins and chill  
 Which the pulse of pain did fill;  
 Every little living nerve  
 That from bitter words did swerve  
 Round the tortured lips and brow,  
 Are like sapless leaflets now  
 Frozen upon December's bough.

On the beach of a northern sea  
 Which tempests shake eternally,  
 As once the wretch there lay to sleep,  
 Lies a solitary heap,  
 One white skull and seven dry bones,  
 On the margin of the stones,  
 Where a few gray rushes stand,  
 Boundaries of the sea and land:  
 Nor is heard one voice of wail  
 But the sea-mews, as they sail  
 O'er the billows of the gale;  
 Or the whirlwind up and down  
 Howling, like a slaughtered town,  
 When a king in glory rides  
 Through the pomp of fratricides:  
 Those unburied bones around  
 There is many a mournful sound;  
 There is no lament for him,  
 Like a sunless vapor, dim,  
 Who once clothed with life and thought  
 What now moves nor murmurs not.

Ay, many flowering islands lie  
 In the waters of wide Agony:  
 To such a one this morn was led,  
 My bark by soft winds piloted:  
 Mid the mountains Euganean  
 I stood listening to the pæan,  
 With which the legioned rooks did hail  
 The sun's uprise majestic;  
 Gathering round with wings all hoar,  
 Thro' the dewy mist they soar  
 Like gray shades, till the eastern heaven  
 Bursts, and then, as clouds of even,  
 Fleckt with fire and azure, lie  
 In the unfathomable sky,  
 So their plumes of purple grain,  
 Starred with drops of golden rain,

Gleam above the sunlight woods,  
 As in silent multitudes  
 On the morning's fitful gale  
 Thro' the broken mist they sail,  
 And the vapors cloven and gleaming  
 Follow down the dark steep streaming,  
 Till all is bright, and clear, and still,  
 Round the solitary hill.

Beneath is spread like a green sea  
 The waveless plain of Lombardy,  
 Bounded by the vaporous air,  
 Isolated by cities fair;  
 Underneath day's azure eyes  
 Ocean's nursing, Venice lies,  
 A peopled labyrinth of walls,  
 Amphitrite's destined halls,  
 Which her hoary sire now paves  
 With his blue and beaming waves.  
 Lo! the sun upsprings behind,  
 Broad, red, radiant, half reclined  
 On the level quivering line  
 Of the waters crystalline;  
 And before that chasm of light,  
 As within a furnace bright,  
 Column, tower, and dome, and spire,  
 Shine like obelisks of fire,  
 Pointing with inconstant motion  
 From the altar of dark ocean  
 To the sapphire-tinted skies;  
 As the flames of sacrifice  
 From the marble shrines did rise,  
 As to pierce the dome of gold  
 Where Apollo spoke of old.

Sun-girt City, thou hast been  
 Ocean's child, and then his queen;  
 Now is come a darker day,  
 And thou soon must be his prey,  
 If the power that raised thee here  
 Hallow so thy watery bier.  
 A less drear ruin than now,  
 With thy conquest-branded brow  
 Stooping to the slave of slaves  
 From thy throne, among the waves  
 Wilt thou be, when the sea-mew  
 Flies, as once before it flew,  
 O'er thine isles depopulate,  
 And all is in its ancient state,  
 Save where many a palace gate  
 With green sea-flowers overgrown  
 Like a rock of ocean's own,  
 Topples o'er the abandoned sea  
 As the tides change sullenly.



The fisher on his watery way,  
 Wandering at the close of day,  
 Will spread his sail and seize his oar  
 Till he pass the gloomy shore,  
 Lest thy dead should, from their sleep  
 Bursting o'er the starlight deep,  
 Lead a rapid masque of death  
 O'er the waters of his path.

Those who alone thy towers behold  
 Quivering thro' ærial gold,  
 As I now behold them here,  
 Would imagine not they were  
 Sepulchres, where human forms,  
 Like pollution-nourisht worms  
 To the corpse of greatness cling,  
 Murdered, and now mouldering:  
 But if Freedom should awake  
 In her omnipotence, and shake  
 From the Celtic Anarch's hold  
 All the keys of dungeons cold,  
 Where a hundred cities lie  
 Chained like thee, ingloriously,  
 Thou and all thy sister band  
 Might adorn this sunny land,  
 Twining memories of old time  
 With new virtues more sublime;  
 If not, perish thou and they,  
 Clouds which stain truth's rising day  
 By her sun consumed away,  
 Earth can spare ye: while like flowers,  
 In the waste of years and hours,  
 From your dust new nations spring  
 With more kindly blossoming.  
 Perish — let there only be  
 Floating o'er thy heartless sea  
 As the garment of thy sky  
 Clothes the world immortally,  
 One remembrance, more sublime  
 Than the tattered pall of time,  
 Which scarce hides thy visage wan;—  
 That a tempest-cleaving Swan  
 Of the songs of Albion,  
 Driven from his ancestral streams  
 By the might of evil dreams,  
 Found a nest in thee; and Ocean  
 Welcomed him with such emotion  
 That its joy grew his, and sprung  
 From his lips like music flung  
 O'er a mighty thunder-fit  
 Chastening terror:— what tho' yet  
 Poesy's unfailing River,  
 Which thro' Albion winds forever

Lashing with melodious wave  
 Many a sacred Poet's grave,  
 Mourn its latest nursling fled?  
 What tho' thou with all thy dead  
 Scarce can for this fame repay  
 Aught thine own? oh, rather say  
 Tho' thy sins and slaveries foul  
 Overcloud a sunlike soul?  
 As the ghost of Homer clings  
 Round Scamander's wasting springs;  
 As divinest Shakespere's might  
 Fills Avon and the world with light  
 Like omniscient power which he  
 Imaged mid mortality;  
 As the love from Petrarch's urn,  
 Yet amid yon hills doth burn,  
 A quenchless lamp by which the heart  
 Sees things unearthly;— so thou art  
 Mighty spirit — so shall be  
 The City that did refuge thee.

Lo, the sun floats up the sky  
 Like thought-wingèd Liberty,  
 Till the universal light  
 Seems to level plain and height;  
 From the sea a mist has spread,  
 And the beams of morn lie dead  
 On the towers of Venice now,  
 Like its glory long ago.  
 By the skirts of that gray cloud  
 Many-domèd Padua proud  
 Stands, a peopled solitude,  
 Mid the harvest-shining plain,  
 Where the peasant heaps his grain  
 In the garner of his foe,  
 And the milk-white oxen slow  
 With the purple vintage strain,  
 Heapt upon the creaking wain,  
 That the brutal Celt may swill  
 Drunken sleep with savage will;  
 And the sickle to the sword  
 Lies unchanged, tho' many a lord,  
 Like a weed whose shade is poison,  
 Overgrows this region's foison,  
 Sheaves of whom are ripe to come  
 To destruction's harvest-home:  
 Men must reap the things they sow,  
 Force from force must ever flow,  
 Or worse; but 't is a bitter woe  
 That love or reason cannot change  
 The despot's rage, the slave's revenge.

Padua, thou within whose walls  
 Those mute guests at festivals,

Son and Mother, Death and Sin,  
 Played at dice for Ezzelin,  
 Till Death cried, "I win, I win!"  
 And Sin curst to lose the wager,  
 But Death promist, to assuage her,  
 That he would petition for  
 Her to be made Vice-Emperor,  
 When the destined years were o'er,  
 Over all between the Po  
 And the eastern Alpine snow,  
 Under the mighty Austrian.  
 Sin smiled so as Sin only can,  
 And since that time, ay, long before,  
 Both have ruled from shore to shore,  
 That incestuous pair, who follow  
 Tyrants as the sun the swallow,  
 As repentance follows Crime,  
 And as changes follow Time.

In thine halls the lamp of learning,  
 Padua, now no more is burning;  
 Like a meteor, whose wild way  
 Is lost over the grave of day,  
 It gleams betrayed and to betray:  
 Once remotest nations came  
 To adore that sacred flame,  
 When it lit not many a hearth  
 On this cold and gloomy earth:  
 Now new fires from antique light  
 Spring beneath the wide world's might;  
 But their spark lies dead in thee,  
 Trampled out by tyranny.  
 As the Norway woodman quells,  
 In the depth of piny dells,  
 One light flame among the brakes  
 While the boundless forest shakes,  
 And its mighty trunks are torn  
 By the fire thus lowly born:  
 The spark beneath his feet is dead,  
 He starts to see the flames it fed  
 Howling thro' the darkened sky  
 With a myriad tongues victoriously,  
 And sinks down in fear: so thou  
 O Tyranny! beholdest now  
 Light around thee, and thou hearest  
 The loud flames ascend, and fearest:  
 Grovel on the earth! ay, hide  
 In the dust thy purple pride!

Noon descends around me now:  
 'T is the noon of autumn's glow,  
 When a soft and purple mist  
 Like a vaporuous amethyst,

Or an air-dissolvèd star  
 Mingling light and fragrance, far  
 From the curved horizon's bound  
 To the point of heaven's profound,  
 Fills the overflowing sky;  
 And the plains that silent lie  
 Underneath, the leaves unsodden  
 Where the infant frost has trodden  
 With his morning-wingèd feet,  
 Whose bright print is gleaming yet;  
 And the red and golden vines,  
 Piercing with their trellist lines  
 The rough, dark-skirted wilderness;  
 The dun and bladed grass no less,  
 Pointing from this hoary tower  
 In the windless air; the flower  
 Glimmering at my feet; the line  
 Of the olive-sandalled Apennine  
 In the south dimly islanded:  
 And the Alps, whose snows are spread  
 High between the clouds and sun;  
 And of living things each one;  
 And my spirit which so long  
 Darkened this swift stream of song,  
 Interpenetrated lie  
 By the glory of the sky:  
 Be it love, light, harmony,  
 Odor, or the soul of all  
 Which from heaven like dew doth fall,  
 Or the mind which feeds this verse  
 Peopling the lone universe.  
 Noon descends, and after noon  
 Autumn's evening meets me soon,  
 Leading the infantine moon,  
 And that one star, which to her  
 Almost seems to minister  
 Half the crimson light she brings  
 From the sunset's radiant springs:  
 And the soft dreams of the morn  
 (Which like wingèd winds had borne  
 To that silent isle, which lies  
 Mid remembered agonies,  
 The frail bark of this lone being)  
 Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,  
 And its ancient pilot, Pain,  
 Sits beside the helm again.

Other flowering isles must be  
 In the sea of life and agony:  
 Other spirits float and flee  
 O'er that gulf: even now, perhaps,  
 On some rock the wild wave wraps,  
 With folded wings they waiting sit

For my bark, to pilot it  
 To some calm and blooming cove,  
 Where for me, and those I love,  
 May a windless bower be built,  
 Far from passion, pain, and guilt,  
 In a dell mid lawny hills,  
 Which the wild sea-murmur fills,  
 And soft sunshine, and the sound  
 Of old forests echoing round,  
 And the light and smell divine  
 Of all flowers that breathe and shine:  
 We may live so happy there,  
 That the spirits of the air,  
 Envyng us, may even entice  
 To our healing paradise  
 The polluting multitude;  
 But their rage would be subdued  
 By that clime divine and calm,  
 And the wind whose wings rain balm  
 On the uplifted soul, and leaves  
 Under which the bright sea heaves;  
 While each breathless interval  
 In their whisperings musical  
 The inspired soul supplies  
 With its own deep melodies,  
 And the love which heals all strife  
 Circling, like the breath of life,  
 All things in that sweet abode  
 With its own mild brotherhood:  
 They, not it, would change; and soon  
 Every sprite beneath the moon  
 Would repent its envy vain,  
 And the earth grow young again.

## SCENE FROM "TASSO."

MADDALO, *a Courtier.*      PIGNA, *a Minister.*  
 MALFIGLIO, *a Poet.*      ALBANO, *an Usher.*

*Maddalo.* No access to the Duke!  
 You have not said  
 That the Count Maddalo would speak  
 with him?

*Pigna.* Did you inform his Grace that  
 Signor Pigna

Waits with state papers for his signature?

*Malpiglio.* The Lady Leonora cannot  
 know

That I have written a sonnet to her fame,  
 In which I      Venus and Adonis.

You should not take my gold and serve  
 me not.

*Albano.* In truth I told her, and she  
 smiled and said,  
 "If I am Venus, thou, coy Poesy,  
 Art the Adonis whom I love, and he  
 The Erymanthian boar that wounded  
 him."

O trust to me, Signor Malpiglio,  
 Those nods and smiles were favors worth  
 the zechin.

*Malpiglio.* The words are twisted in  
 some double sense  
 That I reach not: the smiles fell not  
 on me.

*Pigna.* How are the Duke and  
 Duchess occupied?

*Albano.* Buried in some strange talk.  
 The Duke was leaning,  
 His finger on his brow, his lips unclosed.  
 The Princess sate within the window-seat,  
 And so her face was hid; but on her knee  
 Her hands were claspt, veined, and  
 pale as snow,  
 And quivering — young Tasso, too, was  
 there.

*Maddalo.* Thou seest on whom from  
 thine own worshipped heaven  
 Thou drawest down smiles — they did  
 not rain on thee.

*Malpiglio.* Would they were parch-  
 ing lightnings for his sake  
 On whom they fell!

## SONG FOR "TASSO."

## I.

I LOVED — alas! our life is love;  
 But when we cease to breathe and move  
 I do suppose love ceases too.  
 I thought, but not as now I do,  
 Keen thoughts and bright of linkèd lore,  
 Of all that men had thought before,  
 And all that nature shows, and more.

## II.

And still I love and still I think,  
 But strangely, for my heart can drink  
 The dregs of such despair, and live,  
 And love; . . .  
 And if I think, my thoughts come fast,  
 I mix the present with the past,  
 And each seems uglier than the last.

## III.

Sometimes I see before me flee  
 A silver spirit's form, like thee,  
 O Leonora, and I sit  
 . . . still watching it,  
 Till by the grated casement's ledge  
 It fades, with such a sigh, as sedge  
 Breathes o'er the breezy streamlet's edge.

## TO MISERY.

## I.

COME, be happy! — sit near me,  
 Shadow-vested Misery:  
 Coy, unwilling, silent bride,  
 Mourning in thy robe of pride,  
 Desolation — deified!

## II.

Come, be happy; — sit near me:  
 Sad as I may seem to thee,  
 I am happier far than thou,  
 Lady, whose imperial brow  
 Is endiadem'd with woe.

## III.

Misery! we have known each other,  
 Like a sister and a brother  
 Living in the same lone home,  
 Many years — we must live some  
 Hours or ages yet to come.

## IV.

'T is an evil lot, and yet  
 Let us make the best of it;  
 If love can live when pleasure dies,  
 We two will love, till in our eyes  
 This heart's Hell seem Paradise.

## V.

Come, be happy! — lie thee down  
 On the fresh grass newly mown,  
 Where the Grasshopper doth sing  
 Merrily — one joyous thing  
 In a world of sorrowing!

## VI.

There our tent shall be the willow  
 And thine arm shall be my pillow;  
 Sounds and odors sorrowful  
 Because they once were sweet, shall lull  
 Us to slumber, deep and dull.

## VII.

Ha! thy frozen pulses flutter  
 With a love thou dar'st not utter.  
 Thou art murmuring — thou art weep-  
 ing —  
 Is thine icy bosom leaping  
 While my burning heart lies sleeping?

## VIII.

Kiss me; — oh! thy lips are cold;  
 Round my neck thine arms enfold —  
 They are soft, but chill and dead;  
 And thy tears upon my head  
 Burn like points of frozen lead.

## IX.

Hasten to the bridal bed —  
 Underneath the grave 't is spread:  
 In darkness may our love be hid,  
 Oblivion be our coverlid —  
 We may rest, and none forbid.

## X.

Clasp me till our hearts be grown  
 Like two shadows into one;  
 Till this dreadful transport may  
 Like a vapor fade away  
 In the sleep that lasts always.

## XI.

We may dream, in that long sleep,  
 That we are not those who weep;  
 E'en as Pleasure dreams of thee,  
 Life-deserting Misery,  
 Thou may'st dream of her with me.

## XII.

Let us laugh, and make our mirth,  
 At the shadows of the earth,

As dogs bay the moonlight clouds,  
Which, like spectres wrapt in shrouds,  
Pass o'er night in multitudes.

## XIII.

All the wide world, beside us  
Show like multitudinous  
Puppets passing from a scene;  
What but mockery can they mean,  
Where I am — where thou hast been?

## STANZAS.

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES.

## I.

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,  
The waves are dancing fast and  
bright,  
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear  
The purple noon's transparent might,  
The breath of the moist earth is  
light,  
Around its unexpanded buds;  
Like many a voice of one delight,  
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,  
The City's voice itself is soft like Soli-  
tude's.

## II.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor  
With green and purple seaweeds  
strown;  
I see the waves upon the shore,  
Like light dissolved in star-showers,  
thrown:  
I sit upon the sands alone, —  
The lightning of the noontide ocean  
Is flashing round me, and a tone  
Arises from its measured motion,  
How sweet! did any heart now share  
in my emotion.

## III.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,  
Nor peace within nor calm around,  
Nor that content surpassing wealth  
The sage in meditation found,  
And walkt with inward glory  
crowned —

Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor  
leisure.

Others I see whom these surround —  
Smiling they live, and call life pleas-  
ure; —

To me that cup has been dealt in another  
measure.

## IV.

Yet now despair itself is mild,  
Even as the winds and waters are;  
I could lie down like a tired child,  
And weep away the life of care  
Which I have borne and yet must  
bear,  
Till death like sleep might steal on me,  
And I might feel in the warm air  
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea  
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last  
monotony.

## V.

Some might lament that I were cold,  
As I, when this sweet day is gone,  
Which my lost heart, too soon grown  
old,  
Insults with this untimely moan;  
They might lament — for I am one  
Whom men love not, — and yet regret,  
Unlike this day, which, when the  
sun  
Shall on its stainless glory set,  
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in  
memory yet.

THE WOODMAN AND THE  
NIGHTINGALE.

A WOODMAN whose rough heart was out  
of tune  
(I think such hearts yet never came to  
good)  
Hated to hear, under the stars or moon,

One nightingale in an interfluous wood  
Satiated the hungry dark with melody; —  
And as a vale is watered by a flood,

Or as the moonlight fills the open sky  
Struggling with darkness — as a tuberose

Peoples some Indian dell with scents  
which lie

Like clouds above the flower from which  
they rose,

The singing of that happy nightingale  
In this sweet forest, from the golden  
close

Of evening till the star of dawn may  
fail,

Was interfused upon the silentness;  
The folded roses and the violets pale

Heard her within their slumbers, the  
abyss

Of heaven with all its planets; the dull  
ear

Of the night-cradled earth; the loneliness

Of the circumfluous waters, — every  
sphere

And every flower and beam and cloud  
and wave,

And every wind of the mute atmosphere,

And every beast stretcht in its rugged  
cave,

And every bird lulled on its mossy bough,  
And every silver moth fresh from the  
grave,

Which is its cradle — ever from below  
Aspiring like one who loves too fair, too  
far,

To be consumed within the purest glow

Of one serene and unapproachèd star,  
As if it were a lamp of earthly light,  
Unconscious, as some human lovers are,

Itself how low, how high beyond all  
height

The heaven where it would perish! —  
and every form

That worshippt in the temple of the  
night

Was awed into delight, and by the charm  
Girt as with an interminable zone,  
Whilst that sweet bird, whose music was  
a storm

Of sound, shook forth the dull oblivion  
Out of their dreams; harmony became  
love

In every soul but one.

And so this man returned with axe and  
saw

At evening close from killing the tall  
treen,

The soul of whom by nature's gentle law

Was each a wood-nymph, and kept ever  
green

The pavement and the roof of the wild  
copse,

Checking the sunlight of the blue serene

With jagged leaves, — and from the for-  
est tops

Singing the winds to sleep — or weeping  
oft

Fast showers of aërial water drops

Into their mother's bosom, sweet and soft,  
Nature's pure tears which have no bitter-  
ness; —

Around the cradles of the birds aloft

They spread themselves into the loveli-  
ness

Of fan-like leaves, and over pallid flow-  
ers

Hang like moist clouds: — or, where  
high branches kiss,

Make a green space among the silent  
bowers,

Like a vast fane in a metropolis,  
Surrounded by the columns and the  
towers

All overwrought with branch-like trace-  
ries

In which there is religion — and the mute  
Persuasion of unkindled melodies,

Odors and gleams and murmurs, which  
the lute

Of the blind pilot-spirit of the blast  
Stirs as it sails, now grave and now acute,

Wakening the leaves and waves, ere it  
 has past  
 To such brief unison as on the brain  
 One tone, which never can recur, has  
 cast,  
 One accent never to return again.

The world is full of Woodmen who expel  
 Love's gentle Dryads from the haunts of  
 life,  
 And vex the nightingales in every dell.

MARENGHI.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

LET those who pine in pride or in re-  
 venge,  
 Or think that ill for ill should be repaid,  
 Or barter wrong for wrong, until the  
 exchange  
 Ruins the merchants of such thriftless  
 trade,  
 Visit the tower of Vado, and unlearn  
 Such bitter faith beside Marengi's urn.

## II.

A massy tower yet overhangs the town,  
 A scattered group of ruined dwellings  
 now.

## III.

Another scene ere wise Etruria knew  
 Its second ruin thro' internal strife,  
 And tyrants thro' the breach of discord  
 threw  
 The chain which binds and kills. As  
 death to life,  
 As winter to fair flowers (tho' some be  
 poison)  
 So Monarchy succeeds to Freedom's  
 foison.

<sup>1</sup> This fragment refers to an event told in Sis-  
 mondi's *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes*,  
 which occurred during the war when Florence  
 finally subdued Pisa, and reduced it to a province  
 [Mrs. Shelley].

## IV.

In Pisa's church a cup of sculptured gold  
 Was brimming with the blood of feuds  
 forsworn  
 At sacrament: more holy ne'er of old  
 Etrurians mingled with the shades for-  
 lorn  
 Of moon-illumined forests.

## V.

And reconciling factions wet their lips  
 With that dread wine, and swear to  
 keep each spirit  
 Undarkened by their country's last  
 eclipse.

## VI.

Was Florence the liberticide? that band  
 Of free and glorious brothers who had  
 planted,  
 Like a green isle mid Æthiopian sand,  
 A nation amid slaveries, disenchanting  
 Of many impious faiths — wise, just —  
 do they,  
 Does Florence, gorge the sated tyrants'  
 prey?

## VII.

O foster-nurse of man's abandoned glory,  
 Since Athens, its great mother, sunk  
 in splendor;  
 Thou shadowest forth that mighty shape  
 in story,  
 As ocean its wreckt fanes, severe yet  
 tender: —  
 The light-invested angel Poesy  
 Was drawn from the dim world to wel-  
 come thee.

## VIII.

And thou in painting didst transcribe all  
 taught  
 By loftiest meditations; marble knew  
 The sculptor's fearless soul — and as he  
 wrought  
 The grace of his own power and free-  
 dom grew.

And more than all, heroic, just, sublime,  
Thou wert among the false — was this  
thy crime?

## IX.

Yes; and on Pisa's marble walls the  
twine  
Of direst weeds hangs garlanded —  
the snake  
Inhabits its wrecked palaces; — in thine  
A beast of subtler venom now doth  
make  
Its lair, and sits amid their glories over-  
thrown,  
And thus thy victim's fate is as thine  
own.

## X.

The sweetest flowers are ever frail and  
rare,  
And love and freedom blossom but to  
wither;  
And good and ill like vines entangled  
are,  
So that their grapes may oft be pluckt  
together; —  
Divide the vintage ere thou drink, then  
make  
Thy heart rejoice for dead Marengi's  
sake.

## XI.

No record of his crime remains in story,  
But if the morning bright as evening  
shone,  
It was some high and holy deed, by glory  
Pursued into forgetfulness, which won  
From the blind crowd he made secure  
and free  
The patriot's meed, toil, death, and in-  
famy.

## XII.

For when by sound of trumpet was de-  
clared  
A price upon his life, and there was set  
A penalty of blood on all who shared  
So much of water with him as might wet  
His lips, which speech divided not — he  
went  
Alone, as you may guess, to banishment.

## XIII.

Amid the mountains, like a hunted beast,  
He hid himself, and hunger, toil, and  
cold,  
Month after month endured; it was a  
feast  
Whene'er he found those globes of  
deep-red gold  
Which in the woods the strawberry-tree  
doth bear,  
Suspended in their emerald atmosphere.

## XIV.

And in the roofless huts of vast morasses,  
Deserted by the fever-stricken serf,  
All overgrown with reeds and long rank  
grasses,  
And hillocks heapt of moss-inwoven  
turf,  
And where the huge and speckled aloe  
made,  
Rooted in stones, a broad and pointed  
shade,

## XV.

He housed himself. There is a point of  
strand  
Near Vado's tower and town; and on  
one side  
The treacherous marsh divides it from  
the land,  
Shadowed by pine and ilex forests  
wide,  
And on the other creeps eternally,  
Thro' muddy weeds, the shallow sul-  
len sea.

## XVI.

Here the earth's breath is pestilence, and  
few  
But things whose nature is at war with  
life —  
Snakes and ill worms — endure its mor-  
tal dew.  
The trophies of the clime's victorious  
strife —  
White bones, and locks of dun and yel-  
low hair,  
And ringed horns which buffaloes did  
wear —

. . . . .



## XVII.

And at the utmost point stood there  
 The relics of a weed-inwoven cot,  
 Thatcht with broad flags. An outlawed  
 murderer  
 Had lived seven days there; the pur-  
 suit was hot  
 When he was cold. The birds that  
 were his grave  
 Fell dead upon their feast in Vado's wave.

## XVIII.

There must have lived within Marengi's  
 heart  
 That fire, more warm and bright than  
 life or hope,  
 (Which to the martyr makes his dun-  
 geon . . .  
 More joyous than the heaven's majes-  
 tic cope  
 To his oppressor), warring with decay,—  
 Or he could ne'er have lived years, day  
 by day.

## XIX.

Nor was his state so lone as you might  
 think.  
 He had tamed every newt and snake  
 and toad,  
 And every seagull which sailed down to  
 drink  
 Those . . . ere the death-mist went  
 abroad.  
 And each one, with peculiar talk and play,  
 Wiled, not untaught, his silent time away.

## XX.

And the marsh-meteors, like tame beasts,  
 at night  
 Came licking with blue tongues his  
 veined feet;  
 And he would watch them, as, like  
 spirits bright,  
 In many entangled figures quaint and  
 sweet  
 To some enchanted music they would  
 dance—  
 Until they vanisht at the first moon-  
 glance.

## XXI.

He mockt the stars by grouping on each  
 weed  
 The summer dewdrops in the golden  
 dawn;  
 And, ere the hoar-frost vanisht, he could  
 read  
 Its pictured footprints, as on spots of  
 lawn  
 Its delicate brief touch in silence weaves  
 The likeness of the wood's remembered  
 leaves.

## XXII.

And many a fresh Spring-morn would he  
 awaken—  
 While yet the unrisen sun made glow,  
 like iron  
 Quivering in crimson fire, the peaks un-  
 shaken  
 Of mountains and blue isles which did  
 environ  
 With air-clad crags that plain of land  
 and sea,—  
 And feel liberty.

## XXIII.

And in the moonless nights, when the  
 dim ocean  
 Heaved underneath the heaven . . .  
 Starting from dreams . . .  
 Communed with the immeasurable  
 world:  
 And felt his life beyond his limbs dilated,  
 Till his mind grew like that it contem-  
 plated.

## XXIV.

His food was the wild fig and strawberry;  
 The milky pine-nuts which the autumnal  
 blast  
 Shakes into the tall grass; and such  
 small fry  
 As from the sea by winter-storms are  
 cast;  
 And the coarse bulbs of iris-flowers he  
 found  
 Knotted in clumps under the spongy  
 ground.

## XXV.

And so were kindled powers and thoughts  
 which made  
 His solitude less dark. When mem-  
 ory came  
 (For years gone by leave each a deepening  
 shade),  
 His spirit baskt in its internal flame —  
 As, when the black storm hurries round  
 at night,  
 The fisher basks beside his red firelight.

## XXVI.

Yet human hopes and cares and faiths  
 and errors,  
 Like billows unawakened by the wind,  
 Slept in Marengi still; but that all  
 terrors,  
 Weakness, and doubt, had withered in  
 his mind.  
 His couch . . .

## XXVII.

And, when he saw beneath the sunset's  
 planet  
 A black ship walk over the crimson  
 ocean, —  
 Its pennons streaming on the blasts that  
 fan it,  
 Its sails and ropes all tense and with-  
 out motion,  
 Like the dark ghost of the unburied even  
 Striding across the orange-colored  
 heaven, —

## XXVIII.

The thought of his own kind who made  
 the soul  
 Which sped that wingèd shape thro'  
 night and day, —  
 The thought of his own country . . .

## SONNET.

LIFT not the painted veil which those  
 who live  
 Call Life: tho' unreal shapes be pic-  
 tured there,

And it but mimic all we would believe  
 With colors idly spread, — behind, lurk  
 Fear  
 And Hope, twin destinies; who ever  
 weave  
 Their shadows, o'er the chasm, sightless  
 and drear.  
 I knew one who had lifted it — he sought,  
 For his lost heart was tender, things to  
 love,  
 But found them not, alas! nor was there  
 aught  
 The world contains, the which he could  
 approve.  
 Thro' the unheeding many he did  
 move,  
 A splendor among shadows, a bright  
 blot  
 Upon this gloomy scene, a Spirit that  
 strove  
 For truth, and like the Preacher found  
 it not.

## FRAGMENT: TO BYRON.

O MIGHTY mind, in whose deep stream  
 this age  
 Shakes like a reed in the unheeding storm,  
 Why dost thou curb not thine own sacred  
 rage?

FRAGMENT: APPEAL TO  
SILENCE.

SILENCE! O well are Death and Sleep  
 and Thou  
 Three brethren named, the guardians  
 gloomy-winged  
 Of one abyss, where life, and truth, and  
 joy  
 Are swallowed up — yet spare me, Spirit,  
 pity me,  
 Until the sounds I hear become my  
 soul,  
 And it has left these faint and weary  
 limbs,  
 To track along the lapses of the air  
 This wandering melody until it rests  
 Among lone mountains in some . . .

FRAGMENT: THE STREAM'S  
MARGIN.

THE fierce beasts of the woods and wil-  
dernesses  
Track not the steps of him who drinks  
of it:  
For the light breezes, which forever fleet  
Around its margin, heap the sand thereon.

FRAGMENT: A LOST LEADER.

MY head is wild with weeping for a grief  
Which is the shadow of a gentle mind.  
I walk into the air (but no relief  
To seek, — or haply, if I sought, to  
find;  
It came unsought); — to wonder that a  
chief  
Among men's spirits should be cold  
and blind.

FRAGMENT: THE VINE AMID  
RUINS.

FLOURISHING vine, whose kindling clus-  
ters glow  
Beneath the autumnal sun, none taste  
of thee;  
For thou dost shroud a ruin, and below  
The rotting bones of dead antiquity.

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1818, BY  
MRS. SHELLEY.

WE often hear of persons disappointed  
by a first visit to Italy. This was not  
Shelley's case. The aspect of its nature,  
its sunny sky, its majestic storms, of the  
luxuriant vegetation of the country, and  
the noble marble-built cities, enchanted  
him. The sight of the works of art was  
full of enjoyment and wonder. He had  
not studied pictures or statues before; he  
now did so with the eye of taste, that re-  
ferred not to the rules of schools, but to  
those of Nature and truth. The first en-  
trance to Rome opened to him a scene of

remains of antique grandeur that far  
surpassed his expectations; and the un-  
speakable beauty of Naples and its envi-  
rons added to the impression he received  
of the transcendent and glorious beauty  
of Italy.

Our winter was spent at Naples. Here  
he wrote the fragments of "Marengi"  
and "The Woodman and the Nightin-  
gale," which he afterwards threw aside.  
At this time, Shelley suffered greatly in  
health. He put himself under the care  
of a medical man, who promised great  
things, and made him endure severe bodily  
pain, without any good results. Constant  
and poignant physical suffering exhausted  
him; and though he preserved the appear-  
ance of cheerfulness, and often greatly  
enjoyed our wanderings in the environs  
of Naples, and our excursions on its sunny  
sea, yet many hours were passed when  
his thoughts, shadowed by illness, became  
gloomy, — and then he escaped to soli-  
tude, and in verses, which he hid for fear  
of wounding me, poured forth morbid  
but too natural bursts of discontent and  
sadness. One looks back with unspeak-  
able regret and gnawing remorse to such  
periods; fancying that, had one been more  
alive to the nature of his feelings, and  
more attentive to soothe them, such would  
not have existed. And yet, enjoying as  
he appeared to do every sight or influ-  
ence of earth and sky, it was difficult to  
imagine that any melancholy he showed  
was aught but the effect of the constant  
pain to which he was a martyr.

We lived in utter solitude. And such  
is often not the nurse of cheerfulness; for  
then, at least with those who have been  
exposed to adversity, the mind broods  
over its sorrows too intently; while the  
society of the enlightened, the witty, and  
the wise, enables us to forget ourselves  
by making us the sharers of the thoughts  
of others, which is a portion of the phi-  
losophy of happiness. Shelley never  
liked society in numbers, — it harassed  
and wearied him; but neither did he like  
loneliness, and usually, when alone, shel-  
tered himself against memory and reflec-  
tion in a book. But, with one or two  
whom he loved, he gave way to wild and

joyous spirits, or in more serious conversation expounded his opinions with vivacity and eloquence. If an argument arose, no man ever argued better. He was clear, logical, and earnest in supporting his own views; attentive, patient, and impartial while listening to those on the adverse side. Had not a wall of prejudice been raised at this time between him and his countrymen, how many would have sought the acquaintance of one whom to know was to love and to revere! How many of the more enlightened of his contemporaries have since regretted that they did not seek him! how very few knew his worth while he lived! and, of those few, several were withheld by timidity or envy from declaring their sense of it. But no man was ever more enthusiastically loved — more looked up to, as one superior to his fellows in intellectual endowments and moral worth, by the few who knew him well, and had sufficient nobleness of soul to appreciate his superiority. His excellence is now acknowledged; but, even while admitted, not duly appreciated. For who, except those who were acquainted with him, can imagine his unwearied benevolence, his generosity, his systematic forbearance? And still less is his vast superiority in intellectual attainments sufficiently understood — his sagacity, his clear understanding, his learning, his prodigious memory. All these, as displayed in conversation, were known to few while he lived, and are now silent in the tomb: —

“Ahi orbo mondo ingrato!  
Gran cagion hai di dover pianger meco,  
Chè quel ben ch' era in te perduto hai seco.”

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1819.

### LINES WRITTEN DURING THE CASTLEREAGH ADMINISTRATION.

#### I.

CORPSES are cold in the tomb;  
Stones on the pavement are dumb;  
Abortions are dead in the womb,

And their mothers look pale — like the  
white shore  
Of Albion, free no more.

#### II.

Her sons are as stones in the way —  
They are masses of senseless clay —  
They are trodden, and move not away, —  
The abortion with which she travaileth  
Is Liberty, smitten to death.

#### III.

Then trample and dance, thou Oppressor!  
For thy victim is no redresser;  
Thou art sole lord and possessor  
Of her corpses, and clods, and abortions  
— they pave  
Thy path to the grave.

#### IV.

Hearest thou the festival din  
Of Death, and Destruction, and Sin,  
And Wealth crying *Havoc!* within?  
'T is the bacchanal triumph which makes  
Truth dumb,  
Thine epithalamium.

#### V.

Ay, marry thy ghastly wife!  
Let Fear and Disquiet and Strife  
Spread thy couch in the chamber of  
Life!  
Marry Ruin, thou Tyrant, and God be  
thy guide  
To the bed of the bride!

### SONG TO THE MEN OF ENGLAND.

#### I.

MEN of England, wherefore plough  
For the lords who lay ye low?  
Wherefore weave with toil and care  
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

#### II.

Wherefore feed, and clothe, and save,  
From the cradle to the grave,  
Those ungrateful drones who would  
Drain your sweat — nay, drink your  
blood?

## III.

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge  
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,  
That these stingless drones may spoil  
The forced produce of your toil?

## IV.

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,  
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?  
Or what is it ye buy so dear  
With your pain and with your fear?

## v.

The seed ye sow, another reaps;  
The wealth ye find, another keeps;  
The robes ye weave, another wears;  
The arms ye forge, another bears.

## VI.

Sow seed, — but let no tyrant reap;  
Find wealth, — let no impostor heap;  
Weave robes, — let not the idle wear;  
Forge arms, — in your defence to bear.

## VII.

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells;  
In halls ye deck another dwells.  
Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye  
see  
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

## VIII.

With plough and spade, and hoe and  
loom,  
Trace your grave, and build your tomb,  
And weave your winding-sheet, till fair  
England be your sepulchre.

SIMILES FOR TWO POLITICAL  
CHARACTERS OF 1819.

(SIDMOUTH AND CASTLEREAGH.)

## I.

As from an ancestral oak  
Two empty ravens sound their clarion,  
Yell by yell, and croak by croak,  
When they scent the noonday smoke  
Of fresh human carrion: —

## II.

As two gibbering night-birds flit  
From their bowers of deadly yew  
Thro' the night to frighten it,  
When the moon is in a fit,  
And the stars are none, or few: —

## III.

As a shark and dog-fish wait  
Under an Atlantic isle,  
For the negro-ship, whose freight  
Is the theme of their debate,  
Wrinkling their red gills the while —

## IV.

Are ye, two vultures, sick for battle,  
Two scorpions under one wet stone,  
Two bloodless wolves whose dry throats  
rattle,  
Two crows percht on the murrained  
cattle,  
Two vipers tangled into one.

FRAGMENT: TO THE PEOPLE  
OF ENGLAND.

PEOPLE of England, ye who toil and  
groan,  
Who reap the harvests which are not  
your own,  
Who weave the clothes which your op-  
pressors wear,  
And for your own take the inclement air;  
Who build warm houses . . .  
And are like gods who give them all they  
have,  
And nurse them from the cradle to the  
grave . . .  
. . . . .

FRAGMENT: "WHAT MEN GAIN  
FAIRLY."<sup>1</sup>

WHAT men gain fairly — that they should  
possess,  
And children may inherit idleness,

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps connected with that immediately preceding. — ED.

From him who earns it — This is understood:

Private injustice may be general good.  
But he who gains by base and armèd wrong,

Or guilty fraud, or base compliances,  
May be despoiled; even as a stolen dress  
Is stript from a convicted thief, and he  
Left in the nakedness of infamy.

## A NEW NATIONAL ANTHEM.

### I.

God prosper, speed, and save,  
God raise from England's grave  
Her murdered Queen!

Pave with swift victory  
The steps of Liberty,  
Whom Britons own to be  
Immortal Queen.

### II.

See, she comes throned on high,  
On swift Eternity!

God save the Queen!  
Millions on millions wait  
Firm, rapid, and elate,  
On her majestic state!  
God save the Queen!

### III.

She is thine own pure soul  
Moulding the mighty whole, —  
God save the Queen!  
She is thine own deep love  
Rained down from heaven above, —  
Wherever she rest or move,  
God save our Queen!

### IV.

Wilder her enemies  
In their own dark disguise, —  
God save our Queen!  
All earthly things that dare  
Her sacred name to bear,  
Strip them, as kings are, bare;  
God save the Queen!

### V.

Be her eternal throne  
Built in our hearts alone —  
God save the Queen!

Let the oppressor hold  
Canopied seats of gold;  
She sits enthroned of old  
O'er our hearts Queen.

### VI.

Lips toucht by seraphim  
Breathe out the choral hymn  
"God save the Queen!"  
Sweet as if angels sang,  
Loud as that trumpet's clang  
Wakening the world's dead gang, —  
God save the Queen!

## SONNET: ENGLAND IN 1819.

AN old, mad, blind, despised, and dying  
king, —  
Princes, the dregs of their dull race,  
who flow  
Thro' public scorn, — mud from a muddy  
spring, —  
Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor  
know,  
But leech-like to their fainting country  
cling,  
Till they drop, blind in blood, without a  
blow, —  
A people starved and stabbed in the un-  
tilled field, —  
An army, which liberticide and prey  
Makes as a two-edged sword to all who  
wield  
Golden and sanguine laws which tempt  
and slay;  
Religion Christless, Godless — a book  
sealed;  
A Senate, — Time's worst statute unre-  
pealed, —  
Are graves, from which a glorious Phan-  
tom may  
Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

## AN ODE: TO THE ASSERTORS OF LIBERTY.

ARISE, arise, arise!  
There is blood on the earth that denies  
ye bread;  
Be your wounds like eyes  
To weep for the dead, the dead, the  
dead.

What other grief were it just to pay?  
Your sons, your wives, your brethren,  
were they;  
Who said they were slain on the battle  
day?

Awaken, awaken, awaken!

The slave and the tyrant are twin-born  
foes;

Be the cold chains shaken

To the dust where your kindred re-  
pose, repose:

Their bones in the grave will start and  
move,

When they hear the voices of those they  
love,

Most loud in the holy combat above.

Wave, wave high the banner!

When Freedom is riding to conquest  
by:

Tho' the slaves that fan her

Be Famine and Toil, giving sigh for  
sigh.

And ye who attend her imperial car,  
Lift not your hands in the banded war,  
But in her defence whose children ye are.

Glory, glory, glory,

To those who have greatly suffered and  
done!

Never name in story

Was greater than that which ye shall  
have won.

Conquerors have conquered their foes  
alone,

Whose revenge, pride, and power they  
have overthrown:

Ride ye, more victorious, over your own.

Bind, bind every brow

With crownals of violet, ivy, and pine,  
Hide the blood-stains now

With hues which sweet nature has  
made divine:

Green strength, azure hope, and eternity:  
But let not the pansy among them be;

Ye were injured, and that means mem-  
ory.

#### CANCELLED STANZA.

GATHER, O gather,  
Foeman and friend in love and peace!

Waves sleep together  
When the blasts that called them to  
battle, cease.  
For fangless power grown tame and mild  
Is at play with Freedom's fearless child—  
The dove and the serpent reconciled!

#### ODE TO HEAVEN.

##### CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

##### *First Spirit.*

PALACE-ROOF of cloudless nights!  
Paradise of golden lights!

Deep, immeasurable, vast,  
Which art now, and which wert then

Of the present and the past,  
Of the eternal where and when,

Presence-chamber, temple, home,  
Ever-canopying dome,

Of acts and ages yet to come!

Glorious shapes have life in thee,  
Earth, and all earth's company;

Living globes which ever throng  
Thy deep chasms and wildernesses;

And green worlds that glide along;  
And swift stars with flashing tresses;

And icy moons most cold and bright,  
And mighty suns beyond the night,

Atoms of intensest light.

Even thy name is as a god,  
Heaven! for thou art the abode

Of that power which is the glass  
Wherein man his nature sees.

Generations as they pass  
Worship thee with bended knees.

Their unremaining gods and they  
Like a river roll away:

Thou remainest such alway.

##### *Second Spirit.*

Thou art but the mind's first chamber,  
Round which its young fancies clamber,

Like weak insects in a cave,  
Lighted up by stalactites;

But the portal of the grave,  
Where a world of new delights

Will make thy best glories seem  
But a dim and noontday gleam

From the shadow of a dream!

*Third Spirit.*

Peace! the abyss is wreathed with scorn  
At your presumption, atom-born!

What is heaven? and what are ye  
Who its brief expanse inherit?

What are suns and spheres which flee  
With the instinct of that spirit  
Of which ye are but a part?

Drops which Nature's mighty heart  
Drives through thinnest veins! De-  
part!

What is heaven? a globe of dew,  
Filling in the morning new  
Some eyed flower whose young leaves  
waken

On an unimagined world:  
Constellated suns unshaken,  
Orbits measureless, are furled  
In that frail and fading sphere,  
With ten millions gathered there,  
To tremble, gleam, and disappear.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of  
Autumn's being,  
Thou, from whose unseen presence the  
leaves dead  
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchan-  
ter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic  
red,  
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,  
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

<sup>1</sup> This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions.

The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it.

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold  
and low,

Each like a corpse within its grave, until  
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth,  
and fill

(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed  
in air)

With living hues and odors plain and  
hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving every-  
where;

Destroyer and preserver; hear, O hear!

## II.

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep  
sky's commotion,

Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves  
are shed,

Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven  
and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are  
spread

On the blue surface of thine airy surge,  
Like the bright hair uplifted from the  
head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the  
dim verge

Of the horizon to the zenith's height  
The locks of the approaching storm.  
Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing  
night

Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,  
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere  
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst:  
Oh hear!

## III.

Thou who didst waken from his summer  
dreams

The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,  
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline  
streams,



Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,  
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers  
Quivering within the wave's intenser  
day,

All overgrown with azure moss and  
flowers

So sweet, the sense faints picturing them!  
Thou

For whose path the Atlantic's level  
powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far  
below

The sea-blooms and the oozy woods  
which wear

The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with  
fear,

And tremble and despoil themselves.  
Oh hear!

## IV.

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;  
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;  
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and  
share

The impulse of thy strength, only less  
free

Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even  
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over  
heaven,

As then, when to outstrip thy skyey  
speed

Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er  
have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore  
need.

Oh lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!  
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and  
bowed

One too like thee: tameless, and swift,  
and proud.

## V.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:  
What if my leaves are falling like its  
own!

The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep autumnal  
tone,

Sweet tho' in sadness. Be thou, spirit  
fierce,

My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the uni-  
verse

Like withered leaves to quicken a new  
birth!

And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth  
Ashes and sparks, my words among man-  
kind!

Be thro' my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O, wind,  
If Winter comes, can Spring be far be-  
hind?

## AN EXHORTATION.

CHAMELEONS feed on light and air:

Poets' food is love and fame:

If in this wide world of care

Poets could but find the same

With as little toil as they,

Would they ever change their hue

As the light chameleons do,

Suiting it to every ray

Twenty times a day?

Poets are on this cold earth,

As chameleons might be,

Hidden from their early birth

In a cave beneath the sea;

Where light is, chameleons change:

Where love is not, poets do:

Fame is love disguised: if few

Find either never think it strange

That poets range.

Yet dare not stain with wealth or power

A poet's free and heavenly mind:

If bright chameleons should devour

Any food but beams and wind,

They would grow as earthly soon

As their brother lizards are.

Children of a sunnier star,

Spirits from beyond the moon,

Oh refuse the boon!

## THE INDIAN SERENADE.

## I.

I ARISE from dreams of thee  
 In the first sweet sleep of night,  
 When the winds are breathing low,  
 And the stars are shining bright:  
 I arise from dreams of thee,  
 And a spirit in my feet  
 Hath led me — who knows how!  
 To thy chamber window, Sweet!

## II.

The wandering airs they faint  
 On the dark, the silent stream —  
 And the champak odors fail  
 Like sweet thoughts in a dream;  
 The nightingale's complaint,  
 It dies upon her heart; —  
 As I must on thine,  
 Oh! belovèd as thou art!

## III.

Oh lift me from the grass!  
 I die! I faint! I fail!  
 Let thy love in kisses rain  
 On my lips and eyelids pale.  
 My cheek is cold and white, alas!  
 My heart beats loud and fast; —  
 Oh! press it to thine own again,  
 Where it will break at last.

CANCELLED PASSAGE OF THE  
INDIAN SERENADE.

O PILLOW cold and wet with tears!  
 Thou breathest sleep no more!

## TO SOPHIA [MISS STACEY].

## I.

THOU art fair, and few are fairer  
 Of the nymphs of earth or ocean;  
 They are robes that fit the wearer —  
 Those soft limbs of thine, whose mo-  
 tion  
 Ever falls and shifts and glances  
 As the life within them dances.

## II.

Thy deep eyes, a double Planet,  
 Gaze the wisest into madness  
 With soft clear fire, — the winds that  
 fan it  
 Are those thoughts of tender gladness  
 Which, like Zephyrs on the billow,  
 Make thy gentle soul their pillow.

## III.

If, whatever face thou paintest  
 In those eyes grows pale with pleasure,  
 If the fainting soul is faintest  
 When it hears thy harp's wild measure,  
 Wonder not that when thou speakest  
 Of the weak my heart is weakest.

## IV.

As dew beneath the wind of morning,  
 As the sea which Whirlwinds waken,  
 As the birds at thunder's warning,  
 As aught mute yet deeply shaken,  
 As one who feels an unseen spirit  
 Is mine heart when thine is near it.

## TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

(With what truth I may say —  
 Roma! Roma! Roma!  
 Non è più come era prima!)

## I.

My lost William, thou in whom  
 Some bright spirit lived, and did  
 That decaying robe consume  
 Which its lustre faintly hid,  
 Here its ashes find a tomb,  
 But beneath this pyramid  
 Thou art not — if a thing divine  
 Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine  
 Is thy mother's grief and mine.

## II.

Where art thou, my gentle child!  
 Let me think thy spirit feeds,  
 With its life intense and mild,  
 The love of living leaves and weeds,  
 Among these tombs and ruins wild: —  
 Let me think that thro' low seeds

Of sweet flowers and sunny grass,  
 Into their hues and scents may pass  
 A portion —

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

THY little footsteps on the sands  
 Of a remote and lonely shore;  
 The twinkling of thine infant hands,  
 Where now the worm will feed no  
 more:  
 Thy mingled look of love and glee  
 When we returned to gaze on thee.

TO MARY SHELLEY.

MY dearest Mary, wherefore hast thou  
 gone,  
 And left me in this dreary world alone!  
 Thy form is here indeed — a lovely one —  
 But thou art fled, gone down the dreary  
 road,  
 That leads to Sorrow's most obscure  
 abode.  
 Thou' sittest on the hearth of pale de-  
 spair,  
 Where  
 For thine own sake I cannot follow thee.

TO MARY SHELLEY.

THE world is dreary,  
 And I am weary  
 Of wandering on without thee, Mary;  
 A joy was erewhile  
 In thy voice and thy smile,  
 And 't is gone, when I should be gone  
 too, Mary.

ON THE MEDUSA OF LEONARDO  
 DA VINCI IN THE FLOREN-  
 TINE GALLERY.

I.

IT lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,  
 Upon the cloudy mountain peak su-  
 pine;  
 Below, far lands are seen tremblingly;  
 Its horror and its beauty I divine.

Upon its lips and eyelids seems to lie  
 Loveliness like a shadow, from which  
 shine,  
 Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,  
 The agonies of anguish and of death.

II.

Yet it is less the horror than the grace  
 Which turns the gazer's spirit into  
 stone;  
 Whereon the lineaments of that dead  
 face  
 Are graven, till the characters be grown  
 Into itself, and thought no more can trace;  
 'T is the melodious hue of beauty  
 thrown  
 Athwart the darkness and the glare of  
 pain,  
 Which humanize and harmonize the  
 strain.

III.

And from its head as from one body grow,  
 As grass out of a watery rock,  
 Hairs which are vipers, and they curl  
 and flow  
 And their long tangles in each other  
 lock,  
 And with unending involutions show  
 Their mailed radiance, as it were to  
 mock  
 The torture and the death within, and  
 saw  
 The solid air with many a ragged jaw.

IV.

And from a stone beside, a poisonous eft  
 Peeps idly into those Gorgonian eyes;  
 Whilst in the air a ghastly bat, bereft  
 Of sense, has flitted with a mad sur-  
 prise  
 Out of the cave this hideous light had  
 cleft,  
 And he comes hastening like a moth  
 that hies  
 After a taper; and the midnight sky  
 Flares, a light more dread than obscurity.

V.

'T is the tempestuous loveliness of terror;  
 For from the serpents gleams a brazen  
 glare  
 Kindled by that inextricable error,

Which makes a thrilling vapor of the  
air  
Become a           and ever-shifting mirror  
Of all the beauty and the terror there—  
A woman's countenance, with serpent  
locks,  
Gazing in death on heaven from those  
wet rocks.

### LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY.

#### I.

THE Fountains mingle with the River  
And the Rivers with the Ocean,  
The winds of Heaven mix for ever  
With a sweet emotion;  
Nothing in the world is single,  
All things by a law divine  
In one spirit meet and mingle.  
Why not I with thine? —

#### II.

See the mountains kiss high heaven  
And the waves clasp one another;  
No sister-flower would be forgiven  
If it disdained its brother,  
And the sunlight clasps the earth  
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:  
What is all this sweet work worth  
If thou kiss not me?

### FRAGMENT: "FOLLOW TO THE DEEP WOOD'S WEEDS."

FOLLOW to the deep wood's weeds,  
Follow to the wild briar dingle,  
Where we seek to intermingle,  
And the violet tells her tale  
To the odor-scented gale,  
For they two have enough to do  
Of such work as I and you.

### THE BIRTH OF PLEASURE.

AT the creation of the Earth  
Pleasure, that divinest birth,  
From the soil of Heaven did rise,  
Wrapt in sweet wild melodies—

Like an exhalation wreathing  
To the sound of air low-breathing  
Thro' Æolian pines which make  
A shade and shelter to the lake  
Whence it rises soft and slow;  
Her life-breathing [limbs] did flow  
In the harmony divine  
Of an ever-lengthening line  
Which enwrapt her perfect form  
With a beauty clear and warm.

### FRAGMENT: LOVE THE UNIVERSE.

AND who feels discord now or sorrow?  
Love is the universe to-day—  
These are the slaves of dim to-morrow,  
Darkening Life's labyrinthine way.

### FRAGMENT: "A GENTLE STORY OF TWO LOVERS YOUNG."

A GENTLE story of two lovers young,  
Who met in innocence and died in sor-  
row,  
And of one selfish heart, whose rancor  
clung  
Like curses on them; are ye slow to  
borrow,  
The lore of truth from such a tale?  
Or in this world's deserted vale,  
Do ye not see a star of gladness  
Pierce the shadow of its sadness,  
When ye are cold, that love is a light  
sent  
From Heaven, which none shall quench,  
to cheer the innocent?

### FRAGMENT: LOVE'S ATMOS- PHERE.

THERE is a warm and gentle atmosphere  
About the form of one we love, and  
thus  
As in a tender mist our spirits are  
Wrapt in the           of that which is  
to us  
The health of life's own life.

## FRAGMENT: FELLOWSHIP OF SOULS.

I AM as a spirit who has dwelt  
 Within his heart of hearts, and I have  
 felt  
 His feelings, and have thought his  
 thoughts, and known  
 The inmost converse of his soul, the  
 tone  
 Unheard but in the silence of his blood,  
 When all the pulses in their multitude  
 Image the trembling calm of summer  
 seas.

I have unlockt the golden melodies  
 Of his deep soul, as with a master-key,  
 And loosened them and bathed myself  
 therein —

(Even as an eagle in a thunder-mist  
 Clothing his wings with lightning.)

## FRAGMENT: REMINISCENCE AND DESIRE.

Is it that in some brighter sphere  
 We part from friends we meet with here?  
 Or do we see the Future pass  
 Over the Present's dusky glass?  
 Or what is that that makes us seem  
 To patch up fragments of a dream,  
 Part of which comes true, and part  
 Beats and trembles in the heart?)

## FRAGMENT: FOREBODINGS.

Is not to-day enough? Why do I peer  
 Into the darkness of the day to come?  
 Is not to-morrow even as yesterday?  
 And will the day that follows change  
 thy doom?

Few flowers grow upon thy wintry way;  
 And who waits for thee in that cheer-  
 less home

Whence thou hast fled, whither thou must  
 return

Charged with the load that makes thee  
 faint and mourn?

## FRAGMENT: VISITATIONS OF CALM THOUGHTS.

YE gentle visitations of calm thought —  
 Moods like the memories of happier  
 earth,  
 Which come arrayed in thoughts of lit-  
 tle worth,  
 Like stars in clouds by the weak winds  
 enwrought,  
 But that the clouds depart and stars  
 remain,  
 While they remain, and ye, alas, depart!

## FRAGMENT: POETRY AND MUSIC.

How sweet it is to sit and read the tales  
 Of mighty poets and to hear the while  
 Sweet music, which when the attention  
 fails  
 Fills the dim pause — )

## FRAGMENT: THE TOMB OF MEMORY.

AND where is truth? On tombs? for  
 such to thee  
 Has been my heart — and thy dead  
 memory  
 Has lain from childhood, many a change-  
 ful year —  
 Unchangingly preserved and buried there.

## FRAGMENT: SONG OF THE FURIES.

I.

WHEN a lover clasps his fairest,  
 Then be our dread sport the rarest,  
 Their caresses were like the chaff  
 In the tempest, and be our laugh  
 His despair — her epitaph!

## II.

When a mother clasps her child,  
 Watch till dusty Death has piled  
 His cold ashes on the clay;  
 She has loved it many a day —  
 She remains, — it fades away.

FRAGMENT: "WAKE THE  
SERPENT NOT."

WAKE the serpent not — lest he  
 Should not know the way to go, —  
 Let him crawl which yet lies sleeping  
 Thro' the deep grass of the meadow;  
 Not a bee shall hear him creeping,  
 Not a may-fly shall awaken  
 From its cradling blue-bell shaken,  
 Not the starlight as he's sliding  
 Thro' the grass with silent gliding.

## FRAGMENT: RAIN AND WIND.

THE fitful alternations of the rain,  
 When the chill wind, languid as with pain  
 Of its own heavy moisture, here and  
 there  
 Drives thro' the gray and beamless at-  
 mosphere.

## FRAGMENT: A TALE UNTOLD.

ONE sung of thee who left the tale un-  
 told,  
 Like the false dawns which perish in  
 the bursting:  
 Like empty cups of wrought and dædal  
 gold,  
 Which mock the lips with air, when  
 they are thirsting. )

## FRAGMENT: TO ITALY.

As the sunrise to the night,  
 As the north wind to the clouds,  
 As the earthquake's fiery flight,  
 Ruining mountain solitudes,  
 Everlasting Italy,  
 Be those hopes and fears on thee.

FRAGMENT: WINE OF  
EGLANTINE.

I AM drunk with the honey wine  
 Of the noon-unfolded eglantine,  
 Which fairies catch in hyacinth bowls:—  
 The bats, the dormice, and the moles  
 Sleep in the walls or under the sward  
 Of the desolate Castle yard;  
 And when 't is spilt on the summer earth,  
 Or its fumes arise among the dew,  
 Their jocund dreams are full of mirth,  
 They gibber their joy in sleep; for few  
 Of the fairies bear those bowls so new!

FRAGMENT: A ROMAN'S  
CHAMBER.

## I.

IN the cave which wild weeds cover  
 Wait for thine ethereal lover;  
 For the pallid moon is waning,  
 O'er the spiral cypress hanging,  
 And the moon no cloud is staining.

## II.

It was once a Roman's chamber,  
 Where he kept his darkest revels,  
 And the wild weeds twine and clam-  
 ber;  
 It was then a chasm for devils.

FRAGMENT: ROME AND  
NATURE.

ROME has fallen, ye see it lying  
 Heapt in undistinguisht ruin:  
 Nature is alone undying.

VARIATION OF THE LYRIC TO  
THE MOON.

(*Prometheus Unbound*, ACT IV.)

(As a violet's gentle eye  
 Gazes on the azure sky  
 Until its hue grows like what it beholds,)

As a gray and empty mist  
 Lies like solid amethyst  
 Over the western mountain it enfolds,  
 When the sunset sleeps  
 Upon its snow;  
 As a strain of sweetest sound  
 Wraps itself the wind around  
 Until the voiceless wind be music too;  
 As aught dark, vain, and dull,  
 Basking in what is beautiful,  
 Is full of light and love.

1819.

CANCELLED STANZA OF THE  
 MASK OF ANARCHY.

(FOR WHICH STANZAS LXVIII, LXIX HAVE  
 BEEN SUBSTITUTED.)

FROM the cities where from caves,  
 Like the dead from putrid graves,  
 Troops of starvelings gliding come,  
 Living Tenants of a tomb.

NOTE BY MRS. SHELLEY.

Shelley loved the People; and respected them as often more virtuous, as always more suffering, and therefore more deserving of sympathy, than the great. He believed that a clash between the two classes of society was inevitable, and he eagerly ranged himself on the people's side. He had an idea of publishing a series of poems adapted expressly to commemorate their circumstances and wrongs. He wrote a few; but, in those days of prosecution for libel, they could not be printed. They are not among the best of his productions, a writer being always shackled when he endeavors to write down to the comprehension of those who could not understand or feel a highly imaginative style; but they show his earnestness, and with what heartfelt compassion he went home to the direct point of injury — that oppression is detestable as being the parent of starvation, nakedness, and ignorance. Besides these outpourings of compassion and indignation, he had meant to adorn the cause he loved with loftier poetry of glory and triumph;

such is the scope of the "Ode to the Assertors of Liberty." He sketched also a new version of our national anthem, as addressed to Liberty.

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1820.

THE SENSITIVE PLANT.

PART FIRST.

A SENSITIVE Plant in a garden grew,  
 And the young winds fed it with silver dew,  
 And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,  
 And closed them beneath the kisses of night.

And the Spring arose on the garden fair,  
 Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere;  
 And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast  
 Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

But none ever trembled and panted with bliss  
 In the garden, the field, or the wilderness,  
 Like a doe in the noontide with love's sweet want,  
 As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

The snowdrop, and then the violet,  
 Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,  
 And their breath was mixt with fresh odor, sent  
 From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.

Then the pied wind-flowers and the tulip tall,  
 And narcissi, the fairest among them all,  
 Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess,  
 Till they die of their own dear loveliness;

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,  
 Whom youth makes so fair and passion so pale,

That the light of its tremulous bells is  
 seen  
 Thro' their pavilions of tender green;  
 And the hyacinth purple and white and  
 blue,  
 Which flung from its bells a sweet peal  
 anew  
 Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,  
 It was felt like an odor within the sense;  
 And the rose like a nymph to the bath  
 address,  
 Which unveiled the depth of her glowing  
 breast,  
 Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air  
 The soul of her beauty and love lay bare:  
 And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,  
 As a Mænad, its moonlight-colored cup,  
 Till the fiery star, which is its eye,  
 Gazed thro' clear dew on the tender  
 sky;  
 And the jessamine faint, and the sweet  
 tuberose,  
 The sweetest flower for scent that blows;  
 And all rare blossoms from every clime  
 Grew in that garden in perfect prime.  
 And on the stream whose inconstant  
 bosom  
 Was pranked under boughs of embower-  
 ing blossom,  
 With golden and green light, slanting  
 thro'  
 Their heaven of many a tangled hue.  
 Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,  
 And starry river-buds glimmered by,  
 And around them the soft stream did  
 glide and dance  
 With a motion of sweet sound and  
 radiance.  
 And the sinuous paths of lawn and of  
 moss,  
 Which led thro' the garden along and  
 across,  
 Some open at once to the sun and the  
 breeze;  
 Some lost among bowers of blossoming  
 trees,

Were all paved with daisies and delicate  
 bells  
 As fair as the fabulous asphodels,  
 And flowrets which drooping as day  
 droopt too  
 Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and  
 blue,  
 To roof the glow-worm from the even-  
 ing dew.  
 And from this undefiled Paradise  
 The flowers (as an infant's awakening  
 eyes  
 Smile on its mother, whose singing sweet  
 Can first lull, and at last must awaken it),  
 When Heaven's blithe winds had un-  
 folded them,  
 As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem,  
 Shone smiling to Heaven, and every one  
 Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun;  
 For each one was interpenetrated  
 With the light and the odor its neighbor  
 shed,  
 Like young lovers whom youth and love  
 make dear  
 Wrapt and filled by their mutual atmos-  
 phere.  
 But the Sensitive Plant which could give  
 small fruit  
 Of the love which it felt from the leaf to  
 the root,  
 Received more than all, it loved more  
 than ever,  
 Where none wanted but it, could belong  
 to the giver,  
 For the Sensitive Plant has no bright  
 flower;  
 Radiance and odor are not its dower;  
 It loves, even like Love, its deep heart  
 is full,  
 It desires what it has not, the beautiful!  
 The light winds which from unsustain-  
 ing wings  
 Shed the music of many murmurings;  
 The beams which dart from many a star  
 Of the flowers whose hues they bear afar;  
 The plumèd insects swift and free,  
 Like golden boats on a sunny sea,



Laden with light and odor, which pass  
Over the gleam of the living grass;

The unseen clouds of the dew, which lie  
Like fire in the flowers till the sun rides  
high,  
Then wander like spirits among the  
spheres,  
Each cloud faint with the fragrance it  
bears;

The quivering vapors of dim noontide,  
Which like a sea o'er the warm earth  
glide,  
In which every sound, and odor, and  
beam,  
Move, as reeds in a single stream;

Each and all like ministering angels were  
For the Sensitive Plant sweet joy to bear,  
Whilst the lagging hours of the day  
went by  
Like windless clouds o'er a tender sky.

And when evening descended from  
heaven above,  
And the Earth was all rest, and the air  
was all love,  
And delight, tho' less bright, was far  
more deep  
And the day's veil fell from the world of  
sleep,

And the beasts, and the birds, and the  
insects were drowned  
In an ocean of dreams without a sound;  
Whose waves never mark, tho' they ever  
impress  
The light sand which paves it, conscious-  
ness;

(Only overhead the sweet nightingale  
Ever sang more sweet as the day might  
fail,  
And snatches of its Elysian chant  
Were mixed with the dreams of the  
Sensitive Plant.)

The Sensitive Plant was the earliest  
Up-gathered into the bosom of rest;  
A sweet child weary of its delight,  
The feeblest and yet the favorite,  
Cradled within the embrace of night.

## PART SECOND.

There was a Power in this sweet place,  
An Eve in this Eden; a ruling grace  
Which to the flowers did they waken or  
dream,  
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,  
Whose form was upborne by a lovely  
mind  
Which, dilating, had moulded her mien  
and motion  
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the  
ocean,

Tended the garden from morn to even:  
And the meteors of that sublunar heaven,  
Like the lamps of the air when night  
walks forth,  
Laught round her footsteps up from the  
Earth!

She had no companion of mortal race,  
But her tremulous breath and her flush-  
ing face  
Told, whilst the morn kist the sleep from  
her eyes  
That her dreams were less slumber than  
Paradise:

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet  
sake  
Had deserted heaven while the stars  
were awake,  
As if yet around her he lingering were,  
Tho' the veil of daylight concealed him  
from her.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it prest;  
You might hear by the heaving of her  
breast,  
That the coming and going of the wind  
Brought pleasure there and left passion  
behind.

And wherever her airy footstep trod,  
Her trailing hair from the grassy sod  
Erased its light vestige, with shadowy  
sweep,  
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark green  
deep.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden  
sweet  
Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle  
feet;  
I doubt not they felt the spirit that came  
From her glowing fingers thro' all their  
frame.

She sprinkled bright water from the  
stream  
On those that were faint with the sunny  
beam;  
And out of the cups of the heavy flowers  
She emptied the rain of the thunder  
showers.

She lifted their heads with her tender  
hands,  
And sustained them with rods and osier  
bands;  
If the flowers had been her own infants  
she  
Could never have nursed them more  
tenderly.

And all killing insects and gnawing  
worms,  
And things of obscene and unlovely  
forms,  
She bore in a basket of Indian woof,  
Into the rough woods far aloof,  
In a basket, of grasses and wild-flowers  
full,  
The freshest her gentle hands could pull  
For the poor banished insects, whose  
intent,  
Altho' they did ill, was innocent.

But the bee and the beamlike ephemeris  
Whose path is the lightning's, and soft  
moths that kiss  
The sweet lips of the flowers, and harm  
not, did she  
Make her attendant angels be.

And many an antenatal tomb,  
Where butterflies dream of the life to  
come,  
She left clinging round the smooth and  
dark  
Edge of the odorous cedar bark.  
This fairest creature from earliest spring

Thus moved thro' the garden minis-  
tering  
All the sweet season of summer tide,  
And ere the first leaf looked brown —  
she died!

## PART THIRD.

Three days the flowers of the garden fair,  
Like stars when the moon is awakened,  
were,  
Or the waves of Baiæ, ere luminous  
She floats up thro' the smoke of  
Vesuvius.

And on the fourth, the Sensitive Plant  
Felt the sound of the funeral chant,  
And the steps of the bearers, heavy and  
slow,  
And the sobs of the mourners deep and  
low;

The weary sound and the heavy breath,  
And the silent motions of passing death,  
And the smell, cold, oppressive, and  
dank,  
Sent thro' the pores of the coffin  
plank;

The dark grass, and the flowers among  
the grass,  
Were bright with tears as the crowd did  
pass;  
From their sighs the wind caught a  
mournful tone,  
And sate in the pines, and gave groan  
for groan.

The garden, once fair, became cold and  
foul,  
Like the corpse of her who had been its  
soul,  
Which at first was lovely as if in sleep,  
Then slowly changed, till it grew a heap  
To make men tremble who never weep.

Swift summer into the autumn flowed,  
And frost in the mist of the morning rode,  
Tho' the noonday sun looked clear and  
bright,  
Mocking the spoil of the secret night.  
The rose leaves, like flakes of crimson  
snow,

Paved the turf and the moss below.  
The lilies were drooping, and white, and wan,  
Like the head and the skin of a dying man.

And Indian plants, of scent and hue  
The sweetest that ever were fed on dew,  
Leaf by leaf, day after day,  
Were massed into the common clay.

And the leaves, brown, yellow, and gray,  
and red,  
And white with the whiteness of what is dead,  
Like troops of ghosts on the dry wind past;  
Their whistling noise made the birds aghast.

And the gusty winds waked the wingèd seeds,  
Out of their birthplace of ugly weeds,  
Till they clung round many a sweet flower's stem,  
Which rotted into the earth with them.

The water-blooms under the rivulet  
Fell from the stalks on which they were set;  
And the eddies drove them here and there,  
As the winds did those of the upper air.

Then the rain came down, and the broken stalks,  
Were bent and tangled across the walks;  
And the leafless network of parasite bowers  
Massed into ruin; and all sweet flowers.

Between the time of the wind and the snow,  
All loathliest weeds began to grow,  
Whose coarse leaves were splasht with many a speck,  
Like the water-snake's belly and the toad's back.

And thistles, and nettles, and darnels rank,  
And the dock, and henbane, and hemlock dank,

Stretcht out its long and hollow shank,  
And stifled the air till the dead wind stank.

And plants at whose names the verse feels loath,  
Filled the place with a monstrous undergrowth,  
Prickly, and pulpous, and blistering, and blue,  
Livid, and starred with a lurid dew.

And agarics and fungi, with mildew and mould  
Started like mist from the wet ground cold;  
Pale, fleshy, as if the decaying dead  
With a spirit of growth had been animated!

Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous scum,  
Made the running rivulet thick and dumb,  
And at its outlet flags huge as stakes  
Dammed it up with roots knotted like water-snakes.

And hour by hour, when the air was still,  
The vapors arose which have strength to kill:  
At morn they were seen, at noon they were felt,  
At night they were darkness no star could melt.

And unctuous meteors from spray to spray  
Crept and flitted in broad noonday  
Unseen; every branch on which they alit  
By a venomous blight was burned and bit.

The Sensitive Plant like one forbid  
Wept, and the tears within each lid  
Of its foided leaves which together grew  
Were changed to a blight of frozen glue.

For the leaves soon fell, and the branches soon  
By the heavy axe of the blast were hewn;  
The sap shrank to the root thro' every pore,  
As blood to a heart that will beat no more.

For winter came: the wind was his  
 whip:  
 One choppy finger was on his lip:  
 He had torn the cataracts from the hills  
 And they clankt at his girdle like man-  
 acles;

His breath was a chain which without a  
 sound  
 The earth, and the air, and the water  
 bound;  
 He came, fiercely driven, in his chariot-  
 throne  
 By the tenfold blasts of the Arctic zone.

Then the weeds which were forms of  
 living death  
 Fled from the frost to the earth beneath.  
 Their decay and sudden flight from frost  
 Was but like the vanishing of a ghost!

And under the roots of the Sensitive  
 Plant  
 The moles and the dormice died for want;  
 The birds dropt stiff from the frozen  
 air  
 And were caught in the branches naked  
 and bare.

First there came down a thawing rain  
 And its dull drops froze on the boughs  
 again,  
 Then there steamed up a freezing dew  
 Which to the drops of the thaw-rain  
 grew;

And a northern whirlwind, wandering  
 about  
 Like a wolf that had smelt a dead child  
 out,  
 Shook the boughs thus laden, and heavy  
 and stiff,  
 And snapt them off with his rigid  
 griff.

When winter had gone and spring came  
 back  
 The Sensitive Plant was a leafless wreck;  
 But the mandrakes, and toadstools, and

## CONCLUSION.

Whether the Sensitive Plant, or that  
 Which within its boughs like a spirit sat  
 Ere its outward form had known decay,  
 Now felt this change, I cannot say.

Whether that lady's gentle mind,  
 No longer with the form combined  
 Which scattered love, as stars do light,  
 Found sadness, where it left delight,

I dare not guess; but in this life  
 Of error, ignorance, and strife,  
 Where nothing is, but all things seem,  
 And we the shadows of the dream,

It is a modest creed, and yet  
 Pleasant if one considers it,  
 To own that death itself must be,  
 Like all the rest, a mockery.

That garden sweet, that lady fair,  
 And all sweet shapes and odors there,  
 In truth have never past away:  
 'T is we, 't is ours, are changed; not  
 they.

For love and beauty and delight,  
 There is no death nor change: their  
 might  
 Exceeds our organs, which endure  
 No light, being themselves obscure.

## CANCELLED PASSAGE.

THEIR moss rotted off them, flake by  
 flake,  
 Till the thick stalk stuck like a murder-  
 er's stake,  
 Where rags of loose flesh yet tremble on  
 high,  
 Infecting the winds that wander by.

## A VISION OF THE SEA.

'T IS the terror of tempest. The rags  
 of the sail  
 Are flickering in ribbons within the fierce

And when lightning is loost, like a  
 deluge from heaven,  
 She sees the black trunks of the water-  
 spouts spin,  
 And bend, as if heaven was ruining in,  
 Which they seemed to sustain with their  
 terrible mass  
 As if ocean had sunk from beneath them:  
 they pass  
 To their graves in the deep with an earth-  
 quake of sound,  
 And the waves and the thunders made  
 silent around  
 Leave the wind to its echo. The vessel,  
 now tost  
 Thro' the low-trailing rack of the tem-  
 pest, is lost  
 In the skirts of the thunder-cloud: now  
 down the sweep  
 Of the wind-cloven wave to the chasm  
 of the deep  
 It sinks, and the walls of the watery  
 vale  
 Whose depths of dread calm are un-  
 moved by the gale,  
 Dim mirrors of ruin hang gleaming  
 about;  
 While the surf, like a chaos of stars, like  
 a rout  
 Of death-flames, like whirlpools of fire-  
 flowing iron  
 With splendor and terror the black ship  
 environ,  
 Or like sulphur-flakes hurled from a mine  
 of pale fire  
 In fountains spout o'er it. In many a  
 spire  
 The pyramid-billows with white points of  
 brine  
 In the cope of the lightning inconstantly  
 shine,  
 As piercing the sky from the floor of the  
 sea.  
 The great ship seems splitting! it cracks  
 as a tree,  
 While an earthquake is splintering its  
 root, ere the blast  
 Of the whirlwind that stript it of  
 branches has past.  
 The intense thunder-balls which are rain-  
 ing from heaven

The chinks suck destruction. The heavy  
 dead hulk  
 On the living sea rolls an inanimate  
 bulk,  
 Like a corpse on the clay which is hun-  
 gery to fold  
 Its corruption around it. Meanwhile,  
 from the hold,  
 One deck is burst up by the waters below,  
 And it splits like the ice when the thaw-  
 breezes blow  
 O'er the lakes of the desert! Who sit  
 on the other?  
 Is that all the crew that lie burying each  
 other,  
 Like the dead in a breach, round the  
 foremast? Are those  
 Twin tigers, who burst, when the waters  
 arose,  
 In the agony of terror, their chains in the  
 hold;  
 (What now makes them tame, is what  
 then made them bold;)  
 Who crouch, side by side, and have  
 driven, like a crank,  
 The deep grip of their claws thro' the  
 vibrating plank.  
 Are these all? Nine weeks the tall ves-  
 sel had lain  
 On the windless expanse of the watery  
 plain,  
 Where the death-darting sun cast no  
 shadow at noon,  
 And there seemed to be fire in the beams  
 of the moon,  
 Till a lead-colored fog gathered up from  
 the deep  
 Whose breath was quick pestilence; then,  
 the cold sleep  
 Crept, like blight thro' the ears of a  
 thick field of corn,  
 O'er the populous vessel. And even and  
 morn,  
 With their hammocks for coffins the sea-  
 men aghast  
 Like dead men the dead limbs of their  
 comrades cast  
 Down the deep, which closed on them  
 above and around,  
 And the sharks and the dog-fish their  
 grave-clothes unbound

From God on their wilderness. One  
 after one  
 The mariners died; on the eve of this day,  
 When the tempest was gathering in  
 cloudy array,  
 But seven remained. Six the thunder  
 has smitten,  
 And they lie black as mummies on which  
 Time has written  
 His scorn of the embalmer; the seventh,  
 from the deck  
 An oak-splinter pierced thro' his breast  
 and his back,  
 And hung out to the tempest, a wreck  
 on the wreck.  
 No more? At the helm sits a woman  
 more fair  
 Than heaven, when, unbinding its star-  
 braided hair,  
 It sinks with the sun on the earth and  
 the sea.  
 She clasps a bright child on her upgath-  
 ered knee,  
 It laughs at the lightning, it mocks the  
 mixed thunder  
 Of the air and the sea, with desire and  
 with wonder  
 It is beckoning the tigers to rise and  
 come near,  
 It would play with those eyes where the  
 radiance of fear  
 Is outshining the meteors; its bosom  
 beats high,  
 The heart-fire of pleasure has kindled  
 its eye;  
 While its mother's is lustreless. "Smile  
 not, my child,  
 But sleep deeply and sweetly, and so be  
 beguiled  
 Of the pang that awaits us, whatever  
 that be,  
 So dreadful since thou must divide it  
 with me!  
 Dream, sleep! This pale bosom thy  
 cradle and bed,  
 Will it rock thee not, infant? 'Tis beat-  
 ing with dread!  
 Alas! what is life, what is death, what  
 are we,  
 That when the ship sinks we no longer

To be after life what we have been be-  
 fore?  
 Not to touch those sweet hands? Not  
 to look on those eyes,  
 Those lips, and that hair, all the smiling  
 disguise  
 Thou yet wearest, sweet spirit, which I,  
 day by day,  
 Have so long called my child, but which  
 now fades away  
 Like a rainbow, and I the fallen show-  
 er?" Lo! the ship  
 Is settling, it topples, the leeward ports  
 dip;  
 The tigers leap up when they feel the  
 slow brine  
 Crawling inch by inch on them, hair,  
 ears, limbs, and eyne,  
 Stand rigid with horror; a loud, long,  
 hoarse cry  
 Bursts at once from their vitals tremen-  
 dously,  
 And 't is borne down the mountainous  
 vale of the wave,  
 Rebounding, like thunder, from crag to  
 cave,  
 Mixt with the clash of the lashing rain,  
 Hurried on by the might of the hurri-  
 cane:  
 The hurricane came from the west, and  
 past on  
 By the path of the gate of the eastern  
 sun,  
 Transversely dividing the stream of the  
 storm;  
 As an arrowy serpent, pursuing the form  
 Of an elephant, bursts thro' the brakes  
 of the waste.  
 Black as a cormorant the screaming blast,  
 Between ocean and heaven, like an  
 ocean, past,  
 Till it came to the clouds on the verge of  
 the world  
 Which, based on the sea and to heaven  
 upcurled,  
 Like columns and walls did surround and  
 sustain  
 The dome of the tempest; it rent them  
 in twain,  
 As a flood rends its barriers of mountain-

Like the stones of a temple ere earth-quake has past,  
 Like the dust of its fall, on the whirl-wind are cast;  
 They are scattered like foam on the torrent; and where  
 The wind has burst out from the chasm, from the air  
 Of clear morning, the beams of the sunrise flow in,  
 Unimpeded, keen, golden, and crystalline,  
 Banded armies of light and of air; at one gate  
 They encounter, but interpenetrate.  
 And that breach in the tempest is widening away,  
 And the caverns of cloud are torn up by the day,  
 And the fierce winds are sinking with weary wings  
 Lulled by the motion and murmurings,  
 And the long glassy heave of the rocking sea,  
 And overhead glorious, but dreadful to see  
 The wrecks of the tempest, like vapors of gold,  
 Are consuming in sunrise. The heapt waves behold  
 The deep calm of blue heaven dilating above,  
 And, like passions made still by the presence of Love,  
 Beneath the clear surface reflecting it slide  
 Tremulous with soft influence; extending its tide  
 From the Andes to Atlas, round mountain and isle,  
 Round sea-birds and wrecks, paved with heaven's azure smile,  
 The wide world of waters is vibrating. Where  
 Is the ship? On the verge of the wave where it lay  
 One tiger is mingled in ghastly affray  
 With a sea-snake. The foam and the smoke of the battle

Of solid bones crusht by the infinite stress  
 Of the snake's adamantine voluminousness;  
 And the hum of the hot blood that spouts and rains  
 Where the gripe of the tiger has wounded the veins,  
 Swollen with rage, strength, and effort; the whirl and the splash  
 As of some hideous engine whose brazen teeth smash  
 The thin winds and soft waves into thunder; the screams  
 And hissings crawl fast o'er the smooth ocean streams,  
 Each sound like a centipede. Near this commotion,  
 A blue shark is hanging within the blue ocean,  
 The fin-wingèd tomb of the victor. The other  
 Is winning his way from the fate of his brother,  
 To his own with the speed of despair. Lo! a boat  
 Advances; twelve rowers with the impulse of thought  
 Urge on the keen keel, the brine foams. At the stern  
 Three marksmen stand levelling. Hot bullets burn  
 In the breast of the tiger, which yet bears him on  
 To his refuge and ruin. One fragment alone,  
 'T is dwindling and sinking, 't is now almost gone,  
 Of the wreck of the vessel peers out of the sea.  
 With her left hand she grasps it impetuously,  
 With her right she sustains her fair infant. Death, Fear,  
 Love, Beauty, are mixt in the atmosphere;  
 Which trembles and burns with the fervor of dread  
 Around her wild eyes, her bright hand, and her head.

Is yet smiling, and playing, and murmuring; so smiled  
 The false deep ere the storm. Like a sister and brother  
 The child and the ocean still smile on each other,  
 Whilst —

### THE CLOUD.

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,  
 From the seas and the streams;  
 I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
 In their noonday dreams.  
 From my wings are shaken the dews that waken  
 The sweet buds every one,  
 When rockt to rest on their mother's breast,  
 As she dances about the sun.  
 I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
 And whiten the green plains under,  
 And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
 And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,  
 And their great pines groan aghast;  
 And all the night 't is my pillow white,  
 While I sleep in the arms of the blast.  
 Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,  
 Lightning my pilot sits,  
 In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,  
 It struggles and howls at fits;  
 Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,  
 This pilot is guiding me,  
 Lured by the love of the genii that move  
 In the depths of the purple sea;  
 Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,  
 Over the lakes and the plains,  
 Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,  
 The Spirit he loves remains;  
 And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,  
 Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

And his burning plumes outspread,  
 Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,  
 When the morning star shines dead,  
 As on the jag of a mountain crag,  
 Which an earthquake rocks and swings,  
 An eagle alit one moment may sit  
 In the light of its golden wings.  
 And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,  
 Its ardors of rest and of love,  
 And the crimson pall of eve may fall  
 From the depths of heaven above,  
 With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,  
 As still as a brooding dove.

That orb'd maiden with white fire laden,  
 Whom mortals call the moon,  
 Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,  
 By the midnight breezes strewn;  
 And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,  
 Which only the angels hear,  
 May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,  
 The stars peep behind her and peer;  
 And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,  
 Like a swarm of golden bees,  
 When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,  
 Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,  
 Like strips of the sky fallen thro' me on high,  
 Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone,  
 And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;  
 The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim,  
 When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.  
 From cape to cape with a bridge-like shape,  
 Over a torrent sea,  
 Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,  
 The mountains its columns be.



With hurricane, fire, and snow,  
 When the powers of the air are chained  
 to my chair,  
 Is the million-colored bow;  
 The sphere-fire above its soft colors  
 wove,  
 While the moist earth was laughing  
 below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,  
 And the nursling of the sky;  
 I pass thro' the pores of the ocean  
 and shores;  
 I change, but I cannot die.  
 For after the rain when with never a  
 stain,  
 The pavilion of heaven is bare,  
 And the winds and sunbeams with their  
 convex gleams,  
 Build up the blue dome of air,  
 I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,  
 And out of the caverns of rain,  
 Like a child from the womb, like a ghost  
 from the tomb,  
 I arise and unbuild it again.

### TO A SKYLARK.

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit!  
 Bird thou never wert,  
 That from heaven, or near it,  
 Pourest thy full heart  
 In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher  
 From the earth thou springest  
 Like a cloud of fire;  
 The blue deep thou wingest,  
 And singing still dost soar, and soaring  
 ever singest.

In the golden lightning  
 Of the sunken sun,  
 O'er which clouds are brightning,  
 Thou dost float and run;  
 Like an unbodied joy whose race is  
 just begun.

The pale purple even  
 Melts around thy flight;  
 Like a star of heaven,

Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy  
 shrill delight.

Keen as are the arrows  
 Of that silver sphere,  
 Whose intense lamp narrows  
 In the white dawn clear,  
 Until we hardly see,—we feel that it  
 is there.

All the earth and air  
 With thy voice is loud,  
 As, when night is bare,  
 From one lonely cloud  
 The moon rains out her beams, and  
 heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;  
 What is most like thee?  
 From rainbow clouds there flow not  
 Drops so bright to see,  
 As from thy presence showers a rain of  
 melody.

Like a poet hidden  
 In the light of thought,  
 Singing hymns unbidden,  
 Till the world is wrought  
 To sympathy with hopes and fears it  
 heeded not;

Like a high-born maiden  
 In a palace-tower,  
 Soothing her love-laden  
 Soul in secret hour  
 With music sweet as love, which over-  
 flows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden  
 In a dell of dew,  
 Scattering unbeholden  
 Its aërial hue  
 Among the flowers and grass, which  
 screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered  
 In its own green leaves,  
 By warm winds deflowered,  
 Till the scent it gives  
 Makes faint with too much sweet these

Sound of vernal showers  
 On the twinkling grass,  
 Rain-awakened flowers,  
 All that ever was  
 Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music  
 doth surpass:

Teach us, sprite or bird,  
 What sweet thoughts are thine:  
 I have never heard  
 Praise of love or wine  
 That panted forth a flood of rapture so  
 divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,  
 Or triumphal chant,  
 Matched with thine would be all  
 But an empty vaunt,  
 A thing wherein we feel there is some  
 hidden want.

What object are the fountains  
 Of thy happy strain?  
 What fields, or waves, or moun-  
 tains?  
 What shapes of sky or plain?  
 What love of thine own kind? what  
 ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance  
 Languor cannot be:  
 Shadow of annoyance  
 Never came near thee:  
 Thou lovest: but ne'er knew love's  
 sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,  
 Thou of death must deem  
 Things more true and deep  
 Than we mortals dream,  
 Or how could thy notes flow in such a  
 crystal stream?

We look before and after,  
 And pine for what is not:  
 Our sincerest laughter  
 With some pain is fraught;  
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell  
 of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn  
 Hate, and pride, and fear;  
 If we were things born  
 Not to shed a tear,  
 I know not how thy joy we ever should

Better than all measures  
 Of delightful sound,  
 Better than all treasures  
 That in books are found,  
 Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of  
 the ground!

Teach me half the gladness  
 That thy brain must know,  
 Such harmonious madness  
 From my lips would flow,  
 The world should listen then, as I am  
 listening now.

### ODE TO LIBERTY.

Yet, Freedom, yet thy banner torn but flying,  
 Streams like a thunder storm against the wind.  
 BYRON.

#### I.

A GLORIOUS people vibrated again  
 The lightning of the nations: Liberty  
 From heart to heart, from tower to tower,  
 o'er Spain,  
 Scattering contagious fire into the sky,  
 Gleamed. My soul spurned the chains  
 of its dismay,  
 And, in the rapid plumes of song,  
 Clothed itself, sublime and strong;  
 As a young eagle soars the morning  
 clouds among,  
 Hovering in verse o'er its accustomed  
 prey;  
 Till from its station in the heaven of  
 fame  
 The Spirit's whirlwind rapt it, and  
 the ray  
 Of the remotest sphere of living  
 flame  
 Which paves the void was from behind  
 it flung,  
 As foam from a ship's swiftness, when  
 there came  
 A voice out of the deep: I will record  
 the same.

#### II.

The Sun and the serenest Moon sprang  
 forth:  
 The burning stars of the abyss were

Into the depths of heaven. The dædal  
 earth,  
 That island in the ocean of the world,  
 Hung in its cloud of all-sustaining air:  
 But this divinest universe  
 Was yet a chaos and a curse,  
 For thou wert not; but power from worst  
 producing worse,  
 The spirit of the beasts was kindled  
 there,  
 And of the birds, and of the watery  
 forms,  
 And there was war among them, and  
 despair  
 Within them, raging without truce  
 or terms;  
 The bosom of their violated nurse  
 Groaned, for beasts warred on beasts,  
 and worms on worms,  
 And men on men; each heart was as  
 a hell of storms.

## III.

Man, the imperial shape, then multiplied  
 His generations under the pavilion  
 Of the sun's throne: palace and pyramid,  
 Temple and prison, to many a swarming  
 million,  
 Were, as to mountain-wolves their ragged  
 caves.  
 This human living multitude  
 Was savage, cunning, blind, and  
 rude,  
 For thou wert not; but o'er the popu-  
 lous solitude,  
 Like one fierce cloud over a waste of  
 waves  
 Hung Tyranny; beneath, sate dei-  
 fied  
 The sister-pest, congregator of slaves;  
 Into the shadow of her pinions wide  
 Anarchs and priests who fled on gold  
 and blood,  
 Till with the stain their inmost souls  
 are dyed,  
 Drove the astonished herds of men  
 from every side.

## IV.

The nodding promontories, and blue  
 isles,  
 And cloud-like mountains, and dividu-

Of Greece, baskt glorious in the open  
 smiles  
 Of favoring heaven: from their en-  
 charmed caves  
 Prophetic echoes flung dim melody.  
 On the unapprehensive wild  
 The vine, the corn, the olive mild,  
 Grew savage yet, to human use unrecon-  
 ciled;  
 And, like unfolded flowers beneath  
 the sea,  
 Like the man's thought dark in the  
 infant's brain,  
 Like aught that is which wraps what  
 is to be,  
 Art's deathless dreams lay veiled by  
 many a vein  
 Of Parian stone; and yet a speechless  
 child,  
 Verse murmured, and Philosophy did  
 strain  
 Her lidless eyes for thee; when o'er  
 the Ægean main

## V.

Athens arose: a city such as vision  
 Builds from the purple crags and sil-  
 ver towers  
 Of battlemented cloud, as in derision  
 Of kingliest masonry: the ocean-floors  
 Pave it; the evening sky pavilions it;  
 Its portals are inhabited  
 By thunder-zonèd winds, each  
 head  
 Within its cloudy wings with sunfire gar-  
 landed,  
 A divine work! Athens diviner yet  
 Gleamed with its crest of columns,  
 on the will  
 Of man, as on a mount of diamond,  
 set;  
 For thou wert, and thine all-creative  
 skill  
 Peopled with forms that mock the eter-  
 nal dead  
 In marble immortality, that hill  
 Which was thine earliest throne and  
 latest oracle.

## VI.

Within the surface of Time's fleeting

Its wrinkled image lies, as then it lay  
Immovably unquiet, and for ever

It trembles, but it cannot pass away!  
The voices of thy bards and sages thunder  
With an earth-awakening blast  
Thro' the caverns of the past;

Religion veils her eyes: Oppression  
shrinks aghast:

A wingèd sound of joy, and love, and  
wonder,

Which soars where Expectation  
never flew,

Rending the veil of space and time  
asunder!

One ocean feeds the clouds, and  
streams, and dew;

One sun illumines heaven; one spirit  
vast

With life and love makes chaos ever  
new,

As Athens doth the world with thy  
delight renew.

## VII.

Then Rome was, and from thy deep  
bosom fairest,

Like a wolf-cub from a Cadmæan  
Mænad,<sup>1</sup>

She drew the milk of greatness, tho' thy  
dearest

From that Elysian food was yet un-  
weanèd;

And many a deed of terrible uprightnes  
By thy sweet love was sanctified;

And in thy smile, and by thy side,  
Saintly Camillus lived, and firm Atilius  
died.

But when tears stained thy robe of  
vestal whiteness,

And gold profaned thy Capitolian  
throne,

Thou didst desert, with spirit-wingèd  
lightness,

The senate of the tyrants: they sunk  
prone

Slaves of one tyrant: Palatinus sighed  
Faint echoes of Ionian song; that tone  
Thou didst delay to hear, lamenting to  
disown.

## VIII.

From what Hyrcanian glen or frozen  
hill,

Or piny promontory of the Arctic  
main,

Or utmost islet inaccessible,  
Didst thou lament the ruin of thy  
reign,

Teaching the woods and waves, and des-  
ert rocks,

And every Naiad's ice-cold urn,  
To talk in echoes sad and stern,

Of that sublimest lore which man had  
dared unlearn?

For neither didst thou watch the wiz-  
ard flocks

Of the Scald's dreams, nor haunt  
the Druid's sleep.

What if the tears rained thro' thy  
shattered locks

Were quickly dried? for thou didst  
groan, not weep

When from its sea of death to kill and  
burn,

The Galilean serpent forth did creep,  
And made thy world an undistinguish-  
able heap.

## IX.

A thousand years the Earth cried, Where  
art thou?

And then the shadow of thy coming  
fell

On Saxon Alfred's olive-cinctured brow:  
And many a warrior-peopled citadel,

Like rocks which fire lifts out of the flat  
deep,

Arose in sacred Italy,  
Frowning o'er the tempestuous  
sea

Of kings, and priests, and slaves, in  
tower-crowned majesty;

That multitudinous anarchy did sweep,  
And burst around their walls, like  
idle foam,

Whilst from the human spirit's deepest  
deep

Strange melody with love and awe  
struck dumb

Dissonant arms; and Art, which cannot

With divine wand traced on our  
earthly home  
Fit imagery to pave heaven's everlast-  
ing dome.

## X.

Thou huntress swifter than the Moon!  
thou terror  
Of the world's wolves! thou bearer  
of the quiver,  
Whose sunlike shafts pierce tempest-  
wingèd Error,  
As light may pierce the clouds when  
they dis sever  
In the calm regions of the orient day!  
Luther caught thy wakening  
glance;  
Like lightning, from his leaden  
lance  
Reflected, it dissolved the visions of the  
trance  
In which, as in a tomb, the nations  
lay;  
And England's prophets hailed thee  
as their queen,  
In songs whose music cannot pass  
away,  
Tho' it must flow for ever: not  
unseen  
Before the spirit-sighted countenance  
Of Milton didst thou pass, from the  
sad scene  
Beyond whose night he saw, with a  
dejected mien.

## XI.

The eager hours and unreluctant years  
As on a dawn-illuminèd mountain  
stood,  
Trampling to silence their loud hopes and  
fears,  
Darkening each other with their mul-  
titude,  
And cried aloud, Liberty! Indignation  
Answered Pity from her cave;  
Death grew pale within the grave,  
And Desolation howled to the destroyer,  
Save!  
When like heaven's sun girt by the  
exhalation  
Of its own glorious light, thou didst

Chasing thy foes from nation unto  
nation  
Like shadows: as if day had cloven  
the skies  
At dreaming midnight o'er the western  
wave,  
Men started, staggering with a glad  
surprise,  
Under the lightnings of thine unfamil-  
iar eyes.

## XII.

Thou heaven of earth! what spells could  
pall thee then,  
In ominous eclipse? a thousand years  
Bred from the slime of deep oppression's  
den,  
Dyed all thy liquid light with blood  
and tears,  
Till thy sweet stars could weep the stain  
away;  
How like Bacchanals of blood  
Round France, the ghastly vint-  
age, stood  
Destruction's sceptred slaves, and Folly's  
mitred brood!  
When one, like them, but mightier far  
than they,  
The Anarch of thine own bewildered  
powers  
Rose: armies mingled in obscure array,  
Like clouds with clouds, darkening  
the sacred bowers  
Of serene heaven. He, by the past pur-  
sued,  
Rests with those dead, but unforgotten  
hours,  
Whose ghosts scare victor kings in  
their ancestral towers.

## XIII.

England yet sleeps: was she not called  
of old?  
Spain calls her now, as with its thrill-  
ing thunder  
Vesuvius wakens Ætna, and the cold  
Snow-crags by its reply are cloven in  
sunder:  
O'er the lit waves every Æolian isle  
From Pithecusa to Pelorus  
Howls, and leaps, and glares in

They cry, Be dim; ye lamps of heaven  
suspended o'er us.

Her chains are threads of gold, she  
need but smile

And they dissolve; but Spain's were  
links of steel,

Till bit to dust by virtue's keenest file.

Twins of a single destiny! appeal  
To the eternal years enthroned before us,  
In the dim West; impress us from a  
seal.

All ye have thought and done! Time  
cannot dare conceal.

## XIV.

Tomb of Arminius! render up thy dead,  
Till, like a standard from a watch-  
tower's staff,

His soul may stream over the tyrant's  
head;

Thy victory shall be his epitaph,  
Wild Bacchanal of truth's mysterious  
wine,

King-deluded Germany,  
His dead spirit lives in thee.

Why do we fear or hope? thou art already  
free!

And thou, lost Paradise of this divine  
And glorious world! thou flowery  
wilderness!

Thou island of eternity! thou shrine  
Where desolation clothed with  
loveliness,

Worships the thing thou wert! O Italy,  
Gather thy blood into thy heart; re-  
press

The beasts who make their dens thy  
sacred palaces.

## XV.

Oh, that the free would stamp the im-  
pious name

Of KING into the dust! or write it  
there,

So that this blot upon the page of fame  
Were as a serpent's path, which the  
light air

Erases, and the flat sands close behind!

Ye the oracle have heard:

Lift the victory-flashing sword,

And cut the snaky knots of this foul

Which, weak itself as stubble, yet can  
bind

Into a mass, irrefragably firm,  
The axes and the rods which awe man-  
kind;

The sound has poison in it, 't is the  
sperm

Of what makes life foul, cankerous, and  
abhorred:

Disdain not thou, at thine appointed  
term,

To set thine armèd heel on this reluc-  
tant worm.

## XVI.

Oh, that the wise from their bright minds  
would kindle

Such lamps within the dome of this  
dim world,

That the pale name of PRIEST might  
shrink and dwindle

Into the hell from which it first was  
hurled,

A scoff of impious pride from fiends  
impure;

Till human thoughts might kneel  
alone

Each before the judgment-throne  
Of its own aweless soul, or of the power  
unknown!

Oh, that the words which make the  
thoughts obscure

From which they spring, as clouds  
of glimmering dew

From a white lake blot heaven's blue  
portraiture,

Were stript of their thin masks and  
various hue

And frowns and smiles and splendors not  
their own,

Till in the nakedness of false and true  
They stand before their Lord, each to  
receive its due!

## XVII.

He who taught man to vanquish whatso-  
ever

Can be between the cradle and the  
grave

Crowned him the King of Life. Oh.

If on his own high will a willing slave,  
 He has enthroned the oppression and  
 the oppressor.  
 What if earth can clothe and feed  
 Amplest millions at their need,  
 And power in thought be as the tree  
 within the seed?  
 Or what if Art, an ardent intercessor,  
 Driving on fiery wings to Nature's  
 throne,  
 Checks the great mother stooping to  
 caress her,  
 And cries: Give me, thy child, do-  
 minion  
 Over all height and depth? if Life can  
 breed  
 New wants, and wealth from those  
 who toil and groan  
 Rend of thy gifts and hers a thou-  
 sandfold for one.

XVIII.

Come Thou, but lead out of the inmost  
 cave  
 Of man's deep spirit, as the morning-  
 star  
 Beckons the Sun from the Eoan wave,  
 Wisdom. I hear the pennons of her  
 car  
 Self-moving, like cloud charioted by  
 flame;  
 Comes she not, and come ye not,  
 Rulers of eternal thought,  
 To judge, with solemn truth, life's ill-  
 apportioned lot?  
 Blind Love, and equal Justice, and  
 the Fame  
 Of what has been, the Hope of  
 what will be?  
 Oh Liberty! if such could be thy name  
 Wert thou disjoined from these, or  
 they from thee:  
 If thine or theirs were treasures to be  
 bought  
 By blood or tears, have not the wise  
 and free  
 Wept tears, and blood like tears?—The  
 solemn harmony

XIX.

Paused, and the spirit of that mighty

To its abyss was suddenly withdrawn;  
 Then, as a wild swan, when sublimely  
 winging  
 Its path athwart the thunder-smoke  
 of dawn,  
 Sinks headlong thro' the ærial golden  
 light  
 On the heavy sounding plain,  
 When the bolt has pierced its  
 brain;  
 As summer clouds dissolve, unburdened  
 of their rain;  
 As a far taper fades with fading night,  
 As a brief insect dies with dying  
 day,  
 My song, its pinions disarranged of  
 night,  
 Droopt; o'er it closed the echoes  
 far away  
 Of the great voice which did its flight  
 sustain,  
 As waves which lately paved his watery  
 way  
 Hiss round a drowner's head in their  
 tempestuous play.

CANCELLED PASSAGE OF THE  
 ODE TO LIBERTY.

WITHIN a cavern of man's trackless  
 spirit  
 Is throned an Image, so intensely fair  
 That the adventurous thoughts that wan-  
 der near it  
 Worship, and as they kneel tremble  
 and wear  
 The splendor of its presence, and the  
 light  
 Penetrates their dreamlike frame  
 Till they become charged with the  
 strength of flame.

TO ———

I.

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,  
 Thou needest not fear mine;  
 My spirit is too deeply laden

## II.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion.  
 Thou needest not fear mine;  
 Innocent is the heart's devotion  
 With which I worship thine.

## ARETHUSA.

## I.

ARETHUSA arose  
 From her couch of snows  
 In the Acroceraunian mountains, —  
 From cloud and from crag,  
 With many a jag,  
 Shepherding her bright fountains.  
 She leapt down the rocks,  
 With her rainbow locks  
 Streaming among the streams; —  
 Her steps paved with green  
 The downward ravine  
 Which slopes to the western gleams:  
 And gliding and springing  
 She went, ever singing,  
 In murmurs as soft as sleep;  
 The earth seemed to love her,  
 And Heaven smiled above her,  
 As she lingered towards the deep.

## II.

Then Alpheus bold,  
 On his glacier cold,  
 With his trident the mountains strook  
 And opened a chasm  
 In the rocks; — with the spasm  
 All Erymanthus shook.  
 And the black south wind  
 It concealed behind  
 The urns of the silent snow,  
 And earthquake and thunder  
 Did rend in sunder  
 The bars of the springs below  
 The beard and the hair  
 Of the River-god were  
 Seen thro' the torrent's sweep,  
 As he followed the light  
 Of the fleet nymph's flight  
 To the brink of the Dorian deep.

## III.

For he grasps me now by the hair!"  
 The loud Ocean heard,  
 To its blue depth stirred,  
 And divided at her prayer;  
 And under the water  
 The Earth's white daughter  
 Fled like a sunny beam;  
 Behind her descended  
 Her billows, unblended  
 With the brackish Dorian stream:—  
 Like a gloomy stain  
 On the emerald main  
 Alpheus rushed behind, —  
 As an eagle pursuing  
 A dove to its ruin  
 Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

## IV.

Under the bowers  
 Where the Ocean Powers  
 Sit on their pearlèd thrones,  
 Thro' the coral woods  
 Of the weltering floods,  
 Over heaps of unvalued stones;  
 Thro' the dim beams  
 Which amid the streams  
 Weave a network of colored light;  
 And under the caves,  
 Where the shadowy waves  
 Are as green as the forest's night:—  
 Outspeeding the shark,  
 And the sword-fish dark,  
 Under the ocean foam,  
 And up thro' the rifts  
 Of the mountain cliffs  
 They past to their Dorian home.

## V.

And now from their fountains  
 In Enna's mountains,  
 Down one vale where the morning basks  
 Like friends once parted  
 Grown single-hearted,  
 They ply their watery tasks.  
 At sunrise they leap  
 From their cradles steep  
 In the cave of the shelving hill;  
 At noontide they flow  
 Through the woods below  
 And the meadows of asphodel;



Beneath the Ortygian shore;—  
 Like spirits that lie  
 In the azure sky  
 When they love but live no more.

SONG OF PROSERPINE,

WHILE GATHERING FLOWERS ON THE  
 PLAIN OF ENNA.

I.

SACRED Goddess, Mother Earth,  
 Thou from whose immortal bosom,  
 Gods, and men, and beasts have birth,  
 Leaf and blade, and bud and blossom,  
 Breathe thine influence most divine  
 On thine own child, Proserpine.

II.

If with mists of evening dew  
 Thou dost nourish these young flowers  
 Till they grow, in scent and hue,  
 Fairest children of the hours,  
 Breathe thine influence most divine  
 On thine own child, Proserpine.

HYMN OF APOLLO.

I.

THE sleepless Hours who watch me as I  
 lie,  
 Curtained with star-inwoven tapestries,  
 From the broad moonlight of the sky,  
 Fanning the busy dreams from my dim  
 eyes,—  
 Waken me when their Mother, the gray  
 Dawn,  
 Tells them that dreams and that the  
 moon is gone.

II.

Then I arise, and climbing Heaven's  
 blue dome,  
 I walk over the mountains and the  
 waves,

My footsteps pave the clouds with fire;  
 the caves  
 Are filled with my bright presence, and  
 the air  
 Leaves the green earth to my embraces  
 bare.

III.

The sunbeams are my shafts, with which  
 I kill  
 Deceit, that loves the night and fears  
 the day;  
 All men who do or even imagine ill  
 Fly me, and from the glory of my ray  
 Good minds and open actions take new  
 might,  
 Until diminish by the reign of night.

IV.

I feed the clouds, the rainbows and the  
 flowers  
 With their ethereal colors; the Moon's  
 globe  
 And the pure stars in their eternal bowers  
 Are cinctured with my power as with  
 a robe;  
 Whatever lamps on Earth or Heaven  
 may shine,  
 Are portions of one power, which is  
 mine.

V.

I stand at noon upon the peak of  
 Heaven,  
 Then with unwilling steps I wander  
 down  
 Into the clouds of the Atlantic even;  
 For grief that I depart they weep and  
 frown:  
 What look is more delightful than the  
 smile  
 With which I soothe them from the  
 western isle?

VI.

I am the eye with which the Universe  
 Beholds itself and knows itself divine;  
 All harmony of instrument or verse,

All light of art or nature;—to my song,  
Victory and praise in their own right  
belong.

### HYMN OF PAN.

#### I.

FROM the forests and highlands  
We come, we come;  
From the river-girt islands,  
Where loud waves are dumb  
Listening to my sweet pipings.  
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,  
The bees on the bells of thyme,  
The birds on the myrtle bushes,  
The cicale above in the lime,  
And the lizards below in the grass,  
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was  
Listening to my sweet pipings.

#### II.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,  
And all dark Tempe lay  
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing  
The light of the dying day,  
Speded by my sweet pipings.  
The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,  
And the Nymphs of the woods and  
waves,  
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,  
And the brink of the dewy caves,  
And all that did then attend and follow  
Were silent with love, as you now,  
Apollo,  
With envy of my sweet pipings.

#### III.

I sang of the dancing stars,  
I sang of the *daedal* Earth,  
And of Heaven,—and the giant wars,  
And Love, and Death, and Birth,—  
And then I changed my pipings,—  
Singing how down the vale of Menalus  
I pursued a maiden and clapt a  
reed:  
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus!  
It breaks in our bosom and then we  
bleed:  
All wept, as I think both ye now would,

### THE QUESTION.

#### I.

I DREAMED that, as I wandered by the  
way,  
Bare winter suddenly was changed to  
spring,  
And gentle odors led my steps astray,  
Mixt with a sound of waters mur-  
muring  
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay  
Under a copse, and hardly dared to  
fling  
Its green arms round the bosom of the  
stream,  
But kist it and then fled, as thou  
mightest in dream.

#### II.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,  
Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of the  
earth,  
The constellated flower that never sets;  
Faint oxslips; tender bluebells, at  
whose birth  
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall  
flower that wets —  
Like a child, half in tenderness and  
mirth —  
Its mother's face with heaven's collected  
tears,  
When the low wind, its playmate's voice,  
it hears.

#### III.

And in the warm hedge grew lush  
eglantine,  
Green cowbind and the moonlight-  
colored May,  
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups,  
whose wine  
Was the bright dew, yet drained not  
by the day;  
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,  
With its dark buds and leaves, wan-  
dering astray;  
And flowers azure, black, and streakt

## IV.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge  
 There grew broad flag-flowers, purple  
 pranked with white,  
 And starry river buds among the sedge,  
 And floating water-lilies, broad and  
 bright,  
 Which lit the oak that overhung the  
 hedge  
 With moonlight beams of their own  
 watery light;  
 And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep  
 green  
 As soothed the dazzled eye with sober  
 sheen.

## V.

Methought that of these visionary flowers  
 I made a nosegay bound in such a way  
 That the same hues, which in their  
 natural bowers  
 Were mingled or opposed, the like  
 array  
 Kept these imprisoned children of the  
 Hours  
 Within my hand, — and then, elate  
 and gay,  
 hastened to the spot whence I had  
 come,  
 That I might there present it! — oh! to  
 whom?

THE TWO SPIRITS: AN  
 ALLEGORY.

*First Spirit.*

DO THOU, who plumed with strong desire  
 Wouldst float above the earth, beware!  
 A Shadow tracks thy flight of fire —  
 Night is coming!  
 Bright are the regions of the air,  
 And among the winds and beams  
 It were delight to wander there —  
 Night is coming!

*Second Spirit.*

The deathless stars are bright above,  
 If I would cross the shade of night

Within my heart is the lamp of love,  
 And that is day!  
 And the moon will smile with gentle  
 light  
 On my golden plumes where'er they  
 move;  
 The meteors will linger round my  
 flight,  
 And make night day.

*First Spirit.*

But if the whirlwinds of darkness waken  
 Hail, and lightning, and stormy rain;  
 See, the bounds of the air are shaken —  
 Night is coming!  
 The red swift clouds of the hurricane  
 Yon declining sun have overtaken,  
 The clash of the hail sweeps over the  
 plain —  
 Night is coming!

*Second Spirit.*

I see the light, and I hear the sound;  
 I'll sail on the flood of the tempest  
 dark,  
 With the calm within and the light  
 around  
 Which makes night day:  
 And thou, when the gloom is deep and  
 stark,  
 Look from thy dull earth, slumber-  
 bound,  
 My moon-like flight thou then may'st  
 mark  
 On high, far away.

Some say there is a precipice  
 Where one vast pine is frozen to ruin  
 O'er piles of snow and chasms of ice  
 Mid Alpine mountains;  
 And that the languid storm pursuing  
 That wingèd shape, for ever flies  
 Round those hoar branches, aye re-  
 newing  
 Its æry fountains.

Some say when nights are dry and clear,  
 And the death-dews sleep on the mor-  
 rass,  
 Sweet whispers are heard by the traveller,  
 Which make night day:

And a silver shape like his early love  
doth pass  
Upborne by her wild and glittering hair,  
And when he awakes on the fragrant  
grass,  
He finds night day.

ODE TO NAPLES.<sup>1</sup>

## EPODE I α.

I STOOD within the city disinterred,  
And heard the autumnal leaves like  
light footfalls  
Of spirits passing thro' the streets; and  
heard  
The Mountain's slumberous voice at  
intervals  
Thrill thro' those roofless halls;  
The oracular thunder penetrating shook  
The listening soul in my suspended  
blood;  
I felt that Earth out of her deep heart  
spoke —  
I felt, but heard not: — thro' white  
columns glowed  
The isle-sustaining Ocean-flood,  
A plane of light between two Heavens  
of azure:  
Around me gleamed many a bright  
sepulchre  
Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his  
pleasure  
Were to spare Death, had never made  
erasure;  
But every living lineament was clear  
As in the sculptor's thought; and there  
The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy, and  
pine,  
Like winter leaves o'ergrown by  
moulded snow,  
Seemed only not to move and grow  
Because the crystal silence of the air

<sup>1</sup> The Author has connected many recollections of his visit to Pompeii and Baix with the enthusiasm excited by the intelligence of the proclamation of a Constitutional Government at Naples. This has given a tinge of picturesque and descriptive imagery to the introductory Epodes which depict these scenes, and some of the majestic feelings permanently connected with the scene of this animating event.

Weighed on their life; even as the  
Power divine  
Which then lulled all things, brooded  
upon mine.

## EPODE II α.

Then gentle winds arose  
With many a mingled close  
Of wild Æolian sound and mountain-  
odor keen;  
And where the Baian ocean  
Welters with airlike motion,  
Within, above, around its bowers of  
starry green,  
Moving the sea-flowers in those purple  
caves  
Even as the ever-stormless atmos-  
phere  
Floats o'er the Elysian realm,  
It bore me like an Angel, o'er the  
waves  
Of sunlight, whose swift pinnacle of  
dewy air  
No storm can overwhelm;  
I sailed, where ever flows  
Under the calm Serene  
A spirit of deep emotion  
From the unknown graves  
Of the dead kings of Melody.<sup>3</sup>  
Shadowy Aornos darkened o'er the helm  
The horizontal ether; heaven stript bare  
Its depths over Elysium, where the prow  
Made the invisible water white as snow;  
From that Typhæan mount, Inarime  
There streamed a sunlit vapor, like  
the standard  
Of some ethereal host;  
Whilst from all the coast,  
Louder and louder, gathering round,  
there wandered  
Over the oracular woods and divine sea  
Prophesyings which grew articulate —  
They seize me — I must speak them —  
be they fate!

## STROPHE α I.

Naples! thou Heart of men which ever  
pantest  
Naked, beneath the lidless eye of  
heaven!

Elysian City which to calm enchantest  
 The mutinous air and sea: they round  
 thee, even  
 As sleep round Love, are driven!  
 Metropolis of a ruined Paradise  
 Long lost, late won, and yet but half  
 regained!  
 Bright Altar of the bloodless sacrifice,  
 Which armèd Victory offers up un-  
 stained  
 To Love, the flower-enchained!  
 Thou which wert once, and then didst  
 cease to be,  
 Now art, and henceforth ever shalt be,  
 free,  
 If Hope, and Truth, and Justice can  
 avail,  
 Hail, hail, all hail!

STROPHE  $\beta$  2.

Thou youngest giant birth  
 Which from the groaning earth  
 Leap'st, clothed in armor of impene-  
 trable scale!  
 Last of the Intercessors!  
 Who 'gainst the Crowned Trans-  
 gressors  
 Pleadest before God's love! Arrayed  
 in Wisdom's mail,  
 Wave thy lightning lance in mirth  
 Nor let thy high heart fail,  
 Tho' from their hundred gates the  
 leagued Oppressors,  
 With hurried legions move!  
 Hail, hail, all hail!

ANTISTROPHE  $\alpha$ .

What tho' Cimberian Anarchs dare  
 blaspheme  
 Freedom and thee? thy shield is as a  
 mirror  
 To make their blind slaves see, and with  
 fierce gleam  
 To turn his hungry sword upon the  
 wearer;  
 A new Actæon's error  
 Shall theirs have been — devoured by  
 their own hounds.  
 Be thou like the imperial Basilisk  
 Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!

Gaze on oppression, till at that dread  
 risk  
 Aghast she pass from the Earth's disk:  
 Fear not, but gaze — for freemen might-  
 ier grow,  
 And slaves more feeble, gazing on their  
 foe;  
 If Hope and Truth and Justice may  
 avail,  
 Thou shalt be great. — All hail!

ANTISTROPHE  $\beta$  2.

From Freedom's form divine,  
 From Nature's inmost shrine,  
 Strip every impious gawd, rend Error  
 veil by veil:  
 O'er Ruin desolate,  
 O'er Falsehood's fallen state,  
 Sit thou sublime, unawed; be the De-  
 stroyer pale!  
 And equal laws be thine,  
 And wingèd words let sail,  
 Freightèd with truth even from the  
 throne of God:  
 That wealth, surviving fate,  
 Be thine. — All hail!

ANTISTROPHE  $\alpha$   $\gamma$ .

Didst thou not start to hear Spain's  
 thrilling pæan  
 From land to land re-echoed solemnly,  
 Till silence became music? From the  
 Ææan<sup>1</sup>  
 To the cold Alps, eternal Italy  
 Starts to hear thine! The Sea  
 Which paves the desert streets of Venice  
 laughs  
 In light and music; widowed Genoa  
 wan  
 By moonlight spells ancestral epitaphs,  
 Murmuring, where is Doria? fair  
 Milan,  
 Within whose veins long ran  
 The viper's<sup>2</sup> palsyng venom, lifts her  
 heel  
 To bruise his head. The signal and the  
 seal

<sup>1</sup> Ææa, the island of Circe.

<sup>2</sup> The viper was the armorial device of the Visconti tyrants of Milan.

(If Hope and Truth and Justice can  
avail)  
Art thou of all these hopes. — O hail!

ANTISTROPHE  $\beta$   $\gamma$ .

Florence! beneath the sun,  
Of cities fairest one,  
Blushes within her bower for Freedom's  
expectation:  
From eyes of quenchless hope  
Rome tears the priestly cope,  
As ruling once by power, so now by  
admiration,  
As athlete stript to run  
From a remoter station  
For the high prize lost on Philippi's  
shore: —  
As then Hope, Truth, and Justice did  
avail,  
So now may Fraud and Wrong! O  
hail!

EPODE I.  $\beta$ .

Hear ye the march as of the Earth-born  
Forms  
Arrayed against the ever-living Gods?  
The crash and darkness of a thousand  
storms  
Bursting their inaccessible abodes  
Of crags and thunder-clouds?  
See ye the banners blazoned to the  
day,  
Inwrought with emblems of barbaric  
pride?  
Dissonant threats kills Silence far away,  
The serene Heaven which wraps our  
Eden wide  
With iron light is dyed,  
The Anarchs of the North lead forth  
their legions  
Like Chaos o'er creation, uncreat-  
ing;  
A hundred tribes nourisht on strange  
religions  
And lawless slaveries, — down the aërial  
regions  
Of the white Alps, desolating,  
Famisht wolves that bide no  
waiting,  
Blotting the glowing footsteps of old

Trampling our columned cities into dust,  
Their dull and savage lust  
On Beauty's corse to sickness sati-  
ating —  
They come! The fields they tread look  
black and hoary  
With fire — from their red feet the  
streams run gory!

EPODE II.  $\beta$ .

Great Spirit, deepest Love!  
Which rulest and dost move  
All things which live and are, within  
the Italian shore;  
Who spreadest heaven around it,  
Whose woods, rocks, waves, sur-  
round it;  
Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's  
western floor,  
Spirit of beauty! at whose soft command  
The sunbeams and the showers distil  
its foison  
From the Earth's bosom chill;  
O bid those beams be each a blinding  
brand  
Of lightning! bid those showers be  
dews of poison!  
Bid the Earth's plenty kill!  
Bid thy bright Heaven above,  
Whilst light and darkness bound it,  
Be their tomb who planned  
To make it ours and thine!  
Or, with thine harmonizing ardors fill  
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone  
horizon  
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with  
fire —  
Be man's high hope and unextinct de-  
sire,  
The instrument to work thy will divine!  
Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes  
from leopards,  
And frowns and fears from Thee,  
Would not more swiftly flee  
Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian  
shepherds. —  
Whatever, Spirit, from thy starry shrine  
Thou yieldest or withholdest, Oh, let  
be

AUTUMN: A DIRGE.

I.

THE warm sun is failing, the bleak wind  
is wailing,  
The bare boughs are sighing, the pale  
flowers are dying,  
And the year  
On the earth her deathbed, in a shroud  
of leaves dead,  
Is lying.  
Come, months, come away,  
From November to May,  
In your saddest array;  
Follow the bier  
Of the dead cold year,  
And like dim shadows watch by her  
sepulchre.

II.

The chill rain is falling, the nipt worm  
is crawling,  
The rivers are swelling, the thunder is  
knelling  
For the year;  
The blithe swallows are flown, and the  
lizards each gone  
To his dwelling;  
Come, months, come away,  
Put on white, black, and gray;  
Let your light sisters play —  
Ye, follow the bier  
Of the dead cold year,  
And make her grave green with tear on  
tear.

THE WANING MOON.

AND like a dying lady, lean and pale,  
Who totters forth, wrapt in a gauzy veil,  
Out of her chamber, led by the insane  
And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,  
The moon rose up in the murky east,  
A white and shapeless mass.

TO THE MOON.

I.

ART thou pale for weariness  
Of climbing heaven and gazing on the  
earth,  
Wandering companionless

And ever changing, like a joyless eye  
That finds no object worth its constancy?

II.

Thou chosen sister of the spirit,  
That gazes on thee till in thee it  
pities . . .

DEATH.

I.

DEATH is here and death is there,  
Death is busy everywhere,  
All around, within, beneath,  
Above is death — and we are death.

II.

Death has set his mark and seal  
On all we are and all we feel,  
On all we know and all we fear,

III.

First our pleasures die — and then  
Our hopes, and then our fears — and  
when  
These are dead, the debt is due,  
Dust claims dust — and we die too.

IV.

All things that we love and cherish,  
Like ourselves must fade and perish,  
Such is our rude mortal lot —  
Love itself would, did they not.

LIBERTY.

I.

THE fiery mountains answer each other;  
Their thunderings are echoed from  
zone to zone;  
The tempestuous oceans awake one an-  
other,  
And the ice-rocks are shaken round  
Winter's throne,  
When the clarion of the Typhoon

## II.

From a single cloud the lightning flashes,  
 Whilst a thousand isles are illumined  
 around,  
 Earthquake is trampling one city to ashes,  
 A hundred are shuddering and totter-  
 ing; the sound  
 Is bellowing underground.

## III.

But keener thy gaze than the lightning's  
 glare,  
 And swifter thy step than the earth-  
 quake's tramp;  
 Thou deafenest the rage of the ocean;  
 thy stare  
 Makes blind the volcanoes; the sun's  
 bright lamp  
 To thine is a fen-fire damp.

## IV.

From billow and mountain and exhalation  
 The sunlight is darted thro' vapor and  
 blast;  
 From spirit to spirit, from nation to  
 nation,  
 From city to hamlet thy dawning is  
 cast, —  
 And tyrants and slaves are like shadows  
 of night  
 In the van of the morning light.

## SUMMER AND WINTER.

It was a bright and cheerful afternoon,  
 Towards the end of the sunny month of  
 June,  
 When the north wind congregates in  
 crowds  
 The floating mountains of the silver  
 clouds  
 From the horizon — and the stainless sky  
 Opens beyond them like eternity.  
 All things rejoiced beneath the sun; the  
 weeds,  
 The river, and the cornfields, and the  
 reeds:  
 The willow leaves that glanced in the  
 light breeze,

It was a winter such as when birds die  
 In the deep forests; and the fishes lie  
 Stiffened in the translucent ice, which  
 makes  
 Even the mud and slime of the warm  
 lakes  
 A wrinkled clod as hard as brick; and  
 when,  
 Among their children, comfortable men  
 Gather about great fires, and yet feel  
 cold:  
 Alas then for the homeless beggar old!

## THE TOWER OF FAMINE.

AMID the desolation of a city,  
 Which was the cradle, and is now the  
 grave  
 Of an extinguisht people; so that pity  
 Weeps o'er the shipwrecks of oblivion's  
 wave,  
 There stands the Tower of Famine. It  
 is built  
 Upon some prison homes, whose dwell-  
 ers rave  
 For bread, and gold, and blood: pain,  
 linkt to guilt,  
 Agitates the light flame of their hours,  
 Until its vital oil is spent or spilt;

There stands the pile, a tower amid the  
 towers  
 And sacred domes; each marble-ribbed  
 roof,  
 The brazen-gated temples, and the bow-  
 ers

Of solitary wealth; the tempest-proof  
 Pavilions of the dark Italian air,  
 Are by its presence dimmed — they  
 stand aloof,

And are withdrawn — so that the world  
 is bare,  
 As if a spectre wrapt in shapeless terror  
 Amid a company of ladies fair

Should glide and glow, till it became a  
 mirror  
 Of all their beauty, and their hair and



The life of their sweet eyes, with all its error,  
Should be absorbed, till they to marble grew.

AN ALLEGORY.

I.

A PORTAL as of shadowy adamant  
Stands yawning on the highway of the life  
Which we all tread, a cavern huge and gaunt;  
Around it rages an unceasing strife  
Of shadows, like the restless clouds that haunt  
The gap of some cleft mountain, lifted high  
Into the whirlwinds of the upper sky.

II.

And many pass it by with careless tread,  
Not knowing that a shadowy . . .  
Tracks every traveller even to where the dead  
Wait peacefully for their companion new;  
But others, by more curious humor led  
Pause to examine, — these are very few,  
And they learn little there, except to know  
That shadows follow them where'er they go.

THE WORLD'S WANDERERS.

I.

TELL me, thou star, whose wings of light  
Speed thee in thy fiery flight,  
In what cavern of the night  
Will thy pinions close now?

II.

Tell me, moon, thou pale and gray  
Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,  
In what depth of night or day

III.

Weary wind, who wanderest  
Like the world's rejected guest,  
Hast thou still some secret nest  
On the tree or billow?

SONNET.

YE hasten to the grave! What seek ye there,  
Ye restless thoughts and busy purposes  
Of the idle brain, which the world's livery wear?  
Oh thou quick heart which pantest to possess  
All that pale Expectation feigneth fair!  
Thou vainly curious mind which would-est guess  
Whence thou didst come, and whither thou must go,  
And all that never yet was known would know —  
Oh, whither hasten ye, that thus ye press,  
With such swift feet life's green and pleasant path,  
Seeking, alike from happiness and woe,  
A refuge in the cavern of gray death?  
O heart, and mind, and thoughts! what thing do you  
Hope to inherit in the grave below?

LINES TO A REVIEWER.

ALAS, good friend, what profit can you see  
In hating such a hateless thing as me?  
There is no sport in hate when all the rage  
Is on one side; in vain would you assuage  
Your frowns upon an unresisting smile,  
In which not even contempt lurks to beguile  
Your heart, by some faint sympathy of hate.  
Oh! conquer what you cannot satiate;  
For to your passion I am far more coy  
Than ever yet was coldest maid or boy  
In winter noon. Of your antipathy,  
If I am the Narcissus, you are free

FRAGMENT OF A SATIRE ON  
SATIRE.

IF gibbets, axes, confiscations, chains,  
 And racks of subtle torture, if the pains  
 Of shame, of fiery Hell's tempestuous  
 wave,  
 Seen thro' the caverns of the shadowy  
 grave,  
 Hurling the damned into the murky air  
 While the meek blest sit smiling; if De-  
 spair  
 And Hate, the rapid bloodhounds with  
 which Terror  
 Hunts thro' the world the homeless  
 steps of Error,  
 Are the true secrets of the commonweal  
 To make men wise and just; . . .  
 And not the sophisms of revenge and  
 fear,  
 Bloodier than is revenge . . .  
 Then send the priests to every hearth  
 and home  
 To preach the burning wrath which is to  
 come,  
 In words like flakes of sulphur, such as  
 thaw  
 The frozen tears . . .  
 If Satire's scourge could wake the slum-  
 bering hounds  
 Of Conscience, or erase the deeper  
 wounds,  
 The leprous scars of callous infamy;  
 If it could make the present not to be,  
 Or charm the dark past never to have  
 been,  
 Or turn regret to hope; who that has  
 seen  
 What Southey is and was, would not  
 exclaim,  
 Lash on!            be the keen verse  
 dipt in flame;  
 Follow his flight with wingèd words,  
 and urge  
 The strokes of the inexorable scourge  
 Until the heart be naked, till his soul  
 See the contagion's spots            foul;  
 And from the mirror of Truth's sunlike  
 shield,  
 From which his Parthian arrow . . .  
 Flash on his sight the spectres of the

Until his mind's eye paint thereon —  
 Let scorn like            yawn below,  
 And rain on him like flakes of fiery  
 snow.

This cannot be, it ought not, evil still —  
 Suffering makes suffering, ill must follow  
 ill.

Rough words beget sad thoughts,  
 and, beside,

Men take a sullen and a stupid pride  
 In being all they hate in others' shame,  
 By a perverse antipathy of fame.

'T is not worth while to prove, as I could,  
 how

From the sweet fountains of our Nature  
 flow

These bitter waters; I will only say,  
 If any friend would take Southey some  
 day,

And tell him, in a country walk alone,  
 Softening harsh words with friendship's  
 gentle tone,

How incorrect his public conduct is,  
 And what men think of it, 't were not  
 amiss.

Far better than to make innocent ink —

## GOOD-NIGHT.

## I.

GOOD-NIGHT! ah! no; the hour is ill  
 Which severs those it should unite;  
 Let us remain together still,  
 Then it will be *good* night.

## II.

How can I call the lone night good,  
 Though thy sweet wishes wing its  
 flight?  
 Be it not said, thought, understood —  
 Then it will be — *good* night.

## III.

To hearts which near each other move  
 From evening close to morning light,  
 The night is good; because, my love

BUONA NOTTE.

I.

“BUONA notte, buona notte!”— Come mai

La notte sarà buona senza te?  
Non dirmi buona notte, — chè tu sai,  
La notte sà star buona da per sè.

II.

Solinga, scura, cupa, senza speme,  
La notte quando Lilla m’abbandona;  
Pei cuori chi si batton insieme  
Ogni notte, senza dirla, sarà buona.

III.

Come male buona notte si suona  
Con sospiri e parole interrotte! —  
Il modo di aver la notte buona  
E mai non di dir la buona notte.

ORPHEUS.

A. Not far from hence. From yonder pointed hill,  
Crowned with a ring of oaks, you may behold  
A dark and barren field, thro’ which there flows,  
Sluggish and black, a deep but narrow stream,  
Which the wind ripples not, and the fair moon  
Gazes in vain, and finds no mirror there.  
Follow the herbless banks of that strange brook  
Until you pause beside a darksome pond,  
The fountain of this rivulet, whose gush  
Cannot be seen, hid by a rayless night  
That lives beneath the overhanging rock  
That shades the pool — an endless spring of gloom,  
Upon whose edge hovers the tender light,  
Trembling to mingle with its paramour,—  
But, as Syrinx fled Pan, so night flies day,  
Or, with most sullen and regardless hate,

On one side of this jagged and shapeless hill  
There is a cave, from which there eddies up  
A pale mist, like aërial gossamer,  
Whose breath destroys all life — awhile it veils  
The rock — then, scattered by the wind, it flies  
Along the stream, or lingers on the clefts,  
Killing the sleepy worms, if aught bide there.  
Upon the beetling edge of that dark rock  
There stands a group of cypresses; not such  
As, with a graceful spire and stirring life,  
Pierce the pure heaven of your native vale,  
Whose branches the air plays among, but not  
Disturbs, fearing to spoil their solemn grace;  
But blasted and all wearily they stand,  
One to another clinging; their weak boughs  
Sigh as the wind buffets them, and they shake  
Beneath its blasts — a weatherbeaten crew!

*Chorus.* What wondrous sound is that, mournful and faint,  
But more melodious than the murmuring wind  
Which thro’ the columns of a temple glides?

A. It is the wandering voice of Orpheus’ lyre,  
Borne by the winds, who sigh that their rude king  
Hurries them fast from these air-feeding notes;  
But in their speed they bear along with them  
The waning sound, scattering it like dew  
Upon the startled sense.

*Chorus.* Does he still sing?  
Methought he rashly cast away his harp  
When he had lost Eurydice.

A. Ah no!  
Awhile he paused. As a poor hunted

A moment shudders on the fearful brink  
 Of a swift stream — the cruel hounds  
 press on  
 With deafening yell, the arrows glance  
 and wound, —  
 He plunges in: so Orpheus, seized and  
 torn  
 By the sharp fangs of an insatiate grief,  
 Mænad-like waved his lyre in the bright  
 air,  
 And wildly shriekt, “Where she is, it  
 is dark !”  
 And then he struck from forth the strings  
 a sound  
 Of deep and fearful melody. Alas !  
 In times long past, when fair Eurydice  
 With her bright eyes sat listening by his  
 side,  
 He gently sang of high and heavenly  
 themes.  
 As in a brook, fretted with little waves,  
 By the light airs of spring — each triplet  
 makes  
 A many-sided mirror for the sun,  
 While it flows musically thro’ green  
 banks,  
 Ceaseless and pauseless, ever clear and  
 fresh,  
 So flowed his song, reflecting the deep  
 joy,  
 And tender love that fed those sweetest  
 notes,  
 The heavenly offspring of ambrosial food.  
 But that is past. Returning from drear  
 Hell,  
 He chose a lonely seat of unhewn stone,  
 Blackened with lichens, on a herbless  
 plain.  
 Then from the deep and overflowing  
 spring  
 Of his eternal ever-moving grief  
 There rose to Heaven a sound of angry  
 song.  
 ’T is as a mighty cataract that parts  
 Two sister rocks with waters swift and  
 strong,  
 And casts itself with horrid roar and din  
 Adown a steep; from a perennial source  
 It ever flows and falls, and breaks the  
 air  
 With loud and fierce, but most harmo-  
 nious roar,

Which the sun clothes in hues of Iris  
 light.  
 Thus the tempestuous torrent of his grief  
 Is clothed in sweetest sound and varying  
 words  
 Of poesy. Unlike all human works,  
 It never slackens, and thro’ every  
 change  
 Wisdom and beauty and the power divine  
 Of mighty poesy together dwell,  
 Mingling in sweet accord. As I have  
 seen  
 A fierce south blast tear thro’ the dark-  
 ened sky,  
 Driving along a rack of wingèd clouds,  
 Which may not pause, but ever hurry on,  
 As their wild shepherd wills them, while  
 the stars,  
 Twinkling and dim, peep from between  
 the plumes.  
 Anon the sky is cleared, and the high  
 dome  
 Of serene Heaven, starred with fiery  
 flowers,  
 Shuts in the shaken earth; or the still  
 moon  
 Swiftly, yet gracefully, begins her walk,  
 Rising all bright behind the eastern hills.  
 I talk of moon, and wind, and stars, and  
 not  
 Of song; but would I echo his high song,  
 Nature must lend me words ne’er used  
 before,  
 Or I must borrow from her perfect  
 works,  
 To picture forth his perfect attributes.  
 He does no longer sit upon his throne  
 Of rock upon a desert herbless plain,  
 For the evergreen and knotted ilexes,  
 And cypresses that seldom wave their  
 boughs,  
 And sea-green olives with their grateful  
 fruit,  
 And elms dragging along the twisted  
 vines,  
 Which drop their berries as they follow  
 fast,  
 And blackthorn bushes with their infant  
 race  
 Of blushing rose blooms; beeches, to  
 lovers dear,  
 And weeping-willow trees; all swift or

As their huge boughs or lighter dress  
 permit,  
 Have circled in his throne, and Earth  
 herself  
 Has sent from her maternal breast a  
 growth  
 Of starlike flowers and herbs of odor  
 sweet,  
 To pave the temple that his poesy  
 Has framed, while near his feet grim  
 lions couch,  
 And kids, fearless from love, creep near  
 his lair.  
 Even the blind worm seems to feel the  
 sound.  
 The birds are silent, hanging down their  
 heads,  
 Percht on the lowest branches of the  
 trees;  
 Not even the nightingale intrudes a note  
 In rivalry, but all entranced she listens.

FIORDISPINA.

THE season was the childhood of sweet  
 June,  
 Whose sunny hours from morning until  
 noon  
 Went creeping thro' the day with silent  
 feet,  
 Each with its load of pleasure, slow yet  
 sweet;  
 Like the long years of blest Eternity  
 Never to be devlopt. Joy to thee,  
 Fiordispina and thy Cosimo,  
 For thou the wonders of the depth canst  
 know  
 Of this unfathomable flood of hours,  
 Sparkling beneath the heaven which em-  
 bowers —  
 They were two cousins, almost like to  
 twins,  
 Except that from the catalogue of sins  
 Nature had rased their love — which  
 could not be  
 But by dissevering their nativity.  
 And so they grew together like two  
 flowers  
 Upon one stem, which the same beams  
 and showers

Which the same hand will gather — the  
 same clime  
 Shake with decay. This fair day smiles  
 to see  
 All those who love — and who e'er loved  
 like thee,  
 Fiordispina? Scarcely Cosimo,  
 Within whose bosom and whose brain  
 now glow  
 The ardors of a vision which obscure  
 The very idol of its portraiture.  
 He faints dissolved into a sea of love:  
 But thou art as a planet sphered above;  
 But thou art Love itself — ruling the  
 motion  
 Of his subjected spirit: such emotion  
 Must end in sin and sorrow, if sweet May  
 Had not brought forth this morn — your  
 wedding-day.

Lie there; sleep awhile in your own dew  
 Ye faint-eyed children of the  
 Hours,"

Fiordispina said, and threw the flowers  
 Which she had from the breathing —

— A table near of polisht porphyry.  
 They seemed to wear a beauty from the  
 eye  
 That lookt on them — a fragrance from  
 the touch  
 Whose warmth checkt their life;  
 a light such  
 As sleepers wear, lulled by the voice  
 they love,  
 which did reprove  
 The childish pity that she felt for them,  
 And a remorse that from their  
 stem  
 She had divided such fair shapes  
 made  
 A feeling in the which was a shade  
 Of gentle beauty on the flowers; there  
 lay  
 All gems that make the earth's dark  
 bosom gay,  
 rods of myrtle-buds and lemon-  
 blooms,  
 And that leaf tinted lightly which as-  
 sumes  
 The livy of unremembered snow —  
 Violets whose eyes have drunk —

Fiordispina and her nurse are now  
Upon the steps of the high portico;  
Under the withered arm of Media  
She flings her glowing arm

. . . . .

step by step and stair by stair,  
That withered woman, gray and white  
and brown —  
More like a trunk by lichens overgrown  
Than anything which once could have  
been human.  
And ever as she goes the palsied woman

. . . . .

“How slow and painfully you seem to  
walk,  
Poor Media! you tire yourself with  
talk.”

“And well it may,  
Fiordispina, dearest, well-a-day!  
You are hastening to a marriage-bed;  
I to the grave!” — “And if my love  
were dead,

Unless my heart deceives me, I would lie  
Beside him in my shroud as willingly  
As now in the gay night-dress Lilla  
wrought.”

“Fie, child! Let that unseasonable  
thought

Not be remembered until it snows in  
June;

Such fancies are a music out of tune  
With the sweet dance your heart must  
keep to-night.

What! would you take all beauty and  
delight

Back to the Paradise from which you  
sprung,

And leave to grosser mortals? —  
And say, sweet lamb, would you not  
learn the sweet

And subtle mystery by which spirits  
meet?

Who knows whether the loving game is  
played,

When, once of mortal [vesture] dis-  
arrayed,

The naked soul goes wandering here  
and there

Thro' the wide deserts of Elvian air?

## TIME LONG PAST.

### I.

LIKE the ghost of a dear friend dead  
Is Time long past.  
A tone which is now forever fled,  
A hope which is now forever past,  
A love so sweet it could not last,  
Was Time long past.

### II.

There were sweet dreams in the night  
Of Time long past:  
And, was it sadness or delight,  
Each day a shadow onward cast  
Which made us wish it yet might last —  
That Time long past.

### III.

There is regret, almost remorse,  
For Time long past.  
'T is like a child's beloved corse  
A father watches, till at last  
Beauty is like remembrance, cast  
From Time long past.

## FRAGMENT: THE DESERTS OF SLEEP.

I WENT into the deserts of dim sleep —  
That world, which like an unknown  
wilderness,  
Bounds this with its recesses wide and  
deep.

## FRAGMENT: CONSEQUENCE.

THE viewless and invisible Consequence  
Watches thy goings-out, and comings-in,  
And . . . hovers o'er thy guilty sleep,  
Unveiling every new-born deed, and  
thoughts

## FRAGMENT: A FACE.

HIS face was like a snake's — wrinkled  
and loose  
And withered.

## FRAGMENT: WEARINESS.

MY head is heavy, my limbs are weary,  
And it is not life that makes me move.

FRAGMENT: HOPE, FEAR, AND  
DOUBT.

SUCH hope, as is the sick despair of  
good,  
Such fear, as is the certainty of ill,  
Such doubt, as is pale Expectation's food  
Turned while she tastes to poison, when  
the will  
Is powerless, and the spirit . . .

FRAGMENT; "ALAS! THIS IS  
NOT WHAT I THOUGHT LIFE  
WAS." 1

ALAS! this is not what I thought life  
was.  
I knew that there were crimes and evil  
men,  
Misery and hate; nor did I hope to pass  
Untoucht by suffering, thro' the rugged  
glen.  
In mine own heart I saw as in a glass  
The hearts of others                      And when  
I went among my kind, with triple brass  
Of calm endurance my weak breast I  
armed,  
To bear scorn, fear, and hate, a woful  
mass!

## FRAGMENT: MILTON'S SPIRIT.

I DREAMED that Milton's spirit rose, and  
took

From life's green tree his Uranian  
lute,  
And from his touch sweet thunder flowed,  
and shook  
All human things built in contempt of  
man, —  
And sanguine thrones and impious altars  
quaked,  
Prisons and citadels . . .

FRAGMENT: UNRISEN  
SPLENDOR.

UNRISEN splendor of the brightest sun,  
To rise upon our darkness, if the star  
Now beckoning thee out of thy misty  
throne  
Could thaw the clouds which wage an  
obscure war  
With thy young brightness!

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1820,  
BY MRS. SHELLEY.

WE spent the latter part of the year 1819 in Florence, where Shelley passed several hours daily in the Gallery, and made various notes on its ancient works of art. His thoughts were a good deal taken up also by the project of a steam-boat, undertaken by a friend, an engineer, to ply between Leghorn and Marseilles, for which he supplied a sum of money. This was a sort of plan to delight Shelley, and he was greatly disappointed when it was thrown aside.

There was something in Florence that disagreed excessively with his health, and he suffered far more pain than usual; so much so that we left it sooner than we intended, and removed to Pisa, where we had some friends, and, above all, where we could consult the celebrated Vaccà as to the cause of Shelley's sufferings. He, like every other medical man, could only guess at that, and gave him little hope of immediate relief; he enjoined him to abstain from all physicians and medicine, and to leave his complaint to Nature.

of the highest repute in England, he was easily persuaded to adopt this advice. Pain and ill-health followed him to the end; but the residence at Pisa agreed with him better than any other, and there in consequence we remained.

In the Spring we spent a week or two near Leghorn, borrowing the house of some friends who were absent on a journey to England. It was on a beautiful summer evening, while wandering among the lanes whose myrtle-hedges were the bowers of the fireflies, that we heard the carolling of the skylark, which inspired one of the most beautiful of his poems. He addressed the letter to Mrs. Gisborne from this house, which was hers: he had made his study of the workshop of her son, who was an engineer. Mrs. Gisborne had been a friend of my father in her younger days. She was a lady of great accomplishments, and charming from her frank and affectionate nature. She had the most intense love of knowledge, a delicate and trembling sensibility, and preserved freshness of mind after a life of considerable adversity. As a favorite friend of my father, we had sought her with eagerness; and the most open and cordial friendship was established between us.

Our stay at the Baths of San Giuliano was shortened by an accident. At the foot of our garden ran the canal that communicated between the Serchio and the Arno. The Serchio overflowed its banks, and, breaking its bounds, this canal also overflowed; all this part of the country is below the level of its rivers, and the consequence was that it was speedily flooded. The rising waters filled the Square of the Baths, in the lower part of which our house was situated. The canal overflowed in the garden behind; the rising waters on either side at last burst open the doors, and, meeting in the house, rose to the height of six feet. It was a picturesque sight at night to see the peasants driving their cattle from the plains below to the hills above

relief against the red glare of the flame, which was reflected again in the waters that filled the Square.

We then removed to Pisa, and took up our abode there for the winter. The extreme mildness of the climate suited Shelley, and his solitude was enlivened by an intercourse with several intimate friends. Chance cast us strangely enough on this quiet half-unpeopled town; but its very peace suited Shelley. Its river, the near mountains, and not distant sea, added its attractions, and were the objects of many delightful excursions. We feared the south of Italy, and a hotter climate, on account of our child; our former bereavement inspiring us with terror. We seemed to take root here, and moved little afterwards; often, indeed, entertaining projects for visiting other parts of Italy, but still delaying. But for our fears on account of our child, I believe we should have wandered over the world, both being passionately fond of travelling. But human life, besides its great unalterable necessities, is ruled by a thousand Lilliputian ties that shackle at the time, although it is difficult to account afterwards for their influence over our destiny.

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1821.

### DIRGE FOR THE YEAR.

#### I.

ORPHAN hours, the year is dead,  
Come and sigh, come and weep!  
Merry hours smile instead,  
For the year is but asleep,  
See, it smiles as it is sleeping,  
Mocking your untimely weeping.

#### II.

As an earthquake rocks a corse  
In its coffin in the clay,  
So White Winter, that rough nurse,



III.

As the wild air stirs and sways  
 The tree-swung cradle of a child,  
 So the breath of these rude days  
 Rocks the year:— be calm and mild,  
 Trembling hours, she will arise  
 With new love within her eyes.

IV.

January gray is here,  
 Like a sexton by her grave;  
 February bears the bier,  
 March with grief doth howl and rave,  
 And April weeps— but, O, ye hours,  
 Follow with May's fairest flowers.

TO NIGHT.

I.

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,  
 Spirit of Night!  
 Out of the misty eastern cave,  
 Where all the long and lone daylight,  
 Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,  
 Which make thee terrible and dear, —  
 Swift be thy flight!

II.

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,  
 Star-inwrought!  
 Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day:  
 Kiss her until she be wearied out,  
 Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,  
 Touching all with thine opiate wand —  
 Come, long sought!

III.

When I arose and saw the dawn,  
 I sighed for thee;  
 When light rode high, and the dew was  
 gone,  
 And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,  
 And the weary day turned to his rest,  
 Lingering like an unloved guest,  
 I sighed for thee.

IV.

Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,  
 Murmured like a noontide bee,  
 Shall I nestle near thy side?  
 "Wouldst thou me?" — And I replied,  
 "No, not thee!"

v.

Death will come when thou art dead,  
 Soon, too soon —  
 Sleep will come when thou art fled;  
 Of neither would I ask the boon  
 I ask of thee, beloved Night —  
 Swift be thine approaching flight,  
 Come soon, soon!

TIME.

UNFATHOMABLE Sea! whose waves  
 are years,  
 Ocean of Time, whose waters of  
 deep woe  
 Are brackish with the salt of human  
 tears!  
 Thou shoreless flood, which in thy  
 ebb and flow  
 Claspest the limits of mortality!  
 And sick of prey, yet howling on for  
 more,  
 Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable  
 shore;  
 Treacherous in calm, and terrible in  
 storm,  
 Who shall put forth on thee,  
 Unfathomable Sea?

LINES.

I.

FAR, far away, O ye  
 Halcyons of memory,  
 Seek some far calmer nest  
 Than this abandoned breast;—  
 No news of your false spring  
 To my heart's winter bring.

## II.

Vultures, who build your bowers  
High in the Future's towers,  
Withered hopes on hopes are spread,  
Dying joys choked by the dead,  
Will serve your beaks for prey  
Many a day.

FROM THE ARABIC: AN  
IMITATION.

## I.

My faint spirit was sitting in the light  
Of thy looks, my love;  
It panted for thee like the hind at noon  
For the brooks, my love.  
Thy barb whose hoofs outspeed the tem-  
pest's flight  
Bore thee far from me;  
My heart, for my weak feet were weary  
soon,  
Did companion thee.

## II.

Ah! fleetest far than fleetest storm or  
steed,  
Or the death they bear,  
The heart which tender thought clothes  
like a dove  
With the wings of care;  
In the battle, in the darkness, in the  
need,  
Shall mine cling to thee,  
Nor claim one smile for all the com-  
fort, love,  
It may bring to thee.

## TO EMILIA VIVIANI.

MADONNA, wherefore hast thou sent  
to me

Sweet basil and mignonette?  
Embleming love and health, which never  
yet

In the same wreath might be.

Alas, and they are wet!

Is it with thy kisses or thy tears?

From plant or flower — the very doubt  
endears

My sadness ever new,  
The sighs I breathe, the tears I shed  
for thee.

Send the stars light, but send not love  
to me,

In whom love ever made  
Health like a heap of embers soon to  
fade.

## THE FUGITIVES.

## I.

THE waters are flashing,  
The white hail is dashing,  
The lightnings are glancing,  
The hoar-spray is dancing —  
Away!

The whirlwind is rolling,  
The thunder is tolling,  
The forest is swinging,  
The minster bells ringing —  
Come away!

The Earth is like Ocean,  
Wreck-strewn and in motion:  
Bird, beast, man, and worm  
Have crept out of the storm,  
Come away!

## II.

“Our boat has one sail,  
And the helmsman is pale; —  
A bold pilot I trow,  
Who should follow us now,” —  
Shouted He —

And she cried: “Ply the oar!  
Put off gayly from shore!” —  
As she spoke, bolts of death,  
Mixt with hail, speckt their path  
O'er the sea.

And from isle, tower, and rock,  
The blue beacon cloud broke,  
And though dumb in the blast

## III.

“And fear'st thou, and fear'st thou?  
And see'st thou, and hear'st thou?  
And drive we not free  
O'er the terrible sea,  
I and thou?”

One boat-cloak did cover  
The loved and the lover —  
Their blood beats one measure,  
They murmur proud pleasure  
Soft and low;—

While around the lasht Ocean,  
Like mountains in motion,  
Is withdrawn and uplifted,  
Sunk, shattered and shifted  
To and fro.

## IV.

In the court of the fortress  
Beside the pale portress,  
Like a bloodhound well beaten  
The bridegroom stands, eaten  
By shame;

On the topmost watch-turret,  
As a death-boding spirit,  
Stands the gray tyrant father,  
To his voice the mad weather  
Seems tame;

And with curses as wild  
As e'er clung to child,  
He devotes to the blast,  
The best, loveliest, and last  
Of his name!

## TO —.

MUSIC, when soft voices die,  
Vibrates in the memory —  
Odors, when sweet violets sicken,  
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,  
Are heapt for the belovèd's bed;

## SONG.

## I.

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,  
Spirit of Delight!  
Wherefore hast thou left me now  
Many a day and night?  
Many a weary night and day  
'T is since thou art fled away.

## II.

How shall ever one like me  
Win thee back again!  
With the joyous and the free  
Thou wilt scoff at pain.  
Spirit false! thou hast forgot  
All but those who need thee not.

## III.

As a lizard with the shade  
Of a trembling leaf,  
Thou with sorrow art dismayed;  
Even the sighs of grief  
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,  
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

## IV.

Let me set my mournful ditty  
To a merry measure,  
Thou wilt never come for pity,  
Thou wilt come for pleasure.  
Pity then will cut away  
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

## V.

I love all that thou lovest,  
Spirit of Delight!  
The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,  
And the starry night;  
Autumn evening, and the morn  
When the golden mists are born.

## VI.

I love snow and all the forms  
Of the radiant frost;  
I love waves, and winds, and storms,  
Every thing almost  
Which Nature's hand has wrought

## VII.

I love tranquil solitude,  
 And such society  
 As is quiet, wise, and good;  
 Between thee and me  
 What difference? but thou dost possess  
 The things I seek, not love them less.

## VIII.

I love Love — though he has wings,  
 And like light can flee,  
 But above all other things,  
 Spirit, I love thee —  
 Thou art love and life! Oh come,  
 Make once more my heart thy home.

## MUTABILITY.

THE flower that smiles to-day  
 To-morrow dies;  
 All that we wish to stay  
 Tempts and then flies.  
 What is this world's delight?  
 Lightning that mocks the night,  
 Brief even as bright.

## II.

Virtue, how frail it is!  
 Friendship how rare!  
 Love, how it sells poor bliss  
 For proud despair!  
 But we, though soon they fall,  
 Survive their joy and all  
 Which ours we call.

## II.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,  
 Whilst flowers are gay,  
 Whilst eyes that change ere night  
 Make glad the day;  
 Whilst yet the calm hours creep,  
 Dream thou — and from thy sleep

LINES WRITTEN ON HEARING  
THE NEWS OF THE DEATH OF  
NAPOLEON.

WHAT! alive and so bold, oh earth?  
 Art thou not overbold!  
 What! leapest thou forth as of old  
 In the light of thy morning mirth,  
 The last of the flock of the starry fold?  
 Ha! leapest thou forth as of old?  
 Are not the limbs still when the ghost is  
 fled,  
 And canst thou move, Napoleon being  
 dead?

How! is not thy quick heart cold?  
 What spark is alive on thy hearth?  
 How! is not *his* death-knell knolled?  
 And livest *thou* still, Mother Earth?  
 Thou wert warming thy fingers old  
 O'er the embers covered and cold  
 Of that most fiery spirit, when it fled —  
 What, Mother, do you laugh now he is  
 dead?

“Who has known me of old,” replied  
 Earth,  
 “Or who has my story told?  
 It is thou who art overbold.”  
 And the lightning of scorn laught forth  
 As she sung, “To my bosom I fold  
 All my sons when their knell is knolled,  
 And so with living motion all are fed,  
 And the quick spring like weeds out of  
 the dead.

“Still alive and still bold,” shouted  
 Earth,  
 “I grow bolder and still more bold.  
 The dead fill me ten thousandfold  
 Fuller of speed and splendor and mirth,  
 I was cloudy, and sullen, and cold,  
 Like a frozen chaos uprolled,  
 Till by the spirit of the mighty dead  
 My heart grew warm. I feed on whom  
 I fed.

“Ay, alive and still bold,” muttered  
 Earth,  
 “Napoleon's fierce spirit rolled.

A torrent of ruin to death from his birth.  
 Leave the millions who follow to mould  
 The metal before it be cold;  
 And weave into his shame, which like  
 the dead  
 Shrouds me, the hopes that from his  
 glory fled."

SONNET: POLITICAL GREAT-  
 NESS.

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,  
 Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in  
 arms or arts,  
 Shepherd those herds whom tyranny  
 makes tame;  
 Verse echoes not one beating of their  
 hearts,  
 History is but the shadow of their shame,  
 Art veils her glass, or from the pageant  
 starts  
 As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,  
 Staining that Heaven with obscene  
 imagery  
 Of their own likeness. What are num-  
 bers knit  
 By force or custom? Man who man  
 would be,  
 Must rule the empire of himself; in it  
 Must be supreme, establishing his throne  
 On vanquish will, quelling the anarchy  
 Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

THE AZIOLA.

I.

"Do you not hear the Aziola cry?  
 Methinks she must be nigh,"  
 Said Mary, as we sate  
 In dusk, ere stars were lit, or candles  
 brought;  
 And I, who thought  
 This Aziola was some tedious woman,  
 Askt, "Who is Aziola?" How  
 elate  
 I felt to know that it was nothing  
 human,  
 No mockery of myself to fear or  
 hate;

And laught, and said, "Disquiet your-  
 self not;  
 'T is nothing but a little downy  
 owl."

II.

Sad Aziola! many an eventide  
 Thy music I had heard  
 By wood and stream, meadow and moun-  
 tain side,  
 And fields and marshes wide,  
 Such as nor voice, nor lute, nor wind,  
 nor bird,  
 The soul ever stirred;  
 Unlike and far sweeter than them all,  
 Sad Aziola! from that moment I  
 Loved thee and thy sad cry.

A LAMENT.

I.

O WORLD! O life! O time!  
 On whose last steps I climb  
 Trembling at that where I had stood  
 before:  
 When will return the glory of your prime?  
 No more — oh, never more!

II.

Out of the day and night  
 A joy has taken flight;  
 Fresh spring, and summer, and winter  
 hoar,  
 Move my faint heart with grief, but with  
 delight  
 No more — oh, never more!

REMEMBRANCE.

I.

SWIFTER far than summer's flight —  
 Swifter far than youth's delight —  
 Swifter far than happy night,  
 Art thou come and gone —  
 As the earth when leaves are dead,  
 As the night when sleep is sped,  
 As the heart when joy is fled,

## II.

The swallow summer comes again —  
 The owlet night resumes her reign —  
 But the wild-swan youth is fain  
 To fly with thee, false as thou. —  
 My heart each day desires the morrow:  
 Sleep itself is turned to sorrow;  
 Vainly would my winter borrow  
 Sunny leaves from any bough.

## III.

Lilies for a bridal bed —  
 Roses for a matron's head —  
 Violets for a maiden dead —  
 Pansies let *my* flowers be:  
 On the living grave I bear  
 Scatter them without a tear —  
 Let no friend, however dear,  
 Waste one hope, one fear for me.

## TO EDWARD WILLIAMS.

## I.

THE serpent is shut out from paradise.  
 The wounded deer must seek the  
 herb no more  
 In which its heart-cure lies:  
 The widowed dove must cease to  
 haunt a bower  
 Like that from which its mate with  
 feignèd sighs  
 Fled in the April hour.  
 I too must seldom seek again  
 Near happy friends a mitigated pain.

## II.

Of hatred I am proud, — with scorn content;  
 Indifference, that once hurt me, now  
 is grown  
 Itself indifferent.  
 But not to speak of love, pity alone  
 Can break a spirit already more than  
 bent.  
 The miserable one  
 Turns the mind's poison into food,—

## III.

Therefore, if now I see you seldomer,  
 Dear friends, dear *friend!* know  
 that I only fly  
 Your looks, because they stir  
 Grievs that should sleep, and hopes  
 that cannot die:  
 The very comfort that they minister  
 I scarce can bear, yet I,  
 So deeply is the arrow gone,  
 Should quickly perish if it were with-  
 drawn.

## IV.

When I return to my cold home, you ask  
 Why I am not as I have ever been.  
*You* spoil me for the task  
 Of acting a forced part in life's dull  
 scene, —  
 Of wearing on my brow the idle mask  
 Of author, great or mean,  
 In the world's carnival. I sought  
 Peace thus, and but in you I found it not.

## V.

Full half an hour to-day, I tried my lot  
 With various flowers, and every one  
 still said,  
 "She loves me — loves me not."  
 And if this meant a vision long  
 since fled —  
 If it meant fortune, fame, or peace of  
 thought —  
 If it meant, — but I dread  
 To speak what you may know too  
 well:  
 Still there was truth in the sad oracle.

## VI.

The crane o'er seas and forests seeks her  
 home;  
 No bird so wild but has its quiet  
 nest,  
 When it no more would roam;  
 The sleepless billows on the ocean's  
 breast  
 Break like a bursting heart, and die in  
 foam,  
 And thus at length find rest.  
 Doubtless there is a place of peace  
 Where *my* weak heart and all its throbs

## VII.

I askt her, yesterday, if she believed  
That I had resolution. One who  
*had*  
Would ne'er have thus relieved  
His heart with words, — but what  
his judgment bade  
Would do, and leave the scorner unre-  
lieved.

These verses are too sad  
To send to you, but that I know,  
Happy yourself, you feel another's woe.

TO —.

## I.

ONE word is too often profaned  
For me to profane it,  
One feeling too falsely disdained  
For thee to disdain it.  
One hope is too like despair  
For prudence to smother,  
And pity for thee more dear  
Than that from another.

## II.

I can give not what men call love,  
But wilt thou accept not  
The worship the heart lifts above  
And the Heavens reject not,  
The desire of the moth for the star,  
Of the night for the morrow,  
The devotion to something afar  
From the sphere of our sorrow?

TO —.

## I.

WHEN passion's trance is overpast,  
If tenderness and truth could last  
Or live, whilst all wild feelings keep  
Some mortal slumber, dark and deep,  
I should not weep, I should not weep!

## II.

It were enough to feel, to see,  
Thy soft eyes gazing tenderly,  
And dream the rest — and burn and be  
The secret food of fires unseen.

## III.

After the slumber of the year  
The woodland violets reappear,  
All things revive in field or grove,  
And sky and sea, but two, which move,  
And form all others, life and love.

## A BRIDAL SONG.

## I.

THE golden gates of Sleep unbar  
Where Strength and Beauty, met to-  
gether,  
Kindle their image like a star  
In a sea of glassy weather.

Night, with all thy stars look down, —  
Darkness, weep thy holiest dew, —  
Never smiled the inconstant moon  
On a pair so true.  
Let eyes not see their own delight; —  
Haste, swift Hour, and thy flight  
Oft renew.

## II.

Fairies, sprites, and angels keep her!  
Holy stars, permit no wrong!  
And return to wake the sleeper,  
Dawn, — ere it be long!  
O joy! O fear! what will be done  
In the absence of the sun!  
Come along!

ANOTHER VERSION OF THE  
SAME.

NIGHT, with all thine eyes look down!  
Darkness shed its holiest dew!  
When ever smiled the inconstant moon  
On a pair so true?  
Hence, coy Hour! and quench thy light,  
Lest eyes see their own delight!  
Hence, swift hour! and thy loved flight  
Oft renew.

*Boys.*

O joy! O fear! why may be done  
In the absence of the sun?

The golden gates of sleep unbar!  
 When strength and beauty meet together,  
 Kindles their image like a star  
 In a sea of glassy weather.  
 Hence, coy hour! and quench thy light,  
 Lest eyes see their own delight!  
 Hence, swift hour! and thy loved flight  
 Oft renew.

*Girls.*

O joy! O fear! what may be done  
 In the absence of the sun?  
 Come along!

Fairies! sprites! and angels keep her!  
 Holiest powers, permit no wrong!  
 And return, to wake the sleeper,  
 Dawn, ere it be long.  
 Hence, swift hour! and quench thy light,  
 Lest eyes see their own delight!  
 Hence, coy hour, and thy loved flight  
 Oft renew.

*Boys and Girls.*

O joy! O fear! what will be done  
 In the absence of the sun?  
 Come along!

ANOTHER VERSION OF THE  
SAME.*Boys Sing.*

NIGHT! with all thine eyes look down!  
 Darkness! weep thy holiest dew!  
 Never smiled the inconstant moon  
 On a pair so true.  
 Haste, coy Hour! and quench all light,  
 Lest eyes see their own delight!  
 Haste, swift Hour! and thy loved flight  
 Oft renew.

*Girls Sing.*

Fairies, sprites, and angels, keep her!  
 Holy stars! permit no wrong!  
 And return to wake the sleeper,  
 Dawn, ere it be long!  
 O joy! O fear! there is not one  
 Of us can guess what may be done

*Boys.*

Oh! linger long, thou envious eastern  
 lamp  
 In the damp  
 Caves of the deep!

*Girls.*

Nay, return, Vesper! urge thy lazy car!  
 Swift unbar  
 The gates of Sleep.

*Chorus.*

The golden gate of Sleep unbar,  
 When Strength and Beauty, met together,  
 Kindle their image, like a star  
 In a sea of glassy weather.  
 May the purple mist of love  
 Round them rise, and with them move,  
 Nourishing each tender gem  
 Which, like flowers, will burst from them.  
 As the fruit is to the tree  
 May their children ever be!

LOVE, HOPE, DESIRE, AND  
FEAR.

AND many there were hurt by that strong  
 boy;  
 His name, they said, was Pleasure.  
 And near him stood, glorious beyond  
 measure,  
 Four Ladies who possess all empery  
 In earth and air and sea,  
 Nothing that lives from their award is  
 free.  
 Their names will I declare to thee,  
 Love, Hope, Desire, and Fear,  
 And they the regents are  
 Of the four elements that frame the  
 heart,  
 And each diversely exercised her art  
 By force or circumstance or sleight  
 To prove her dreadful might  
 Upon that poor domain.  
 Desire presented her [false] glass and  
 then  
 The spirit dwelling there  
 Was spellbound to embrace what seemed  
 so fair



It would have scorned the [shafts] of  
 the avenger,  
 And death, and penitence, and dan-  
 ger,  
 Had not then silent Fear  
 Toucht with her palsyng spear,  
 So that as if a frozen torrent  
 The blood was curdled in its cur-  
 rent;

It dared not speak, even in look or mo-  
 tion,  
 But chained within itself its proud devo-  
 tion.

Between Desire and Fear thou wert  
 A wretched thing, poor heart!  
 Sad was his life who bore thee in his  
 breast,

Wild bird for that weak nest.  
 Till Love even from fierce Desire it  
 bought,  
 And from the very wound of tender  
 thought  
 Drew solace, and the pity of sweet  
 eyes  
 Gave strength to bear those gentle ago-  
 nies,

Surmount the loss, the terror, and the  
 sorrow.

Then Hope approacht, she who  
 can borrow

For poor to-day, from rich to-mor-  
 row,

And Fear withdrew, as night when  
 day

Descends upon the orient ray,  
 And after long and vain endurance  
 The poor heart woke to her assu-  
 rance.

—At one birth these four were  
 born

With the world's forgotten morn,  
 And from Pleasure still they hold  
 All it circles, as of old.

When, as summer lures the swal-  
 low,

Pleasure lures the heart to follow —  
 O weak heart of little wit!

The fair hand that wounded it,  
 Seeking, like a panting hare,  
 Refuge in the lynx's lair,

## PROLOGUE TO HELLAS.

*Herald of Eternity.* It is the day  
 when all the sons of God

Wait in the roofless senate-house, whose  
 floor

Is Chaos, and the immovable abyss  
 Frozen by his steadfast word to hyaline

The shadow of God, and delegate  
 Of that before whose breath the universe  
 Is as a print of dew.

Hierarchs and kings  
 Who from yon thrones pinnaced on the  
 past

Sway the reluctant present, ye who sit  
 Pavilioned on the radiance or the gloom  
 Of mortal thought, which like an exhalation

Steaming from earth, conceals the of  
 heaven

Which gave it birth, assemble  
 here

Before your Father's throne; the swift  
 decree

Yet hovers, and the fiery incarnation  
 Is yet withheld, clothed in which it shall  
 annul

The fairest of those wandering isles that  
 gem

The sapphire space of interstellar air,  
 That green and azure sphere, that earth  
 enwrapt

Less in the beauty of its tender light  
 Than in an atmosphere of living spirit  
 Which interpenetrating all the . . .

it rolls from realm to realm  
 And age to age, and in its ebb and flow  
 Impels the generations

To their appointed place,  
 Whilst the high Arbiter  
 Beholds the strife, and at the appointed  
 time

Sends his decrees veiled in eternal . . .

Within the circuit of this pendant orb  
 There lies an antique region, on which  
 fell

The dews of thought in the world's  
 golden dawn

Temples and cities and immortal forms  
 And harmonies of wisdom and of song,  
 And thoughts, and deeds worthy of  
 thoughts so fair.

And when the sun of its dominion failed,  
 And when the winter of its glory came,  
 The winds that stript it bare blew on and  
 swept

The dew into the utmost wildernesses  
 In wandering clouds of sunny rain that  
 thawed

The unmaternal bosom of the North.  
 Haste, sons of God, for ye  
 beheld,

Reluctant, or consenting, or astonisht,  
 The stern decrees go forth, which heapt  
 on Greece

Ruin and degradation and despair.  
 A fourth now waits: assemble, sons of  
 God,

To speed or to prevent or to suspend,  
 If, as ye dream, such power be not with-  
 held,

The unaccomplisht destiny.

*Chorus.*

The curtain of the Universe  
 Is rent and shattered,  
 The splendor-wingèd worlds disperse  
 Like wild doves scattered.

Space is roofless and bare,  
 And in the midst a cloudy shrine,  
 Dark amid thrones of light.  
 In the blue glow of hyaline  
 Golden worlds revolve and shine.  
 In flight  
 From every point of the Infinite,  
 Like a thousand dawns on a single  
 night

The splendors rise and spread;  
 And thro' thunder and darkness dread  
 Light and music are radiated,  
 And in their pavilioned chariots led  
 By living wings high overhead  
 The giant Powers move,  
 Gloomy or bright as the thrones they fill.

The senate of the Gods is met,  
 Each in his rank and station set;  
 There is silence in the spaces —  
 Lo! Satan, Christ, and Mahomet  
 Start from their places!

*Christ.* Almighty Father!  
 Low-kneeling at the feet of Destiny

There are two fountains in which spirits  
 weep

When mortals err, Discord and Slavery  
 named,

And with their bitter dew two Destinies  
 Filled each their irrevocable urns; the  
 third,

Fiercest and mightiest, mingled both, and  
 added

Chaos and Death, and slow Oblivion's  
 lymph,  
 And hate and terror, and the poisoned  
 rain

The Aurora of the nations. By this  
 brow

Whose pores wept tears of blood, by  
 these wide wounds,

By this imperial crown of agony,  
 By infamy and solitude and death,  
 For this I underwent, and by the pain  
 Of pity for those who would for  
 me

The unremembered joy of a revenge,  
 For this I felt — by Plato's sacred light,  
 Of which my spirit was a burning mor-  
 row —

By Greece and all she cannot cease to be,  
 Her quenchless words, sparks of immor-  
 tal truth,

Stars of all night — her harmonies and  
 forms,

Echoes and shadows of what Love adores  
 In thee, I do compel thee, send forth  
 Fate,

Thy irrevocable child: let her descend  
 A seraph-wingèd victory [arrayed]  
 In tempest of the omnipotence of God  
 Which sweeps through all things.

From hollow leagues, from Tyranny

To stamp, as on a wingèd serpent's  
 seed,  
 Upon the name of Freedom; from the  
 storm  
 Of faction which like earthquake shakes  
 and sickens  
 The solid heart of enterprise; from all  
 By which the holiest dreams of highest  
 spirits  
 Are stars beneath the dawn . . .

She shall arise

Victorious as the world arose from  
 Chaos!  
 And as the Heavens and the Earth  
 arrayed  
 Their presence in the beauty and the  
 light  
 Of thy first smile, O Father, as they  
 gather  
 The spirit of thy love which paves for  
 them  
 Their path o'er the abyss, till every  
 sphere  
 Shall be one living Spirit, so shall  
 Greece —

*Satan.* Be as all things beneath the  
 empyrean,  
 Mine! Art thou eyeless like old Des-  
 tiny,  
 Thou mockery-king, crowned with a  
 wreath of thorns?  
 Whose sceptre is a reed, the broken reed,  
 Which pierces thee! whose throne a  
 chair of scorn;  
 For seest thou not beneath this crystal  
 floor  
 The innumerable worlds of golden light  
 Which are my empire, and the least of  
 them

which thou wouldst redeem  
 from me?

Know'st thou not them my portion?  
 Or wouldst rekindle the strife  
 Which our great Father then did arbitrate  
 Which he assigned to his competing  
 sons  
 Each his apportioned realm?

Thou Destiny,

Thou who art mailed in the omnipotence  
 Of Him who sends thee forth, whate'er  
 thy task.

Thy trophies, whether Greece again be-  
 come  
 The fountain in the desert whence the earth  
 Shall drink of freedom, which shall give  
 it strength  
 To suffer, or a gulf of hollow death  
 To swallow all delight, all life, all hope.  
 Go, thou Vicegerent of my will, no less  
 Than of the Father's; but lest thou  
 shouldst faint,  
 The wingèd hounds, Famine and Pesti-  
 lence,  
 Shall wait on thee, the hundred-forkèd  
 snake  
 Insatiate Superstition still shall . . .  
 The earth behind thy steps, and War  
 shall hover  
 Above, and Fraud shall gape below, and  
 Change  
 Shall flit before thee on her dragon wings,  
 Convulsing and consuming, and I add  
 Three vials of the tears which demons  
 weep  
 When virtuous spirits thro' the gate of  
 Death  
 Pass triumphing over the thorns of life,  
 Sceptres and crowns, mitres and swords  
 and snares  
 Trampling in scorn, like Him and Soc-  
 rates.  
 The first is Anarchy; when Power and  
 Pleasure,  
 Glory and science and security,  
 On Freedom hang like fruit on the green  
 tree,  
 Then pour it forth, and men shall gather  
 ashes.

The second Tyranny —  
*Christ.* Obdurate spirit!  
 Thou seest but the Past in the To-come.  
 Pride is thy error and thy punishment.  
 Boast not thine empire, dream not that  
 thy worlds  
 Are more than furnace-sparks or rainbow-  
 drops  
 Before the Power that wields and kindles  
 them.  
 True greatness asks not space, true ex-  
 cellence

Lives in the Spirit of all things that live,  
 Which lends it to the worlds thou callest

*Mahomet.* . . . Haste thou and  
fill the waning crescent  
With beams as keen as those which  
pierced the shadow  
Of Christian night rolled back upon the  
West  
When the orient moon of Islam rode in  
triumph  
From Tmolus to the Acroceraunian snow.

. . . . . Wake, thou Word  
Of God, and from the throne of Destiny  
Even to the utmost limit of thy way  
May Triumph

. . . . . Be thou a curse on them whose  
creed  
Divides and multiplies the most high  
God.

#### FRAGMENTS WRITTEN FOR HELLAS.

##### I.

FAIREST of the Destinies,  
Disarray thy dazzling eyes:  
Keener far thy lightnings are  
Than the wingèd [bolts] thou  
bearest,  
And the smile thou wearest  
Wraps thee as a star  
Is wrapt in light.

##### II.

Could Arethuse to her forsaken urn  
From Alpheus and the bitter Doris run,  
Or could the morning shafts of purest  
light  
Again into the quivers of the Sun  
Be gathered — could one thought from  
its wild flight  
Return into the temple of the brain  
Without a change, without a stain, —  
Could aught that is, ever again  
Be what it once has ceased to be,  
Greece might again be free!

##### III.

A quenchless atom of immortal light,  
A living spark of Night,  
A cresset shaken from the constellations  
Swifter than the thunder fell  
To the heart of Earth, the well  
Where its pulses flow and beat,  
And unextinct in that cold source  
Burns, and on course  
Guides the sphere which is its prison,  
Like an angelic spirit pent  
In a form of mortal birth,  
Till, as a spirit half arisen  
Shatters its charnel, it has rent,  
In the rapture of its mirth,  
The thin and painted garment of the  
Earth,  
Ruining its chaos — a fierce breath  
Consuming all its forms of living death.

#### FRAGMENT: "I WOULD NOT BE A KING."

I WOULD not be a king — enough  
Of woe it is to love;  
The path to power is steep and rough,  
And tempests reign above.  
I would not climb the imperial throne;  
'T is built on ice which fortune's sun  
Thaws in the height of noon.  
Then farewell, king, yet were I one,  
Care would not come so soon.  
Would he and I were far away  
Keeping flocks on Himalay!

#### GINEVRA.

WILD, pale, and wonder-stricken, even  
as one  
Who staggers forth into the air and sun  
From the dark chamber of a mortal  
fever,  
Bewildered, and incapable, and ever  
Fancying strange comments in her dizzy  
brain  
Of usual shapes, till the familiar train  
Of objects and of persons past like  
things  
Strange as a dreamer's mad imaginings,  
Ginevra from the nuptial altar went:

Rung in her brain still with a jarring din,  
Deafening the lost intelligence within.

And so she moved under the bridal  
veil,  
Which made the paleness of her cheek  
more pale,  
And deepened the faint crimson of her  
mouth,  
And darkened her dark locks as moon-  
light doth, —  
And of the gold and jewels glittering  
there  
She scarce felt conscious, — but the  
weary glare  
Lay like a chaos of unwelcome light,  
Vexing the sense with gorgeous unde-  
light.  
A moonbeam in the shadow of a cloud  
Was less heavenly fair — her face was  
bowed,  
And as she past, the diamonds in her hair  
Were mirrored in the polisht marble  
stair  
Which led from the cathedral to the  
street;  
And ever as she went her light fair feet  
Erased these images.

The bride - maidens who round her  
thronging came,  
Some with a sense of self-rebuke and  
shame,  
Envyng the unenviable; and others  
Making the joy which should have been  
another's  
Their own by gentle sympathy; and  
some  
Sighing to think of an unhappy home:  
Some few admiring what can ever iure  
Maidens to leave the heaven serene and  
pure  
Of parents' smiles for life's great cheat;  
a thing  
Bitter to taste, sweet in imagining.

But they are all disperst — and, lo!  
she stands  
Looking in idle grief on her white hands,  
Alone within the garden now her own:  
And thro' the sunny air, with jangling

Killing the azure silence, sinks and  
swells; —  
Absorbed like one within a dream who  
dreams  
That he is dreaming, until slumber  
seems  
A mockery of itself — when suddenly  
Antonio stood before her, pale as she.  
With agony, with sorrow, and with  
pride,  
He lifted his wan eyes upon the bride,  
And said — “Is this thy faith?” and  
then as one  
Whose sleeping face is stricken by the  
sun  
With light like a harsh voice, which bids  
him rise  
And look upon his day of life with eyes  
Which weep in vain that they can dream  
no more,  
Ginevra saw her lover, and forbore  
To shriek or faint, and checkt the stifling  
blood  
Rushing upon her heart, and unsubdued  
Said — “Friend, if earthly violence or  
ill,  
Suspicion, doubt, or the tyrannic will  
Of parents, chance, or custom, time or  
change,  
Or circumstance, or terror, or revenge,  
Or wildered looks, or words, or evil  
speech,  
With all their stings and venom can im-  
peach  
Our love, — we love not: — if the grave  
which hides  
The victim from the tyrant, and divides  
The cheek that whitens from the eyes  
that dart  
Imperious inquisition to the heart  
That is another's could dissever ours,  
We love not.” — “What! do not the  
silent hours  
Beckon thee to Gherardi's bridal bed?  
Is not that ring” — a pledge, he would  
have said,  
Of broken vows, but she with patient  
look  
The golden circle from her finger took,  
And said — “Accept this token of my  
faith,

And I am dead or shall be soon — my  
knell

Will mix its music with that merry bell;  
Does it not sound as if they sweetly said  
'We toll a corpse out of the marriage-  
bed?'

The flowers upon my bridal chamber  
strewn

Will serve unfaded for my bier — so soon  
That even the dying violet will not die  
Before Ginevra." The strong fantasy  
Had made her accents weaker and more  
weak,

And quencht the crimson life upon her  
cheek,

And glazed her eyes, and spread an at-  
mosphere

Round her, which chilled the burning  
noon with fear,

Making her but an image of the thought,  
Which, like a prophet or a shadow,  
brought

News of the terrors of the coming time.  
Like an accuser branded with the crime  
He would have cast on a beloved friend,  
Whose dying eyes reproach not to the end  
The pale betrayer — he then with vain  
repentance

Would share, he cannot now avert, the  
sentence —

Antonio stood and would have spoken,  
when

The compound voice of women and of  
men

Was heard approaching; he retired,  
while she

Was led amid the admiring company  
Back to the palace, — and her maidens  
soon

Changed her attire for the afternoon,  
And left her at her own request to keep  
An hour of quiet and rest. — Like one  
asleep

With open eyes and folded hands she  
lay,

Pale in the light of the declining day.

Meanwhile the day sinks fast, the sun  
is set,

And in the lighted hall the guests are  
met;

Reflected from a thousand hearts and  
eyes

Kindling a momentary Paradise.

This crowd is safer than the silent wood,  
Where love's own doubts disturb the  
solitude;

On frozen hearts the fiery rain of wine  
Falls, and the dew of music more divine  
Tempers the deep emotions of the time  
To spirits cradled in a sunny clime: —  
How many meet who never yet have met,  
To part too soon, but never to forget!

How many saw the beauty, power and  
wit

Of looks and words which ne'er en-  
chanted yet!

But life's familiar veil was now with-  
drawn,

As the world leaps before an earthquake's  
dawn,

And unprophetic of the coming hours,  
The matin winds from the expanded  
flowers,

Scatter their hoarded incense, and  
awaken

The earth, until the dewy sleep is shaken  
From every living heart which it pos-  
sesses,

Thro' seas and winds, cities and wilder-  
nesses,

As if the future and the past were all  
Treasured i' the instant; — so Gherardi's  
hall

Laught in the mirth of its lord's festival,  
Till some one askt — "Where is the  
Bride?" And then

A bride's-maid went, — and ere she came  
again

A silence fell upon the guests — a pause  
Of expectation, as when beauty awes  
All hearts with its approach, tho' unbe-  
held;

Then wonder, and then fear that wonder  
quelled: —

For whispers past from mouth to ear  
which drew

The color from the hearer's cheeks, and  
flew

Louder and swifter round the company;  
And then Gherardi entered with an eye  
Of ostentatious trouble, and a crowd

They found Ginevra dead ! if it be death,  
To lie without motion, or pulse, or breath,  
With waxen cheeks, and limbs cold, stiff,  
and white,  
And open eyes, whose fixt and glassy  
light

Mockt at the speculation they had owned.  
If it be death, when there is felt around  
A smell of clay, a pale and icy glare,  
And silence, and a sense that lifts the  
hair

From the scalp to the ankles, as it were  
Corruption from the spirit passing forth,  
And giving all it shrouded to the earth,  
And leaving as swift lightning in its flight  
Ashes, and smoke, and darkness: in our  
night

Of thought we know thus much of death,  
— no more

Than the unborn dream of our life before  
Their barks are wreckt on its inhospitable  
shore.

The marriage feast and its solemnity  
Was turned to funeral pomp — the com-  
pany

With heavy hearts and looks, broke up;  
nor they

Who loved the dead went weeping on  
their way

Alone, but sorrow mixt with sad surprise  
Loosened the springs of pity in all  
eyes,

On which that form, whose fate they  
weep in vain,

Will never, thought they, kindle smiles  
again.

The lamps which half extinguisht in their  
haste

Gleamed few and faint o'er the aban-  
doned feast,

Showed as it were within the vaulted  
room

A cloud of sorrow hanging, as if gloom  
Had past out of men's minds into the air.  
Some few yet stood around Gherardi  
there,

Friends and relations of the dead, —  
and he,

A loveless man, accepted torpidly  
The consolation that he wanted not.

Their whispers made the solemn silence  
seem

More still — some wept, . . .

Some melted into tears without a sob,  
And some with hearts that might be  
heard to throb

Leant on the table, and at intervals  
Shuddered to hear thro' the deserted  
halls

And corridors the thrilling shrieks which  
came

Upon the breeze of night, that shook the  
flame

Of every torch and taper as it swept  
From out the chamber where the women  
kept; —

Their tears fell on the dear companion  
cold

Of pleasures now departed; then was  
knolled

The bell of death, and soon the priests  
arrived,

And finding death their penitent had  
shrived,

Returned like ravens from a corpse  
whereon

A vulture has just feasted to the bone.

And then the mourning women came. —

#### THE DIRGE.

Old winter was gone

In his weakness back to the mountains  
hoar,

And the spring came down

From the planet that hovers upon the  
shore

Where the sea of sunlight encroaches

On the limits of wintry night; —

If the land, and the air, and the sea,

Rejoice not when spring approaches,

We did not rejoice in thee,

Ginevra !

She is still, she is cold

On the bridal couch,

One step to the white death-bed,

And one to the bier,

And one to the charnel — and one, oh  
where?

Ere the sun thro' heaven once more has  
 rolled,  
 The rats in her heart  
 Will have made their nest,  
 And the worms be alive in her golden  
 hair,  
 While the spirit that guides the sun,  
 Sits throned in his flaming chair,  
 She shall sleep.

EVENING: PONTE A MARE,  
 PISA.

I.

THE sun is set; the swallows are asleep;  
 The bats are flitting fast in the gray air;  
 The slow soft toads out of damp corners  
 creep,  
 And evening's breath, wandering here  
 and there  
 Over the quivering surface of the stream,  
 Wakes not one ripple from its summer  
 dream.

II.

There is no dew on the dry grass to-night,  
 Nor damp within the shadow of the  
 trees;  
 The wind is intermitting, dry, and light;  
 And in the inconstant motion of the  
 breeze  
 The dust and straws are driven up and  
 down,  
 And whirled about the pavement of the  
 town.

III.

Within the surface of the fleeting river  
 The wrinkled image of the city lay,  
 Immovably unquiet, and for ever  
 It trembles, but it never fades away;  
 Go to the . . .  
 You, being changed, will find it then as  
 now.

IV.

The chasm in which the sun has sunk  
 is shut  
 By darkest barriers of sinuous cloud

Growing and moving upwards in a  
 crowd,  
 And over it a space of watery blue,  
 Which the keen evening star is shining  
 thro'.

THE BOAT ON THE SERCHIO.

OUR boat is asleep on Serchio's stream,  
 Its sails are folded like thoughts in a  
 dream,  
 The helm sways idly, hither and thither;  
 Dominic, the boatman, has brought  
 the mast,  
 And the oars and the sails; but 't is  
 sleeping fast,  
 Like a beast, unconscious of its tether.

The stars burnt out in the pale blue air,  
 And the thin white moon lay withering  
 there,  
 To tower, and cavern, and rift and tree,  
 The owl and the bat fled drowsily.  
 Day had kindled the dewy woods,  
 And the rocks above and the stream  
 below,  
 And the vapors in their multitudes,  
 And the Apennine's shroud of summer  
 snow,  
 And clothed with light of aëry gold  
 The mists in their eastern caves uprolled.

Day had awakened all things that be,  
 The lark and the thrush and the swallow  
 free,  
 And the milkmaid's song and the  
 mower's scythe,  
 And the matin-bell and the mountain bee:  
 Fire-flies were quencht on the dewy corn,  
 Glow-worms went out on the river's  
 brim,  
 Like lamps which a student forgets to  
 trim:  
 The beetle forgot to wind his horn,  
 The crickets were still in the meadow  
 and hill:

Like a flock of rooks at a farmer's gun  
 Night's dreams and terrors, every one,  
 Fled from the brains which are their  
 prey.



All rose to do the task He set to each,  
Who shaped us to his ends and not our  
own;

The million rose to learn, and one to  
teach

What none yet ever knew or can be  
known.

And many rose  
Whose woe was such that fear became  
desire;—

Melchior and Lionel were not among  
those;

They from the throng of men had stept  
aside,

and made their home under the green  
hillside.

It was that hill, whose intervening brow  
Screens Lucca from the Pisan's envious  
eye,

Which the circumfluous plain waving be-  
low,

Like a wide lake of green fertility,  
With streams and fields and marshes bare,

Divides from the far Apennines—  
which lie

stranded in the immeasurable air.

What think you, as she lies in her green  
cove,

Our little sleeping boat is dreaming of?"

If morning dreams are true, why I  
should guess

That she was dreaming of our idleness,  
and of the miles of watery way

We should have led her by this time of  
day."—

"Never mind," said Lionel,

"Give care to the winds, they can bear  
it well

About yon poplar tops; and see!  
The white clouds are driving merrily,

And the stars we miss this morn will  
light

More willingly our return to-night. —  
How it whistles, Dominic's long black  
hair!

List my dear fellow; the breeze blows  
fair:

Hear how it sings into the air."

"If I can guess a boat's emotions;  
And how we ought, two hours  
before,

To have been the devil knows where."

And then, in such transalpine Tuscan  
As would have killed a Della-Cruscan,

So, Lionel according to his art  
Weaving his idle words, Melchior  
said:

"She dreams that we are not yet out  
of bed;

We'll put a soul into her, and a heart  
Which like a dove chased by a dove shall  
beat."

"Ay, heave the ballast over-  
board,

And stow the eatables in the aft  
locker."

"Would not this keg be best a little  
lowered?"

"No, now all 's right." "Those bottles  
of warm tea—

(Give me some straw) — must be stowed  
tenderly;

Such as we used, in summer after six,  
To cram in great-coat pockets, and to mix

Hard eggs and radishes and rolls at Eton,  
And, coucht on stolen hay in those green  
harbors

Farmers called gaps, and we schoolboys  
called arbors,

Would feast till eight."

With a bottle in one hand,

As if his very soul were at a stand,  
Lionel stood—when Melchior brought  
him steady:—

"Sit at the helm—fasten this sheet—  
all ready!"

The chain is loost, the sails are spread,  
The living breath is fresh behind,

As with dews and sunrise fed,  
Comes the laughing morning wind;—

The sails are full, the boat makes head  
Against the Serchio's torrent fierce,

Then flags with intermitting course,  
And hangs upon the wave, and stems

Shallow, smooth and strong doth  
come, —

Swift as fire, tempestuously  
It sweeps into the affrighted sea;  
In morning's smile its eddies coil,  
Its billows sparkle, toss and boil,  
Torturing all its quiet light  
Into columns fierce and bright.

The Serchio, twisting forth  
Between the marble barriers which it  
clove

At Ripafratta, leads thro' the dread  
chasm

The wave that died the death which  
lovers love,

Living in what it sought; as if this  
spasm

Had not yet past, the toppling moun-  
tains cling,

But the clear stream in full enthusiasm  
Pours itself on the plain, then wandering  
Down one clear path of effluence  
crystalline,

Sends its superfluous waves, that they  
may fling

At Arno's feet tribute of corn and  
wine,

Then, thro' the pestilential deserts wild  
Of tangled marsh and woods of stunt-  
ed pine,

It rushes to the Ocean.

### MUSIC.

#### I.

I PANT for the music which is divine,

My heart in its thirst is a dying flower;  
Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine,

Loosen the notes in a silver shower;  
Like a herbless plain, for the gentle rain,  
I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

#### II.

Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet  
sound,

More, oh more, — I am thirsting yet,  
It loosens the serpent which care has  
bound

Upon my heart to stifle it;  
The dissolving strain, thro' every vein,  
Passes into my heart and brain.

#### III.

As the scent of a violet withered up,  
Which grew by the brink of a silver  
lake;

When the hot noon has drained its dewy  
cup,

And mist there was none its thirst to  
slake —

And the violet lay dead while the odor  
flew

On the wings of the wind o'er the waters  
blue —

#### IV.

As one who drinks from a charmed cup  
Of foaming and sparkling and mur-  
muring wine,

Whom, a mighty Enchantress filling up,  
Invites to love with her kiss divine . . .

### SONNET TO BYRON.

[I AM afraid these verses will not please  
you, but]

If I esteemed you less, Envy would kill  
Pleasure, and leave to Wonder and  
Despair

The ministrations of the thoughts that fill  
The mind which, like a worm whose  
life may share

A portion of the unapproachable,  
Marks your creations rise as fast and fair  
As perfect worlds at the Creator's will.

But such is my regard that nor your  
power

To soar above the heights where others  
[climb],

Nor fame, that shadow of the unborn  
hour

Cast from the envious future on the time,  
Move one regret for his unhonored name  
Who dares these words: — the worm be-  
neath the sod

May lift itself in homage of the God.

### FRAGMENT ON KEATS,

WHO DESIRED THAT ON HIS TOMB  
SHOULD BE INSCRIBED —

“HERE lieth One whose name was writ  
on water.”

But, ere the breath that could erase it  
blew,  
Death, in remorse for that fell slaughter,  
Death, the immortalizing winter, flew  
Athwart the stream, — and time's  
printless torrent grew  
A scroll of crystal, blazoning the name  
Of Adonais. —

FRAGMENT: "METHOUGHT I  
WAS A BILLOW IN THE  
CROWD."

METHOUGHT I was a billow in the crowd  
Of common men, that stream without  
a shore,  
That ocean which at once is deaf and  
loud;  
That I, a man, stood amid many more  
By a wayside . . . which the aspect  
bore  
Of some imperial metropolis,  
Where mighty shapes — pyramid,  
dome, and tower —  
Gleamed like a pile of crags.

TO-MORROW.

WHERE art thou, beloved To-morrow?  
When young and old and strong and  
weak,  
Rich and poor, thro' joy and sorrow,  
Thy sweet smiles we ever seek, —  
In thy place — ah! well-a-day!  
We find the thing we fled — To-day.

STANZA.<sup>1</sup>

IF I walk in Autumn's even  
While the dead leaves pass,  
If I look on Spring's soft heaven, —  
Something is not there which was.  
Winter's wondrous frost and snow,  
Summer's clouds, where are they now?

FRAGMENT: A WANDERER.

HE wanders, like a day-appearing dream,  
Thro' the dim wildernesses of the  
mind;

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps in continuation of "To-morrow." —  
Ed.

Thro' desert woods and tracts, which  
seem  
Like ocean, homeless, boundless, un-  
confined.

FRAGMENT: PEACE SURROUND-  
ING LIFE.

THE babe is at peace within the womb,  
The corpse is at rest within the tomb,  
We begin in what we end.

FRAGMENT: "I FAINT, I PERISH  
WITH MY LOVE!"

I FAINT, I perish with my love! I grow  
Frail as a cloud whose [splendors]  
pale  
Under the evening's ever-changing glow:  
I die like mist upon the gale,  
And like a wave under the calm I fail.

FRAGMENT: THE LADY OF THE  
SOUTH.

FAINT with love, the Lady of the  
South  
Lay in the paradise of Lebanon  
Under a heaven of cedar boughs; the  
drouth  
Of love was on her lips; the light was  
gone  
Out of her eyes.

FRAGMENT: THE AWAKENER.

COME, thou awakener of the spirit's  
ocean,  
Zephyr, whom to thy cloud or cave  
No thought can trace! speed with thy  
gentle motion!

FRAGMENT: RAIN.

THE gentleness of rain was in the wind.

FRAGMENT: AMBUSHED  
DANGERS.

WHEN soft winds and sunny skies  
With the green earth harmonize,

And the young and dewy dawn,  
 Bold as an unhunted fawn,  
 Up the windless heaven is gone, —  
 Laugh — for ambusht in the day, —  
 Clouds and whirlwinds watch their  
 prey.

FRAGMENT: “AND THAT I  
 WALK THUS PROUDLY  
 CROWNED.”

AND that I walk thus proudly crowned  
 withal  
 Is that 't is my distinction; if I fall,  
 I shall not weep out of the vital day,  
 To-morrow dust, nor wear a dull decay.

FRAGMENT: “THE RUDE WIND  
 IS SINGING.”

THE rude wind is singing  
 The dirge of the music dead,  
 The cold worms are clinging  
 Where kisses were lately fed.

FRAGMENT: “GREAT SPIRIT.”

GREAT Spirit whom the sea of boundless  
 thought  
 Nurtures within its unimagined caves,  
 In which thou sittest sole, as in my mind,  
 Giving a voice to its mysterious waves.

FRAGMENT: “O THOU  
 IMMORTAL DEITY.”

O thou immortal deity  
 Whose throne is in the depth of human  
 thought,  
 I do adjure thy power and thee  
 By all that man may be, by all that he  
 is not,  
 By all that he has been and yet must be !

FRAGMENT: FALSE LAURELS  
 AND TRUE.

“WHAT art thou, Presumptuous, who  
 profanest  
 The wreath to mighty poets only due,

Even whilst like a forgotten moon thou  
 wanest?

Touch not those leaves which for the  
 eternal few  
 Who wander o'er the paradise of fame,  
 In sacred dedication ever grew:  
 One of the crowd thou art without a  
 name.”

“Ah, friend, 't is the false laurel that  
 I wear;  
 Bright tho' it seem, it is not the same  
 As that which bound Milton's immor-  
 tal hair;  
 Its dew is poison and the hopes that  
 quicken  
 Under its chilling shade, tho' seeming  
 fair,  
 Are flowers which die almost before they  
 sicken.”

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1821, BY  
 MRS. SHELLEY.

MY task becomes inexpressibly painful  
 as the year draws near that which sealed  
 our earthly fate, and each poem, and each  
 event it records, has a real or mysterious  
 connection with the fatal catastrophe. I  
 feel that I am incapable of putting on  
 paper the history of those times. The  
 heart of the man, abhorred of the poet,  
 who could

“peep and botanise  
 Upon his mother's grave,”

does not appear to me more inexplicably  
 framed than that of one who can dissect  
 and probe past woes, and repeat to the  
 public ear the groans drawn from them in  
 the throes of their agony.

The year 1821 was spent in Pisa, or at  
 the Baths of San Giuliano. We were not,  
 as our wont had been, alone; friends had  
 gathered round us. Nearly all are dead,  
 and, when Memory recurs to the past, she  
 wanders among tombs. The genius, with  
 all his blighting errors and mighty powers;  
 the companion of Shelley's ocean-wan-  
 derings, and the sharer of his fate, than  
 whom no man ever existed more gentle,  
 generous, and fearless, and others, who  
 found in Shelley's society, and in his  
 great knowledge and warm sympathy,

delight, instruction, and solace; have joined him beyond the grave. A few survive who have felt life a desert since he left it. What misfortune can equal death? Change can convert every other into a blessing, or heal its sting—death alone has no cure. It shakes the foundations of the earth on which we tread; it destroys its beauty; it casts down our shelter; it exposes us bare to desolation. When those we love have passed into eternity, "life is the desert and the solitude" in which we are forced to linger—but never find comfort more.

There is much in the "Adonais" which seems now more applicable to Shelley himself than to the young and gifted poet whom he mourned. The poetic view he takes of death, and the lofty scorn he displays towards his calumniators, are as a prophecy on his own destiny when received among immortal names, and the poisonous breath of critics has vanished into emptiness before the fame he inherits.

Shelley's favorite taste was boating; when living near the Thames or by the Lake of Geneva, much of his life was spent on the water. On the shore of every lake or stream or sea near which he dwelt, he had a boat moored. He had latterly enjoyed this pleasure again. There are no pleasure-boats on the Arno; and the shallowness of its waters (except in winter-time, when the stream is too turbid and impetuous for boating) rendered it difficult to get any skiff light enough to float. Shelley, however, overcame the difficulty; he, together with a friend, contrived a boat such as the huntsmen carry about with them in the Maremma, to cross the sluggish but deep streams that intersect the forests,—a boat of laths and pitched canvas. It held three persons; and he was often seen on the Arno in it, to the horror of the Italians, who remonstrated on the danger, and could not understand how any one could take pleasure in an exercise that risked life. "Ma va per la vita!" they exclaimed. I little thought how true their words would prove. He once ventured, with a friend, on the glassy sea of a calm day, down the Arno and round the coast

to Leghorn, which, by keeping close in shore, was very practicable. They returned to Pisa by the canal, when, missing the direct cut, they got entangled among weeds, and the boat upset; a wetting was all the harm done, except that the intense cold of his drenched clothes made Shelley faint. Once I went down with him to the mouth of the Arno, where the stream, then high and swift, met the tideless sea, and disturbed its sluggish waters. It was a waste and dreary scene; the desert sand stretched into a point surrounded by waves that broke idly though perpetually around; it was a scene very similar to Lido, of which he had said—

"I love all waste  
And solitary places; where we taste  
The pleasure of believing what we see  
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be;  
And such was this wide ocean, and this shore  
More barren than its billows."

Our little boat was of greater use, unaccompanied by any danger, when we removed to the Baths. Some friends lived at the village of Pugnano, four miles off, and we went to and fro to see them, in our boat, by the canal; which, fed by the Serchio, was, though an artificial, a full and picturesque stream, making its way under verdant banks, sheltered by trees that dipped their boughs into the murmuring waters. By day, multitudes of ephemera darted to and fro on the surface; at night, the fireflies came out among the shrubs on the banks; the cicale at noonday kept up their hum; the aziola cooed in the quiet evening. It was a pleasant summer, bright in all but Shelley's health and inconstant spirits; yet he enjoyed himself greatly, and became more and more attached to the part of the country where chance appeared to cast us. Sometimes he projected taking a farm situated on the height of one of the near hills, surrounded by chestnut and pine woods, and overlooking a wide extent of country: or settling still farther in the maritime Apennines, at Massa. Several of his slighter and unfinished poems were inspired by these scenes, and by the companions around us. It is the

nature of that poetry, however, which overflows from the soul oftener to express sorrow and regret than joy; for it is when oppressed by the weight of life, and away from those he loves, that the poet has recourse to the solace of expression in verse.

Still, Shelley's passion was the ocean; and he wished that our summers, instead of being passed among the hills near Pisa, should be spent on the shores of the sea. It was very difficult to find a spot. We shrank from Naples from a fear that the heats would disagree with Percy: Leghorn had lost its only attraction, since our friends who had resided there had returned to England, and Monte Nero being the resort of many English, we did not wish to find ourselves in the midst of a colony of chance travellers. No one then thought it possible to reside at Via Reggio, which latterly has become a summer resort. The low lands and bad air of Maremma stretch the whole length of the western shores of the Mediterranean, till broken by the rocks and hills of Spezia. It was a vague idea, but Shelley suggested an excursion to Spezia, to see whether it would be feasible to spend a summer there. The beauty of the bay enchanted him. We saw no house to suit us; but the notion took root, and many circumstances, enchained as by fatality, occurred to urge him to execute it.

He looked forward this autumn with great pleasure to the prospect of a visit from Leigh Hunt. When Shelley visited Lord Byron at Ravenna, the latter had suggested his coming out, together with the plan of a periodical work in which they should all join. Shelley saw a prospect of good for the fortunes of his friend, and pleasure in his society; and instantly exerted himself to have the plan executed. He did not intend himself joining in the work: partly from pride, not wishing to have the air of acquiring readers for his poetry by associating it with the compositions of more popular writers; and also because he might feel shackled in the free expression of his opinions, if any friends were

to be compromised. By those opinions, carried even to their utmost extent, he wished to live and die, as being in his conviction not only true, but such as alone would conduce to the moral improvement and happiness of mankind. The sale of the work might meanwhile, either really or supposedly, be injured by the free expression of his thoughts; and this evil he resolved to avoid.

## POEMS WRITTEN IN 1822.

### THE ZUCCA.

#### I.

SUMMER was dead and Autumn was ex-  
piring,  
And infant Winter laught upon the  
land  
All cloudlessly and cold;—when I, de-  
siring  
More in this world than any under-  
stand,  
Wept o'er the beauty, which like sea  
retiring,  
Had left the earth bare as the wave-  
worn sand  
Of my lorn heart, and o'er the grass and  
flowers  
Pale for the falsehood of the flattering  
Hours.

#### II.

Summer was dead, but I yet lived to  
weep  
The instability of all but weeping;  
And on the Earth lulled in her winter  
sleep  
I woke, and envied her as she was  
sleeping.  
Too happy Earth! over thy face shall  
creep  
The wakening vernal airs, until thou,  
leaping  
From unremembered dreams, shalt see  
No death divide thy immortality.

#### III.

I loved—oh no, I mean not one of ye,  
Or any earthly one, tho' ye are dear

As human heart to human heart may  
be;—

I loved, I know not what — but this  
low sphere

And all that it contains, contains not  
thee,

Thou, whom seen nowhere, I feel  
everywhere.

From heaven and earth, and all that in  
them are,

Veiled art thou, like a star.

## IV.

By Heaven and Earth, from all whose  
shapes thou flowest,

Neither to be contained, delayed, nor  
hidden,

Making divine the loftiest and the lowest,  
When for a moment thou art not for-  
bidden

To live within the life which thou be-  
stowest;

And leaving noblest things vacant and  
chidden,

Cold as a corpse after the spirit's flight,  
Blank as the sun after the birth of night.

## v.

In winds, and trees, and streams, and all  
things common,

In music and the sweet unconscious  
tone

Of animals, and voices which are human,  
Meant to express some feelings of their  
own;

In the soft motions and rare smile of  
woman,

In flowers and leaves, and in the grass  
fresh-shown,

Or dying in the autumn, I the most  
Adore thee present or lament thee lost.

## VI.

And thus I went lamenting, when I saw

A plant upon the river's margin lie,  
Like one who loved beyond his nature's

law,

And in despair had cast him down to  
die;

Its leaves which had outlived the frost,  
the thaw

Had blighted; like a heart which  
hatred's eye

Can blast not, but which pity kills; the  
dew

Lay on its spotted leaves like tears too  
true.

## VII.

The Heavens had wept upon it, but the  
Earth

Had crusht it on her unmaternal  
breast.

## VIII.

I bore it to my chamber, and I planted  
It in a vase full of the lightest mould;  
The winter beams which out of Heaven  
slanted

Fell thro' the window panes, disrobed  
of cold,

Upon its leaves and flowers; the star  
which panted

In evening for the Day, whose car has  
rolled

Over the horizon's wave, with looks of  
light

Smiled on it from the threshold of the  
night.

## IX.

The mitigated influences of air  
And light revived the plant, and from  
it grew

Strong leaves and tendrils, and its flow-  
ers fair,

Full as a cup with the vine's burning  
dew,

O'erflowed with golden colors; an at-  
mosphere

Of vital warmth infolded it anew,  
And every impulse sent to every part

The unbeheld pulsations of its heart.

## x.

Well might the plant grow beautiful and  
strong,

Even if the air and sun had smiled not  
on it;

For one wept o'er it all the winter long

Tears pure as Heaven's rain, which  
 fell upon it  
 Hour after hour; for sounds of softest  
 song  
 Mixt with the stringèd melodies that  
 won it  
 To leave the gentle lips on which it slept,  
 Had loost the heart of him who sat and  
 wept.

## XI.

Had loost his heart, and shook the leaves  
 and flowers  
 On which he wept, the while the sav-  
 age storm  
 Waked by the darkest of December's  
 hours  
 Was raving round the chamber husht  
 and warm;  
 The birds were shivering in their leafless  
 bowers,  
 The fish were frozen in the pools, the  
 form  
 Of every summer plant was dead . . .  
 Whilst this . . .

THE MAGNETIC LADY TO HER  
PATIENT.

## I.

“SLEEP, sleep on! forget thy pain;  
 My hand is on thy brow,  
 My spirit on thy brain;  
 My pity on thy heart, poor friend;  
 And from my fingers flow  
 The powers of life, and like a sign,  
 Seal thee from thine hour of woe;  
 And brood on thee, but may not blend  
 With thine.

## II.

“Sleep, sleep on! I love thee not;  
 But when I think that he  
 Who made and makes my lot  
 As full of flowers as thine of weeds,  
 Might have been lost like thee;  
 And that a hand which was not mine,  
 Might then have charmed his agony  
 As I another's — my heart bleeds  
 For thine.

## III.

“Sleep, sleep, and with the slumber of  
 The dead and the unborn  
 Forget thy life and love;  
 Forget that thou must wake forever;  
 Forget the world's dull scorn;  
 Forget lost health, and the divine  
 Feelings which died in youth's brief  
 morn;  
 And forget me, for I can never  
 Be thine.

## IV.

“Like a cloud big with a May shower,  
 My soul weeps healing rain,  
 On thee, thou withered flower;  
 It breathes mute music on thy sleep;  
 Its odor calms thy brain;  
 Its light within thy gloomy breast  
 Spreads like a second youth again.  
 By mine thy being is to its deep  
 Possesst.

## V.

“The spell is done. How feel you now?”  
 “Better — Quite well,” replied  
 The sleeper. — “What would do  
 You good when suffering and awake?  
 What cure your head and side? —”  
 “What would cure, that would kill me,  
 Jane:  
 And as I must on earth abide  
 Awhile, yet tempt me not to break  
 My chain.”

LINES: “WHEN THE LAMP IS  
SHATTERED.”

## I.

WHEN the lamp is shattered  
 The light in the dust lies dead —  
 When the cloud is scattered  
 The rainbow's glory is shed.  
 When the lute is broken,  
 Sweet tones are remembered not;  
 When the lips have spoken,  
 Loved accents are soon forgot.

## II.

As music and splendor  
 Survive not the lamp and the lute,



The heart's echoes render  
 No song when the spirit is mute: —  
 No song but sad dirges,  
 Like the wind through a ruined cell,  
 Or the mournful surges  
 That ring the dead seaman's knell.

## III.

When hearts have once mingled  
 Love first leaves the well-built nest,  
 The weak one is singled  
 To endure what it once possest.  
 O Love! who bewailest  
 The frailty of all things here,  
 Why choose you the frailest  
 For your cradle, your home, and your  
 bier?

## IV.

Its passions will rock thee  
 As the storms rock the ravens on high:  
 Bright reason will mock thee,  
 Like the sun from a wintry sky.  
 From thy nest every rafter  
 Will rot, and thine eagle home  
 Leave thee naked to laughter,  
 When leaves fall and cold winds come.

## TO JANE: THE INVITATION.

BEST and brightest, come away!  
 Fairer far than this fair Day,  
 Which, like thee to those in sorrow,  
 Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow  
 To the rough Year just awake  
 In its cradle on the brake.  
 The brightest hour of unborn Spring,  
 Thro' the winter wandering,  
 Found, it seems, the halcyon Morn  
 To hoar February born;  
 Bending from Heaven, in azure mirth,  
 It kist the forehead of the Earth,  
 And smiled upon the silent sea,  
 And bade the frozen streams be free,  
 And waked to music all their fountains,  
 And breathed upon the frozen mountains,  
 And like a prophetess of May  
 Strewed flowers upon the barren way,

Making the wintry world appear  
 Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

Away, away, from men and towns,  
 To the wild wood and the downs —  
 To the silent wilderness  
 Where the soul need not repress  
 Its music lest it should not find  
 An echo in another's mind,  
 While the touch of Nature's art  
 Harmonizes heart to heart.  
 I leave this notice on my door  
 For each accustomed visitor: —  
 "I am gone into the fields  
 To take what this sweet hour yields;—  
 Reflection, you may come to-morrow,  
 Sit by the fireside with Sorrow. —  
 You with the unpaid bill, Despair, —  
 You tiresome verse-reciter, Care, —  
 I will pay you in the grave, —  
 Death will listen to your stave.  
 Expectation too, be off!  
 To-day is for itself enough;  
 Hope in pity mock not Woe  
 With smiles, nor follow where I go;  
 Long having lived on thy sweet food,  
 At length I find one moment's good  
 After long pain — with all your love,  
 This you never told me of."

Radiant Sister of the Day,  
 Awake! arise! and come away!  
 To the wild woods and the plains,  
 And the pools where Winter rains  
 Image all their roof of leaves,  
 Where the pine its garland weaves  
 Of sapless green and ivy dun  
 Round stems that never kiss the sun;  
 Where the lawns and pastures be,  
 And the sandhills of the sea; —  
 Where the melting hoar-frost wets  
 The daisy-star that never sets,  
 And wind-flowers, and violets,  
 Which yet join not scent to hue,  
 Crown the pale year weak and new;  
 When the night is left behind  
 In the deep east, dun and blind,  
 And the blue noon is over us,  
 And the multitudinous  
 Billows murmur at our feet,  
 Where the earth and ocean meet,  
 And all things seem only one  
 In the universal sun.

## TO JANE: THE RECOLLECTION.

## I.

Now the last day of many days,  
 All beautiful and bright as thou,  
 The loveliest and the last, is dead,  
 Rise, Memory, and write its praise!  
 Up to thy wonted work! come, trace  
 The epitaph of glory fled, —  
 For now the Earth has changed its face,  
 A frown is on the Heaven's brow.

## II.

We wandered to the Pine Forest  
 That skirts the Ocean's foam,  
 The lightest wind was in its nest,  
 The tempest in its home.  
 The whispering waves were half asleep,  
 The clouds were gone to play,  
 And on the bosom of the deep,  
 The smile of Heaven lay;  
 It seemed as if the hour were one  
 Sent from beyond the skies,  
 Which scattered from above the sun  
 A light of Paradise.

## III.

We paused amid the pines that stood  
 The giants of the waste,  
 Tortured by storms to shapes as rude  
 As serpents interlaced,  
 And soothed by every azure breath,  
 That under heaven is blown,  
 To harmonies and hues beneath,  
 As tender as his own;  
 Now all the tree-tops lay asleep,  
 Like green waves on the sea,  
 As still as in the silent deep  
 The ocean woods may be.

## IV.

How calm it was! — the silence there  
 By such a chain was bound  
 That even the busy woodpecker  
 Made stiller by her sound  
 The inviolable quietness;  
 The breath of peace we drew  
 With its soft motion made not less  
 The calm that round us grew.

There seemed from the remotest seat  
 Of the white mountain waste,  
 To the soft flower beneath our feet,  
 A magic circle traced, —  
 A spirit interfused around,  
 A thrilling silent life,  
 To momentary peace it bound  
 Our mortal nature's strife;—  
 And still I felt the centre of  
 The magic circle there,  
 Was one fair form that filled with love  
 The lifeless atmosphere.

## V.

We paused beside the pools that lie  
 Under the forest bough,  
 Each seemed as 't were a little sky  
 Gult in a world below;  
 A firmament of purple light,  
 Which in the dark earth lay,  
 More boundless than the depth of night,  
 And purer than the day —  
 In which the lovely forests grew  
 As in the upper air,  
 More perfect both in shape and hue  
 Than any spreading there,  
 There lay the glade and neighboring  
 lawn,  
 And thro' the dark green wood  
 The white sun twinkling like the dawn  
 Out of a speckled cloud.  
 Sweet views which in our world above  
 Can never well be seen,  
 Were imaged by the water's love  
 Of that fair forest green.  
 And all was interfused beneath  
 With an elysian glow,  
 An atmosphere without a breath,  
 A softer day below.  
 Like one beloved the scene had lent  
 To the dark water's breast,  
 Its every leaf and lineament  
 With more than truth exprest;  
 Until an envious wind crept by,  
 Like an unwelcome thought,  
 Which from the mind's too faithful eye  
 Blots one dear image out.  
 Tho' thou art ever fair and kind,  
 The forests ever green,  
 Less oft is peace in Shelley's mind,  
 Than calm in waters seen.

## CANCELLED PASSAGE.

WERE not the crocuses that grew  
Under that ilex-tree  
As beautiful in scent and hue  
As ever fed the bee?

## WITH A GUITAR, TO JANE.

ARIEL to *Miranda*. — Take  
This slave of Music, for the sake  
Of him who is the slave of thee,  
And teach it all the harmony  
In which thou canst, and only thou,  
Make the delighted spirit glow,  
Till joy denies itself again,  
And, too intense, is turned to pain;  
For by permission and command  
Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,  
Poor Ariel sends this silent token  
Of more than ever can be spoken;  
Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who,  
From life to life, must still pursue  
Your happiness; — for thus alone  
Can Ariel ever find his own.  
From Prospero's enchanted cell,  
As the mighty verses tell,  
To the throne of Naples, he  
Lit you o'er the trackless sea,  
Flitting on, your prow before,  
Like a living meteor.  
When you die, the silent Moon,  
In her interlunar swoon,  
Is not sadder in her cell  
Than deserted Ariel.  
When you live again on earth,  
Like an unseen star of birth,  
Ariel guides you o'er the sea  
Of life from your nativity.  
Many changes have been run,  
Since Ferdinand and you begun  
Your course of love, and Ariel still  
Has trackt your steps, and served your  
will;  
Now, in humbler, happier lot,  
This is all remembered not;  
And now, alas! the poor sprite is  
Imprisoned, for some fault of his,  
In a body like a grave; —  
From you he only dares to crave,

For his service and his sorrow,  
A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought,  
To echo all harmonious thought,  
Felled a tree, while on the steep  
The woods were in their winter sleep,  
Rockt in that repose divine  
On the wind-swept Apennine;  
And dreaming, some of Autumn past,  
And some of Spring approaching fast,  
And some of April buds and showers,  
And some of songs in July bowers,  
And all of love; and so this tree, —  
O that such our death may be! —  
Died in sleep and felt no pain,  
To live in happier form again:  
From which, beneath Heaven's fairest  
star,

The artist wrought this loved Guitar,  
And taught it justly to reply,  
To all who question skilfully,  
In language gentle as thine own;  
Whispering in enamoured tone  
Sweet oracles of woods and dells,  
And summer winds in sylvan cells;  
For it had learnt all harmonies  
Of the plains and of the skies,  
Of the forests and the mountains,  
And the many-voicèd fountains;  
The clearest echoes of the hills,  
The softest notes of falling rills,  
The melodies of birds and bees,  
The murmuring of summer seas,  
And pattering rain, and breathing  
dew,

And airs of evening; and it knew  
That seldom-heard mysterious sound,  
Which, driven on its diurnal round  
As it floats thro' boundless day,  
Our world enkindles on its way —  
All this it knows, but will not tell  
To those who cannot question well  
The spirit that inhabits it;  
It talks according to the wit  
Of its companions; and no more  
Is heard than has been felt before,  
By those who tempt it to betray  
These secrets of an elder day:  
But sweetly as its answers will  
Flatter hands of perfect skill,  
It keeps its highest, holiest tone  
For our beloved Jane alone.

TO JANE: "THE KEEN STARS  
WERE TWINKLING."

## I.

THE keen stars were twinkling,  
And the fair moon was rising among  
them,  
Dear Jane!  
The guitar was tinkling,  
But the notes were not sweet till you  
sung them  
Again.

## II.

As the moon's soft splendor  
O'er the faint cold starlight of heaven  
Is thrown,  
So your voice most tender  
To the strings without soul had then  
given  
Its own.

## III.

The stars will awaken,  
Tho' the moon sleep a full hour later,  
To-night;  
No leaf will be shaken  
Whilst the dews of your melody scatter  
Delight.

## IV.

Tho' the sound overpowers,  
Sing again, with your dear voice reveal-  
ing  
A tone  
Of some world far from ours,  
Where music and moonlight and feeling  
Are one.

## A DIRGE.

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud  
Grief too sad for song;  
Wild wind, when sullen cloud  
Knells all the night long;  
Sad storm, whose tears are vain,  
Bare woods, whose branches stain,  
Deep caves and dreary main,  
Wail, for the world's wrong!

LINES WRITTEN IN THE BAY OF  
LERICI.

SHE left me at the silent time  
When the moon had ceast to climb  
The azure path of Heaven's steep,  
And like an albatross asleep,  
Balanced on her wings of light,  
Hovered in the purple night,  
Ere she sought her ocean nest  
In the chambers of the West.  
She left me, and I stayed alone  
Thinking over every tone  
Which, tho' silent to the ear,  
The enchanted heart could hear,  
Like notes which die when born, but  
still

Haunt the echoes of the hill;  
And feeling ever — oh, too much! —  
The soft vibration of her touch,  
As if her gentle hand, even now,  
Lightly trembled on my brow;  
And thus, altho' she absent were,  
Memory gave me all of her  
That even Fancy dares to claim:—  
Her presence had made weak and tame  
All passions, and I lived alone  
In the time which is our own;  
The past and future were forgot,  
As they had been, and would be, not.  
But soon, the guardian angel gone,  
The demon reassumed his throne  
In my faint heart. I dare not speak  
My thoughts, but thus disturbed and weak  
I sat and saw the vessels glide  
Over the ocean bright and wide,  
Like spirit-wingèd chariots sent  
O'er some serenest element  
For ministrations strange and far;  
As if to some Elysian star  
Sailed for drink to medicine  
Such sweet and bitter pain as mine.  
And the wind that winged their flight  
From the land came fresh and light,  
And the scent of wingèd flowers,  
And the coolness of the hours  
Of dew, and sweet warmth left by day,  
Were scattered o'er the twinkling bay.  
And the fisher with his lamp  
And spear about the low rocks damp  
Crept, and struck the fish which came  
To worship the delusive flame.

Too happy they, whose pleasure sought  
Extinguishes all sense and thought  
Of the regret that pleasure leaves,  
Destroying life alone, not peace!

LINES: "WE MEET NOT AS WE  
PARTED."

## I.

WE meet not as we parted,  
We feel more than all may see,  
My bosom is heavy-hearted,  
And thine full of doubt for me.  
One moment has bound the free.

## II.

That moment is gone forever,  
Like lightning that flasht and died,  
Like a snowflake upon the river,  
Like a sunbeam upon the tide,  
Which the dark shadows hide.

## III.

That moment from time was singled  
As the first of a life of pain,  
The cup of its joy was mingled  
— Delusion too sweet tho' vain!  
Too sweet to be mine again.

## IV.

Sweet lips, could my heart have hidden  
That its life was crusht by you,  
Ye would not have then forbidden  
The death which a heart so true  
Sought in your briny dew.

## V.

• • • • •  
• • • • •  
• • • • •  
Methinks too little cost  
For a moment so found, so lost!

## THE ISLE.

THERE was a little lawny islet  
By anemone and violet,  
Like mosaic, paven:

And its roof was flowers and leaves  
Which the summer's breath enweaves  
Where nor sun nor showers nor breeze  
Pierce the pines and tallest trees,  
Each a gem engraven.  
Girt by many an azure wave  
With which the clouds and mountains  
pave  
A lake's blue chasm.

## FRAGMENT: TO THE MOON.

BRIGHT wanderer, fair coquette of  
heaven,  
To whom alone it has been given  
To change and be adored for ever,  
Envy not this dim world, for never  
But once within its shadows grew  
One fair as ——

## EPITAPH.

THESE are two friends whose lives were  
undivided;  
So let their memory be, now they have  
glided  
Under the grave; let not their bones be  
parted,  
For their two hearts in life were single-  
hearted.

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1822, BY  
MRS. SHELLEY.

THIS morn thy gallant bark  
Sailed on a sunny sea:  
'T is noon, and tempest dark  
Have wreckt it on the lee.  
Ah woe! ah woe!  
By Spirits of the deep  
Thou 'rt cradled on the billow  
To thy eternal sleep.

Thou sleep'st upon the shore  
Beside the knelling surge,  
And Sea-nymphs evermore  
Shall sadly chant thy dirge.  
They come, they come,  
The Spirits of the deep, —  
While near thy seaweed pillow  
My lonely watch I keep.

From far across the sea  
I hear a loud lament,  
By Echo's voice for thee  
From ocean's caverns sent.

Oh list! oh list!  
 The Spirits of the deep!  
 They raise a wail of sorrow,  
 While I for ever weep.

With this last year of the life of Shelley these Notes end. They are not what I intended them to be. I began with energy, and a burning desire to impart to the world, in worthy language, the sense I have of the virtues and genius of the beloved and the lost; my strength has failed under the task. Recurrence to the past, full of its own deep and unforgetten joys and sorrows, contrasted with succeeding years of painful and solitary struggle, has shaken my health. Days of great suffering have followed my attempts to write, and these again produced a weakness and languor that spread their sinister influence over these Notes. I dislike speaking of myself, but cannot help apologizing to the dead, and to the public, for not having executed in the manner I desired the history I engaged to give of Shelley's writings.<sup>1</sup>

The winter of 1822 was passed in Pisa, if we might call that season winter in which autumn merged into spring after the interval of but few days of bleaker weather. Spring sprang up early, and with extreme beauty. Shelley had conceived the idea of writing a tragedy on the subject of Charles I. It was one that he believed adapted for a drama; full of intense interest, contrasted character, and busy passion. He had recommended it long before, when he encouraged me to attempt a play. Whether the subject proved more difficult than he anticipated, or whether in fact he could not bend his

mind away from the broodings and wanderings of thought, divested from human interest, which he best loved, I cannot tell; but he proceeded slowly, and threw it aside for one of the most mystical of his poems, the "Triumph of Life," on which he was employed at the last.

His passion for boating was fostered at this time by having among our friends several sailors. His favorite companion, Edward Ellerker Williams, of the 8th Light Dragoons, had begun his life in the navy, and had afterwards entered the army; he had spent several years in India, and his love for adventure and manly exercises accorded with Shelley's taste. It was their favorite plan to build a boat such as they could manage themselves, and, living on the sea-coast, to enjoy at every hour and season the pleasure they loved best. Captain Roberts, R.N., undertook to build the boat at Genoa, where he was also occupied in building the *Bolivar* for Lord Byron. Ours was to be an open boat, on a model taken from one of the royal dockyards. I have since heard that there was a defect in this model, and that it was never seaworthy. In the month of February, Shelley and his friend went to Spezia to seek for houses for us. Only one was to be found at all suitable; however, a trifle such as not finding a house could not stop Shelley; the one found was to serve for all. It was unfurnished; we sent our furniture by sea, and with a good deal of precipitation, arising from his impatience, made our removal. We left Pisa on the 26th of April.

The Bay of Spezia is of considerable extent, and divided by a rocky promontory into a larger and smaller one. The town of Lerici is situated on the eastern point, and in the depth of the smaller bay, which bears the name of this town, is the village of San Terenzo. Our house, Casa Magni, was close to this village; the sea came up to the door, a steep hill sheltered it behind. The proprietor of the estate on which it was situated was insane; he had begun to erect a large house at the summit of the hill behind, but his malady prevented its being finished, and

<sup>1</sup> I at one time feared that the correction of the press might be less exact through my illness; but I believe that it is nearly free from error. Some asterisks occur in a few pages, as they did in the volume of *Posthumous Poems*, either because they refer to private concerns, or because the original manuscript was left imperfect. Did any one see the papers from which I drew that volume, the wonder would be how any eyes or patience were capable of extracting it from so confused a mass, interlined and broken into fragments, so that the sense could only be deciphered and joined by guesses which might seem rather intuitive than founded on reasoning. Yet I believe no mistake was made.

it was falling into ruin. He had (and this to the Italians had seemed a glaring symptom of very decided madness) rooted up the olives on the hillside, and planted forest trees. These were mostly young, but the plantation was more in English taste than I ever elsewhere saw in Italy; some fine walnut and ilex trees intermingled their dark massy foliage, and formed groups which still haunt my memory, as then they satiated the eye with a sense of loveliness. The scene was indeed of unimaginable beauty. The blue extent of waters, the almost landlocked bay, the near castle of Lerici shutting it in to the east, and distant Porto Venere to the west; the varied forms of the precipitous rocks that bound in the beach, over which there was only a winding rugged footpath towards Lerici, and none on the other side; the tideless sea leaving no sands nor shingle, formed a picture such as one sees in Salvator Rosa's landscapes only. Sometimes the sunshine vanished when the sirocco raged—the "ponente" the wind was called on that shore. The gales and squalls that hailed our first arrival surrounded the bay with foam; the howling wind swept round our exposed house, and the sea roared unremittingly, so that we almost fancied ourselves on board ship. At other times sunshine and calm invested sea and sky, and the rich tints of Italian heaven bathed the scene in bright and ever-varying tints.

The natives were wilder than the place. Our near neighbors of San Terenzo were more like savages than any people I ever before lived among. Many a night they passed on the beach, singing, or rather howling; the women dancing about among the waves that broke at their feet, the men leaning against the rocks and joining in their loud wild chorus. We could get no provisions nearer than Sarzana, at a distance of three miles and a half off, with the torrent of the Magra between; and even there the supply was very deficient. Had we been wrecked on an island of the South Seas, we could scarcely have felt ourselves farther from civilization and comfort; but, where the

sun shines the latter becomes an unnecessary luxury, and we had enough society among ourselves. Yet I confess house-keeping became rather a toilsome task, especially as I was suffering in my health, and could not exert myself actively.

At first the fatal boat had not arrived, and was expected with great impatience. On Monday, 12th of May, it came. Williams records the long-wished-for fact in his journal: "Cloudy and threatening weather. M. Maglian called; and after dinner, and while walking with him on the terrace, we discovered a strange sail coming round the point of Porto Venere, which proved at length to be Shelley's boat. She had left Genoa on Thursday last, but had been driven back by the prevailing bad winds. A Mr. Heslop and two English seamen brought her round, and they speak most highly of her performances. She does indeed excite my surprise and admiration. Shelley and I walked to Lerici, and made a stretch off the land to try her: and I find she fetches whatever she looks at. In short, we have now a perfect ploughing for the summer."—It was thus that short-sighted mortals welcomed Death, he having disguised his grim form in a pleasing mask! The time of the friends was now spent on the sea; the weather became fine, and our whole party often passed the evenings on the water when the wind promised pleasant sailing. Shelley and Williams made longer excursions; they sailed several times to Massa. They had engaged one of the seamen who brought her round, a boy, by name Charles Vivian; and they had not the slightest apprehension of danger. When the weather was unfavorable, they employed themselves with alterations in the rigging, and by building a boat of canvas and reeds, as light as possible, to have on board the other for the convenience of landing in waters too shallow for the larger vessel. When Shelley was on board, he had his papers with him; and much of the "Triumph of Life" was written as he sailed or weltered on that sea which was soon to engulf him.

The heats set in in the middle of June; the days became excessively hot. But the sea-breeze cooled the air at noon, and extreme heat always put Shelley in spirits. A long drought had preceded the heat; and prayers for rain were being put up in the churches, and processions of relics for the same effect took place in every town. At this time we received letters announcing the arrival of Leigh Hunt at Genoa. Shelley was very eager to see him. I was confined to my room by severe illness, and could not move; it was agreed that Shelley and Williams should go to Leghorn in the boat. Strange that no fear of danger crossed our minds! Living on the sea-shore, the ocean became as a plaything: as a child may sport with a lighted stick, till a spark inflames a forest, and spreads destruction over all, so did we fearlessly and blindly tamper with danger, and make a game of the terrors of the ocean. Our Italian neighbors, even, trusted themselves as far as Massa in the skiff; and the running down the line of coast to Leghorn gave no more notion of peril than a fair-weather inland navigation would have done to those who had never seen the sea. Once, some months before, Trelawny had raised a warning voice as to the difference of our calm bay and the open sea beyond; but Shelley and his friends, with their one sailor-boy, thought themselves a match for the storms of the Mediterranean, in a boat which they looked upon as equal to all it was put to do.

On the 1st of July they left us. If ever shadow of future ill darkened the present hour, such was over my mind when they went. During the whole of our stay at Lerici, an intense presentiment of coming evil brooded over my mind, and covered this beautiful place and genial summer with the shadow of coming misery. I had vainly struggled with these emotions — they seemed accounted for by my illness; but at this hour of separation they recurred with renewed violence. I did not anticipate danger for them, but a vague expectation of evil shook me to agony, and I could

scarcely bring myself to let them go. The day was calm and clear; and, a fine breeze rising at twelve, they weighed for Leghorn. They made the run of about fifty miles in seven hours and a half. The *Bolívar* was in port; and, the regulations of the Health-office not permitting them to go on shore after sunset, they borrowed cushions from the larger vessel, and slept on board their boat.

They spent a week at Pisa and Leghorn. The want of rain was severely felt in the country. The weather continued sultry and fine. I have heard that Shelley all this time was in brilliant spirits. Not long before, talking of presentiment, he had said the only one that he ever found infallible was the certain advent of some evil fortune when he felt peculiarly joyous. Yet, if ever fate whispered of coming disaster, such inaudible but not unfelt prognostics hovered around us. The beauty of the place seemed unearthly in its excess: the distance we were at from all signs of civilization, the sea at our feet, its murmurs or its roaring forever in our ears, — all these things led the mind to brood over strange thoughts, and, lifting it from everyday life, caused it to be familiar with the unreal. A sort of spell surrounded us; and each day, as the voyagers did not return, we grew restless and disquieted, and yet, strange to say, we were not fearful of the most apparent danger.

The spell snapped, it was all over; an interval of agonizing doubt — of days passed in miserable journeys to gain tidings, of hopes that took firmer root even as they were more baseless — was changed to the certainty of the death that eclipsed all happiness for the survivors for evermore.

There was something in our fate peculiarly harrowing. The remains of those we lost were cast on shore; but, by the quarantine-laws of the coast, we were not permitted to have possession of them — the law with respect to everything cast on land by the sea being that such should be burned, to prevent the possibility of any remnant bringing the plague into Italy; and no representation could alter the law.



At length, through the kind and unwearied exertions of Mr. Dawkins, our *Chargé d'Affaires* at Florence, we gained permission to receive the ashes after the bodies were consumed. Nothing could equal the zeal of Trelawny in carrying our wishes into effect. He was indefatigable in his exertions, and full of forethought and sagacity in his arrangements. It was a fearful task; he stood before us at last, his hands scorched and blistered by the flames of the funeral-pyre, and by touching the burnt relics as he placed them in the receptacles prepared for the purpose. And there, in compass of that small case, was gathered all that remained on earth of him whose genius and virtue were a crown of glory to the world — whose love had been the source of happiness, peace, and good, — to be buried with him!

The concluding stanzas of the "Adonais" pointed out where the remains ought to be deposited; in addition to which our beloved child lay buried in the cemetery at Rome. Thither Shelley's ashes were conveyed; and they rest beneath one of the antique weed-grown towers that recur at intervals in the circuit of the massy ancient wall of Rome. He selected the hallowed place himself; there is

"the sepulchre,

Oh, not of him, but of our joy! —

"And gray walls moulder round, on which dull  
Time

Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand,  
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,  
Pavilions the dust of him who planned  
This refuge for his memory, doth stand  
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath  
A field is spread, on which a newer band  
Have pitched in heaven's smile their camp of  
death,  
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguisht breath."

Could sorrow for the lost, and shuddering anguish at the vacancy left behind, be soothed by poetic imaginations, there was something in Shelley's fate to miti-

gate pangs which yet, alas! could not be so mitigated; for hard reality brings too miserably home to the mourner all that is lost of happiness, all of lonely unsolaced struggle that remains. Still, though dreams and hues of poetry cannot blunt grief, it invests his fate with a sublime fitness, which those less nearly allied may regard with complacency. A year before he had poured into verse all such ideas about death as give it a glory of its own. He had, as it now seems, almost anticipated his own destiny; and, when the mind figures his skiff wrapped from sight by the thunder-storm, as it was last seen upon the purple sea, and then, as the cloud of the tempest passed away, no sign remained of where it had been<sup>1</sup> — who but will regard as a prophecy the last stanza of the "Adonais"?

"The breath whose might I have invoked in  
song

Descends on me, my spirit's bark is driven  
Far from the shore, far from the trembling  
through

Whose sails were never to the tempest given;  
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!  
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar!

Whilst, burning thro' the inmost veil of  
heaven,

The soul of Adonais, like a star,  
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are."

PURNEY, May 1, 1839.

<sup>1</sup> Captain Roberts watched the vessel with his glass from the top of the lighthouse of Leghorn, on its homeward track. They were off Via Reggio, at some distance from shore, when a storm was driven over the sea. It enveloped them and several larger vessels in darkness. When the cloud passed onwards, Roberts looked again, and saw every other vessel sailing on the ocean except their little schooner, which had vanished. From that time he could scarcely doubt the fatal truth; yet we fancied that they might have been driven towards Elba or Corsica, and so be saved. The observation made as to the spot where the boat disappeared caused it to be found, through the exertions of Trelawny for that effect. It had gone down in ten fathom water, it had not capsized, and, except such things as had floated from her, everything was found on board exactly as it had been placed when they sailed. The boat itself was uninjured. Roberts possessed himself of her, and decked her; but she proved not seaworthy, and her shattered planks now lie rotting on the shore of one of the Ionian islands, on which she was wrecked.

## TRANSLATIONS.

## HYMN TO MERCURY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF  
HOMER.

## I.

SING, Muse, the son of Maia and of  
Jove,  
The Herald-child, king of Arcadia  
And all its pastoral hills, whom in sweet  
love

Having been interwoven, modest May  
Bore Heaven's dread Supreme — an an-  
tique grove

Shadowed the cavern where the lovers  
lay

In the deep night, unseen by Gods or  
Men,

And white-armed Juno slumbered sweet-  
ly then.

## II.

Now, when the joy of Jove had its ful-  
filling,

And Heaven's tenth moon chronicled  
her relief,

She gave to light a babe all babes excel-  
ling,

A schemer subtle beyond all belief;  
A shepherd of thin dreams, a cow-steal-  
ing,

A night-watching, and door-waylaying  
thief,

Who 'mongst the Gods was soon about  
to thieve,

And other glorious actions to achieve.

## III.

The babe was born at the first peep of  
day;

He began playing on the lyre at noon,  
And the same evening did he steal away

Apollo's herds; — the fourth day of  
the moon

On which him bore the venerable May,  
From her immortal limbs he leapt  
full soon,

Nor long could in the sacred cradle keep,  
But out to seek Apollo's herds would  
creep.

## IV.

Out of the lofty cavern wandering  
He found a tortoise, and cried out —  
“A treasure!”

(For Mercury first made the tortoise  
sing)

The beast before the portal at his  
leisure

The flowery herbage was depasturing,  
Moving his feet in a deliberate measure  
Over the turf. Jove's profitable son  
Eyeing him laught, and laughing thus  
began:—

## V.

“A useful god-send are you to me now,  
King of the dance, companion of the  
feast,

Lovely in all your nature! Welcome,  
you

Excellent plaything! Where, sweet  
mountain beast,

Got you that speckled shell? Thus  
much I know,

You must come home with me and be  
my guest;

You will give joy to me, and I will do  
All that is in my power to honor you.

## VI.

“Better to be at home than out of door;—  
So come with me, and tho' it has been  
said

That you alive defend from magic power,  
I know you will sing sweetly when  
you 're dead.”

Thus having spoken, the quaint infant  
bore,

Lifting it from the grass on which it  
fed,

And grasping it in his delighted hold,  
His treasured prize into the cavern old.

## VII.

Then scooping with a chisel of gray steel,  
He bored the life and soul out of the  
beast—

Nor swifter a swift thought of woe or  
weal.

Darts thro' the tumult of a human  
breast

Which thronging cares annoy — not  
swifter wheel

The flashes of its torture and unrest  
Out of the dizzy eyes — than Maia's son  
All that he did devise hath featly done.

## VIII.

And thro' the tortoise's hard stony  
skin

At proper distances small holes he made,  
And fastened the cut stems of reeds  
within,

And with a piece of leather overlaid  
The open space and fixt the cubits in,  
Fitting the bridge to both, and stretcht  
o'er all

Symphonious cords of sheep-gut rhyth-  
mical.

## IX.

When he had wrought the lovely instru-  
ment,

He tried the chords, and made division  
meet

Preluding with the plectrum, and there  
went

Up from beneath his hand a tumult  
sweet

Of mighty sounds, and from his lips he  
sent

A strain of unpremeditated wit  
Joyous and wild and wanton — such you  
may

Hear among revellers on a holiday.

## X.

He sung how Jove and May of the bright  
sandal

Dallied in love not quite legitimate;  
And his own birth, still scoffing at the  
scandal,

And naming his own name, did cele-  
brate;

His mother's cave and servant maids he  
planned all

In plastic verse, her household stuff  
and state,

Perennial pot, trippet, and brazen pan, —  
But singing, he conceived another plan.

## XI.

Seized with a sudden fancy for fresh  
meat,

He in his sacred crib deposited

The hollow lyre, and from the cavern  
sweet

Rusht with great leaps up to the moun-  
tain's head,

Revolving in his mind some subtle feat  
Of thievish craft, such as a swindler  
might

Devise in the lone season of dun night.

## XII.

Lo! the great Sun under the ocean's  
bed has

Driven steeds and chariot — The child  
meanwhile strode

O'er the Pierian mountains clothed in  
shadows,

Where the immortal oxen of the God  
Are pastured in the flowering unmown  
meadows,

And safely stalled in a remote abode —  
The archer Argicide, elate and proud,  
Drove fifty from the herd, lowing aloud.

## XIII.

He drove them wandering o'er the sandy  
way,

But, being ever mindful of his craft,  
Backward and forward drove he them  
astray,

So that the tracks which seemed be-  
fore, were aft;

His sandals then he threw to the ocean  
spray,

And for each foot he wrought a kind  
of raft

Of tamarisk, and tamarisk-like sprigs,  
And bound them in a lump with withy  
twigs.

## XIV.

And on his feet he tied these sandals  
light,

The trail of whose wide leaves might not  
betray

His track; and then, a self-sufficing  
wight,

Like a man hastening on some distant  
way,

He from Pieria's mountain bent his  
flight;

But an old man perceived the infant pass  
Down green Onchestus heapt like beds  
with grass.

## XV.

The old man stood dressing 'his sunny  
vine :  
" Halloo ! old fellow with the crookèd  
shoulder !  
You grub those stumps ? before they will  
bear wine  
Methinks even you must grow a little  
older :  
Attend, I pray, to this advice of mine,  
As you would 'scape what might appal  
a bolder —  
Seeing, see not — and hearing, hear not  
— and —  
If you have understanding—understand."

## XVI.

So saying, Hermes roused the oxen vast ;  
O'er shadowy mountain and resounding  
dell,  
And flower-paven plains, great Hermes  
past ;  
Till the black night divine, which fav-  
oring fell  
Around his steps, grew gray, and morn-  
ing fast  
Wakened the world to work, and from  
her cell  
Sea-strewn, the Pallantean Moon sub-  
lime  
Into her watch-tower just began to climb.

## XVII.

Now to Alpheus he had driven all  
The broad-foreheaded oxen of the  
Sun ;  
They came unwearied to the lofty stall  
And to the water troughs which ever  
run  
Thro' the fresh fields—and when with  
rushgrass tall,  
Lotus and all sweet herbage, every  
one  
Had pastured been, the great God made  
them move  
Towards the stall in a collected drove.

## XVIII.

A mighty pile of wood the God then  
heapt,

And having soon conceived the mys-  
tery  
Of fire, from two smooth laurel branches  
stript  
The bark, and rubbed them in his  
palms, — on high  
Suddenly forth the burning vapor leapt,  
And the divine child saw delightedly —  
Mercury first found out for human weal  
Tinder-box, matches, fire-irons, flint and  
steel.

## XIX.

And fine dry logs and roots innumerable  
He gathered in a delve upon the  
ground —  
And kindled them — and instantaneous  
The strength of the fierce flame was  
breathed around :  
And whilst the might of glorious Vulcan  
thus  
Wrapt the great pile with glare and  
roaring sound,  
Hermes dragged forth two heifers, low-  
ing loud,  
Close to the fire — such might was in the  
God.

## XX.

And on the earth upon their backs he  
threw  
The panting beasts, and rolled them  
o'er and o'er,  
And bored their lives out. Without  
more ado  
He cut up fat and flesh, and down be-  
fore  
The fire, on spits of wood he placed the  
two,  
Toasting their flesh and ribs, and all  
the gore  
Purged in the bowels ; and while this was  
done  
He stretcht their hides over a craggy  
stone.

## XXI.

We mortals let an ox grow old, and then  
Cut it up after long consideration, —  
But joyous-minded Hermes from the glen  
Drew the fat spoils to the more open  
station

Of a flat smooth space, and portioned  
 them; and when  
 He had by lot assigned to each a  
 ration  
 Of the twelve Gods, his mind became  
 aware  
 Of all the joys which in religion are.

## XXII.

For the sweet savor of the roasted meat  
 Tempted him tho' immortal. Natheles  
 He checkt his haughty will and did not  
 eat,  
 Tho' what it cost him words can  
 scarce express,  
 And every wish to put such morsels  
 sweet  
 Down his most sacred throat, he did  
 repress;

But soon within the lofty portalled stall  
 He placed the fat and flesh and bones  
 and all.

## XXIII.

And every trace of the fresh butchery  
 And cooking, the God soon made dis-  
 appear,  
 As if it all had vanisht thro' the sky;  
 He burned the hoofs and horns and  
 head and hair,  
 The insatiate fire devoured them hun-  
 grily;—  
 And when he saw that everything was  
 clear,

He quentch the coals, and trampled the  
 black dust,  
 And in the stream his bloody sandals  
 tost.

## XXIV.

All night he workt in the serene moon-  
 shine —  
 But when the light of day was spread  
 abroad  
 He sought his natal mountain-peaks  
 divine.  
 On his long wandering, neither man  
 nor god  
 Had met him, since he killed Apollo's  
 kine,  
 Nor house-dog had barkt at him on his  
 road;

Now he obliquely thro' the keyhole past,  
 Like a thin mist, or an autumnal blast.

## XXV.

Right thro' the temple of the spacious cave  
 He went with soft light feet — as if his  
 tread  
 Fell not on earth; no sound their falling  
 gave;  
 Then to his cradle he crept quick, and  
 spread  
 The swaddling-clothes about him; and  
 the knave  
 Lay playing with the covering of the  
 bed  
 With his left hand about his knees — the  
 right  
 Held his beloved tortoise-lyre tight.

## XXVI.

There he lay, innocent as a new-born  
 child,  
 As gossips say; but tho' he was a god,  
 The goddess, his fair mother, unbeguild  
 Knew all that he had done being  
 abroad:  
 "Whence come you, and from what  
 adventure wild,  
 You cunning rogue, and where have  
 you abode  
 All the long night, clothed in your im-  
 pudence?  
 What have you done since you departed  
 hence?"

## XXVII.

"Apollo soon will pass within this gate  
 And bind your tender body in a chain  
 Inextricably tight, and fast as fate,  
 Unless you can delude the God again,  
 Even when within his arms — ah, runa-  
 gate!  
 A pretty torment both for gods and men  
 Your father made when he made you!"  
 — "Dear mother,"  
 Replied sly Hermes, "Wherefore scold  
 and bother?"

## XXVIII.

"As if I were like other babes as old,  
 And understood nothing of what is  
 what;

And cared at all to hear my mother  
scold.

I in my subtle brain a scheme have  
got,  
Which whilst the sacred stars round  
Heaven are rolled  
Will profit you and me — nor shall our  
lot

Be as you counsel, without gifts or food,  
To spend our lives in this obscure abode.

## XXIX.

“But we will leave this shadow-peopled  
cave

And live among the Gods, and pass  
each day

In high communion, sharing what they  
have

Of profuse wealth and unexhausted  
prey;

And from the portion which my father  
gave

To Phœbus, I will snatch my share  
away,

Which if my father will not — natheless  
I,

Who am the king of robbers, can but try.

## XXX.

“And, if Latona’s son should find me  
out,

I’ll countermine him by a deeper plan;  
I’ll pierce the Pythian temple-walls, tho’  
stout,

And sack the fane of every thing I  
can —

Caldrons and tripods of great worth no  
doubt,

Each golden cup and polisht brazen  
pan,

All the wrought tapestries and garments  
gay.” —

So they together talkt; — meanwhile the  
Day,

## XXXI.

Ethereal born, arose out of the flood  
Of flowing Ocean, bearing light to  
men.

Apollo past toward the sacred wood,  
Which from the inmost depths of its  
green glen

Echoes the voice of Neptune, — and  
there stood

On the same spot in green Onchestus  
then

That same old animal, the vine-dresser,  
Who was employed hedging his vineyard  
there.

## XXXII.

Latona’s glorious Son began: — “I pray  
Tell, ancient hedger of Onchestus  
green,

Whether a drove of kine has past this  
way,

All heifers with crookt horns? for they  
have been

Stolen from the herd in high Pieria,

Where a black bull was fed apart, be-  
tween

Two woody mountains in a neighboring  
glen,

And four fierce dogs watcht there, unani-  
mous as men.

## XXXIII.

“And what is strange, the author of this  
theft

Has stolen the fatted heifers, every  
one,

But the four dogs and the black bull are  
left: —

Stolen they were last night at set of  
sun,

Of their soft beds and their sweet food  
bereft —

Now tell me, man born ere the world  
began,

Have you seen any one pass with the  
cows?” —

To whom the man of overhanging brows:

## XXXIV.

“My friend, it would require no common  
skill

Justly to speak of everything I see:  
On various purposes of good or ill

Many pass by my vineyard, — and to  
me

’T is difficult to know the invisible

Thoughts, which in all those many  
minds may be: —

Thus much alone I certainly can say,  
I tilled these vines till the decline of day,

## xxxv.

“And then I thought I saw, but dare not speak  
 With certainty of such a wondrous thing,  
 A child, who could not have been born a week,  
 Those fair-horned cattle closely following,  
 And in his hand he held a polisht stick:  
 And, as on purpose, he walkt waver-  
 ing  
 From one side to the other of the road,  
 And with his face opposed the steps he trod.”

## xxxvi.

Apollo hearing this, past quickly on —  
 No wingèd omen could have shown more clear  
 That the deceiver was his father's son.  
 So the God wraps a purple atmosphere  
 Around his shoulders, and like fire is gone  
 To famous Pylos, seeking his kine there,  
 And found their track and his, yet hardly cold,  
 And cried — “What wonder do mine eyes behold!

## xxxvii.

“Here are the footsteps of the hornèd herd  
 Turned back towards their fields of asphodel; —  
 But these! are not the tracks of beast or bird,  
 Gray wolf, or bear, or lion of the dell,  
 Or manèd Centaur — sand was never stirred  
 By man or woman thus! Inexplicable!  
 Who with unwearied feet could e'er impress  
 The sand with such enormous vestiges?

## xxxviii.

“That was most strange — but this is stranger still!”  
 Thus having said, Phœbus impetuously

Sought high Cyllene's forest-cinctured hill,  
 And the deep cavern where dark shadows lie,  
 And where the ambrosial nymph with happy will  
 Bore the Saturnian's love-child, Mercury —  
 And a delightful odor from the dew  
 Of the hill pastures, at his coming, flew.

## xxxix.

And Phœbus stooped under the craggy roof  
 Archt over the dark cavern:—Maia's child  
 Perceived that he came angry, far aloof,  
 About the cows of which he had been beguiled,  
 And over him the fine and fragrant woof  
 Of his ambrosial swaddling clothes he piled —  
 As among fire-brands lies a burning spark  
 Covered, beneath the ashes cold and dark.

## xl.

There, like an infant who had suckt his fill  
 And now was newly washt and put to bed,  
 Awake, but courting sleep with weary will,  
 And gathered in a lump, hands, feet, and head,  
 He lay, and his belovèd tortoise still  
 He graspt and held under his shoulder-blade.  
 Phœbus the lovely mountain-goddess knew,  
 Not less her subtle, swindling baby, who

## xli.

Lay swathed in his sly wiles. Round every crook  
 Of the ample cavern, for his kine, Apollo  
 Lookt sharp; and when he saw them not, he took  
 The glittering key, and opened three great hollow

Recesses in the rock—where many a  
nook  
Was filled with the sweet food im-  
mortals swallow,  
And mighty heaps of silver and of gold  
Were piled within—a wonder to behold!

## XLII.

And white and silver robes, all over-  
wrought  
With cunning workmanship of tracery  
sweet—  
Except among the Gods there can be  
naught  
In the wide world to be compared  
with it.  
Latona's offspring, after having sought  
His herds in every corner, thus did  
greet  
Great Hermes:—“Little cradled rogue,  
declare  
Of my illustrious heifers, where they are!

## XLIII.

“Speak quickly! or a quarrel between  
us  
Must rise, and the event will be, that I  
Shall hurl you into dismal Tartarus,  
In fiery gloom to dwell eternally;  
Nor shall your father nor your mother  
loose  
The bars of that black dungeon—  
utterly  
You shall be cast out from the light of  
day,  
To rule the ghosts of men, unblest as  
they.”

## XLIV.

To whom thus Hermes slyly answered:  
—“Son  
Of great Latona, what a speech is  
this!  
Why come you here to ask me what is  
done  
With the wild oxen which it seems  
you miss?  
I have not seen them, nor from any one  
Have heard a word of the whole  
business;

If you should promise an immense re-  
ward,  
I could not tell more than you now have  
heard.

## XLV.

“An ox-stealer should be both tall and  
strong,  
And I am but a little new-born thing,  
Who, yet at least, can think of nothing  
wrong:—  
My business is to suck, and sleep,  
and fling  
The cradle-clothes about me all day  
long,—  
Or half asleep, hear my sweet mother  
sing,  
And to be washt in water clean and  
warm,  
And husht and kist and kept secure from  
harm.

## XLVI.

“O, let not e'er this quarrel be averred!  
The astounded Gods would laugh at  
you, if e'er  
You should allege a story so absurd,  
As that a new-born infant forth could  
fare  
Out of his home after a savage herd.  
I was born yesterday—my small feet  
are  
Too tender for the roads so hard and  
rough:—  
And if you think that this is not enough,

## XLVII.

“I swear a great oath, by my father's  
head,  
That I stole not your cows, and that I  
know  
Of no one else who might, or could, or  
did.—  
Whatever things cows are, I do not  
know,  
For I have only heard the name.”—  
This said,  
He winkt as fast as could be, and his  
brow  
Was wrinkled, and a whistle loud gave  
he,  
Like one who hears some strange ab-  
surdity.



XLVIII.

Apollo gently smiled and said: — "Aye,  
aye, —  
You cunning little rascal, you will  
bore  
Many a rich man's house, and your array  
Of thieves will lay their siege before  
his door,  
Silent as night, in night; and many a  
day  
In the wild glens rough shepherds  
will deplore  
That you or yours, having an appetite,  
Met with their cattle, comrade of the  
night!

XLIX.

"And this among the Gods shall be your  
gift,  
To be considered as the lord of those  
Who swindle, house-break, sheep-steal,  
and shop-lift; —  
But now, if you would not your last  
sleep doze;  
Crawl out!" — Thus saying, Phœbus did  
uplift  
The subtle infant in his swaddling-  
clothes,  
And in his arms, according to his wont,  
A scheme devised the illustrious Argi-  
phont.

L.

. . . . .  
And sneezed and shuddered — Phœbus  
on the grass  
Him threw, and whilst all that he had  
designed  
He did perform — eager altho' to pass,  
Apollo darted from his mighty mind  
Towards the subtle babe the following  
scoff: —

"Do not imagine this will get you off,

LI.

"You little swaddled child of Jove and  
May!"  
And seized him: — "By this omen I  
shall trace  
My noble herds, and you shall lead the  
way." —

Cyllenian Hermes from the grassy  
place,  
Like one in earnest haste to get away,  
Rose, and with hands lifted towards  
his face  
Round both his ears — up from his shoul-  
ders drew  
His swaddling clothes, and — "What  
mean you to do

LII.

"With me, you unkind God?" said  
Mercury:  
"Is it about these cows you tease me  
so?  
I wish the race of cows were perisht! I  
Stole not your cows — I do not even  
know  
What things cows are. Alas! I well  
may sigh,  
That since I came into this world of  
woe,  
I should have ever heard the name of  
one —  
But I appeal to the Saturnian's throne."

LIII.

Thus Phœbus and the vagrant Mercury  
Talkt without coming to an explana-  
tion,  
With adverse purpose. As for Phœbus,  
he  
Sought not revenge, but only informa-  
tion,  
And Hermes tried with lies and roguery  
To cheat Apollo. — But when no  
evasion  
Served — for the cunning one his match  
had found —  
He paced on first over the sandy ground.

LIV.

He of the Silver Bow the child of Jove  
Followed behind, till to their heavenly  
Sire  
Came both his children — beautiful as  
Love,  
And from his equal balance did require  
A judgment in the cause wherein they  
strove.  
O'er odorous Olympus and its snows

A murmuring tumult as they came  
arose, —

LV.

And from the folded depths of the great  
Hill,

While Hermes and Apollo reverent  
stood

Before Jove's throne, the indestructible  
Immortals rusht in mighty multitude;  
And whilst their seats in order due they  
fill,

The lofty Thunderer in a careless  
mood

To Phœbus said: — "Whence drive you  
this sweet prey,

This herald-baby, born but yesterday? —

LVI.

"A most important subject, trifler, this  
To lay before the Gods!" — "Nay,  
father, nay,

When you have understood the business,  
Say not that I alone am fond of prey.

I found this little boy in a recess  
Under Cyllene's mountains far away —

A manifest and most apparent thief,  
A scandal-monger beyond all belief.

LVII.

"I never saw his like either in heaven  
Or upon earth for knavery or craft: —

Out of the field my cattle yester-even,  
By the low shore on which the loud  
sea laught,

He right down to the river-ford had  
driven;

And mere astonishment would make  
you daft

To see the double kind of footsteps  
strange

He has imprest wherever he did range.

LVIII.

"The cattle's track on the black dust,  
full well

Is evident, as if they went towards  
The place from which they came — that  
asphodel

Meadow, in which I feed my many  
herds, —

*His* steps were most incomprehensible —

I know not how I can describe in  
words

Those tracks — he could have gone along  
the sands

Neither upon his feet nor on his hands; —

LIX.

"He must have had some other stranger  
mode

Of moving on: those vestiges immense,  
Far as I traced them on the sandy road,

Seemed like the trail of oak-toppings:  
— but thence

No mark nor track denoting where they  
trod

The hard ground gave: — but, working  
at his fence,

A mortal hedger saw him as he past  
To Pylos, with the cows, in fiery haste.

LX.

"I found that in the dark he quietly  
Had sacrificed some cows, and before  
light

Had thrown the ashes all dispersedly  
About the road — then, still as gloomy  
night,

Had crept into his cradle, either eye  
Rubbing, and cogitating some new  
sleight.

No eagle could have seen him as he lay  
Hid in his cavern from the peering day.

LXI.

"I taxt him with the fact, when he  
averred

Most solemnly that he did neither see  
Nor even had in any manner heard

Of my lost cows, whatever things cows  
be;

Nor could he tell, tho' offered a reward,  
Not even who could tell of them to  
me."

So speaking, Phœbus sate; and Hermes  
then

Address the Supreme Lord of Gods and  
men: —

## LXII.

"Great Father, you know clearly beforehand  
That all which I shall say to you is  
sooth;

I am a most veracious person, and  
Totally unacquainted with untruth.  
At sunrise, Phœbus came, but with no  
band  
Of Gods to bear him witness, in great  
wrath,  
To my abode, seeking his heifers there,  
And saying that I must show him where  
they are,

## LXIII.

"Or he would hurl me down the dark  
abyss.

I know that every Apollonian limb  
Is clothed with speed and might and  
manliness,

As a green bank with flowers—but  
unlike him

I was born yesterday, and you may guess  
He well knew this when he indulged  
the whim

Of bullying a poor little new-born thing  
That slept, and never thought of cow-  
driving.

## LXIV.

"Am I like a strong fellow who steals  
kine?

Believe me, dearest Father, such you  
are,

This driving of the herds is none of mine;  
Across my threshold did I wander ne'er,  
So may I thrive! I reverence the divine

Sun and the Gods, and I love you, and  
care

Even for this hard accuser—who must  
know

I am as innocent as they or you.

## LXV.

"I swear by these most gloriously-  
wrought portals—

(It is, you will allow, an oath of might)  
Thro' which the multitude of the Im-  
mortals

Pass and repass for ever, day and night,

Devising schemes for the affairs of  
mortals—

That I am guiltless; and I will requite,  
Altho' mine enemy be great and strong,  
His cruel threat—do thou defend the  
young!"

## LXVI.

So speaking, the Cyllenian Argiphont  
Winkt, as if now his adversary was  
fitted:—

And Jupiter according to his wont,  
Laught heartily to hear the subtle-  
witted

Infant give such a plausible account,  
And every word a lie. But he remitted  
Judgment at present—and his exhorta-  
tion

Was, to compose the affair by arbitration.

## LXVII.

And they by mighty Jupiter were bidden  
To go forth with a single purpose both,  
Neither the other chiding nor yet chid-  
den:

And Mercury with innocence and truth  
To lead the way, and show where he had  
hidden

The mighty heifers. — Hermes, nothing  
loth,

Obedyed the Ægis-bearer's will — for he  
Is able to persuade all easily.

## LXVIII.

These lovely children of Heaven's high-  
est Lord

Hastened to Pylos and the pastures  
wide

And lofty stalls by the Alphean ford,  
Where wealth in the mute night is  
multiplied

With silent growth. Whilst Hermes  
drove the herd

Out of the stony cavern, Phœbus spied  
The hides of those the little babe had  
slain,

Stretcht on the precipice above the plain.

## LXIX.

"How was it possible," then Phœbus  
said,

“That you, a little child, born yesterday,  
 A thing on mother’s milk and kisses fed,  
 Could two prodigious heifers ever flay!  
 Even I myself may well hereafter dread  
 Your prowess, offspring of Cyllenian  
 May,  
 When you grow strong and tall.” — He  
 spoke, and bound  
 Stiff withy bands the infant’s wrists  
 around.

LXX.

He might as well have bound the oxen  
 wild;  
 The withy bands, though starkly interknit,  
 Fell at the feet of the immortal child,  
 Loosened by some device of his quick  
 wit.  
 Phœbus perceived himself again beguiled,  
 And stared — while Hermes sought  
 some hole or pit,  
 Looking askance and winking fast as  
 thought,  
 Where he might hide himself and not be  
 caught.

LXXI.

Sudden he changed his plan, and with  
 strange skill  
 Subdued the strong Latonian, by the  
 might  
 Of winning music, to his mightier will;  
 His left hand held the lyre, and in his  
 right  
 The plectrum struck the chords — uncon-  
 querable  
 Up from beneath his hand in circling  
 flight  
 The gathering music rose — and sweet as  
 Love  
 The penetrating notes did live and move

LXXII.

Within the heart of great Apollo. — He  
 Listened with all his soul, and laught  
 for pleasure.  
 Close to his side stood harping fearlessly  
 The unabashed boy; and to the  
 measure  
 Of the sweet lyre, there followed loud  
 and free

His joyous voice; for he unlockt the  
 treasure  
 Of his deep song, illustrating the birth  
 Of the bright Gods, and the dark desert  
 Earth:

LXXIII.

And how to the Immortals every one  
 A portion was assigned of all that is;  
 But chief Mnemosyne did Maia’s son  
 Clothe in the light of his loud melo-  
 dies; —  
 And as each God was born or had begun  
 He in their order due and fit degrees  
 Sung of his birth and being — and did  
 move  
 Apollo to unutterable love.

LXXIV.

These words were wingèd with his swift  
 delight:  
 “You heifer-stealing schemer, well do  
 you  
 Deserve that fifty oxen should requite  
 Such minstrelsies as I have heard even  
 now.  
 Comrade of feasts, little contriving wight,  
 One of your secrets I would gladly  
 know,  
 Whether the glorious power you now  
 show forth  
 Was folded up within you at your birth,

LXXV.

“Or whether mortal taught or God in-  
 spired  
 The power of unpremeditated song?  
 Many divinest sounds have I admired,  
 The Olympian Gods and mortal men  
 among;  
 But such a strain of wondrous, strange,  
 untired,  
 And soul-awakening music, sweet and  
 strong,  
 Yet did I never hear except from thee,  
 Offspring of May, impostor Mercury!

LXXVI.

“What Muse, what skill, what unim-  
 agined use,  
 What exercise of subtlest art, has given

Thy songs such power?— for those who  
hear may choose

From three, the choicest of the gifts  
of Heaven,

Delight, and love, and sleep,— sweet  
sleep, whose dews

Are sweeter than the balmy tears of  
even:—

And I, who speak this praise, am that  
Apollo

Whom the Olympian Muses ever follow :

## LXXVII.

“And their delight is dance and the  
blithe noise

Of song and overflowing poesy;

And sweet, even as desire, the liquid  
voice

Of pipes, that fills the clear air thrill-  
ingly;

But never did my inmost soul rejoice

In this dear work of youthful revelry

As now. I wonder at thee, son of Jove;  
Thy harpings and thy song are soft as  
love.

## LXXVIII.

“Now since thou hast, altho' so very  
small,

Science of arts so glorious, thus I  
swear,

And let this cornel javelin, keen and  
tall,

Witness between us what I promise  
here,—

That I will lead thee to the Olympian  
Hall,

Honored and mighty, with thy mother  
dear,

And many glorious gifts in joy will give  
thee,

And even at the end will ne'er deceive  
thee.”

## LXXIX.

To whom thus Mercury with prudent  
speech:—

“Wisely hast thou inquired of my  
skill:

I envy thee no thing I know to teach

Even this day:— for both in word and  
will

I would be gentle with thee; thou canst  
reach

All things in thy wise spirit, and thy  
sill

Is highest in heaven among the sons of  
Jove,

Who loves thee in the fulness of his love.

## LXXX.

“The Counsellor Supreme has given to  
thee

Divinest gifts, out of the amplitude

Of his profuse exhaustless treasury;

By thee, 't is said, the depths are un-  
derstood

Of his far voice; by thee the mystery

Of all oracular fates, — and the dread  
mood

Of the diviner is breathed up, even I—

A child— perceive thy might and ma-  
jesty—

## LXXXI.

“Thou canst seek out and compass all  
that wit

Can find or teach;—yet since thou  
wilt, come take

The lyre— be mine the glory giving it—

Strike the sweet chords, and sing  
aloud, and wake

Thy joyous pleasure out of many a fit

Of tranced sound— and with fleet fin-  
gers make

Thy liquid-voicèd comrade talk with  
thee,—

It can talk measured music eloquently.

## LXXXII.

“Then bear it boldly to the revel loud,  
Love-wakening dance, or feast of  
solemn state,

A joy by night or day— for those en-  
dowed

With art and wisdom who interrogate

It teaches, babbling in delightful mood

All things which make the spirit most  
elate,

Soothing the mind with sweet familiar  
play,

Chasing the heavy shadows of dismay.

## LXXXIII.

“To those who are unskilled in its sweet tongue,  
 Tho’ they should question most impetuously  
 Its hidden soul, it gossips something wrong —  
 Some senseless and impertinent reply.  
 But thou who art as wise as thou art strong  
 Canst compass all that thou desirest. I  
 Present thee with this music-flowing shell,  
 Knowing thou canst interrogate it well.

## LXXXIV.

“And let us two henceforth together feed  
 On this green mountain slope and pastoral plain,  
 The herds in litigation — they will breed  
 Quickly enough to recompense our pain,  
 If to the bulls and cows we take good heed; —  
 And thou, tho’ somewhat over fond of gain,  
 Grudge me not half the profit.” — Having spoke,  
 The shell he proffered, and Apollo took.

## LXXXV.

And gave him in return the glittering lash,  
 Installing him as herdsman; — from the look  
 Of Mercury then laught a joyous flash.  
 And then Apollo with the plectrum strook  
 The chords, and from beneath his hands a crash  
 Of mighty sounds rusht up, whose music shook  
 The soul with sweetness, and like an adept  
 His sweeter voice a just accordance kept.

## LXXXVI.

The herd went wandering o’er the divine mead,  
 Whilst these most beautiful Sons of Jupiter

Won their swift way up to the snowy head  
 Of white Olympus, with the joyous lyre  
 Soothing their journey; and their father dread  
 Gathered them both into familiar Affection sweet, — and then, and now, and ever,  
 Hermes must love Him of the Golden Quiver,

## LXXXVII.

To whom he gave the lyre that sweetly sounded,  
 Which skilfully he held and played thereon.  
 He piped the while, and far and wide rebounded  
 The echo of his pipings; every one  
 Of the Olympians sat with joy astounded,  
 While he conceived another piece of fun,  
 One of his old tricks — which the God of Day  
 Perceiving, said: — “I fear thee, Son of May; —

## LXXXVIII.

“I fear thee and thy sly chameleon spirit,  
 Lest thou should steal my lyre and crookèd bow;  
 This glory and power thou dost from Jove inherit,  
 To teach all craft upon the earth below;  
 Thieves love and worship thee — it is thy merit  
 To make all mortal business ebb and flow  
 By roguery: — now, Hermes, if you dare,  
 By sacred Styx a mighty oath to swear

## LXXXIX.

“That you will never rob me, you will do  
 A thing extremely pleasing to my heart.”  
 Then Mercury sware by the Stygian dew,  
 That he would never steal his bow or dart,  
 Or lay his hands on what to him was due,

Or ever would employ his powerful  
art  
Against his Pythian fane. Then Phœbus  
swore  
There was no God or man whom he  
loved more.

## XC.

“And I will give thee as a good-will  
token,  
The beautiful wand of wealth and  
happiness;  
A perfect three-leaved rod of gold un-  
broken,  
Whose magic will thy footsteps ever  
bless;

And whatsoever by Jove's voice is spoken  
Of earthly or divine from its recess,  
It, like a loving soul, to thee will speak,  
And more than this, do thou forbear to  
seek.

## XCI.

“For, dearest child, the divinations high  
Which thou requirest, 't is unlawful  
ever

That thou, or any other deity  
Should understand — and vain were  
the endeavor;  
For they are hidden in Jove's mind,  
and I

In trust of them, have sworn that I  
would never  
Betray the counsels of Jove's inmost will  
To any God — the oath was terrible.

## XCII.

“Then, golden-wanded brother, ask me  
not

To speak the fates by Jupiter designed;  
But be it mine to tell their various lot  
To the unnumbered tribes of human  
kind.

Let good to these, and ill to those be  
wrought

As I dispense — but he who comes  
consigned

By voice and wings of perfect augury  
To my great shrine, shall find avail in  
me.

## XCIII.

“Him will I not deceive, but will assist;  
But he who comes relying on such  
birds

As chatter vainly, who would strain and  
twist

The purpose of the Gods with idle  
words,

And deems their knowledge light, he  
shall have misst

His road — whilst I among my other  
hoards

His gifts deposit. Yet, O son of May,  
I have another wondrous thing to say.

## XCIV.

“There are three Fates, three virgin  
Sisters, who

Rejoicing in their wind-outspeeding  
wings,

Their heads with flour snowed over  
white and new,

Sit in a vale round which Parnassus  
flings

Its circling skirts — from these I have  
learned true

Vaticinations of remotest things.

My father cared not. Whilst they search  
out dooms,

They sit apart and feed on honeycombs.

## XCV.

“They, having eaten the fresh honey,  
grow

Drunk with divine enthusiasm, and  
utter

With earnest willingness the truth they  
know;

But if deprived of that sweet food,  
they mutter

All plausible delusions; — these to you

I give; — if you inquire, they will not  
stutter;

Delight your own soul with them: — any  
man

You would instruct may profit if he can.

## XCVI.

“Take these and the fierce oxen, Maia's  
child —

O'er many a horse and toil-enduring  
 mule,  
 O'er jagged-jawed lions, and the wild  
 White-tusked boars, o'er all, by field  
 or pool,  
 Of cattle which the mighty Mother mild  
 Nourishes in her bosom, thou shalt  
 rule —  
 Thou dost alone the veil from death up-  
 lift —  
 Thou givest not — yet this is a great gift."

## XCVII.

Thus King Apollo loved the child of  
 May  
 In truth, and Jove covered their love  
 with joy,  
 Hermes with Gods and men even from  
 that day  
 Mingled, and wrought the latter much  
 annoy,  
 And little profit, going far astray  
 Thro' the dun night. Farewell, de-  
 lightful Boy,  
 Of Jove and Maia sprung, — never by  
 me,  
 Nor thou, nor other songs, shall unre-  
 membered be.

HOMER'S HYMN TO CASTOR  
AND POLLUX.

YE wild-eyed Muses, sing the Twins of  
 Jove,  
 Whom the fair-ankled Leda, mixt in love  
 With mighty Saturn's heaven-obscur-  
 ing  
 Child,  
 On Taygetus, that lofty mountain wild,  
 Brought forth in joy, mild Pollux void of  
 blame,  
 And steed-subduing Castor, heirs of  
 fame.  
 These are the Powers who earth-born  
 mortals save  
 And ships, whose flight is swift along the  
 wave.  
 When wintry tempests o'er the savage  
 sea  
 Are raging, and the sailors tremblingly  
 Call on the Twins of Jove with prayer  
 and vow,

Gathered in fear upon the lofty prow,  
 And sacrifice with snow-white lambs, the  
 wind  
 And the huge billow bursting close be-  
 hind,  
 Even then beneath the weltering waters  
 bear  
 The staggering ship — they suddenly ap-  
 pear,  
 On yellow wings rushing athwart the sky,  
 And lull the blasts in mute tranquillity,  
 And strew the waves on the white ocean's  
 bed,  
 Fair omen of the voyage; from toil and  
 dread,  
 The sailors rest, rejoicing in the sight,  
 And plough the quiet sea in safe delight.

## HOMER'S HYMN TO THE MOON.

DAUGHTERS of Jove, whose voice is  
 melody,  
 Muses, who know and rule all minstrelsy!  
 Sing the wide-winged Moon. Around  
 the earth,  
 From her immortal head in Heaven shot  
 forth,  
 Far light is scattered — boundless glory  
 springs;  
 Where'er she spreads her many-beaming  
 wings  
 The lampless air glows round her golden  
 crown.

But when the Moon divine from  
 Heaven is gone  
 Under the sea, her beams within abide,  
 Till, bathing her bright limbs in Ocean's  
 tide,  
 Clothing her form in garments glittering  
 far,  
 And having yoked to her immortal car  
 The beam-invested steeds, whose necks  
 on high  
 Curve back, she drives to a remoter sky  
 A western Crescent, borne impetuously.  
 Then is made full the circle of her light,  
 And as she grows, her beams more bright  
 and bright,  
 Are poured from Heaven, where she is  
 hovering then,  
 A wonder and a sign to mortal men.



The Son of Saturn with this glorious  
Power  
Mingled in love and sleep — to whom  
she bore,  
Pandaia, a bright maid of beauty rare  
Among the Gods, whose lives eternal  
are.

Hail Queen, great Moon, white-armed  
Divinity,  
Fair-haired and favorable, thus with  
thee,  
My song beginning, by its music sweet  
Shall make immortal many a glorious  
feat  
Of demigods, with lovely lips, so well  
Which minstrels, servants of the muses,  
tell.

## HOMER'S HYMN TO THE SUN.

OFFSPRING of Jove, Calliope, once more  
To the bright Sun, thy hymn of music  
pour;  
Whom to the child of star-clad Heaven  
and Earth  
Euryphaessa, large-eyed nymph, brought  
forth;  
Euryphaessa, the famed sister fair,  
Of great Hyperion, who to him did bear  
A race of loveliest children; the young  
Morn,  
Whose arms are like twin roses newly  
born,  
The fair-haired Moon, and the immortal  
Sun,  
Who, borne by heavenly steeds his race  
doth run  
Unconquerably, illuming the abodes  
Of mortal men and the eternal gods.

Fiercely look forth his awe-inspiring  
eyes,  
Beneath his golden helmet, whence arise  
And are shot forth afar, clear beams of  
light;  
His countenance with radiant glory  
bright  
Beneath his graceful locks far shines  
around,  
And the light vest with which his limbs  
are bound

Of woof ethereal, delicately twined  
Glow in the stream of the uplifting  
wind.  
His rapid steeds soon bear him to the  
west;  
Where their steep flight his hands divine  
arrest,  
And the fleet car with yoke of gold,  
which he  
Sends from bright heaven beneath the  
shadowy sea.

HOMER'S HYMN TO THE EARTH:  
MOTHER OF ALL.

O UNIVERSAL mother, who dost keep  
From everlasting thy foundations deep,  
Eldest of things, Great Earth, I sing  
of thee;  
All shapes that have their dwelling in  
the sea,  
All things that fly, or on the ground  
divine  
Live, move, and there are nourisht —  
these are thine;  
These from thy wealth thou dost sustain;  
from thee  
Fair babes are born, and fruits on every  
tree  
Hang ripe and large, revered Divinity!

The life of mortal men beneath thy  
sway  
Is held; thy power both gives and takes  
away!  
Happy are they whom thy mild favors  
nourish,  
All things unstinted round them grow  
and flourish.  
For them, endures the life-sustaining  
field  
Its load of harvest, and their cattle yield  
Large increase, and their house with  
wealth is filled.  
Such honored dwell in cities fair and  
free,  
The homes of lovely women, prosper-  
ously;  
Their sons exult in youth's new budding  
gladness,  
And their fresh daughters free from care  
or sadness,

With bloom-inwoven dance and happy  
 song,  
 On the soft flowers the meadow-grass  
 among,  
 Leap round them sporting — such de-  
 lights by thee,  
 Are given, rich Power, revered Divinity.

Mother of gods, thou wife of starry  
 Heaven,  
 Farewell! be thou propitious, and be  
 given  
 A happy life for this brief melody,  
 Nor thou nor other songs shall unremem-  
 bered be.

#### HOMER'S HYMN TO MINERVA.

I SING the glorious Power with azure  
 eyes,  
 Athenian Pallas! tameless, chaste, and  
 wise,  
 Tritogenia, town-preserving maid,  
 Revered and mighty; from his awful  
 head  
 Whom Jove brought forth, in warlike  
 armor drest,  
 Golden, all radiant! wonder strange  
 possesst  
 The everlasting Gods that shape to see,  
 Shaking a javelin keen, impetuously  
 Rush from the crest of Ægis-bearing  
 Jove;  
 Fearfully Heaven was shaken, and did  
 move  
 Beneath the might of the Cerulean-eyed;  
 Earth dreadfully resounded, far and  
 wide,  
 And lifted from its depths, the sea  
 swelled high  
 In purple billows, the tide suddenly  
 Stood still, and great Hyperion's son  
 long time  
 Checkt his swift steeds, till where she  
 stood sublime,  
 Pallas from her immortal shoulders threw  
 The arms divine: wise Jove rejoiced to  
 view.  
 Child of the Ægis-bearer, hail to thee,  
 Nor thine nor others' praise shall unre-  
 membered be.

#### HOMER'S HYMN TO VENUS.

[Vv. 1-55, with some omissions.]

MUSE, sing the deeds of golden Aphro-  
 dite,  
 Who wakens with her smile the lulled  
 delight  
 Of sweet desire, taming the eternal  
 kings  
 Of Heaven, and men, and all the living  
 things  
 That fleet along the air, or whom the  
 sea,  
 Or earth with her maternal ministry  
 Nourish innumerable, thy delight  
 All seek O crownèd Aphrodite!  
 Three spirits canst thou not deceive or  
 quell,  
 Minerva, child of Jove, who loves too  
 well  
 Fierce war and mingling combat, and  
 the fame  
 Of glorious deeds, to heed thy gentle  
 flame.  
 Diana golden-shafted queen,  
 Is tamed not by thy smiles; the shadows  
 green  
 Of the wild woods, the bow, the . . .  
 And piercing cries amid the swift pur-  
 suit  
 Of beasts among waste mountains, such  
 delight  
 Is hers, and men who know and do the  
 right.  
 Nor Saturn's first-born daughter, Vesta  
 chaste,  
 Whom Neptune and Apollo wooed the  
 last,  
 Such was the will of ægis-bearing Jove;  
 But sternly she refused the ills of Love,  
 And by her mighty father's head she  
 swore  
 An oath not unperformed, that ever-  
 more  
 A virgin she would live mid deities  
 Divine: her father, for such gentle ties  
 Renounced, gave glorious gifts, thus in  
 his hall  
 She sits and feeds luxuriously. O'er  
 all

In every fane, her honors first arise  
From men — the eldest of Divinities.

These spirits she persuades not, nor  
deceives,  
But none beside escape, so well she  
weaves  
Her unseen toils; nor mortal men, nor  
gods  
Who live secure in their unseen abodes.  
She won the soul of him whose fierce  
delight  
Is thunder — first in glory and in  
might.  
And, as she willed, his mighty mind  
deceiving,  
With mortal limbs his deathless limbs  
inweaving  
Concealed him from his spouse and sister  
fair,  
Whom to wise Saturn ancient Rhea bare.  
but in return,  
In Venus Jove did soft desire awaken,  
That by her own enchantments over-  
taken,  
She might, no more from human union  
free,  
Burn for a nursling of mortality.  
For once, amid the assembled Deities,  
The laughter-loving Venus from her eyes  
Shot forth the light of a soft starlight  
smile,  
And boasting said, that she, secure the  
while,  
Could bring at will to the assembled  
gods  
The mortal tenants of earth's dark  
abodes,  
And mortal offspring from a deathless  
stem  
She could produce in scorn and spite of  
them.  
Therefore he poured desire into her  
breast  
Of young Anchises,  
Feeding his herds among the mossy  
fountains  
Of the wide Ida's many-folded moun-  
tains,  
Whom Venus saw, and loved, and the  
love clung  
Like wasting fire her senses wild  
among.

## THE CYCLOPS.

A SATYRIC DRAMA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF  
EURIPIDES.SILENUS. | ULYSSES.  
CHORUS OF SATYRS. | THE CYCLOPS.

*Silenus.* O Bacchus, what a world of  
toil, both now  
And ere these limbs were overworn with  
age,  
Have I endured for thee! First, when  
thou fled'st  
The mountain-nymphs who nursed thee,  
driven afar  
By the strange madness Juno sent upon  
thee;  
Then in the battle of the sons of Earth,  
When I stood foot by foot close to thy  
side,  
No unpropitious fellow-combatant,  
And driving thro' his shield my winged  
spear,  
Slew vast Enceladus. Consider now,  
Is it a dream of which I speak to thee?  
By Jove it is not, for you have the  
trophies!  
And now I suffer more than all before.  
For when I heard that Juno had devised  
A tedious voyage for you, I put to sea  
With all my children quaint in search of  
you,  
And I myself stood on the beakèd prow  
And fixt the naked mast, and all my  
boys  
Leaning upon their oars, with splash  
and strain  
Made white with foam the green and  
purple sea, —  
And so we sought you, king. We were  
sailing  
Near Malea, when an eastern wind arose,  
And drove us to this wild Ætnean rock;  
The one-eyed children of the Ocean  
God,  
The man-destroying Cyclopes inhabit,  
On this wild shore, their solitary caves,  
And one of these, named Polypheme,  
has caught us

To be his slaves; and so, for all delight  
Of Bacchic sports, sweet dance and  
melody,

We keep this lawless giant's wandering  
flocks.

My sons indeed, on far declivities,  
Young things themselves, tend on the  
youngling sheep,

But I remain to fill the water-casks,  
Or sweeping the hard floor, or minis-  
tering

Some impious and abominable meal  
To the fell Cyclops. I am wearied of it!  
And now I must scrape up the littered  
floor

With this great iron rake, so to receive  
My absent master and his evening sheep  
In a cave neat and clean. Even now I  
see

My children tending the flocks hither-  
ward.

Ha! what is this! are your Sicinnian  
measures

Even now the same, as when with dance  
and song

You brought young Bacchus to Althæa's  
halls?

*Chorus of Satyrs.*

STROPHE.

Where has he of race divine  
Wandered in the winding rocks?  
Here the air is calm and fine

For the father of the flocks;—  
Here the grass is soft and sweet,  
And the river-eddies meet  
In the trough beside the cave,  
Bright as in their fountain wave.—  
Neither here, nor on the dew

Of the lawny uplands feeding?  
Oh, you come!—a stone at you  
Will I throw to mend your breed-  
ing;—

Get along, you hornèd thing,  
Wild, seditious, rambling!

EPODE.

An Iacchic melody  
To the golden Aphrodite

Will I lift, as erst did I  
Seeking her and her delight  
With the Mænads, whose white feet  
To the music glance and fleet.

Bacchus, O belovèd, where,  
Shaking wide thy yellow hair,  
Wanderest thou alone, afar?

To the one-eyed Cyclops, we  
Who by right thy servants are,  
Minister in misery,  
In these wretched goat-skins clad,  
Far from thy delights and thee.

*Silenus.* Be silent, sons; command  
the slaves to drive  
The gathered flocks into the rock-rooft  
cave.

*Chorus.* Go! But what needs this  
serious haste, O father?

*Silenus.* I see a Grecian vessel on  
the coast,

And thence the rowers with some general  
Approaching to this cave.—About their  
necks

Hang empty vessels, as they wanted  
food,

And water-flasks.—Oh miserable stran-  
gers!

Whence come they that they know not  
what and who

My master is, approaching in ill hour  
The inhospitable roof of Polypheme,  
And the Cyclopien jaw-bone, man-  
destroying?

Be silent, Satyrs, while I ask and hear  
Whence coming, they arrive the Ætnean  
hill.

*Ulysses.* Friends, can you show me  
some clear water spring,  
The remedy of our thirst? Will any  
one

Furnish with food seamen in want of it?  
Ha! what is this? We seem to be ar-  
rived

At the blithe court of Bacchus. I ob-  
serve

This sportive band of Satyrs near the  
caves.

First let me greet the elder.—Hail!

*Silenus.* Hail thou,  
O Stranger! tell thy country and thy  
race.

*Ulysses.* The Ithacan Ulysses and the king  
Of Cephalonia.

*Silenus.* Oh! I know the man,  
Wordy and shrewd, the son of Sisyphus.

*Ulysses.* I am the same, but do not  
rail upon me. —

*Silenus.* Whence sailing do you come  
to Sicily?

*Ulysses.* From Ilion, and from the  
Trojan toils.

*Silenus.* How toucht you not at your  
paternal shore?

*Ulysses.* The strength of tempests  
bore me here by force.

*Silenus.* The self-same accident oc-  
curred to me.

*Ulysses.* Were you then driven here  
by stress of weather?

*Silenus.* Following the Pirates who  
had kidnapt Bacchus.

*Ulysses.* What land is this, and who  
inhabit it? —

*Silenus.* Ætna, the loftiest peak in  
Sicily.

*Ulysses.* And are there walls, and  
tower-surrounded towns?

*Silenus.* There are not. — These lone  
rocks are bare of men.

*Ulysses.* And who possess the land?  
the race of beasts?

*Silenus.* Cyclops, who live in caverns,  
not in houses.

*Ulysses.* Obeying whom? Or is the  
state popular?

*Silenus.* Shepherds: no one obeys  
any in aught.

*Ulysses.* How live they? do they sow  
the corn of Ceres?

*Silenus.* On milk and cheese, and on  
the flesh of sheep.

*Ulysses.* Have they the Bromian  
drink from the vine's stream?

*Silenus.* Ah! no; they live in an un-  
gracious land.

*Ulysses.* And are they just to stran-  
gers? — hospitable?

*Silenus.* They think the sweetest  
thing a stranger brings

Is his own flesh.

*Ulysses.* What! do they  
eat man's flesh?

*Silenus.* No one comes here who is  
not eaten up.

*Ulysses.* The Cyclops now — where  
is he? Not at home?

*Silenus.* Absent on Ætna, hunting  
with his dogs.

*Ulysses.* Know'st thou what thou  
must do to aid us hence?

*Silenus.* I know not: we will help  
you all we can.

*Ulysses.* Provide us food, of which  
we are in want.

*Silenus.* Here is not anything, as I  
said, but meat.

*Ulysses.* But meat is a sweet remedy  
for hunger.

*Silenus.* Cow's milk there is, and  
store of curdled cheese.

*Ulysses.* Bring out: — I would see all  
before I bargain.

*Silenus.* But how much gold will you  
engage to give?

*Ulysses.* I bring no gold, but Bacchic  
juice.

*Silenus.* Oh joy!  
'T is long since these dry lips were wet  
with wine.

*Ulysses.* Maron, the son of the God,  
gave it me.

*Silenus.* Whom I have nurst a baby  
in my arms.

*Ulysses.* The son of Bacchus, for your  
clearer knowledge.

*Silenus.* Have you it now? — or is it  
in the ship?

*Ulysses.* Old man, this skin contains  
it, which you see.

*Silenus.* Why this would hardly be a  
mouthful for me.

*Ulysses.* Nay, twice as much as you  
can draw from thence.

*Silenus.* You speak of a fair fountain,  
sweet to me.

*Ulysses.* Would you first taste of the  
unmingled wine?

*Silenus.* 'T is just — tasting invites  
the purchaser.

*Ulysses.* Here is the cup, together  
with the skin.

*Silenus.* Pour: that the draught may  
fillip my remembrance.

*Ulysses.* See!

*Silenus.* Papaiax! what a sweet smell it has!

*Ulysses.* You see it then?—

*Silenus.* By Jove, no! but I smell it.

*Ulysses.* Taste, that you may not praise it in words only.

*Silenus.* Babai! Great Bacchus calls me forth to dance!

Joy! joy!

*Ulysses.* Did it flow sweetly down your throat?

*Silenus.* So that it tingled to my very nails.

*Ulysses.* And in addition I will give you gold.

*Silenus.* Let gold alone! only unlock the cask.

*Ulysses.* Bring out some cheeses now, or a young goat.

*Silenus.* That will I do, despising any master.

Yes, let me drink one cup, and I will give All that the Cyclops feed upon their mountains.

*Chorus.* Ye have taken Troy and laid your hands on Helen?

*Ulysses.* And utterly destroyed the race of Priam.

*Silenus.* The wanton wretch! she was bewicht to see  
The many-colored anklets and the chain  
Of woven gold which girt the neck of Paris,  
And so she left that good man Menelaus.  
There should be no more women in the world  
But such as are reserved for me alone.—  
See, here are sheep, and here are goats,  
Ulysses,  
Here are unsparing cheeses of prest milk;  
Take them; depart with what good speed ye may;  
First leaving my reward, the Bacchic dew  
Of joy-inspiring grapes.

*Ulysses.* Ah me! Alas!  
What shall we do? the Cyclops is at hand!  
Old man, we perish! whither can we fly?

*Silenus.* Hide yourselves quick within that hollow rock.

*Ulysses.* 'T were perilous to fly into the net.

*Silenus.* The cavern has recesses numberless;  
Hide yourselves quick.

*Ulysses.* That will I never do!  
The mighty Troy would be indeed disgraced  
If I should fly one man. How many times  
Have I withstood, with shield immovable,  
Ten thousand Phrygians!—if I needs must die,  
Yet will I die with glory;—if I live,  
The praise which I have gained will yet remain.

*Silenus.* What, ho! assistance, comrades, haste, assistance!

*The CYCLOPS, SILENUS, ULYSSES;  
CHORUS.*

*Cyclops.* What is this tumult? Bacchus is not here,  
Nor tympanies nor brazen castanets.  
How are my young lambs in the cavern?  
Milking  
Their dams or playing by their sides?  
And is  
The new cheese prest into the bulrush baskets?  
Speak! I'll beat some of you till you rain tears—  
Look up, not downwards when I speak to you.

*Silenus.* See! I now gape at Jupiter himself,  
I stare upon Orion and the stars.

*Cyclops.* Well, is the dinner fitly cookt and laid?

*Silenus.* All ready, if your throat is ready too.

*Cyclops.* Are the bowls full of milk besides?

*Silenus.* O'er-brimming;  
So you may drink a tunful if you will.

*Cyclops.* Is it ewe's milk or cow's milk, or both mixt?—

*Silenus.* Both, either; only pray don't swallow me.

*Cyclops.* By no means. —

What is this crowd I see beside the stalls?

Outlaws or thieves? for near my cavern-home,

I see my young lambs coupled two by two

With willow bands; mixt with my cheeses lie

Their implements; and this old fellow here

Has his bald head broken with stripes.

*Silenus.* Ah me!

I have been beaten till I burn with fever.

*Cyclops.* By whom? Who laid his fist upon your head?

*Silenus.* Those men, because I would not suffer them

To steal your goods.

*Cyclops.* Did not the rascals know

I am a God, sprung from the race of heaven?

*Silenus.* I told them so, but they bore off your things,

And ate the cheese in spite of all I said, And carried out the lambs — and said, moreover,

They'd pin you down with a three-cubit collar,

And pull your vitals out thro' your one eye,

Torture your back with stripes, then binding you,

Throw you as ballast into the ship's hold, And then deliver you, a slave, to move

Enormous rocks, or found a vestibule.

*Cyclops.* In truth? Nay, haste, and place in order quickly

The cooking knives, and heap upon the hearth,

And kindle it, a great faggot of wood — As soon as they are slaughtered, they

shall fill

My belly, broiling warm from the live coals,

Or boiled and seethed within the bubbling caldron.

I am quite sick of the wild mountain game,

Of stags and lions I have gorged enough, And I grow hungry for the flesh of men.

*Silenus.* Nay, master, something new is very pleasant

After one thing forever, and of late Very few strangers have approacht our cave.

*Ulysses.* Hear, Cyclops, a plain tale on the other side.

We, wanting to buy food, came from our ship

Into the neighborhood of your cave, and here

This old Silenus gave us in exchange These lambs for wine, the which he took

and drank,

And all by mutual compact, without force.

There is no word of truth in what he says,

For slyly he was selling all your store.

*Silenus.* I? May you perish, wretch —

*Ulysses.* If I speak false!

*Silenus.* Cyclops, I swear by Neptune who begot thee,

By mighty Triton and by Nereus old, Calypso and the glaucous ocean Nymphs,

The sacred waves and all the race of fishes —

Be these the witnesses, my dear sweet master,

My darling little Cyclops, that I never Gave any of your stores to these false

strangers; —

If I speak false may those whom most I love,

My children, perish wretchedly!

*Chorus.* There stop!

I saw him giving these things to the strangers.

If I speak false then may my father perish,

But do not thou wrong hospitality.

*Cyclops.* You lie! I swear that he is juster far

Than Rhadamanthus — I trust more in him.

But let me ask, whence have ye sailed, O strangers?

Who are you? And what city nourisht ye?

*Ulysses.* Our race is Ithacan — having destroyed

The town of Troy, the tempests of the sea

Have driven us on thy land, O Poly-  
pHEME.

*Cyclops.* What, have ye shared in the  
unenvied spoil  
Of the false Helen, near Scamander's  
stream?

*Ulysses.* The same, having endured a  
woful toil.

*Cyclops.* Oh, basest expedition! sailed  
ye not  
From Greece to Phrygia for one woman's  
sake?

*Ulysses.* 'T was the Gods' work — no  
mortal was in fault.

But, O great offspring of the ocean-  
king,  
We pray thee and admonish thee with  
freedom,  
That thou dost spare thy friends who  
visit thee,  
And place no impious food within thy  
jaws.  
For in the depths of Greece we have  
upreared  
Temples to thy great father, which are  
all  
His homes. The sacred bay of Tænarus  
Remains inviolate, and each dim recess  
Scoopt high on the Malean promontory,  
And airy Sunium's silver-veinèd crag,  
Which divine Pallas keeps unprofaned  
ever,  
The Gerastian asylums, and whate'er  
Within wide Greece our enterprise has  
kept  
From Phrygian contumely; and in which  
You have a common care, for you inhabit  
The skirts of Grecian land, under the  
roots  
Of Ætna and its crags, spotted with fire.  
Turn them to converse under human  
laws,  
Receive us shipwreckt suppliants, and  
provide  
Food, clothes, and fire, and hospitable  
gifts;  
Nor fixing upon oxen-piercing spits  
Our limbs, so fill your belly and your  
jaws.  
Priam's wide land has widowed Greece  
enough;  
And weapon-wingèd murder heapt to-  
gether

Enough of dead, and wives are husband-  
less,  
And ancient women and gray fathers  
wail  
Their childless age;— if you should roast  
the rest,  
And 't is a bitter feast that you prepare,  
Where then would any turn? Yet be  
persuaded;  
Forego the lust of your jaw-bone; prefer  
Pious humanity to wicked will:  
Many have bought too dear their evil  
joys.

*Silenus.* Let me advise you, do not  
spare a morsel  
Of all his flesh. If you should eat his  
tongue  
You would become most eloquent, O  
Cyclops.

*Cyclops.* Wealth, my good fellow, is  
the wise man's God,  
All other things are a pretence and  
boast.  
What are my father's ocean promontories,  
The sacred rocks whereon he dwells, to  
me?  
Stranger, I laugh to scorn Jove's thunder-  
bolt,  
I know not that his strength is more than  
mine.  
As to the rest I care not:— When he  
pours  
Rain from above, I have a close pavilion  
Under this rock, in which I lie supine,  
Feasting on a roast calf or some wild  
beast,  
And drinking pans of milk, and glori-  
ously  
Emulating the thunder of high heaven.  
And when the Thracian wind pours down  
the snow,  
I wrap my body in the skins of beasts,  
Kindle a fire, and bid the snow whirl on.  
The earth, by force, whether it will or  
no,  
Bringing forth grass, fattens my flocks  
and herds,  
Which, to what other God but to myself  
And this great belly, first of deities,  
Should I be bound to sacrifice? I well  
know  
The wise man's only Jupiter is this,  
To eat and drink during his little day,



And give himself no care. And as for  
those  
Who complicate with laws the life of  
man,  
I freely give them tears for their reward.  
I will not cheat my soul of its delight,  
Or hesitate in dining upon you:—  
And that I may be quit of all demands,  
These are my hospitable gifts;— fierce  
fire  
And yon ancestral caldron, which o'er-  
bubbling  
Shall finely cook your miserable flesh.  
Creep in! —

*Ulysses.* Ai! ai! I have escaped the  
Trojan toils,  
I have escaped the sea, and now I fall  
Under the cruel grasp of one impious  
man.

O Pallas, mistress, Goddess, sprung from  
Jove,  
Now, now, assist me! Mightier toils  
than Troy

Are these;— I totter on the chasms of  
peril;—

And thou who inhabitest the thrones  
Of the bright stars, look, hospitable Jove,  
Upon this outrage of thy deity,  
Otherwise be considered as no God!

*Chorus (alone).*

For your gaping gulf, and your gullet wide  
The ravin is ready on every side,  
The limbs of the strangers are cookt and  
done,

There is boiled meat, and roast meat,  
and meat from the coal,  
You may chop it, and tear it, and gnash  
it for fun,

An hairy goat's-skin contains the  
whole.

Let me but escape, and ferry me o'er  
The stream of your wrath to a safer  
shore,

The Cyclops Ætnean is cruel and bold,  
He murders the strangers  
That sit on his hearth,  
And dreads no avengers  
To rise from the earth.

He roasts the men before they are cold,  
He snatches them broiling from the coal,  
And from the caldron pulls them whole,

And minces their flesh and gnaws their  
bone  
With his cursèd teeth, till all be gone.

Farewell, foul pavilion:

Farewell, rites of dread!

The Cyclops vermilion,  
With slaughter uncloying,

Now feasts on the dead,

In the flesh of strangers joying!

*Ulysses.* O Jupiter! I saw within  
the cave

Horrible things; deeds to be feigned in  
words,

But not to be believed as being done.

*Chorus.* What! sawest thou the im-  
pious Polypheme

Feasting upon your loved companions  
now?

*Ulysses.* Selecting two, the plumpest  
of the crowd,

He graspt them in his hands. —

*Chorus.* Unhappy man!

*Ulysses.* Soon as we came into this  
craggy place,

Kindling a fire, he cast on the broad  
hearth

The knotty limbs of an enormous oak,  
Three waggon-loads at least, and then  
he strewed

Upon the ground, beside the red fire-  
light,

His couch of pine leaves; and he milkt  
the cows,

And pouring forth the white milk, filled  
a bowl

Three cubits wide and four in depth, as  
much

As would contain ten amphoræ, and  
bound it

With ivy wreaths; then placed upon the  
fire

A brazen pot to boil, and made red hot  
The points of spits, not sharpened with  
the sickle,

But with a fruit tree bough, and with  
the jaws

Of axes for Ætnean slaughterings.<sup>1</sup>

And when this God-abandoned cook of  
hell

Had made all ready, he seized two of us

<sup>1</sup> I confess I do not understand this.

And killed them in a kind of measured manner;  
 For he flung one against the brazen rivets  
 Of the huge caldron, and seized the other  
 By the foot's tendon, and knockt out his brains  
 Upon the sharp edge of the craggy stone:  
 Then peeled his flesh with a great cooking-knife  
 And put him down to roast. The other's limbs  
 He chopt into the caldron to be boiled.  
 And I, with the tears raining from my eyes,  
 Stood near the Cyclops, ministering to him;  
 The rest, in the recesses of the cave,  
 Clung to the rock like bats, bloodless with fear.  
 When he was filled with my companions' flesh,  
 He threw himself upon the ground and sent  
 A loathsome exhalation from his maw.  
 Then a divine thought came to me. I filled  
 The cup of Maron, and I offered him  
 To taste, and said:—"Child of the Ocean God,  
 Behold what drink the vines of Greece produce,  
 The exultation and the joy of Bacchus." He,  
 Satiated with his unnatural food,  
 Received it, and at one draught drank it off,  
 And taking my hand, praised me:—"Thou hast given  
 A sweet draught after a sweet meal, dear guest."  
 And I perceiving that it pleased him, filled  
 Another cup, well knowing that the wine  
 Would wound him soon and take a sure revenge.  
 And the charm fascinated him, and I plied  
 Him cup after cup, until the drink  
 Had warmed his entrails, and he sang aloud  
 In concert with my wailing fellow-seamen  
 A hideous discord—and the cavern rung.

I have stolen out, so that if you will  
 You may achieve my safety and your own.

But say, do you desire, or not, to fly  
 This uncompanionable man, and dwell  
 As was your wont among the Grecian Nymphs

Within the fanes of your beloved God?  
 Your father there within agrees to it,  
 But he is weak and overcome with wine,  
 And caught as if with bird-lime by the cup,

He claps his wings and crows in doting joy.

You who are young escape with me, and find

Bacchus your ancient friend; unsuited he  
 To this rude Cyclops.

*Chorus.* Oh my dearest friend,  
 That I could see that day, and leave forever

The impious Cyclops.

*Ulysses.* Listen then what a punishment I have

For this fell monster, how secure a flight  
 From your hard servitude.

*Chorus.* O sweeter far  
 Than is the music of an Asian lyre  
 Would be the news of Polypheme destroyed.

*Ulysses.* Delighted with the Bacchic drink he goes  
 To call his brother Cyclops—who inhabit

A village upon Ætna not far off.

*Chorus.* I understand, catching him when alone

You think by some measure to dispatch him,

Or thrust him from the precipice.

*Ulysses.* Oh no:  
 Nothing of that kind; my device is subtle.

*Chorus.* How then? I heard of old that thou wert wise.

*Ulysses.* I will dissuade him from this plan, by saying

It were unwise to give the Cyclopes  
 This precious drink, which if enjoyed alone

Would make life sweeter for a longer time.

When vanquish't by the Bacchic power,  
he sleeps,

There is a trunk of olive wood within,  
Whose point having made sharp with  
this good sword

I will conceal in fire, and when I see  
It is alight, will fix it, burning yet,  
Within the socket of the Cyclops' eye  
And melt it out with fire — as when a  
man

Turns by its handle a great augur round,  
Fitting the framework of a ship with  
beams,

So will I, in the Cyclops' fiery eye  
Turn round the brand and dry the pupil  
up.

*Chorus.* Joy! I am mad with joy at  
your device.

*Ulysses.* And then with you, my  
friends, and the old man,  
We'll load the hollow depth of our black  
ship,  
And row with double strokes from this  
dread shore.

*Chorus.* May I, as in libations to a  
God,  
Share in the blinding him with the red  
brand?

I would have some communion in his  
death.

*Ulysses.* Doubtless: the brand is a  
great brand to hold.

*Chorus.* Oh! I would lift a hundred  
wagon-loads,  
If like a wasp's nest I could scoop the  
eye out

Of the detested Cyclops.

*Ulysses.* Silence now!  
Ye know the close device — and when I  
call,

Look ye obey the masters of the craft.  
I will not save myself and leave behind  
My comrades in the cave: I might es-  
cape,

Having got clear from that obscure  
recess,

But 't were unjust to leave in jeopardy  
The dear companions who sailed here  
with me.

*Chorus.*

Come! who is first, that with his hand  
Will urge down the burning brand

Thro' the lids, and quench and pierce  
The Cyclops' eye so fiery fierce?

*Semichorus I. (Song within.)*

Listen! listen! he is coming,  
A most hideous discord humming.  
Drunken, museless, awkward, yelling,  
Far along his rocky dwelling;  
Let us with some comic spell  
Teach the yet unteachable.  
By all means he must be blinded,  
If my council be but minded.

*Semichorus II.*

Happy those made odorous  
With the dew which sweet grapes  
weep,  
To the village hastening thus,  
Seek the vines that soothe to sleep,  
Having first embraced thy friend,  
There in luxury without end,  
With the strings of yellow hair,  
Of thy voluptuous leman fair,  
Shalt sit playing on a bed! —  
Speak what door is opened?

*Cyclops.*

Ha! ha! ha! I'm full of wine,  
Heavy with the joy divine,  
With the young feast oversated,  
Like a merchant's vessel freighted  
To the water's edge, my crop  
Is laden to the gullet's top.  
The fresh meadow grass of spring  
Tempt me forth thus wandering  
To my brothers on the mountains,  
Who shall share the wine's sweet  
fountains.  
Bring the cask, O stranger, bring!

*Chorus.*

One with eyes the fairest  
Cometh from his dwelling,  
Some one loves thee, rarest,  
Bright beyond my telling.  
In thy grace thou shinest  
Like some nymph divinest,  
In her caverns dewy:—  
All delights pursue thee,  
Soon pied flowers, sweet-breathing,  
Shall thy head be wreathing.

*Ulysses.* Listen, O Cyclops, for I am well skilled  
 In Bacchus, whom I gave thee of to drink.  
*Cyclops.* What sort of God is Bacchus then accounted?  
*Ulysses.* The greatest among men for joy of life.  
*Cyclops.* I gulpt him down with very great delight.  
*Ulysses.* This is a God who never injures men.  
*Cyclops.* How does the God like living in a skin?  
*Ulysses.* He is content wherever he is put.  
*Cyclops.* Gods should not have their body in a skin.  
*Ulysses.* If he gives joy what is his skin to you?  
*Cyclops.* I hate the skin, but love the wine within.  
*Ulysses.* Stay here, now drink, and make your spirit glad.  
*Cyclops.* Should I not share this liquor with my brothers?  
*Ulysses.* Keep it yourself, and be more honored so.  
*Cyclops.* I were more useful giving to my friends.  
*Ulysses.* But village mirth breeds contests, broils, and blows.  
*Cyclops.* When I am drunk none shall lay hands on me. —  
*Ulysses.* A drunken man is better within doors.  
*Cyclops.* He is a fool, who drinking, loves not mirth.  
*Ulysses.* But he is wise, who drunk, remains at home.  
*Cyclops.* What shall I do, Silenus? Shall I stay?  
*Silenus.* Stay — for what need have you of pot companions?  
*Cyclops.* Indeed this place is closely carpeted  
 With flowers and grass.  
*Silenus.* And in the sun-warm noon  
 'T is sweet to drink. Lie down beside me now,  
 Placing your mighty sides upon the ground.

*Cyclops.* What do you put the cup behind me for?  
*Silenus.* That no one here may touch it.  
*Cyclops.* Thievish one! You want to drink;— here place it in the midst.  
 And thou, O stranger, tell how art thou called?  
*Ulysses.* My name is Nobody. What favor now  
 Shall I receive to praise you at your hands?  
*Cyclops.* I'll feast on you the last of your companions.  
*Ulysses.* You grant your guest a fair reward, O Cyclops.  
*Cyclops.* Ha! what is this? Stealing the wine, you rogue!  
*Silenus.* It was this stranger kissing me because  
 I looked so beautiful.  
*Cyclops.* You shall repent  
 For kissing the coy wine that loves you not.  
*Silenus.* By Jupiter! you said that I am fair.  
*Cyclops.* Pour out, and only give me the cup full.  
*Silenus.* How is it mixt? let me observe.  
*Cyclops.* Curse you!  
 Give it me so.  
*Silenus.* Not till I see you wear  
 That coronal, and taste the cup to you.  
*Cyclops.* Thou wily traitor!  
*Silenus.* But the wine is sweet.  
 Ay, you will roar if you are caught in drinking.  
*Cyclops.* See now, my lip is clean  
 and all my beard.  
*Silenus.* Now put your elbow right  
 and drink again.  
 As you see me drink — . . .  
*Cyclops.* How now?  
*Silenus.* Ye Gods, what  
 a delicious gulp!  
*Cyclops.* Guest, take it;— you pour  
 out the wine for me.  
*Ulysses.* The wine is well accustomed  
 to my hand.  
*Cyclops.* Pour out the wine!  
*Ulysses.* I pour; only be silent.

*Cyclops.* Silence is a hard task to him  
who drinks.

*Ulysses.* Take it and drink it off;  
leave not a dreg.

Oh, that the drinker died with his own  
draught!

*Cyclops.* Papai! the vine must be a  
sapient plant.

*Ulysses.* If you drink much after a  
mighty feast,

Moistening your thirsty maw, you will  
sleep well;

If you leave aught, Bacchus will dry you  
up.

*Cyclops.* Ho! ho! I can scarce rise.  
What pure delight!

The heavens and earth appear to whirl  
about

Confusedly. I see the throne of Jove  
And the clear congregation of the Gods.

Now if the Graces tempted me to kiss  
I would not, for the loveliest of them all

I would not leave this Ganymede.

*Silenus.* Polypheme,

I am the Ganymede of Jupiter.

*Cyclops.* By Jove you are; I bore  
you off from Dardanus.

*Ulysses and the Chorus*

*Ulysses.* Come, boys of Bacchus,  
children of high race,

This man within is folded up in sleep,  
And soon will vomit flesh from his fell  
maw;

The brand under the shed thrusts out its  
smoke,

No preparation needs, but to burn out  
The monster's eye;— but bear yourselves  
like men.

*Chorus.* We will have courage like  
the adamant rock,

All things are ready for you here; go in,  
Before our father shall perceive the noise.

*Ulysses.* Vulcan, Ætnean king! burn  
out with fire

The shining eye of this thy neighboring  
monster!

And thou, O sleep, nursling of gloomy  
night,

Descend unmixed on this God-hated beast,  
And suffer not Ulysses and his comrades,

Returning from their famous Trojan toils,

To perish by this man, who cares not  
either

For God or mortal; or I needs must  
think

That Chance is a supreme divinity,  
And things divine are subject to her  
power.

*Chorus.*

Soon a crab the throat will seize

Of him who feeds upon his guest,

Fire will burn his lamp-like eyes

In revenge of such a feast!

A great oak stump now is lying

In the ashes yet undying.

Come, Maron, come!

Raging let him fix the doom,

Let him tear the eyelid up

Of the Cyclops— that his cup

May be evil!

Oh! I long to dance and revel

With sweet Bromian, long desired,

In loved ivy wreaths attired;

Leaving this abandoned home—

Will the moment ever come?

*Ulysses.* Be silent, ye wild things!

Nay, hold your peace,

And keep your lips quite close; dare not  
to breathe,

Or spit, or e'en wink lest ye wake the  
monster,

Until his eye be tortured out with fire.

*Chorus.* Nay, we are silent, and we  
chaw the air.

*Ulysses.* Come now, and lend a hand  
to the great stake

Within— it is delightfully red hot.

*Chorus.* You then command who first  
should seize the stake

To burn the Cyclops' eye, that all may  
share

In the great enterprise.

*Semichorus I.* We are too far,

We cannot at this distance from the door  
Thrust fire into his eye.

*Semichorus II.* And we just now  
Have become lame; cannot move hand  
or foot.

*Chorus.* The same thing has occurred  
to us,— our ankles

Are sprained with standing here, I know  
not how.

- Ulysses.* What, sprained with standing still?
- Chorus.* And there is dust  
Or ashes in our eyes, I know not whence.
- Ulysses.* Cowardly dogs! ye will not aid me then?
- Chorus.* With pitying my own back  
and my back bone,  
And with not wishing all my teeth  
knockt out,  
This cowardice comes of itself — but stay,  
I know a famous Orphic incantation  
To make the brand stick of its own  
accord  
Into the skull of this one-eyed son of  
Earth.
- Ulysses.* Of old I knew ye thus by  
nature; now  
I know ye better. — I will use the aid  
Of my own comrades — Yet tho' weak of  
hand  
Speak cheerfully, that so ye may awaken  
The courage of my friends with your  
blithe words.
- Chorus.* This I will do with peril of  
my life,  
And blind you with my exhortations,  
*Cyclops.*  
Hasten and thrust,  
And parch up to dust,  
The eye of the beast,  
Who feeds on his guest.  
Burn and blind  
The Ætnean hind!  
Scoop and draw,  
But beware lest he claw  
Your limbs near his maw.
- Cyclops.* Ah me! my eyesight is  
parcht up to cinders.
- Chorus.* What a sweet pæan! sing  
me that again!
- Cyclops.* Ah me! indeed, what woe  
has fallen upon me!  
But wretched nothings, think ye not to  
flee  
Out of this rock; I, standing at the out-  
let,  
Will bar the way and catch you as you  
pass.
- Chorus.* What are you roaring out,  
*Cyclops?*
- Cyclops.* I perish!
- Chorus.* For you are wicked.
- Cyclops.* And besides miserable.
- Chorus.* What, did you fall into the  
fire when drunk?
- Cyclops.* 'T was Nobody destroyed  
me.
- Chorus.* Why then no one  
Can be to blame.
- Cyclops.* I say 't was Nobody  
Who blinded me.
- Chorus.* Why then you are not  
blind.
- Cyclops.* I wish you were as blind as  
I am.
- Chorus.* Nay,  
It cannot be that no one made you blind.
- Cyclops.* You jeer me; where, I ask,  
is Nobody?
- Chorus.* Nowhere, O Cyclops.
- Cyclops.* It was that stranger ruined  
me:—the wretch  
First gave me wine and then burnt out  
my eye,  
For wine is strong and hard to struggle  
with.
- Have they escaped, or are they yet  
within?
- Chorus.* They stand under the dark-  
ness of the rock  
And cling to it.
- Cyclops.* At my right hand  
or left?
- Chorus.* Close on your right.
- Cyclops.* Where?
- Chorus.* Near the rock itself.
- You have them.
- Cyclops.* Oh, misfortune on  
misfortune!  
I've crackt my skull.
- Chorus.* Now they escape you  
there.
- Cyclops.* Not there, altho' you say so.
- Chorus.* Not on that side.
- Cyclops.* Where then?
- Chorus.* They creep about  
you on your left.
- Cyclops.* Ah! I am mockt! They  
jeer me in my ills.
- Chorus.* Not there! he is a little  
there beyond you.
- Cyclops.* Detested wretch! where are  
you?
- Ulysses.* Far from you  
I keep with care this body of Ulysses.

*Cyclops.* What do you say? You proffer a new name.

*Ulysses.* My father named me so; and I have taken

A full revenge for your unnatural feast; I should have done ill to have burned down Troy

And not revenged the murder of my comrades.

*Cyclops.* Ai! ai! the ancient oracle is accomplisht;

It said that I should have my eyesight blinded

By you coming from Troy, yet it foretold

That you should pay the penalty for this By wandering long over the homeless sea.

*Ulysses.* I bid thee weep — consider what I say,

I go towards the shore to drive my ship To mine own land, o'er the Sicilian wave.

*Cyclops.* Not so, if whelming you with this huge stone

I can crush you and all your men together;

I will descend upon the shore, tho' blind, Groping my way adown the steep ravine.

*Chorus.* And we, the shipmates of Ulysses now,

Will serve our Bacchus all our happy lives.

## EPIGRAMS.

### ( I. — TO STELLA.

FROM THE GREEK OF PLATO.

THOU wert the morning star among the living,

Ere thy fair light had fled; —

Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving

New splendor to the dead. )

### II. — KISSING HELENA.

FROM THE GREEK OF PLATO.

KISSING Helena, together

With my kiss, my soul beside it

Came to my lips, and there I kept it, —

For the poor thing had wandered thither, To follow where the kiss should guide

it,

Oh, cruel I, to intercept it!

### III. — SPIRIT OF PLATO.

FROM THE GREEK.

EAGLE! why soarest thou above that tomb?

To what sublime and star-ypaven home Floatest thou?

“I am the image of swift Plato's spirit, Ascending heaven — Athens doth inherit His corpse below.”

### IV. — CIRCUMSTANCE.

FROM THE GREEK.

A MAN who was about to hang himself, Finding a purse, then threw away his rope;

The owner, coming to reclaim his pelf, The halter found and used it. So is

Hope

Changed for Despair — one laid upon the shelf,

We take the other. Under heaven's high cope

Fortune is God — all you endure and do Depends on circumstance as much as you.

### FRAGMENT OF THE ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF ADONIS.

FROM THE GREEK OF BION.

I MOURN Adonis dead — loveliest Adonis —

Dead, dead Adonis — and the Loves lament.

Sleep no more, Venus, wrapt in purple woof —

Wake, violet-stolèd queen, and weave the crown

Of Death, — 't is Misery calls, — for he is dead.

The lovely one lies wounded in the mountains,  
 His white thigh struck with the white tooth; he scarce  
 Yet breathes; and Venus hangs in agony there.  
 The dark blood wanders o'er his snowy limbs,  
 His eyes beneath their lids are lustreless,  
 The rose has fled from his wan lips, and there  
 That kiss is dead, which Venus gathers yet.

A deep deep wound Adonis . . .  
 A deeper Venus bears upon her heart.  
 See, his belovèd dogs are gathering round—  
 The Oread nymphs are weeping—  
 Aphrodite  
 With hair unbound is wandering thro' the woods,  
 Wildered, ungirt, unsandalled— the thorns pierce  
 Her hastening feet and drink her sacred blood.  
 Bitterly screaming out she is driven on  
 Thro' the long vales; and her Assyrian boy,  
 Her love, her husband calls— The purple blood  
 From his struck thigh stains her white navel now,  
 Her bosom, and her neck before like snow.

Alas for Cytherea—the Loves mourn—  
 The lovely, the beloved is gone—and now  
 Her sacred beauty vanishes away.  
 For Venus whilst Adonis lived was fair—  
 Alas her loveliness is dead with him.  
 The oaks and mountains cry “Ai! ai! Adonis!”  
 The springs their waters changed to tears and weep—  
 The flowers are withered up with grief . . .

Ai! ai! Adonis is dead  
 Echo resounds Adonis dead.  
 Who will weep not thy dreadful woe, O Venus?

Soon as she saw and knew the mortal wound  
 Of her Adonis— saw the life-blood flow  
 From his fair thigh, now wasting, wailing loud  
 She claspt him and cried “ Stay, Adonis!  
 Stay dearest one, . . .  
 and mix my lips with thine—  
 Wake yet a while Adonis— oh but once,  
 That I may kiss thee now for the last time—  
 But for as long as one short kiss may live—  
 Oh let thy breath flow from thy dying soul  
 Even to my mouth and heart, that I may suck  
 That . . .

#### FRAGMENT OF THE ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF BION.

FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

YE Dorian woods and waves lament aloud,—  
 Augment your tide, O streams, with fruitless tears,  
 For the belovèd Bion is no more.  
 Let every tender herb and plant and flower,  
 From each dejected bud and drooping bloom,  
 Shed dews of liquid sorrow, and with breath  
 Of melancholy sweetness on the wind  
 Diffuse its languid love; let roses blush,  
 Anemones grow paler for the loss  
 Their dells have known; and thou, O hyacinth,  
 Utter thy legend now— yet more, dumb flower,  
 Than “ Ah! alas!”—thine is no common grief—  
 Bion the [sweetest singer] is no more.

FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

Τὰν ἄλα τὰν γλαυκὰν ὅταν ὤνεμος ἀτρέμα  
 βάλλῃ—κ. τ. λ.

WHEN winds that move not its calm surface sweep



The azure sea, I love the land no more;  
 The smiles of the serene and tranquil  
 deep  
 Tempt my unquiet mind. — But when  
 the roar  
 Of Ocean's gray abyss resounds, and  
 foam  
 Gathers upon the sea, and vast waves  
 burst,  
 I turn from the drear aspect to the home  
 Of earth and its deep woods, where in-  
 tersperst,  
 When winds blow loud, pines make  
 sweet melody.  
 Whose house is some lone bark, whose  
 toil the sea,  
 Whose prey the wandering fish, an evil  
 lot  
 Has chosen. — But I my languid limbs  
 will fling  
 Beneath the plane, where the brook's  
 murmuring  
 Moves the calm spirit, but disturbs it  
 not.

## PAN, ECHO, AND THE SATYR.

FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

PAN loved his neighbor Echo — but that  
 child  
 Of Earth and Air pined for the Satyr  
 leaping;  
 The Satyr loved with wasting madness  
 wild  
 The bright nymph Lyda, — and so  
 three went weeping.  
 As Pan loved Echo, Echo loved the  
 Satyr,  
 The Satyra Lyda — and so love con-  
 sumed them. —  
 And thus to each — which was a woful  
 matter —  
 To bear what they inflicted Justice  
 doomed them;  
 For in as much as each might hate the  
 lover,  
 Each loving, so was hated. — Ye that  
 love not  
 Be warned — in thought turn this example  
 over,  
 That when ye love — the like return ye  
 prove not.

FROM VERGIL'S TENTH  
ECLOGUE.

[Vv. 1-26.]

MELODIOUS Arethusa, o'er my verse  
 Shed thou once more the spirit of thy  
 stream:  
 Who denies verse to Gallus? So, when  
 thou  
 Glidest beneath the green and purple  
 gleam  
 Of Syracusan waters, mayst thou flow  
 Unmingled with the bitter Doric dew!  
 Begin, and, whilst the goats are brows-  
 ing now  
 The soft leaves, in our way let us  
 pursue  
 The melancholy loves of Gallus. List!  
 We sing not to the dead: the wild  
 woods knew  
 His sufferings, and their echoes . . .  
 Young Naiads, . . . in what far  
 woodlands wild  
 Wandered ye when unworthy love possest  
 Your Gallus? Not where Pindus is  
 up-piled,  
 Nor where Parnassus' sacred mount, nor  
 where  
 Aonian Aganippe expands . . .  
 The laurels and the myrtle-copses dim.  
 The pine-encircled mountain, Mænalus,  
 The cold crags of Lycæus, weep for him;  
 And Sylvan, crowned with rustic  
 coronals,  
 Came shaking in his speed the budding  
 wands  
 And heavy lilies which he bore: we  
 knew  
 Pan the Arcadian.

What madness is this, Gallus? Thy  
 heart's care  
 With willing steps pursues another there.

## SONNET.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE.

*Dante Alighieri to Guido Cavalcanti.*  
 GUIDO, I would that Lapo, thou, and I  
 Led by some strong enchantment, might  
 ascend

A magic ship, whose charmed sails  
 should fly  
 With winds at will where'er our thoughts  
 might wend,  
 And that no change, nor any evil chance  
 Should mar our joyous voyage; but it  
 might be,  
 That even satiety should still enhance  
 Between our hearts their strict com-  
 munity:  
 And that the bounteous wizard then  
 would place  
 Vanna and Bice and my gentle love,  
 Companions of our wandering, and would  
 grace  
 With passionate talk, wherever we might  
 rove,  
 Our time, and each were as content and  
 free  
 As I believe that thou and I should be.

THE FIRST CANZONE OF THE  
 CONVITO.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE.

I.

YE who intelligent the third heaven  
 move,  
 Hear the discourse which is within my  
 Heart,  
 Which cannot be declared, it seems so  
 new;  
 The Heaven whose course follows your  
 power and art,  
 Oh, gentle creatures that ye are! me  
 drew,  
 And therefore may I dare to speak to  
 you,  
 Even of the life which now I live — and  
 yet  
 I pray that ye will hear me when I  
 cry,  
 And tell of mine own Heart this  
 novelty;  
 How the lamenting Spirit moans in it,  
 And how a voice there murmurs against  
 her  
 Who came on the refulgence of your  
 sphere.

II.

A sweet Thought, which was once the  
 life within  
 This heavy Heart, many a time and oft  
 Went up before our Father's feet, and  
 there  
 It saw a glorious Lady throned aloft;  
 And its sweet talk of her my soul did  
 win,  
 So that I said, "Thither I too will  
 fare."  
 That Thought is fled, and one doth  
 now appear  
 Which tyrannizes me with such fierce  
 stress,  
 That my heart trembles — ye may see  
 it leap —  
 And on another Lady bids me keep  
 Mine eyes, and says — "Who would have  
 blessedness  
 Let him but look upon that Lady's eyes,  
 Let him not fear the agony of sighs."

III.

This lowly Thought, which once would  
 talk with me  
 Of a bright Seraph sitting crowned on  
 high,  
 Found such a cruel foe it died, and so  
 My Spirit wept, the grief is hot even  
 now —  
 And said, "Alas for me! how swift could  
 flee  
 That piteous thought which did my life  
 console!"  
 And the afflicted one questioning  
 Mine eyes, if such a Lady saw they  
 never,  
 And why they would . . .  
 I said: "Beneath those eyes might  
 stand for ever  
 He whom regards must kill  
 with . . .  
 To have known their power stood me in  
 little stead,  
 Those eyes have lookt on me, and I am  
 dead."

IV.

"Thou art not dead, but thou hast  
 wanderèd,

Thou Soul of ours, who thyself dost  
fret,  
A Spirit of gentle Love beside me said;  
For that fair Lady, whom thou dost  
regret,  
Hath so transformed the life which thou  
hast led,  
Thou scornest it, so worthless art thou  
made.  
And see how meek, how pitiful, how  
staid,  
Yet courteous, in her majesty she is.  
And still call thou her 'Woman' in thy  
thought;  
Her whom, if thou thyself deceivest  
not,  
Thou wilt behold deckt with such loveli-  
ness,  
That thou wilt cry '[Love] only Lord, lo  
here  
Thy handmaiden, do what thou wilt with  
her.'''

v.

My Song, I fear that thou wilt find but  
few  
Who fitly shall conceive thy reasoning  
Of such hard matter dost thou en-  
tertain.  
Whence, if by misadventure chance  
should bring  
Thee to base company, as chance may  
do,  
Quite unaware of what thou dost  
contain,  
I prithee comfort thy sweet self  
again,  
My last delight; tell them that they are  
dull,  
And bid them own that thou art beautiful.

MATILDA GATHERING  
FLOWERS.

FROM THE PURGATORIO OF DANTE,  
CANTO XXVIII, 1-51.

AND earnest to explore within — around  
The divine wood, whose thick green  
living woof  
Tempered the young day to the sight —  
I wound

Up the green slope, beneath the forest's  
roof,  
With slow soft steps leaving the moun-  
tain's steep,  
And sought those inmost labyrinths,  
motion-proof  
Against the air, that in that stillness deep  
And solemn, struck upon my forehead  
bare,  
The slow soft stroke of a continuous . . .  
In which the leaves tremblingly  
were  
All bent towards that part where earliest  
The sacred hill obscures the morning air.  
Yet were they not so shaken from the  
rest,  
But that the birds, perchd on the utmost  
spray,  
Incessantly renewing their blithe quest,  
With perfect joy received the early day,  
Singing within the glancing leaves, whose  
sound  
Kept a low burden to their roundelay,  
Such as from bough to bough gathers  
around  
The pine forest on bleak Chiassi's shore,  
When Æolus Sirocco has unbound.  
My slow steps had already borne me o'er  
Such space within the antique wood,  
that I  
Perceived not where I entered any more,  
When, lo! a stream whose little waves  
went by,  
Bending towards the left thro' grass that  
grew  
Upon its bank, impeded suddenly  
My going on. Water of purest hue  
On earth, would appear turbid and im-  
pure  
Compared with this, whose unconcealing  
dew,  
Dark, dark, yet clear, moved under the  
obscure  
Eternal shades, whose interwoven looms  
The rays of moon or sunlight ne'er en-  
dure.

I moved not with my feet, but mid the glooms  
 Pierced with my charmed eye contemplating  
 The mighty multitude of fresh May blooms

Which starred that night, when, even as a thing  
 That suddenly for blank astonishment  
 Charms every sense, and' makes all thought take wing,

A solitary woman! and she went  
 Singing and gathering flower after flower,  
 With which her way was painted and besprent.

Bright lady, who, if looks had ever power  
 To bear true witness of the heart within,  
 Dost bask under the beams of love, come lower

Towards this bank. I prithee let me win  
 This much of thee, to come, that I may hear  
 Thy song; like Proserpine, in Enna's glen,

Thou seemest to my fancy, singing here  
 And gathering flowers, as that fair maiden when  
 She lost the spring, and Ceres her, more dear.

## FRAGMENT

ADAPTED FROM THE VITA NUOVA  
 OF DANTE.

WHAT Mary is when she a little smiles  
 I cannot even tell or call to mind,  
 It is a miracle, so new, so rare.

## SONNET

FROM THE ITALIAN OF CAVALCANTI.

GUIDO CAVALCANTI TO DANTE  
 ALIGHIERI.

RETURNING from its daily quest, my Spirit

Changed thoughts and vile in thee doth weep to find:

It grieves me that thy mild and gentle mind

Those ample virtues which it did inherit  
 Has lost. Once thou didst loathe the multitude

Of blind and madding men — I then loved thee —

I loved thy lofty songs and that sweet mood

When thou wert faithful to thyself and me.

I dare not now thro' thy degraded state  
 Own the delight thy strains inspire — in vain

I seek what once thou wert — we can not meet

As we were wont. Again and yet again  
 Ponder my words: so the false Spirit shall fly

And leave to thee thy true integrity.

SCENES FROM THE MAGICO  
 PRODIGIOSO.

FROM THE SPANISH OF CALDERON.

SCENE I. — *Enter* CYPRIAN, *dressed as a Student*; CLARIN and MOSCON *as poor Scholars, with books.*

*Cyprian.* In the sweet solitude of this calm place,

This intricate wild wilderness of trees  
 And flowers and undergrowth of odorous plants,

Leave me; the books you brought out of the house

To me are ever best society.

And while with glorious festival and song,  
 Antioch now celebrates the consecration  
 Of a proud temple to great Jupiter,  
 And bears his image in loud jubilee

To its new shrine, I would consume what still

Lives of the dying day, in studious thought,

Far from the throng and turmoil. You, my friends,

Go, and enjoy the festival; it will  
 Be worth your pains. You may return for me

When the sun seeks its grave among the  
billows,  
Which among dim gray clouds on the  
horizon,  
Dance like white plumes upon a hearse;  
— and here  
I shall expect you.

*Moscon.* I can not bring my mind,  
Great as my haste to see the festival  
Certainly is, to leave you, Sir, without  
Just saying some three or four thousand  
words.

How is it possible that on a day  
Of such festivity, you can be content  
To come forth to a solitary country  
With three or four old books, and turn  
your back  
On all this mirth?

*Clarín.* My master's in the right;  
There is not anything more tiresome  
Than a procession day, with troops, and  
priests,  
And dances, and all that.

*Moscon.* From first to last,  
*Clarín,* you are a temporising flatterer:  
You praise not what you feel but what  
he does; —

Toad-eater!

*Clarín.* You lie — under a  
mistake —

For this is the most civil sort of lie  
That can be given to a man's face. I  
now

Say what I think.

*Cyprian.* Enough, you foolish  
fellows!

Pufft up with your own doting ignorance,  
You always take the two sides of one  
question.

Now go; and as I said, return for me  
When night falls, veiling in its shadows  
wide

This glorious fabric of the universe.

*Moscon.* How happens it, altho' you  
can maintain

The folly of enjoying festivals,

That yet you go there?

*Clarín.* Nay, the consequence  
Is clear: — who ever did what he advises  
Others to do? —

*Moscon.* Would that my feet  
were wings,

So would I fly to Livia.

[*Exit.*]

*Clarín.* To speak truth,  
Livia is she who has surprised my  
heart;  
But he is more than half-way there. —  
Soho!

Livia, I come; good sport, Livia, soho!  
[*Exit.*]

*Cyprian.* Now, since I am alone,  
let me examine  
The question which has long disturbed  
my mind

With doubt, since first I read in Plinius  
The words of mystic import and deep  
sense

In which he defines God. My intellect  
Can find no God with whom these marks  
and signs

Fitly agree. It is a hidden truth  
Which I must fathom.

[*CYPRIAN reads: the DÆMON, dressed  
in a Court dress, enters.*]

*Dæmon.* Search even as thou  
wilt,

But thou shalt never find what I can  
hide.

*Cyprian.* What noise is that among  
the boughs? Who moves?

What art thou? —

*Dæmon.* 'T is a foreign gentle-  
man.

Even from this morning I have lost my  
way

In this wild place; and my poor horse at  
last,

Quite overcome, has stretcht himself  
upon

The enamelled tapestry of this mossy  
mountain,

And feeds and rests at the same time.  
I was

Upon my way to Antioch upon business  
Of some importance, but wrapt up in  
cares

(Who is exempt from this inheritance?)  
I parted from my company, and lost

My way, and lost my servants and my  
comrades.

*Cyprian.* 'T is singular that even  
within the sight

Of the high towers of Antioch you could  
lose

Your way. Of all the avenues and green  
paths

Of this wild wood there is not one but  
leads,

As to its centre, to the walls of Antioch;  
Take which you will you cannot miss  
your road.

*Dæmon.* And such is ignorance!  
Even in the sight

Of knowledge, it can draw no profit  
from it,

But as it still is early, and as I  
Have no acquaintances in Antioch,  
Being a stranger there, I will even wait  
The few surviving hours of the day,  
Until the night shall conquer it. I see  
Both by your dress and by the books in  
which

You find delight and company, that you  
Are a great student; — for my part, I  
feel

Much sympathy in such pursuits.

*Cyprian.* Have you  
Studied much?

*Dæmon.* No, — and yet I  
know enough

Not to be wholly ignorant.

*Cyprian.* Pray, Sir,  
What science may you know? —

*Dæmon.* Many.

*Cyprian.* Alas!  
Much pains must we expend on one  
alone,

And even then attain it not; — but you  
Have the presumption to assert that you  
Know many without study.

*Dæmon.* And with truth.  
For in the country whence I come the  
sciences

Require no learning, — they are known.

*Cyprian.* Oh would  
I were of that bright country! for in this  
The more we study, we the more dis-  
cover

Our ignorance.

*Dæmon.* It is so true, that I  
Had so much arrogance as to oppose  
The chair of the most high Professor-  
ship,

And obtained many votes, and tho' I  
lost,

The attempt was still more glorious,  
than the failure

Could be dishonorable. If you believe  
not,

Let us refer it to dispute respecting  
That which you know the best, and  
altho' I

Know not the opinion you maintain, and  
tho'

It be the true one, I will take the con-  
trary.

*Cyprian.* The offer gives me plea-  
sure. I am now

Debating with myself upon a passage  
Of Plinius, and my mind is rackt with  
doubt

To understand and know who is the  
God

Of whom he speaks.

*Dæmon.* It is a passage, if  
I recollect it right, coucht in these  
words:

“God is one supreme goodness, one  
pure essence,  
One substance, and one sense, all sight,  
all hands.

*Cyprian.* 'T is true.

*Dæmon.* What difficulty find  
you here?

*Cyprian.* I do not recognize among  
the Gods

The God defined by Plinius; if he must  
Be supreme goodness, even Jupiter  
Is not supremely good; because we see  
His deeds are evil, and his attributes  
Tainted with mortal weakness; in what  
manner

Can supreme goodness be consistent  
with

The passions of humanity?

*Dæmon.* The wisdom  
Of the old world maskt with the names  
of Gods

The attributes of Nature and of Man;  
A sort of popular philosophy.

*Cyprian.* This reply will not satisfy  
me, for

Such awe is due to the high name of  
God

That ill should never be imputed. Then  
Examining the question with more care,  
It follows, that the Gods would always  
will

That which is best, were they supremely  
good.

How then does one will one thing, one  
another?

And that you may not say that I allege  
Poetical or philosophic learning:—  
Consider the ambiguous responses  
Of their oracular statues; from two  
shrines

Two armies shall obtain the assurance of  
One victory. Is it not indisputable  
That two contending wills can never  
lead

To the same end? And being opposite,  
If one be good is not the other evil?  
Evil in God is inconceivable;  
But supreme goodness fails among the  
Gods

Without their union.

*Demon.* I deny your major.  
These responses are means towards some  
end

Unfathomed by our intellectual beam.  
They are the work of providence, and  
more

The battle's loss may profit those who  
lose,

Than victory advantage those who win.

*Cyprian.* That I admit; and yet that  
God should not

(Falsehood is incompatible with deity)  
Assure the victory; it would be enough  
To have permitted the defeat. If God  
Be all sight, — God, who had beheld the  
truth,

Would not have given assurance of an  
end

Never to be accomplisht: thus, altho'  
The Deity may according to his attributes  
Be well distinguisht into persons, yet  
Even in the minutest circumstance  
His essence must be one.

*Demon.* To attain the end  
The affections of the actors in the scene  
Must have been thus influenced by his  
voice.

*Cyprian.* But for a purpose thus  
subordinate

He might have employed Genii, good or  
evil, —

A sort of spirits called so by the learned,  
Who roam about inspiring good or evil,  
And from whose influence and existence  
we

May well infer our immortality.  
Thus God might easily, without descent  
To a gross falsehood in his proper person,

Have moved the affections by this media-  
tion

To the just point.

*Demon.* These trifling con-  
tradictions

Do not suffice to impugn the unity  
Of the high Gods; in things of great  
importance

They still appear unanimous; consider  
That glorious fabric man, — his work-  
manship

Is stamp't with one conception.

*Cyprian.* Who made man  
Must have, methinks, the advantage of  
the others.

If they are equal, might they not have  
risen

In opposition to the work, and being  
All hands, according to our author here,  
Have still destroyed even as the other  
made?

If equal in their power, unequal only

In opportunity, which of the two

Will remain conqueror?

*Demon.* On impossible  
And false hypothesis there can be built  
No argument. Say, what do you infer  
From this?

*Cyprian.* That there must be a  
mighty God

Of supreme goodness and of highest  
grace,

All sight, all hands, all truth, infallible,  
Without an equal and without a rival,  
The cause of all things and the effect of  
nothing,

One power, one will, one substance, and  
one essence.

And in whatever persons, one or two,  
His attributes may be distinguisht, one  
Sovereign power, one solitary essence,  
One cause of all cause. [*They rise.*]

*Demon.* How can I impugn  
So clear a consequence?

*Cyprian.* Do you regret  
My victory?

*Demon.* Who but regrets a check  
In rivalry of wit? I could reply  
And urge new difficulties, but will now  
Depart, for I hear steps of men ap-  
proaching,

And it is time that I should now pursue  
My journey to the city.

*Cyprian.* Go in peace!  
*Dæmon.* Remain in peace! — Since  
 thus it profits him  
 To study, I will wrap his senses up  
 In sweet oblivion of all thought, but of  
 A piece of excellent beauty; and as I  
 Have power given me to wage enmity  
 Against Justina's soul, I will extract  
 From one effect two vengeance.

[*Aside and exit.*

*Cyprian.* I never  
 Met a more learned person. Let me now  
 Revolve this doubt again with careful  
 mind. [He reads.

*FLORO and LELIO enter.*

*Lelio.* Here stop. These toppling  
 rocks and tangled boughs,  
 Impenetrable by the noonday beam,  
 Shall be sole witnesses of what we —

*Floro.* Draw!  
 If there were words, here is the place for  
 deeds.

*Lelio.* Thou needest not instruct me;  
 well I know  
 That in the field, the silent tongue of  
 steel

Speaks thus, — [They fight.

*Cyprian.* Ha! what is this?  
*Lelio.* — Floro,  
 Be it enough that Cyprian stands between  
 you,  
 Altho' unarmed.

*Lelio.* Whence comest thou, to  
 stand

Between me and my vengeance!  
*Floro.* From what rocks  
 And desert cells?

*Enter MOSCON and CLARIN.*

*Moscon.* Run! run! for  
 where we left  
 My master, I now hear the clash of  
 swords.

*Clarín.* I never run to approach  
 things of this sort,  
 But only to avoid them. Sir! Cyprian!  
 sir!

*Cyprian.* Be silent, fellows! What!  
 two friends who are  
 In blood and fame the eyes and hope of  
 Antioch,  
 One of the noble race of the Colalti,  
 The other son o' the Governor, adventure

And cast away, on some slight cause no  
 doubt,

Two lives, the honor of their country?

*Lelio.* Cyprian!  
 Altho' my high respect towards your  
 person

Holds now my sword suspended, thou  
 canst not

Restore it to the slumber of the scabbard:  
 Thou knowest more of science than the  
 duel;

For when two men of honor take the field,  
 No counsel nor respect can make them  
 friends

But one must die in the dispute.

*Floro.* I pray  
 That you depart hence with your people,  
 and

Leave us to finish what we have begun  
 Without advantage. —

*Cyprian.* Tho' you may  
 imagine

That I know little of the laws of duel,  
 Which vanity and valor instituted,  
 You are in error. By my birth I am  
 Held no less than yourselves to know  
 the limits

Of honor and of infamy, nor has study  
 Quencht the free spirit which first ordered  
 them;

And thus to me, as one well experienced  
 In the false quicksands of the sea of  
 honor,

You may refer the merits of the case;  
 And if I should perceive in your relation

That either has the right to satisfaction  
 From the other, I give you my word of  
 honor

To leave you.

*Lelio.* Under this condition then  
 I will relate the cause, and you will cede  
 And must confess the impossibility  
 Of compromise; for the same lady is  
 Beloved by Floro and myself.

*Floro.* It seems  
 Much to me that the light of day should  
 look

Upon that idol of my heart — but he —  
 Leave us to fight, according to thy word.

*Cyprian.* Permit one question further:  
 is the lady

Impossible to hope or not?



*Lelio.* She is  
So excellent, that if the light of day  
Should excite Floro's jealousy, it were  
Without just cause, for even the light of  
day

Trembles to gaze on her.

*Cyprian.* Would you for your  
Part, marry her?

*Floro.* Such is my confidence.

*Cyprian.* And you?

*Lelio.* Oh! would that I  
could lift my hope

So high, for tho' she is extremely poor,  
Her virtue is her dowry.

*Cyprian.* And if you both  
Would marry her, is it not weak and  
vain,

Culpable and unworthy, thus beforehand  
To slur her honor? What would the  
world say

If one should slay the other, and if she  
Should afterwards espouse the murderer?

[*The rivals agree to refer their quarrel  
to CYPRIAN; who in consequence visits  
JUSTINA, and becomes enamoured of  
her: she disdains him, and he retires  
to a solitary sea-shore.*

## SCENE II.

*Cyprian.*

O memory! permit it not  
That the tyrant of my thought  
Be another soul that still  
Holds dominion o'er the will,  
That would refuse, but can no more,  
To bend, to tremble, and adore.  
Vain idolatry!—I saw,

And gazing, became blind with error;  
Weak ambition, which the awe  
Of her presence bound to terror!

So beautiful she was—and I,  
Between my love and jealousy,  
Am so convulst with hope and fear,  
Unworthy as it may appear;—  
So bitter is the life I live,  
That, hear me, Hell! I now would give

To thy most detested spirit  
My soul, for ever to inherit,  
To suffer punishment and pine,  
So this woman may be mine.

Hear'st thou, Hell! dost thou reject it?  
My soul is offered!

*Dæmon (unseen).* I accept it.

[*Tempest, with thunder and lightning.*

*Cyprian.*

What is this? ye heavens for ever pure,  
At once intensely radiant and obscure!

Athwart the ethereal halls

The lightning's arrow and the thunder-  
balls

The day affright.

As from the horizon round,

Burst with earthquake sound,

In mighty torrents the electric foun-  
tains;—

Clouds quench the sun, and thunder-  
smoke

Strangles the air, and fire eclipses  
heaven.

Philosophy, thou canst not even  
Compel their causes underneath thy yoke;  
From yonder clouds even to the waves  
below

The fragments of a single ruin choke  
Imagination's flight;

For, on flakes of surge, like feathers  
light,

The ashes of the desolation cast

Upon the gloomy blast,

Tell of the footsteps of the storm.

And nearer see the melancholy form  
Of a great ship, the outcast of the sea,  
Drives miserably!

And it must fly the pity of the port,  
Or perish, and its last and sole resort  
Is its own raging enemy.

The terror of the thrilling cry

Was a fatal prophecy

Of coming death, who hovers now

Upon that shattered prow,

That they who die not may be dying  
still.

And not alone the insane elements  
Are populous with wild portents,  
But that sad ship is as a miracle

Of sudden ruin, for it drives so fast  
It seems as if it had arrayed its form  
With the headlong storm.

It strikes—I almost feel the shock,—  
It stumbles on a jagged rock,—

Sparkles of blood on the white foam  
are cast.

[*A tempest.*

*All exclaim within.* We are all lost.  
*Dæmon (within).* Now from this  
 plank will I  
 Pass to the land and thus fulfil my  
 scheme.

*Cyprian.*

As in contempt of the elemental rage  
 A man comes forth in safety, while  
 the ship's

Great form is in a watery eclipse  
 Obliterated from the Ocean's page,  
 And round its wreck the huge sea-  
 monsters sit,

A horrid conclave, and the whistling  
 wave

Is heapt over its carcase, like a grave.

*The DÆMON enters as escaped from  
 the sea.*

*Dæmon (aside).* It was essential to  
 my purposes

To wake a tumult on the sapphire ocean,  
 That in this unknown form I might at  
 length

Wipe out the blot of the discomfiture  
 Sustained upon the mountain, and assail  
 With a new war the soul of Cyprian,  
 Forging the instruments of his destruc-  
 tion

Even from his love and from his wisdom.  
 — Oh!

Beloved earth, dear mother, in thy  
 bosom

I seek a refuge from the monster who  
 Precipitates itself upon me.

*Cyprian.* Friend,  
 Collect thyself; and be the memory  
 Of thy late suffering, and thy greatest  
 sorrow

But as a shadow of the past, — for nothing  
 Beneath the circle of the moon, but  
 flows

And changes, and can never know re-  
 pose.

*Dæmon.* And who art thou, before  
 whose feet my fate

Has prostrated me?

*Cyprian.* One who, moved  
 with pity,

Would soothe its stings.

*Dæmon.* Oh, that can never be!  
 No solace can my lasting sorrows find.

*Cyprian.* Wherefore?

*Dæmon.* Because my happi-  
 ness is lost.

Yet I lament what has long ceast to be  
 The object of desire or memory,  
 And my life is not life.

*Cyprian.* Now, since the fury  
 Of this earthquaking hurricane is still,  
 And the crystalline heaven has reas-  
 sumed

Its windless calm so quickly, that it  
 seems

As if its heavy wrath had been awak-  
 ened

Only to overwhelm that vessel, — speak,  
 Who art thou, and whence comest thou?

*Dæmon.* Far more  
 My coming hither cost, than thou hast  
 seen

Or I can tell. Among my misadventures  
 This shipwreck is the least. Wilt thou  
 hear?

*Cyprian.* Speak.

*Dæmon.* Since thou desirest, I will  
 then unveil

Myself to thee; — for in myself I am  
 A world of happiness and misery;  
 This I have lost, and that I must lament  
 Forever. In my attributes I stood

So high and so heroically great,  
 In lineage so supreme, and with a genius  
 Which penetrated with a glance the world  
 Beneath my feet, that won by my high  
 merit

A king — whom I may call the king of  
 kings,

Because all others tremble in their pride  
 Before the terrors of his countenance,  
 In his high palace roof with brightest  
 gems

Of living light — call them the stars of  
 Heaven —

Named me his counsellor. But the high  
 praise

Stung me with pride and envy, and I  
 rose

In mighty competition, to ascend  
 His seat and place my foot triumphantly  
 Upon his subject thrones. Chastised, I  
 know

The depth to which ambition falls; too  
 mad

Was the attempt, and yet more mad  
 were now

Repentance of the irrevocable deed:—  
 Therefore I chose this ruin with the  
 glory  
 Of not to be subdued, before the shame  
 Of reconciling me with him who reigns  
 By coward cession. — Nor was I alone,  
 Nor am I now, nor shall I be alone;  
 And there was hope, and there may still  
 be hope,  
 For many suffrages among his vassals  
 Hailed me their lord and king, and  
 many still  
 Are mine, and many more, perchance  
 shall be.  
 Thus vanquisht, tho' in fact victori-  
 ous,  
 I left his seat of empire, from mine eye  
 Shooting forth poisonous lightning, while  
 my words  
 With inauspicious thunderings shook  
 Heaven,  
 Proclaiming vengeance, public as my  
 wrong,  
 And imprecating on his prostrate slaves  
 Rapine, and death, and outrage. Then  
 I sailed  
 Over the mighty fabric of the world,  
 A pirate ambusht in its pathless sands,  
 A lynx croucht watchfully among its  
 caves  
 And craggy shores; and I have wandered  
 over  
 The expanse of these wild wildernesses  
 In this great ship, whose bulk is now  
 dissolved  
 In the light breathings of the invisible  
 wind,  
 And which the sea has made a dustless  
 ruin,  
 Seeking ever a mountain, thro' whose  
 forests  
 I seek a man whom I must now compel  
 To keep his word with me. I came  
 arrayed  
 In tempest, and altho' my power could  
 well  
 Bridle the forest winds in their career,  
 For other causes I forbore to soothe  
 Their fury to Favonian gentleness;  
 I could and would not; (thus I wake in  
 him [Aside.  
 A love of magic art). Let not this  
 tempest,

Nor the succeeding calm excite thy  
 wonder;  
 For by my art the sun would turn as  
 pale  
 As his weak sister with unwonted fear.  
 And in my wisdom are the orbs of  
 Heaven  
 Written as in a record; I have pierced  
 The flaming circles of their wondrous  
 spheres  
 And know them as thou knowest every  
 corner  
 Of this dim spot. Let it not seem to  
 thee  
 That I boast vainly; wouldst thou that I  
 work  
 A charm over this waste and savage  
 wood,  
 This Babylon of crags and aged trees,  
 Filling its leafy coverts with a horror  
 Thrilling and strange? I am the friend-  
 less guest  
 Of these wild oaks and pines — and as  
 from thee  
 I have received the hospitality  
 Of this rude place, I offer thee the fruit  
 Of years of toil in recompense; whate'er  
 Thy wildest dream presented to thy  
 thought  
 As object of desire, that shall be thine.

. . . . .

And thenceforth shall so firm an amity  
 'Twixt thee and me be, that neither  
 fortune,  
 The monstrous phantom which pursues  
 success,  
 That careful miser, that free prodigal,  
 Who ever alternates with changeful  
 hand,  
 Evil and good, reproach and fame; nor  
 Time,  
 That lodestar of the ages, to whose  
 beam  
 The wingèd years speed o'er the intervals  
 Of their unequal revolutions; nor  
 Heaven itself, whose beautiful bright  
 stars  
 Rule and adorn the world, can ever  
 make  
 The least division between thee and me,  
 Since now I find a refuge in thy favor.

SCENE III. — *The DÆMON tempts JUSTINA, who is a Christian.*

*Dæmon.*

Abyss of Hell! I call on thee,  
Thou wild misrule of thine own anarchy!  
From thy prison-house set free  
The spirits of voluptuous death,  
That with their mighty breath  
They may destroy a world of virgin  
thoughts;

Let her chaste mind with fancies thick  
as notes

Be peopled from thy shadowy deep,  
Till her guiltless fantasy  
Full to overflowing be!

And with sweetest harmony  
Let birds, and flowers, and leaves and  
all things move

To love, only to love.

Let nothing meet her eyes

But signs of Love's soft victories;

Let nothing meet her ear

But sounds of Love's sweet sorrow,

So that from faith no succor she may  
borrow,

But, guided by my spirit blind  
And in a magic snare entwined,

She may now seek Cyprian.

Begin, while I in silence bind

My voice, when thy sweet song thou  
hast began.

*A Voice (within).*

What is the glory far above

All else in human life!

*All.*

Love! love!

[*While these words are sung the DÆMON goes out at one door, and JUSTINA enters at another.*

*The First Voice.*

There is no form in which the fire

Of love its traces has impress not.

Man lives far more in love's desire

Than by life's breath, soon possess  
not.

If all that lives must love or die,  
All shapes on earth, or sea, or sky,  
With one consent to Heaven cry

That the glory far above  
All else in life is —

*All.*

Love! oh love!

*Justina.*

Thou melancholy thought which art  
So flattering and so sweet, to thee  
When did I give the liberty

Thus to afflict my heart?

What is the cause of this new power

Which doth my fevered being move,  
Momently raging more and more?

What subtle pain is kindled now

Which from my heart doth overflow  
Into my senses? —

*All.*

Love! oh love!

*Justina.*

'T is that enamoured nightingale

Who gives me the reply;

He ever tells the same soft tale

Of passion and of constancy

To his mate who rapt and fond  
Listening sits a bough beyond.

Be silent, Nightingale — no more

Make me think, in hearing thee

Thus tenderly thy love deplore,

If a bird can feel his so,

What a man would feel for me.

And, voluptuous Vine, O thou  
Who seekest most when least pursuing, —

To the trunk thou interlacest

Art the verdure which embracest,  
And the weight which is its ruin, —

No more with green embraces, Vine,

Make me think on what thou lovest, —

For whilst thus thy boughs entwine,

I fear lest thou should'st teach me,  
sophist,

How arms might be entangled too.

Light-enchanted Sunflower, thou

Who gazest ever true and tender

On the sun's revolving splendor!

Follow not his faithless glance

With thy faded countenance,

Nor teach my beating heart to fear,

If leaves can mourn without a tear,

How must eyes weep! O Nightingale,

Cease from thy enamoured tale, —

Leafy Vine, unwreath thy bower,  
Restless Sunflower, cease to move, —  
Or tell me all, what poisonous power  
Ye use against me —

*All.*

Love! love! love!

*Justina.* It cannot be! — Whom  
have I ever loved?

Trophies of my oblivion and disdain,  
Floro and Lelio did I not reject?  
And Cyprian?

[*She becomes troubled at the name of  
Cyprian.*

Did I not requite him  
With such severity, that he has fled  
Where none has ever heard of him  
again? —

Alas! I now begin to fear that this  
May be the occasion whence desire grows  
bold,

As if there were no danger. From the  
moment

That I pronounced to my own listening  
heart,

Cyprian is absent, O me miserable!

I know not what I feel! [*More calmly.*  
It must be pity

To think that such a man, whom all the  
world

Admired, should be forgot by all the  
world,

And I the cause.

[*She again becomes troubled.*

And yet if it were pity,  
Florio and Lelio might have equal share,  
For they are both imprisoned for my  
sake.

(*Calmly.*) Alas! what reasonings are  
these? it is

Enough I pity him, and that, in vain,  
Without this ceremonious subtlety.

And woe is me! I know not where to  
find him now,

Even should I seek him thro' this wide  
world.

*Enter DÆMON.*

*Dæmon.* Follow, and I will lead thee  
where he is.

*Justina.* And who art thou, who hast  
found entrance hither,  
Into my chamber thro' the doors and  
locks?

Art thou a monstrous shadow which my  
madness

Has formed in the idle air?

*Dæmon.* No. I am one  
Called by the thought which tyrannizes  
thee

From his eternal dwelling; who this  
day

Is pledged to bear thee unto Cyprian.

*Justina.* So shall thy promise fail.  
This agony

Of passion which afflicts my heart and  
soul

May sweep imagination in its storm;

The will is firm.

*Dæmon.* Already half is done  
In the imagination of an act.

The sin incurred, the pleasure then  
remains;

Let not the will stop half-way on the  
road.

*Justina.* I will not be discouraged,  
nor despair,

Altho' I thought it, and altho' 't is true  
That thought is but a prelude to the  
deed:—

Thought is not in my power, but action  
is:

I will not move my foot to follow thee.

*Dæmon.* But a far mightier wisdom  
than thine own

Exerts itself within thee, with such  
power

Compelling thee to that which it in-  
clines

That it shall force thy step; how wilt  
thou then

Resist, *Justina*?

*Justina.* By my free-will.

*Dæmon.* I

Must force thy will.

*Justina.* It is invincible;  
It were not free if thou hadst power  
upon it.

[*He draws but cannot move her.*

*Dæmon.* Come, where a pleasure  
waits thee.

*Justina.* It were bought  
Too dear.

*Dæmon.* 'T will soothe thy heart  
to softest peace.

*Justina.* 'T is dread captivity.

*Dæmon.* 'T is joy, 't is glory.

*Justina.* 'T is shame, 't is torment,  
't is despair.

*Dæmon.* But how  
Canst thou defend thyself from that or  
me,  
If my power drags thee onward?

*Justina.* My defence  
Consists in God.

[*He vainly endeavors to force her,  
and at last releases her.*]

*Dæmon.* Woman, thou hast  
subdued me,  
Only by not owning thyself subdued.  
But since thou thus findest defence in  
God,

I will assume a feignèd form, and thus  
Make thee a victim of my baffled rage.  
For I will mask a spirit in thy form  
Who will betray thy name to infamy,  
And doubly shall I triumph in thy loss,  
First by dishonoring thee, and then by  
turning  
False pleasure to true ignominy.

[*Exit.*]

*Justina.* I  
Appeal to Heaven against thee; so that  
Heaven

May scatter thy delusions, and the blot  
Upon my fame vanish in idle thought,  
Even as flame dies in the envious air,  
And as the floweret wanes at morning  
frost,

And thou shouldst never — But, alas! to  
whom

Do I still speak? — Did not a man but  
now

Stand here before me? — No, I am alone,  
And yet I saw him. Is he gone so  
quickly?

Or can the heated mind engender shapes  
From its own fear? Some terrible and  
strange

Peril is near. *Lisander!* father! lord!  
*Livia!* —

*Enter LISANDER and LIVIA.*

*Lisander.* Oh my daughter!  
What?

*Livia.* What?

*Justina.* Saw you  
A man go forth from my apartment  
now? —

I scarce contain myself!

*Lisander.* A man here!

*Justina.* Have you not seen him?

*Livia.* No, Lady.

*Justina.* I saw him.

*Lisander.* 'T is impossible; the  
doors

Which led to this apartment were all  
lockt.

*Livia (aside).* I dare say it was Mos-  
con whom she saw,

For he was lockt up in my room.

*Lisander.* It must  
Have been some image of thy fantasy.  
Such melancholy as thou feedest is  
Skillful in forming such in the vain air  
Out of the motes and atoms of the  
day.

*Livia.* My master's in the right.

*Justina.* Oh would it were  
Delusion; but I fear some greater ill.  
I feel as if out of my bleeding bosom  
My heart was torn in fragments; ay,  
Some mortal spell is wrought against my  
frame;

So potent was the charm, that had not  
God

Shielded my humble innocence from  
wrong,

I should have sought my sorrow and my  
shame

With willing steps. — *Livia,* quick, bring  
my cloak,

For I must seek refuge from these ex-  
tremes

Even in the temple of the highest God  
Where secretly the faithful worship.

*Livia.* Here.

*Justina (putting on her cloak).* In  
this, as in a shroud of snow, may I  
Quench the consuming fire in which  
I burn,

Wasting away!

*Lisander.* And I will go with  
thee.

*Livia.* When once I see them safe  
out of the house

I shall breathe freely.

*Justina.* So do I confide  
In thy just favor, Heaven!

*Lisander.* Let us go.

*Justina.* Thine is the cause, great  
God! turn for my sake,

And for thine own, mercifully to me!

SCENES FROM THE FAUST OF  
GOETHE.

## SCENE I.—PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.

*The LORD and the Host of Heaven.**Enter three Archangels.**Raphael.*

THE sun makes music as of old  
 Amid the rival spheres of Heaven,  
 On its predestined circle rolled  
 With thunder speed: the Angels even  
 Draw strength from gazing on its glance,  
 Though none its meaning fathom  
 may:—  
 The world's unwithered countenance  
 Is bright as at creation's day.

*Gabriel.*

And swift and swift, with rapid light-  
 ness,  
 The adorned Earth spins silently,  
 Alternating Elysian brightness  
 With deep and dreadful night; the sea  
 Foams in broad billows from the deep  
 Up to the rocks, and rocks and ocean,  
 Onward, with spheres which never sleep,  
 Are hurried in eternal motion.

*Michael.*

And tempests in contention roar  
 From land to sea, from sea to land;  
 And, raging, weave a chain of power,  
 Which girds the earth, as with a  
 band.—  
 A flashing desolation there,  
 Flames before the thunder's way;  
 But thy servants, Lord, reverse  
 The gentle changes of thy day.

*Chorus of the Three.*

The Angels draw strength from thy  
 glance,  
 Though no one comprehend thee  
 may;—

Thy world's unwithered countenance  
 Is bright as on creation's day.<sup>1</sup>

*Enter MEPHISTOPHELES.*

*Mephistopheles.* As thou, O Lord,  
 once more art kind enough  
 To interest thyself in our affairs—  
 And ask, "How goes it with you there  
 below?"  
 And as indulgently at other times  
 Thou tookest not my visits in ill part,  
 Thou seest me here once more among  
 thy household.  
 Tho' I should scandalize this company,  
 You will excuse me if I do not talk  
 In the high style which they think fash-  
 ionable;  
 My pathos certainly would make you  
 laugh too,  
 Had you not long since given over  
 laughing.  
 Nothing know I to say of suns and  
 worlds;

<sup>1</sup> *Raphael.* The sun sounds, according to an-  
 cient custom,  
 In the song of emulation of his brother-spheres.  
 And its fore-written circle  
 Fulfils with a step of thunder.  
 Its countenance gives the Angels strength  
 Though no one can fathom it.  
 The incredible high works  
 Are excellent as at the first day.

*Gabriel.* And swift, and inconceivably swift  
 The adornment of earth winds itself round,  
 And exchanges Paradise-clearness  
 With deep dreadful night.

The sea foams in broad waves  
 From its deep bottom, up to the rocks,  
 And rocks and sea are torn on together  
 In the eternal swift course of the spheres.

*Michael.* And storms roar in emulation  
 From sea to land, from land to sea,  
 And make, raging, a chain  
 Of deepest operation round about.  
 There flames a flashing destruction  
 Before the path of the thunderbolt.  
 But thy servants, Lord, reverse  
 The gentle alternations of thy day.

*Chorus.* Thy countenance gives the Angels  
 strength,  
 Though none can comprehend thee:  
 And all thy lofty works  
 Are excellent as at the first day.

Such is a literal translation of this astonishing  
 chorus; it is impossible to represent in another  
 language the melody of the versification; even  
 the volatile strength and delicacy of the ideas  
 escape in the crucible of translation, and the  
 reader is surprised to find a *caput mortuum*.

I observe only how men plague themselves;—

The little god o' the world keeps the same stamp,

As wonderful as on creation's day:—

A little better would he live, hadst thou  
Not given him a glimpse of Heaven's light

Which he calls reason, and employs it only

To live more beastly than any beast.

With reverence to your Lordship be it spoken,

He's like one of those long-legged grasshoppers,

Who flits and jumps about, and sings for ever

The same old song i' the grass. There let him lie,

Burying his nose in every heap of dung.

*The Lord.* Have you no more to say? Do you come here

Always to scold, and cavil, and complain?

Seems nothing ever right to you on earth?

*Mephistopheles.* No, Lord! I find all there, as ever, bad at best.

Even I am sorry for man's days of sorrow;

I could myself almost give up the pleasure

Of plaguing the poor things.

*The Lord.* Knowest thou Faust!

*Mephistopheles.* The Doctor?

*The Lord.* Ay; my servant Faust.

*Mephistopheles.* In truth

He serves you in a fashion quite his own;  
And the fool's meat and drink are not of earth.

His aspirations bear him on so far

That he is half aware of his own folly,

For he demands from Heaven its fairest star,

And from the earth the highest joy it bears,

Yet all things far, and all things near, are vain

To calm the deep emotions of his breast.

*The Lord.* Tho' he now serves me in a cloud of error,

I will soon lead him forth to the clear day.

When trees look green full well the gardener knows

That fruits and blooms will deck the coming year.

*Mephistopheles.* What will you bet — now I am sure of winning —

Only, observe you give me full permission

To lead him softly on my path.

*The Lord.* As long as he shall live upon the earth, so long

Is nothing unto thee forbidden — Man must err till he has ceased to struggle.

*Mephistopheles.* Thanks.

And that is all I ask; for willingly I never make acquaintance with the dead.

The full fresh cheeks of youth are food for me,

And if a corpse knocks, I am not at home.

For I am like a cat — I like to play

A little with the mouse before I eat it.

*The Lord.* Well, well! it is permitted thee. Draw thou

His spirit from its springs; as thou find'st power,

Seize him and lead him on thy downward path;

And stand ashamed when failure teaches thee

That a good man, even in his darkest longings,

Is well aware of the right way.

*Mephistopheles.* Well and good.

I am not in much doubt about my bet, and if I lose, then 't is your turn to

crow;

Enjoy your triumph then with a full breast.

Ay; dust shall he devour, and that with pleasure,

Like my old paramour, the famous Snake.

*The Lord.* Pray come here when it suits you; for I never

Had much dislike for people of your sort.

And, among all the Spirits who rebelled, The knave was ever the least tedious

to me.

The active spirit of man soon sleeps, and soon

He seeks unbroken quiet; therefore I



Have given him the Devil for a companion,  
 Who may provoke him to some sort of work,  
 And must create for ever. — But ye, pure  
 Children of God, enjoy eternal beauty; —  
 Let that which ever operates and lives  
 Clasp you within the limits of its love;  
 And seize with sweet and melancholy thoughts  
 The floating phantoms of its loveliness.  
 [*Heaven closes; the Archangels exeunt.*  
*Mephistopheles.* From time to time I  
 visit the old fellow,  
 And I take care to keep on good terms  
 with him.  
 Civil enough is the same God Almighty,  
 To talk so freely with the Devil himself.

## SCENE II.—MAY-DAY NIGHT.

SCENE. — *The Hartz Mountain, a desolate Country.*

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

*Mephistopheles.* Would you not like  
 a broomstick? As for me  
 I wish I had a good stout ram to ride;  
 For we are still far from the appointed  
 place.

*Faust.* This knotted staff is help  
 enough for me,  
 Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs. What  
 good

Is there in making short a pleasant way?  
 To creep along the labyrinths of the  
 vales,  
 And climb those rocks where ever-bab-  
 bling springs,  
 Precipitate themselves in waterfalls,  
 Is the true sport that seasons such a path.  
 Already Spring kindles the birchen spray,  
 And the hoar pines already feel her  
 breath:  
 Shall she not work also within our  
 limbs!

*Mephistopheles.* Nothing of such an  
 influence do I feel.

My body is all wintry, and I wish  
 The flowers upon our path were frost  
 and snow.

But see how melancholy rises now,  
 Dimly uplifting her belated beam,  
 The blank unwelcome round of the red  
 moon,

And gives so bad a light, that every step  
 One stumbles 'gainst some crag. With  
 your permission,

I'll call an Ignis-fatuus to our aid:

I see one yonder burning jollily.

Halloo, my friend! may I request that  
 you

Would favor us with your bright com-  
 pany?

Why should you blaze away there to no  
 purpose?

Pray be so good as light us up this way.

*Ignis-fatuus.* With reverence be it  
 spoken, I will try

To overcome the lightness of my nature:  
 Our course, you know, is generally zig-  
 zag.

*Mephistopheles.* Ha, ha! your wor-  
 ship thinks you have to deal

With men. Go straight on, in the  
 Devil's name,

Or I shall puff your flickering life out.

*Ignis-fatuus.* Well,

I see you are the master of the house;

I will accommodate myself to you.

Only consider that to-night this moun-  
 tain

Is all enchanted, and if a Jack-a-lantern  
 Shows you his way, tho' you should miss  
 your own,

You ought not to be too exact with him.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, and IGNIS-  
 FATUUS, *in alternate Chorus.*

The limits of the sphere of dream,  
 The bounds of true and false, are past.  
 Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,  
 Lead us onward, far and fast,  
 To the wide, the desert waste.

But see, how swift advance and shift

Trees behind trees, row by row, —

How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift

Their frowning foreheads as we go.

The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!

How they snort, and how they  
 blow!

Thro' the mossy sods and stones,  
 Stream and streamlet hurry down —  
 A rushing throng! A sound of song  
 Beneath the vault of Heaven is blown!  
 Sweet notes of love, the speaking tones  
 Of this bright day, sent down to say  
 That Paradise on Earth is known,  
 Resound around, beneath, above.  
 All we hope and all we love  
 Finds a voice in this blithe strain,  
 Which wakens hill and wood and rill,  
 And vibrates far o'er field and vale,  
 And which Echo, like the tale  
 Of old times, repeats again.

To-whoo! to-whoo! near, nearer now  
 The sound of song, the rushing throng!  
 Are the screech, the lapwing, and the  
 jay,  
 All awake as if 't were day?  
 See, with long legs and belly wide,  
 A salamander in the brake!  
 Every root is like a snake,  
 And along the loose hillside,  
 With strange contortions thro' the night,  
 Curls, to seize or to affright;  
 And, animated, strong, and many,  
 They dart forth polypus-antennæ,  
 To blister with their poison spume  
 The wanderer. Thro' the dazzling gloom  
 The many-colored mice, that tread  
 The dewy turf beneath our tread,  
 In troops each other's motions cross,  
 Thro' the heath and thro' the moss;  
 And, in legions intertangled,  
 The fire-flies flit, and swarm, and  
 throng,  
 Till all the mountain depths are spangled.

Tell me, shall we go or stay?  
 Shall we onward? Come along!  
 Everything around is swept  
 Forward, onward, far away!  
 Trees and masses intercept  
 The sight, and wisps on every side  
 Are puffed up and multiplied.  
*Mephistopheles.* Now vigorously seize  
 my skirt, and gain  
 This pinnacle of isolated crag.  
 One may observe with wonder from this  
 point,  
 How Mammon glows among the moun-  
 tains.

*Faust.* Ay —  
 And strangely thro' the solid depth  
 below  
 A melancholy light, like the red dawn,  
 Shoots from the lowest gorge of the  
 abyss  
 Of mountains, lightning hitherward:  
 there rise  
 Pillars of smoke, here clouds float gently  
 by;  
 Here the light burns soft as the enkindled  
 air,  
 Or the illumined dust of golden flowers;  
 And now it glides like tender colors  
 spreading;  
 And now bursts forth in fountains from  
 the earth;  
 And now it winds, one torrent of broad  
 light,  
 Thro' the far valley with a hundred  
 veins;  
 And now once more within that narrow  
 corner  
 Masses itself into intensest splendor.  
 And near us, see, sparks spring out of  
 the ground,  
 Like golden sand scattered upon the  
 darkness;  
 The pinnacles of that black wall of  
 mountains  
 That hems us in are kindled.  
*Mephistopheles.* Rare: in faith!  
 Does not Sir Mammon gloriously illu-  
 minate  
 His palace for this festival — it is  
 A pleasure which you had not known  
 before.  
 I spy the boisterous guests already.  
*Faust.* How  
 The children of the wind rage in the air!  
 With what fierce strokes they fall upon  
 my neck!  
*Mephistopheles.*  
 Cling tightly to the old ribs of the crag.  
 Beware! for if with them thou  
 warrest  
 In their fierce flight towards the  
 wilderness,  
 Their breath will sweep thee into dust,  
 and drag  
 Thy body to a grave in the abyss.  
 A cloud thickens the night.

Hark! how the tempest crashes  
thro' the forest!

The owls fly out in strange  
affright;

The columns of the evergreen palaces  
Are split and shattered;

The roots creak, and stretch, and  
groan;

And ruinously overthrown,

The trunks are crusht and shattered  
By the fierce blast's unconquerable  
stress.

Over each other crack and crash they all  
In terrible and intertangled fall;

And thro' the ruins of the shaken moun-  
tain

The airs hiss and howl —

It is not the voice of the fountain,

Nor the wolf in his midnight prowl.

Dost thou not hear?

Strange accents are ringing

Aloft, afar, anear?

The witches are singing!

The torrent of a raging wizard song

Streams the whole mountain along.

*Chorus of Witches.*

The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,

Now to the Brocken the witches go;

The mighty multitude here may be seen

Gathering, wizard and witch, below.

Sir Urian is sitting aloft in the air;

Hey over stock! and hey over stone!

'Twixt witches and incubi, what shall  
be done?

Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!

*A Voice.*

Upon a sow-swine, whose farrows were  
nine,

Old Baubo rideth alone.

*Chorus.*

Honor her, to whom honor is due,  
Old mother Baubo, honor to you!

An able sow, with old Baubo upon her,

Is worthy of glory, and worthy of honor!

The legion of witches is coming behind,  
Darkening the night, and outspeeding  
the wind —

*A Voice.*

Which way comest thou?

*A Voice.*

Over Ilsenstein;

The owl was awake in the white moon-  
shine;

I saw her at rest in her downy nest,  
And she stared at me with her broad,  
bright eyne.

*Voices.*

And you may now as well take your  
course on to Hell,

Since you ride by so fast on the head-  
long blast.

*A Voice.*

She dropt poison upon me as I past.

Here are the wounds —

*Chorus of Witches.*

Come away! come along!

The way is wide, the way is long,

But what is that for a Bedlam throng?

Stick with the prong, and scratch with  
the broom.

The child in the cradle lies strangled at  
home,

And the mother is clapping her hands. —

*Semichorus of Wizards I.*

We glide in

Like snails when the women are all  
away;

And from a house once given over to  
sin

Woman has a thousand steps to stray.

*Semichorus II.*

A thousand steps must a woman take

Where a man but a single spring will  
make.

*Voices above.*

Come with us, come with us, from  
Felsensee.

*Voices below.*

With what joy would we fly thro' the  
upper sky!

We are washed, we are 'nointed, stark  
naked are we;

But our toil and our pain are for ever  
in vain.

*Both Choruses.*

The wind is still, the stars are fled,  
The melancholy moon is dead;  
The magic notes, like spark on spark,  
Drizzle, whistling thro' the dark.

Come away!

*Voices below.*

Stay, oh stay!

*Voices above.*

Out of the crannies of the rocks,  
Who calls?

*Voices below.*

Oh, let me join your flocks!  
I, three hundred years have striven  
To catch your skirt and mount to  
Heaven, —  
And still in vain. Oh, might I be  
With company akin to me!

*Both Choruses.*

Some on a ram and some on a prong,  
On poles and on broomsticks we flutter  
along;  
Forlorn is the wight who can rise not  
to-night.

*A Half-Witch below.*

I have been tripping this many an hour:  
Are the others already so far before?  
No quiet at home, and no peace abroad!  
And less methinks is found by the road.

*Chorus of Witches.*

Come onward, away! aroint thee, aroint!  
A witch to be strong must anoint —  
anoint —  
Then every trough will be boat enough;  
With a rag for a sail we can sweep thro'  
the sky,  
Who flies not to-night, when means he  
to fly?

*Both Choruses.*

We cling to the skirt, and we strike on  
the ground;  
Witch - legions thicken around and  
around;  
Wizard-swarms cover the heath all over.  
[ *They descend.*

*Mephistopheles.*

What thronging, dashing, raging, rust-  
ling;

What whispering, babbling, hissing,  
bustling;

What glimmering, spurting, stinking,  
burning,

As Heaven and Earth were overturning.  
There is a true witch element about us;  
Take hold on me, or we shall be  
divided: —

Where are you?

*Faust (from a distance).* Here!

*Mephistopheles.*

What!

I must exert my authority in the house.  
Place for young Voland! pray make  
way, good people.

Take hold on me, doctor, and with one  
step

Let us escape from this unpleasant  
crowd:

They are too mad for people of my sort.  
Just there shines a peculiar kind of  
light —

Something attracts me in those bushes.  
Come

This way: we shall slip down there in a  
minute.

*Faust.* Spirit of Contradiction! Well,  
lead on —

'T were a wise feat indeed to wander  
out

Into the Brocken upon May-day night,  
And then to isolate oneself in scorn,  
Disgusted with the humors of the time.

*Mephistopheles.* See yonder, round a  
many-colored flame

A merry club is huddled all together:  
Even with such little people as sit there  
One would not be alone.

*Faust.*

Would that I were

Up yonder in the glow and whirling  
smoke,

Where the blind million rush impetu-  
ously

To meet the evil ones; there might I  
solve

Many a riddle that torments me!

*Mephistopheles.*

Yet

Many a riddle there is tied anew  
Inextricably. Let the great world  
rage!

We will stay here safe in the quiet dwell-  
ings.

'T is an old custom. Men have ever  
built

Their own small world in the great world  
of all.

I see young witches naked there, and  
old ones

Wisely attired with greater decency.

Be guided now by me, and you shall  
buy

A pound of pleasure with a dram of  
trouble.

I hear them tune their instruments — one  
must

Get used to this damned scraping.  
Come, I'll lead you

Among them; and what there you do  
and see,

As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall  
be.

How say you now? this space is wide  
enough —

Look forth, you cannot see the end of  
it —

A hundred bonfires burn in rows, and  
they

Who throng around them seem innum-  
erable:

Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making  
love,

And cooking, are at work. Now tell  
me, friend,

What is there better in the world than  
this?

*Faust.* In introducing us, do you  
assume

The character of wizard or of devil?

*Mephistopheles.* In truth, I generally  
go about

In strict incognito; and yet one likes

To wear one's orders upon gala days.

I have no ribbon at my knee; but  
here

At home, the cloven foot is honorable.

See you that snail there? — she comes  
creeping up,

And with her feeling eyes hath smelt out  
something.

I could not, if I would, mask myself  
here.

Come now, we'll go about from fire to  
fire:

I'll be the pimp, and you shall be the  
lover.

[*To some old Women, who are sitting  
round a heap of glimmering coals.*

Old gentlewomen, what do you do out  
here?

You ought to be with the young rioters  
Right in the thickest of the revelry —  
But every one is best content at home.

*General.*

Who dare confide in right or a just  
claim?

So much as I have done for them!  
and now —

With women and the people 't is the  
same,

Youth will stand foremost ever, — age  
may go

To the dark grave unhonored.

*Minister.*

Nowadays

People assert their rights: they go too  
far;

But as for me, the good old times I  
praise;

Then we were all in all, 't was  
something worth

One's while to be in place and wear  
a star;

That was indeed the golden age on  
earth.

*Parvenu.*

We too are active, and we did and do

What we ought not, perhaps; and yet  
we now

Will seize, whilst all things are whirled  
round and round,

A spoke of Fortune's wheel, and keep  
our ground.

*Author.*

Who now can taste a treatise of deep  
sense

And ponderous volume? 't is imperti-  
nence

To write what none will read, therefore  
will I

To please the young and thoughtless  
people try.

*Mephistopheles (who at once appears  
to have grown very old).* I find

the people ripe for the last day,

Since I last came up to the wizard moun-  
tain;

And as my little cask runs turbid now,  
So is the world drained to the dregs.

*Pedlar-witch.* Look here,  
Gentlemen; do not hurry on so fast  
And lose the chance of a good penny-  
worth. •  
I have a pack full of the choicest wares  
Of every sort, and yet in all my bundle  
Is nothing like what may be found on  
earth;  
Nothing that in a moment will make  
rich  
Men and the world with fine malicious  
mischief —  
There is no dagger drunk with blood; no  
bowl  
From which consuming poison may be  
drained  
By innocent and healthy lips; no jewel,  
The price of an abandoned maiden's  
shame;  
No sword which cuts the bond it cannot  
loose,  
Or stabs the wearer's enemy in the back;  
No —

*Mephistopheles.* Gossip, you  
know little of these times.  
What has been, has been; what is done,  
is past,  
They shape themselves into the innova-  
tions  
They breed, and innovation drags us  
with it.  
The torrent of the crowd sweeps over us:  
You think to impel, and are yourself im-  
pelled.

*Faust.* Who is that yonder?

*Mephistopheles.* Mark her well.  
It is

Lilith.

*Faust.* Who?

*Mephistopheles.* Lilith, the first  
wife of Adam.

Beware of her fair hair, for she excels  
All women in the magic of her locks;  
And when she winds them round a young  
man's neck,  
She will not ever set him free again.

*Faust.*

There sit a girl and an old woman —  
they  
Seem to be tired with pleasure and with  
play.

*Mephistopheles.*

There is no rest to-night for any one:  
When one dance ends another is begun;  
Come, let us to it. We shall have rare  
fun.

[*FAUST dances and sings with a girl  
and MEPHISTOPHELES with an old  
Woman.*

*Faust.*

I had once a lovely dream  
In which I saw an apple tree,  
Where two fair apples with their gleam  
To climb and taste attracted me.

*The Girl.*

She with apples you desired  
From Paradise came long ago:  
With you I feel that if required,  
Such still within my garden grow.

*Procto-Phantasmist.* What is this  
curs'd multitude about?  
Have we not long since proved to dem-  
onstration  
That ghosts move not on ordinary feet?  
But these are dancing just like men and  
women.

*The Girl.* What does he want then  
at our ball?

*Faust.* Oh! he  
Is far above us all in his conceit:  
Whilst we enjoy, he reasons of enjoyment;  
And any step which in our dance we  
tread,

If it be left out of his reckoning,  
Is not to be considered as a step.  
There are few things that scandalize him  
not:

And when you whirl round in the circle  
now,  
As he went round the wheel in his old  
mill,  
He says that you go wrong in all respects,  
Especially if you congratulate him  
Upon the strength of the resemblance.

*Procto-Phantasmist.* Fly!  
Vanish! Unheard-of impudence! What,  
still there!  
In this enlightened age too, since you  
have been

Proved not to exist! — But this infernal  
brood  
Will hear no reason and endure no rule.  
Are we so wise, and is the *pond* still  
haunted?  
How long have I been sweeping out this  
rubbish  
Of superstition, and the world will not  
Come clean with all my pains! — it is a  
case

Unheard of!

*The Girl.* Then leave off  
teasing us so.

*Procto-Phantasmist.* I tell you, spirits,  
to your faces now,

That I should not regret this despotism  
Of spirits, but that mine can wield it not.  
To-night I shall make poor work of it,  
Yet I will take a round with you, and  
hope

Before my last step in the living dance  
To beat the poet and the devil together.

*Mephistopheles.* At last he will sit  
down in some foul puddle;  
That is his way of solacing himself;  
Until some leech, diverted with his  
gravity,  
Cures him of spirits and the spirit to-  
gether.

[To FAUST, who has seceded from the  
dance.

Why do you let that fair girl pass from  
you,

Who sang so sweetly to you in the dance?

*Faust.* A red mouse in the middle of  
her singing

Sprang from her mouth.

*Mephistopheles.* That was all  
right, my friend:

Be it enough that the mouse was not  
gray.

Do not disturb your hour of happiness  
With close consideration of such trifles.

*Faust.* Then saw I —

*Mephistopheles.* What?

*Faust.* Seest thou not a pale,

Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away?

She drags herself now forward with slow  
steps,

And seems as if she moved with shackled  
feet:

I cannot overcome the thought that she  
Is like poor Margaret.

*Mephistopheles.*

Let it be —

pass on —

No good can come of it — it is not  
well

To meet it — it is an enchanted phan-  
tom,

A lifeless idol; with its numbing  
look,

It freezes up the blood of man; and  
they

Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to  
stone,

Like those who saw Medusa.

*Faust.*

Oh, too true!

Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh  
corpse

Which no beloved hand has closed, alas!  
That is the breast which Margaret yielded

to me —

Those are the lovely limbs which I en-  
joyed!

*Mephistopheles.* It is all magic, poor  
deluded fool!

She looks to every one like his first  
love.

*Faust.* Oh, what delight! what woe!  
I cannot turn

My looks from her sweet piteous counte-  
nance.

How strangely does a single blood-red  
line,

Not broader than the sharp edge of a  
knife,

Adorn her lovely neck!

*Mephistopheles.* Ay, she can carry  
Her head under her arm upon occa-  
sion;

Perseus has cut it off for her. These  
pleasures

End in delusion. — Gain this rising  
ground,

It is as airy here as in a . . .

And if I am not mightily deceived,

I see a theatre — What may this mean!

*Attendant.* Quite a new piece, the  
last of seven, for 't is

The custom now to represent that num-  
ber.

'T is written by a Dilettante, and  
The actors who perform are Dilettanti;

Excuse me, gentlemen; but I must  
vanish.

I am a Dilettante curtain-lifter.

## JUVENILIA.

## VERSES ON A CAT.

## I.

A CAT in distress,  
Nothing more, nor less;  
Good folks, I must faithfully tell ye,  
As I am a sinner,  
It waits for some dinner  
To stuff out its own little belly.

## II.

You would not easily guess  
All the modes of distress  
Which torture the tenants of earth;  
And the various evils,  
Which like so many devils,  
Attend the poor souls from their birth.

## III.

Some a living require,  
And others desire  
An old fellow out of the way;  
And which is the best  
I leave to be guessed,  
For I cannot pretend to say.

## IV.

One wants society,  
Another variety,  
Others a tranquil life;  
Some want food,  
Others, as good,  
Only want a wife.

## V.

But this poor little cat  
Only wanted a rat,  
To stuff out its own little maw;  
And it were as good  
*Some* people had such food,  
To make them *hold their jaw!*

## FRAGMENT: OMENS.

HARK! the owlet flaps his wings  
In the pathless dell beneath;  
Hark! 't is the night-raven sings  
Tidings of approaching death.

## EPITAPHIUM.

[LATIN VERSION OF THE EPITAPH IN  
GRAY'S ELEGY.]

## I.

HIC sinu fessum caput hospitali  
Cespitis dormit juvenis, nec illi  
Fata ridebant, popularis ille  
Nescius auræ.

## II.

Musa non vultu genus arroganti  
Rusticâ natum grege despicata,  
Et suum tristis puerum notavit  
Sollicitudo.

## III.

Indoles illi bene larga, pectus  
Veritas sedem sibi vindicavit,  
Et pari tantis meritis beavit  
Munere cœlum.

## IV.

Omne quod mœstis habuit miserto  
Corde largivit lacrymam, receptit  
Omne quod cœlo voluit, fidelis  
Pectus amici.

## V.

Longius sed tu fuge curiosus  
Cæteras laudes fuge suspicari,  
Cæteras culpas fuge velle tractas  
Sede tremendâ.

## VI.

Spe tremescentes recubant in illâ  
Sede virtutes pariterque culpæ,  
In sui Patris gremio, tremendâ  
Sede Dei que.

## IN HOROLOGIUM.

INTER marmoreas Leonoræ pendula  
colles  
Fortunata nimis Machina dicit horas.  
Quas *manibus* premit illa duas insensa  
papillas  
Cur mihi sit *digito* tangere, amata, nefas?



SONG FROM THE WANDERING  
JEW.

SEE yon opening flower  
Spreads its fragrance to the blast;  
It fades within an hour,  
Its decay is pale — is fast.  
Paler is yon maiden;  
Faster is her heart's decay;  
Deep with sorrow laden,  
She sinks in death away.

FRAGMENT FROM THE  
WANDERING JEW.

THE Elements respect their Maker's seal!  
Still like the scathèd pine tree's height,  
Braving the tempests of the night  
Have I 'scap'd the bickering flame.  
Like the scath'd pine, which a monu-  
ment stands  
Of faded grandeur, which the brands  
Of the tempest-shaken air  
Have riven on the desolate heath;  
Yet it stands majestic even in death,  
And rears its wild form there.

## A DIALOGUE.

## DEATH.

FOR my dagger is bathed in the blood of  
the brave,  
I come, care-worn tenant of life, from  
the grave,  
Where Innocence sleeps 'neath the  
peace-giving sod,  
And the good cease to tremble at Tyr-  
anny's nod;  
I offer a calm habitation to thee,  
Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber  
with me?  
My mansion is damp, cold silence is  
there,  
But it lulls in oblivion the fiends of de-  
spair,  
Not a groan of regret, not a sigh, not a  
breath,  
Dares dispute with grim Silence the em-  
pire of Death.

I offer a calm habitation to thee,  
Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber  
with me?

## MORTAL.

Mine eyelids are heavy; my soul seeks  
repose,  
It longs in thy cells to embosom its woes,  
It longs in thy cells to deposit its load,  
Where no longer the scorpions of Perfidy  
goad;  
Where the phantoms of Prejudice vanish  
away,  
And Bigotry's bloodhounds lose scent of  
their prey;  
Yet tell me, dark Death, when thine em-  
pire is o'er,  
What awaits on Futurity's mist-covered  
shore?

## DEATH.

Cease, cease, wayward Mortal! I dare  
not unveil  
The shadows that float o'er Eternity's  
vale;  
Naught waits for the good but a spirit  
of Love,  
That will hail their blest advent to  
regions above.  
For Love, Mortal, gleams thro' the  
gloom of my sway,  
And the shades which surround me fly  
fast at its ray.  
Hast thou loved?—Then depart from  
these regions of hate,  
And in slumber with me blunt the  
arrows of fate.  
I offer a calm habitation to thee,  
Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber  
with me?

## MORTAL.

Oh, sweet is thy slumber! oh! sweet is  
the ray  
Which after thy night introduces the  
day;  
How concealed, how persuasive, self-  
interest's breath,  
Tho' it floats to mine ear from the  
bosom of Death!

I hoped that I quite was forgotten by  
all,  
Yet a lingering friend might be grieved  
at my fall,  
And duty forbids, tho' I languish to  
die,  
When departure might heave Virtue's  
breast with a sigh.  
O Death! O my friend! snatch this form  
to thy shrine,  
And I fear, dear destroyer, I shall not  
repine.

### TO THE MOONBEAM.

#### I.

MOONBEAM, leave the shadowy vale,  
To bathe this burning brow.  
Moonbeam, why art thou so pale,  
As thou walkest o'er the dewy dale,  
Where humble wild-flowers grow?  
Is it to mimic me?  
But that can never be;  
For thine orb is bright,  
And the clouds are light,  
That at intervals shadow the star-studded  
night.

#### II.

Now all is deathly still on earth,  
Nature's tired frame reposes,  
And ere the golden morning's birth  
Its radiant hues discloses,  
Flies forth its balmy breath.  
But mine is the midnight of  
Death,  
And Nature's morn,  
To my bosom forlorn,  
Brings but a gloomier night, implants a  
deadlier thorn.

#### III.

Wretch! Suppress the glare of mad-  
ness  
Struggling in thine haggard eye,  
For the keenest throb of sadness,  
Pale Despair's most sickening sigh,  
Is but to mimic me;  
And this must ever be,  
When the twilight of care,  
And the night of despair,  
Seem in my breast but joys to the pangs  
that rankle there.

### THE SOLITARY.

#### I.

DAR'ST thou amid the varied multitude  
To live alone, an isolated thing?  
To see the busy beings round thee  
spring  
And care for none; in thy calm solitude,  
A flower that scarce breathes in the  
desert rude  
To Zephyr's passing wing?

#### II.

Not the swart Pariah in some Indian  
grove,  
Lone, lean, and hunted by his brother's  
hate,  
Hath drunk so deep the cup of bitter  
fate  
As that poor wretch who cannot, cannot  
love:  
He bears a load which nothing can  
remove,  
A killing, withering weight.

#### III.

He smiles — 't is sorrow's deadliest  
mockery;  
He speaks — the cold words flow not  
from his soul;  
He acts like others, drains the genial  
bowl, —  
Yet, yet he longs — altho' he fears — to  
die;  
He pants to reach what yet he seems to  
fly,  
Dull life's extremest goal.

### TO DEATH.

DEATH! where is thy victory?  
To triumph whilst I die,  
To triumph whilst thine ebon wing  
Infolds my shuddering soul.  
O Death! where is thy sting?  
Not when the tides of murder roll,  
When nations groan, that kings may  
bask in bliss.  
Death! canst thou boast a victory such  
as this?  
When in his hour of pomp and power

His blow the mightiest murderer  
gave,  
Mid nature's cries the sacrifice  
Of millions to glut the grave;  
When sunk the tyrant desolation's slave;  
Or Freedom's life-blood streamed upon  
thy shrine;  
Stern tyrant, couldst thou boast a vic-  
tory such as mine?

To know in dissolution's void,  
That mortals' baubles sunk, decay,  
That everything, but Love, destroyed  
Must perish with its kindred clay.  
Perish Ambition's crown,  
Perish her sceptred sway;  
From Death's pale front fades Pride's  
fastidious frown.

In Death's damp vault the lurid fires  
decay,  
That Envy lights at heaven-born Virtue's  
beam —

That all the cares subside,  
Which lurk beneath the tide  
Of life's unquiet stream.  
Yes! this is victory!

And on yon rock, whose dark form  
glooms the sky,  
To stretch these pale limbs, when the  
soul is fled;

To baffle the lean passions of their  
prey,  
To sleep within the palace of the dead!  
Oh! not the King, around whose daz-  
zling throne

His countless courtiers mock the words  
they say,  
Triumphs amid the bud of glory blown,  
As I in this cold bed, and faint expiring  
groan!

Tremble, ye proud, whose grandeur  
mocks the woe,  
Which props the column of unnatural  
state,

You the plainings faint and low,  
From misery's tortured soul that  
flow,  
Shall usher to your fate.

Tremble, ye conquerors, at whose fell  
command  
The war-fiend riots o'er a peaceful land.

You desolation's gory throng  
Shall bear from Victory along  
To that mysterious strand.

## LOVE'S ROSE.

## I.

HOPES, that swell in youthful breasts,  
Live not thro' the waste of time?  
Love's rose a host of thorns invests;  
Cold, ungenial is the clime,  
Where its honors blow.  
Youth says, The purple flowers are  
mine,  
Which die the while they glow.

## II.

Dear the boon to Fancy given,  
Retracted whilst it's granted:  
Sweet the rose which lives in heaven,  
Altho' on earth 't is planted,  
Where its honors blow,  
While by earth's slaves the leaves are  
riven  
Which die the while they glow.

## III.

Age cannot Love destroy,  
But perfidy can blast the flower,  
Even when in most unwary hour  
It blooms in Fancy's bower.  
Age cannot Love destroy,  
But perfidy can rend the shrine  
In which its vermeil splendors shine.

## EYES : A FRAGMENT.

How eloquent are eyes!  
Not the rapt poet's frenzied lay  
When the soul's wildest feelings stray  
Can speak so well as they.  
How eloquent are eyes!  
Not music's most impassioned note  
On which love's warmest fervors float  
Like them bids rapture rise.

Love, look thus again, —  
 That your look may light a waste of  
 years,  
 Darting the beam that conquers cares  
 Thro' the cold shower of tears.  
 Love, look thus again!

POEMS FROM ST. IRVYNE, OR  
 THE ROSICRUCIAN.

I. — VICTORIA.

I.

'T WAS dead of the night, when I sat in  
 my dwelling;  
 One glimmering lamp was expiring  
 and low;  
 Around, the dark tide of the tempest  
 was swelling,  
 Along the wild mountains night-ravens  
 were yelling, —  
 They bodingly presaged destruction  
 and woe.

II.

'T WAS then that I started! — the wild  
 storm was howling,  
 Nought was seen, save the lightning,  
 which danced in the sky;  
 Above me, the crash of the thunder was  
 rolling,  
 And low, chilling murmurs, the blast  
 wafted by.

III.

My heart sank within me — unheeded  
 the war  
 Of the battling clouds, on the moun-  
 tain-tops, broke; —  
 Unheeded the thunder-peal crasht in  
 mine ear —  
 This heart, hard as iron, is stranger to  
 fear;  
 But conscience in low, noiseless whis-  
 pering spoke.

IV.

'T WAS then that her form on the whirl-  
 wind upholding,

The ghost of the murder'd Victoria  
 strode;  
 In her right hand, a shadowy shroud  
 she was holding,  
 She swiftly advanc'd to my lonesome  
 abode.

V.

I wildly then call'd on the tempest to  
 bear me —

II. — "ON THE DARK HEIGHT  
 OF JURA."

I.

GHOSTS of the dead! have I not heard  
 your yelling  
 Rise on the night-rolling breath of  
 the blast,  
 When o'er the dark ether the tempest is  
 swelling,  
 And on eddying whirlwind the thun-  
 der-peal past?

II.

For oft have I stood on the dark height  
 of Jura,  
 Which frowns on the valley that opens  
 beneath;  
 Oft have I brav'd the chill night-tem-  
 pest's fury,  
 Whilst around me, I thought, echo'd  
 murmurs of death.

III.

And now, whilst the winds of the moun-  
 tain are howling,  
 O father! thy voice seems to strike  
 on mine ear;  
 In air whilst the tide of the night-storm  
 is rolling,  
 It breaks on the pause of the elements'  
 jar.

IV.

On the wing of the whirlwind which  
 roars o'er the mountain  
 Perhaps rides the ghost of my sire  
 who is dead;

On the mist of the tempest which hangs  
o'er the fountain,  
Whilst a wreath of dark vapor en-  
circles his head.

### III. — SISTER ROSA: A BALLAD.

#### I.

THE death-bell beats! —  
The mountain repeats  
The echoing sound of the knell;  
And the dark monk now  
Wraps the cowl round his brow,  
As he sits in his lonely cell.

#### II.

And the cold hand of death  
Chills his shuddering breath,  
As he lists to the fearful lay  
Which the ghosts of the sky,  
As they sweep wildly by,  
Sing to departed day.  
And they sing of the hour  
When the stern fates had power  
To resolve Rosa's form to its clay.

#### III.

But that hour is past;  
And that hour was the last  
Of peace to the dark monk's brain.  
Bitter tears, from his eyes, gush  
silent and fast;  
And he strove to suppress them in vain.

#### IV.

Then his fair cross of gold he dasht  
on the floor,  
When the death-knell struck on his ear.  
Delight is in store  
For her evermore;  
But for me is fate, horror, and fear.

#### V.

Then his eyes wildly roll'd,  
When the death-bell toll'd,  
And he rag'd in terrific woe.  
And he stamp'd on the ground, —  
But when ceast the sound,  
Tears again began to flow.

#### VI.

And the ice of despair  
Chill'd the wild thro' of care,  
And he sate in mute agony still;  
Till the night-stars shone thro' the  
cloudless air,  
And the pale moonbeam slept on the  
hill.

#### VII.

Then he knelt in his cell: —  
And the horrors of hell  
Were delights to his agonized pain,  
And he prayed to God to dissolve the  
spell,  
Which else must for ever remain.

#### VIII.

And in fervent prayer he knelt on the  
ground,  
Till the abbey bell struck One:  
His feverish blood ran chill at the  
sound:  
A voice hollow and horrible murmured  
around —  
"The term of thy penance is done!"

#### IX.

Grew dark the night;  
The moonbeam bright  
Waxt faint on the mountain high;  
And, from the black hill,  
Went a voice cold and still, —  
"Monk! thou art free to die."

#### X.

Then he rose on his feet,  
And his heart loud did beat,  
And his limbs they were palsied with  
dread;  
Whilst the grave's clammy dew  
O'er his pale forehead grew;  
And he shuddered to sleep with the  
dead.

#### XI.

And the wild midnight storm  
Raved around his tall form,

As he sought the chapel's gloom:  
 And the sunk grass did sigh  
 To the wind, bleak and high,  
 As he searcht for the new-made tomb.

## XII.

And forms, dark and high,  
 Seemed around him to fly,  
 And mingle their yells with the blast:  
 And on the dark wall  
 Half-seen shadows did fall,  
 As enhorrored he onward past.

## XIII.

And the storm-fiend's wild rave  
 O'er the new-made grave,  
 And dread shadows, linger around.  
 The Monk called on God his soul to  
 save,  
 And, in horror, sank on the ground.

## XIV.

Then despair nerved his arm  
 To dispel the charm,  
 And he burst Rosa's coffin asunder.  
 And the fierce storm did swell  
 More terrific and fell,  
 And louder pealed the thunder.

## XV.

And laught, in joy, the fiendish throng,  
 Mixt with ghosts of the mouldering  
 dead:  
 And their grisly wings, as they floated  
 along,  
 Whistled in murmurs dread.

## XVI.

And her skeleton form the dead Nun  
 reared  
 Which dript with the chill dew of  
 hell.  
 In her half-eaten eyeballs two pale  
 flames appeared,  
 And triumphant their gleam on the dark  
 Monk glared,  
 As he stood within the cell.

## XVII.

And her lank hand lay on his shuddering  
 brain;  
 But each power was nerved by fear. —  
 "I never, henceforth, may breathe  
 again;  
 Death now ends mine anguist pain. —  
 The grave yawns, — we meet there."

## XVIII.

And her skeleton lungs did utter the  
 sound,  
 So deadly, so lone, and so fell,  
 That in long vibrations shuddered the  
 ground;  
 And as the stern notes floated around,  
 A deep groan was answered from hell.

## IV. — ST. IRVYNE'S TOWER.

## I.

How swiftly thro' heaven's wide ex-  
 pance  
 Bright day's resplendent colors fade!  
 How sweetly does the moonbeam's  
 glance  
 With silver tint St. Irvyne's glade!

## II.

No cloud along the spangled air,  
 Is borne upon the evening breeze;  
 How solemn is the scene! how fair  
 The moonbeams rest upon the trees!

## III.

Yon dark grey turret glimmers white,  
 Upon it sits the mournful owl;  
 Along the stillness of the night,  
 Her melancholy shriekings roll.

## IV.

But not alone on Irvyne's tower,  
 The silver moonbeam pours her ray;  
 It gleams upon the ivied bower,  
 It dances in the cascade's spray.

## V.

"Ah! why do darkening shades conceal  
 The hour when man must cease to  
 be?"

Why may not human minds unveil  
The dim mists of futurity?

VI.

“The keenness of the world hath torn  
The heart which opens to its blast;  
Despised, neglected, and forlorn,  
Sinks the wretch in death at last.”

V. — BEREAVEMENT.

I.

How stern are the woes of the desolate  
mourner,  
As he bends in still grief o'er the  
hallowed bier,  
As enanguisht he turns from the laugh  
of the scorner,  
And drops, to perfection's remem-  
brance, a tear;  
When floods of despair down his pale  
cheek are streaming,  
When no blissful hope on his bosom is  
beaming,  
Or, if lulled for awhile, soon he starts  
from his dreaming,  
And finds torn the soft ties to affection  
so dear.

II.

Ah! when shall day dawn on the night  
of the grave,  
Or summer succeed to the winter of  
death?  
Rest awhile, hapless victim, and Heaven  
will save  
The spirit, that faded away with the  
breath.  
Eternity points in its amaranth bower,  
Where no clouds of fate o'er the sweet  
prospect lower,  
Unspeakable pleasure, of goodness the  
dower,  
When woe fades away like the mist  
of the heath.

VI. — THE DROWNED LOVER.

I.

AH! faint are her limbs, and her foot-  
step is weary,

Yet far must the desolate wanderer  
roam;  
Tho' the tempest is stern, and the moun-  
tain is dreary,  
She must quit at deep midnight her  
pitiless home.  
I see her swift foot dash the dew from  
the whortle,  
As she rapidly hastes to the green grove  
of myrtle;  
And I hear, as she wraps round her  
figure the kirtle,  
“Stay thy boat on the lake, — dearest  
Henry, I come.”

II.

High swelled in her bosom the throb of  
affection,  
As lightly her form bounded over the  
lea,  
And arose in her mind every dear recol-  
lection;  
“I come, dearest Henry, and wait  
but for thee.”  
How sad, when dear hope every sorrow  
is soothing,  
When sympathy's swell the soft bosom  
is moving,  
And the mind the mild joys of affection  
is proving,  
Is the stern voice of fate that bids  
happiness flee!

III.

Oh! dark lowered the clouds on that  
horrible eve,  
And the moon dimly gleamed thro' the  
tempested air;  
Oh! how could fond visions such soft-  
ness deceive?  
Oh! how could false hope rend a  
bosom so fair?  
Thy love's pallid corpse the wild surges  
are laving,  
O'er his form the fierce swell of the tem-  
pest is raving;  
But, fear not, parting spirit; thy good-  
ness is saving,  
In eternity's bowers, a seat for thee  
there.

POSTHUMOUS FRAGMENTS  
OF MARGARET NICHOL-  
SON.

Being Poems found amongst the Papers of that noted Female who attempted the life of the King in 1786. Edited by John Fitzvictor.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE energy and native genius of these Fragments must be the only apology which the Editor can make for thus intruding them on the public notice. The first I found with no title, and have left it so. It is intimately connected with the dearest interests of universal happiness; and much as we may deplore the fatal and enthusiastic tendency which the ideas of this poor female had acquired, we cannot fail to pay the tribute of unequivocal regret to the departed memory of genius, which, had it been rightly organized, would have made that intellect, which has since become the victim of frenzy and despair, a most brilliant ornament to society.

In case the sale of these Fragments evinces that the public have any curiosity to be presented with a more copious collection of my unfortunate Aunt's poems, I have other papers in my possession which shall, in that case, be subjected to their notice. It may be supposed they require much arrangement; but I send the following to the press in the same state in which they came into my possession.

J. F.

POSTHUMOUS FRAGMENTS.

AMBITION, power, and avarice, now have  
hurled  
Death, fate, and ruin, on a bleeding  
world.  
See! on yon heath what countless vic-  
tims lie,  
Hark! what loud shrieks ascend thro'  
yonder sky;

Tell then the cause, 't is sure the aven-  
ger's rage  
Has swept these myriads from life's  
crowded stage:  
Hark to that groan, an anguist hero  
dies,  
He shudders in death's latest agonies;  
Yet does a fleeting hectic flush his  
cheek,  
Yet does his parting breath essay to  
speak —  
“Oh God! my wife, my children, —  
Monarch, thou  
For whose support this fainting frame  
lies low;  
For whose support in distant lands I  
bleed,  
Let his friends' welfare be the warrior's  
meed.  
He hears me not — ah! no — kings can-  
not hear,  
For passion's voice has dulled their list-  
less ear.  
To thee, then, mighty God, I lift my  
moan,  
Thou wilt not scorn a suppliant's an-  
guist groan.  
Oh! now I die — but still is death's  
fierce pain —  
God hears my prayer — we meet, we  
meet again.”  
He spake, reclined him on death's bloody  
bed,  
And with a parting groan his spirit fled.  
Oppressors of mankind to *you* we  
owe  
The baleful streams from whence these  
miseries flow;  
For you how many a mother weeps her  
son,  
Snatched from life's course ere half his  
race was run!  
For you how many a widow drops a  
tear,  
In silent anguish, on her husband's bier!  
“Is it then thine, Almighty Power,”  
she cries,  
“Whence tears of endless sorrow dim  
these eyes?  
Is this the system which thy powerful  
sway,  
Which else in shapeless chaos sleeping  
lay,



Formed and approved? — it cannot be —  
 but oh!  
 Forgive me, Heaven, my brain is warped  
 by woe.”  
 'T is not — he never bade the war-note  
 swell,  
 He never triumphed in the work of hell —  
 Monarchs of earth! thine is the baleful  
 deed,  
 Thine are the crimes for which thy sub-  
 jects bleed.  
 Ah! when will come the sacred fated  
 time,  
 When man unsullied by his leaders'  
 crime,  
 Despising wealth, ambition, pomp, and  
 pride,  
 Will stretch him fearless by his foeman's  
 side?  
 Ah! when will come the time, when o'er  
 the plain  
 No more shall death and desolation  
 reign?  
 When will the sun smile on the blood-  
 less field,  
 And the stern warrior's arm the sickle  
 wield?  
 Not whilst some King, in cold ambi-  
 tion's dreams,  
 Plans for the field of death his plodding  
 schemes;  
 Not whilst for private pique the public  
 fall,  
 And one frail mortal's mandate governs  
 all.  
 Swelled with command and mad with  
 dizzying sway;  
 Who sees unmoved his myriads fade  
 away.  
 Careless who lives or dies — so that he  
 gains  
 Some trivial point for which he took the  
 pains.  
 What then are Kings? — I see the trem-  
 bling crowd,  
 I hear their fulsome clamors echoed  
 loud;  
 Their stern oppressor pleased appears  
 awhile,  
 But April's sunshine is a Monarch's  
 smile —  
 Kings are but dust — the last eventful  
 day

Will level all and make them lose their  
 sway;  
 Will dash the sceptre from the Monarch's  
 hand,  
 And from the warrior's grasp wrest the  
 ensanguined brand.  
 Oh! Peace, soft peace, art thou for  
 ever gone,  
 Is thy fair form indeed for ever flown?  
 And love and concord hast thou swept  
 away,  
 As if incongruous with thy parted  
 sway?  
 Alas I fear thou hast, for none ap-  
 pear,  
 Now o'er the palsied earth stalks giant  
 Fear,  
 With War, and Woe, and Terror, in his  
 train;  
 Listening he pauses on the embattled  
 plain,  
 Then speeding swiftly o'er the ensan-  
 guined heath,  
 Has left the frightful work to hell and  
 death.  
 See! gory Ruin yokes his blood-stained  
 car,  
 He scents the battle's carnage from afar;  
 Hell and destruction mark his mad  
 career,  
 He tracks the rapid step of hurrying  
 Fear;  
 Whilst ruined towns and smoking cities  
 tell,  
 That thy work, Monarch, is the work of  
 hell.  
 It is thy work! I hear a voice repeat,  
 Shakes the broad basis of thy blood-  
 stained seat;  
 And at the orphan's sigh, the widow's  
 moan,  
 Totters the fabric of thy guilt-stained  
 throne —  
 “It is thy work, O Monarch;” now  
 the sound  
 Fainter and fainter, yet is borne around,  
 Yet to enthusiast ears the murmurs tell  
 That heaven, indignant at the work of  
 hell,  
 Will soon the cause, the hated cause  
 remove,  
 Which tears from earth peace, inno-  
 cence, and love.

## FRAGMENT.

SUPPOSED TO BE AN EPITHALAMIUM  
OF FRANCIS RAVAILLAC AND  
CHARLOTTE CORDÉ.

'T is midnight now — athwart the murky  
air,

Dank lurid meteors shoot a lurid  
gleam;

From the dark storm-clouds flashes a  
fearful glare,

It shows the bending oak, the roaring  
stream.

I ponder'd on the woes of lost mankind,  
I ponder'd on the ceaseless rage of  
Kings;

My rapt soul dwelt upon the ties that  
bind

The mazy volume of commingling  
things,

When fell and wild misrule to man stern  
sorrow brings.

I heard a yell — it was not the knell,  
When the blasts on the wild lake  
sleep,

That floats on the pause of the summer  
gale's swell,

O'er the breast of the waveless deep.

I thought it had been death's accents  
cold

That bade me recline on the shore;

I laid mine hot head on the surge-beaten  
mould,

And thought to breathe no more.

But a heavenly sleep

That did suddenly steep

In balm my bosom's pain,

Pervaded my soul,

And free from control,

Did mine intellect range again.

Methought enthroned upon a silvery  
cloud,

Which floated mid a strange and bril-  
liant light;

My form upborne by viewless ether rode,  
And spurned the lessening realms of  
earthly night.

What heavenly notes burst on my rav-  
isht ears,

What beauteous spirits met my dazzled  
eye!

Hark! louder swells the music of the  
spheres,

More clear the forms of speechless  
bliss float by,

And heavenly gestures suit ethereal  
melody.

But fairer than the spirits of the air,

More graceful than the sylph of sym-  
metry,

Than the enthusiast's fancied love more  
fair,

Were the bright forms that swept the  
azure sky.

Enthroned in roseate light, a heavenly  
band

Strewed flowers of bliss that never fade  
away;

They welcome virtue to its native land,

And songs of triumph greet the joyous  
day

When endless bliss the woes of fleeting  
life repay.

Congential minds will seek their kindred  
soul,

E'en tho' the tide of time has rolled  
between;

They mock weak matter's impotent con-  
trol,

And seek of endless life the eternal  
scene.

At death's vain summons *this* will never  
die,

In nature's chaos *this* will not decay —  
These are the bands which closely,  
warmly, tie

Thy soul, O Charlotte, 'yond this chain  
of clay,

To him who thine must be till time shall  
fade away.

Yes, Francis! thine was the dear knife  
that tore

A tyrant's heart-strings from his guilty  
breast,

Thine was the daring at a tyrant's gore,  
To smile in triumph, to contemn the  
rest;

And thine, loved glory of thy sex! to  
tear

From its base shrine a despot's haughty  
soul,

To laugh at sorrow in secure despair,  
To mock, with smiles, life's lingering  
control,

And triumph mid the griefs that round  
thy fate did roll.

Yes! the fierce spirits of the avenging  
deep

With endless tortures goad their guilty  
shades.

I see the lank and ghastly spectres  
sweep

Along the burning length of yon  
arcades;

And I see Satan stalk athwart the plain;  
He hastes along the burning soil of  
hell.

"Welcome thou despots to my dark  
domain,

With maddening joy mine anguished  
senses swell

To welcome to their homes the friends I  
love so well."

. . . . .

Hark! to those notes, how sweet, how  
thrilling sweet

They echo to the sound of angels' feet.

. . . . .

Oh haste to the bower where roses are  
spread,

For there is prepared thy nuptial bed.  
Oh haste — hark! hark! — they're gone.

. . . . .

*Chorus of Spirits.*

Stay ye days of contentment and joy,  
Whilst love every care is erasing,  
Stay ye pleasures that never can cloy,  
And ye spirits that can never cease  
pleasing.

And if any soft passion be near,  
Which mortals, frail mortals, can  
know,

Let love shed on the bosom a tear,  
And dissolve the chill ice-drop of woe.

SYMPHONY.

*Francis.*

"SOFT, my dearest angel stay,  
Oh! you suck my soul away;  
Suck on, suck on, I glow, I glow!  
Tides of maddening passion roll,  
And streams of rapture drown my soul.  
Now give me one more billing kiss,  
Let your lips now repeat the bliss,  
Endless kisses steal my breath,  
No life can equal such a death."

*Charlotte.*

Oh! yes I will kiss thine eyes so fair,  
— And I will clasp thy form;  
Serene is the breath of the balmy air,  
But I think, love, thou feelest me  
warm.  
And I will recline on thy marble neck  
Till I mingle into thee.  
And I will kiss the rose on thy cheek,  
And thou shalt give kisses to me.  
For here is no morn to flout our delight,  
Oh! dost thou not joy at this?  
And here we may lie an endless night,  
A long, long night of bliss."

Spirits! when raptures move,  
Say what it is to love,  
When passion's tear stands on the cheek,  
When bursts the unconscious sigh;  
And the tremulous lips dare not speak  
What is told by the soul-felt eye.  
But what is sweeter to revenge's ear  
Than the fell tyrant's last expiring  
yell?  
Yes! than love's sweetest blisses 't is  
more dear  
To drink the floatings of a despot's  
knell.  
I wake — 't is done — 't is o'er.

DESPAIR.

AND canst thou mock mine agony, thus  
calm  
In cloudless radiance, Queen of silver  
night?  
Can you, ye flowerets, spread your per-  
fumed balm

Mid pearly gems of dew that shine so bright?  
 And you wild winds, thus can you sleep  
 so still  
 Whilst throbs the tempest of my  
 breast so high?  
 Can the fierce night-fiends rest on yonder  
 hill,  
 And, in the eternal mansions of the  
 sky,  
 Can the directors of the storm in power-  
 less silence lie?  
 Hark! I hear music on the zephyr's  
 wing,  
 Louder it floats along the unruffled  
 sky;  
 Some fairy sure has touched the viewless  
 string —  
 Now faint in distant air the murmurs  
 die,  
 Awhile it stills the tide of agony.  
 Now — now it loftier swells — again  
 stern woe  
 Arises with the awakening melody.  
 Again fierce torments, such as demons  
 know,  
 In bitterer, feller tide, on this torn  
 bosom flow.  
 Arise ye sightless spirits of the storm,  
 Ye unseen minstrels of the aerial  
 song,  
 Pour the fierce tide around this lonely  
 form,  
 And roll the tempest's wildest swell  
 along.  
 Dart the red lightning, wing the forked  
 flash,  
 Pour from thy cloud-formed hills the  
 thunder's roar;  
 Arouse the whirlwind — and let ocean  
 dash  
 In fiercest tumult on the rocking  
 shore,  
 Destroy this life or let earth's fabric be  
 no more.  
 Yes! every tie that links me here is  
 dead;  
 Mysterious fate thy mandate I obey,  
 Since hope and peace, and joy, for aye  
 are fled,  
 I come, terrific power, I come away,

Then o'er this ruined soul let spirits of  
 hell,  
 In triumph, laughing wildly, mock its  
 pain;  
 And tho' with direst pangs mine heart-  
 strings swell,  
 I'll echo back their deadly yells again,  
 Cursing the power that ne'er made aught  
 in vain.

## FRAGMENT.

YES! all is past — swift time has fled  
 away,  
 Yet its swell pauses on my sickening  
 mind;  
 How long will horror nerve this frame  
 of clay?  
 I 'm dead, and lingers yet my soul  
 behind.  
 Oh! powerful fate, revoke thy deadly  
 spell,  
 And yet that may not ever, ever be,  
 Heaven will not smile upon the work of  
 hell;  
 Ah! no, for heaven cannot smile on  
 me;  
 Fate, envious fate, has sealed my way-  
 ward destiny.

I sought the cold brink of the midnight  
 surge,  
 I sighed beneath its wave to hide my  
 woes,  
 The rising tempest sung a funeral dirge,  
 And on the blast a frightful yell arose.  
 Wild flew the meteors o'er the maddened  
 main,  
 Wilder did grief athwart my bosom  
 glare;  
 Stilled was the unearthly howling, and a  
 strain,  
 Swelled mid the tumult of the battling  
 air,  
 'T was like a spirit's song, but yet more  
 soft and fair.

I met a maniac; like he was to me,  
 I said — " Poor victim wherefore dost  
 thou roam?  
 And canst thou not contend with agony,  
 That thus at midnight thou dost quit  
 thine home? "

“ Ah there she sleeps: cold is her blood-  
less form,  
And I will go to slumber in her  
grave;  
And then our ghosts, whilst raves the  
maddened storm,  
Will sweep at midnight o'er the  
wildered wave;  
Wilt thou our lowly beds with tears of  
pity lave? ”

“ Ah! no, I cannot shed the pitying  
tear,  
This breast is cold, this heart can feel  
no more;  
But I can rest me on thy chilling bier,  
Can shriek in horror to the tempest's  
roar. ”

## THE SPECTRAL HORSEMAN.

WHAT was the shriek that struck fancy's  
ear  
As it sate on the ruins of time that is  
past?  
Hark! it floats on the fitful blast of the  
wind,  
And breathes to the pale moon a funeral  
sigh.  
It is the Benshie's moan on the storm,  
Or a shivering fiend that thirsting for  
sin,  
Seeks murder and guilt when virtue  
sleeps,  
Winged with the power of some ruthless  
king,  
And sweeps o'er the breast of the pro-  
strate plain.  
It was not a fiend from the regions of  
hell  
That poured its low moan on the still-  
ness of night:  
It was not a ghost of the guilty dead,  
Nor a yelling vampire reeking with  
gore;  
But aye at the close of seven years'  
end,  
That voice is mixt with the swell of the  
storm,  
And aye at the close of seven years'  
end,

A shapeless shadow that sleeps on the  
hill  
Awakens and floats on the mist of the  
heath.  
It is not the shade of a murdered man,  
Who has rusht uncalled to the throne of  
his God,  
And howls in the pause of the eddying  
storm.  
This voice is low, cold, hollow, and  
chill,  
'T is not heard by the ear, but is felt in  
the soul.  
'T is more frightful far than the death-  
demon's scream,  
Or the laughter of fiends when they  
howl o'er the corpse  
Of a man who has sold his soul to hell.  
It tells the approach of a mystic form,  
A white courser bears the shadowy  
sprite;  
More thin they are than the mists of the  
mountain,  
When the clear moonlight sleeps on the  
waveless lake.  
More pale *his* cheek than the snows of  
Nithona,  
When winter rides on the northern blast,  
And howls in the midst of the leafless  
wood.  
Yet when the fierce swell of the tempest  
is raving,  
And the whirlwinds howl in the caves  
of Inisfallen,  
Still secure mid the wildest war of the  
sky,  
The phantom courser scours the waste,  
And his rider howls in the thunder's  
roar.  
O'er him the fierce bolts of avenging  
heaven  
Pause, as in fear, to strike his head.  
The meteors of midnight recoil from his  
figure,  
Yet the wildered peasant that oft passes  
by,  
With wonder beholds the blue flash  
thro' his form:  
And his voice, tho' faint as the sighs of  
the dead,  
The startled passenger shudders to hear,  
More distinct than the thunder's wildest  
roar.

Then does the dragon, who chained in  
the caverns  
To eternity, curses the champion of  
Erin,  
Moan and yell loud at the lone hour of  
midnight,  
And twine his vast wreaths round the  
forms of the demons;  
Then in agony roll his death-swimming  
eyeballs,  
Though wildered by death, yet never to  
die!  
Then he shakes from his skeleton folds  
the nightmares,  
Who, shrieking in agony, seek the  
couch  
Of some fevered wretch who courts  
sleep in vain;  
Then the tombless ghosts of the guilty  
dead  
In horror pause on the fitful gale.  
They float on the swell of the eddying  
tempest,  
And scared seek the caves of gigan-  
tic . . .  
Where their thin forms pour unearthly  
sounds  
On the blast that sweeps the breast of  
the lake,  
And mingles its swell with the moon-  
light air.

MELODY TO A SCENE OF  
FORMER TIMES.

ART thou indeed for ever gone,  
For ever, ever, lost to me?  
Must this poor bosom beat alone,  
Or beat at all, if not for thee?  
Ah! why was love to mortals given,  
To lift them to the height of heaven,  
Or dash them to the depths of hell?  
Yet I do not reproach thee, dear!  
Ah! no, the agonies that swell  
This panting breast, this frenzied  
brain  
Might wake my ——'s slumb'ring  
tear.  
Oh! heaven is witness I did love,  
And heaven does know I love thee still,  
Does know the fruitless sickening thrill,

When reason's judgment vainly strove  
To blot thee from my memory;  
But which might never, never be.  
Oh! I appeal to that blest day  
When passion's wildest ecstasy  
Was coldness to the joys I knew,  
When every sorrow sunk away.  
Oh! I had never liv'd before,  
But now those blisses are no more.

And now I cease to live again,  
I do not blame thee, love; ah no!  
The breast that feels this anguished woe  
Throbs for thy happiness alone.  
Two years of speechless bliss are gone,  
I thank thee dearest for the dream.  
'T is night—what faint and distant  
scream

Comes on the wild and fitful blast?  
It moans for pleasures that are past,  
It moans for days that are gone by.  
Oh! lagging hours how slow you fly!

I see a dark and lengthened vale,  
The black view closes with the tomb;  
But darker is the lowering gloom  
That shades the intervening dale.

In visioned slumber for awhile  
I seem again to share thy smile,  
I seem to hang upon thy tone.

Again you say, "Confide in me,  
For I am thine, and thine alone,  
And thine must ever, ever be."  
But oh! awakening still anew,  
Athwart my enanguisht senses flew  
A fiercer, deadlier agony!

[End of *Posthumous Fragments of Margaret  
Nicholson.*]

STANZA FROM A TRANSLA-  
TION OF THE MARSEIL-  
LAISE HYMN.

TREMBLE Kings despised of man  
Ye traitors to your Country  
Tremble! Your parricidal plan  
At length shall meet its destiny . . .  
We all are soldiers fit to fight  
But if we sink in glory's night  
Our mother Earth will give ye new  
The brilliant pathway to pursue  
Which leads to Death or Victory. . . .

## BIGOTRY'S VICTIM.

## I.

DARES the lama, most fleet of the sons  
 of the wind,  
 The lion to rouse from his skull-  
 covered lair?  
 When the tiger approaches can the fast-  
 fleeting hind  
 Repose trust in his footsteps of air?  
 No! Abandoned he sinks in a trance of  
 despair,  
 The monster transfixes his prey,  
 On the sand flows his life-blood  
 away;  
 Whilst India's rocks to his death-yells  
 reply,  
 Protracting the horrible harmony.

## II.

Yet the fowl of the desert, when danger  
 encroaches,  
 Dares fearless to perish defending her  
 brood,  
 Tho' the fiercest of cloud-piercing tyrants  
 approaches,  
 Thirsting — ay, thirsting for blood;  
 And demands, like mankind, his brother  
 for food;  
 Yet more lenient, more gentle  
 than they;  
 For hunger, not glory, the prey  
 Must perish. Revenge does not howl  
 in the dead.  
 Nor ambition with fame crown the  
 murderer's head.

## III.

Tho' weak, as the lama, that bounds on  
 the mountains,  
 And endued not with fast-fleeting foot-  
 steps of air,  
 Yet, yet will I draw from the purest of  
 fountains,  
 Tho' a fiercer than tiger is there.  
 Tho' more dreadful than death, it scat-  
 ters despair,  
 Tho' its shadow eclipses the day,  
 And the darkness of deepest dis-  
 may

Spreads the influence of soul-chilling  
 terror around,  
 And lowers on the corpses, that rot on  
 the ground.

## IV.

They came to the fountain to draw from  
 its stream,  
 Waves too pure, too celestial, for  
 mortals to see;  
 They bathed for awhile in its silvery  
 beam,  
 Then perisht, and perisht like me.  
 For in vain from the grasp of the Bigot  
 I flee;  
 The most tenderly loved of my  
 soul  
 Are slaves to his hated control.  
 He pursues me, he blasts me! 'Tis in  
 vain that I fly:  
 What remains, but to curse him, — to  
 curse him and die?

ON AN ICICLE THAT CLUNG  
TO THE GRASS OF A  
GRAVE.

## I.

OH! take the pure gem to where south-  
 erly breezes,  
 Waft repose to some bosom as faithful  
 as fair,  
 In which the warm current of love never  
 freezes,  
 As it rises unmingled with selfishness  
 there,  
 Which, untainted by pride, unpolluted  
 by care,  
 Might dissolve the dim icedrop, might  
 bid it arise,  
 Too pure for these regions, to gleam in  
 the skies.

## II.

Or where the stern warrior, his country  
 defending,  
 Dares fearless the dark-rolling battle  
 to pour,  
 Or o'er the fell corpse of a dread tyrant  
 bending,

Where patriotism red with his guilt-  
reeking gore  
Plants liberty's flag on the slave-  
peopled shore,  
With victory's cry, with the shout of the  
free,  
Let it fly, taintless spirit, to mingle with  
thee.

## III.

For I found the pure gem, when the  
daybeam returning,  
Ineffectual gleams on the snow-covered  
plain,  
When to others the wisht-for arrival of  
morning  
Brings relief to long visions of soul-  
racking pain;  
But regret is an insult — to grieve is  
in vain:  
And why should we grieve that a spirit  
so fair  
Seeks Heaven to mix with its own kin-  
dred there?

## IV.

But still 't was some spirit of kindness  
descending  
To share in the load of mortality's  
woe,  
Who over the lowly-built sepulchre  
bending  
Bade sympathy's tenderest teardrop to  
flow.  
Not for *thee*, soft compassion, cele-  
stials did know,  
But if *angels* can weep, sure *man* may  
repine,  
May weep in mute grief o'er thy low-  
laid shrine.

## V.

And did I then say, for the altar of  
glory,  
That the earliest, the loveliest of flow-  
ers I 'd entwine,  
Tho' with millions of blood-reeking vic-  
tims 't was gory,  
Tho' the tears of the widow polluted  
its shrine,  
Tho' around it the orphans, the father-  
less pine?

Oh! Fame, all thy glories I'd yield for a  
tear  
To shed on the grave of a heart so  
sincere.

## LOVE.

WHY is it said thou canst not live  
In a youthful breast and fair,  
Since thou eternal life canst give,  
Canst bloom for ever there?  
Since withering pain no power possest,  
Nor age, to blanch thy vermeil hue,  
Nor time's dread victor, death, confest,  
Tho' bathed with his poison dew,  
Still thou retain'st unchanging bloom,  
Fixt tranquil, even in the tomb.  
And oh! when on the blest reviving  
The day-star dawns of love,  
Each energy of soul surviving  
More vivid, soars above,  
Hast thou ne'er felt a rapturous thrill,  
Like June's warm breath, athwart thee  
fly,  
O'er each idea then to steal,  
When other passions die?  
Felt it in some wild noonday dream,  
When sitting by the lonely stream,  
Where Silence says, "Mine is the dell;"  
And not a murmur from the plain,  
And not an echo from the fell,  
Disputes her silent reign.

ON A FÊTE AT CARLTON  
HOUSE: FRAGMENT.

By the mossy brink,  
With me the Prince shall sit and think;  
Shall muse in visioned Regency,  
Rapt in bright dreams of dawning  
Royalty.

## TO A STAR.

SWEET star, which gleaming o'er the  
darksome scene  
Thro' fleecy clouds of silvery radiance  
fliest,  
Spanglet of light on evening's shadowy  
veil,  
Which shrouds the day-beam from the  
waveless lake,  
Lighting the hour of sacred love; more  
sweet



Than the expiring morn-star's paly fires.  
 Sweet star! When wearied Nature  
 sinks to sleep,  
 And all is husht, — all, save the voice of  
 Love,  
 Whose broken murmurings swell the  
 balmy blast  
 Of soft Favonius, which at intervals  
 Sighs in the ear of stillness, art thou  
 aught but  
 Lulling the slaves of interest to repose  
 With that mild, pitying gaze! Oh, I  
 would look  
 In thy dear beam till every bond of  
 sense  
 Became enamoured —

TO MARY, WHO DIED IN THIS  
 OPINION.

I.

MAIDEN, quench the glare of sorrow  
 Struggling in thine haggard eye:  
 Firmness dare to borrow  
 From the wreck of destiny;  
 For the ray morn's bloom revealing  
 Can never boast so bright an hue  
 As that which mocks concealing,  
 And sheds its loveliest light on you.

II.

Yet is the tie departed  
 Which bound thy lovely soul to bliss?  
 Has it left thee broken-hearted  
 In a world so cold as this!  
 Yet, tho', fainting fair one,  
 Sorrow's self thy cup has given,  
 Dream thou'lt meet thy dear one,  
 Never more to part, in heaven.

III.

Existence would I barter  
 For a dream so dear as thine,  
 And smile to die a martyr  
 On affection's bloodless shrine.  
 Nor would I change for pleasure  
 That withered hand and ashy cheek,  
 If my heart enshrined a treasure  
 Such as forces thine to break.

A TALE OF SOCIETY AS IT IS:  
 FROM FACTS, 1811.

I.

SHE was an agèd woman; and the years  
 Which she had numbered on her toil-  
 some way  
 Had bowed her natural powers to  
 decay.  
 She was an agèd woman; yet the ray  
 Which faintly glimmered thro' her start-  
 ing tears,  
 Prest into light by silent misery,  
 Hath soul's imperishable energy.  
 She was a cripple, and incapable  
 To add one mite to gold-fed luxury:  
 And therefore did her spirit dimly  
 feel  
 That poverty, the crime of tainting  
 stain,  
 Would merge her in its depths, never to  
 rise again.

II.

One only son's love had supported her.  
 She long had struggled with in-  
 firmity,  
 Lingering to human life-scenes; for  
 to die,  
 When fate has spared to rend some  
 mental tie,  
 Would many wish, and surely fewer  
 dare.  
 But, when the tyrant's bloodhounds  
 forced the child  
 For his cursed power unhallowed arms  
 to wield —  
 Bend to another's will — become a  
 thing  
 More senseless than the sword of  
 battlefield —  
 Then did she feel keen sorrow's  
 keenest sting;  
 And many years had past ere comfort  
 they would bring.

III.

For seven years did this poor woman  
 live  
 In unparticipated solitude.

Thou mightst have seen her in the  
 forest rude  
 Picking the scattered remnants of  
 its wood.  
 If human, thou mightst then have  
 learned to grieve.  
 The gleanings of precarious charity  
 Her scantiness of food did scarce  
 supply.  
 The proofs of an unspeaking sorrow  
 dwelt  
 Within her ghastly hollowness of eye:  
 Each arrow of the season's change  
 she felt.  
 Yet still she groans, ere yet her race  
 were run,  
 One only hope: it was — once more to  
 see her son.

## IV.

It was an eve of June, when every star  
 Spoke peace from heaven to those  
 on earth that live.  
 She rested on the moor. 'T was  
 such an eve  
 When first her soul began indeed to  
 grieve:  
 Then he was here; now he is very far.  
 The sweetness of the balmy evening  
 A sorrow o'er her aged soul did fling,  
 Yet not devoid of rapture's mingled  
 tear:  
 A balm was in the poison of the sting.  
 This aged sufferer for many a year  
 Had never felt such comfort. She  
 supprest  
 A sigh — and turning round, claspt Wil-  
 liam to her breast!

## V.

And, tho' his form was wasted by  
 the woe  
 Which tyrants on their victims love  
 to wreak,  
 Tho' his sunk eyeballs and his faded  
 cheek  
 Of slavery's violence and scorn did  
 speak,  
 Yet did the aged woman's bosom  
 glow.  
 The vital fire seemed reillumed within  
 By this sweet unexpected welcoming.

O, consummation of the fondest  
 hope  
 That ever soared on fancy's wildest  
 wing!  
 Oh, tenderness that found'st so  
 sweet a scope!  
 Prince who dost pride thee on thy  
 mighty sway,  
 When *thou* canst feel such love, thou  
 shalt be great as they!

## VI.

Her son, compelled, the country's  
 foes had fought,  
 Had bled in battle; and the stern  
 control  
 Which ruled his sinews and coerced  
 his soul  
 Utterly poisoned life's unmingled  
 bowl,  
 And unsubduable evils on him brought.  
 He was the shadow of the lusty child  
 Who, when the time of summer season  
 smiled,  
 Did earn for her a meal of honesty,  
 And with affectionate discourse be-  
 guiled  
 The keen attacks of pain and pov-  
 erty;  
 Till Power, as envying her this only  
 joy,  
 From her maternal bosom tore the  
 unhappy boy.

## VII.

And now cold charity's unwelcome  
 dole  
 Was insufficient to support the pair;  
 And they would perish rather than  
 would bear  
 The law's stern slavery, and the  
 insolent stare  
 With which law loves to rend the  
 poor man's soul —  
 The bitter scorn, the spirit-sinking  
 noise  
 Of heartless mirth which women,  
 men, and boys,  
 Wake in this scene of legal misery.



## II.

He drew on a boot to hide his hoof,  
 He drew on a glove to hide his claw,  
 His horns were concealed by a *bras-  
 chapeau*,  
 And the Devil went forth as natty a beau,  
 As Bond Street ever saw.

## III.

He sate him down, in London town,  
 Before earth's morning ray,  
 With a favorite imp he began to chat,  
 On religion, and scandal, this and that,  
 Until the dawn of day.

## IV.

And then to St. James's Court he went,  
 And St. Paul's Church he took on his  
 way,  
 He was mighty thick with every Saint,  
 Tho' they were formal and he was gay.

## V.

The Devil was an agriculturist,  
 And as bad weeds quickly grow,  
 In looking over his farm, I wist  
 He would n't find cause for woe.

## VI.

He peept in each hole, to each chamber  
 stole,  
 His promising live-stock to view;  
 Grinning applause, he just showed them  
 his claws,  
 And they shrunk with affright from his  
 ugly sight,  
 Whose work they delighted to do.

## VII.

Satan poked his red nose into crannies  
 so small,  
 One would think that the innocents  
 fair,  
 Poor lambkins! were just doing nothing  
 at all,  
 But settling some dress or arranging  
 some ball,  
 But the Devil saw deeper there.

## VIII.

A Priest, at whose elbow the Devil dur-  
 ing prayer,  
 Sate familiarly, side by side,  
 Declared, that if the tempter were there,  
 His presence he would not abide.  
 Ah, ha! thought Old Nick, that 's a very  
 stale trick,  
 For without the Devil, O favorite of evil,  
 In your carriage you would not ride.

## IX.

Satan next saw a brainless King,  
 Whose house was as hot as his own,  
 Many imps in attendance were there on  
 the wing,  
 They flap the pennon and twisted the  
 sting.  
 Close by the very Throne.

## X.

Ah, ha! thought Satan, the pasture is  
 good,  
 My Cattle will here thrive better  
 than others,  
 They dine on news of human blood,  
 They sup on the groans of the dying  
 and dead,  
 And supperless never will go to bed;  
 Which will make them fat as their  
 brothers.

## XI.

Fat as the fiends that feed on blood,  
 Fresh and warm from the fields of  
 Spain,  
 Where ruin ploughs her gory way,  
 When the shoots of earth are nipt in the  
 bud,  
 Where Hell is the Victor's prey,  
 Its glory the meed of the slain.

## XII.

Fat — as the death-birds on Erin's shore,  
 That glutted themselves in her dearest  
 gore,  
 And fitted round Castlereagh,  
 When they snatch the Patriot's heart,  
 that *his* grasp

Had torn from its widow's maniac clasp,  
And fled at the dawn of day.

## XIII.

Fat — as the reptiles of the tomb,  
That riot in corruption's spoil,  
That fret their little hour in gloom,  
And creep, and live the while.

## XIV.

Fat as that Prince's maudlin brain,  
Which addled by some gilded toy,  
Tired, gives his sweetmeat, and again  
Cries for it, like a humored boy.

## XV.

For he is fat, his waistcoat gay,  
When strained upon a levee day,  
Scarce meets across his princely  
paunch,  
And pantaloons are like half moons  
Upon each brawny haunch.

## XVI.

How vast his stock of calf! when plenty  
Had filled his empty head and heart,  
Enough to satiate foplings twenty,  
Could make his pantaloons seams start.

## XVII.

The Devil, (who sometimes is called  
nature,)  
For men of power provides thus well,  
Whilst every change and every feature,  
Their great original can tell.

## XVIII.

Satan saw a lawyer a viper slay,  
That crawled up the leg of his table,  
It reminded him most marvellously,  
Of the story of Cain and Abel.

## XIX.

The wealthy yeoman, as he wanders,  
His fertile fields among,  
And on his thriving cattle ponders,  
Counts his sure gains, and hums a  
song;

Thus did the Devil, thro' earth walking,  
Hum low a hellish song.

## XX.

For they thrive well, whose garb of gore,  
Is Satan's choicest livery,  
And they thrive well, who from the poor,  
Have snatcht the bread of penury,  
And heap the houseless wanderer's store,  
On the rank pile of luxury.

## XXI.

The Bishops thrive, tho' they are big,  
The Lawyers thrive, tho' they are thin;  
For every gown, and every wig,  
Hides the safe thrift of Hell within.

## XXII.

Thus pigs were never counted clean,  
Altho' they dine on finest corn;  
And cormorants are sin-like lean,  
Altho' they eat from night to morn.

## XXIII.

Oh! why is the Father of Hell in such  
glee,  
As he grins from ear to ear?  
Why does he doff his clothes joyfully,  
As he skips, and prances, and flaps his  
wing,  
As he sidles, leers, and twirls his sting,  
And dares, as he is, to appear?

## XXIV.

A statesman past — alone to him,  
The Devil dare his whole shape un-  
cover,  
To show each feature, every limb,  
Secure of an unchanging lover.

## XXV.

At this known sign, a welcome sight,  
The watchful demons sought their  
King,  
And every fiend of the Stygian night,  
Was in an instant on the wing.

## XXVI.

Pale Loyalty, his guilt-steeped brow,  
 With wreaths of gory laurel crowned;  
 The hell-hounds, Murder, Want, and  
 Woe,  
 For ever hungering flockt around;  
 From Spain had Satan sought their food,  
 'T was human woe and human blood!

## XXVII.

Hark the earthquake's crash I hear,  
 Kings turn pale and Conquerors start,  
 Ruffians tremble in their fear,  
 For their Satan doth depart.

## XXVIII.

This day fiends give to revelry,  
 To celebrate their King's return,  
 And with delight its sire to see,  
 Hell's adamantine limits burn.

## XXIX.

But were the Devil's sight as keen  
 As Reason's penetrating eye,  
 His sulphurous Majesty I ween,  
 Would find but little cause for joy.

## XXX.

For the sons of Reason see,  
 That ere fate consume the Pole,  
 The false Tyrant's cheek shall be,  
 Bloodless as his coward soul.

TO THE QUEEN OF MY HEART.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

SHALL we roam, my love,  
 To the twilight grove,

<sup>1</sup> Printed as Shelley's by Medwin; reprinted by Mrs. Shelley, first edition of 1839, but subsequently withdrawn as of doubtful genuineness.—  
 ED.

When the moon is rising bright;  
 Oh, I 'll whisper there,  
 In the cool night-air,  
 What I dare not in broad daylight!

## II.

I 'll tell thee a part  
 Of the thoughts that start  
 To being when thou art nigh;  
 And thy beauty, more bright  
 Than the stars' soft light,  
 Shall seem as a weft from the sky.

## III.

When the pale moonbeam  
 On tower and stream  
 Sheds a flood of silver sheen,  
 How I love to gaze  
 As the cold ray strays  
 O'er thy face, my heart's throned  
 queen!

## IV.

Wilt thou roam with me  
 To the restless sea,  
 And linger upon the steep,  
 And list to the flow  
 Of the waves below  
 How they toss and roar and leap!

## V.

Those boiling waves  
 And the storm that raves  
 At night o'er their foaming crest,  
 Resemble the strife  
 That, from earliest life,  
 The passions have waged in my breast.

## VI.

Oh, come then and rove  
 To the sea or the grove  
 When the moon is rising bright,  
 And I 'll whisper there  
 In the cool night-air  
 What I dare not in broad daylight.

## APPENDIX.

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### UGOLINO.

From Dante's *Inferno*, Canto xxxiii.  
ll. 22-75.

Translated by Medwin, with aid from  
Shelley.

Shelley's contributions are printed in Ro-  
man type, Medwin's portion in italics.

*Now had the loophole of that dungeon still  
Which bears the name of Famine's  
Tower from me,  
And where 't is fit that many another will  
Be doomed to linger in captivity,  
Shown thro' its narrow opening in my  
cell,*

Moon after moon slow waning, *when a  
sleep*

That of the future burst the veil, in dream,  
Visited me. It was a slumber deep  
And evil; for I saw — or I did seem

*To see — that tyrant lord his revels keep,  
The leader of the cruel hunt to them,*

*Chasing the wolf and wolf-cubs up the  
steep*

*Ascent that from the Pisan is the screen  
Of Lucca. With him Gualandi came,  
Simondi, and Lanfranchi, bloodhounds  
lean,*

Trained to the sport and eager for the  
game,  
Wide ranging in his front. *But soon were  
seen,*

*Tho' by so short a course, with spirits  
tame  
The father and his whelps to flag at once.*

*When I*

Heard lockt beneath me of that horrible  
tower

The outlet, then into their eyes alone  
I lookt to read myself, *without a sign  
Or word.*

*But, when to shine*

*Upon the world, not us, came forth the  
light  
Of the new sun, and, thwart my prison  
thrown,  
Gleamed thro' its narrow chink, a doleful  
sight,*

Three faces, each the reflex of my own,  
Were imaged by this faint and ghastly  
ray.

*"Father, our woes so great were yet the less  
Would you but eat of us: 't was you who  
clad*

Our bodies in these weeds of wretched-  
ness, —

*Despoil them!" — Not to make their  
hearts more sad,*

*I husht myself.*

*Between the fifth and sixth day, ere 't was  
dawn,*

*I found myself blind-groping o'er the  
three.*

FROM CALDERON'S CISMA  
D'INGLATERRA.

Translated by Medwin, with aid from  
Shelley.

Shelley's contributions are printed in Roman type, Medwin's portion in italics.

*Hast thou not seen, officious with delight,  
Move thro' the illumined air about the  
flower*

*The bee, that fears to drink its purple light,  
Lest danger lurk within that rose's  
bower?*

*Hast thou not marked the moth's enamoured flight*

*About the taper's flame at evening hour,  
Till kindle in that monumental fire  
His sunflower wings their own funereal  
pyre?*

*My heart, its wishes trembling to unfold,  
Thus round the rose and taper hovering  
came;*

And Passion's slave, Distrust, in ashes cold  
Smothered awhile, but could not quench,  
the flame;

*Till Love, that grows by disappointment  
bold,*

*And Opportunity, had conquered  
Shame,—*

*And like the bee and moth, in act to close,  
I burnt my wings, and settled on the rose.*

ADDITIONAL STANZA TO  
IRELAND.<sup>1</sup>

"I COULD stand

Upon thy shores, O Erin, and could count  
The billows that, in their unceasing swell,  
Dash on thy beach, and every wave might  
seem

An instrument in Time, the giant's grasp,  
To burst the barriers of Eternity.  
Proceed, thou giant, conquering and to  
conquer;

March on thy lonely way! The nations fall  
Beneath thy noiseless footstep; pyramids  
That for millenniums have defied the blast,  
And laught at lightnings, thou dost crush to  
naught.

Yon monarch, in his solitary pomp,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 671.

Is but the fungus of a winter day  
That thy light footstep presses into dust.  
Thou art a conqueror, Time; all things give  
way  
Before thee but the fixt and virtuous will;  
The sacred sympathy of soul which was  
When thou wert not, which shall be when  
thou perishest.

EVENING.—TO HARRIET.<sup>2</sup>

O THOU bright Sun! beneath the dark blue  
line

Of western distance that sublime descend-  
est,

And, gleaming lovelier as thy beams de-  
cline,

Thy million hues to every vapor lendest,  
And, over cobweb lawn and grove and stream

Sheddest the liquid magic of thy light,  
Till calm Earth, with the parting splendor

bright,

Shows like the vision of a beauteous dream;  
What gazer now with astronomic eye

Could coldly count the spots within thy  
sphere?

Such were thy lover, Harriet, could he fly  
The thoughts of all that makes his pas-  
sion dear,

And, turning senseless from thy warm  
caress,

Pick flaws in our close-woven happiness.

TO IANTHE.<sup>3</sup>

I LOVE thee, Baby! for thine own sweet  
sake;

Those azure eyes, that faintly dimpled  
cheek,

Thy tender frame, so eloquently weak,  
Love in the sternest heart of hate might  
wake;

But more when o'er thy fitful slumber bend-  
ing

Thy mother folds thee to her wakeful  
heart,

Whilst love and pity, in her glances blend-  
ing,

All that thy passive eyes can feel impart:  
More, when some feeble lineaments of her,

Who bore thy weight beneath her spotless  
bosom,

<sup>2</sup> *Evening.* — *To Harriet.* Published by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1837. Composed July 31, 1813.

<sup>3</sup> *To Ianthe.* Published by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1837. Composed September, 1813.



As with deep love I read thy face, recur, —  
 More dear art thou, O fair and fragile blossom;  
 Dearest when most thy tender traits express  
 The image of thy mother's loveliness.

### THE PINE FOREST OF THE CASCINE NEAR PISA.<sup>1</sup>

FIRST DRAFT OF "TO JANE: THE INVENTION, THE RECOLLECTION."

DEAREST, best and brightest,

    Come away,  
 To the woods and to the fields!  
 Dearer than this fairest day  
 Which, like thee to those in sorrow,  
 Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow  
 To the rough Year just awake  
 In its cradle in the brake.

The eldest of the hours of Spring,  
 Into the winter wandering,  
 Looks upon the leafless wood;  
 And the banks all bare and rude  
 Found, it seems, this halcyon Morn  
 In February's bosom born,  
 Bending from Heaven, in azure mirth,  
 Kist the cold forehead of the Earth,  
 And smiled upon the silent sea,  
 And bade the frozen streams be free;  
 And waked to music all the fountains,  
 And breathed upon the rigid mountains,  
 And made the wintry world appear  
 Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

### FRAGMENTS.

RADIANT Sister of the Day,  
 Awake! arise! and come away!  
 To the wild woods and the plains,  
 To the pools where winter rains  
 Image all the roof of leaves,  
 Where the pine its garland weaves  
 Sapless, gray, and ivy dun  
 Round stems that never kiss the sun —  
 To the sandhills of the sea,  
 Where the earliest violets be.

Now the last of many days,  
 All beautiful and bright as thou,  
 The loveliest and the last, is dead,  
 Rise, Memory, and write its praise!  
 And do thy wonted work and trace  
 The epitaph of glory fled;  
 For now the Earth has changed its face,  
 A frown is on the Heaven's brow.

We wandered to the Pine Forest  
 That skirts the Ocean's foam,  
 The lightest wind was in its nest,  
 The tempest in its home.

The whispering waves were half asleep,  
 The clouds were gone to play,  
 And on the woods, and on the deep,  
 The smile of Heaven lay.

It seemed as if the day were one  
 Sent from beyond the skies,  
 Which shed to earth above the sun  
 A light of Paradise.

We paused amid the pines that stood  
 The giants of the waste,  
 Tortured by storms to shapes as rude  
 With stems like serpents interlaced.

How calm it was — the silence there  
 By such a chain was bound  
 That even the busy woodpecker  
 Made stiller by her sound

The inviolable quietness;  
 The breath of peace we drew  
 With its soft motion made not less  
 The calm that round us grew.

It seemed that from the remotest seat  
 Of the white mountain's waste,  
 To the bright flower beneath our feet,  
 A magic circle traced: —

A spirit interfused around,  
 A thinking silent life,  
 To momentary peace it bound  
 Our mortal nature's strife; —

And still it seemed the centre of  
 The magic circle there,  
 Was one whose being filled with love  
 The breathless atmosphere.

Were not the crocuses that grew  
 Under that ilex-tree  
 As ever in scent and hue  
 As ever fed the bee?

<sup>1</sup> *The Pine Forest of the Cascine near Pisa.*  
 Published by Mrs. Shelley, 1824.

We stood beside the pools that lie  
Under the forest bough,  
And each seemed like a sky  
Gulft in a world below ;

A purple firmament of light,  
Which in the dark earth lay,  
More boundless than the depth of night,  
And clearer than the day —

In which the massy forests grew  
As in the upper air,  
More perfect both in shape and hue  
Than any waving there.

Like one beloved the scene had lent  
To the dark water's breast  
Its every leaf and lineament  
With that clear truth exprest ;

There lay far glades and neighboring  
lawn,  
And thro' the dark green crowd  
The white sun twinkling like the dawn  
Under a speckled cloud.

Sweet views, which in our world above  
Can never well be seen,  
Were imaged by the water's love  
Of that fair forest green.

And all was interfused beneath  
Within an Elysium air  
An atmosphere without a breath,  
A silence sleeping there.

Until a wandering wind crept by,  
Like an unwelcome thought,  
Which from my mind's too faithful eye  
Blots thy bright image out.

For thou art good and dear and kind,  
The forest ever green,  
But less of peace in S——'s mind,  
Than calm in waters seen.

#### ON ROBERT EMMET'S GRAVE.<sup>1</sup>

##### VI.

No trump tells thy virtues — the grave  
where they rest  
With thy dust shall remain unpolluted by  
fame,  
Till thy foes, by the world and by fortune  
carest,  
Shall pass like a mist from the light of  
thy name.

<sup>1</sup> On *Robert Emmet's Grave*. Published by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1887, dated 1812.

##### VII.

When the storm-cloud that lowers o'er the  
day-beam is gone,  
Unchanged, unextinguish't its life-spring  
will shine ;  
When Erin has ceast with their memory  
to groan,  
She will smile through the tears of revival  
on thine.

#### THE RETROSPECT: CWM ELAN, 1812.<sup>2</sup>

A SCENE, which wildered fancy viewed  
In the soul's coldest solitude,  
With that same scene when peaceful love  
Flings rapture's color o'er the grove,  
When mountain, meadow, wood and stream  
With unalloying glory gleam,  
And to the spirit's ear and eye  
Are unison and harmony.  
The moonlight was my dearer day ;  
Then would I wander far away,  
And, lingering on the wild brook's shore  
To hear its unremitting roar,  
Would lose in the ideal flow  
All sense of overwhelming woe ;  
Or at the noiseless noon of night  
Would climb some healthy mountain's  
height,

And listen to the mystic sound  
That stole in fitful gasps around.  
I joyed to see the streaks of day  
Above the purple peaks decay,  
And watch the latest line of light  
Just mingling with the shades of night ;  
For day with me was time of woe  
When even tears refused to flow ;  
Then would I stretch my languid frame  
Beneath the wild woods' gloomiest shade,  
And try to quench the ceaseless flame  
That on my withered vitals preyed ;  
Would close mine eyes and dream I were  
On some remote and friendless plain,  
And long to leave existence there,  
If with it I might leave the pain  
That with a finger cold and lean  
Wrote madness on my withering mien.

It was not unrequited love  
That bade my 'wildered spirit rove ;  
'T was not the pride disdainng life,  
That with this mortal world at strife

<sup>2</sup> *The Retrospect: Cwm Elan*, 1812. Published by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1887.

Would yield to the soul's inward sense,  
 Then groan in human impotence,  
 And weep because it is not given  
 To taste on Earth the peace of Heaven.  
 'T was not that in the narrow sphere  
 When nature fixt my wayward fate  
 There was no friend or kindred dear  
 Formed to become that spirit's mate,  
 Which, searching on tired pinion, found  
 Barren and cold repulse around ;  
 Oh, no ! yet each one sorrow gave  
 New graces to the narrow grave.

For broken vows had early quelled  
 The stainless spirit's vestal flame ;  
 Yes ! whilst the faithful bosom swelled,  
 Then the envenomed arrow came,  
 And apathy's unaltering eye  
 Beamed coldness on the misery ;  
 And early I had learned to scorn  
 The chains of clay that bound a son  
 Panting to seize the wings of morn,  
 And where its vital powers were born  
 To soar, and spur the cold control  
 Which the vile slaves of earthly night  
 Would twine around its struggling flight.

Oh, many were the friends whom fame  
 Had linkt with the unmeaning name,  
 Whose magic markt among mankind  
 The casket of my unknown mind,  
 Which hidden from the vulgar glare  
 Imbided no fleeting radiance there.  
 My darksome spirit sought — it found  
 A friendless solitude around.  
 For who that might undaunted stand,  
 The savior of a sinking land,  
 Would crawl, its ruthless tyrant's slave,  
 And fatten upon Freedom's grave,  
 Though doomed with her to perish, where  
 The captive clasps abhorred despair.

They could not share the bosom's feeling,  
 Which, passion's every throb revealing,  
 Dared force on the world's notice cold  
 Thoughts of unprofitable mould,  
 Who bask in Custom's fickle ray,  
 Fit sunshine of such wintry day !  
 They could not in a twilight walk  
 Weave an impassioned web of talk,  
 Till mysteries the spirits press  
 In wild yet tender awfulness,  
 Then feel within our narrow sphere  
 How little yet how great we are !  
 But they might shine in courtly glare,  
 Attract the rabble's cheapest stare,  
 And might command where'er they move  
 A thing that bears the name of love ;  
 They might be learn'd, witty, gay,  
 Foremost in fashion's gilt array,  
 On Fame's emblazoned pages shine,  
 Be princes' friends, but never mine !

Ye jagged peaks that frown sublime,  
 Mocking the blunted scythe of Time,  
 Whence I would watch its lustre pale  
 Steal from the moon o'er yonder vale :

Thou rock, whose bosom black and vast,  
 Bared to the stream's unceasing flow,  
 Ever its giant shade doth cast  
 On the tumultuous surge below :

Woods, to whose depths retires to die  
 The wounded echo's melody,  
 And whither this lone spirit bent  
 The footstep of a wild intent :

Meadows ! whose green and spangled breast  
 These fevered limbs have often prest,  
 Until the watchful fiend Despair  
 Slept in the soothing coolness there !  
 Have not your varied beauties seen  
 The sunken eye, the withering mien,  
 Sad traces of the unuttered pain  
 That froze my heart and burned my brain.  
 How changed since Nature's summer form  
 Had last the power my grief to charm,  
 Since last ye soothed my spirit's sadness  
 Strange chaos of a mingled madness !  
 Changed ! — not the loathsome worm that  
 fed

In the dark mansions of the dead  
 Now soaring thro' the fields of air,  
 And gathering purest nectar there,  
 A butterfly, whose million hues  
 The dazzled eye of wonder views,  
 Long lingering on a work so strange,  
 Has undergone so bright a change.

How do I feel my happiness ?  
 I cannot tell, but they may guess  
 Whose every gloomy feeling gone,  
 Friendship and passion feel alone ;  
 Who see mortality's dull clouds  
 Before affection's murmur fly,  
 Whilst the mild glances of her eye  
 Pierce the thin veil of flesh that shrouds  
 The spirit's inmost sanctuary.

O thou ! whose virtues latest known,  
 First in this heart yet claim 'st a throne ;  
 Whose downy sceptre still shall share  
 The gentle sway with virtue there ;  
 Thou fair in form, and pure in mind,  
 Whose ardent friendship rivets fast  
 The flowery band our fates that bind,  
 Which incorruptible shall last  
 When duty's hard and cold control  
 Had thawed around the burning soul, —  
 The gloomiest retrospects that bind  
 With crowns of thorn the bleeding mind,  
 The prospects of most doubtful hue  
 That rise on Fancy's shuddering view, —  
 Are gilt by the reviving ray  
 Which thou hast flung upon my day.

FRAGMENT OF A SONNET.— TO  
HARRIET.<sup>1</sup>

EVER as now with Love and Virtue's glow  
May thy unwithering soul not cease to burn,  
Still may thine heart with those pure thoughts  
o'erflow  
Which force from mine such quick and warm  
return.

TO HARRIET.<sup>2</sup>

It is not blasphemy to hope that Heaven  
More perfectly will give those nameless joys  
Which throb within the pulses of the blood  
And sweeten all that bitterness which Earth  
Infuses in the heaven-born soul. O thou  
Whose dear love gleamed upon the gloomy  
path  
Which this lone spirit travelled, drear and  
cold,  
Yet swiftly leading to those awful limits  
Which mark the bounds of Time and of the  
space  
When Time shall be no more; wilt thou not  
turn  
Those spirit-beaming eyes and look on me,  
Until I be assured that Earth is Heaven,  
And Heaven is Earth? — will not thy glow-  
ing cheek,  
Glowing with soft suffusion, rest on mine,  
And breathe magnetic sweetness thro' the  
frame  
Of my corporeal nature, thro' the soul  
Now knit with these fine fibres? I would  
give  
The longest and the happiest day that fate  
Has markt on my existence but to feel  
*One* soul-reviving kiss. . . . O thou most  
dear,  
'T is an assurance that this Earth is Heaven,  
And Heaven the flower of that untainted  
seed  
Which springeth here beneath such love as  
ours.  
Harriet! let death all mortal ties dissolve,

<sup>1</sup> *Fragment of a Sonnet to Harriet.* Published by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1887, and dated Aug. 1, 1812.

<sup>2</sup> *To Harriet.* Published, 5-13, by Forman, 58-69, by Shelley. *Notes to Queen Mab*, 1813, and entire by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1887, dated 1812.

But ours shall not be mortal! The cold  
hand  
Of Time may chill the love of earthly minds  
Half frozen now; the frigid intercourse  
Of common souls lives but a summer's day;  
It dies, where it arose, upon this earth.  
But ours! oh, 't is the stretch of fancy's  
hope  
To portray its continuance as now,  
Warm, tranquil, spirit-healing; nor when  
age  
Has tempered these wild ecstasies, and given  
A soberer tinge to the luxurious glow  
Which blazing on devotion's pinnacle  
Makes virtuous passion supersede the power  
Of reason; nor when life's festival sun  
To deeper manhood shall have ripened me;  
Nor when some years have added judgment's  
store  
To all thy woman sweetness, all the fire  
Which throbs in thine enthusiast heart; not  
then  
Shall holy friendship (for what other name  
May love like ours assume?), not even then  
Shall custom so corrupt, or the cold forms  
Of this desolate world so harden us,  
As when we think of the dear love that binds  
Our souls in soft communion, while we know  
Each other's thoughts and feelings, can we  
say  
Unblushingly a heartless compliment,  
Praise, hate, or love with the unthinking  
world,  
Or dare to cut the unrelaxing nerve  
That knits our love to virtue. Can those  
eyes,  
Beaming with mildest radiance on my heart  
To purify its purity, e'er bend  
To soothe its vice or consecrate its fears?  
Never, thou second self! Is confidence  
So vain in virtue that I learn to doubt  
The mirror even of Truth? Dark flood of  
Time,  
Roll as it listeth thee; I measure not  
By month or moments thy ambiguous course.  
Another may stand by me on thy brink,  
And watch the bubble whirled beyond his  
ken,  
Which pauses at my feet. The sense of  
love,  
The thirst for action, and the impassioned  
thought  
Prolong my being; if I wake no more,  
My life more actual living will contain  
Than some gray veterans of the world's  
cold school,  
Whose listless hours unprofitably roll  
By one enthusiast feeling unredeemed,  
Virtue and Love! unbending Fortitude,  
Freedom, Devotedness and Purity!  
That life my spirit consecrates to you.

## SONNET.

## TO A BALLOON LADEN WITH KNOWLEDGE.

BRIGHT ball of flame that thro' the gloom  
of even

Silently takest thine ethereal way,  
And with surpassing glory dimm'st each  
ray

Twinkling amid the dark blue depths of  
Heaven,—

Unlike the fire thou bearest, soon shalt  
thou

Fade like a meteor in surrounding gloom,  
Whilst that unquenchable is doomed to  
glow

A watch-light by the patriot's lonely tomb ;  
A ray of courage to the opprest and poor ;  
A spark, tho' gleaming on the hovel's  
hearth,

Which thro' the tyrant's gilded domes shall  
roar ;

A beacon in the darkness of the Earth ;

A sun which, o'er the renovated scene,  
Shall dart like Truth where Falsehood yet  
has been.

SONNET.<sup>2</sup>

## ON LAUNCHING SOME BOTTLES FILLED WITH KNOWLEDGE INTO THE BRISTOL CHANNEL.

VESSELS of heavenly medicine! may the  
breeze

Auspicious waft your dark green forms  
to shore ;

Safe may ye stem the wide surrounding  
roar

Of the wild whirlwinds and the raging seas ;  
And oh ! if Liberty e'er deigned to stoop

From yonder lowly throne her crownless  
brow,

Sure she will breathe around your emerald  
group

The fairest breezes of her west that blow.

Yes ! she will waft ye to some freeborn soul  
Whose eye-beam, kindling as it meets your  
freight,

<sup>1</sup> *Sonnet: To a Balloon laden with Knowledge.* Published by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1887, dated August, 1812.

<sup>2</sup> *Sonnet: On launching some Bottles filled with Knowledge into the Bristol Channel.* Published by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1887, dated August, 1812.

Her heaven-born flame in suffering Earth  
will light,  
Until its radiance gleams from pole to pole,  
And tyrant-hearts with powerless envy  
burst  
To see their night of ignorance dispersed.

FRAGMENT OF A SONNET.<sup>3</sup>

## FAREWELL TO NORTH DEVON.

Where man's profane and tainting hand  
Nature's primeval loveliness has marred,  
And some few souls of the high bliss de-  
barred  
Which else obey her powerful command ;  
That load in grandeur Cambria's emerald  
vales.

ON LEAVING LONDON FOR WALES.<sup>4</sup>

HAIL to thee, Cambria! for the unfettered  
wind  
Which from thy wilds even now methinks  
I feel,  
Chasing the clouds that roll in wrath be-  
hind,  
And tightening the soul's laxest nerves to  
steel ;  
True mountain Liberty alone may heal  
The pain which Custom's obduracies bring,  
And he who dares in fancy even to steal  
One draught from Snowdon's ever sacred  
spring  
Blots out the unholy rede of worldly wit-  
nessing.

And shall that soul, to selfish peace re-  
signed,  
So soon forget the woe its fellows share ?  
Can Snowdon's Lethe from the freeborn  
mind  
So soon the page of injured penury tear ?  
Does this fine mass of human passion dare  
To sleep, unhonoring the patriot's fall,  
Or life's sweet load in quietude to bear  
While millions famish even in Luxury's  
hall,  
And Tyranny, high-raised, stern lowers on  
all ?

<sup>3</sup> *Fragment of a Sonnet: Farewell to North Devon.* Published by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1887, dated August, 1812.

<sup>4</sup> *On Leaving London for Wales: A Fragment.* Published by Dowden, *Life of Shelley*, 1887, dated November, 1812.

No, Cambria! never may thy matchless  
vales

A heart so false to hope and virtue  
shield;

Nor ever may thy spirit-breathing gales  
Waft freshness to the slaves who dare to  
yield.

For me! . . . the weapon that I burn to  
wield

I seek amid thy rocks to ruin hurled,  
That Reason's flag may over Freedom's  
field,

Symbol of bloodless victory, wave un-  
furled,

A meteor-sign of love effulgent o'er the  
world.

Do thou, wild Cambria, calm each strug-  
gling thought;

Cast thy sweet veil of rocks and woods  
between,

That by the soul to indignation wrought  
Mountains and dells be mingled with the  
scene;

Let me forever be what I have been,  
But not forever at my needy door

Let Misery linger speechless, pale, and  
lean;

I am the friend of the unfriended poor,—  
Let me not madly stain their righteous  
cause in gore.

## NOTES.

Page 39.

*Throughout this varied and eternal world etc.*

In Shelley's edition there is a comma after *element* and a full stop at *remained*. Mr. Tutin proposed the emendation.

Page 94.

*The Dæmon of the World. A Fragment.*

Part I. appeared in the volume which contained *Alastor*. Part II. was recovered by Mr. Forman from a copy of *Queen Mab* revised by Shelley.

Page 104.

*Preface to Alastor.*

Shelley's *Preface to Alastor*, etc., closed with the following reference to "The Dæmon of the World": "The Fragment entitled 'THE DÆMON OF THE WORLD' is a detached part of a poem which the author does not intend for publication. The metre in which it is composed is that of 'Samson Agonistes' and the Italian pastoral drama, and may be considered as the natural measure into which poetical conceptions, expressed in harmonious language, naturally fall."

Page 107.

*Herself a poet.*

Mrs. Shelley's second edition, 1839, reads "Himself a poet," which Mr. Rossetti follows.

Page 113.

*In the light of evening, and, its precipice*

I insert the comma after *and*.

Page 117.

*The Revolt of Islam.*

To restore the text of "Laon and Cythna" it will be necessary to make the following changes in "The Revolt of Islam." At the close of *Preface*, p. 121, add as follows:—"In the personal conduct of my Hero and Heroine, there is one circumstance which was intended to startle the reader from the trance of ordinary life. It was my object to break through the crust of those outworn opinions on which established institutions depend. I have appealed therefore to the most universal of all feelings, and have endeavored to strengthen the moral sense, by forbidding it to waste its energies in seeking to avoid actions which are only crimes of convention. It is because there is so great a multitude of artificial vices that there are so few real virtues. Those feelings alone which are benevolent or malevolent, are essentially good or bad. The circumstance of which I speak was introduced, however, merely to accustom men to that charity and toleration which the exhibition of a practice widely differing from their own has a tendency to promote.<sup>1</sup> Nothing indeed can be more mischievous than many actions, innocent in themselves, which might bring down upon individuals the bigoted contempt and rage of the multitude."

P. 140, c. II. st. xxi. l. 1:

"I had a little sister, whose fair eyes"

P. 140, c. II. st. xxv. l. 2:

"To love in human life, this sister sweet,"

P. 145, c. III. st. i. l. 1:

"What thoughts had sway over my sister's slumber"

P. 145, c. III. st. i. l. 3:

"As if they did ten thousand years out-number"

<sup>1</sup> The sentiments connected with and characteristic of this circumstance have no personal reference to the Writer. [Shelley's note.]

- P. 157, c. iv. st. xxx. l. 6:  
"And left it vacant—'t was her brother's  
face—"
- P. 167, c. v. st. xlvii. l. 5:  
"I had a brother once, but he is dead! —"
- P. 175, c. vi. st. xxiv. l. 8:  
"My own sweet sister looked), with joy did  
quail,"
- P. 177, c. vi. st. xxxi. l. 6:  
"The common blood which ran within our  
frames,"
- P. 178, c. vi. st. xxxix. ll. 6-9:  
"With such close sympathies, for to each other  
Had high and solemn hopes, the gentle  
might  
Of earliest love, and all the thoughts which  
smother  
Cold Evil's power, now linked a sister and a  
brother."
- P. 178, c. vi. st. xl. l. 1:  
"And such is Nature's modesty, that those "
- P. 190, c. viii. st. iv. l. 9:  
"Dream ye that God thus builds for man in  
solitude?"
- P. 190, c. viii. st. v. l. 1:  
"What then is God? Ye mock yourselves  
and give"
- P. 190, c. viii. st. vi. l. 1:  
"What then is God? Some moonstruck  
sophist stood"
- P. 190, c. viii. st. vi. ll. 8, 9:  
"And that men say God has appointed Death  
On all who scorn his will to wreak immortal  
wrath."
- P. 190, c. viii. st. vii. ll. 1-4:  
"Men say they have seen God, and heard  
from God,  
Or known from others who have known  
such things,  
And that his will is all our law, a rod  
To scourge us into slaves—that Priests  
and Kings"
- P. 190, c. viii. st. viii. l. 1:  
"And it is said, that God will punish wrong; "
- P. 190, c. viii. st. viii. ll. 3, 4:  
"And his red hell's undying snakes among  
Will bind the wretch on whom he fixed a  
stain"
- P. 191, c. viii. st. xiii. ll. 3, 4:  
"For it is said God rules both high and low,  
And man is made the captive of his  
brother; "
- P. 197, c. ix. st. xiii. l. 8:  
"To curse the rebels. To their God did they "
- P. 197, c. ix. st. xiv. l. 6:  
"By God, and Nature, and Necessity."
- P. 198, c. ix. st. xv. The stanza contains ten  
lines—ll. 4-7 as follows:
- "There was one teacher, and must ever be,  
They said, even God, who, the necessity  
Of rule and wrong had armed against man-  
kind,  
His slave and his avenger there to be; "
- P. 198, c. ix. st. xviii. ll. 3-6:  
"And Hell and Awe, which in the heart of man  
Is God itself; the Priests its downfall knew,  
As day by day their altars lovelier grew,  
Till they were left alone within the fane; "
- P. 206, c. x. st. xxii. l. 9:  
"On fire! Almighty God his hell on earth has  
spread! "
- P. 207, c. x. st. xxvi ll. 7, 8:  
"Of their Almighty God, the armies wind  
In sad procession: each among the train."
- P. 207, c. x. st. xxviii. l. 1:  
"O God Almighty! thou alone hast power."
- P. 208, c. x. st. xxxi. l. 1:  
"And Oromaze, and Christ, and Mahomet."
- P. 208, c. x. st. xxxii. l. 1:  
"He was a Christian Priest from whom it  
came "
- P. 208, c. x. st. xxxii. l. 4:  
"To quell the rebel Atheists; a dire guest "
- P. 208, c. x. st. xxxii. l. 9:  
"To wreak his fear of God on vengeance on  
mankind"
- P. 208, c. x. st. xxxiv. ll. 5, 6:  
"His cradled Idol, and the sacrifice  
Of God to God's own wrath—that Islam's  
creed "
- P. 208, c. x. st. xxxv. l. 9:  
"And thrones, which rest on faith in God,  
nigh overturned."
- P. 209, c. x. st. xxxix. l. 4:  
"Of God may be appeased." He ceased, and  
they "
- P. 209, c. x. st. xl. l. 5:  
"With storms and shadows girt, sate God,  
alone,"
- P. 210, c. x. st. xlv. l. 9:  
"As 'hush! hark! Come they yet? God,  
God, thine hour is near!'"
- P. 210, c. x. st. xlv. l. 8:  
"Men brought their atheist kindred to ap-  
pease "
- P. 211, c. x. st. xlvii. l. 6:  
"The threshold of God's throne, and it was  
she! "
- P. 214, c. xi. st. xvi. l. 1:  
"Ye turn to God for aid in your distress; "
- P. 216, c. xi. st. xxv. l. 7:  
"Swear by your dreadful God."—"We swear,  
we swear! "
- P. 218, c. xii. st. x. l. 9:  
"Truly for self, thus thought that Christian  
Priest indeed,"



P. 218, c. xii. st. xi. l. 9:

"A woman? God has sent his other victim here."

P. 218, c. xii. st. xii. ll. 6-8:

"Will I stand up before God's golden throne,  
And cry, O Lord, to thee did I betray  
An Atheist; but for me she would have  
known."

P. 221, c. xii. st. xxix. l. 4:

"In torment and in fire have Atheists gone; "

P. 221, c. xii. st. xxx. l. 4:

"How Atheists and Republicans can die; "

Page 170.

*Beneath whose spires which swayed in the  
red flame*

Shelley's edition reads *light* for *flame*.  
The emendation is Mr. Rossetti's.

Page 171.

*And the great gate. Then, none knew whence  
or why,*

In Shelley's edition there is a comma after  
gate. The emendation is Mr. Rossetti's.

Page 172.

*As sudden earthquakes light many a vol-  
cano-isle,*

In Shelley's edition there is a full stop at  
isle. The comma is substituted by Mr.  
Forman.

Page 182.

*Which dawned through the rent soul; and  
words it gave,*

Shelley's edition has no comma after *gate*  
nor after *gestures*, nor has it marks of paren-  
thesis around line 4 of the stanza. The  
emendation is Mr. A. C. Bradley's.

Page 191.

*"Oh! Love, who to the heart of wandering  
man*

Shelley's edition has "hearts of wander-  
ing men." The emendation is Mr. Ros-  
setti's.

Page 191.

*And Hate is throned on high with Fear his  
mother,*

This is the reading of "Laonand Cytha-  
na." "The Revolt of Islam" has "her  
mother." There is no authority for *her*, Mr.  
Forman says, in Shelley's revised copy.

Page 197.

*Words which the lore of truth in hues of  
flame*

Shelley's edition reads "hues of grace."  
The emendation is Mr. Forman's.

Page 219.

*Near me, among the snakes. When there  
had fled*

Shelley's edition reads "What then." The  
emendation is Mr. Forman's.

Page 222.

*When the broad sunrise filled with deepen-  
ing gold*

Shelley's edition reads "Where the broad  
*sunrise*." The emendation is Mr. Ros-  
setti's.

Page 223.

*Where its wild surges with the lake were  
blended:*

Shelley's edition reads "When its wild  
surges." The emendation is Mr. Rossetti's.

Page 223.

*Our bark hung there, as on a line sus-  
pended*

Shelley's edition reads "as one line sus-  
pended." The emendation is Mr. Rossetti's.  
In the next line Shelley's edition has a semi-  
colon after "lake."

Page 226.

*Of an ancestral name the orphan chief,*

So in Mrs. Shelley's later editions. In  
the "Posthumous Poems" there is a full  
stop after *chief*.

Page 229.

*And sweet and subtle talk they evermore,*  
So in the "Posthumous Poems;" in later  
editions, "now evermore."

Page 236.

*And down my cheeks the quick tears ran*  
Mr. Rossetti reads "fell" for "ran."

Page 237.

*Which all that I had undergone*

So in Shelley's edition. Mr. Forman sug-  
gests "While" for "Which," and three lines  
farther "had almost burst" for "and almost  
burst."

Page 246.

*(Did they not, love, demand too much,  
Those dying murmurs?)*

The marks of parenthesis are due to Mr. Rossetti.

Page 246.

*Had rescue from a chasm of tears;*

Shelley's edition reads "rescued." The emendation is Mr. Forman's.

Page 246.

*She ceased. — "Lo, where red morning thro'  
the wood"*

Shelley's edition reads "woods." The emendation is Mr. Rossetti's.

Page 248.

*Julian and Maddalo.*

The text of this poem has been finally ascertained by Mr. Forman from Shelley's MS., sent to Leigh Hunt, and placed with other precious MSS. at Mr. Forman's disposal by Mr. Townshend Mayer.

Page 283.

*Withering in destined pain: but who rains  
down*

Shelley's edition has "reigns down," which Mr. Forman defends.

Page 285.

*Which in the winds and on the waves doth  
move,*

The word *and*, introduced here by Mr. Rossetti, is wanting in Shelley's edition.

Page 286.

*And cling to it; tho' under my wrath's  
night*

Shelley's edition reads "wrath's might." Mrs. Shelley made the correction.

Page 289.

*Than all thy sisters, this is the mystic  
shell;*

Mrs. Shelley omits the word "is."

Page 294.

*Of those who were their conquerors: mould-  
ering round*

Mr. Rossetti removes the colon after "conquerors," and puts a full stop after "round."

Page 294.

*The loathsome mask has fallen, the man  
remains etc.*

Mr. Rossetti reads —

"The loathsome mask has fallen. The man remains, — Spectreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man: Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless, Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king Over himself; just, gentle, wise: but man. Passionless? no: — yet free from guilt or pain, —"

Page 298.

*Purple and azure, white, and green, and  
golden,*

The "and" before "green" is due to Mr. Rossetti.

Page 301.

*Darting from starry depths radiance and  
life, doth move,*

So MS. and Mr. Forman; other editions "radiance and light."

Page 301.

*A half unfrozen dew-globe,*

So Mrs. Shelley; in original edition "infrozen."

Page 302.

*And the weak day weeps  
That it should be so.*

Mr. Rossetti makes these lines the close of the preceding speech — that of the moon.

Page 351.

*Whose love was as a bond to all our loves*

The needful word *as* was supplied by Mr. Rossetti.

Page 355.

*The Mask of Anarchy.*

Several readings different from those of the edition of 1832 are derived from a MS. mainly in Mrs. Shelley's handwriting, and used by Mr. Forman in his edition of *Shelley's Poetical Works*.

Page 367.

*To bully one another's guilt.*

The original edition has *out* for *one*, corrected by Mr. Forman.

Page 376.

*Letter to Maria Gisborne.*

The text as first printed has been emended with the aid of readings supplied by Dr. Garnett from Shelley's draft, and by Mr. Forman from a transcript in Mrs. Shelley's handwriting.

Page 381.

*The Witch of Atlas.*

Some readings are derived from a transcript in Mrs. Shelley's handwriting used by Mr. Forman.

Page 384.

*It was their work to bear to many a saint*

So Mr. Rossetti; previous ed *its work*.

Page 447.

*Revenge and Wrong bring forth their kind,*

*Fear,*

Dr. Garnett ("Relics of Shelley") had printed "For Revenge." The correction is Mr. Rossetti's.

Page 456

*Fragments of an Unfinished Drama.*

These fragments were in part printed by Mrs. Shelley, in part obtained from MS. by Dr. Garnett, and first printed by Mr. Rossetti. The passage of prose on p. 456 is Mrs. Shelley's.

Page 461.

*Charles the First.*

These fragments were in part printed by Mrs. Shelley, in part deciphered from MS., and constructed in their present form by Mr. Rossetti. The list of *Dramatis Personæ* was drawn up by Mr. Forman. Two or three emendations are due to Mr. Forman.

Page 474.

*The Triumph of Life.*

Emendations of the text as originally printed were derived from MS. by Dr. Garnett.

Page 476.

*Tempering the light. Upon the chariot beam*

Mr. Rossetti's emendation. Mrs. Shelley read —

"Tempering the light upon the chariot beam,"

Page 478.

*Said the grim Feature (of my thought aware).*

So Mr. Rossetti, emending Mrs. Shelley's —

"Said the grim Feature of my thought: 'Aware . . .'"

Page 489.

*Lines.*

Named "November 1815" in the *Literary Pocket-Book* for 1823.

Page 490.

*"I never saw the sun? We will walk here*

Mr. Forman makes the ingenious suggestion —

"I never saw the sun-rise? We will wake here . . ."

Page 497.

*The flames were fiercely vomited*

*Flames* is Mr. Rossetti's emendation on the line as previously printed — "The waves," etc.

Page 499.

*To the Lord Chancellor.*

In this poem and that to *William Shelley* some readings are derived from transcripts in Mrs. Shelley's handwriting, consulted by Mr. Forman.

Page 499.

*No, Music, thou art not the "food of Love,"*

So Mr. Forman, no doubt rightly: previous editions "god of Love."

Page 502.

*Otho.*

These two stanzas were printed by Mrs. Shelley. The "Fragments" which follow were printed by Dr. Garnett. Mr. Forman and Dr. Garnett think it very likely that they belong to "Otho."

Page 506.

*To the Nile.*

First printed by Mr. Townshend Mayer in the *St. James's Magazine*, March 1879.

Page 513.

*The purple noon's transparent might,  
The breath of the moist earth is light,*

The words *earth* and *might* are given on Dr. Garnett's authority from Shelley's MS. In the *Posthumous Poems* the second of these lines does not appear, and *light* stands in place of *might*. *Air* appears in some editions instead of *earth*.

Page 515.

*Marenghi.*

In part given by Mrs. Shelley; in part obtained from MS. by Dr. Garnett, and first printed by Mr. Rossetti.

Page 520.

*And their mothers look pale — like the white shore*

A MS. of Shelley gives the reading "death-white shore."

Page 520.

*Marry Ruin, thou Tyrant, and God be thy guide*

A MS. of Shelley gives "Hell" in place of "God."

Page 526.

*And the stars are shining bright:*

The Harvard College MS. reads "burning bright." So "The Liberal."

Page 526.

*As I must on thine,*

The Harvard MS. gives —  
"As I most die on thine"  
(Mrs. Shelley's reading, 1839).

Page 527.

*Of sweet flowers and sunny grass,*

So Harvard College MS. "Of the sweet flowers." — Mrs. Shelley's edition.

Page 535.

*Leaf by leaf, day after day,*

The reading *by* instead of *after* is supplied by the MS. in Shelley's handwriting in the Library of Harvard College.

Page 536.

*Cancelled Passage.*

This stanza originally printed before that beginning "Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous scum" was omitted in Mrs. Shelley's edition. It is cancelled in Shelley's own copy in the Harvard College MS.

Page 537.

*One deck is burst up by the waters below,*

This is the reading of the Harvard College MS. Printed editions have *from* for *by*.

Page 540.

*The sweet buds every one,*

In the original printed text we have *birds*. The correction is from Mrs. Shelley.

Page 542.

*Ode to Liberty.*

The Harvard College MS. in Shelley's handwriting is decisive as to the punctuation of the first two lines.

Page 546.

*Of KING into the dust ' or write it there,*

"King" is found in a fragment of the rough draft. Shelley and Mrs. Shelley put four asterisks in place of the word.

Page 547.

*Or what if Art, an ardent intercessor,*

So Mrs. Shelley. In Shelley's edition "O," is printed in place of "Or."

Page 550.

*Its mother's face with heaven's collected tears,*

The Harvard College MS. in Mrs. Shelley's handwriting has this reading. Later editions, "heaven-collected."

Page 551.

*My moon-like flight, thou then may'st mark*

So in the *Posthumous Poems*. "Moonlight flight" in Mrs. Shelley's later editions.

Page 556.

*The Tower of Famine.*

It is uncertain whether the following note be Mrs. Shelley's or Shelley's: "At Pisa

there still exists the prison of Ugolino, which goes by the name of 'La Torre della Fame'; in the adjoining building the galley-slaves are confined. It is situated on the Ponte al Mare on the Arno."

Page 557.

*And many pass it by with careless tread,*

Mrs Shelley reads *passed*. The emendation is Mr. Rossetti's.

Page 557.

*Sonnet.*

Readings in this Sonnet are derived from a copy in Shelley's handwriting sold at the Ollier sale, and from the Harvard College MS.

Page 565.

*And the weary day turned to his rest,*

Mr. Rossetti suggests "her rest."

Page 567.

*Song.*

I have left this among the Poems of 1821, but it seems probable that it was earlier, for in the Harvard College MS. a copy made by Mrs. Shelley is dated in Shelley's handwriting "Pisa, May 1820." It is not likely that Shelley erred, even though his entry of the date of transcription may have been made at a later time than the copy.

Page 569.

*Sonnet: Political Greatness.*

Named by Shelley in the Harvard College MS., *Sonnet, To the Republic of Benevento.*

Page 569.

*Remembrance.*

In a MS. copy by Shelley followed by Mr. Forman, we read, ll. 5-8—

"As the wood when leaves are shed,  
As the night when sleep is fled,  
As the heart when joy is dead."

And, l. 10—

"The owlet night resumes his reign."

Page 578.

*Thro' seas and winds, cities and wildernesses,*

Mr. Forman suggests *lands* in place of *winds*; or should we read *woods*?

Page 580.

*The Boat on the Serchio.*

Partly given by Mrs. Shelley; additions and corrections made from Shelley's MS. by Mr. Rossetti.

Page 582.

*Music.*

Given first in *Posthumous Poems*. Two forms are printed in Mrs. Shelley's second edition of 1839.

Page 582.

*Sonnet to Byron.*

The sonnet as here given was obtained from MS. by Mr. Rossetti.

*Under a heaven of cedar boughs; the drouth*

I adopt Mr. Forman's suggestion *drouth* instead of *drought*.

Page 589.

*To Jane: The Invitation.*

A version of part of this poem and part of the next with variations of text is given in the *Posthumous Poems*.

Page 589.

*Sit by the fireside with Sorrow.*

So MS.; in Mrs. Shelley's collected editions "of Sorrow."

Page 592.

*Bare woods, whose branches stain,*

Mr. Rossetti suggests "strain" for "stain."

Page 604.

*Shall hurl you into dismal Tartarus,*

"Hurl" is the reading of the Harvard College MS.; printed editions, "haul." Cf. stanza lxiii. l. 1.

Page 609.

*As now. I wonder at thee, son of Jove;*

The full stop after "now" is from the Harvard College MS.

Page 610.

*The soul with sweetness, and like an adept*

Harvard College MS. and *Posthumous Poems* read—

"The soul with sweetness, as of an adept."

Page 612.

*Thou dost alone the veil from death uplift.*

So Harvard College MS.; printed editions "of death."

Page 612.

*In truth, and Jove covered their love with joy,*

So the Harvard College MS.; printed editions incorrectly—

"In truth, and Jove covered them with love and joy."

Page 612.

*And steed-subduing Castor, heirs of fame.*

Mr. Rossetti corrected the error "steel-subduing" in previous editions,

Page 614.

*Tritogenia, town-preserving maid,*

Misprinted in Mrs. Shelley's editions "Trilogenia." So on p. 616 "Althæa's" was misprinted "Athæa" in editions previous to Mr. Forman's. On p. 618 "Papaiax" was erroneously "Papaiapax" until Mr. Forman set it right.

Page 621.

*Ai! ai! I have escaped the Trojan toils.*

In Mrs. Shelley's editions, "Ay! ay!" Corrected by Mr. Rossetti.

Page 621.

*The ravin is ready on every side,*

In Mrs. Shelley's editions, "The ravine." Corrected by Mr. Rossetti.

Page 621.

*As would contain ten amphoræ, and bound it*

In Mrs. Shelley's editions, "four amphoræ." The correction was suggested by Mr. Swinburne.

Page 625.

Semichorus I. *We are too far,*

In Mrs. Shelley's editions, "too few." Corrected by Mr. Rossetti.

Page 628.

*From his struck thigh stains her white navel now,*

The MS. of Shelley has "her" for "his," in this and the following line. With Mr. Rossetti I change it in its first occurrence to "his."

Page 647.

*The trunks are crushed and shattered*

Mr. Rossetti reads "scattered."

Page 653.

*A Dialogue.*

The title is from Shelley's MS., where the poem is given in a later and revised text. I introduce from the MS. the correction "o'er Eternity's vale" (in place of "on"). The date given is 1809.

Page 654.

*To the Moonbeam.*

Like "A Dialogue," this is given both in Hogg's "Life of Shelley" (in a letter of 17th May, 1811) and with a revised text in a MS. of later date. In the MS. the date 23d September, 1809 is given. I correct from the MS. the last line of the poem.

Page 654.

*The Solitary.*

Dated 1810 in Shelley's MS.

Page 654.

*To Death.*

The title is from Shelley's MS., where it appears with a revised text. I correct the word "murders" (l. 10) in Hogg's text to "murderer," MS. Hogg says the poem was written at Oxford (1810). The MS. gives twenty additional lines.

Page 655.

*Love's Rose.*

The title is Mr. Rossetti's. The poem appears in a revised text in Shelley's MS., with the date 1810. The second line, hitherto given erroneously, I correct from the MS.

Page 655.

*Eyes: A Fragment.*This is from a MS. copied by Mr. Gannett. A MS. of later date gives the complete poem—five eight-lined stanzas. The date in the later MS. is 1810. I correct *lighten* (l. 1 st. 2) to *light* from this MS.

Page 656.

*Poems from St. Irvyne.*

Following Mr. Rossetti's example I supply a title for each of these poems.

Page 666.

*Stanza from a Translation, etc.*

The entire poem is given in a later MS.

Page 667.

*Bigotry's Victim.*

From Hogg's "Life of Shelley," given in a letter dated 28th April, 1811. Dated 1810 in a later revised MS.

Page 667.

*On an Icicle, etc.*

The title is from Shelley's MS., where the poem (given in a revised text) is dated 1809. It is given also in a letter to Hogg, dated 6th January, 1811, where Shelley says that he had been most of the previous night pacing a churchyard.

Page 669.

*To Mary, who Died in this Opinion.*

From a letter to Miss Hitchener, 23d November, 1811. Mr. Esdaile's MS. con-

tains three poems "To Mary," with an Advertisement prefixed, and one "To the Lover of Mary." The date of these is November, 1810. They are selected, Shelley says, from many written during three weeks of an entrancement caused by hearing Mary's story. Probably the poem here printed is one of those from among which he made his later selection.

Page 669.

*A Tale of Society, etc.*

The title is from Shelley's MS., where the poem appears in a later text, and extends to ten stanzas. The present text is from a letter to Miss Hitchener, 7th January, 1812. I made a few corrections from the later MS.

Page 671.

*To the Republicans of North America.*

The title is from Shelley's MS.; the text, from a letter to Miss Hitchener, dated 14th February, 1812. The later MS. contains an additional stanza. I make one or two corrections of text from this MS.

Page 671.

*To Harriet: A Fragment.*

The poem from which this fragment is taken will be found in the "Life of Shelley," by Edward Dowden, vol. i. pp. 286-288.

## A LIST OF SHELLEY'S PRINCIPAL WRITINGS.<sup>1</sup>

1. Zastrozzi, A Romance. By P. B. S., London: Printed for G. Wilkie and J. Robinson, 57 Paternoster Row, 1810.

2. Original Poetry. By Victor and Cazire, Worthing: Phillips. 8vo, pp. 64. No copy known.

3. Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson; being Poems found amongst the papers of that noted female who attempted the life of the King in 1786. Edited by John Fitzvictor. Oxford: Printed and Sold by J. Munday, 1810.

6. St. Irvyne; or, The Rosicrucian: A Romance. By A Gentleman of the University of Oxford. London: Printed for J. J. Stockdale, 41 Pall Mall, 1811.

7. An Essay on Love. In a letter to Godwin, Keswick, 16th January, 1812, Shelley speaks of "the 'Essay on Love,' a little poem"—as if a printed work. No copy is known.

8. Leonora. This was a novel said to have been written in conjunction with T. J. Hogg. The printing is said to have been stopped in consequence of the expulsion of Shelley and Hogg from Oxford. Never issued.

9. The necessity of Atheism. Worthing: Printed by E. and W. Phillips. Sold in London and Oxford.

10. A Poetical Essay on the Existing State of Things. By a Gentleman of the University of Oxford, For assisting to maintain in Prison Mr. Peter Finnerty, imprisoned for a libel. London: Sold by B. Crosby and Co., and all other booksellers, 1811. This is advertised in the *Oxford Herald* for 2d March, 1811, and there is strong reason to believe that it was by Shelley. No copy is known.

11. Lines on a Fête at Carlton House—a poem of about fifty lines said to have been printed, 1811. No copy is known, but a fragment has been orally preserved.

12. A Satire, 1811; supposed to have been printed. No copy known; the title unknown.

13. An Address to the Irish People. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Dublin, 1812.

14. Proposals for an Association of those Philanthropists, who, convinced of the inadequacy of the moral and political state of Ireland to produce benefits which are nevertheless attainable, are willing to unite to accomplish its regeneration. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Dublin: Printed by I. Eton, Winetavern Street (1812).

15. Declaration of Rights—a broadside printed in Dublin, 1812,

16. The Devil's Walk; a Ballad—a broadside, 1812.

17. A Letter to Lord Ellenborough, occasioned by the sentence which he passed on Mr. D. I. Eaton, as publisher of the Third Part of Paine's "Age of Reason" (Printed by Syle at Barnstaple, 1812.)

18. Queen Mab; a Philosophical Poem: with Notes by Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: Printed by P. B. Shelley, 23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square, 1813. The poem was printed and published by W. Clark, 201 Strand, London, in 1821, and was reissued in 1822 by R. Carlile, 55 Fleet Street. In 1821 it was reprinted in New York in duodecimo form.

19. A Vindication of Natural Diet. Being one of a Series of Notes to Queen Mab, a Philosophical Poem. London: Printed for J. Callow, medical bookseller, Crown Court, Princes Street, Soho, by Smith and Davy, Queen Street, Seven Dials, 1813.

<sup>1</sup> For fuller information the reader should consult the volume from which mainly this list has been drawn up: "The Shelley Library: An Essay in Bibliography by H. Buxton Forman. Part I. [all published as yet]. London: Reeves and Turner, 1886."



20. A Refutation of Deism: in a Dialogue. London: Printed by Schulze and Dean, 13 Poland Street, 1814.

21. Review of Hogg's "Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff," contributed to the *Critical Review*, December, 1814.

22. Alastor; or the Spirit of Solitude: and other Poems. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: Printed for Baldwin, Craddock, and Joy, Paternoster Row; and Carpenter and Son, Old Bond Street: by S. Hamilton, Weybridge, Surrey, 1816.

23. A Proposal for Putting Reform to the Vote throughout the Kingdom. By the Hermit of Marlow. London: Printed for C. and J. Ollier, 3 Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square, by C. H. Reynell, 21 Piccadilly, 1817.

24. An Address to the People on the Death of the Princess Charlotte. By the Hermit of Marlow, 1817. [The motto "We pity the Plumage, but forget the Dying Bird" has been mistaken for the title.] Known only through a reprint of Thomas Rodd about 1843.

25. History of a Six Weeks' Tour through a part of France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland: with letters descriptive of a Sail round the Lake of Geneva and of the Glaciers of Chamouni. London: Published by T. Hookham jun., Old Bond Street; and C. and J. Ollier, Welbeck Street, 1817. This is in the main by Mary Shelley, with certain contributions from Shelley's pen.

26. Laon and Cythna; or, the Revolution of the Golden City: A Vision of the Nineteenth Century. In the Stanza of Spenser. By Percy B. Shelley. London: Printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, Paternoster Row; and C. and J. Ollier, Welbeck Street: by B. M'Millan, Bow Street, Covent Garden, 1818.

This by alterations, cancel-leaves, and a fresh title was altered into

27. The Revolt of Islam; a Poem, in twelve cantos. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: Printed for C. and J. Ollier, Welbeck Street, by B. M'Millan, Bow Street, Covent Garden, 1818. Some few copies are dated 1817. In 1829 the remainder was issued with a new title-page and the imprint "London; Printed for John Brooks, 421 Oxford Street, 1829." Some copies of this issue give the "Laon and Cythna" text.

28. Rosalind and Helen, a Modern Eclogue; with Other Poems: by Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: Printed for C. and J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street, 1819.

29. The Cenci. A Tragedy, in Five Acts. By Percy B. Shelley. Italy: Printed

for C. and J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street, London, 1819.

The Cenci appeared in a second edition. London: C. and J. Ollier, 1821.

30. Prometheus Unbound. A Lyrical Drama in Four Acts, with other Poems. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. London: C. and J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street, 1820.

31. Œdipus Tyrannus; or Swellfoot the Tyrant. A Tragedy. In Two Acts. Translated from the Original Doric. London: Published for the Author, by J. Johnston, 98 Cheapside; and sold by all booksellers, 1820.

32. Epipsychidion. Verses addressed to the Noble and Unfortunate Lady Emilia V——, now imprisoned in the Convent of ———. London: C. and J. Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street, 1821.

33. Adonais. An Elegy on the Death of John Keats, Author of Endymion, Hyperion, etc. By Percy B. Shelley. Pisa, with the Types of Didot, 1821. The second edition was brought out through the zeal of Arthur Hallam and the late Lord Houghton at Cambridge. Printed by W. Metcalfe, and sold by Messrs. Gee and Bridges, Market Hill, 1829.

34. Hellas. A Lyrical Drama. By Percy B. Shelley. London: Charles and James Ollier, Vere Street, Bond Street, 1822. This was the last work issued during Shelley's life.

35. Posthumous Poems of Percy Bysshe Shelley. London, 1824: Printed for John and Henry L. Hunt, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden. [Edited by Mary Shelley.]

36. The Masque of Anarchy. A Poem. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Now First Published, with a Preface by Leigh Hunt. London: Edward Moxon, 64 New Bond Street, 1832.

37. The Shelley Papers: Memoir of Percy Bysshe Shelley. By T. Medwin, Esq., and Original Poems and Papers by Percy Bysshe Shelley. Now First Collected. London: Whittaker, Treacher, and Co., 1833.

38. Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations, and Fragments, By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Edited by Mrs. Shelley. In Two Volumes. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street, 1840.

39. Relics of Shelley. Edited by Richard Garnett. London: Edward Moxon and Co., Dover Street, 1862.

40. The Dæmon of the World. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. The First Part as published in 1816 with Alastor. The Second Part, Deciphered and now First Printed

from his own Manuscript Revision and Interpolations in the Newly Discovered Copy of *Queen Mab*. London: Privately printed by H. Buxton Forman, 38 Marlborough Hill, 1876.

41. Notes on Sculptures in Rome and Florence: Together with a Lucianic Fragment and a Criticism on Peacock's "Rhododaphne." By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Edited by Harry Buxton Forman. London: Printed for Private Distribution, 1879.

A notice of Shelley's unpublished prose work, "A Philosophical View of Reform (1819), will be found in "Transcripts and Studies," by Edward Dowden, 1888, pp. 41-74.

Some account of early poems, still unpublished, will be found in "The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley," by Edward Dowden, 1886, vol. i. pp. 344-349; and poems, or passages from poems, in the unpublished MS. volume in the possession of Mr. Esdaile will be found in the same work, vol. i. pp. 268, 270-274, 286-288, 294, 298-299, 317-318, 347-348, 376, 385-386, 404, 413-414.

One poem, "The Wandering Jew's Soliloquy," from the same MS. volume is printed in the Shelley Society's Publications, Second Series, No. 12. "The Wandering Jew," edited by Bertram Dobell (1887), pp. 69-70.

## ORDER OF POEMS.

### IN EDITIONS PUBLISHED DURING SHELLEY'S LIFETIME.

It seems right to put it in the reader's power to place certain poems in the order in which they originally appeared with Shelley's approval.

*Alastor* was followed in the volume of 1816 by —

The Stanzas beginning "Oh! there are spirits in the air."

Stanzas, April 1814.

Mutability.

Stanzas beginning "The pale, the cold, and the moony smile."

A Summer Evening Churchyard.

Sonnet: To Wordsworth.

Sonnet: Feelings of a Republican.

Superstition (a fragment of *Queen Mab*).

Sonnet from the Italian of Dante.

Sonnet: Translated from the Greek of Moschus.

The Dæmon of the World: Part I.

*Rosalind and Helen* was followed in the volume of 1819 by —

Lines Written among the Euganean Hills.

Hymn to Intellectual Beauty.

Sonnet: Ozymandias.

*Prometheus Unbound* was followed in the volume of 1820 by —

The Sensitive Plant.

A Vision of the Sea.

Ode to Heaven.

An Exhortation.

Ode to the West Wind.

An Ode: To the Assertors of Liberty (named originally "An Ode written October 1819, before the Spaniards had recovered their Liberty").

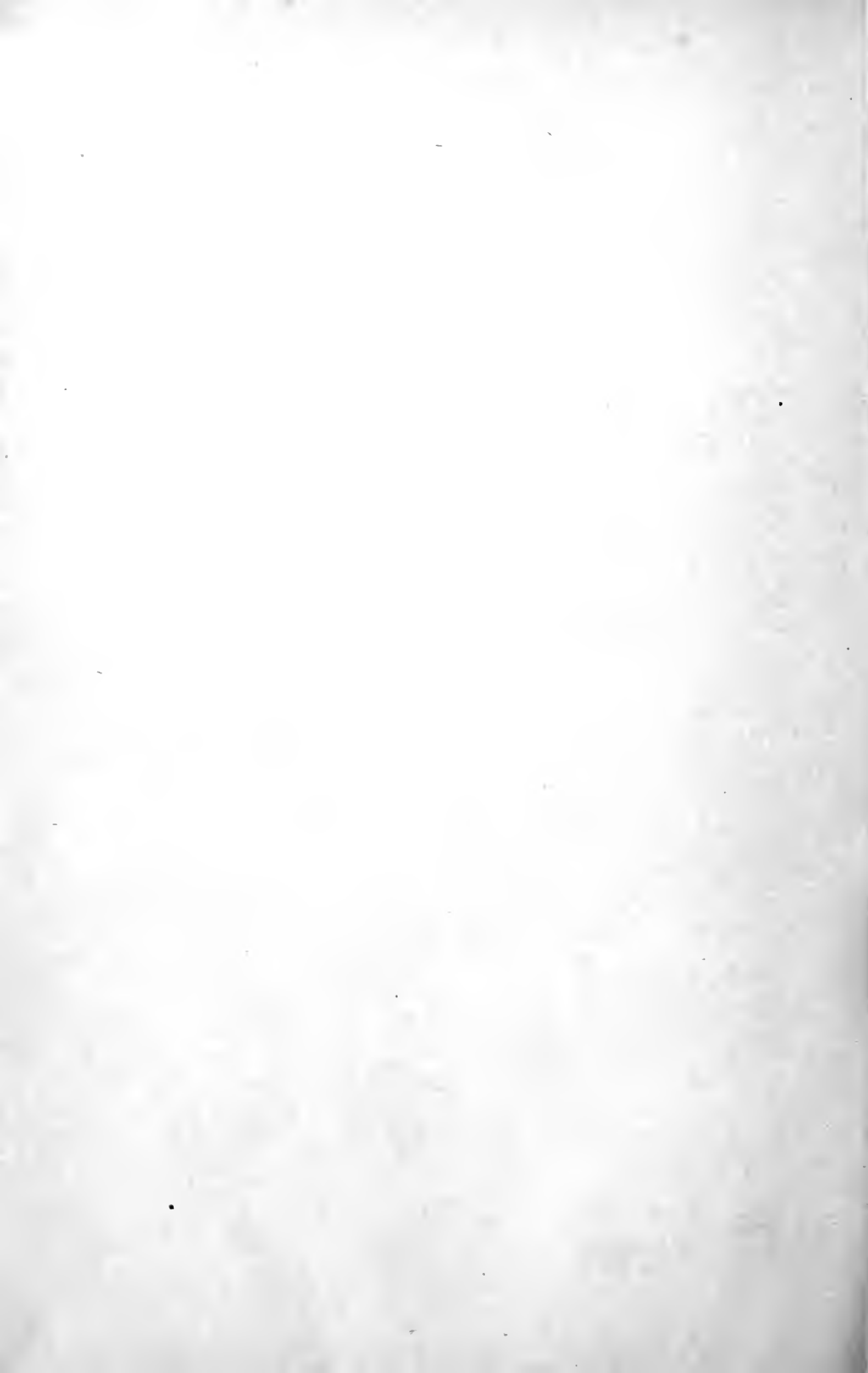
The Cloud.

To a Skylark.

Ode to Liberty.

*Hellas* was followed in the volume of 1822 by —

Lines written on hearing the News of the Death of Napoleon.



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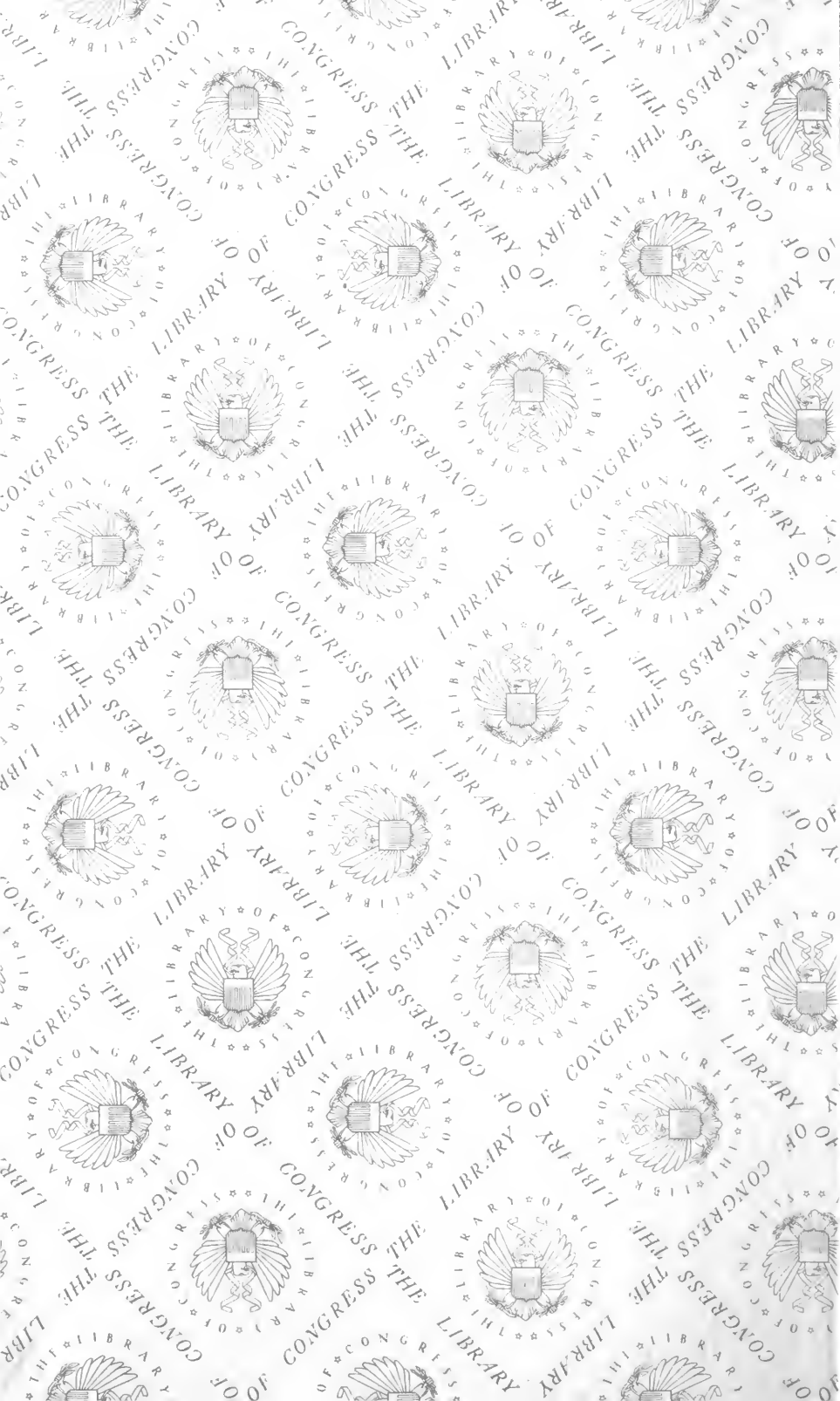
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